

The Book of Revelation

The Four Act Play

Chapters 1-3	<i>The Author and the Audience</i>	A Message about the Present
Chapter 4-5	<i>A Look into the Owner's Suite</i>	A Brief Look into Heaven
Chapters 6-11	Act 1 – 7 Seals Reveal and 7 Trumpet Warn of Rome's Fall	
Chapters 12-15	Act 2 – 7 Angels Speak in response to the Dragon & his Beasts	
Chapters 16-18	Act 3 – 7 Bowls of Wrath upon the Beast and its Rider	
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Chapters 1-3

The Author and the Audience

A Message about the Present

1:1-3 – Prophecies soon to be fulfilled

1:4-11 – John sets up the Message

1:12-16 – John describes the True Author

1:17-20 – John explains he saw Jesus

2:1-7 – Ephesus (comm. / corr.)

2:8-10 – Smyrna (comm.)

2:12-17 – Pergamum (comm. / corr.)

2:18-29 – Thyatira (comm. / corr.)

3:1-6 – Sardis (cond. / comm.)

3:7-13 – Philadelphia (comm.)

3:14-22 – Laodicea (corr.)

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A Brief Look into Heaven

Characters:

4:2-3 – “One sitting on the throne”

4:4 – “twenty-four elders”

4:6-7 – “four living creatures”

5:5-6 – “the Lion” “the Lamb”

Events in heaven:

4:8-11 – All worship God!

5:1-7 – Jesus takes the sealed book.

5:8-14 – All worship Jesus!

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The First Four Seals: (The 4 Horsemen)

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| 6:2 – Man on White Horse with Bow and Crown | - Military victory by Parthians (9:14;16:12) |
| 6:4 – Man on Red Horse with a Great Sword | - Such a battle would produce Bloodshed |
| 6:5 – Man on Black Horse with a Pair of Scales | - Economic hardship would accompany War |
| 6:7 – Death on Ashen Horse as Hades Followed | - Culmination of the First Three – 1/4 Fall |

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Seals 5 and 6:

6:9-11 – Martyred Souls under the Altar

- They cry out “How Long?” Answer: “Soon.”
- But other Christians would die first at Roman hands.
- But martyrs are given a robe of victory (20:4)
- It would not be long before Rome was diminished.

6:12-17 – Earthquake and Darkened Sun

- God wrath would be strong. Kings of earth would hide.
- Common judgment language (Mt. 24:29; Lu. 23:30)
- The day of wrath would overtake them all.

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An Interlude Concerning Christians

7:1-17 – What about the Saints?

- Before the Horsemen acted, God would seal saints.
- That is, they would be given some protection (v.3).
- 144,000 of the Tribes just represents Israel of God.
- (Gal. 6:16) – That is, Christians alive on the earth.

- The Saints who had died are around the Throne of God
- They don't need to be sealed – they are in heaven.
- Their blessings are AMAZING (7:14-17)

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The 7th Seal:

8:1-5

- Silence in heaven for half an hour (may indicate that judgment would come in God's time – after some delay. But it would definitely come.)
- Before Rome is judged, the saints' prayers would ascend to God.
- God hears their prayers and will, in His time, pour forth judgment.

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The First Four Trumpets: (Divine Warning) Rev. 8:6 - 11:19

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|---|---|
| 8:7 – Hail and Fire, Blood, 1/3 Burned Up | - Imagery from the Exodus – Devastation to Rome |
| 8:8 – A Great Mountain Burning, 1/3 Died | - Denotes fall of a Great Government – Jer. 51:25 |
| 8:10-11 – Star (Wormwood) Falls from Heaven | - Depicts fall of Rulers – like Isaiah 14:12 |
| 8:12-13 – 1/3 of Sun, Moon, Stars go dark | - Common Divine Judgment language – Joel 3:15 |

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The 5th Trumpet: (Divine Warning) Rev. 8:6 - 11:19

- 9:1-12
- A Star falls from Heaven – Likely an angel coming to carry out the work
 - He unlocks the Bottomless Pit and Smoke comes out an Locusts
 - Not just any locusts – the most epically frightening Locusts in the history of ever!
 - All of this would in some way not affect the people of God – (9:4)
 - This may be moral, **internal**, rottenness from within Rome – tearing them down.

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The 6th Trumpet: (Divine Warning) Rev. 8:6 - 11:19

9:13-21

- Once Rome had weakened itself, then the 4 Angels (7:1) would come.
- From the East (Euphrates) would come the Parthian Forces.
- Sadly, however, the Surviving Romans did not Repent and turn to God.

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An Interlude between 6th and 7th Trumpet 10:1-11:13 (Presents 4 Pictures)

First (10:1-7) – The Angel and the Book and the 7 Peals of Thunder (8:5 – judgment language)

Second (10:8-11) – John Eats the Book (the Bitter/Sweet journey for the Christian)

Third (11:1-2) – Measure the Temple (The temple is His church – Eph. 2:21 – He will protect them.)

Fourth (11:3-13) – The Two Witnesses die and are raised (2 = power and witnesses = the church)
-- Church would grow / then be halted for a time / but the cause would be resurrected.

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The 7th Trumpet: (Divine Warning) Rev. 8:6 - 11:19

11:14-19

- GOD'S CAUSE WINS! HIS COVENANT LIVES ON IN HIS TEMPLE (PEOPLE)!!!

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The Cast of Characters (Chapter 12)

The Woman with Child – (12:1-6, 16-17) - The Church, the People of God (Rev. 22:17; Gal. 4:26)

The Red Dragon – (12:3-4, 7-9, 17) – The Devil, Satan. Personification of the Roman Empire

The “Male Child” – Perhaps **Christ** (what about v. 5) / Perhaps Martyrs (what about v.5)

Note: The War in Heaven – (12:7-9) – A spiritual battle. The devil loses! (**Empty Tomb?**) (Rome?)

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The Sea and Land Beasts (Chapter 13)

The Sea Beast is the Roman Empire – (v.4-7, 10) – Conditions for the Christian at that time.

The Land Beast is Religious In Nature – (v11-14) – False Doctrine leading to Caesar Worship

Side Note: 666 (v.18) – Going back to Orient even, it comes short of 7's – incomplete, evil.

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The Lamb on Mount Zion (Chapter 14)

The Lamb and the Martyrs (144,000) all in Peace and Comfort in Spiritual Zion – Heaven! (Heb. 12)

7 Angels with a Message – Prepared to Act (Chapter 14-15)

14: 6-8, 18-19; 15:5-8 – Judgment on the sinners and on Rome.

14:12-13; 15:2-3 - Victory for Christians who keep the faith

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Chapters 16-18

Act 3 – 7 Bowls of Wrath upon the Beast and its Rider

The Setup In Heaven: (Chapter 15)

- In heaven there are seven angels with seven plagues
- In heaven there are the victorious saints singing the song of Moses
- In heaven the seven angels are given seven golden bowls holding God's wrath
- In heaven the glory of God and His power fills the temple.

7 Angels with Seven Bowls (Chapters 16-18)

- Note: The bowls have been mentioned before (Rev. 5:8) – as holding the saint's prayers
- Note: Recipients of the Wrath are those with the Mark of the Beast – (Rev. 13:15-17; 14:9)

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Chapters 16-18

Act 3 – 7 Bowls of Wrath upon the Beast and its Rider

7 Angels with Seven Bowls (Chapters 16)

- 16:2 “the **first** angel went and poured” – “a loathsome and malignant sore”
- 16:3 “the **second** angel poured” – “into the sea, and it became blood... every living thing... died”
- 16:4 “the **third** angel poured” – “into the rivers and the springs... and they became blood”
 - The Third Angels speaks to God about the Wrath (v.5-7)
- 16:8 “the **fourth** angel poured” – “upon the sun, and it was given to it to scorch men with fire”
 - Those punished did not repent and continued to blaspheme God (v.9)
- 16:10 “the **fifth** angel poured” – “on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was darkened”
 - They continued to blaspheme even in their agony and did not repent (v11)
- 16:12 “the **sixth** angel poured” – “on the great river, Euphrates... dried up... kings of the East”
 - Satan and Rome’ government and religion will mislead many (v14-16)
- 16:17 “the **seventh** angel poured” – upon the air and said “it is done”
 - At this point, Rome was divided and cities around her fell (v18-21)

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Chapters 16-18

Act 3 – 7 Bowls of Wrath upon the Beast and its Rider

The Woman riding on the Beast (Chapters 17)

- **The Woman is evil.** She rides on a dreadful beast. She is drunk with the blood of saints (v1-6)
 - The woman is commonly thought to represent the city of Rome (v.18)
- **The Beast is evil.** He has seven heads and ten horns. (Similar language to Daniel 7:19-23)
 - This is the Roman Empire –the kings, the rulers, the power that persecutes saints (v.8-13)
- **The Lamb is righteous.** The Lamb will war with the Beast. The Lamb will prevail.
 - Because the Lamb is Lord of lords and King of kings. And those with Him overcome!
- In the wake of Rome's defeat – they will become self destructive & crumble from within (v15-17)

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Chapters 16-18

Act 3 – 7 Bowls of Wrath upon the Beast and its Rider

“Woe, Woe, The Great City – Babylon the Great” (Chapters 18)

-- Rome will be paid back for her arrogance and sensuality – 18:1-10

-- Rome will no longer be wealthy and the center of material things – 18:11-20

-- Rome will be thrown down with violence for her violence against God’s people – 18:21-24

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Chapters 19-22

Act 4 – The Vision of Victory following Rome’s Demise

Chapter 19 – The Celebration of Victory

-- Jubilant joy in the heavens / and a renewed growth of the church with Christ – 19:1-10

-- Jesus rides on the white horse / a celebration feast follows / the beast was seized – 19:11-21

Chapter 20 – The Events to Immediately Follow

-- The Dragon is stopped / his use of Rome is finished / he may rally, but only for a moment– 20:1-3

-- The Martyrs’ Gospel cause is resurrected and they celebrate in heaven! – 20:4-6

-- During Satan’s brief retry at dominion – saints will be threatened – but he will lose again– 20:7-10

-- Looks like final judgment – but likely the eternal judgment on evil Romans – 20:11-15

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Chapters 19-22

Act 4 – The Vision of Victory following Rome’s Demise

Chapter 21 – 22:5 – The New Age for the Church

- A new era of peace and growth exists for the church – (see Isaiah 65:1,19; 66:22) - 21:1-8
 - v4 – past oppressions will exist no more / v6 – focus back on growth and evangelism
- A description of this new age of the church, the bride, the city, His Church – 21:9-22:5
 - v10 – the church, from out of heaven, blessed with great fellowship with Jesus v.22-23

Chapter 22:6-21 – John’s Concluding Thoughts

- When will all this happen? – “soon” “quickly” “the time is near” - 22:6-12
- What should we (7 Churches) do about it? – “wash their garments” and “Come” - 22:13-21