

The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Overview

They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because He is Lord of lords and King of kings – and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers. - Revelation 17:14

Prologue

Jesus introduces Himself and His servant John, who is going to be showing us the things we are about to read, things which hold a special blessing in their revealing. An introduction to the message we're about to receive. The overwhelming idea is: *this message is from Jesus the Christ, the firstborn from the dead, the Almighty ruler - the Alpha and the Omega. It's a big deal.*

Scene One – **Seven Letters** (Chapters 1 - 3)

1. the loveless
2. the persecuted
3. the compromising
4. the corrupt
5. the dead
6. the faithful
7. the lukewarm

John is in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and he sees a vision of Christ, who tells him to write certain things to the saints. Jesus has a personalized message for each of seven particular churches in Asia. These churches each have significant characteristics worthy of note. Moreover, they represent the Church as a corporate whole and most definitely apply in principle to our activities today. There's a general flow of the message for each one – Jesus acknowledges who He's speaking to, introduces Himself, commends the saints, condemns the evildoings, commands repentance, admonishes the saints, and makes a promise to the faithful. That we're talking about seven churches emphasizes the fact that these are God's churches. However, many of these churches have let the world influence them, rather than influencing the world around them. These basic problems have always been a stumbling block for the people of God, and they still are today. But to him who overcomes, and remains faithful till the end, Christ promises *everlasting life*.

Scene Two – **Seven Seals** (Chapters 4 – 7)

1. the white horse
2. the red horse
3. the black horse
4. the pale horse
5. the cry of the martyrs
6. the earth shattered
7. the sound of silence

After these things, John receives a vision of the Throne Room of Heaven. This is the Supreme Headquarters of the Lord! Around the great throne sit twenty-four thrones for the

twenty-four elders. These elders represent all of God's people. They are priests, like the twenty-four courses of priesthood. We have the twelve sons of Israel or the twelve patriarchs from the Old Testament and the twelve leaders in the New Testament - the apostles. This is a very meaningful setting, which uses many symbols we find in the Hebrew Scriptures to describe this heavenly realm. We're going to see four living creatures – cherubim. High ranking angels – the ones who were set guard around the tree of life, who we see on the very Ark of the Covenant. We're going to see a scroll that had been sealed up with seven seals, and find One worthy to loose the scroll of its seals. The opening of these seals uncovers and reveals what was formerly unknown or a mystery, until all is revealed. In these seals we're going to see four horsemen bringing punishment and judgment, we're going to see martyr's crying out and told they must only rest a little while longer, till all is fulfilled. Then we see the earth disturbed in cosmic proportions, so much that all the great and mighty men of the earth hide themselves in caves, because the wrath of the Lord has come. After these things, we see an image of all God's people, a great innumerable multitude of the faithful saints, who washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. Before anything else comes to pass, the servants of God must be sealed.

Scene Three – **Seven Trumpets** (Chapters 8 – 11)

1. the wildfire
2. the stricken seas
3. the waters struck
4. the skies altered
5. the locusts
6. the four angels
7. the kingdom come

The seventh seal holds the seven trumpets. Before the trumpets earth, an eerie silence falls in heaven. Something big is about to happen. This is the calm before the storm. The seals were used for concealing, thus ripping them off was to reveal. Trumpets are warning judgments. Not everything is going to be destroyed, yet. The wicked are supposed to pay attention and repent. If things haven't gotten serious yet, they're about to. We're going to see the ungodly world hit by a number of devastating plagues, worse than the plagues of Egypt. We'll see two witnesses of God proclaiming the Truth, and we'll see them killed, then resurrected and the Kingdom proclaimed. The saints are comforted through this time of suffering. The saints are going to be in for the long-haul, but they are going to be protected by the Living, Powerful God. This too shall pass!

Scene Four – **Seven Signs** (Chapters 12 – 14)

1. the woman
2. the dragon
3. the Child
4. the sea beast
5. the earth beast
6. the redeemed
7. the angels

John is now presented with a violent scene of some nasty beasts, and the righteous who oppose them. He sees a woman and a Child, being persecuted by a Dragon. There's a war in heaven and the angels fight the Dragon. Under consideration here is God's people being persecuted by the Dragon – the serpent of old – Satan. God protects the woman in the wilderness. Two beasts arise, one from the sea and one from the earth, empowered by the Dragon, secular and religiously corrupted powers, who compromise with the Dragon, forming a sort of *unholy trinity*. The conflict is between the Seed of the woman and the Dragon. If this were a battle of men, the outcome might be doubtful, or if it were a battle of men versus the Dragon, the Dragon would most surely win. But this is Jesus against the Dragon – the victory is assured. The Dragon cannot defeat the Christ and he cannot defeat His people together, so he tries to pick off individuals, but those that remain faithful to Christ, fight on His side – together with all the saints, will win. We need one another to fight this Battle.

Scene Five – **Seven Bowls** (Chapters 15 – 16)

1. loathsome sores
2. sea turn to blood
3. waters turn to blood
4. men scorched
5. darkness
6. river dries up
7. earth utterly shaken

A great and marvelous sign appears of God's Holy Temple and seven angels who have the **last** seven plagues. This is *it!* God will pour out His *final*, holy and **righteous** judgment and the saints will be vindicated. We're going to see the earth utterly shaken and the unrighteous destroyed. We're going to see this happen in a series of plagues, held in bowls, and in the scene to come we'll hear more details about what has happened. The trumpets were warnings – their damage is partial. The bowls are complete judgments – their damage is total, and it is finished.

Scene Six – **Seven Backfires of Babylon** (Chapters 17 – 18)

1. the woman
2. the beast
3. the seven heads
4. the ten horns
5. the seven kings
6. the many waters
7. the golden cup

The bowls have been poured out and the judgment completed. But we haven't gotten the details yet. We know that Babylon is fallen, but why, and how? Babylon will be identified for the saints and we're going to know without question that she has been utterly destroyed; we're going to see why it was righteous for God to punish her. This is going to be revealed through a series of characters – the scarlet woman and the scarlet beast. Satan and his allies on the earth. Babylon, the seductress of the world, the mother of prostitutes, has fallen, and stands as a warning to every nation in every time: *Whosoever killeth with the sword, by the sword shall he be killed.*

Scene Seven – **Seven Visions of Victory** (Chapters 19 – 20)

1. the Marriage
2. the Rider on the White Horse
3. the Enemies Fall
4. the Key Holder
5. the Reign of the Saints
6. the Rebellion Crushed
7. the Great White Throne

Christ and His saints triumph over Babylon. Victory has most assuredly come. Again we're going to see the woman and the beast destroyed, and the supremacy of God and His people. The message is clear – with Christ we **cannot** lose! Whatever happens, as long as we stay true, *we win*. They can take away everything we have, they can take our lives, but they cannot break the tie that binds us to our Lord. We have the all knowing, all seeing, all powerful, ever righteous God, Lord of all Creation, **fighting** for us. *This is the Final Battle*. Christ **wins** – the Enemy is destroyed. *This is the Final Judgment*. Death and Hades are cast into the lake of fire. *The saints reign*.

Scene Eight – **Seven Revelations** (Chapters 21 – 22)

1. the Holy City
2. the Promised Land
3. the Light of Life
4. the River of Life
5. the Word of Life
6. the Blessing
7. the Warning

There's no going back now. The prior events are irrevocable – the saints look forward to new things. **It is done!** John sees a new heaven and a new earth, a New Jerusalem, God's Holy Dwelling Place for His people. The city is stable and secure and strong. The foundation is sturdy, and the appearance is glorious. It is **important**, and so is her testimony. *This is a Holy City* – God's City come to Earth. We see a picture like the Garden and we receive a wonderful promise. *This is the Revelation of Jesus Christ*

Epilogue – They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because He is Lord of lords and King of kings – and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers.

Amen! Even so Lord, let it be so.

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