



# Intro to Revelation.

# Revelation

---

- Written around 95-96 AD
- On the Island of Patmos.
- John and Daniel were “Beloved”.
- Unique in that it gives us an outline. Rev 1:19
- There is also a blessing and a curse within. Rev 1:3, 22:18-19





# Revelation

- Most misunderstood Book.
- The most avoided Book
- The most popular Book
- The Book of Revelation contains numerous references to other parts of the Bible, especially the Old Testament. Some key references include:



- Daniel:** Many apocalyptic visions and symbols in Revelation are similar to those in the Book of Daniel, such as the beasts and the Son of Man.
- Ezekiel:** The imagery of the New Jerusalem, the Temple, and the living creatures are reminiscent of Ezekiel's visions.
- Isaiah:** Themes of a new heaven and a new earth, as well as the final judgment, echo passages from Isaiah.
- Zechariah:** References to the two witnesses, the lampstands, and the olive trees are found in Zechariah.
- Psalms:** Various psalms are alluded to, particularly in the hymns and prayers of Revelation.
- Exodus:** The plagues described in Revelation mirror the plagues of Egypt.
- Genesis:** The imagery of the tree of life and the serpent refer back to the Garden of Eden.





- Of the 404 verses in the book of Revelation, seemingly **278** of them make some allusion to the Old Testament. That is **68.8%** of the verses! And some of these verses contain two, or even three, allusions to the Old Testament.

- Because of this, some teachers believe the book of Revelation is a great starting point for a new believer.



•Throughout church history, there have been four different views regarding the book of Revelation:

- idealist,
- preterist,
- historicist,
- and futurist.

•Each view attempts to interpret Revelation according to the laws of hermeneutics, the art and science of interpretation. This is central to the debate about how we should approach and interpret Revelation.





- The Idealist View
- The first view of Revelation is the idealist view, or the spiritual view. This view uses the allegorical method to interpret the Book of Revelation. The allegorical approach to Revelation was introduced by ancient church father Origen (AD 185-254) and made prominent by Augustine (AD 354-420). According to this view, the events of Revelation are not tied to specific historical events. The imagery of the book symbolically presents the ongoing struggle throughout the ages of God against Satan and good against evil.



- The Preterist View
- The second view is called the preterist view.
- *Preter*, which means “past,” is derived from the Latin. There are two major views among preterists: full preterism and partial preterism. Both views believe that the prophecies of the Olivet discourse of Matthew 24 and Revelation were fulfilled in the first century with the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70.





- The Preterist View
- The second view is called the preterist view.
- *Preter*, which means “past,” is derived from the Latin. There are two major views among preterists: full preterism and partial preterism. Both views believe that the prophecies of the Olivet discourse of Matthew 24 and Revelation were fulfilled in the first century with the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70.
- Another example of allegorical interpretation by preterists is their interpretation of Revelation 7:4. John identifies a special group of prophets: the 144,000 from the “tribes of Israel.” Preterist Hanegraaff states that this group represents the true bride of Christ and is referred to in Rev. 7:9 as the “great multitude that no one could count from every nation, tribe, people, and language.” In other words, the 144,000 in verse 4, and the great multitude in verse 9 are the same people.



- The Historicist View
- The third view is called the historicist approach. This view teaches that Revelation is a symbolic representation that presents the course of history from the apostle's life through the end of the age. The symbols in the apocalypse correspond to events in the history of Western Europe, including various popes, the Protestant Reformation, the French Revolution, and rulers such as Charlemagne. Most interpreters place the events of their day in the later chapters of Revelation.





- The Futurist View
- The fourth view is the futurist view. This view teaches that the events of the Olivet Discourse and Revelation chapters 4-22 will occur in the future. Futurist divide the book of Revelation into three sections as indicated in 1:19: “what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later.” Chapter 1 describes the past (“what you have seen”), chapters 2-3 describe the present (“what is now”), and the rest of the book describes future events (“what will take place later”).



- The Futurist View

- The literalist (so called) is not one who denies that figurative language, that symbols, are used in prophecy, nor does he deny that great spiritual truths are set forth therein; his position is, simply, that the prophecies are to be normally interpreted





# The Literary Genre of Revelation

- Epistolary Genre
- “John to the seven churches that are in Asia.” This line indicates that John is writing a circular letter to seven different congregations. The average Christian is familiar with this type of literature since the New Testament contains several examples.



# The Literary Genre of Revelation

- Epistolary Genre
- “John to the seven churches that are in Asia.” This line indicates that John is writing a circular letter to seven different congregations. The average Christian is familiar with this type of literature since the New Testament contains several examples.





# The Literary Genre of Revelation

- Prophetic Genre
- John says in Revelation 1:3, “Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy.” The prophecy designation is also used in 22:7, 10, 18-19.
- Prophecy, of course, is a word from the Lord. It is generally meant to announce judgment on the wicked and offer hope for the righteous.



# The Literary Genre of Revelation

- Apocalyptic Genre
- Finally, and most prevalent, Revelation is apocalyptic literature. The very word “revelation” comes from the Greek word, “apocalypsis.” Standard definitions of apocalyptic literature note that it includes an unveiling of a transcendent reality intended to provide a heavenly perspective of what is taking place on earth all the while mediated through an otherworldly being to a human recipient





- Common features of apocalyptic literature include:
- historical dualism (good vs. evil), visions,
- pseudonymity, Fake name for a real name
- numerology (numbers are symbolic),
- angelology,
- demonology, and
- predictive woes.<sup>3</sup>
- Apocalyptic literature is in the Old Testament (Daniel, Zechariah, and Ezekiel), in the Olivet discourse (Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21), as well as in non-canonical Jewish books (1 Enoch, 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, and the Apocalypse of Abraham). That is to say, while we may not be familiar with this genre, it was quite common in the ancient world.



- 1. Recognize the Symbolic Imagery
- This point is obvious. Yet all too often, readers miss that almost all of Revelation is symbolic. Numbers, colors, institutions, and places all carry metaphorical meanings





- John uses the number seven (the number of completeness)
- fifty-five times throughout the book.
- The name “Christ” occurs seven times.
- “Jesus” and “Spirit” both occur fourteen times (7 x 2),
- “Lamb” occurs twenty-eight times (7 x 4).
- Seven times God is referred to as “the Alpha and Omega,” “the first and the last,” or the “beginning and the end.”
- Seven times the Lord is called, “The Almighty.”
- Seven times he is called “The one who sits on the throne.” The book contains seven “beatitudes.”



- Fun with 7
- 7 is symbolically *complete*, then 6 is symbolically *incomplete*, insufficient, and therefore unholy. Then 666 is symbolically “triple incomplete” or “divinely incomplete” or “diabolical.”
- 6 man...
- There are 23 instances of 7... things... in *Revelation*





- **Twenty-Three Sevens**
- **Seven Churches**
- **Seven Letters**
- **Seven Spirits**
  - in *Revelation*, angels are always actual heavenly beings, so I think John probably really meant angels. He seems to suggest that each church has a heavenly overseer or protector



- **Seven Golden Lampstands**
- **Seven Stars**
- **Seven Seals**
- **Seven Horns of the Lamb**
- **Seven Eyes of the Lamb**
- **Seven Angels with Trumpets**
- **Seven Trumpets**
- **Seven Thunders**
- **Seven Thousand Killed**
- **Seven Heads of the Dragon**
- **Seven Crowns of the Dragon**
- **Seven Heads of the First Beast**
- **Seven Plagues**
- **Seven Angels with Plagues**
- **Seven Angels of Wrath**





- **Seven Golden Bowls of Wrath**
- **Seven Mountains**
- **Seven Kings**
- **Seven Beatitudes**
- **Seven Doxologies**
  - **Songs of praise**



## **Outline of the Book of Revelation**

### **I. Introduction to the book of Revelation (1:1-20)**

A) Prologue (1:1-3)

B) Epistolary introduction (1:4-8)

C) Vision of the glorified Jesus and introduction to the 7 letters to the churches (1:9-20)

### **II. The 7 letters to the 7 churches (2:1-3:22)**

A) Ephesus (2:1-7)

B) Smyrna (2:8-11)

C) Pergamum (2:12-17)

D) Thyatira (2:18-29)

C') Sardis (3:1-6)

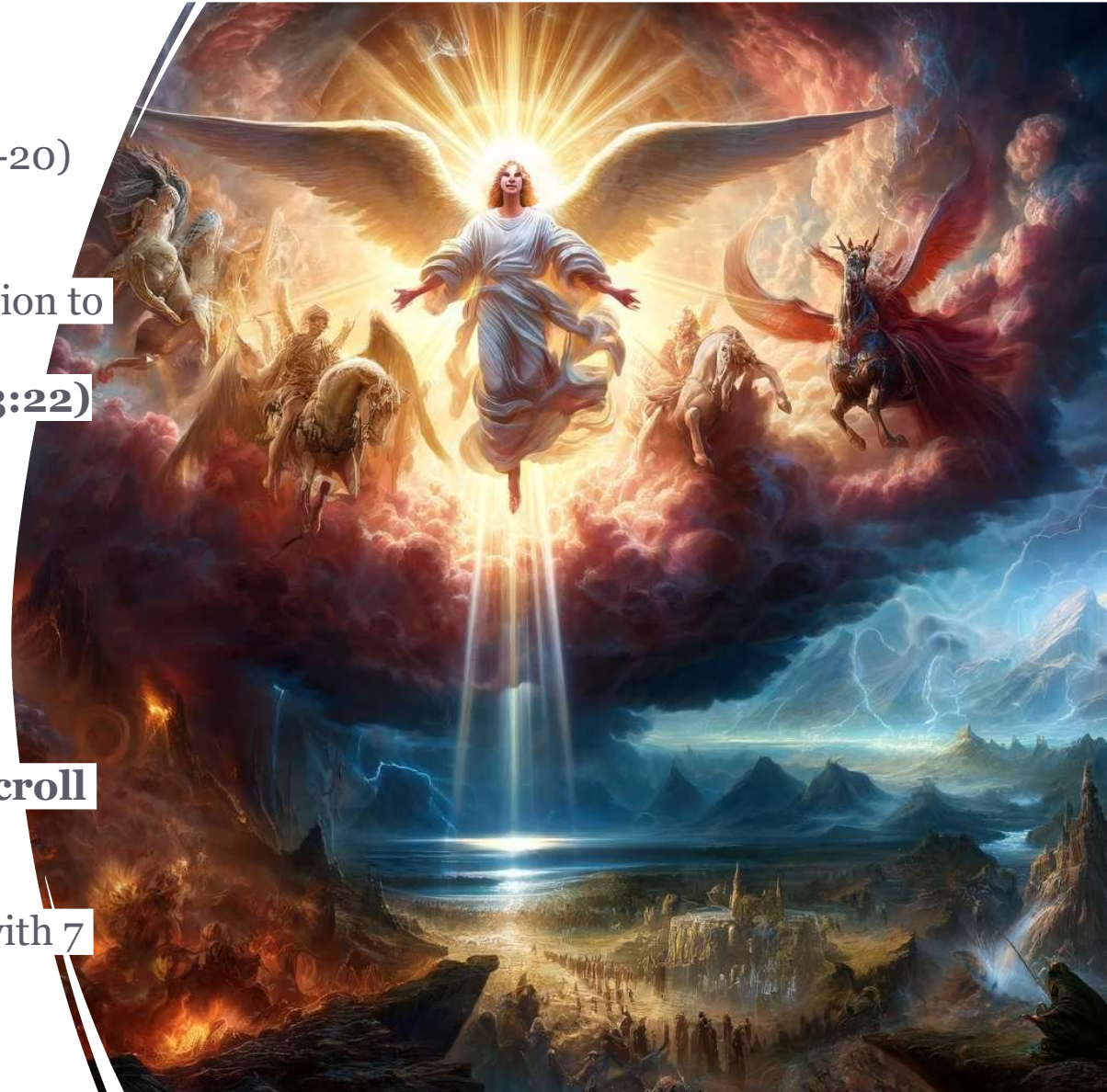
B') Philadelphia (3:7-13)

A') Laodicea (3:14-22)

### **III. Vision of God, the Lamb, and the scroll with 7 seals (4:1-5:14)**

A) The One who sits on the throne (4:1-11)

B) The Lamb and introduction of the scroll with 7 seals (5:1-14)





IV. Opening of the 6 seals (6:1-17)

**V. Interlude 1: The sealing of the people of God and a vision of the people of the New Jerusalem (7:1-17)**

A) Sealing of the people of God, the 144,000 (7:1-8)

B) Vision of the people of the New Jerusalem (7:9-17)

**VI. The 7<sup>th</sup> seal and the first 6 trumpets (8:1-9:21)**

A) The 7<sup>th</sup> seal (8:1-5)

1) The introduction of the 7 trumpets (8:2)

2) The 7<sup>th</sup> judgment (8:3-5)

B) The first 6 trumpets (8:6-9:21)

**VII. Interlude 2: John's call to prophesy and the 2 prophetic witnesses (10:1-11:13)**

A) John called to prophesy "again" (10:1-11)

B) The story of the 2 prophetic witnesses (11:1-13)

**VIII. The 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet, part 1 (11:14-19)**



**XI. Interlude 3: The unholy trinity, the 144,000 on Mount Zion, and the coming judgment (12:1-14:20)**

A) The unholy trinity: the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet (12:1-13:18)

B) Preview of the coming of judgment and salvation (14:1-20)

1) The victorious people of the Lamb on Mount Zion (14:1-5)

(14:1-5)

2) Judgment for Babylon and the people of the Beast (14:6-11)

(14:6-11)

3) Salvation for the people of the Lamb (14:12-16)

4) The coming wrath of God (14:17-20)

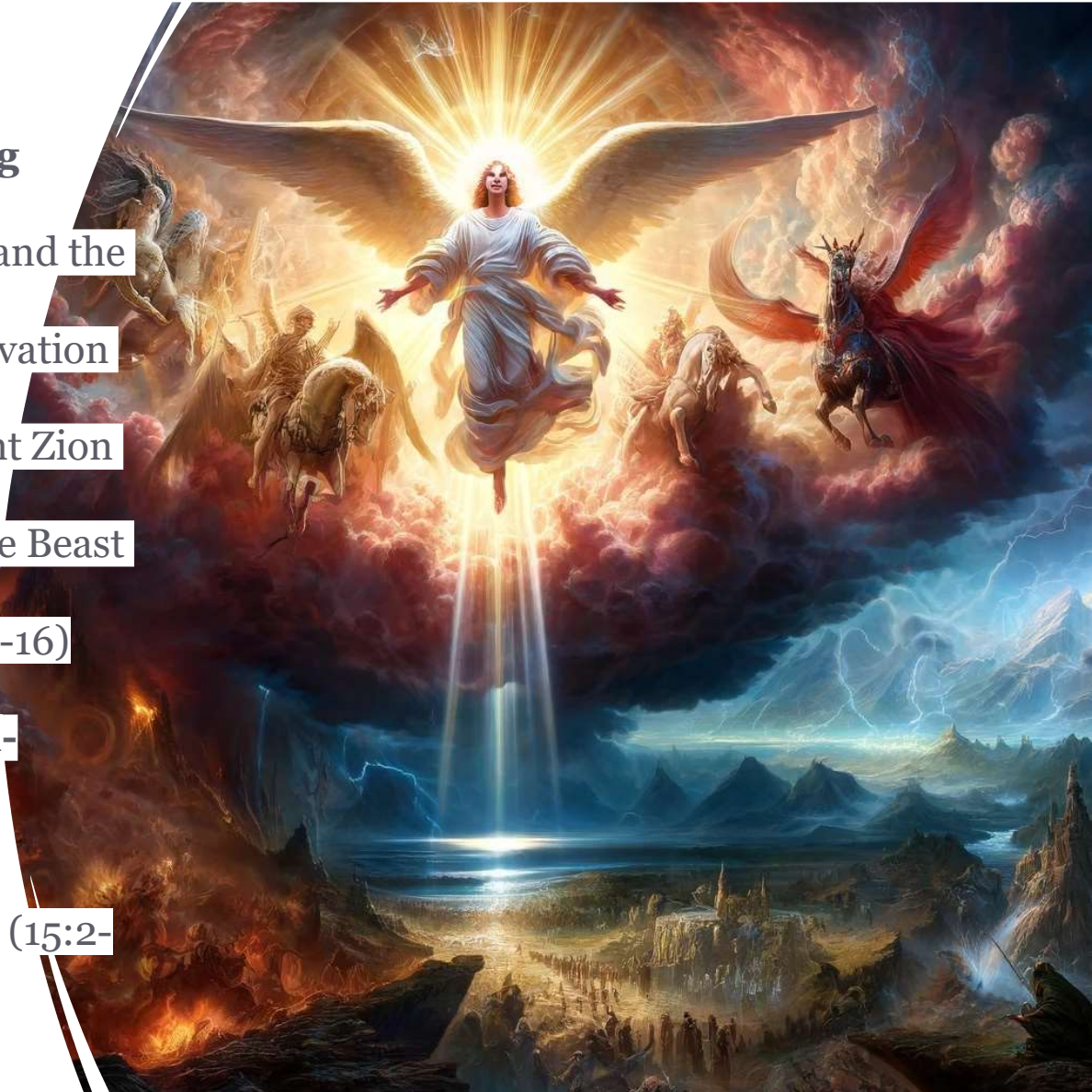
**X. The 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet and the 7 bowls (15:1-16:21)**

A) The 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet, part 2

1) The angels with 7 bowls (15:1, 5-8)

2) Vision of the victorious people of the Lamb (15:2-4)

4)  
B) The judgments of the 7 bowls (16:1-21)





## **XI. Babylon the Harlot and her judgment**

### **(17:1-19:4)**

A) Portrait of the Harlot (17:1-6)

B) Interpretation of the Beast's 7 heads and 10 horns  
(17:7-18)

C) Extended portrait of the Harlot's destruction  
(18:1-19:4)

## **XII. The coming of the Lamb for judgment and salvation (19:5-21)**

A) The introduction of the bride of the Lamb (19:5-10)

B) The Christ comes to judge the Beast and his  
armies (19:11-19)

C) The judgment of the Beast and the False Prophet  
(19:20)

D) The judgment of the Beast's armies (19:21)



**XIII. The millennium and the final judgment of the people of the Devil's kingdom (20:1-15)**

A) The millennium (20:1-10)

1) The binding of the Devil for 1,000 years (20:1-3)

2) The reign of the saints (20:4-6)

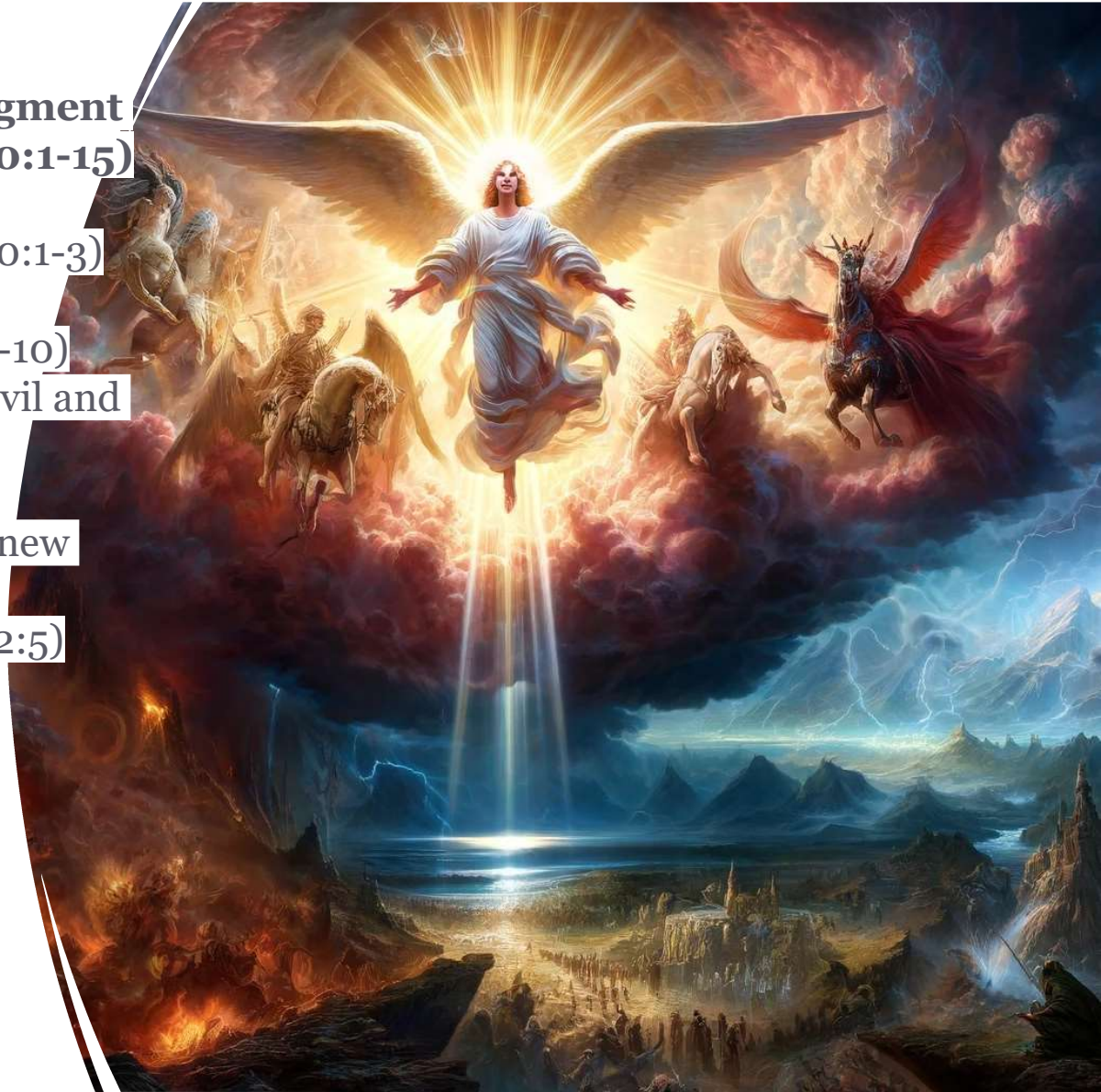
3) The release and final defeat of Satan (20:7-10)

B) The final judgment of the people of the Devil and the lake of fire (20:11-15)

**XIV. The New Jerusalem (21:1-22:5)**

A) Introduction to the New Jerusalem of the new creation (21:1-8)

B) Description of the New Jerusalem (21:9-22:5)





- In Revelation 4-16, the structure of the book appears to revolve around three series of seven plagues,
- the seals,
- the trumpets
- and the bowls. However
- three interludes in the book.
- The first interlude follows the sixth seal (Rev. 7).
- The second interlude follows the sixth trumpet (Rev. 10:1-11:13)
- The third interlude (Rev. 12-14) follows the first part of the seventh trumpet (Rev. 11:14-19).[\[3\]](#)



- The first interlude introduces the sealed people of God (7:1-8) and then launches into a vision of the people of God in the New Jerusalem, before God's throne (7:9-17).
- The second and third interludes reveal aspects of the conflict between the two kingdoms, that is, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the Dragon.
- The third interlude is very significant for the theology of the entire book.





# Figure 1: Structure of the 21 Plagues

*Note: Progression of time from the cross to the time of the second coming.*

