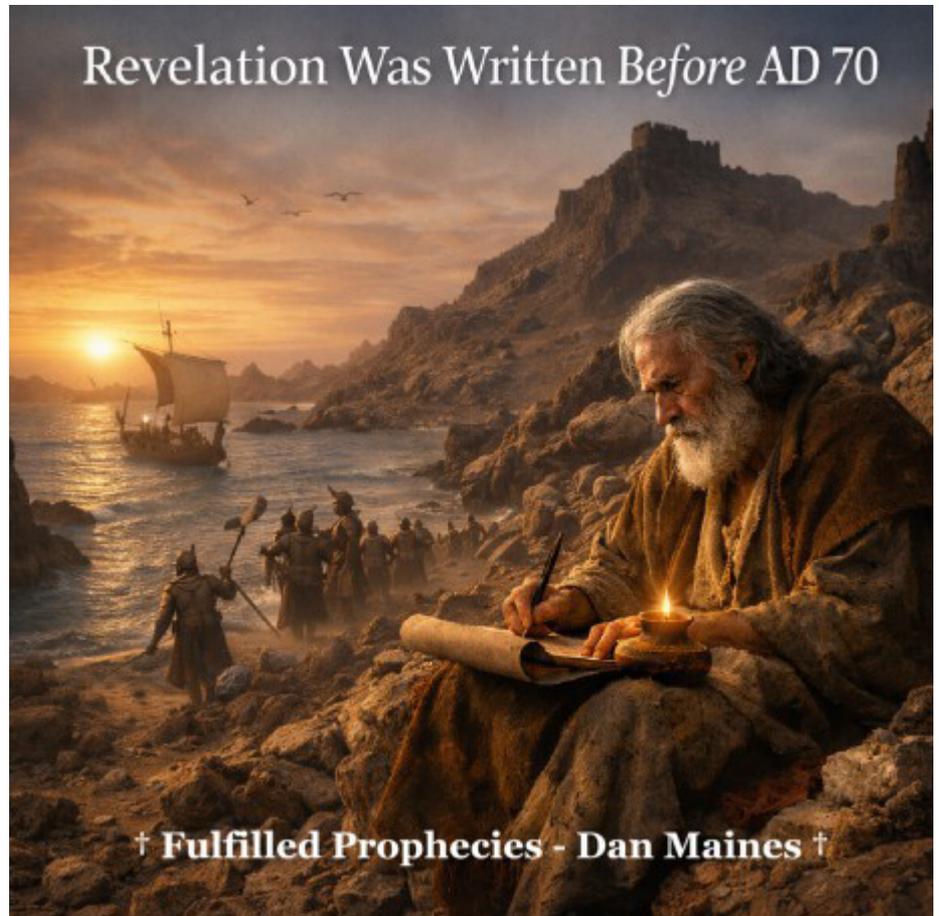


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Revelation Was Written Before AD 70



By Dan Maines

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Introduction

† The timing of Revelation isn't a side issue, it's foundational to everything the book says.

† If it was written before AD 70, then it speaks to the imminent judgment of Jerusalem and the end of the Old Covenant age.

† If it was written after AD 70, then its time statements collapse and its audience relevance disappears.

† We aren't guessing, we're letting Scripture define its own

timing.

† We're going to establish the date from internal evidence first, then confirm it with history.

† Scripture interprets Scripture, and when we let it speak plainly, the early date becomes unavoidable.

Revelation 1:1

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place, and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John,

† John was told the things must soon take place, not thousands of years later.

† The Greek word *en tachei* means quickly, shortly, without delay.

† If Revelation was written in AD 95, then soon meant over 2,000 years, which makes the word meaningless.

† God doesn't redefine time to protect a future system.

Revelation 1:3

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it, for the time is near.

† The time is near doesn't mean far off, it means at hand.

† The same word near is used in Matthew 24:33 for the destruction of Jerusalem, and it happened in that generation.

† If the time wasn't near, then John misled the churches.

Revelation 1:9

I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the

testimony of Jesus.

† John says he was a fellow partaker in the tribulation, not that it was thousands of years away.

† The tribulation was present tense reality.

† That places Revelation in the same tribulation Jesus warned about in Matthew 24.

Revelation 2:10

Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

† About to suffer is immediate expectation language.

† This was relevant to living, breathing first century believers.

† It makes no sense as distant end of world prophecy.

Revelation 3:10-11

Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. I am coming quickly, hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown.

† The hour was about to come, not scheduled for our century.

† I am coming quickly is covenant judgment language.

† The churches were told to hold fast because the crisis was near.

Revelation 6:11

And there was given to each of them a white robe, and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to

be killed even as they had been, would be completed also.

† A little while longer can't honestly mean thousands of years.

† The martyrs expected vindication soon.

† That fits the coming judgment on Jerusalem.

Revelation 11:1-2

Then there was given me a measuring rod like a staff, and someone said, Get up and measure the temple of God and the altar, and those who worship in it. Leave out the court which is outside the temple and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations, and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months.

† The temple was still standing when John wrote.

† In AD 95 there was no temple to measure.

† The forty-two months matches the Roman siege period from AD 67 to AD 70.

† John was told to measure something that existed, not something destroyed 25 years earlier.

Revelation 11:8

And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified.

† The Lord was crucified in Jerusalem.

† Revelation identifies the great city as the place of crucifixion.

† That city was about to be judged just as Jesus declared in Matthew 23.

Revelation 17:10

and they are seven kings, five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when he comes, he must remain a little

while.

† Five had fallen, Julius, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius.

† One is, that would be Nero.

† Nero reigned AD 54 to 68, placing Revelation before AD 68.

Revelation 22:6

And he said to me, These words are faithful and true, and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must soon take place.

† Revelation ends the same way it begins, soon.

† God doesn't frame a book with urgency if fulfillment is 2,000 years away.

Revelation 22:10

And he said to me, Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.

† Daniel was told to seal his book because fulfillment was far off.

† John was told not to seal because fulfillment was near.

† That contrast alone demands a first century fulfillment.

Matthew 24:34

Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

† Jesus tied the destruction of Jerusalem to that generation.

† Revelation describes the same tribulation, siege, and judgment events.

† If Revelation was written after AD 70, then Jesus' time

statement would already have expired.

Romans 13:11-12

Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep, for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. The night is almost gone, and the day is near.

† Paul says the day was near in his lifetime.

† That aligns with Revelation's urgency.

Hebrews 10:37

FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE, HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY.

† A very little while is explicit imminence language.

† It can't be stretched into millennia without redefining language.

James 5:8-9

You too be patient, strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.

† Near and at the door are immediate expressions.

† James wrote to first century believers facing crisis.

1 Peter 4:7

The end of all things is near, therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.

† Peter said the end was near, not thousands of years away.

† This matches Revelation's timeframe.

Daniel 12:4

But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time, many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase.

- † Daniel was sealed because fulfillment was distant.
- † Revelation was unsealed because fulfillment was near.
- † The two books interpret each other.

Historical References

- † Irenaeus is often cited for a late date, but his statement is grammatically ambiguous as to whether John or the vision was seen long ago.
- † Irenaeus wrote over a century later, he wasn't an eyewitness to the exile.
- † The Syriac subscription to Revelation places it in the reign of Nero.
- † Clement of Alexandria connects John's exile to the time of the tyrant, Nero was the first imperial persecutor of Christians.
- † Internal evidence outweighs one debated late second century statement.
- † The temple references, king sequence, tribulation context, and urgency language all point before AD 70.

How It Applies To Us Today

- † Revelation isn't about our future headlines, it's about Christ keeping His word.
- † It proves Jesus fulfilled His prophecy within that generation.
- † It confirms the Old Covenant age ended in judgment just as He declared.
- † We're not waiting for wrath, we're living in the fulfilled kingdom.

Q & A Appendix

Q If Revelation was written before AD 70, why do many scholars date it later?

A Many rely on one disputed statement from Irenaeus, but Scripture's internal evidence, Revelation 1:1, 1:3, 11:1-2, 17:10, and 22:10, demands an early date.

Q Could the temple in Revelation 11 be symbolic?

A It carries symbolism, but John was told to measure it as a present structure. In AD 95 there was no standing temple.

Q Why does this matter?

A Because it confirms Jesus fulfilled Matthew 24:34 within that generation, and Revelation documents that fulfillment.

Q If Revelation was written before AD 70, why does it mention seven churches that seem established and mature?

A Paul had already established churches across Asia Minor in the 50s and early 60s, Acts 19:10 says all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord. By the mid 60s those churches were fully functioning congregations. Maturity doesn't require decades, it requires persecution, and persecution was already active under Nero, 1 Peter 4:12-13.

Q Doesn't Irenaeus clearly say Revelation was seen in the reign of Domitian?

A Irenaeus says it was seen toward the end of Domitian's reign, but the Greek grammar allows the reference to apply to John himself being seen, not the writing of the book. Even if it referred to the vision, Irenaeus wrote over 100 years later. Internal Scripture evidence must outweigh a second century statement, Revelation 1:1, 1:3, 22:10.

Q Could John have been referring to a spiritual temple in Revelation 11?

A Revelation 11:1-2 refers to the temple, altar, and worshipers,

and the holy city being trampled for forty-two months. That language parallels Luke 21:20-24 which describes Jerusalem surrounded by armies. The forty-two months fits the Jewish War period, AD 67 to AD 70.

Q If Nero is the sixth king in Revelation 17:10, how do we count the emperors?

A When counted from Julius Caesar as the first imperial ruler, the sequence fits perfectly: Julius, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero. Revelation 17:10 says five have fallen, one is, which fits Nero's reign before AD 68.

Q What about the number 666?

A Revelation 13:18 says let him who has understanding calculate the number. In Hebrew gematria, Nero Caesar equals 666. That makes perfect sense in a first century Jewish context and fits the Neronian persecution period.

Q Why would John say the time is near if it wasn't?

A Revelation 1:3 and 22:10 both say the time is near. If near means thousands of years, then words lose meaning. The same Greek word for near is used in Matthew 24:33 and Luke 21:31 describing events that occurred in that generation.

Q Doesn't Revelation describe the end of the world?

A Revelation describes the end of the age, the end of the covenant order centered in Jerusalem. Hebrews 8:13 says the old covenant was becoming obsolete and ready to disappear. That disappearance happened in AD 70 with the destruction of the temple.

Q Why does Revelation focus so much on Jerusalem if Rome was the empire?

A Revelation 11:8 identifies the great city where the Lord was crucified. Revelation 18:24 says in her was found the blood of prophets. Jesus said in Matthew 23:35-36 that all righteous blood would come upon that generation in Jerusalem. The

target of covenant judgment was the city that rejected Him.

Q Why would the early Christians care about events in AD 70?

A Because Jesus warned them directly in Matthew 24:15-20 to flee when they saw Jerusalem surrounded. Luke 21:22 calls those days days of vengeance. Revelation gave prophetic confirmation of what Jesus already told them.

Q Why does almost all of modern evangelicalism teach a late date for Revelation?

A Because once the early date is admitted, futurism collapses. If Revelation was written before AD 70, then the tribulation, the Beast, the judgment of the great city, and the coming in judgment all belong to that generation, Matthew 24:34. The late date protects a future system. But Scripture defines its own time statements, Revelation 1:1, 1:3, 22:10. When we let the text speak plainly, the urgency language can't be postponed without redefining words.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Revelation 1:1, 3, 9; 2:10; 3:10-11; 6:11; 11:1-2, 8; 17:10; 22:6, 10; Matthew 24:34; Romans 13:11-12; Hebrews 10:37; James 5:8-9; 1 Peter 4:7; Daniel 12:4

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies 5.30.3; Clement of Alexandria, Who Is the Rich Man That Shall Be Saved; Syriac Peshitta Subscription to Revelation

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