Revelation and Apocalyptic Literature
Our Outline:

1. Apocalyptic Literature
2. Intro to Revelation
3. Revelation chapter by chapter

Resources:

“Revelation Revealed”  Gordon Ferguson

“Revelation”  Jim McGuiggan

“Worthy is the Lamb”  Ray Summers
Rev 1:1  The *revelation* of Jesus Christ

*revelation* = *apokalupsis*  
αποκαλυψις  
= unveiling.

Apocalyptic literature is an unveiling  
Vision as a literary device
Purpose of Apocalyptic Writing

To show in dramatic fashion that God is in control.

To reveal (unveil) the kingdom of God.

“The purpose of these writings was to stress the virtue of loyalty and of stimulate faith by showing in vivid fashion the certain overthrow of evil and final victory for God’s righteous cause.” (Summers: Worthy is the Lamb)
Characteristics of Apocalyptic Literature

1. Written in times of trouble
   - Isaiah: Destruction of Israel
   - Ezekiel and Daniel: Captivity of Judah
   - Zechariah: Persian conquest
   - 1 Enoch: Antiochus Epiphanes
   - Revelation: Roman persecution

2. Cryptic in style
   - Wisdom, caution
   - Keep the uninitiated in the dark
3. Prophecy vs Apocalyptic

Prophecy mainly preaching, secondarily prediction
Apocalyptic mainly predictive, preaching secondary
Apocalyptic a wider scope: The whole world!
Apocalyptic: more eschatology (end times)
(although apocalyptic is not chiefly eschatology)

4. Always has a definite historical setting

Daniel: Antiochus Epiphanes
Revelation: Domitian
5. Pseudonymous (falsely attributed author)

1 Enoch
Assumptiomi of Moses
Baruch etc.
Does not apply to Daniel, Revelation, etc.

6. Visions (rare in prophecy Daniel 9?)
7. Symbolic Apocalyptic literature is saturated with symbolism.

Other literature: Assume a statement or description is literal unless the context demands otherwise.

Apocalyptic: Assume a statement or description is symbolic unless the context demands otherwise (the seven churches or Rev. 17 for example)
Numbers in Apocalyptic Literature

1 = unity, unique, alone.
2 = strength, courage, energy
3 = divine number. Number of God.
4 = the world, the cosmos, creation.
6 = sinister, Satan 6 falls one short of seven. Doom.
7 = perfection, completeness 4 + 3 = 7 cosmos + God = perfection
3-1/2 = incomplete, partial (1260 days, “time, times and half a time”)

4 + 3 = 7 cosmos + God = perfection

3-1/2 = incomplete, partial (1260 days, “time, times and half a time”)

7 = perfection, completeness 4 + 3 = 7 cosmos + God = perfection
Numbers in Apocalyptic Literature (cont.)

10 = completeness

Multiples of 10

70 = perfect completeness

1000 = 10x10x10 = ultimate completeness

12 = Number of religion. God’s people. 4x3 = 12

Ex. 144,000 is the full number of God’s people
(12x12x10x10x10)

We should hesitate to take these numbers literally. The 144,000 is certainly NOT literal!
Colors in Apocalyptic Literature

White  purity and innocence  Dan 7:9, Rev 1:14, Zech 6:3,6 Rev 7:9,13-14, 19:? 
Purple  royalty or voluptuous ease  Jer 10:9, Rev 17:4, 18:12
Blue  heaven, sky, Holy Spirit  Rev 9:17
Black  famine, death, distress  Zech 6:2, 6  Rev 6:5,12, 13
Pale yellow  near the end of life  Rev 9:17
Pale  death, terror-stricken  Jer 30:6, Dan 10:8  Rev 6:8
Crimson  blood, atonement
Gold  divinity, splendor  Rev 1:13  15:6
Green  death?  6:8, 8:7, 9:4
8. Dramatic.

Arguably, the chief aspect of the Apocalyptic is that it is dramatic.

Dramatic, vivid, forceful, terrifying, grotesque
Non-canonical Apocalypses
The Pseudepigrapha

- 1 Enoch 150 BC
- Assumption of Moses 1st half of 1st century
- Secrets of Enoch (2 Enoch) early 1st century
- Baruch after AD 70
- 4th Ezra after AD 70
Old Testament Apocalyptic Passages

- Daniel 7:7-8, 11-14
- Isaiah 34;2-8
- Ezek 32:1-10

Pattern: All are about the future. All are about God coming to defend or to judge his people. All are about the kingdom of God. All have a definite historical application. These passages will help us greatly to interpret Revelation.
Summary: How to Interpret Apocalyptic:

- There will be a definite historical setting and cause for the visions. Interpret in light of this setting and cause.

- About the imagery: get the big picture and do not get too caught up in the details—do not “push” the details.

- After correctly observing the first two steps, you can apply apocalyptic passages to all people and all situations and all times.
End-Time Theories (Eschatology)

- **Preterist**
  - Most or all of Revelation
    - Already fulfilled

- **Amillenialism**
  - No physical millennial reign

- **Premillennialism**
  - Jesus comes back before the millenium

- **Postmillennialism**
  - Millenium happens, then Jesus comes back
Approaches to Interpreting Revelation

1. It is either principally or entirely about the time of Roman persecution of the church.

2. It is principally about the apostasy of the Roman Catholic Church.

3. It is about the entire history of the [western] world until Jesus comes back.

4. It is principally about end-times—about Armageddon, the rapture and the millennial reign of Christ which will ensue. Revelation is principally unfulfilled prophecy.

5. It is about how God deals with mankind in all ages, with no particular specific historical context.
Approaches to Interpreting Revelation

1. It is about the time of Roman persecution of the church. Historical Background View.

3. It is about the entire history of the [western] world until Jesus comes back. Continuous Historical Wycliffe, Luther, Fox. The Reformation.

- 1st seal = Domitian to Commodus AD 180
- 2nd seal = Commodus to Caracella
- 3rd seal = Caracella to Decius
- 4th seal = Decius to Gallienus (243-268) (many persecutions)
- 5th seal = Diocletian and friends (284-315) (greatest persecutions of all)
- 6th seal = Barbarian invasions (see below)
3. Continuous Historical

- 7th seal = trumpets
- 1st trumpet = Goths 395-410 (sacked Rome)
- 2nd trumpet = Genseric 428-468 (sacked Rome)
- 3rd trumpet = Atilla 433-457
- 4th trumpet = Odoacer 476-490 (ended Western Roman empire for good)
- 5th trumpet = Muslim invaders
- 6th trumpet = Turks
  Great Angel = The Reformation
  Great Harlot = The Papacy etc.

Criticism: Too narrow, stretches the symbols way too much
4. Futurist  The most common premillennial theory:

Revelation 4-19 is about a seven year period called the Tribulation after the rapture, but before Jesus comes to dwell in physical Jerusalem.

Use Daniel 9:24-27 to prophesy a future “week” of tribulation.

This “week” marks the end of the “Christian era”.

The temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem

The two prophets and the antichrist will be literal people.
Approaches to Interpreting Revelation

4. Futurist     The most common premillennial theory:

**Antichrist defeated after 3-1/2 year reign in a battle called Armageddon**

After this, Jesus comes back and reigns in Jerusalem, ushering in the Kingdom of God, beginning the millennium

**After the Millennium Satan and the Beast are thrown into the Abyss and final judgment occurs.**
Premillenialism

SEQUENCE OF END TIME EVENTS

CHRIST
- Appearing of Christ
- Bride & Saints Meet in the Air
- I Thess. 4:14 - 18
- I Corin. 15: 51-54
- II Corin. 5:10
- Romans 14:10
- I Corin. 3:10 - 15

THE CHURCH
- Tribulation
- Anti-God Dragon
- Anti-Christ Beast
- Anti-Spirit False Prophet
- Rev. 12:9
- Rev. 13:1
- Rev. 13:2

THE TRUE CHURCH
- Eph. 5:27
- Matt. 25:1-3

THE PROFESSING CHURCH
- I Timothy 4:3

THE PAPAL CHURCH
- Blind Israel
- Romans 11:18

THE GRAVE

OLD PARADISE (Now enlarged of HELL)
- Isa. 6:14

THE GULF
- Luke 16:19-31
- Satan Bound Rev.20:1-3

BOTTOMLESS PIT
- Rev. 20:2-3

HARLOT CHURCH
- Jer. 16:9
- Rev. 17:5
- Rev. 18:23

Judgment of Nations
- Matt. 25:31-46

MILLENNIAL AGE
- Christ - Bride and Saints Return to Earth
- II Thess. 1:7-10
- II Thess. 3:13
- Col. 3:4

GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGEMENT
- Rev. 20:11-15

Reign With Christ ISRAEL
- Natural Reign as Head of Nations
- Zech. 8:23
- Deut. 36:10
- Throne of David
- Luke 1:31-33

Satan Loosed Rev. 20:7-9

CHURCH SPIRITUAL
- Rev. 20:4-6
- II Tim. 2:12
- Rev. 5:10
- Satan Loosed Rev. 20:7-9

Copyright 1972 - Bill Brown Ministries
This chart cannot be reproduced without written permission from Bill Brown Ministries

Rev. 20:15,14-15
The folly of Interpreters has been, to foretell times and things, by this Prophecy, as if God designed to make them Prophets. By this rashness they have not only exposed themselves, but brought the Prophecy also into contempt. The design of God was much otherwise. He gave this and the Prophecies of the Old Testaments, not to gratify men's curiosities by enabling them to foreknow things, but that after they were fulfilled they might be interpreted by the event; and his own Providence, not the Interpreters, be then manifested thereby to the world. For the event of things predicted many ages before, will then be a convincing argument that the world is governed by providence.
Problems with Premillennialism

1. Seems to contradict Revelation 1:1,3

2. Means that Revelation has virtually no meaning to its primary audience: the Church in the first centuries.

3. Blatant overliteralizing


5. It is about how God deals with mankind in all ages, with no particular specific historical context. Philosophy of History method.

Revelation is a description of things that happen again and again throughout history and it is equally applicable to all Christians at any time.

Multiple fulfillment theory

Conclusion: There is validity to the preterist/Historical Background view and to the Philosophy of History view. Revelation is principally about and for the persecuted early church, but it is also applicable to all Christians everywhere.
Historical Background to Revelation

Revelation 1:9  I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

Persecutions of the Church:
Nero AD 64
*Domitian 95-96
Trajan 98-117
Septimius Severus 202-211
Decius 249-251
Valerian 257-261
Diocletian and Galerian 303-311
Monastery of St. John, Patmos
John’s cave?
Nero  AD 64
Persecution only in Rome
No record of required emperor-worship

Vespasian  AD 69-79
Based on Rev 17:9-11  Five have fallen
(Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero)  one is
(Vespasian)  one who is to come for a little while (Titus,
ruled two years) and “the beast who was, and is not and
is also an eighth and is of the seven = Domitian.

Domitian AD 81-96
First systematic persecutor AD 95-96
Ordered worship of emperor, Christianity illegal
Unanimous opinion of the early church.
Author: The Apostle John

External Evidence:
Papias 125 AD
Justin Martyr Dialogue with Trypho  AD 150
Irenaeus  AD 170
Origen AD 220
Also: Tertullian (AD 200), Clement of Alexandria (AD 210), Hippolytus (Rome, 220), Cyprian, Athanasius, Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome.

Internal Evidence:
The writer is clearly a Jewish Christian
The writer assumes great authority over the churches in Asia (John came to Ephesus some time after AD 70 was over the church in Ephesus for 25 years)
Internal Evidence Only

Dionysius of Alexandria AD 250  The writing style too different to allow the same author as the gospel of John.

Eusebius AD 330 quotes Papias, and concludes that it was Presbyter/Elder John, a separate John. (but Irenaeus is definite that the “elder John” is the apostle John)

If, then, any one should come, having followed personally the elders, I would question him concerning the words of the elders, what Andrew or what Peter said, or what Philip, or what Thomas or James or what John or Matthew or any one of the disciples of the Lord said, and the things which Aristion and the elder John, disciples of the Lord said.
Authorship: Alternative Views

Why such different styles?

Was John written in the late 70s or early 80s?

John was very carefully constructed, Revelation was written in haste.

Conclusion: If we allow that two different people wrote John and Revelation, then Revelation would be the one written by John.
Theme, Message and Objective of Revelation

Theme of Revelation: Peel back the layers of history and even the terrible persecutions and what do we find? The lamb is on the throne and God is in control.

Message of Revelation: Be encouraged and faithful to Jesus Christ. Jesus, not Caesar, is Lord.

Objective: to comfort persecuted Christians.


Romans appeals to the intellect/mind
Psalms appeals to the emotions
Revelation appeals to the imagination.
Outline of Revelation

Ch 1  Prologue
Ch 2-3  Letters to the seven churches
Ch 4-7  The Seven Seals
Ch 8-11  The Seven Trumpets
Ch 12-16  Seven Mystical Figures
Ch 15-16  The Seven Vials
Ch 17-20  Enemies of the Church Overthrown
Ch 21-22  The Kingdom of God Revealed
An Outline of the Bible

I. Genesis 1  God created the universe and the earth. It was very good.

II. Genesis 2  God created man so that we could have an intimate relationship with him.

III. Genesis 3 and 4  We messed up very badly—destroying that relationship.

IV. Genesis 5-Rev 20  God is repairing the damage done by sin.

V. Rev 21-22  God has fixed the problem and we are back in a relationship with him.

Revelation is the culmination of the Bible story
Revelation Chapter 1  Prologue

John 1:1  The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave to him to show to his servants what must soon come to pass (things it is necessary to come to pass shortly).

What is the book about? Things that will soon take place.

Dei δει “must” morally necessary. God’s justice requires that these prophecies must be fulfilled soon

En taxeōs εν ταχέως quickly 2 Tim 4:9 taxeōs

Rev 1:1, 22:6  must soon take place
Rev 1:3, 22:10  is at hand (right near by)

Compare to Daniel 9:26 which concerns “the distant future.” (written 550 BC about 167 BC)
Seven Beatitudes in Revelation

Rev 1:3 Blessed is he who reads this prophecy and takes it to heart.

Rev 14:13 Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.

Rev 16:15 he who watches and is prepared for the Lord’s coming.

Rev 19:9 those invited to the Lamb’s wedding supper.

Rev 20:6 those who have a part in the first resurrection.

Rev 22:7 he who keeps the words of this book.

Revelation 1 Prologue (cont.)

Rev 1:4,11

Who from?   God the father, the Holy Spirit (the seven spirits) and Jesus Christ

Who to?   v. 4  to the seven churches in the province of Asia
v. 11  Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.

Why these churches? They are the ones over which John was a shepherd.

1:3  to all who hear  2:7  to anyone who has an ear.
... what the Spirit says to the churches.
Revelation 1 Prologue (cont.)

**Rev 1:9**  John can totally relate to the persecutions that the church will soon be going through.

Why was he on Patmos?  Because of the Word of God.

**1:10**  On the Lord’s day = Sunday = the 8th day.

**1:12-18**  Is this the picture we get of Jesus in the gospels?

The principle picture of Jesus in Revelation is of incredible power and of judgment.

Why?  Because of the message.  God will judge the persecutors!
Rev 1: 10,12-18

Similar to Daniel 7:9-10 and Daniel 10:4-9

Voice “like a trumpet” A loud and clear message

Blazing eyes See everything clearly. Nothing escapes his notice.

Double-edged sword in his mouth Authority and power of his words (John 12:48)

Q: How does this picture of Jesus make you feel?
Revelation 2 & 3 Letters to the Churches in Asia

Pattern:

1. Greeting
2. A description of Jesus
3. A commendation (except Sardis and Laodicea)
4. A criticism (except Smyrna and Philadelphia)
5. An appeal and a warning
6. Exhortation and promise
Revelation 2:1-7 Ephesus
Ephesus

Rev 2:1

...holds the seven stars in his hand

...walking among the golden lampstands

“Long live Artemis of the Ephesians” One of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

The capital of Christian Asia.
Ephesus: Commendations

Rev 2:2-3,6

Hard work
Perseverence
Staunch opposition to sin and false doctrine

Nicolaitins  Acts 6:5?

They had not grown weary

Q: Is this possible, even when we have lost our first love?
Ephesus: Admonitions

Rev 2:4-5

Remember, this is the church John himself was responsible for!

Lost their first love.

Q: What, exactly, had they lost? What was their day-to-day Christian life like?

The solution: Remember and repent!

Do what you did at first. Do it the way you did it at first.
Revelation 2:8-11 Smyrna
Smyrna: Commendations Only

Rev 2:9 Poor but rich.

Q: Do you feel poor? Why? Do you feel rich? Why?

The Synagogue of Satan Jewish persecution.

1 Tim 6:6-10

Admonition: Stay faithful, even unto death
...you will receive a crown
...you will be untouched by the second death
(Rev 20:14)
Revelation 2:12-17 Pergamum
Pergamum

Largest city in Asia at the time

Capital of Roman power

Seat of paganism in Ionia

"Throne" of Satan = Temple of Zeus

Pergamum Library
Pergamum: Commendations

Rev 2:12  the sharp, double-edged sword. Watch out!

2:13  Pergamum is a tough city to build a church!

How would you like to live where Satan lives?

You have endured extreme persecution

Antipas  witness = martarus
Pergamum: Warnings

Some hold to Balaam’s teaching.

Some hold to the teachings of the Nicolaitins

Their problem: lack of church discipline

Q: Is tolerance a Christian virtue?

Q: Does Jesus get angry?

God expects the church to discipline these teachers.

Q: Why doesn’t he just deal with them?
Rev 2:17

Hidden manna

A white stone

Symbol of acquittal in a trial
Symbol of being freed from slavery
A name known only to him who receives it.
Revelation 2:18-29  Thyatira

Hephaestus: the god of the foundry
Thyatira

Thyatira a city of trades and unions/guilds

Specialized in purple cloth (Lydia)

Specialized in bronze craft

Being in a guild required participation in pagan sacrifices, including fornication.
Thyatira: Commendation

Jesus: Eyes like blazing fire, feet like burnished bronze.

Rev 2:19

Giving
Serving
Growing!

But.... The seeds of spiritual disaster had already been planted!
Thyatira: Warnings

Rev 2:20   You tolerate that woman Jezebel

Probably a prominent and charismatic woman

Her sin? Probably encouraging participation in the idolatry required to keep a job in one of the trades in Thyatira

Those who “committed adultery” with her and “her children” are those who accepted her teaching.

A warning against divisiveness
Thyatira: Warnings and Encouragement

Rev 2:21-23

I have given her time to repent

I will deal with Jezebel (unlike in Pergamum)

2:24 “deep teaching” a reference to Gnosticism

2:25 Assurance: Hold on until the end... I will give you authority over nations (1 Cor 6:2-4)
Revelation 3:1-6 Sardis
Sardis

Capital of Lydia and of King Croesus

On a very steep mountain—thought to be impregnable

Nevertheless, conquered by Cyrus 549 BC
Conquered by Antiochus III 218 BC

A symbol of overconfidence and unjustified pride. Living on past greatness.

Famous for robbers.
Sardis: Warnings First!

Rev 3:1  You have a great reputation, but you are dead, spiritually!

Their problem was not sin, per se, but lack of doing things God expected them to do.

Q: What about you?

Rev 3:2  Solution?  WAKE UP!!!! (Hebrews 2:1)

Remember, obey and repent.

I will come like a thief
Sardis: Encouragement

No encouragement to the church as a whole

3:4 Yet you have a few in Sardis...

Even in a dead church, some will be alive. Despite what Jesus is saying to the churches, we are saved individually.

3:5 To all disciples: He who overcomes will, like the few faithful Sardisians, be dressed in white.
Revelation 3:7-13 Philadelphia
Philadelphia

A significant Jewish population. The Synagogue of Satan

Rev 3:7  Jesus holds the key of David.

Isaiah 22:21-22  A messianic prophecy
Philadelphia: Encouragements Only

Rev 3:8 You are small and weak, but you are doing great!

3:9 You are the true Jews

The Jews will fall at your feet some day. Wow!

I will give you a crown
I will make you a pillar
You will never again have to leave it
Your will have a new name.

All these are relevant to specifics of Philadelphia
Revelation 3:14-22  Laodicea
Laodicea

A center of banking. A very rich city

A center of the wool industry. Black wool.

Most famous school of Medicine. Famous for their eye salve.

All these are used by Jesus in his admonition
Laodicea: Warnings Only

Their sin? Lukewarmness. Hypocrisy

Jesus: You make me want to throw up!

Wouldn’t it be better to be a half-hearted Christian than a blatant pagan?

Why not?
Laodicea: Lukewarm Christianity

Rev 3:17  How do we become lukewarm?
By relying on self rather than God.
You say you are rich
You say you need nothing (from God)
Q: Do they actually say this?

Reality check: You are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.
Laodicea: It’s Not Too Late!

1. Admit you are wretched, pitiful, poor blind and naked.

2. Rev 3:18  Buy gold from Jesus.

3. Apply the eye-salve of Jesus  John 9:31
   Q: Do you need some of this salve to see your need for God?

4. Rev 3:19  Accept God’s rebuke and discipline
Laodicea: Summary

Repent!

I stand at the door and knock.

Jesus is waiting, but he will not force his people to eat with him.

Does this prove that we can pray Jesus into our hearts?

Message of Revelation: To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne

We are about to get a view of that throne!
Revelation Chapter 4
Enter the Throne Room
Revelation Chapter 4

Now the visions begin.

Be prepared to use your imagination.

Rev 4:1 John sees a door open in heaven.

How does the vision begin? God is on his throne!!!!!!
The Throne Room

Jasper  white  Holiness

Carnelian  red  Justice

Rainbow  God’s promise/covenant
The Throne Room (cont.)

Rev 4:4 24 elders: 12 tribes and 12 apostles
The 24 elders is, in essence us—God’s people.
Symbolism in Rev 4 & 5 is of the tabernacle.
Rev 4:5 thunder, etc. Like Exodus 19:6
Rev 4:6 Sea of crystal = separation of holy from profane.

Rev 4:6b-4 Four living creatures = cherubim = protecting the holiness of God.
The Throne Room (cont.)

The four creatures: Eyes = vigilance
Garden of Eden    Curtain in the Tabernacle.

Isaiah 6:2   Ezek 1:5-14  Ezekiel 10
Lion   Ox   Man   Eagle

Rev 4:8-11  Q: What impression of God does this give you?
Revelation CH 4 & 5

John 14:1

- Ch 4  Trust in God
- Ch 5  Trust also in me

Throughout the rest of the visions, remember Ch 4 & 5. It is the background.
A scroll with seven seals which no one was worthy to open.

Sealed = something to be revealed

7 seals = completely sealed.
Enter: Jesus Christ

Jesus is a lion  Q: What image comes to mind?

Jesus is the Root of Jesse  Messiah

Jesus is triumphant

Jesus is a lamb  Q: What image comes to mind?

7 horns = perfect in power
7 eyes = perfect in knowledge
Worship the Lamb who was slain

The most amazing worship service ever!

Harps = singing to the Lamb

Incense = prayers of the saints

Rev 5:9-14  A New Song (compare to the Song of Moses Exodus 15)

Theme of the song: Worthy is the Lamb

He has made a kingdom of priests Exodus 19:6 has been fulfilled!

v. 11,13 hundted of millions of angels and all creation worship the lamb.
Revelation 6 The Lamb opens the Scroll

Now the action really begins!

Structure of Revelation 6-16:

Seven seals  Revelation 6-7
Seven trumpets  Revelation 8-9
Seven symbolic creatures  Revelation 10-15
Seven bowls  Revelation 15-16
The Seven Seals
God’s Judgment on the Roman Persecutors

Revelation 6:1  Come!!!  Come see the vision.

Hoofbeats are heard in the distance
The Four Horsemen
Revelation 6  Four Horsemen

Seal #1  A rider on a white horse.  Jesus comes as a conqueror.  A crown and a bow.  A Parthian symbol of victory (over Rome)

Seal #2  Red horse = War “the power to take peace from the earth.” Represents persecution to the church.

Seal #3  Black horse = Famine  Scale to measure food. Oil and wine available:  The rich are still doing fine. Represents financial depravity due to persecution of the church.

Seal #4  Pale yellow-green horse = Death  Ezekiel 14:12-20. Represents martyrdom to the church.
Q: How do you feel about persecution for preaching the gospel?

**Rev 6:9-11 The fifth seal.** Martyrs before the throne of God.

How long... before God judges the wicked?

Retribution for God’s people  Psalm 94:1-3  Rev 11:7-18  Rev 16:5-6

Do you long to see vengeance on God’s enemies?

God’s answer:  Rev 6:11  Not yet. There are more martyrs to follow you.
The Sixth Seal: The Day of the Lord

Rev 6:12-17  The sixth seal.

Earthquake, sun turns black, moon turns red, stars fall from the sky, the sky recedes like a scroll and the mountains removed. Everyone hides in caves and among the rocks.

Judgment is coming. The Day of the Lord is here. Hide!

Rev 6:17  Who can stand under this? Answer: Revelation 7!
Revelation 7
Interlude: The Saints are Sealed

Four angels hold back the winds. Winds = the action of God to judge his enemies. Daniel 7:1

An angel from the East.

The sealing of the 144,000 Ezekiel 9:1-6

Seal = ownership

12 x 12 x 10 x 10 x 10 All of God’s people. Every single one!!!

A multitude no one could count is the same people: Those saved from the coming wrath of God.
The 144,000 Sealed

Q: Does this sealing mean that the disciples will escape the suffering brought on by the tribulation? (Ezekiel 9:1-6)

White robes = pure, forgiven, righteous

Palm branches = joy  The Feast of Tabernacles  Celebrating salvation and living in a relationship with God.

Rev 7:10-15  A worship service

An elder: Who are these people?  John: You know!

Rev 7:15  God spreads his tabernacle over us.
Revelation 8 & 9 The Seven Trumpets

Rev 8:1 The seventh seal is the seven trumpets

Trumpets:

Warning of impending judgment
Feast of Trumpets /Yom Teruah /Rosh Hashanah
Rabbis: Stay awake all night
Numbers 10 Sound the warning
Matthew 25:32-31 1 Thess 4:13-14
All this applies to Rev Ch 8-9
Revelation 8  Judgment on the Persecutors

Rev 8:1  Silence in heaven for ½ hour  God is still holding back his judgment.  2 Pet 3:9  Ezek 33:11

Rev 8:3-5  What are the saints praying for?  They are praying for God to take vengeance on the Roman persecutors.  (Rev 6:10)

God’s response:  Don’t make the mistake of going after my Saints.  Rome made a big mistake when she did.

8:5  Thunder, rumblings, lightning and an earthquake.  Judgment is coming!
Revelation 8  The First Four Trumpets

Rev 8:7  Trumpet #1  Hail, fire and blood  Egypt plague #7  God goes after the crops of the persecutors of his saints.

\[\frac{1}{3} = \text{a limited judgment}\]

Rev 8:8-9  Trumpet #2  Sea turns to blood  Plague #1 God goes after the means of commerce  Jer 51:25

Rev 8:10-11  Trumpet #3  Wormwood  God goes after the fresh water.  Jer 9:15

Rev 8:12  Trumpet #4  God goes after the heavenly objects.  Plague #9  Isaiah 34:4-5  Joel 2:10
Rev 8:13  Woe!

An Eagle says woe, woe, woe. Three woes are coming (trumpet #5,6,7)

Trumpet #1-4 Judgments on the earth. Trumpet #5,6 Judgment on people
Revelation 9 Trumpet #5,6  Woes!

Rev 9:1-12 Trumpet #5. First of two judgments on men. Locusts (plague #8)

Fallen Star = Satan who holds the key to the Abyss

Locusts = Demons who torment those who do not worship God.

Q: Can a Christian be possessed by a demon?

v. 5-6 Their sin will cause the sinful to loath themselves. Can you relate?
v. 7-10  Bizarre locusts!!!

Satan is their king!

Ephesians 2:2  The ruler of the kingdom of the air

John 14:30  The prince of this world.

Summers: “The locusts represent the hellish rottenness, the internal decadence in the Roman Empire.”
Revelation 9:13-20 Woe #2
War comes to Rome

9:14 bound at the River Euphrates = Parthia: the chief military rival of Rome.

Q: Will the church suffer because of this warfare?

Rev 9:21 A depressing result. Rome did not repent. It is time for the 7th trumpet and the seven bowls!
Revelation 9:13-20 Trumpet #6
Revelation 10:1-11:14
A Second Encouraging Interlude

10:1-2  A very mighty angel with a little scroll
v. 3 Seven thunders are sealed (ie not heard for now)

v. 5  Right hand = oath  NO MORE DELAY
Judgment is at hand.

v. 9-11 Eat the scroll
  Tasted sweet (it is God’s word after all!
  Turned sour in the stomach (bad news for the saints)
Judgment on God’s enemies and trial for God’s people
God measures the temple courts, but not the court of the Gentiles.

God will protect the heart of the church, but he will give Rome some freedom to go after his saints.

v. 2 The court of the Gentiles will be trampled for 42 months. Limited persecution of the church—allowed by God.
3-1/2 Years in the Bible

1. The period the church will be persecuted Rev 11:2
2. The period during which the two witnesses will testify Rev 11:3
3. The period over which the Woman is nourished in the wilderness Rev 12:6,14
4. The period of the Beast’s authority Rev 13:5
5. The period the little horn persecutes the saints Daniel 7:25
6. The period of the abomination of desolation by Antiochus Ephiphanes Dan 12:11 (1290 days for some reason)
Rev 11:3-6 The Two Witnesses

The two witnesses are the “witness” of the church during the time of the trampling.

In sackcloth (there will be much suffering, but they will still witness for me)

The two olive trees and the two lampstands: Zechariah 4:12-14 Joshua (priestly authority) and Zerubbabel (civic authority). Zechariah 4:4-6 The witness of the Holy Spirit.

v. 5-6 The Church’s testimony will be very powerful!!
Rev 11:7-12 The Serpent Attacks the Church and is Defeated.

v. 7 Some saints will be killed by Domitian/Rome.

v. 8 Sodom/Egypt/Jerusalem = Rome (Rev 13:7)

v. 9-10 The “world” will gloat over the defeat of the church, but only for 3-1/2 days.

v. 11-12 But the church will come back, seemingly from the dead. The saints will be victorious.
Rev 11:13-14  The Third Woe is at Hand

But first..... Worship service #4 breaks out in heaven.

v. 18  The time for your wrath to break out has come.

v. 19  Hold your breath....
Rev 12  Now We Look Behind the Scene

Rev Ch 1-11  Part I  The view from the perspective of the church—up front.

Rev Ch 12-22  Part II  The view of matters from the perspective of heaven—behind the scene.

Rev 12:1  A wondrous sign appeared in heaven
Revelation 12
The Woman and the Beast
Revelation 12:1-3

A great and wondrous sign.

Who is the woman?

She is Israel—about to give birth to the Messiah
She is the Church—about to be persecuted
She is God’s kingdom in any of its aspects.

Another sign: An enormous red dragon.
7 heads (great wisdom)
10 horns (very powerful)
7 crowns (great authority (on the earth at least))

Satan! Rome! (Rev 17)
Rev 12:4-6 Satan Goes After the Son and, Later, His Church

12:4 Satan tries to devour the child when the woman (Israel/Mary) gives birth. Herod kills the children of Bethlehem.

v. 5 The child “who will rule all the nations” is snatched up to heaven.

v. 6 The woman (the Church) flees to the desert and is cared for by God for 1260 days. Persecuted but protected.
Rev 12:7-17  Spiritual War in Heaven…
and On Earth

12:7-10. Satan is defeated and cast down to the earth.

Q: Is this a good thing for the Church?

The result: vicious persecution of the church! (12:13)

The Devil: Deceiver (9:9) Accuser (9:10)

Q: Which method does Satan use with you?
How Do We Overcome the Work of Satan in Our Lives? (Rev 12:11)

1. By the blood of Jesus.

2. By the word of their testimony. Remember the two witnesses.

3. By our willingness to give up our very lives rather than worshipping the Beast. They “loved not their lives” Gal 2:20

Rev 12:14-16 The Church will be protected from the Serpent 3-1/2 years.
Revelation 13  The Two Beasts

Rev 13:1  An ominous passage. The dragon stood on the shore of the sea.

Sea = the nations.

Rev 13:2  A beast from the sea = Rome!

10 heads = Augustus, Tiberius, Claudius, Caligula, Nero, Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian and Titus.  Daniel 7:7  Rev 17:12

7 horns = Augustus, Tiberius, Claudius, Caligula, Nero, Vespasian and Titus  Rev 17:9
The Beast From the Sea
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emperor</th>
<th>Dates of Rule</th>
<th>Significance to Biblical Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Augustus</td>
<td>27 BC-14 AD</td>
<td>Birth of Christ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiberius</td>
<td>14 AD-37 AD</td>
<td>Crucifixion of Christ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaius (Caligula)</td>
<td>37 AD-41 AD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claudius</td>
<td>41 AD-54 AD</td>
<td>Jews Exiled from Rome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nero</td>
<td>54 AD-68 AD</td>
<td>First persecutions, Execution of Paul and Peter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galba</td>
<td>68 AD-69 AD</td>
<td>One of the three overcome by Vespasian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otho</td>
<td>69 AD-70 AD</td>
<td>One of the three…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitellius</td>
<td>69 AD-70 AD</td>
<td>One of the three…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vespasian</td>
<td>69 AD-79 AD</td>
<td>Attack on Jerusalem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Titus</td>
<td>79 AD-81 AD</td>
<td>The general who destroyed Jerusalem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domitian</td>
<td>81 AD-96 AD</td>
<td>First Systematic Persecutor of the Church</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Beast From the Sea

v. 2 The dragon (Satan) gave the beast (Rome) its power to attack the saints.

v. 3 One of the heads had a fatal wound (Nero who ended the Claudian Dynasty).

But the wound was healed. (Vespasian started the Flavian Dynasty)

v. 5-7 Domitian given temporary power over the saints (42 months) and to make war on the saints.

v. 8 Everyone (except the Saints, of course) will worship Domitian. This was literally true.

This is very scary for the church!!!!!!
v. 8 Those who do not join them and worship the beast will have their name written on a different list that the Romans kept: The Lamb’s book of life!!

v. 9-10 But.... Reality check here.... Some who refuse to worship the beast will be put in jail and some will be killed.

v. 11 This calls for patient endurance of the Saints. I would say so!!!
Revelation 13:11-18 The Beast Out of the Earth

Rev 13:11 Another beast. Domitian

The eight king of Revelation 17

The eleventh horn of Daniel 7 who uprooted three horns (Galba, Otho and Vitellius)

13:14 An obvious reference to Domitian
13:17 The mark of the beast was not a literal mark, but it was an official document declaring that you made the sacrifice

Domitian’s number is 666. He is Satan’s man.
Domitian (c. 81-96 AD)
The Beast out of the Earth