

## Revelation

Purpose: comfort the Church in its struggle against the forces of evil; it is full of help and comfort for persecuted and suffering Christians.

Contrast 2:13 with 22:1

1:9; 2:13; 3:10; 6:9; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2; 20:4

Theme: 17:14

Revelation claims to be written by "John" (1:1, 4, 9; 22:8). I believe this to be John the Apostle, author of the gospel John and the three epistles. "Was the Asiatic church overrun with brilliant Christians by the name of John, who would only need to announce their name for the Christians to know which was meant" (Guthrie).

John writes from Patmos, a rocky and rugged island, some forty miles southwest of Ephesus in the Aegean Sea.

Date: Two possible dates have been suggested by scholars: during the reign of Nero (54-68) or the reign of Domitian (81-96), which the early church favored.

Revelation is a prophecy cast in an apocalyptic mold and written down in a letter form.

Jewish apocalyptists ground their hope in a future event, while John grounds his hope in the past sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the "Lamb that has been slain."

How would Revelation present James 4:4? Contrast Rev 13:16-17 (and 14:11) with 14:1.

A sabbatical structure, that is six groups of seven followed by the final rest

- I. Christ in the midst of the seven golden lampstands (1:1-3:22) 1:5, 7
- II. The vision of heaven and the seven seals (4:1-8:1) 5:5-6; 6:16-17; 7:16-17
- III. The seven trumpets (8:2-11:19) 11:15, 18
- IV. The persecuting dragon/the seven signs\* (12:1-14:20) 12:5; 14:14, 16
- V. The seven bowls (15:1-16:21) 16:20
- VI. The sevenfold declaration of Babylon's ruin (17:1-19:21) [18:1-3, 4-5, 6-8, 9-19, 20, 21-24; 19:1-5] 19:11ff
- VII. The great consummation (20:1-22:21) 20:10ff

These seven sections run parallel (progressive) to each other, spanning from the first to the second coming of Christ.

Compare also 11:2-3 and 12:6, 14

First trumpet (8:7)	Earth	First bowl (16:2)
Second trumpet (8:8-9)	Sea	Second bowl (16:3)
Third trumpet (8:10-11)	Rivers	Third bowl (16:4-7)
Fourth trumpet (8:12)	Sun	Fourth bowl (16:8-9)
Fifth trumpet (9:1-12)	Pit of the abyss or throne of the beast	Fifth bowl (16:10-11)

Sixth trumpet (9:13-21)	Euphrates	Sixth bowl (16:12-16)
Seventh trumpet (11:15-19)	Second coming in judgment	Seventh bowl (16:17-21)

Trumpets warn and bowls are poured out.

16:14; 19:19; 20:8

Revelation 1-11: The world attacks the church but the church is avenged and victorious.

Revelation 12-22: This struggle on earth is the outward manifestation of the devil's failed attack upon the child. All the enemies of the church are defeated in the end.

\*Between the trumpets and bowls are seven significant signs!

- 1) a woman who gives birth to a son (12:1-6)
- 2) a war in heaven between Michael and his angels and a dragon, identified with Satan, who is cast out of heaven (12:7-12)
- 3) a war on earth between Satan and the woman and her child (12:13-13:1a)
- 4) the worldwide worship of a beast who comes out of the sea (13:1b-10)
- 5) the worldwide domination of a beast who comes out of the earth (13:11-18)
- 6) the praise of the Lamb from the 144,000 (14:1-5)
- 7) the harvesting of the earth done by "one like a son of man" and angels (14:14-20)

The seals, trumpets, bowls of wrath and similar symbols refer not to specific events, particular happenings, or details of history, but to principles—of human conduct and of divine moral government—that are operating throughout the history of the world.

The **preterist** perspective sees the book as a prophecy of the fall of either Jerusalem in 70 AD or the Roman Empire in the fifth century AD. The **historicist** view sees Revelation as predicting the major movements of Christian history (such as, the invasions of the Christianized Roman Empire by the Goths and Muslims, the corruption of the medieval papacy, the reign of Charlemagne, the Protestant Reformation, etc.). The **futurist** view sees the visions from chapter 4 through 22:5 as referring exclusively to a future time immediately preceding the end of history. The **idealist** approach affirms that Revelation is a symbolic portrayal of the conflict between good and evil, between the forces of God and of Satan.

The most popular form of futurism expects: (1) the restoration of ethnic Israel to its land, (2) the church's rapture into heaven, (3) a seven-year tribulation, (4) the antichrist's reign, (5) the assembly of evil nations to fight over Jerusalem, (6) Christ's second coming, (7) his millennial reign, (8) Satan's final rebellion at the end of the millennium, and (9) Christ's eternal reign.