

The Book of Revelation – Structure and Themes

Pastor Hetherington - Bethel Reformed Baptist Church - Hemel Hempstead, England

Following the Lord Jesus Christ’s resurrection and ascension upon His throne in heaven, and up until His second coming to judge the world is known as “The Gospel Age”. Also known as “these last times” 1 Peter 1:20. The risen glorified Son of God now reigns as Prophet, Priest and King of His Church and will soon be revealed to all men as the judge of all the earth. Having died for the sins of His elect, He is crowned with glory, see Psalm 110:1-5, Acts 2:34, Hebrews 1:13, Luke 20:39–43, Revelation 12:5. In this Gospel age, He is gathering His Church out of the world, by the ministry of His Word and by the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit, quickening and drawing all that God the Father gave Him {John 6:37} from before the foundation of the world. He reigns as Sovereign and Supreme working over all of nature, time and all events for the glory of God’s Name and His everlasting Kingdom, and for the good of His beloved bride the Church. He will then come again to raise the bodies of all men from the dust, and thus reuniting body and soul of all, and to pass final judgement on the wicked. Key Features. The man-child in Revelation 12:5 is the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Lamb of God slain for the sins of His people and has been taken up to His throne until His final return. The dragon in Revelation 12:9 is Satan. The woman in the wilderness of Chapter 12:1-2, 14 is the Church, or the true bride. The first beast coming from the waters Rev 13:1 is the world and the world’s kingdoms see Daniel 7:1-15, the second beast, the false lamblike prophet who gives power to the first beast in the form of religious persecution. The Harlot that rides the beast is a pseudo-church, a pretentious bride and a postulating city mimicking the true Church and city of God, but is the Roman Catholic Church of Rome, called Babylon, “the mother of harlots” who says in Revelation 18:7, “I sit as a queen, and I am no widow”. This is not the language of the world but a false church, see Matthew 25:1-6. The Pope, in his perpetual and successive office is the head of the Catholic Church of Rome and is “the man of sin”, placing himself in the house of God and above Gods Word, as described in 2 Thessalonians 2:3. This position also accords with the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith Ch 26 par 4, and the Westminster Confession of Faith Ch 25 par 6.

The Book of the Revelation is structured into 7 cycles, thus giving different 7 clear aspects of events during the Gospel age beholding each from 7 vantage points.

All 7 cycles (as pictured below) run synchronously (*syn* meaning together) (*chronos* meaning time,) IE “at the same time” or in parallel with each other throughout the Gospel age.

The symbolism of the Gospel Age is consistently depicted by 1260 Days = 3 ½ years or 42 months. See Daniel 12:7, Revelation 11:2, Revelation 13:5, Revelation 11:11, Revelation 12:14.

The Church of God are God’s children and are identified in Scripture by the following titles: The elect, the bride of Christ, the true Israel, the circumcised in heart by a new birth. The Church is also referred to as the 24 elders, or the 144,000 and whose garments are made white in the blood of the Lamb and are taken from every kindred, tribe tongue and nation, Revelation 7:9.

The Church is the fulfilment of the promise of God the Father to the Lord Jesus Christ. See Psalm 2:8 and then confirmed by oath in covenant to Abraham, Genesis 22:17 see also Galatians 3:28–29

1 st Cycle	2 nd Cycle	3 rd Cycle	4 th Cycle	5 th Cycle	6 th Cycle	7 th Cycle
<p>The 7 Golden Candlesticks or Lampstands (The Church) Revelation Chapters 1-3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Theme</p> <p>The Lord Jesus Christ is now by His Spirit walking in the midst of His Church His Golden Candlesticks. Revelation 3:1. Christ is building, watching, and preserving His purchased bride the Church, until he finally returns. These Churches were actual but also suitably representative.</p>	<p>The 7 Seals (Decrees) Revelation Chapters 4-7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Theme</p> <p>Every event throughout the world, is sovereignly decreed by God. Each event, no matter what, is subservient to the cause and purposes of God the Son who is the Conquering King. Rev 6:2 also later cf/ Revelation 19:11–16</p>	<p>The 7 Trumpets Revelation Chapters 8-11</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Theme</p> <p>All events as foretold and that are unfolding before our eyes do warn men, but also are given to encourage the Church that The Lord Jesus Christ shall return soon to judge all men. Lost men do not repent despite these trumpet warnings. Revelation 9:20</p>	<p>The enemies of Christ and His bride Revelation Chapters 12-14</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Theme</p> <p>The unseen spiritual enemies of Christ. These enemies are led by Satan who has 7 deceiving and pretentious crowns. The Church whom Satan is wroth with are precisely those who love God and keep His Commandments, See, Revelation 12:17. See also Jeremiah 31:33</p>	<p>The 7 Plagues, also referred to as bowls or vials poured out on the earth and the inhabitants. Revelation Chapters 15-16</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Theme</p> <p>Present judgements, These are poured out through the present age. Whereby Satan and man’s sin and wrath are restrained until the Lord returns to judge all men.</p>	<p>The Harlot (the false bride) who will be finally judged. Revelation Chapters 17-19</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Theme</p> <p>The harlot (the false bride who made drunk the earth with her harlotry, Revelation 17:2 and drank the blood of the saints) Revelation 17:6. Should be known by the elect. The Book of the Revelation is given to reveal and warn the elect from spiritual danger of apostacy.</p>	<p>Revelation Chapters 20-22</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Theme</p> <p>Christ Reigning as conquering King now and soon to be returning to judge and finally to receive His bride (the Church) forever. The Book closes with most solemn warnings, vital exhortations and wonderful promises.</p>
<p>The whole Church with God Revelation 4:10</p> <p>General Resurrection & Judgement of all men concluded.</p>	<p>The whole Church with God Revelation 7:9</p> <p>General Resurrection & Judgement of all men concluded.</p>	<p>The whole Church with God Revelation 11:11–13</p> <p>General Resurrection & Judgement of all men concluded.</p>	<p>The whole Church with God Revelation 14:14–20</p> <p>General Resurrection & Judgement of all men concluded.</p>	<p>The whole Church with God Revelation 16:17–21</p> <p>General Resurrection & Judgement of all men concluded.</p>	<p>The whole Church with God Revelation 19:20-22</p> <p>General Resurrection & Judgement of all men concluded.</p>	<p>The whole Church with God Revelation 22:1–5</p> <p>General Resurrection & Judgement of all men concluded.</p>