

Themes and Scope of Revelation

A simple key to the understanding of the book of Revelation is to realize that it is divided into three main parts. Chapter 1 describes a vision in which John saw Christ robed as a Judge and standing in the midst of the seven churches. Chapters 2 and 3 have to do with the Church Age in which we now live.

The remaining nineteen chapters have to do with future events following the close of the Church Age. We may divide the book as follows:

1. *The things which John saw*, that is, the vision of Christ as Judge of the churches.
2. *The things which are*: an outline of the Church Period from the death of the apostles to the time when Christ will take His saints to heaven (chaps. 2 and 3).
3. *The things which will take place after this*: an outline of future events from the Rapture of the saints to the Eternal State (chaps. 4–22).

An easy way to remember the contents of this third section of the book is:

a. Chapters 4 through 19 describe the Tribulation, a period of at least seven years during which God will judge the unbelieving nation of Israel and unbelieving Gentiles as well. These judgments are described under the figures:

(1) Seven seals. (2) Seven trumpets. (3) Seven bowls.

b. Chapters 20–22 deal with Christ's Second Coming, His kingdom on earth, the Judgment of the Great White Throne, and the Eternal State.

In the Tribulation Period, the seventh seal contains the seven trumpets. Also the seventh trumpet contains the seven bowl judgments. Thus the Tribulation Period might be diagrammed as follows:

SEALS
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
TRUMPETS
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
BOWLS
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

OUTLINE

I. Introduction: “What You Have Seen” (ch. 1)

- A. Prologue (1:1-3)
- B. Salutation (1:4-8)
- C. The Patmos vision of Christ glorified (1:9-18)
- D. The command to write (1:19-20)

II. Letters to the Churches: “What Is Now” (ch. 2-3)

- A. The letter to the church in Ephesus (2:1-7)
- B. The letter to the church in Smyrna (2:8-11)
- C. The letter to the church in Pergamum (2:12-17)
- D. The letter to the church in Thyatira (2:18-29)
- E. The letter to the church in Sardis (3:1-6)

F. The letter to the church in Philadelphia (3:7-13)

G. The letter to the church in Laodicea (3:14-22)

III. Future: “What Will Take Place Later” (ch. 4-22)

- A. The vision of the heavenly throne (chap. 4)
- B. The seven-sealed scroll (chap. 5)
- C. The opening of the six seals: the time of divine wrath (chap. 6)
- D. Those who will be saved in the Great Tribulation (chap. 7)
- E. The opening of the seventh seal and the introduction of the seven trumpets (chaps. 8-9)
- F. The mighty angel and the little scroll (chap. 10)
- G. The two witnesses (11:1-14)
- H. The sounding of the seventh trumpet (11:15-19)
- I. The seven great personages of the end times (chaps. 12-15)
- J. The bowls of divine wrath (chap. 16)
- K. The fall of Babylon (chaps. 17-18)
- L. The song of hallelujah in heaven (19:1-10)
- M. The second coming of Christ (19:11-21)
- N. The millennial reign of Christ (20:1-10)
- O. The judgment of the great white throne (20:11-15)
- P. The new heaven and the new earth (21:1-22:5)
- Q. The final word from God (22:6-21)

What do I get out of it? An in-depth study of the following:

- Final political setup of the world
- The Antichrist
- Ultimate defeat of Demons and Satan
- Rapture of the church
- The Battle between the Angels
- 7 year Tribulation (Great Tribulation)
- Battle of Armageddon
- Thousand-year earthly Kingdom of Jesus
- Final judgment of unbelievers (Great White Throne judgment)
- The reward(s) of the believers
- The Lake of Fire, Hell & Death
- Angels and their role
- Heaven and it's activities
- The new heaven and new earth
- The new heavenly city
- The Tree of Life and the Book of Life
- The return of the King

Guide & Record of your thoughts

11/8/2009 - Week 1 Introduction - Revelation 1:1-3

Following the Message:

1. As we study Revelation we are about to open a door which will allow us to gaze into the very (portals) of (heaven) 4:1
2. The result of John's use of a lot of symbolism is this book a) hindered Roman officials from using these words as (evidence) against the believers; b) allowed the recorded text to not be (weakened) by time; and c) provided a (graphic/enhanced) understanding of the truths recorded. (Example 17:2)
3. The meaning of nearly all the symbols used in revelation are (defined/explained) elsewhere in scripture (Example: 1:20)
4. Apocalypse, in the context of Revelation means to unveil or (expose) in full view what was formerly (hidden).
5. Revelation is about to unveil the (DESTINY) of the world.
6. A bond servant, like John, is one who (serves) voluntarily out of love and (devotion) to his master.
7. In verse 1:1 the things which must take place shortly or soon* means that action and events will be (sudden) when they come, not that they will occur (immediately). Once the trigger is pulled and the events begin they will occur in (rapid succession). *Hint – the Greek word we learned for soon is *en tachei, en takh'-os*; meaning a *brief* space (of time), in *haste*
8. The things revealed in Revelation are things that John actually (saw).
9. The two elements in this book that are of chief importance are the (Word) of God and the (Testimony) of Jesus Christ.

10. This book is primarily written for (believers) to understand and be (blessed) if they read, hear and (heed) the things written (1:3)

11. In verse 3 the phrase the “time is near” refers to an (age/epoch) and refers to the time of the (end).

Reflecting on the Text

On a scale of 1–10, with 1 representing “very little” and 10 signifying “very good” how would you rate your current understanding of the Book of Revelation and what it teaches about end-times events?

When in your life have you had the most profound experience with the living God? What happened? How were you affected?

How would your life be different if you lived daily with a continual expectancy of Christ’s return?

What questions do you hope to have answered as a result of this study?

Passage to consider this week - 2 Peter 3:3-7 Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation." For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.