

## **Study Guide #15: Introduction to Revelation, Part II**

### **Introduction**

Read Explorer III, Study Guide #14 before studying this one because it prepares you for this Study Guide. In Study Guide #14, we discussed the human author, probable date for the book, principles of apocalyptic prophecies, and the existence of heavenly sanctuary or sanctuary-like scenes as the key to Revelation.

### **Question #1: Of what significance are the heavenly sanctuary or sanctuary-like scenes in Revelation?**

**Answer:** In Explorer III, Study Guide #14, we outlined 7 heavenly sanctuary or sanctuary-like scenes and suggested that each of them introduces a major section of Revelation. Here we make that point clear. *First*, many key words, phrases, or concepts are repeated in what can be deduced is the opposite section later in the book. *Second*, the major theme in the earlier section is often addressed in a later section, usually as a fulfillment or an answer to it. This cements our conclusion that there are parallel sections in Revelation. In fact, they constitute an *inverse parallelism*, which simply means that the 1<sup>st</sup> and last sections are parallel sections, as are the 2<sup>nd</sup> and next to last sections, and so on. This structural design is called a chiasm (kī'-asm), a not uncommon literary structure in the Hebrew thought of the Bible writers. The evidence for this chiasm follows:

#### *Prologue*

1:1	Sent by an angel; "things which must shortly take place"	22:6
1:3	"Blessed is he who...keep" "the words of this prophecy"	22:7
	"Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."	
1:4-6	Greetings to the Churches; Statement to the Churches	22:16
1:7	"Behold, He is coming"; "And behold, I am coming"	22:12
1:8	"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End"	22:13

#### *Epilogue*

#### *The Seven Churches*

1:16	Brightness of Jesus	21:23
1:17; 2:8	"I am the First and the Last"; "I am the Alpha and the Omega"	21:6
2:7	Tree of Life	22:2
2:11	Second Death	21:8
3:5	Book of Life	21:27
3:12	New Jerusalem	21:2, 10
3:12	God's Name written on His People	22:4
3:14	"Faithful and True"; "true and faithful"	21:5
3:21	God's Throne	22:3

#### *The New Jerusalem*

2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21	reference to Overcomers	21:7
<i>The Seven Seals</i>		<i>Second Coming and Millennium</i>
4:2	God's Throne	19:4; 20:11
4:4, 10; 5:8, 14	24 Elders	19:4
4:6	4 Living Creatures	19:4
4:9-11; 5:8-10	4 Living Creatures & 24 Elders Praise	19:4-5
5:6; 7:10, 17	the Lamb	19:7, 9
5:13	every creature (many beings) praising God	19:1, 6
6:2	Rider on a White Horse	19:11
6:4	Sword	19:15, 21
6:10	Judging and Avenging	19:2
6:11; 7:9	"white robes"; "fine linen"	19:8
<i>The Seven Trumpets</i>		<i>The Seven Last Plagues</i>
8:7	Earth	16:2
8:8	Sea	16:3
8:10	"rivers and...springs of waters"	16:4
8:12	Sun	16:8
9:2	Darkness	16:10
9:14	Euphrates	16:12
11:15	Announcement of Christ's rule; "It is done!"	16:17

## **Question #2: What then is the suggested outline for the book of Revelation?**

**Answer:** Here is our suggested outline for the book of Revelation:

### **I. The Prologue (1:1-8)**

- A. The Chain of Transmission (1:1-3)
- B. Greetings and Doxology (1:4-6)
- C. Eschatological Announcement (1:7-8)

### **II. The Seven Churches: Promises made to Overcomers (1:9-3:22)**

- A. Sanctuary Motif Scene: Jesus Walking Among the Churches (1:9-20)
  - 1. John on Patmos (1:9-11)
  - 2. Vision of Jesus (1:12-20)
- B. Messages to the Seven Churches (2:1-3:22)
  - 1. Ephesus (2:1-7)
  - 2. Smyrna (2:8-11)
  - 3. Pergamos (2:12-17)
  - 4. Thyatira (2:18-29)
  - 5. Sardis (3:1-6)
  - 6. Philadelphia (3:7-13)
  - 7. Laodicea (3:14-22)

### III. The Seven Seals: Church Struggles with Evil (4:1-8:1)

#### A. Heavenly Sanctuary Scene: The Enthronement of Jesus (4:1-5:14)

1. General Worship Scene (4:1-11)
2. Heavenly Crisis and Resolution (5:1-7)
3. Celebration of the Crisis Resolved (5:8-14)

#### B. Opening of the Seven Seals (6:1-8:1)

1. The White Horse (6:1-2)
2. The Red Horse (6:3-4)
3. The Black Horse (6:5-6)
4. The Pale Horse (6:7-8)
5. Cry of the Martyrs (6:9-11)
6. Final Eschatological Events (6:12-17)
  - Parentetical Focus on God's People:
    - a. The 144,000 Sealed on Earth (7:1-8)
    - b. The Great Multitude in Heaven (7:9-17)
7. Silence in Heaven (8:1)

### IV. The Seven Trumpets: God's Partial Judgment Warnings (8:2-11:18)

#### A. Heavenly Sanctuary Scene: Trumpets and the Altar of Incense (8:2-6)

#### B. Sounding of the Seven Trumpets (8:7-11:18)

1. Hail, Fire, and Blood Fall to Earth (8:7)
2. A Great Burning Mountain Falls into the Sea (8:8-9)
3. A Star Falls into the Rivers and Springs (8:10-11)
4. Partial Darkening of the Heavenly Bodies (8:12)
  - Announcement of Last 3 Trumpets as Woes (8:13)
5. Darkness and Locusts Arise from the Abyss (9:1-11)
  - Announcement of Two More Woes (9:12)
6. Warriors on Horseback Kill with Fire, Smoke, and Brimstone (9:13-21)
  - Parentetical Focus on God's People:
    - a. The Angel, a Scroll, and John (10:1-11)
    - b. The Temple and the Two Witnesses (11:1-13)
  - Announcement of the Coming Third Woe (11:14)
7. Jesus Receives His Kingdom (11:15-18)

### V. The Great Controversy (11:19-15:4)

#### A. Heavenly Sanctuary Scene: The Ark of the Covenant (11:19)

#### B. Scene 1: The Woman and the Dragon (12:1-6, 13-17)

1. Introduction to the Woman and the Dragon (12:1-6)
  - Parenthesis on the Great Controversy
    - a. War in Heaven (12:7-9)
    - b. Result on Earth (12:10-12)
2. The Dragon Wars against the Woman and Her Remnant (12:13-17)

#### C. Scene 2: The Sea Beast (13:1-10)

#### D. Scene 3: The Lamblike Earth Beast (13:11-18)

#### E. Scene 4: The 144,000 in Heaven (14:1-5)

#### F. Scene 5: The Three Angels' Messages (14:6-13)

1. The First Angel's Message (14:6-7)

- 2. The Second Angel's Message (14:8)
- 3. The Third Angel's Message (14:9-11)
- 4. Appendix to the Three Angels' Messages (14:12-13)
- G. Scene 6: The Second Coming of Jesus (14:14-20)
  - 1. Harvest of the Righteous (14:14-16)
  - 2. Harvest of the Wicked (14:17-20)
- H. Scene 7: The Victors' Song (15:1-4)

#### VI. The Seven Last Plagues: The Complete Wrath of God (15:5-18:24)

- A. Heavenly Sanctuary Scene (15:5-8)
- B. The Pouring Out of the Seven Last Plagues (16:1-21)
  - 1. A Malignant Sore (16:2)
  - 2. The Sea becomes Blood (16:3)
  - 3. The Rivers and Springs become Blood (16:4-7)
  - 4. The Sun Scorches Men with Fire (16:8-9)
  - 5. Darkness in the Beast's Kingdom (16:10-11)
  - 6. Euphrates is Dried Up (16:12)
    - Parentetical Warning:
      - a. Wicked are Gathering for the Battle of Armageddon (16:13-14, 16)
      - b. Righteous are Warned to be Ready (16:15)
  - 7. Babylon Falls (16:17-21)
- C. Parentetical Enlargement of the Fall of Babylon (17:1-18:24)
  - 1. Babylon in the Wilderness (17:1-6)
  - 2. The Beast Begins to Destroy Babylon (17:7-18)
  - 3. Wailing for the Destruction of Babylon (18:1-24)

#### VII. Evil Is Finally Destroyed (19:1-21:1)

- A. Sanctuary Introduction: Celebration and Call to the Marriage Supper (19:1-10)
- B. The Final End: Before, During, and After the Millennium (19:11-21:1)
  - 1. Jesus Gathers to Make War (19:11-16)
  - 2. The Wicked are Defeated (19:17-21)
  - 3. Satan is Bound in the Bottomless Pit (20:1-3)
  - 4. The Righteous are Enthroned with Jesus (20:4-6)
  - 5. The Final Defeat of Satan and the Wicked (20:7-10)
  - 6. The Great White Throne Judgment (20:11-15)
  - 7. The New Heaven and New Earth (21:1)

#### VIII. The New Earth: Promises Fulfilled to Overcomers (21:2-22:5)

- A. Partial Sanctuary Motif Scene: New Earth, New Heaven, and New Jerusalem (21:2-4)
- B. The New Jerusalem (21:5-22:5)
  - 1. Conditions for Living in the New Jerusalem (21:5-8)
  - 2. A Cursory Description of the New Jerusalem (21:9-14)
  - 3. Measuring the New Jerusalem (21:15-17)
  - 4. Detailed Description of the New Jerusalem (21:18-21)
  - 5. The Glory of the New Jerusalem (21:22-27)
  - 6. The River of Life and the Tree of Life (22:1-2)

7. A Summary of Life in the City (22:3-5)

IX. The Epilogue (22:6-21)

- A. Importance of this Book (22:6-11)
- B. Jesus' Last Invitation (22:12-17)
- C. Postscript and Benediction (22:18-21)

**Question #3: Is there a briefer version of this outline so that one can see it on one page?**

*Answer:* Yes. Here's the brief, easy-to-see version of the outline of Revelation:

- A. Prologue (1:1-8)
  - B. The 7 Churches: Promises made to Overcomers (1:9-3:22)
    - C. The 7 Seals: Church Struggles with Evil (4:1-8:1)
      - D. The 7 Trumpets: God's Partial Judgment Warnings (8:2-11:18)
        - E. The Great Controversy (11:19-15:4)**
        - D.<sup>1</sup> The 7 Last Plagues: The Complete Wrath of God (15:5-18:24)
    - C.<sup>1</sup> Evil is Finally Destroyed (19:1-21:1)
  - B.<sup>1</sup> Promises Fulfilled to Overcomers (21:2-22:5)
- A.<sup>1</sup> Epilogue (22:6-21)

**Question #4: Is there anything else suggested by the literary structure of Revelation that helps us to properly interpret the book?**

*Answer:* Yes. Note that for the Seven Seals, the Seven Trumpets, and the Great Controversy sections, each ends in the triumph of Jesus' kingdom—see Revelation 6:12-17; 8:1 (7 Seals); 11:15-18 (7 Trumpets), and 14:14-20 and 15:1-4 (Great Controversy). This indicates that each of these prophetic sections covers the Christian Era through the establishment of Jesus' kingdom. This cosmic sweep of history ending with Jesus' victory is very typical of apocalyptic prophecies, as we see in Explorer III, Study Guide #14. Each of these sections recapitulates the same era of history from different perspectives. Therefore, this outline illustrates that the accurate paradigm for Revelation is that of Recapitulation Historicism, as opposed to Straight-line Historicism of a much earlier generation of Christian scholars. By contrast, the 7 Last Plagues, Evil is Finally Destroyed, and the New Earth sections overwhelmingly concern the end-times, almost exclusively. That is to say, Revelation is thereby divided into a Historical section (1:1-15:4) and an End-Time section (15:5-22:21). [NOTE: We derived the Recapitulation Historicist paradigm from the evidence in Scripture itself rather than starting with any paradigm and forcing the pieces to fit accordingly.]

**Question #5: Does Revelation have a focal point, a special place of emphasis?**

*Answer:* Yes. Eastern writers are much more inclined than Western authors to place the climax of their literature in the center of their document. Section 5 (the Great Controversy) is in the exact middle or center of Revelation—not in terms of the number of words or chapters, but in terms of the book's literary structure. That means that this is the section which Jesus is highlighting for every Christian. It's no coincidence that this section discusses the major great controversy theme that the conflicts on earth are an extension of the

war that Satan began and lost in heaven, the mark of the beast crisis, and the final 3-fold warning message to the world shortly before Jesus returns in glory! To Him be praised!