

# Revelation in Outline



It is difficult to construct a satisfactory outline of Revelation, for the work contains doublets, artificial constructions, and repetitious elements. The writer did not set out to systematize doctrine, but to stun his readers with images and visions. Revelation is a carefully structured work in which the number seven plays a central role. The book's contents may be summarized as follows:

<b>Introduction (1:1-20)</b>		
1	1:1-3	Source and purpose
2	1:4,5a	Greetings
3	1:5b-8	Jesus the Messiah's past, present, and future work
4	1:9-20	John's inaugural vision on the island of Patmos
<b>The Seven Letters (2:1-3:22)</b>		
1	2:1-7	Ephesus
2	2:8-11	Smyrna
3	2:12-17	Pergamum
4	2:18-29	Thyatira
5	3:1-16	Sardis
6	3:7-13	Philadelphia
7	3:14-22	Laodicea
<b>The Seven Seals (4:1-8:1)</b>		
	4:1-11	The setting in heaven:
	5:1-14	● God enthroned in glory
		● The scroll and the Lamb
1	6:1,2	First seal: white horse
2	6:3,4	Second seal: red horse
3	6:5,6	Third seal: black horse
4	6:7,8	Fourth seal: green horse
5	6:9-11	Fifth seal: martyrs beneath an altar
6	6:12-17	Sixth seal: cosmic signs; many seek to escape from God
		<i>Two supplementary visions:</i>
	7:1-8	● Marking of 144,000 on earth
	7:9-17	● The elect before God's throne
7	8:1	Seventh seal: silence in heaven
<b>The Seven Trumpets (8:2-11:18)</b>		
	8:2-6	The setting in heaven: seven angels with trumpets; signs in nature
1	8:7	First trumpet blast: a third of the earth is burned
2	8:8,9	Second trumpet blast: a burning mountain thrown into the sea
3	8:10,11	Third trumpet blast: a burning star falls into the sea
4	8:12,13	Fourth trumpet blast: a third of the sun, moon, and stars darkened
5	9:1-12	Fifth trumpet blast (first woe): deadly locusts, bottomless pit
6	9:13-21; 11:14	Sixth trumpet blast (second woe): angels, army, destruction
		<i>Two supplementary visions:</i>
	10:1-11	● The angel with the little scroll
	11:1-13	● Measuring the Temple; the two witnesses

7	11:14–18	Seventh trumpet blast (third woe): God's Kingdom breaks in
<b>The Seven Signs (11:19–15:4)</b>		
	11:19	The setting in heaven
1		First sign:
	12:1–6	● The woman and the child
	12:7–12	● Michael and the dragon
	12:13–17	● The dragon pursues the woman
2	13:1–10	Second sign: the beast from the sea
3	13:11–18	Third sign: the beast from the land
4	14:1–5	Fourth sign: the 144,000 and the Lamb
5	14:6–13	Fifth sign: three proclamations
6	14:14–20	Sixth sign: three voices proclaim messages
	15:1	<i>A supplementary vision: Seven angels with seven plagues</i>
7	15:2–4	Seventh sign: sea of glass
<b>The Seven Bowls (15:5–16:21)</b>		
	15:5–16:1	The setting in heaven
1	16:2	The first bowl: sores afflict those who worship the beast
2	16:3	Second bowl: sea turns into blood; all life within it dies
3	16:4–7	Third bowl: rivers and springs turn into blood
4	16:8,9	Fourth bowl: sun's heat scorches the godless
5	16:10,11	Fifth bowl: beast's throne and kingdom enshrouded in darkness
6	16:12	Sixth bowl: Euphrates river dries up
	16:13–16	<i>A supplementary vision: demons set stage for battle at Harmagedon</i>
7	16:17–21	Seventh bowl: storms, hailstones; Rome splits, cities crumble
<b>The Seven Sights (17:1–20:15)</b>		
	17:1–18	Introductory: The harlot on the beast
1	18:1–8	First sight: two angels with messages
2	18:9–20	Second sight: kings, merchants, sailors, dirges
3	18:21–24	Third sight: Babylon (Rome!) is silenced
4	19:1–10	Fourth sight: God's people rejoice
5	19:11–21	Fifth sight: victory over the beast and false prophet
6	20:1–3	Sixth sight: the dragon is chained
	20:4–10	<i>A supplementary vision: God's elect reign for 1,000 years during the period of Satan's release</i>
7	20:11–15	Seventh sight: final judgment
<b>The New Creation and New Jerusalem (21:1–22:5)</b>		
1	21:1–8	The voice from the throne
2	21:9–22:5	A vision of the Heavenly Jerusalem
<b>Epilogue (22:6–21)</b>		
	22:6–20	Final attestations
	22:21	Final blessing

The above outline reveals that Revelation contains six major segments that are “book-ended” by opening and closing sections, 1:1–20, 22:1–21. Some suggest that the fact that there are six major sections (one short of the perfect “seven”) declares that perfection will surface only in the coming Eternal Age. It is also significant that in the six major sections (each with seven parts) there are seven supplementary visions.