

A Brief Overview of the Chapters in the Book

To properly understand the order of the chapters in the book of Revelation, we must recognize the presence of *five* parentheses. When these are taken into consideration, the book will be seen as an orderly thesis on prophetic events.

Chapters 1-3 view the Church on earth. The “**seven churches**” present a prophetic history of the public testimony of the Church on earth. The churches represent various stages in history through which the Church at large has passed—from the days immediately after the apostles through to the Lord’s coming—the Rapture. Chapters 4-5 are parenthetical and view the Old and New Testament saints glorified in heaven, celebrating Christ’s two-fold right to publicly reign in the kingdom—creatorial and redemptive. Chapter 6 resumes the unfolding of events on earth in regard to Israel and the Gentile nations.

God has purposed to use this world as His place to display the glory of Christ in “**the world to come**”—the Millennium (Eph. 1:21; Heb. 2:5). But it must first be cleansed of defilement and wickedness through judgment. All evil (men and things) must be expunged from the earth to make way for Christ’s reign in righteousness (Isa. 32:1; Zech. 14:9). Since God holds the various parts of the earth responsible for the degree of light each has had, in chapters 6-16 the Lord takes up these spheres separately and judges them accordingly. In these chapters the Spirit of God goes over the coming prophetic week of seven years in Daniel’s prophecy (Dan. 9:24-27) *three* times, in relation to the *three* great spheres of human responsibility—each ending with events surrounding the Appearing of Christ.

In chapters 6:1–11:18 the Spirit of God goes over the prophetic week in connection with the Christianized nations of the prophetic earth. These nations have had the greatest exposure to the truth, and are the most responsible. Therefore, the Lord’s judgments begin with them (1 Peter 4:17), as seen in the Seal-judgments and the Trumpet-judgments. Chapter 7 and chapters 10-11:14 are two more parentheses. This section ends with the Appearing of Christ (chap. 11:15-18).

In chapters 12-14 the Spirit of God takes us through the coming prophetic week again, but this time in connection with Israel. This section begins at the time of the Lord’s life on earth, and then hops over the Church period and the first half of the prophetic week. It picks up prophecy again at the middle of the week and proceeds to the Appearing of Christ, when the Lord will execute the

Harvest judgment (chap. 14:14-16). It actually extends a little beyond the Appearing of Christ to the Winepress judgment (chap. 14:17-20).

In chapters 15-16 the Spirit of God goes over the coming prophetic week a third time in connection with the nations outlying the prophetic earth. It begins at the middle of the prophetic week with judgments falling on the prophetic earth, but not confined to it. This is seen in the absence of the expression “**the third part,**” mentioned 12 times in chapter 8. Hence, the judgments that fall through these Vial [Bowl] judgments include the nations outside the prophetic earth. Chapter 16:15 is the fourth parenthesis declaring the Appearing of Christ. This section ends with the judgment that Christ executes at His coming. (chap. 16:15-21).

Then, after a final parenthesis in chapters 17–19:10 wherein the subject of Babylon (ecclesiastical and political) is taken up in detail, the subject of Christ’s Appearing is resumed in chapter 19:11-21—which is where the preceding sections have left off.

Then, after Christ has appeared in power and glory, chapters 20:1–21:8 presents the Millennium, and is followed by the Eternal State, when time ceases to exist.

Chapter 21:9–22:5 is an appendix giving further details as to the Church being used to glorify Christ in the administration of His Millennial kingdom.

Then lastly, chapter 22:6-21 gives the Lord’s closing exhortations and a three-fold promise of His coming.

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From this brief overview of the chapters, we can see that the book of Revelation is really a very orderly thesis on prophetic events. The fact that the Spirit of God takes the reader over the prophetic week of Daniel *three* times from *three* different perspectives is very much in keeping with His way of presenting prophecy elsewhere in the Bible. Whether it is in the Psalms or the Prophets, the Spirit goes over that ground again and again—each time ending up at the Appearing of Christ and the introduction to His kingdom (the Millennium). It is therefore, no surprise to the prophetic student to see this same order observed in the book of Revelation.

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# The Book of REVELATION

*A Chart Outlining the Order  
of the Chapters*

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# THE BOOK OF REVELATION

