



PANORAMA PLUS

MOVEMENT 12:
THE FINAL CONSUMMATION

name

phone / email

OUTLINE

Session 1: The Vision/The Seven Churches	4
Session 2: The Throne Scene	17
Session 3: Tribulation—Part One	31
Session 4: Tribulation—Part Two	45
Session 5: Tribulation—Part Three	57
Session 6: Second Coming—Ages to Come	71
Appendix A	88
Appendix B	89

NOTE TO THE STUDENT!

This material is structured in outline form, yet it is complete enough that the student can gain maximum benefit from the lectures if the material is read beforehand. There is much to cover; the best learning experience combines the student's reading(s) and the lecture overview.

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BiLD Training Center

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PREFACE

Panorama of the Bible is a twelve-session broad overview of the flow of Biblical history from Genesis to Revelation. The unifying thread is the Panorama Timeline which links key people, places, events, and dates chronologically in 12 movements.

The **Panorama Plus** series is built upon the 12 movements of Panorama. Each distinct movement is expanded in six additional sessions to take the student deeper into the flow of the Bible.

This study, Panorama Plus 12, is the final, closing **Plus** expansion. Thus, Panorama with its 12 sessions along with the 12 **Plus** studies totals 84 sessions in the Panorama approach to an overview of the whole of Scripture.

May the study be helpful to the student and honoring to the Lord.

Robert V. Cupp
BiLD Training Center
Winter 2018

PANORAMA: TWELVE MOVEMENTS	
<u>Movement</u>	<u>Biblical Books</u>
#1 Prologue	Genesis 1-11
#2 Patriarchs	Genesis 12-50; Job
#3 Redemption and Wanderings	Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
#4 Conquest	Joshua
#5 Apostasy	Judges, Ruth
#6 Kingship: United Monarchy	1-2 Samuel; 1 Kings 1-11 (Pss., Prov., Eccl., Song of Solomon)
#7 Kingship: Divided Monarchy	1 Kings 12-22; 2 Kings (Prophets - selected)
#8 Exile	Daniel, Ezekiel (Jeremiah)
#9 Return from Exile and 400 Silent Years	Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther (Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi)
#10 Life of Christ	Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
#11 Church Age	Acts and Epistles
#12 Final Consummation	Revelation (Daniel)

SESSION 1

(The Vision/The Seven Churches—Revelation 1-3)

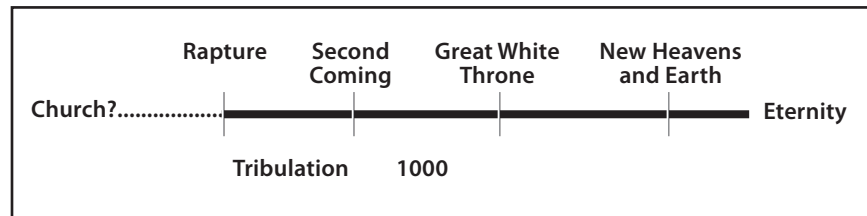
I. PRAYER/PURPOSE

II. TWELVE MOVEMENTS OF “PANORAMA”

- A. Listed: See chart, page 3
- B. Biblical Structure
 - 1. Movements #1-9 Old Testament/
400 Silent Years
 - 2. Movements #10-12 New Testament

III. MOVEMENT #12: TIMELINE

- A. Pre-Tribulational, Pre-Millennial Approach



- B. Other Approaches: See Appendix A, page 88.

IV. APPROACHES (GLASSES TO SEE) TO “REVELATION”

- A. Preterist (PAST): all prophecies fulfilled in the early history of the church.
- B. Historical (PRESENT): prophecies give a broad overview of church history to the Second Coming.
- C. Idealist (TIMELESS): symbolism and other prophetic imagery illustrate struggles and conflicts throughout the church age.
- ** D. Futurist (FUTURE): prophecies of Revelation 4-22 are yet unfulfilled and are literal, future certainties.

****N.B.** This study will follow the “Futurist” approach to the interpretation of Revelation. While acknowledging that outstanding scholars and Bible teachers disagree (with this study and with each other!), this will be the “set of glasses” (approach) that will be followed.

V. BIBLICAL CHARTS OF REVELATION

A. Outline of “Revelation”

REVELATION		
Outline: “Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later.” (Rev. 1:19 NIV 84)		
Chapter 1	Chapters 2-3	Chapters 4-22
“what you have seen”	“what is now”	“what will take place later”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salutation (prologue/greeting) • Vision (“have seen”) • Outline (1:19) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 Letters to 7 Churches (historical) (representative) (prophetic?) 	Throne Scene 4 5
		Tribulation 6 19
		Second Coming & Millennium 19 20
		Eternal State 21 22

B. Topical/Chapter Chart (Pre-millennial view)

CHAPTER TOPICS OF REVELATION					
<i>Events</i>	<i>Church Age</i>	<i>Tribulation</i>	<i>Millennium</i>	<i>Judgment: Great White Throne</i>	<i>Eternal State</i>
In Heaven	1	4-5	19-20	20	21-22
On Earth	2-3	6-19	20		

* Taken from Ryrie ESV Study Bible, 1549

VI. BIBLICAL DEVELOPMENT: REVELATION 1

("What You Have Seen" – 1:19)

A. Salutation (1:1-8)

1. Prologue (1-3)

Revelation 1:1-3

*The **revelation** from **Jesus Christ**, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant **John**,² who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.³ **Blessed** is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and **blessed** are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.*

- a. The Biblical word *revelation* means "unveiling" or "disclosure." Something that has been hidden or unknown is revealed. In this book, prophetic events will be unveiled; more so, there is a significant "uncovering" (revealing) of Jesus in His resplendent glory, in His lordship over the churches, in His coming and establishing of His Millennial Kingdom.
- b. "John" (1) is the recipient of this prophetic disclosure. As author, he identifies himself four times in the text (1:1,4,9; 22:8). Early Christian tradition names John as the author of the gospel, brother of James, and a part of the Twelve. Conservative scholars date the writing around 95 AD prior to the death of Emperor Domitian (d. 96 AD).
- c. "Blessed" (3) is pronounced upon those who would carefully read this prophecy.
 - "Read" to know truth
 - "Hear" to understand truth
 - "Take to heart" to obey truth

2. Greeting (4-8)

Revelation 1:4-6

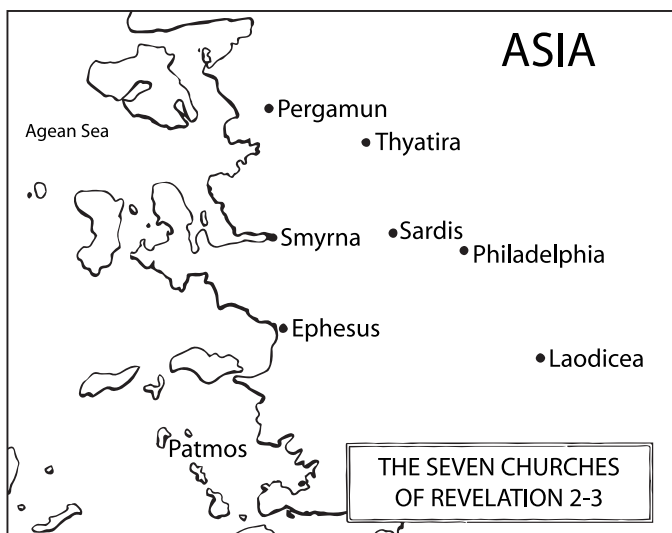
John,

To the seven churches in the province of Asia:

Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his

throne,⁵ and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood,⁶ and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

- a. Human Author: John
- b. Addressees: Seven churches in the province of Asia



- c. Greeting: "Grace and peace"
- d. Divine Author: Trinitarian
 - Father: "him who is, and who was, and who is to come" (4)
 - Son: "from Jesus Christ" (5)
 - Holy Spirit: "the seven spirits" (4)
- e. Doxology: see verses 5^b-6
 Note in particular what causes the outbreak of praise in the doxology:
 - (Jesus) "loves us"
 - (Jesus) "freed us from our sins"
 - (Jesus) "made us to be a kingdom and priests"
 Therefore, "to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen."

f. Theme of Book of Revelation:

Revelation 1:7

"Look, he is coming with the clouds," and "every eye will see him, even those who pierced him"; and all peoples on earth "will mourn because of him." So shall it be! Amen.

g. Affirmation:

Revelation 1:8

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

B. Vision (1:9-18)

1. The command to write the vision (9-11)

Revelation 1:10-11

On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, ¹¹ which said: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea."

- a. The writer: John (9)
 - b. The location: Island of Patmos (9)
 - c. The day: "the Lord's day" (10)
 - d. The condition of the writer: "in the Spirit" (10)
 - e. The command: "write on a scroll" (11)
 - f. The recipients: "the seven churches" (11)
- (See previous map, page 7)

2. The one giving the command to write (12-16)

The speaker was described as:

- a. Among the "seven golden lampstands" (12)
- b. "Like a son of man" (13)
- c. "Dressed in a robe...golden sash around his chest" (13)
- d. Head and hair "white like wool" (14)
- e. Eyes "like blazing fire" (14)
- f. Feet "like bronze" (15)
- g. Voice "like...rushing waters" (15)
- h. Hands holding "seven stars" (16)
- i. Mouth came "sharp double-edged sword" (16)
- j. Face "like the sun shining" (16)

3. The renewed command to write the vision (17-18)
Revelation 1:17-18

When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

C. The Outline of the Book of Revelation (1:19-20)

Revelation 1:19

Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later.

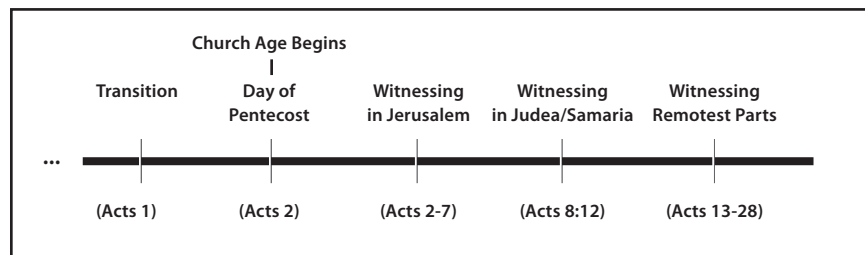
1. "What you have seen": historical personal moment (1st Century)
2. "What is now": historical period (late 1st Century)
3. "What will take place later": future prophetic day

VII. BIBLICAL DEVELOPMENT: REVELATION 2-3

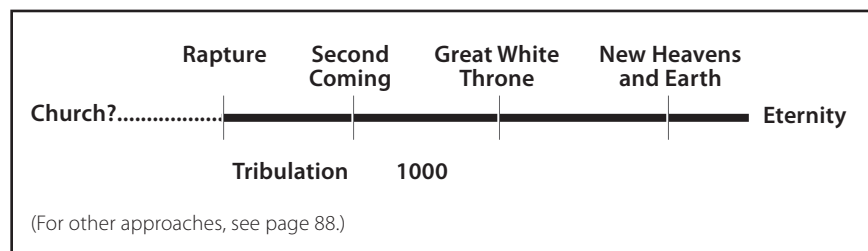
("What is Now"—1:19)

A. Panorama Timeline: Context

1. Movement #11: Church Age



2. Movement #12: Final Consummation
(Pre-tribulational, Pre-millennial)



3. Observations:
 - a. The "Church Age" began in Acts 2 and has continued to the present.
 - b. The "Final Consummation" acknowledges that the time of the end of the "Church Age" is an uncertain, future date.
 - c. The final Movement #12 begins with the Rapture of the Church; this event precedes the Tribulation described in Revelation 6-19.

B. Seven Churches: Overview

1. Located (map taken from Constable, *Notes*, 19)



N.B. Beginning with Ephesus, follow the generally clockwise movement from church to church.

2. Significance
 - a. Historical: all of the seven churches actually existed and were for the most part in well-known cities along major Roman roads. Each church likely had some connection with the Apostle John. All of the churches are evaluated by Christ by a common template (see later comments).
 - b. Representative: all of the churches of Revelation 2-3 are instructive for all churches both then and now. What Christ would commend then, He would commend today. What He would condemn then,

He would condemn today. Thus, churches of all ages could learn much from these seven.

c. Prophetic: some interpreters see the seven churches as representing “seven ages” of church history. For example, Fruchtenbaum suggests the following:

- Ephesus (30-100 AD): Apostolic Church
- Smyrna (100-313 AD): Roman Persecution
- Pergamum (313-600 AD): Age of Constantine
- Thyatira (600-1517 AD): Dark Ages
- Sardis (1517-1648 AD): Reformation
- Philadelphia (1648-1900 AD): Missionary Movement
- Laodicea (1900 A.D. – present): Apostasy

While some pre-millennial interpreters adopt some version of this view, it is speculation at best.

3. Observations

- a. These church addresses (messages) are brief and do not follow the strict epistolary form of other New Testament (NT) letters (e.g., Pauline and others).
- b. “Churches 1 and 7 are in grave danger; churches 2 and 6 are in excellent shape; churches 3, 4 and 5 are middling, never very good or very bad.”

(Constable quoting L. Morris, 25)

- c. The seven church messages follow a common pattern:
 - Church (specific church identified...e.g., Ephesus)
 - Christ (described uniquely)
 - Commendation (good news, if any)
 - Condemnation (bad news, if any)
 - Charge (exhortation to action)
 - Challenge (to hear, respond appropriately)

4. Analysis: basic messages to the seven churches (broad topic, theme, and applicational questions)

Insight:

The chart which immediately follows summarizes in broad strokes and with personal application the major teaching theme of each of the seven churches.

The second chart provides an analytical, structural overview of each church's message in a more detailed fashion. To understand Revelation 2-3, both charts should be studied and compared (in light of the Biblical text).

THE SEVEN LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES			
Church	Topic	Theme	Key Question (Church Family, Personal Family, Personal Life)
Ephesus	A church that SLIDES	Leaving our first love	Is Christ central in my life?
Smyrna	A church that SUFFERS	Suffering for our faith	Would I be faithful...even to the point of death?
Pergamum	A church that STRAYS	Struggling to understand	Do I know the basics of the Christian faith?
Thyatira	A church that SINS	Tolerating false teachings and false morality	Am I pure in my faith and conduct?
Sardis	A church that SLEEPS	Living on the glory of the past	Is my faith fresh? Current? Awake and alive?
Philadelphia	A church that SEIZES the opportunity	Taking advantage of the open door of ministry opportunity	Do I have a sense of spiritual urgency?
Laodicea	A church that STAGNATES	Staying lukewarm in the Kingdom battle for the souls of men	Am I open, useful, and available for God's use?

C. Seven Churches: Charted by Pattern
(Biblical descriptions based on NIV 84)

1. Ephesus (2:1-7)

CHURCH (Text)	CHRIST (Description)	COMMENDATION (Good News)	CONDEMNATION (Bad News)	CHARGE (Exhortation)	CHALLENGE (Promise)	CONTEMPLATION (Application)
EPHESUS 2:1-7	"holds the seven stars" "walks among the seven golden lampstands"	"Know...deeds, hard work, perseverance" "Know...cannot tolerate wicked men, tested those (apostles)..." "Persevered, endured hardship, not grown weary" "Hate the practice of the Nicolaitans"	"Forsaken your first love"	"Remember" "Repent" "Re-do"	"ear...hear" (overcomer)... "eat from tree of life"	

2. Smyrna (2:8-11)

CHURCH (Text)	CHRIST (Description)	COMMENDATION (Good News)	CONDEMNATION (Bad News)	CHARGE (Exhortation)	CHALLENGE (Promise)	CONTEMPLATION (Application)
SMYRNA 2:8-11	"the First and the Last, who died and came to life again."	"Know...afflictions, poverty" "Know...slander (against you)"	(NONE)	"Do not be afraid...(suffering)" "Be faithful... (to death)"	"ear...hear" (overcomer)... "not be hurt... by the second death"	

3. Pergamum (2:12-17)

CHURCH (Text)	CHRIST (Description)	COMMENDATION (Good News)	CONDEMNATION (Bad News)	CHARGE (Exhortation)	CHALLENGE (Promise)	CONTEMPLATION (Application)
PERGAMUM 2:12-17	"who has the sharp, double-edged sword"	"Know...where you live..." "Yet you remain true to my name" "You did not renounce your faith"	(Some)"...the teaching of Balaam" (Some)"...the teaching of the Nicolaitans"	"Repent therefore!" "Otherwise... (judgment)"	"ear...hear" (overcomer)... "hidden manna (and) a white stone"	

4. Thyatira (2:18-29)

CHURCH (Text)	CHRIST (Description)	COMMENDATION (Good News)	CONDEMNATION (Bad News)	CHARGE (Exhortation)	CHALLENGE (Promise)	CONTEMPLATION (Application)
THYATIRA 2:18-29	"the Son of God, whose eyes... blazing fire and whose feet... burnished bronze"	"Know...deeds, love and faith, service and perseverance" (Know)... "now doing more than you did"	"You tolerate that woman, Jezebel" "prophetess" (teaching) "sexual immorality" "eating of food (idols)" "unwilling" (to repent)	(Faithful)... "hold on to what you have"	(overcomer)... "authority over the nations" (and) "the morning star" "ear ... hear"	

5. Sardis (3:1-6)

CHURCH (Text)	CHRIST (Description)	COMMENDATION (Good News)	CONDEMNATION (Bad News)	CHARGE (Exhortation)	CHALLENGE (Promise)	CONTEMPLATION (Application)
SARDIS 3:1-6	"holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars"	(Few)... "not soiled their clothes"	"Know...deeds (INCOMPLETE)" "Know...reputation of being alive (BUT...DEAD)"	"Wake up!" "Remember" "Obey" "Repent"	(overcomer)... "dressed in white" "book of life" "ear...hear"	

6. Philadelphia (3:7-13)

CHURCH (Text)	CHRIST (Description)	COMMENDATION (Good News)	CONDEMNATION (Bad News)	CHARGE (Exhortation)	CHALLENGE (Promise)	CONTEMPLATION (Application)
PHILADELPHIA 3:7-13	"who is holy and true, who holds the key of David"	"Know...deeds (open door)" "Know... little strength" "Know... kept my word." "Know...not denied my name"	(NONE)	"Hold on to what you have"	(overcomer)... "pillar in the temple" "will write on him" (three names) "ear...hear"	

7. Laodicea (3:14-22)

CHURCH (Text)	CHRIST (Description)	COMMENDATION (Good News)	CONDEMNATION (Bad News)	CHARGE (Exhortation)	CHALLENGE (Promise)	CONTEMPLATION (Application)
LAODICEA 3:14-2	"the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation"	(NONE)	"Know...deeds (lukewarm)" (Rich?)..."wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, naked"	"Buy from me"... "gold" "white clothes" "salve" "Be earnest, and repent"	(overcomer)... "sit with [Christ on his] throne" "ear...hear"	

VIII. RECAP

A. Approach

Scholars differ as to the presuppositional glasses they wear to interpret Revelation. This study uses the "Futurist" approach based upon consistent use of the litero-grammatico-historical interpretive method.

B. Centerpiece

The Book of Revelation centers upon the Lord of History as the central character and unifying thread. Jesus Christ is the exalted head of the Church and sovereign over all human history, past and future.

C. Churches

The "Seven Churches" of the Book of Revelation were 1st century historical churches as well as representative churches for all of the Church Age. Lessons for then can be applied as lessons for today.

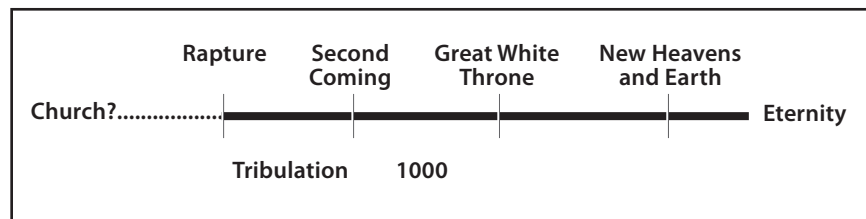
SESSION 2

(The Throne Scene—Revelation 4-5)

I. PRAYER/PREVIEW

II. PANORAMA MOVEMENT #12: TIMELINE

(Pre-millennial, Pre-tribulational Approach)



III. BOOK OF REVELATION

A. Broad Overview Chart

REVELATION		
Outline: "Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later." (Rev. 1:19 NIV 84)		
Chapter 1	Chapters 2-3	Chapters 4-22
"what you have seen"	"what is now"	"what will take place later"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salutation (prologue/greeting) • Vision ("have seen") • Outline (1:19) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 Letters to 7 Churches (historical) (representative) (prophetic?) 	<div>Throne Scene</div> <div>4 5</div>
		<div>Tribulation</div> <div>6 19</div>
		<div>Second Coming & Millennium</div> <div>19 20</div>
		<div>Eternal State</div> <div>21 22</div>

B. Topical/Chapter Chart (Pre-millennial View)

CHAPTER TOPICS OF REVELATION					
<i>Events</i>	<i>Church Age</i>	<i>Tribulation</i>	<i>Millennium</i>	<i>Judgment: Great White Throne</i>	<i>Eternal State</i>
In Heaven	1	4-5	19-20	20	21-22
On Earth	2-3	6-19	20		

* Taken from Ryrie *ESV Study Bible*, 1549

IV. FLOW OF BOOK OF REVELATION

(Occurrences of “Ekklēsia”)

Vision (Christ)	Churches (Seven)		Throne Scene (Worship) (Heaven)		Tribulation (Wrath) (Earth)		Millennium Eternal State	
1	2	3	4	5	6	19	20	22

“ekklēsia” (church) 19 times	“ekklēsia” (church) 0 times	“ekklēsia” (church) 1 time
------------------------------------	-----------------------------------	----------------------------------

Rapture
 (“comes for saints”)

Second Coming
 (“comes with saints”)

V. BIBLICAL DEVELOPMENT: REVELATION 4-5

Revelation 4-5 forms a bridge from the message of Christ to the Seven Churches to the descriptions of the Tribulation (in Rev. 6-19). As noted in the previous chart, "Chapter Topics of Revelation" (p. 18), the scene is no longer on earth with the churches but now in heaven.

The Throne Room scenario includes several important figures:

- voice of the Lord (ch. 4)
- seated figure upon the throne (ch. 4)
- twenty-four elders (ch. 4)
- seven-fold Spirit (ch. 4)
- mighty angel (ch. 5)
- Lamb (ch. 5)
- many angels (ch. 5)

A. The Throne in Heaven (4:1-11)

Eleven times in Revelation 4 the word "throne" occurs. The basic theme of the chapter is built around this sovereignty image.

1. The voice of One who summons (1)

Revelation 4:1

After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."

- a. "After this" refers to the messages to the seven churches. The term occurs also in 7:1, 9; 15:5; 18:1; 19:1 and refers to a new vision (revelation) which follows (and the terms are likely chronological, sequential markers).
- b. John's vision will be heavenly, thus he sees "a door standing open in heaven." This invitation brings to mind other similar descriptions:

Acts 7:55-56

But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

2 Corinthians 12:1-4

I must go on boasting. Although there is nothing to be gained, I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord. ²I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know—God knows. ³And I know that this man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows—⁴was caught up to paradise and heard inexpressible things, things that no one is permitted to tell.

- c. The “voice” (Rev. 4:1) belongs to Christ. It was described “like a thunder,” which is how Christ’s voice is also described in 1:10-11.
- d. “I will show you what must take place after this” adds a futuristic note to the unveiling of new truth. From this point forward the described events are yet future to John’s experience (and to ours as well).

2. The enthroned One (2-3)

Revelation 4:2

At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.

- a. “In the Spirit” refers to the state which John was in during this experience. It may have been similar to Paul’s state as referenced earlier in 2 Corinthians 12:1-4, a state whereby Paul confessed, “whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know” (v. 2).
- b. What John saw was Someone seated on a throne. The identity of this person is God the Father (see 4:5 compared to 5:5, 7; also note 6:16; 7:10; 19:4). The powerful vision brings to mind the experience of Daniel who saw both the Ancient of Days (Father) and Son of Man (Son) in transcendent glory.

Daniel 7:9

“As I looked, “thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze.

Daniel 7:13-14

*In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one **like a son of man**, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the **Ancient of Days** and was led into his presence. ¹⁴He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.*

3. The twenty-four elders (4)

Revelation 4:4

*Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were **twenty-four elders**. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads.*

a. Described:

- Their number: twenty-four
- Their privilege: thrones (subordinate rule)
- Their appearance: dressed in white; crowns of gold

b. Identified:

Who are these elders? Three primary options include:

- (1) Angels (perhaps of high rank in a council of angels; see Col. 1:16)
- (2) Church (representative of and for the whole church)
- (3) People of God (12 tribes & 12 apostles are representative of the elect of all ages, both OT and NT)

4. The display of judgment (5-6^a)

Revelation 4:5-6^a

From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God. ⁶Also in front of the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass...

a. The stormy description speaks of pending judgment, one of irresistible power.

b. "Seven Spirits" or "Sevenfold Spirit" refers to the fullness of the Holy Spirit to carry out the judgment to come (cf. Isa. 11:2-3).

5. The living creatures (6^b-11)

a. Their description (6^b-8^a)

The “four living creatures” (or perhaps better, “living ones”) are angelic beings of high rank characterized as “covered with eyes” (v. 6^b and v. 8). The eyes “evidently symbolize their penetrating intelligence, and makes them immediately aware of whatever is happening that affects their judicial responsibility (cf. Ezek. 1:18; 10:12)” (Constable, *Notes*, 67).

Revelation 4:7-8^a

The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle. ⁸Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings...

These descriptions are likely symbolic of created life under God’s sovereign rule (though scholars differ widely as to the intended meaning).

- “lion”: untamed animals
- “ox”: domesticated animals
- “man”: human life
- “eagle”: avian life

If these living beings and their descriptions are indeed symbolic of creation, perhaps “they are what is noblest (lion), strongest (ox), wisest (man), and swiftest (eagle)” (Patterson quoting J.M. Ford, 136).

b. Their activity (8^b-11)

Whatever real or symbolic meaning is given to the “living creatures” (“living ones”), they fulfill what all of creation was intended to do...worship God.

Revelation 4:8^b

*...Day and night they never stop saying:
“‘Holy, holy, holy
is the Lord God Almighty,
who was, and is, and is to come.”*

Further, verses 9-10 indicate that the twenty-four elders join the living ones (angels) in falling down before God who sits in His throne, the undeniable symbol of His ruling authority over all that He has created. The elders “lay their crowns before the throne” (10).

The scene is reminiscent of other powerful worship passages:

Isaiah 6:1-4

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. ²Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. ³And they were calling to one another:

*“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty;
the whole earth is full of his glory.”*

⁴At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

Psalms 95:1-7^a

*Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD;
let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.*

*²Let us come before him with thanksgiving
and extol him with music and song.*

*³For the LORD is the great God,
the great King above all gods.*

*⁴In his hand are the depths of the earth,
and the mountain peaks belong to him.*

*⁵The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands formed the dry land.*

*⁶Come, let us bow down in worship,
let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;*

*⁷for he is our God
and we are the people of his pasture,
the flock under his care...*

Psalms 47:4-8

*He chose our heritage for us,
the pride of Jacob whom he loves.*

*⁵God has gone up with a shout,
the LORD with the sound of a trumpet.*

⁶*Sing praises to God, sing praises!
Sing praises to our King, sing praises!*
⁷*For God is the King of all the earth;
sing praises with a psalm!*
⁸*God reigns over the nations;
God sits on his holy throne.*

Finally, a concluding doxology of praise ends the chapter.

Revelation 4:11
*You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they were created
and have their being.*

- Note that the song is addressed to God directly.
- Note the reference to creation, the sustaining power of creation, the purposeful action of creation.

Insight:

"We need to see all that follows in this revelation (chs. 5-22) in the light of the character of God manifested in this vision. God is perfectly holy, just, gracious, righteous, pure, omnipotent, eternal, and sovereign. This should help us to accept the coming revelation of all that He will do, including God's judging of huge segments of humanity in the future."

(Constable, *Notes*, 70)

B. The Lamb upon the Throne (5:1-14)

Revelation 5 continues the throne scene in heaven. From the earthly evaluation of the seven churches (Rev. 2-3) to the earthly beginning of the tribulation period (Rev. 6-19), the "throne scene" provides a bridge from the heavenly perspective (Rev. 4-5).

1. The sealed scroll (1-5)
 - a. Described (1)

Revelation 5:1

Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals.

- (1) "Writing on both sides" would have been typical of Roman legal documents as well as the use of "seven seals." Likely, the scroll is a title deed to the earth that details the future events of judgment to come.
- (2) Under Roman law, only one authorized to open such a document could do so.

b. Closed (2-5)

- (1) The question (2)

Revelation 5:2

And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?"

- (2) The dilemma (3-4)

No one was "legally" qualified to open the seals. John wept that none was able, but why would he weep?

- God's purposes (as revealed in the scroll) are unknown (cf. 4:1).
- God's promises of a King and earthly Kingdom are uncertain, perhaps indefinitely postponed.

- (3) The reply (5)

Revelation 5:5

Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals."

2. The slain Lamb (6-8)

Revelation 5:6-8

*Then I saw a **Lamb**, looking as if it had been slain, standing at the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. The **Lamb** had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.*

⁷He went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. ⁸And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God's people.

a. The Lamb's description (6)

- "Lamb" (or little lamb): twenty-eight times the specific term is used of Christ in Revelation and once in the Gospel of John. Further, in the Gospel of John the forerunner declared of Jesus, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29).
- "Looking as if it had been slain": a reference to the visible scars of the Cross.
- "Standing": the Lamb was slain but now is resurrected.
- "Seven horns and seven eyes": horns speak of power; eyes of knowledge.
- "Seven spirits" (or Sevenfold Spirit): may speak of Holy Spirit fullness.

b. The Lamb's action (7)

He alone had the authority to open the deed, to enact the plans and purposes of God for the earth. He alone can and will bring it all to fruition.

c. The Lamb's worship (8)

Both angels ("living creatures") and man ("twenty-four elders") bow before the Lamb. The elders sing praises ("harp") and hold "bowls of incense," representative of the prayers of the saints – prayers that now will begin to be answered.

3. The worship songs (9-14)

a. The "new song" (9-10)

Revelation 5:9-10

And they sang a new song, saying:

"You are worthy to take the scroll

and to open its seals,

because you were slain,

and with your blood you purchased for God persons

from every tribe and language and people and

nation.

¹⁰ You have made them to be a kingdom and priests

to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

- (1) The new song declares the worthiness of the Lamb to open the scroll (9).
- (2) The new song describes four reasons why the Lamb is worthy to open the scroll (9-10):
 - The death of Christ ("were slain")
 - The redemption of people ("blood... purchased")
 - The priestly kingdom to serve God ("a kingdom and priests")
 - The coming Davidic Kingdom ("reign on the earth")

b. The angelic song (11-12)

Revelation 5:11-12

Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. ¹² In a loud voice they were saying:

"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,

to receive power and wealth and wisdom and

strength and honor and glory and praise!"

- (1) The singing choir includes innumerable angels plus the living creatures and the twenty-four elders (11).
- (2) The Lamb is worthy and thus rightfully should receive the seven ascribed qualities that are rightly His: power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, praise (12).

(3) In light of the angelic song, note the contrasts which follow:

CHRIST...WORTHY OF WORSHIP	
Christ on Earth	Christ in Heaven
Worthy of death (Jn. 19:7)	Worthy of praise (Rev. 4-5)
Works...power of Satan (Matt. 12:24)	Worthy of power (Rev. 5:12)
For our sake...became poor (2 Cor. 8:9)	Worthy of wealth (Rev. 5:12)
Preaching of the Cross...foolishness (1 Cor. 1:18)	Worthy of wisdom (Rev. 5:12)
Crucified in weakness (2 Cor. 13:4)	Worthy of strength (Rev. 5:12)
You dishonor Me (Jn. 8:49)	Worthy of honor (Rev. 5:12)
Not seeking glory for Myself (Jn. 8:50)	Worthy of glory (Rev. 5:12)
Christ (became)...a curse for us (Gal. 3:13)	Worthy of praise (Rev. 5:12)
• Adapted from W. Wiersbe, "Whole Bible Study Course," Privately published, n.d.	

c. The creation song (13-14)

Revelation 5:13-14

*Then I heard **every creature** in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying:*

"To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!"

¹⁴*The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.*

- (1) "Every creature" speaks of the whole of creation. This concept is advanced in the following passages:

Philippians 2:9-11

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Colossians 1:19-20

For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

Ephesians 1:18-21

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people,¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength²⁰ he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

- (2) The response of the angelic "living creatures" is "amen" (i.e. true, so be it, may it ever be so).
- (3) The response of the elders is to fall down and worship.

Insight:

True, Biblical worship can be theologically defined as (1) a true recognition of who God is, and (2) an appropriate response. The elders in Revelation 5:14 exemplify this definition.

VI. RECAP

A. Sovereignty

The heavenly scene reinforces the complete sovereignty of God over all things created and all events yet to come. Nothing is beyond His ultimate control/rule.

B. Worship

God alone is worthy of our full devotion and worship. To “bow the knee” to anyone, anything else, is to commit spiritual adultery and idol worship. He alone is worthy of “glory and honor and power” (4:11). He alone is worthy of our worship.

C. Prophetic Certainty

The Lamb alone was worthy to open the seals and to reveal what must/will take place at the close of human history. The Lamb is worthy and will ensure that all (promised) will come to pass as revealed in the Book of Revelation.

The modern challenge is to trust and obey that what God has revealed of the future will in fact someday actually come to pass.

Thus, in the words of one insightful, yet unknown believer:

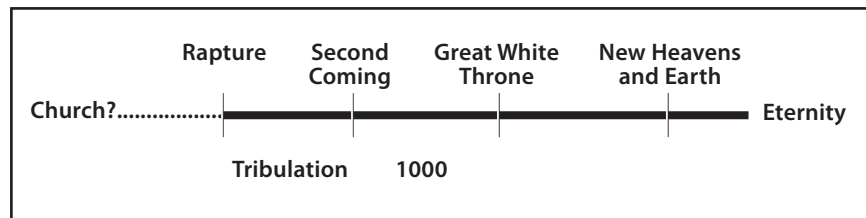
We should live every day as if Christ were crucified yesterday, were raised today, and were coming again tomorrow.

SESSION 3

(Tribulation—Part One—Revelation 6-11)

I. PRAYER

II. PANORAMA MOVEMENT #12: TIMELINE



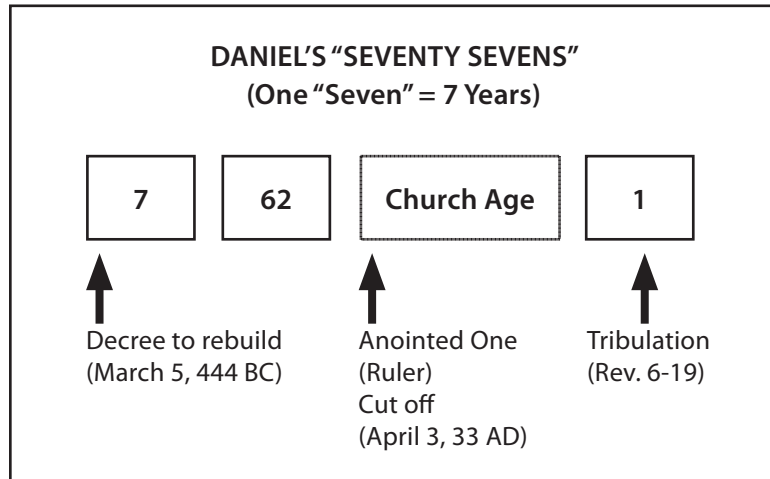
III. THE TRIBULATION

A. Timing (of the Tribulation)

1. The Rapture of the Body of Christ ends the Church Age (see Panorama Timeline above).
2. The Rapture does not necessarily begin the time of the Tribulation. The Bible is not clear as to how long the transition from Rapture to the start of the Tribulation might be (days, weeks, months, years?).
3. The "Covenant of Peace" made by the Antichrist with the nation of Israel inaugurates the time of Tribulation.
 - a. Context: Daniel 9:25-27
*Know and understand this: From the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven 'sevens,' and sixty-two 'sevens.' It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. ²⁶After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be put to death and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. ²⁷He will **confirm a covenant** with many for one 'seven.' In*

the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.

b. Charted



c. Covenant of Peace

Daniel 9:27

*He will **confirm a covenant** with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.*

B. Purposes (of the Tribulation)

1. To bring repentance for the nation of Israel

Jeremiah 30:4-9

*These are the words the LORD spoke concerning Israel and Judah: ⁵ "This is what the LORD says: "Cries of fear are heard—terror, not peace. ⁶ Ask and see: Can a man bear children? Then why do I see every strong man with his hands on his stomach like a woman in labor, every face turned deathly pale? ⁷ How awful that day will be! No other will be like it. It will be a **time of trouble for Jacob**, but he will be saved out of it. ⁸ "In that day," declares the LORD Almighty, 'I will break the yoke off their necks and will tear*

*off their bonds; no longer will foreigners enslave them.
⁹Instead, they will serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.’”*

2. To try and test earth dwellers

Revelation 3:10

*Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the **hour of trial** that is going to come on the whole world **to test the inhabitants of the earth.***

3. To answer the theological question: “who has the right to rule?”

Revelation 15:1-4

I saw in heaven another great and marvelous sign: seven angels with the seven last plagues—last, because with them God’s wrath is completed. ²And I saw what looked like a sea of glass glowing with fire and, standing beside the sea, those who had been victorious over the beast and its image and over the number of its name. They held harps given them by God ³and sang the song of God’s servant Moses and of the Lamb:

*“Great and marvelous are your deeds,
Lord God Almighty.
Just and true are your ways,
King of the nations.
⁴Who will not fear you, Lord,
and bring glory to your name?
For you alone are holy.
All nations will come
and worship before you,
for your righteous acts have been revealed.”*

4. To bring to completion the “times of the Gentiles”

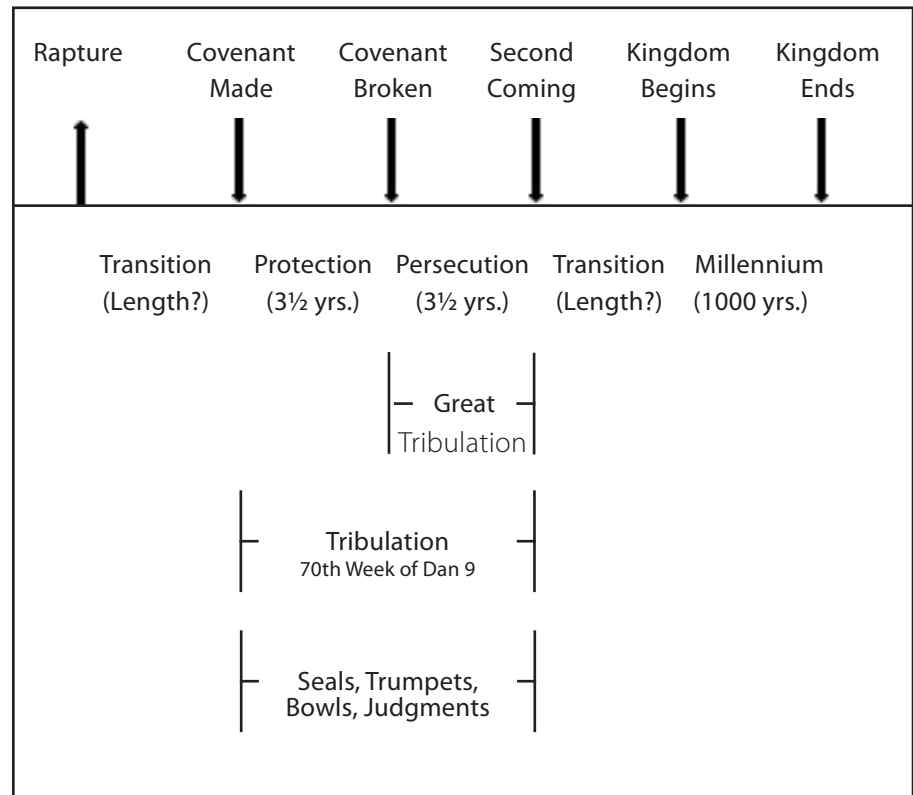
Luke 21:24

They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

Romans 11:25

*I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the **full number of the Gentiles** has come in...*

C. Prophetic Context (of the Tribulation)



IV. SEALS, TRUMPETS, BOWLS (JUDGMENTS)

A. Interrelationships: Three Views

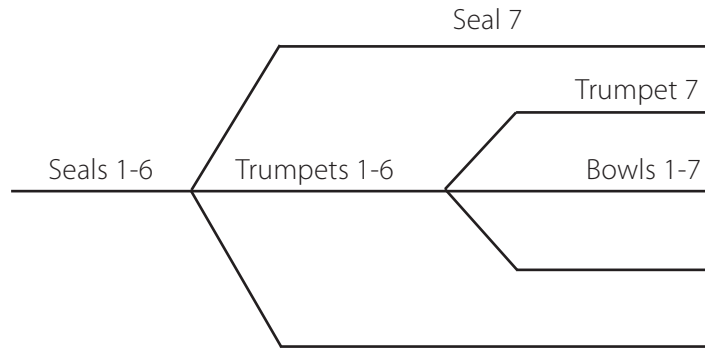
1. View One: Parallel (overlapping)

----- Seals -----
 ----- Trumpets -----
 ----- Bowls -----

2. View Two : Sequential

Seals | Trumpets | Bowls

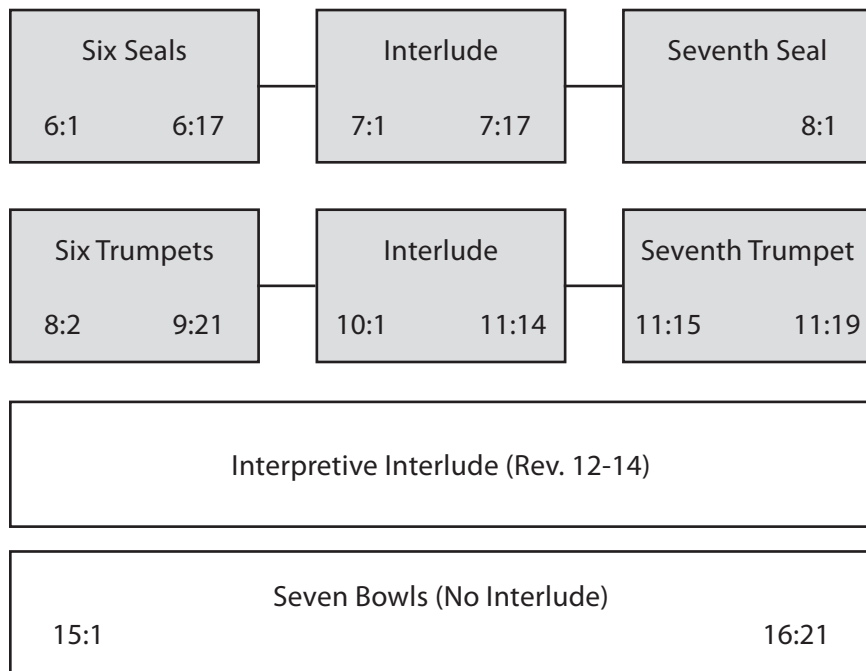
3. View Three: Telescopic



Note: This last view will be the position taken in this study.

V. BIBLICAL DEVELOPMENT

A. Textual Structure: Rev. 6-16



Note: Session 3 of Panorama Plus 12 will cover Revelation 6-11, that is the “Seals” and “Trumpets” judgments. Note the shaded boxes above.

B. "Seals" Judgments (Rev. 6:1-8:1)

1. Seals 1-6 (Rev. 6)

The only one worthy to open the seals (Rev. 5:2-4) is the Lamb. With the opening of the seals, Tribulation judgment begins. The thematic flow of the Book of Revelation now turns from worship (Rev. 4-5) to wrath (Rev. 6 ff).

The student of Revelation should read chapter six closely. To summarize its basic thrust, note the following chart:

Revelation 6				
Seals	Text	Focus	Description	Significance
1	6:1-2	On Earth	Rider on White Horse	Antichrist (peace??)
2	6:3-4	On Earth	Rider on Red Horse	War
3	6:5-6	On Earth	Rider on Black Horse	Famine
4	6:7-8	On Earth	Rider on Pale Horse	Death
5	6:9-11	In Heaven	Martyrs	Vengeance (requested)
6	6:12-17	In Heaven	Destruction	Judgment (enacted)

Notes:

- a. The "rider on a white horse" is often thought to be Jesus as certainly is the white horse rider in Revelation 19:11-19. But there are good reasons to see this Revelation 6 rider as a counterfeit, one who "appears" to bring lasting peace but actually does not.

Hitchcock (*The End*, 279) summarizes the differences between the two white horse riders in the following helpful chart.

RIDER ON THE WHITE HORSE (REVELATION 6:2)	RIDER ON THE WHITE HORSE (REVELATION 19:11-19)
carries a bow without any arrows	wields a sword
wears a <i>stephanos</i> or victor's crown	wears many crowns—the <i>diadema</i> or kingly crown
initiates war	destroys His enemies and brings end to war
commences the Tribulation	climaxes the Tribulation

- b. The first four seals are commonly referred to as the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.
- c. Some scholars see parallel descriptions of the first five seals with a portion of Jesus' prophetic Olivet Discourse.

Matthew 24	Revelation 6
• false christs (4-5)	• rider/white horse (1-2)
• wars and rumors of wars (6-7)	• rider/red horse (3-4)
• famine/plagues (7) (cf. Luke 21:11)	• rider/black horse (5-6)
• persecution/martyrs (9-10)	• martyrs (9-11)

The impact of the six seal judgments is described at the close of the chapter.

Revelation 6:15-17

*Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and everyone else, both slave and free, hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. ¹⁶They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!" ¹⁷For **the great day of their wrath** has come, and who can withstand it?"*

2. Interlude (non-sequential) (Rev. 7)
 - a. Revelation 7 does not follow a sequential, chronological movement. It serves as an interlude to introduce the topic of the 144,000.
 - b. Resumption of the seals (specifically number 7) begins in Revelation 8.

Revelation 8:1

When he opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

- c. Revelation 7 may be a partial answer to the cry of Revelation 6:17. "For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"

d. The sealed Jews (7:1-8)

Revelation 7:1-4

*After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth to prevent any wind from blowing on the land or on the sea or on any tree. ² Then I saw another angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the land and the sea: ³ "Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God." ⁴ Then I heard the number of those who were sealed: **144,000** from all the tribes of Israel.*

e. The saved Gentiles (7:9-17)

(1) Identification of the multitude

Revelation 7:9

*After this I looked, and there before me was a **great multitude** that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.*

(2) Declaration of the multitude

Revelation 7:10

*And they cried out in a loud voice: "**Salvation** belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."*

Insight: "Palm Branches and Jesus"

John 12:12-15

The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. ¹³ They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the king of Israel!" ¹⁴ Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written: ¹⁵ "Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt."

1. Triumphal Entry: "Hosanna...blessed is the King..."
2. Rejection: "we have no king but Caesar"
3. Triumphant Affirmation: Revelation 7:10 (above)

(3) Response to the declaration

Revelation 7:11-12

All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!"

(4) Identification of the multitude

Revelation 7:13-14

Then one of the elders asked me, "These in white robes—who are they, and where did they come from?" ¹⁴ I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

(5) Privileged status of the multitude

Revelation 7:15-17

1. Before the throne of God: THEIR PURITY
2. Serve Him day/night: THEIR PRIVILEGE
3. God's tent over them: HIS PRESENCE
4. No hunger/thirst: HIS PROVISION
5. No scorching heat: HIS POWER/PROTECTION
6. Lamb shepherds them: HIS PLENTY
7. God wipes away tears: HIS PITY (COMFORT)

3. Seventh seal (Rev. 8:1)

a. Context

Refer to "Textual Structural: Revelation 6-16", p. 35.

b. Revelation 8:1

When he opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

The seventh seal is equivalent to the seven trumpets (Refer to IV. A. Interrelationships, p 34).

4. Six Trumpets (Rev. 8:2-9:21)

Revelation 8:1-2

When he opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. ²And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.

Again, the student should carefully read Revelation 8:2-9:21 for full description of the trumpet judgments. The following chart summarizes the thematic content.

Seven Trumpet Judgments		
Number	Passage	Description
1	8:7	Hail and fire (blood): 1/3 vegetation
2	8:8-9	Fiery mountain falls: 1/3 oceans
3	8:10-11	Fiery, falling star: 1/3 fresh water
4	8:12	Darkness: 1/3 celestial bodies
5	9:1-2	Demonic onslaught: oppression
6	9:13-21	Invasion of 200 million (human or demonic armies?)
7	11:15-19	Kingdom announcement

5. Interlude (Rev. 10:1-11:14)

This interlude separates the sixth and seventh trumpet judgments. From the outpouring of judgments comes a brief interlude of consolation, a reminder that God is still sovereignly in control of world-shattering events.

a. The mighty angel (10:1-11)

(1) Appearance (1-4)

The angel is described as “another mighty angel” (1). Some speculate that this is the angel of the Lord (pre-incarnate Christ) but most likely is not.

The angel carries “a little scroll” (perhaps the scroll of 5:1, though not for certain). This certainly represents new revelation from God; yet John the Apostle is not allowed to reveal the prophetic message (10:3-4).

(2) Announcement (5-7)

Revelation 10:5-7

Then the angel I had seen standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven. ⁶And he swore by him who lives for ever and ever, who created the heavens and all that is in them, the earth and all that is in it, and the sea and all that is in it, and said, “There will be no more delay! ⁷But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he announced to his servants the prophets.”

(3) Appropriation (8-11)

John requested to have the scroll and the angel replied, “Take it and eat it.” This metaphorical expression speaks of receiving and contemplating knowledge given. Note the similar usage in the following references.

Ezekiel 3:1-2

And he said to me, “Son of man, eat what is before you, eat this scroll; then go and speak to the people of Israel.” ²So I opened my mouth, and he gave me the scroll to eat.

Jeremiah 15:16

When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart’s delight, for I bear your name, LORD God Almighty.

Psalms 119:103

How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

The resultant tasting of the scroll by John would be described as both bitter (content of the harsh judgments) and sweet (God's ultimate purposes will be accomplished).

Revelation 10:11

Then I was told, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages and kings."

b. The two witnesses (11:1-14)

Also in this interlude John introduces the ministry of the two witnesses. Chronologically this occurs during the latter three and one-half years, i.e., the Great Tribulation.

(1) They measure the temple (1-2)

This must be a rebuilt temple, a prophetic necessity (cf. Dan. 9:27; 12:11; Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:4).

(2) They minister with power (3-6)

Revelation 11:3-6

"And I will appoint my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth."

⁴They are "the two olive trees" and the two lampstands, and "they stand before the Lord of the earth."⁵ If anyone tries to harm them, fire comes from their mouths and devours their enemies. This is how anyone who wants to harm them must die. ⁶They have power to shut up the heavens so that it will not rain during the time they are prophesying; and they have power to turn the waters into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they want.

(a) 1260 days equals three and one-half years.

(b) "Sackcloth" expresses penitence, mourning, and humility.

(c) "Two witnesses" are unidentified. Some believe them to be Enoch and Elijah (as neither tasted death but were "raptured" or taken up to heaven). Others believe Moses

and Elijah (the great law-giver and the great prophet). Still others believe them to be special, unnamed witnesses of that time.

- (d) "Olive trees" and "lampstands" may refer to spiritual light or knowledge, thus spiritual revival.
- (e) As with other gifted and empowered men of the Scriptures, they are endued with the power to perform miracles.

(3) They will be martyred (9-10)

The two witnesses are divinely protected until their ministry is completed. Then the Beast (i.e. the Antichrist) will kill them, display their bodies in the streets for three and one-half days.

(4) They will be resurrected (11-14)

Revelation 11:11-13

But after the three and a half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and terror struck those who saw them. ¹² Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they went up to heaven in a cloud, while their enemies looked on. ¹³ At that very hour there was a severe earthquake and a tenth of the city collapsed. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the survivors were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

6. The Seventh Trumpet (Rev. 11:15-19)

The final trumpet judgment also includes the seven bowl judgments (see earlier IV. A. 3. "Telescopic View," p. 35).

a. Sounding (15)

Revelation 11:15

The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign for ever and ever."

b. Responding (16-18)

The twenty-four elders respond in worship.

Revelation 11:17-18

We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign. ¹⁸The nations were angry, and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your people who revere your name, both great and small—and for destroying those who destroy the earth.

c. Revealing (19)

Revelation 11:19

Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a severe hailstorm.

VI. RECAP

A. Tribulation

Revelation 6-19 details a predicted, future time of tribulation unlike anything ever seen upon the earth. The Tribulation is seven years of judgment upon the earth.

Luke 21:22-23

*For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written. ²³How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be **great distress** in the land and **wrath** against this people.*

B. Revival

Even in the midst of the seven years of the Tribulation, there will be a movement of God. The 144,000 plus the "great multitude" (Rev. 7) are evidence of this. God always has a faithful remnant.

C. Sovereignty

As predicted events unfold, God's sovereignty over human affairs is confirmed. If we can trust Him to oversee and rule over human history, can we trust Him to rule day by day over us?

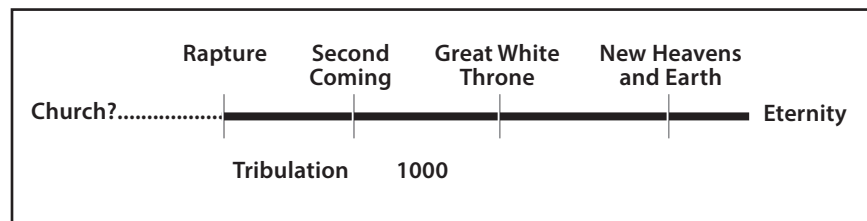
SESSION 4

(Tribulation—Part Two—Revelation 12-14)

I. PRAYER

II. PANORAMA: BROAD CONTEXT

A. Movement #12: Timeline

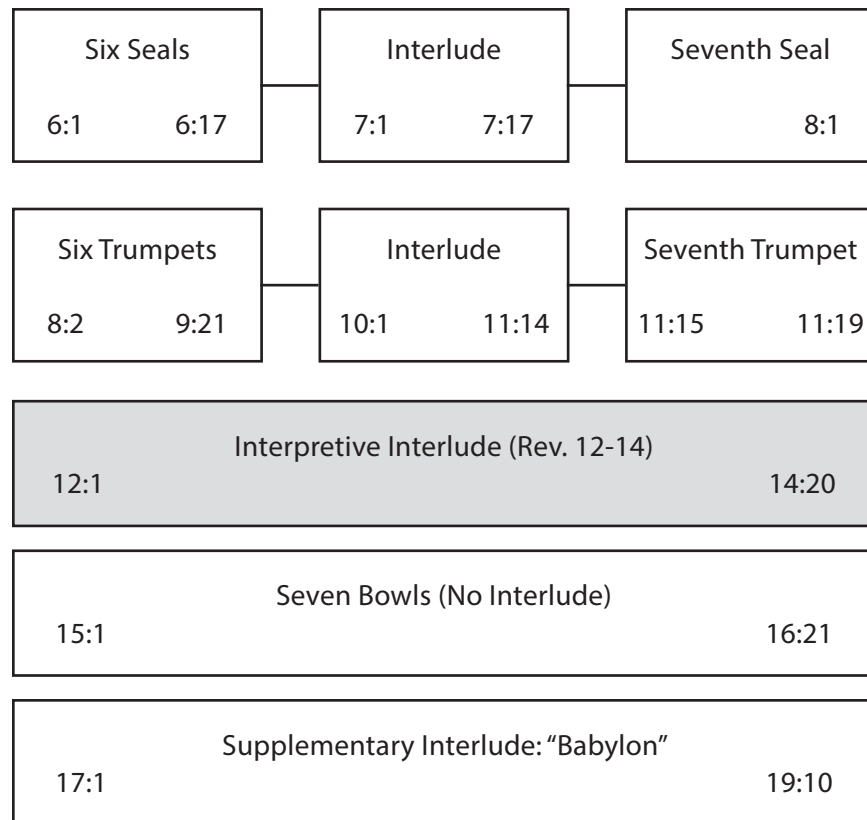


B. Book of Revelation: Charted

REVELATION		
Outline: "Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later." (Rev. 1:19 NIV 84)		
Chapter 1	Chapters 2-3	Chapters 4-22
"what you have seen"	"what is now"	"what will take place later"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salutation (prologue/greeting) • Vision ("have seen") • Outline (1:19) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 Letters to 7 Churches (historical) (representative) (prophetic?) 	<div>Throne Scene</div> <div>4 5</div>
		<div>Tribulation</div> <div>6 19</div>
		<div>Second Coming & Millennium</div> <div>19 20</div>
		<div>Eternal State</div> <div>21 22</div>

III. INTERTEXTUAL STRUCTURE

Revelation 6:1-19:10



Note: Session 4 will deal with the first shaded Interpretive Interlude.

IV. BIBLICAL DEVELOPMENT: REVELATION 12-14

Before the judgment of the seven bowls, the Biblical author describes supplementary information concerning satanic activity in the Great Tribulation (latter half of the seven years of the Tribulation).

A. Satanic Opposition (12:1-16)

Since the time of Lucifer's rebellion (cf. Isa. 14:12-14; Ezek. 28:11-19) there has been angelic warfare between the forces of evil (Satan and his demonic horde) and the forces of good (God and His elect angels). Much of the interplay of the Tribulation is an outworking of this conflict. Beginning

in Revelation 12, John pictures the greater cosmic struggle.

1. The woman, the dragon, the child (1-6)

a. Sign #1: the woman (1-2)

Revelation 12:1-2

*A great **sign** appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. ²She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth.*

(1) Some see the identity of the woman as Mary, the mother of Jesus. Better, however, the woman symbolizes the nation of Israel (cf. Isa. 54:1-6; Jer. 3:19-20; et al.).

(2) The child is the Christ, born of the tribe of Judah of the covenant people Israel.

b. Sign #2: the dragon (3-4)

Revelation 12:3-4

Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on its heads. ⁴Its tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that it might devour her child the moment he was born.

(1) The “red dragon” is identified as Satan.

Revelation 20:2

He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.

(2) Satan’s original rebellion caused one-third of the angels to follow his insurrection (cf. Rev. 12:8-9; 9:1; Jude 6; 2 Pet. 2:4).

c. Sign #2 (continued) The child (5-6)

Revelation 12:5-6

She gave birth to a son, a male child, who “will rule all the nations with an iron scepter.” And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne. ⁶The woman fled into the wilderness to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days.

- (1) The child is the Messiah-King who will “rule all the nations with an iron scepter” (5).
- (2) The child was protected from death at birth and was resurrected and “snatched up to God” as an adult.
- (3) The child’s mother (Israel) will also be protected in the days of the Great Tribulation.

2. The warfare in heaven (7-9)

Revelation 12:7-9

Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. ⁸ But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. ⁹ The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

3. The song of victory (10-12)

Satan’s defeat which is celebrated as certain and sure will be complete at the end of the Millennial Kingdom (cf. 20:1-10).

The saints who resisted Satan had three “weapons” in their arsenal:

- a. Blood of the Lamb: Basis of redemption
- b. Word of their testimony: Truth of the Word of God
- c. Surrender: No fear of death (submission)

4. The wrath on earth (13-16)

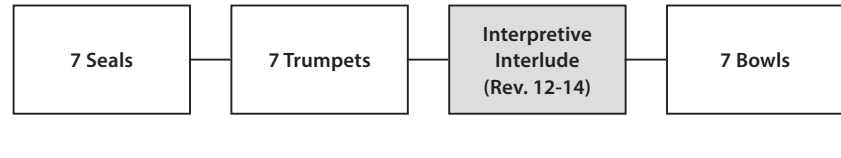
Unable to accuse the saints in heaven (cast out of heaven—see 12:7-9), now Satan persecutes Israel (the woman) on earth.

B. Two Beasts (13:1-18)

Revelation 13:1

The dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. It had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on its horns, and on each head a blasphemous name.

CONTEXT: REVIEW



1. Beast out of the sea (1-10)

Opposing the will and ways of God is a “satanic trinity” of the dragon (Satan), the beast out of the sea (Anti-christ), and the beast out of the earth (False Prophet). Revelation 13 addresses the two beasts, certainly not literal animals but devilish people with beastly aspirations and powers.

a. Described (1-4)

- (1) Summoned by the dragon (1) (see also 12:17)
- (2) Empowered by the dragon (2)
- (3) Described metaphorically (2)
 - “leopard” (swift, agile, cruel)
 - “bear” (brutal, strong)
 - “lion” (majestic, powerful)

Insight:

These animal descriptions fit the prophetic scheme revealed in Daniel 7. Greece (leopard), Medo-Persia (bear) and Babylon (lion) all subjugated Israel. The destruction of Israel will be the beast’s aim. Also, the little horn of Daniel 7 likely refers to the Antichrist prophetically.

- (4) Survived fatal wound (3)

This may refer to one of the ten nations under Antichrist’s rule that survives near extinction or it could refer to the Antichrist surviving a near-fatal head wound.
- (5) Worshiped alongside the dragon (4)

Who is this beast out of the sea?
The best answer is the Antichrist.

b. Activities (5-8)

Revelation 13:5-8

The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise its authority for forty-two months. ⁶It opened its mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven. ⁷It was given power to wage war against God's holy people and to conquer them. And it was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation. ⁸All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the Lamb's book of life, the Lamb who was slain from the creation of the world.

(1) Blasphemy (5-6)

(2) Warfare (7)

(3) False worship (8)

c. Reactions (9-10)

(1) God's judgments on unbelievers will be sure;

(2) God's saints must exercise "patient endurance and faithfulness" (10).

2. Beast out of the earth (11-18)

a. Description of the beast (11-17)

Revelation 13:11

Then I saw a second beast, coming out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb, but it spoke like a dragon.

- "earth"—if Israel (i.e., the land), then a Jew; but most likely a Gentile.
- "lamb"—appears peaceful and gentle.
- "spoke like a dragon"—foul mouthpiece of the dragon (cf. Matt. 24:23-24)

Revelation 13:12-15

It exercised all the authority of the first beast on its behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed. ¹³And it performed great signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to the earth in full view

of the people. ¹⁴Because of the signs it was given power to perform on behalf of the first beast, it deceived the inhabitants of the earth. It ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived. ¹⁵The second beast was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that the image could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed.

- Exercised religious authority on behalf of the first beast, the Antichrist (12)
- Performed miracles and deceived peoples (13-15)

Revelation 13:16-17

It also forced all people, great and small, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads, ¹⁷so that they could not buy or sell unless they had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of its name.

b. Riddle about the beast (18)

Revelation 13:18

This calls for wisdom. Let the person who has insight calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. That number is 666.

Insight: Who is the second beast?

The False Prophet fills the role described of the beast out of the earth. This beast is called the False Prophet three times in Revelation (16:13; 19:20-20:2; 20:10). The Antichrist and the False Prophet will work in concert to advance Satan's will and strategies. They are also in direct contrast with the previous ministry of Christ and John the Baptist (a true prophet who introduced the ministry of Jesus Christ).

Hitchcock (276) summarizes the descriptions and activities of the False Prophet (in Revelation 13) in the following way:

TEN IDENTIFYING FEATURES OF THE FALSE PROPHET FROM REVELATION 13
rises out of the earth (13:11)
controls religious affairs with deceptive speech (13:11)
motivated by Satan, the dragon (13:11)
promotes worship of the first beast (13:12)
performs signs and miracles (13:13)
deceives the whole world (13:14)
empowers the image of the Beast (13:15)
kills all who refuse to worship (13:15)
controls all economic commerce (13:17)
controls the mark of the Beast (13:17, 18)

C. Judgment at the End of the Great Tribulation (14:1-20)

The Interpretive Interlude (Rev. 12-14) continues by spotlighting events near the end of the Great Tribulation. The next two chapters (Rev. 15-16) will return to the final seven bowl judgments.

1. The Lamb and the 144,000 (1-5)

Revelation 14:1-5

Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. ²And I heard a sound from heaven like the roar of rushing waters and like a loud peal of thunder. The sound I heard was like that of harpists playing their harps. ³And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. ⁴These are those who did not defile themselves with women, for they remained virgins. They follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They were purchased from among mankind and offered as firstfruits to God and the Lamb. ⁵No lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless.

a. Identifications

- (1) "Lamb" (resurrected Christ)
- (2) "Mt. Zion" (literal place, SW of Temple Mount in Jerusalem)
- (3) "144,000" (believing Israelites; see Rev. 7 and the seal of ownership/protection upon their foreheads)
- (4) "Four living creatures" (cherubim; Rev. 6:1)
- (5) "Elders" (representative of the people of God)

b. Descriptions of the 144,000

- (1) Redeemed (14:3)
- (2) Sealed (Rev. 7:3-4)
- (3) Preserved (from judgment; cf. 9:4)
- (4) Pure (14:4)
- (5) Resolute (follow the Lamb) (14:4)
- (6) Blameless (14:5)
- (7) Proclaimers (Matt. 29:14)

2. The three angels (6-13)

Angel	Basic Message
1	"Fear God...give Him glory...Worship Him"
2	"Fallen is Babylon the Great"
3	Judgment on those who worship the beast and his image

3. Son of Man and other angels (14-20)

Revelation 14:14-20

*I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one like **a son of man** with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. ¹⁵Then another angel came out of the temple and called in a loud voice to him who was sitting on the cloud, "Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for **the harvest** of the earth is ripe." ¹⁶So he who was seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested. ¹⁷Another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. ¹⁸Still another angel, who had charge of the fire, came from the altar and called in a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, "Take your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the earth's vine, because its grapes are ripe." ¹⁹The angel swung his sickle on the earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God's wrath. ²⁰They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press, rising as high as the horses' bridles for a distance of 1,600 stadia.*

a. "Son of Man" (14)

- Seated in clouds (Shekinah glory?)
- Crown of gold (kingly rule/authority)
- Sharp sickle (judgment)

b. "Harvest" (15-20)

- Judgment time has come.
- Prayers of the martyrs has been realized.

Revelation 6:9-10

When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. ¹⁰ They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?"

- Harvest of blood—Armageddon (?)

Joel 3:12-14

"Let the nations be roused; let them advance into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge all the nations on every side. ¹³ Swing the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, trample the grapes, for the winepress is full and the vats overflow—so great is their wickedness!" ¹⁴ Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.

V. RECAP

A. Spiritual Warfare

The angelic conflict between the fallen angel Lucifer (Isa. 14; Ezek. 28) or Satan and with God and His elect angels is highlighted again in Revelation 12. Spiritual warfare is real. The NT consistently warns the believer to be on alert.

James 4:7-8^a

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Come near to God and he will come near to you...

Ephesians 6:10-12

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

B. Unholy Trinity

Satan (the dragon), the Antichrist (beast out of the sea) and the False Prophet (beast out of the earth) oppose the will and ways of the Holy Trinity (Father, Son, Holy Spirit).

A counterfeit Trinity will use counterfeit signs and religion to confuse and mislead the people on earth. John also authored three NT letters and 1 John 4:1-3 declares,

*Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but **test the spirits** to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ²This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the **spirit of the Antichrist**, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.*

C. Right to Rule

Behind the conflict described in Revelation 12-14 is a theological question: Who in all the cosmos, in all of heaven and earth, truly has the right to rule and reign? Satan has attempted to usurp God's rightful authority and rule the earth as its sovereign. The Book of Revelation will consistently counter this devilish claim and assert that the Lord God alone has the right to rule.

Deuteronomy 4:39 KJV

Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the LORD he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else.

SESSION 5

(Tribulation—Part Three—Revelation 15-19)

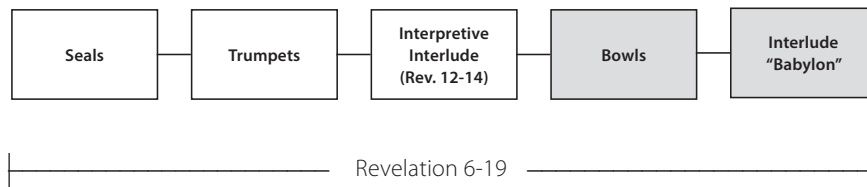
I. PRAYER

II. BOOK OF REVELATION: CHARTED

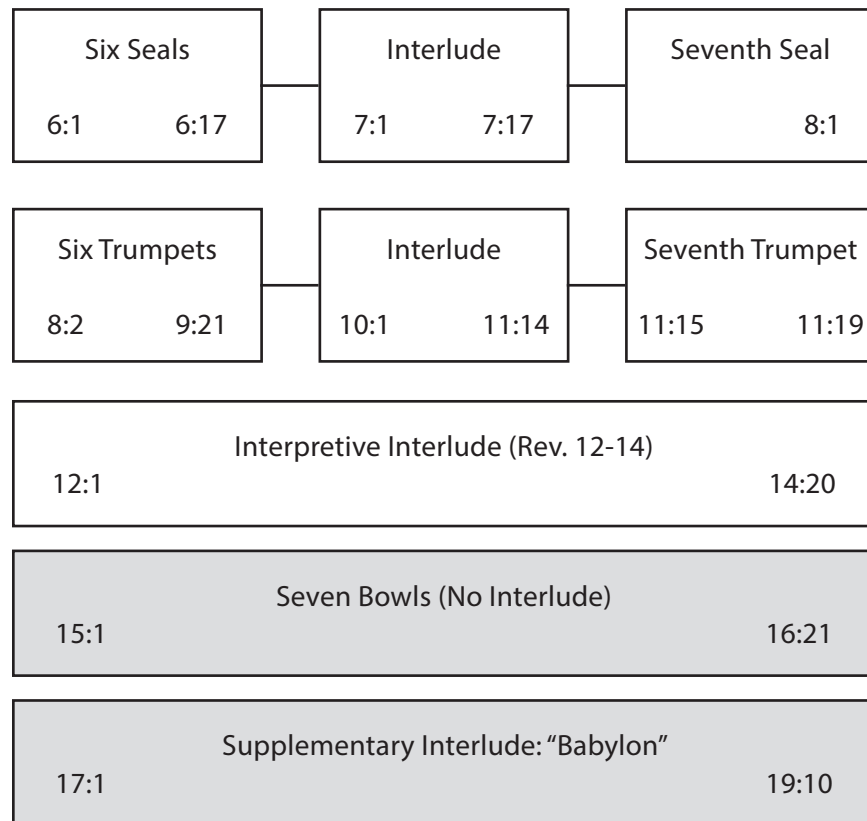
REVELATION			
Outline: "Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later." (Rev. 1:19 NIV 84)			
Chapter 1	Chapters 2-3	Chapters 4-22	
"what you have seen"	"what is now"	"what will take place later"	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salutation (prologue/greeting) • Vision ("have seen") • Outline (1:19) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 Letters to 7 Churches (historical) (representative) (prophetic?) 	4	5
		6	19
		19	20
		21	22

III. INTERTEXTUAL STRUCTURE

A. Broad Overview: "Tribulation"



B. Expanded Context: "Tribulation"



Note: Session 5 will complete the final boxes, "Seven Bowls" and Supplementary Interlude: "Babylon."

IV. BIBLICAL DEVELOPMENT: REVELATION 15-16 ("Seven Bowls")

A. Announcement of the Seven Bowls Judgment (15:1-8)

1. Heavenly scene (1)

Revelation 15:1

*I saw in heaven another great and marvelous **sign**: seven angels with the seven last plagues—last, because with them **God's wrath** is completed.*

The last set of judgments (seven bowls) begins from a heavenly perspective ("saw in heaven") and is described as another "great and marvelous sign" (see the earlier sign; 12:1 ff).

2. Heavenly song (2-4)

Revelation 15:2-4

And I saw what looked like a sea of glass glowing with fire and, standing beside the sea, those who had been victorious over the beast and its image and over the number of its name. They held harps given them by God³ and sang the song of God's servant Moses and of the Lamb: "Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the nations."⁴ Who will not fear you, Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed."

- a. "Fire" refers to judgment completed (2).
- b. "Victorious" ones refer to martyred saints who did not yield to the beast or take on his number (2; cf. 13:11-18).
- c. Reference to the song of Moses hearkens to the Red Sea "exodus event" (deliverance) even as the song of the Lamb likely refers to the deliverance/redemption of believers.

3. Heavenly activity (5-8)

The scene changes ("after this") to a new vision of the heavenly temple. From this place come the seven angels with "seven golden bowls."

Revelation 15:7-8

Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls filled with the wrath of God, who lives for ever and ever.⁸ And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.

B. Seven Bowls Judgment (16:1-21)

Revelation 16:1

Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go, pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath on the earth."

The climactic judgments of the Great Tribulation are at hand. Constable quotes G.E. Ladd (Notes, 159-60):

"These plagues are not the expression of God's wrath against sin in general, nor are they punishments for individual wrongdoing. They are the outpouring of His wrath upon him who would frustrate the divine purpose in the world—the beast—and upon those who have given their loyalty to him.

These plagues are God's answer to Satan's last and greatest effort to frustrate the divine rule."

Reflection:
"Who has the right to rule?"

1. The first bowl (2): "painful sores"

Revelation 16:2

The first angel went and poured out his bowl on the land, and ugly, festering sores broke out on the people who had the mark of the beast and worshiped its image.

2. The second bowl (3): "sea to blood"

This judgment is similar to the second trumpet (8:9; see also Ex. 7:20-21). The difference here is that all life perishes.

3. The third bowl (4): "fresh water to blood"

Interruption (5-7)

Revelation 16:5-7

Then I heard the angel in charge of the waters say: "You are just in these judgments, O Holy One, you who are and who were;⁶ for they have shed the blood of your holy people and your prophets, and you have given them blood to drink as they deserve."⁷ And I heard the altar respond: "Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and just are your judgments."

4. The fourth bowl (8-9): "intense heat of the sun"

While the fourth trumpet judgment darkened the sun, the fourth bowl intensifies the sun's heat apparently upon the people of the beast (what of the faithful believers?). The judgment does not bring about repentance.

Revelation 16:9

They were seared by the intense heat and they cursed the name of God, who had control over these plagues, but they refused to repent and glorify him.

5. The fifth bowl (10-11)

Revelation 16:10-11

The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom was plunged into darkness. People gnawed their tongues in agony ¹¹ and cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they refused to repent of what they had done.

6. The sixth bowl (12-16)

This bowl (and the seventh) brings the Great Tribulation judgments to a climax with geo-political results.

Highlights of this judgment include:

- a. The miraculous drying up of the Euphrates River (12)
- b. The menacing arrival of the kings of the East (12)
- c. The demonic activity from the "unholy Trinity" (13-14)
- d. The gathering of armies to the place called Armageddon (16)

The Lord's response:

Revelation 16:15

Look, I come like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake and remains clothed, so as not to go naked and be shamefully exposed.

7. The seventh bowl (17-21)

- a. The loud voice (17)

Revelation 16:17

The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and out of the temple came a loud voice from the throne, saying, "It is done!"

When the sacrificial atonement was completed at the Cross, Jesus cried, "It is finished" (Jn. 19:30). When the final bowl judgment was at hand, God ("the loud voice") announced "It is done!"

- b. The effects of judgment (18-21^a)
 - 1. Lightning, thunder, earthquakes
 - 2. Great city (Jerusalem) and cities of the earth greatly affected.
 - 3. Babylon the Great (literal and rebuilt or metaphorical for opposition to God) experiences the “fury of His wrath.”
- c. The response of men (21^b)

Revelation 16:21^b

...And they cursed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so terrible.

Insight: Rebellious man and the Bowl Judgments

For the entire history of the human family rebellion against God has been escalating. The temporary and local judgments in which he manifested his fury against sin have all been warnings. Now, at the end of the great tribulation and the outpouring of the seven bowls of wrath, God’s judgment escalates to such an extent that the world witnesses the incredible wrath of God.

(Patterson, *Revelation*, 316)

V. BIBLICAL DEVELOPMENT: REVELATION 17-18

A. Broad Context: Review

Book of Revelation		
"4 Periods (Ages) of Time"		
Revelation Chapters	Time Period	Length
1-3	Church Age	2000+ years
4-19	Tribulation Age	7 years
20	Millennial Kingdom Age	1000 years
21-22	Eternal Age (to come)	Endless years

(Adapted from Hitchcock, *The End*, 77)

Broadly speaking, Revelation 17-18 is textually located amidst the Tribulation section of the Book of Revelation. Note again the diagram of the Tribulation (specifically chapters 6-19) at III. INTERTEXTUAL STRUCTURE, p. 57. The shaded area is the focal point of this fifth session. Revelation 15-16 has focused on the Bowl Judgments. Revelation 17-18 is an Interlude dealing with "religious" and "commercial" Babylon.

Note also that the end of the Bowls judgments, the campaign of Armageddon was introduced. This Interlude (Rev. 17-18) pauses the chronological end of the Great Tribulation and answers the question, "What will happen to 'Babylon'?"

B. Identity of "Babylon"

1. Historically

- a. Site of man-centered, prideful worship at Tower of Babel in Shinar (i.e. Babylonia) (Gen.11:1-9).
- b. Established by Nimrod (10:8-10) as key city of his empire.
- c. Capital of the powerful Babylonian Empire of King Nebuchadnezzar who destroyed Jerusalem and razed the Temple in 586 BC.
- d. One of four prophesied empires that would rule over a subjugated Jewish people (cf. Dan. 2, 7).

2. Metaphorically

Whenever the literal city is not meant, Babylon refers to political and religious opposition to the rule of God. Leon Morris noted, "She (i.e. Babylon) stands for civilized man apart from God, man in organized but godless community." Babylon, then, is the resistant, anti-God culture of the world system as noted and described in the Book of Revelation.

With respect to Revelation 17-18 and "Babylon," note the following chart.

Two Metaphorical "Babylons"	
Religious	Commercial
Revelation 17	Revelation 18
Destroyed by Antichrist and 10 kings	Destroyed by God
Falls (perhaps) near the midpoint of the Tribulation	Falls at the end of the Tribulation

(Adapted from Hitchcock, 369)

C. Religious "Babylon": Revelation 17:1-18

1. The angelic invitation (1-2)

Revelation 17:1-2

One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the punishment of the great prostitute, who sits by many waters. ²With her the kings of the earth committed adultery, and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries."

The "great prostitute" (1) symbolizes idolatry and religious apostasy, thus false religion. This "woman" is one of four used as images to represent something of importance:

- a. Jezebel (2:20) represents apostasy and immorality creeping into the church (Thyatira).
- b. Woman pregnant with child (12:1-2 ff) represents the nation of Israel, the people of the Messiah.
- c. Great prostitute (17:1-2) represents the apostate, religious world system.
- d. The bride (19:7) represents the Church at the Second Coming of Christ.

2. The angelic vision (3-6)

Revelation 17:3-6

Then the angel carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness. There I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was covered with blasphemous names and had seven heads and ten horns. ⁴The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls. She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries. ⁵The name written on her forehead was a mystery:

*BABYLON THE GREAT
THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES
AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.*

⁶I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of God's holy people, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus. When I saw her, I was greatly astonished.

Note the unclean descriptions:

- a. On a beast covered with "blasphemous names"
- b. Holding a cup filled with "abominable things" as well as "filth of her adulteries"
- c. Drunk with the blood of the saints
- d. Note the title on her forehead (see v. 5)

3. The angelic explanation (7-18)

a. About the "beast" (7-14)

The woman (prostitute) is the anti-God world system supported by the beast (the Antichrist who supports the woman initially but will destroy her – see 15-17).

The beast (i.e. the Antichrist; cf. 13:1-3) was referred to by the angels as the one who "once was, now is not, and will come." Some believe the Antichrist will live, die and be resurrected. Others believe that a close association exists between the beast (Antichrist) and his nations ("seven heads and ten horns") such that the miraculous resuscitation actually refers to a once-dead nation that is revived.

What is clear is that demonic deception will be rampant over the earth and the unbelieving world will be "astonished when they see the beast" (8).

Insight:

If (as some scholars suggest) the seven heads refer to seven ruling kings over their own kingdoms, can they be identified? From John's perspective, "five have fallen" (10) likely refers to Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece (all who subjugated Israel at some point). The nation spoken of as "one is" (10) would be Rome (of John's day). The "other" not yet come would be the kingdom of the beast being spoken of. These interpretations are tentative at best, but reasonable possibilities.

"Ten Horns" probably refer to ten important administrative districts. They support and seek to expand the Beast's devilish plans. But they will fail.

Revelation 17:12-14

The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but who for one hour will receive authority as kings along with the beast. ¹³They have one purpose and will

give their power and authority to the beast. ¹⁴They will wage war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will triumph over them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings—and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers.

b. About the “woman” (prostitute) (15-18)

The woman personifies false religion extended over the waters (i.e. all the world’s peoples – see v. 15). At some point, likely at the midpoint of the Tribulation, the Antichrist will destroy “false religion” and institute worship of himself (thus ending the tenuous “covenant of peace”).

Note the following prophetic passages:

Daniel 9:27

He will confirm a covenant with many for one ‘seven.’ In the middle of the ‘seven’ he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.

Matthew 24:15

So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’ spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand...”

2 Thessalonians 2:4

He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

Revelation 13:8

All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the Lamb’s book of life, the Lamb who was slain from the creation of the world.

The Antichrist will succeed in putting away “the woman” (false worship). The reason it succeeds is that it is sovereignly permitted.

Revelation 17:17

For God has put it into their hearts to accomplish his purpose by agreeing to hand over to the beast their royal authority, until God’s words are fulfilled.

D. Commercial “Babylon”: Revelation 18:1-24

1. Angelic announcement (1-8)

a. First angel (1-3)

Revelation 18:1-3

After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven. He had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendor. ²With a mighty voice he shouted: “Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a dwelling for demons and a haunt for every impure spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable animal. ³For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries. The kings of the earth committed adultery with her, and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries.”

Insight (Tatford quoting Bruce Corbin, 523):

The commercial realm is not merely godless: it is controlled by evil forces and, when every spiritual restraint is withdrawn, those influences will be exerted to the full. Behind the purveyors of filthy and defiling pornography are impure spirits. At the back of frenzied finance and ruthless, dishonest commerce are spiritual forces. In many countries the political sphere is full of nepotism, jobbery and graft, and behind it all are unseen demoniacal powers. The whole cosmic system – essentially opposed to God as it is—is controlled by the devil himself (John 12:31).

b. Second angel (4-8)

In light of the devastating, vile, and materialistic bent of commercial Babylon, the second angel urges Tribulation saints to “come out” and flee this evil. This dark day will be judged soon.

Revelation 18:8

Therefore in one day her plagues will overtake her: death, mourning and famine. She will be consumed by fire, for mighty is the Lord God who judges her.

2. People's lament (9-20)

- a. Kings of the earth will "weep and mourn" their loss (upon Babylon's destruction) (9-10).
- b. Merchants of the earth will "weep and mourn" over their economic loss.
- c. Merchants of the sea will "weep and mourn."

Revelation 18:19

"Woe! Woe to you, great city, where all who had ships on the sea became rich through her wealth! In one hour she has been brought to ruin!"

3. Angelic pronouncement (21-24)

The aftermath of the fall of commercial, materialistic Babylon will be completely disruptive and destructive, as well as totally widespread in scope.

NT Warning:

During the Tribulation, many will "sell their souls" for the seeming comfort and benefits of "Commercial Babylon."

Hear the NT warning/encouragement for living in the midst of wealth.

1 Timothy 6:17-19 NLT

Command *those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. ¹⁸**Command** them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. ¹⁹In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.*

VI. RECAP

A. Judgment and Joy

The final judgments ("bowls") are sure and deserved. But in Revelation 15 we also have the joyous song of the martyred ones who did not bend the knee to the beast. The judgment of God is harsh and just, yet the judgment of God is also awe-inspiring to those who know and embrace Him as the Lord God Almighty.

B. Sovereign Authority

The bowl judgments not only express God's wrath against sin but against the beast who would challenge God's divine authority. The age old question arises again..."who has the right to rule?"

C. Babylon

Religious and commercial "Babylon" is judged in Revelation 17-18. It highlights two arenas of life where man can fail so miserably: what he worships and what he possesses. Ultimately there is but One who is worthy to be worshiped. All else is veneration of idols (anything, anyone, any pursuit, any desire that takes God's rightful place).

1 John 5:21

Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.

SESSION 6

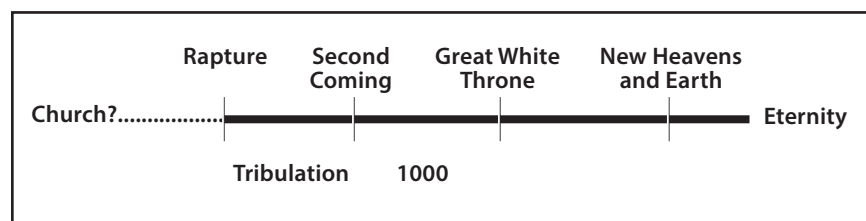
("Second Coming" to the "Ages to Come"—Revelation 19-22)

I. PRAYER

II. AGES TO COME

BOOK OF REVELATION		
"4 Periods (Ages) of Time"		
Revelation Chapters	Time Period	Length
1-3	Church Age	2000+ years
4-19	Tribulation Age	7 years
20	Millennial Kingdom Age	1000 years
21-22	Eternal Age (to come)	Endless years

III. THEOLOGICAL CONTENT



Note:

- (1) This chart represents the Pre-tribulational, Pre-millennial viewpoint (the interpretive stance taken in this study).
- (2) Our theological conviction is that the Church present at the time of the Rapture will not go through the Tribulation (described in Rev. 6-19).

- (3) Our view suggests that there will likely be a “transition period” of days (weeks, months??) between the actual Second Coming and the establishment (beginning) of the Millennial Kingdom (or Davidic Kingdom or Thousand Year Reign).
- (4) Our view believes the thousand years (millennium) to be literal years as to duration.

IV. MAJOR PURPOSES OF THE SECOND COMING

A. The Second Coming Fulfills the Prophetic Promise

Acts 1:9-11

After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. ¹⁰They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹“Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

B. The Second Coming Completes (Ends) the Seventieth Week

Daniel 9:24-27

Seventy ‘sevens’ are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the Most Holy Place. ²⁵“Know and understand this: From the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven ‘sevens,’ and sixty-two ‘sevens.’ It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. ²⁶After the sixty-two ‘sevens,’ the Anointed One will be put to death and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. ²⁷He will confirm a covenant with many for one ‘seven.’ In the middle of the ‘seven’ he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.

C. The Second Coming Culminates the Spiritual Revival/
Regathering of Israel

Isaiah 43:5-7

Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bring your children from the east and gather you from the west. ⁶I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' and to the south, 'Do not hold them back.' Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth— ⁷everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.

Jeremiah 33:6-9 (Promise of the Coming Kingdom)

*Nevertheless, I will bring health and healing to it; I will **heal my people** and will let them enjoy **abundant peace and security**. ⁷I will bring Judah and Israel back from captivity and will rebuild them as they were before. ⁸I will **cleanse** them from all the sin they have committed against me and will **forgive** all their sins of rebellion against me. ⁹Then this city will bring me renown, joy, praise and honor before all nations on earth that hear of all the good things I do for it; and they will be in awe and will tremble at the **abundant prosperity and peace** I provide for it.*

D. The Second Coming Precedes the Judgment of Sheep/
Goats and Resurrection of Believing Dead (OT and
Tribulation)

Matthew 25:31-34 (cf. 25:31-46)

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. ³⁴"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.' "

Daniel 12:1-4 (cf. Rev. 19:11-21; 20:4-6)

At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered. ²Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others

to shame and everlasting contempt. ³Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever. ⁴But you, Daniel, roll up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge.

E. The Second Coming Prepares for the Davidic Kingdom (Millennium)

Isaiah 9:6-7

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. **He will reign** on David's **throne** and over his **kingdom**, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.*

Luke 1:30-33

But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

V. BIBLICAL DEVELOPMENT: REVELATION 19-22

A. The Second Coming: Revelation 19

1. Prelude (19:1-10)

a. "The Four Hallelujahs" (1-8)

Prior to the Second Coming there is rejoicing in heaven by (1) a great multitude (again; 3); by the twenty-four elders and four living creatures (4-5); and by what sounded like a great multitude (6-8).

The fourth hallelujah follows:

Revelation 19:6-8

*⁶ Then I heard what sounded like a **great multitude**, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns ⁷ Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. ⁸ Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear."*

(Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God's holy people.)

b. The wedding supper (feast) of the Lamb

Revelation 19:9

*Then the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the **wedding supper of the Lamb!**" And he added, "These are the true words of God."*

Excursis: "Wedding of the Lamb"/ Typical Jewish Wedding

In His earthly ministry, Jesus (also known as the Lamb of God) often referred to Himself as the bridegroom:

Matthew 9:14-15

Then John's disciples came and asked him, "How is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but your disciples do not fast?" ¹⁵ Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast."

John 3:27-30

To this John replied, "A person can receive only what is given them from heaven. ²⁸ You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Messiah but am sent ahead of him.'²⁹ The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. ³⁰ He must become greater; I must become less."

(Cont'd)

Further, Revelation 19:7 identifies the bride which the NT further develops as the Church (see 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-32). The imagery here is Christ the bridegroom and the Church as the bride. Historically and culturally there were at least “5 Stages of a Typical Jewish Wedding” (cf. Fruchtenbaum, *Footsteps*, 110-112).

Stage One: Covenant: Betrothal, Dowry Paid

As parents would choose a bride for their son, so the Bride (Church) was chosen by God (Eph. 1:4). This is the betrothal. The dowry (bride-price) was the blood of Christ. The sole responsibility of the bride was to be pure (faithful) and be ready (expectant).

Stage Two: Groom to Bride’s Father’s House: Ascension (Acts 1:9)

A typical Jewish wedding could be arranged (Stage One) months or years apart before the fetching of the bride.

Stage Three: Groom Returns for Bride: Rapture (Jn. 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:13-18)

Stage Four: Groom Takes Bride Home/Consummation

Stage Five: Wedding Supper/Feast

Some see the Feast in Heaven after the Rapture; others see the Feast during the Millennial Kingdom.

2. Return (19:11-21)

a. Christ returns to the earth (11-16)

Revelation 19:11-16

I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. ¹² His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. ¹³ He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. ¹⁴ The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. ¹⁵ Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the

nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. ¹⁶On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

- (1) The rider on the white horse is "Faithful and True" (11).
- (2) The rider "judges" with justice (11) with eyes like "blazing fire" (intense, searching scrutiny) (12).
- (3) The rider has many "crowns" indicating that He alone has the ultimate right to rule.
- (4) The rider has an unknown name (12).
- (5) The rider has a robe dipped in blood (judgment of enemies?) (13) and His name is the "Word of God."
- (6) The rider is accompanied by the armies of heaven (14).
- (7) The rider comes in judgment ("out of his mouth comes a sharp sword") (15).
- (8) The rider will rule with an iron scepter (15).
- (9) The rider comes to judge with the "fury of the wrath of God Almighty" (15).
- (10) The rider is identified (16):
KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS

THE TWO "COMINGS" OF CHRIST

1) First Coming: Suffering Servant
(Isa. 52:13-53:12)

2) Second Coming: Conquering Judge
(Rev. 19:11-21)

b. Christ brings victorious judgment (17-21)

Revelation 19:19-21

Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and his army. ²⁰But the beast

was captured, and with it the false prophet who had performed the signs on its behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.²¹ The rest were killed with the sword coming out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

These verses summarize what is commonly known as the Campaign of Armageddon. This is the final, climatic war of the Great Tribulation. Hitchcock (373) lists ten primary passages that describe this campaign:

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| (1) Psalm 2 | (6) Zechariah 14:1-15 |
| (2) Isaiah 34:1-16 | (7) Malachi 4:1-5 |
| (3) Isaiah 63:1-6 | (8) Revelation 14:14-20 |
| (4) Joel 3:1-17 | (9) Revelation 16:12-16 |
| (5) Zechariah 12:1-9 | (10) Revelation 19:19-21 |

B. The Millennial Reign: Revelation 20

1. Purpose of the Millennium

a. To fulfill OT promises (and Covenants)

Luke 1:30-33

But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God."³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.

³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David,³³ and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

b. To answer visibly, tangibly, physically the theological question: "Who has the right to rule?"

Christ alone has this authority and it will be instituted in the Millennial Reign.

c. To redeem creation

Romans 8:19-22

For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed.²⁰ For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope²¹ that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

d. To bring peace and justice and abundant prosperity to the earth.

Isaiah 2:2-5 (cf. Isa 11:1-9, others)

In the last days the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.³ Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.⁴ He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.⁵ Come, descendants of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the LORD.

2. Description of the Millennium

Many of the OT prophets speak of the time of Messianic rule. From scattered passages throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, the Davidic Kingdom will be a reign of peace, prosperity, safety, justice, righteousness, holiness (purity), spirituality (worship), healthiness, and so on.

3. Exposition of the Millennium: Revelation 20

a. Before it comes (20:1-5)

Revelation 20:1-3: Satan bound

And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. ²He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. ³He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

Revelation 20:4: Believers reign

I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

b. When it comes (20:6)

Revelation 20:6

Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

c. The final defeat of Satan (20:7-10)

(1) Released for a final confrontation (7-8)

(2) Defeated in the final insurrection (9)

(3) Judged with eternal torment (10)

Revelation 20:10

And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

d. The Great White Throne Judgment (20:11-15)

Following the Second Coming, the Millennial Reign, the release and final defeat of Satan comes the final, complete judgment known as the Great White Throne judgement.

(1) The throne (11)

Revelation 20:11

*Then I saw a **great white throne** and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them.*

(2) The dead (unsaved) and judgment (12-15)

(a) All unsaved dead stand before this throne (12).

(b) All saved are listed in the Book of Life (12).

(c) All unsaved dead are judged according to their works/deeds (12)

Romans 3:10

As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one..."

Romans 3:23

...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Revelation 20:14-15

Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.

¹⁵ *Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.*

C. Ages to Come (Eternal State): Revelation 21:1-22:5

1. The new heaven and earth (21:1-2)

After the final judgment and sentencing comes the new age of everlasting, eternal joy. The old order was tainted, corrupted by sin (humanity and creation). That sinful condition must be purged and refined by bringing forth the new.

2 Peter 3:10

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.

Psalms 102:25-26

In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. ²⁶They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. Like clothing you will change them and they will be discarded.

Insight:

One thorny issue on this event questions whether this is a “renovation” or a total “re-creation.” Conservative commentators are divided on the issue.

2. The new order (21:3-5)

- a. God will dwell intimately with the redeemed humanity (3).
- b. God will soothe all distress and banish death, mourning, crying, and pain (4).

Revelation 21:5

He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

3. The old order (21:6-8)

The new, eternal arrangement of saved believers is contrasted to eight categories of unsaved unbelievers who will experience the “second death” (eternal separation).

4. The New Jerusalem (21:9-22:5)

The majority of Revelation 21 describes the New Jerusalem (specifically referred to as the bride, the wife of the Lamb – thus a close connection of God’s people and the stupendous sight of the massive city).

Fruchtenbaum (369-73) highlights the following features of the descriptive passage:

- a. The City has the fullness of God's Shekinah glory (21:11).
- b. The City has high walls and gates which speak of absolute protection and security in the age to come (21:12-13).
- c. The City has foundations of the wall with the twelve names of the apostles; this speaks of permanence (21:14).
- d. The City has impressive measurements (a cube or pyramid 1500 miles square); some see literal miles, others see symbolic hyperbole to magnify the greatness of the City (21:15-17).
- e. The City has precious metals and jewels in its structure, a city of unbelievable beauty and value (21:18-21).
- f. The City has several omissions.

Revelation 21:22-24

I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

²⁴The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it.

- g. The City has special inhabitants who are qualified to enter, those whose names are written in the Book of Life (21:25-27).
- h. The City has the river of life (22:1).
- i. The City has the tree of life (22:2).
- J. The City has blessed occupants who will see God's face and live in God's light (22:3-5).

VI. EPILOGUE (TO REVELATION): REVELATION 22

The visions and prophecy of the Book of Revelation have been completed. The book began as a revelation of Jesus to John through an angel (1:1); the book ends with the angel relaying final words of Jesus ("Behold, I am coming soon!").

A. Jesus' First Words (22:6-7)

The angel affirms that the words given in Revelation are "trustworthy and true" (6). Then, the angel relays the words of Jesus to John.

Revelation 22:7

"Look, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy written in this scroll."

Insight:

The Book of Revelation tells the reader how things will eventually turn out...and if you are assured of that, then one can order and live daily life accordingly (in light of future realities). We have come to the end of human history...God wins!!

B. John's Response (22:8-11)

1. John confirmed that he was the one who viewed these things (8).
2. John inappropriately fell before the angel in a posture of worship; the angel rebukes him, "Worship God!" (8-9).
3. John heard the angel's word to not keep these visions and revelations private but to share them (10).

C. Jesus' Second Words (22:12-16)

Revelation 22:12-13, 16

Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

¹⁶ *I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.*

D. John's Second Response (22:17-19)

These words may be John's response or they could be a continuation of Jesus' second address. Either way the meaning is two-fold:

1. An invitation to come to Christ (17).
2. A warning to not add to or tamper with the words of this prophetic book (18).

E. Jesus' final Words (22:20^a)

Revelation 22:20^a

He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon."

F. John's Final Words (22:20^b-21)

Revelation 22:20^b-21

...Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. ²¹ The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen.

VII. RECAP

A. Promise and Fulfillment

The Second Coming, the various Judgments, the Davidic Kingdom (1000 years), and the Eternal age are clearly promised in the Scriptures. For the believer our trust is that the God who is a Promise-Giver will also be a Promise-Keeper.

B. Second Coming

At the end of the seven years of tribulation, Christ will return suddenly, bodily, visibly, and literally to the earth. The differences between the Rapture and the Second Coming are summarized by Hitchcock (151):

THE RAPTURE	THE RETURN (SECOND COMING)
Christ comes in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).	Christ comes to the earth (Zechariah 14:4).
Christ comes for His saints (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).	Christ comes with His saints (1 Thessalonians 3:13; Jude 1:14).
Believers depart the earth (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).	Unbelievers are taken away (Matthew 24:37-41).
Christ claims His bride.	Christ comes with His bride.
Christ gathers His own (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).	Angels gather the elect (Matthew 24:31).
Christ comes to reward (1 Thessalonians 4:17).	Christ comes to judge (Matthew 25:31-46).
Not in the Old Testament (1 Corinthians 15:51)	Predicted often in the Old Testament
There are no signs. It is imminent.	Portended by many signs (Matthew 24:4-29)
It is a time of blessing and comfort (1 Thessalonians 4:17-18).	It is a time of destruction and judgment (2 Thessalonians 2:8-12).
Involves believers only (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-55; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)	Involves Israel and the Gentile nations (Matthew 24:1-25:46)

C. Millennium

The Davidic Kingdom was described by the OT prophets as a day of unparalleled peace and prosperity, of justice and righteousness. During this period of time the world system will no longer be anti-God and Satan will be bound. But a problem will remain. Men and women will still have active sin natures; all born in these days will need to come to faith in Jesus Christ, Matchless Savior and Kingly Lord.

D. Great White Throne

The day of final judgment will come. All unbelievers will have to acknowledge the lordship and divine sovereignty of the Lord Jesus.

John 5:22-23

Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son,²³ that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.

E. Eternal State

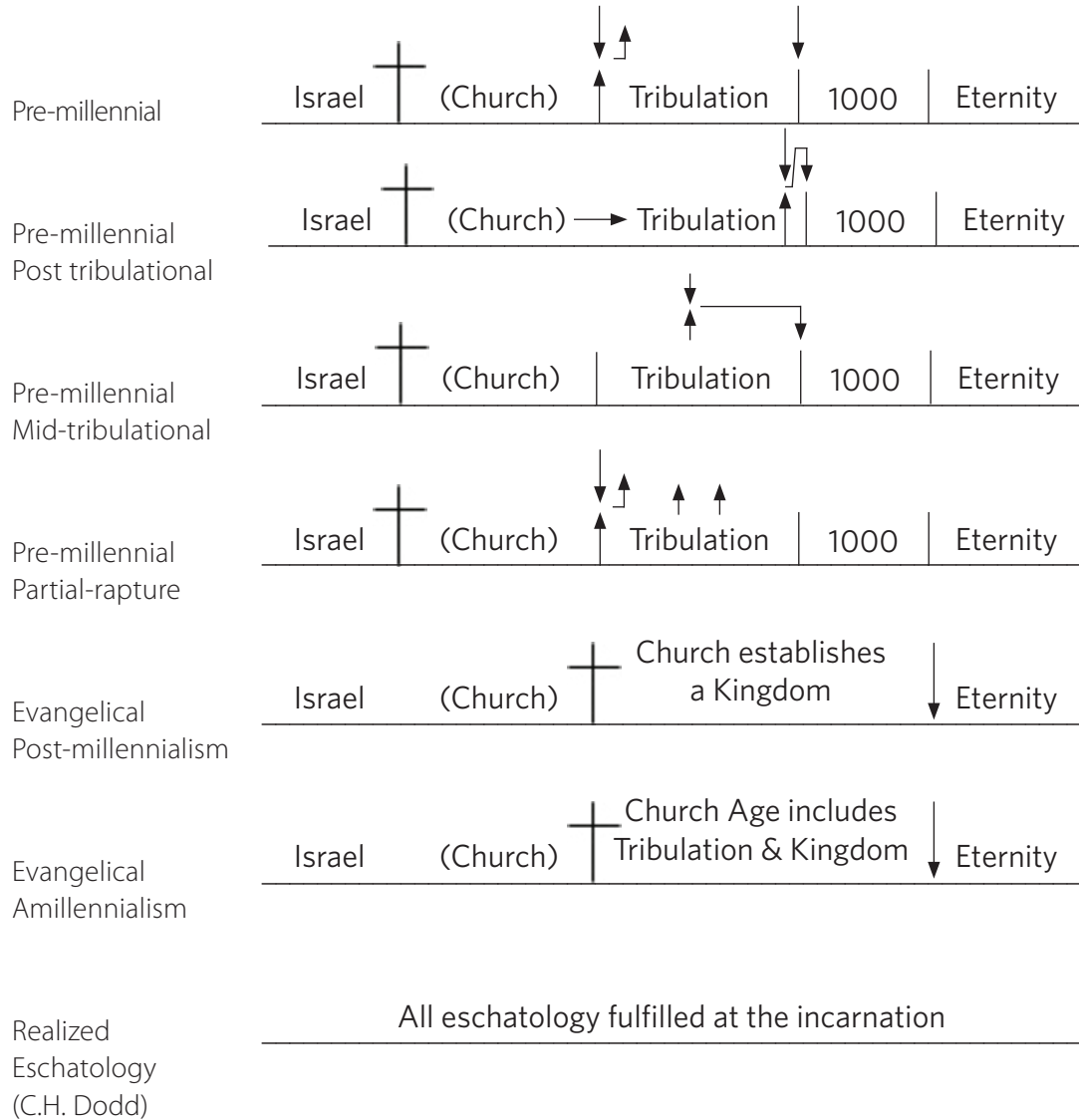
The new heavens and new earth will be the dwelling place of God's people. Some details are given in a somewhat sketchy way, but as 1 Corinthians 2:9 notes,

*no eye has seen,
no ear has heard,
no mind has conceived
what God has prepared
for those who love him—*

AMEN. COME, LORD JESUS.

APPENDIX A

FINAL CONSUMMATION Divergent Evangelical Views of Major Unfilled Prophecies¹



¹This chart is a summarization of key material found in Robert P. Lightner, *Prophecy in the Ring*, pp. 32-58. The ideas of this section have been modified in chart form.

APPENDIX B

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