

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE OF PRAYER ATLANTA
OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION
AUGUST 20TH, 2017 - BILLY HUMPHREY

I. Structure

A. The structure of the book of Revelation is divided into a prologue (1:1-20), 7 epistles (2:1 – 3:22), 5 chronological sections, 5 parenthetical sections & an epilogue (22:7-21).

1. Prologue & Epilogue - It is clear that John added at minimum a prologue and epilogue after he had the original vision. It's possible He wrote these after He was released from Patmos, in order to give clarity to what it was that he had seen and heard.

2. Epistles – The book contains a set of seven letters to seven unique churches. It is clear that these were actual letters written to churches in Asia Minor in the first century. Each letter specifically identifies the Author, Jesus, and the recipient of the letter, the church to whom the letter was written.

3. Chronological & Parenthetical Sections - Through the chronological sections, we see Jesus' plan to systematically cleanse the earth by judging the Antichrist's systems using the seals, trumpets and bowls. Through the parenthetical sections we gain additional information and perspective from angels as to the story line of the book including what happens to the saints and the reasoning for such severe judgments.

B. The events in the chronological sections are presented in the actual order that the events will unfold. The chronological chapters are:

1. Rev 6 – First 6 Seal Judgments
2. Rev 8-9 – 7th Seal and the First 6 Trumpet Judgments
3. Rev 11:14-19 – 7th Trumpet and the Second Coming of Christ
4. Rev 15-16 – The Bowl Judgments
5. Rev 19:11-21:8 – Jesus' Triumphal Entry, Millennial Reign and the Eternal Earth

C. Each parenthetical section follows a chronological section and is an explanation or a commentary of the chronological section. The parenthetical sections are:

1. Rev 7 – The sealing of the 144,000 and the great Multitude
2. Rev 10-11:1-13 – The Seven Thunders, the Finishing of the Mystery of God and the Two Witnesses

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3. Rev 12-14 – War in the Heavenlies, The Woman and the Male child, The Beast and the False Prophet, the Victory of the 144,000 and the Two Harvests
4. Rev 17-18 – The Great Harlot Babylon, the Beast Kingdom and its ultimate destruction
5. Rev 21:9-22:5 – The Eternal Earth and the New Jerusalem

II. Overview of the Chronological and Parenthetical Sections

A. 1st Chronological Section: Seal Judgments 1-6 (Rev 6) - The seals make up the first set of judgments of the three-part judgment series (i.e. seals, trumpets & bowls). It is important to note that Jesus is the one who releases the seals (5:5; 6:1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12; 8:1). The opening of the first seal initiates the final 3.5 years of this age (i.e. the Great Tribulation). The first six seals are separated in the text from the seventh by the first parenthetical section.

1. First Seal: A rider on a white horse comes forth depicting Antichrist's political and military aggression (6:1-2).
2. Second Seal: A rider on a red horse comes forth who has been given authority to take peace from the earth and to bring about mass bloodshed and war (6:3-4).
3. Third Seal: A rider on a black horse comes forth who releases famine and economic crisis globally (6:5-6).
4. Fourth Seal: A rider on a pale horse comes forth who releases disease and death on $\frac{1}{4}$ of the earth (6:7-8).
5. Fifth Seal: The souls of martyrs who are before the throne cry out to the Lord for vindication. This depicts an escalation in the prayer movement that intensifies God's judgment on Antichrist's kingdom (6:9-11).
6. Sixth Seal: Cosmic disturbances are released across the globe that cause people from all spheres of society to be gripped with fear and go into hiding (6:12-17).

B. 1st Parenthetical Section: Sealing of the 144,000 and the Great Multitude (Rev 7) - This section gives an answer to the question that is posed in the final verse of chapter 6, "Who can stand?" The answer is revealed as we are introduced to two groups of believers who stand with Jesus through the events of the Great Tribulation.

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1. The 144,000 (7:1-8) – John witnesses an angel with great authority instructing other angels not to harm the earth until a certain group of bond-servants of God are sealed with the seal of God upon their foreheads. He then hears the number from each tribe of Israel who will be sealed, 144,000.

2. The Great Multitude from every tribe and tongue (7:9-17) – To John's surprise, he turns to see not just 144,000, but a great multitude, without number, from all nations who have come out of the Great Tribulation.

C. 2nd Chronological Section: Seventh Seal and Trumpets 1-6 (Rev 8-9)

1. The seventh seal is grouped with the trumpet judgments because the seventh seal releases the trumpets.

2. Seventh Seal: The seventh seal depicts an escalation in the prayer movement and commissions the angels of the trumpet judgments to come forth (8:1-5).

3. First Trumpet: Bloody fiery hail falls upon the earth burning up 1/3rd of the earth's vegetation (8:7).

4. Second Trumpet: A burning fiery land mass is thrown into the sea destroying 1/3rd of all sea creatures and turning a 1/3rd of the sea to blood (8:8-9).

5. Third Trumpet: A large comet falls upon the earth, poisoning of 1/3rd of the earth's freshwater supply (8:10-11).

6. Fourth Trumpet: The sun and moon are struck so that 1/3rd of the earth's light is darkened for a season (8:12-13).

7. Fifth Trumpet: Releases a large number of tormenting demons, who are permitted to attack and torment men for 5 months (9:1-12).

8. Sixth Trumpet: 1/3rd of the earth's population is killed by demon power (9:13-21).

D. 2nd Parenthetical Section: Prophetic Messengers (Rev. 10:1-11:13)

1. In this section, explanation is given as to how the church receives prophetic direction and leadership through the Great Tribulation. John sees a great angel who commands John to eat the book in the angel's hand so that John might prophesy.

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2. Next, John sees the two witnesses. There is a correlation between the call to prophesy and the two witnesses. God is identifying the two witnesses as the prophetic leaders of the church through the Great Tribulation. Revelation 10 is a key passage for forerunners at the end of the age.

3. The Two Witnesses will preach with great power and give leadership to the end time church during the last 3.5 years of this age. These two prophets will have great authority in confronting Antichrist.

4. The main point of this parenthetical section is that during the Great Tribulation God is going to release an outpouring of authority and revelation on prophetic messengers who will give leadership to His end-time Bride (Acts 2:17-21).

E. 3rd Chronological Section: 7th Trumpet Begins the Second Coming (Rev. 11:14-19)

1. The kingdoms of this world will come under Jesus' reign at the seventh trumpet. At this time, the saints will be rewarded and God will finalize the destruction of the beast kingdom (11:15-18; 1Cor. 15:50-52).

2. At the sound of this last trumpet, Jesus will rapture the church and begin His earthly procession to overthrow the thrones of all nations, taking rulership of the globe.

F. 3rd Parenthetical section: War in the Heavens (12:1-14:20)

1. In Revelation 12, John sees the war that breaks out in heaven between Satan and Michael at the beginning of the Great Tribulation. This war results in Satan losing his authority in the heavenly realm and being cast to the earth. With great rage Satan will focus on persecuting the remnant of Israel and Christians. Many will be martyred and many will go into captivity as a result.

2. In Revelation 13, John sees Satan's two primary weapons of war: Antichrist and the False Prophet.

a. In 13:1-10, Antichrist is introduced as the Beast from the sea. He will have the largest army and greatest political power of any man in history.

b. In 13:11-18, the False Prophet is introduced as the Beast from the earth. His goal is to cause all nations to worship Antichrist (13:4, 8).

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3. In Revelation 14, God promises to reward His people and to release judgment upon the followers of Antichrist. God assures His people that He will be victorious and gives the church specific messages to proclaim at the end of the age.

G. 4th Chronological Section: 7 Bowls of God's Wrath (Rev. 15:1-16:21)

1. The bowls of wrath are the final set of the three-part judgment series. They finalize the release of God's wrath in this age. They are more severe than the seals and trumpets. They are specifically targeted against those of the Beast Kingdom.

2. The bowls culminate with the Armageddon Campaign where Jesus completely destroys Antichrist and his armies and takes His rightful place as king of the nations.

a. First Bowl: Loathsome sores appear upon and torment Antichrist's worshippers (16:1-2)

b. Second Bowl: The sea turns to blood and kills all sea creatures (16:3).

c. Third Bowl: All the fresh water on earth turns to blood (16:4-7).

d. Fourth Bowl: Scorching heat and fire released from the sun severely burning those with the mark of the Beast (16:8-9).

e. Fifth Bowl: Darkness and pain is released upon Antichrist's global empire (16:10-11).

f. Sixth Bowl: Demons come from Antichrist and lure the nations to fight with him against Jesus at Armageddon (16:12-16).

g. Seventh Bowl: The worst earthquake in human history, 100 pound hail stones and the final judgment against the Beast Kingdom (16:17-21).

H. 4th Parenthetical Section: The fall of Babylon (Rev. 17:1-19:10)

1. The Harlot Babylon is an evil, worldwide economic, political, military and religious network that seduces many and persecutes the saints. Antichrist will destroy the Harlot system and take possession of her resources at the beginning of the Great Tribulation. God assures the saints of His complete judgment on Babylon.

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2. The judgment of the Great Harlot (Rev. 17) and the fall of Babylon (Rev. 18) will destroy many of the resources for the infrastructures of the kingdom of darkness.

I. 5th Chronological Section: The Millennium and Eternal Earth (Rev. 19:11-21:8).

1. This section describes Jesus' coming to earth, specifically to Jerusalem, as the Warrior King (19:11-21). He ends the Armageddon Campaign by defeating Antichrist and the False Prophet (19:17-21) in order to establish His earthly 1,000-year reign (20:4-10).

2. Jesus will take over all the governments of the earth and establish the Kingdom of God in every nation. This reign of Christ on the earth is known as the Millennial Kingdom. At the onset of the Millennium, all the kings of the earth will be saved and worship Jesus (Psalm 72:11; 102:15; 138:4) and base their national governments on His Word. During this time, the New Jerusalem descends out of heaven and hovers over the earth (21:10).

3. The Great White Throne Judgment takes place after the Millennium (20:11-15). At this time, the present heaven and earth flee from the face of Him upon the throne and a new heaven and new earth are formed. The New Jerusalem then descends upon the new earth and the old order of things completely passes away. There is a supernatural joining of the spiritual and natural realms. From this point forward God will dwell among mankind forever. (21:1-21:7).

A. 5th Parenthetical Section: The New Jerusalem & Millennial Earth (Rev. 21:9-22:5)

4. The New Jerusalem is the eternal home of the bride of Christ from all the ages. The city itself is referred to as the bride because it is the bride's dwelling place forever.

5. John also sees the eternal earth, the new heavens and earth that will exist after the Great White Throne Judgment.