

Introduction: Purpose, greetings, doxology (1:1-8)

I. Seven Lampstands (1:9 – 3:22)

- A. Vision of the exalted Christ (1:9-20)
- B. Letters to “angels” of churches (2:1 – 3:22)
 - 1. Ephesus (2:1-7)
 - 2. Smyrna (2:8-11)
 - 3. Pergamum (2:12-17)
 - 4. Thyatira (2:18-29)
 - 5. Sardis (3:1-6)
 - 6. Philadelphia (3:7-13)
 - 7. Laodicea (3:14-22)

II. Seven Seals (4:1 – 8:5)

- A. Worship of the worthy Lamb (chs. 4-5)
- B. Seals #1-6 opened (ch. 6)
- C. Interlude: the 144,000 (ch. 7)
- D. Seal #7 opened (8:1-5)

III. Seven Trumpets (8:6 – 11:19)

- A. Trumpets #1-6 sounded (8:6-9:21)
- B. Interlude: angel with a scroll (ch. 10)
- C. Interlude: temple and two witnesses (11:1-13)
- D. Trumpet #7 sounded (11:14-19)

IV. War of the Dragon (chs. 12-14)

- A. Dragon pursues woman and her children (ch. 12)
- B. Dragon summons two beasts to help (ch. 13)
- C. Heavenly response: securing and “reaping” (ch. 14)

V. Seven Bowls (chs. 15-16)

- A. Glory in the temple (ch. 15)
- B. Bowls #1-7 poured (ch. 16)

VI. Babylon the Harlot (chs. 17-19)

- A. Her downfall (chs. 17-18)
- B. Her alternative: a pure Bride for the Lamb (19:1-10)
- C. Her allies defeated by a white-horse Warrior (19:11-21)

VII. All Things New (20:1 – 22:5)

- A. Satan restrained, released, destroyed (20:1-10)
- B. Great white throne judgment (20:11-15)
- C. New heavens, new earth, new Jerusalem (21:1 – 22:5)

Conclusion: The time is near, the book is true (22:6-21)

Four Interpretive Approaches to Revelation

PRETERIST

Revelation concerns earthly events prior to the fall of Jerusalem (in AD 70).
mainly held by postmillennialists who prefer to confine turmoil to the distant past
problems: limits scope and applicability of the book; requires early authorship

HISTORICIST

Revelation concerns earthly events of the whole church age.
held by most Reformers; e.g., “the Pope is the Beast” or “bowl #1 is bubonic plague”
problem: identifications are subjective, unprovable, and change as history continues

FUTURIST

Revelation concerns earthly events leading up to the Second Coming.
one of two ancient views; also, the default view of almost all American evangelicals
problem: tries to read apocalyptic literature “literally” (i.e., as if it were history)

SPIRITUAL

Revelation concerns spiritual realities behind the whole church age.
 These realities are described multiple times, using symbols taken from OT prophets.
advocated in antiquity by Augustine, popularized today by William Hendriksen
AKA “Idealist” or “Symbolic” interpretation, or Progressive Parallelism