

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

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The slain Lamb,
the Lion of Judah,
and the dragon





The book that makes you happy
Who is worthy of worship?
Who is the King of the world?
The Lord who is coming back
Hope for the church
The triumph of the Lamb
What will soon take place
The return of the King
Comfort for the church
The goal of all things

Prophecy is not for speculation
but for motivation!

Revelation was given to unveil!

1. Title

The title of the book is the first three words of the book: The revelation of Jesus Christ. In Greek, revelation is “apokalypsis.” It means to take away a covering or veil, that is, “unveiling.” This can only happen through Jesus Christ himself. And it is also the unveiling about Jesus Christ, about who he is, what he has done, and what he will do.

Many have not valued the book as much as other books of the Bible, because it seemed dark and hidden to them. But the purpose of Revelation (from here on abbreviated as Rev.) is the opposite, namely unveiling, illumination, and encouragement for the one who reads it (not only for the one who understands it) and who keeps it, that is, holds on to it and does it (1:3). Rev. is not for the “curious,” but for “servants”!

2. Author

He introduces himself as John, the brother and companion in the suffering (1:4, 9; 22:8). But he “reveals” little about himself. Who else but John, the disciple of Jesus and apostle, could introduce himself to the churches so matter-of-factly? Justin Martyr (A.D. 100–165) and Irenaeus (115–202) confirm John, the disciple and apostle of Jesus, as the author.

But even early on this was questioned, because the style and language of Rev. and of the Gospel and the letters are said to be so different. Despite differences, there are similarities. The differences do not necessarily prove that it is not the same author.

John means “God is a gracious giver.” Jesus calls him and his brother James “sons of thunder” (Mark 3:17). Both meanings come fully into their own in his writings.

John lived a long time, probably in Ephesus toward the end, after the death of Paul. Whether John died a martyr’s death or a “natural” death at a great age has not been established. Tradition speaks of the torments when he was plunged into boiling oil in Rome, which he is said to have survived unharmed, and he was then banished to the island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea. From there he returned to Ephesus.

3. Recipients, Place, and Situation

These are the seven local churches in Asia Minor (chs. 2 and 3). One might ask whether each church received a complete copy of the whole of Rev., or only the letter addressed to it.

Like John, the recipients were people who were in part facing persecution and difficulties, and who had to struggle with false teachings and influences from paganism (Gnosticism) and Judaism. Even if the persecution came in waves and was not equally severe always and everywhere, a distant atmosphere between state and church in the 1st and 2nd centuries is unmistakable.

It is said that probably no letter of the NT was read as eagerly back then as Rev., because it spoke to the heart of the church, bringing comfort and encouragement. This spurs us on, so that we too can experience great blessing by eagerly reading this letter.

From Patmos, where Rev. was written, it went out to the seven churches and was carried by one or more messengers on the ordinary roads of that time.

4. Date

There are two opinions about the date of composition of the longest letter of the NT. The early dating places it in the reign of Nero (54–68). Since John is to measure the temple in Jerusalem, this would have to be before its destruction in the year 70.

More interpreters set the date considerably later, in the reign of Domitian (81–96), as did Irenaeus, who was a disciple of Polycarp, who in turn was himself a disciple of John. Domitian was the first emperor with an imperial cult in which he had himself worshiped as Lord and God (Dominus et Deus). Against the imperial cult, John sets the true worship of the living God and of the Lamb.

The date of composition also has to do with the school of interpretation that interprets Rev. Thus the early dating is logically preferred by the preterists and also by postmillennialists.

5. Canonicity

In the canon of the NT, with its total of 27 books and letters, Rev. rightly stands in last place. As the only prophetic book of the NT, it deals with what lay in the future as seen from the time it was written.

The authenticity of Rev., its apostolic authorship and therefore its inspiration, led relatively early (second half of the 2nd century) to its having its recognized place in the canon of the NT, which was perhaps helped by its rapid circulation to seven churches. On the other hand – in the Eastern Church – it took until the 12th century for Rev. to be recognized. The main doubts lay in the assumption that Rev. had a different (unknown or unconfirmed) author than John's Gospel. The style of language is admittedly different and could lead one to suspect different authors. Various reasons can explain the difference in language: John spoke Aramaic and wrote Rev. early, in contrast to the Gospel, which he wrote in "better" Greek. Or he had a scribe who knew Greek well or was a Greek and smoothed out John's language. The different style of Revelation is intentional, and the differences are deliberate in view of the "apocalyptic" genre.

6. Apocalyptic Literature

Non-biblical, Jewish apocalyptic is a style of writing or literature that was widespread and popular in Judaism from the 2nd century B.C. to the 2nd century A.D. These writings used images and symbols, heavenly and dark beings, and saw themselves as encouragement for difficult times by foretelling better times. The author used a pseudonym (Enoch, Abraham, Baruch, Ezra, and others).

A certain similarity is unmistakable. The literary style of this inspired letter is apocalyptic and came across to the readers as something familiar or ordinary. Nevertheless, the differences from Jewish apocalyptic are too great to place Rev. in that category as well: The author makes himself known and appeals to Jesus Christ as the source of the unveiling. Its content is unique. It is not Jewish, but Christian. The apocalyptic of this book is bound to the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

7. Theology

The theology of Rev. is different from what we have in the other letters, even those of John, or of Paul and Peter. In Rev. it consists of visual theology, of seeing. The listener is taken along into the storm, into fire, into earthquakes, into pain, into blasphemy and frenzy. The theology of Rev. is founded on the teaching of the NT, but especially in the visions on the OT. Rev. ties in directly with the symbolism of the OT and carries it forward to its completion.

8. Content and Purpose

God's salvation is not only a personal, individual matter. Rev. unveils God's sovereign plan of retaking possession and "reconquering" the earth (the cosmos) through his Son Jesus Christ. Rev. leads all the way to the completion of his plan in the new creation. The way there is described in Rev. as in no other letter of the NT. Nevertheless, Rev. does not contain a detailed "end-time timetable."

The goal of Rev. for the reader, the believer, is stated by the book itself: The righteous is to be and act even more righteously, and the holy is to become even holier (in speech and action) (22:11).

The purpose of the book is comfort and encouragement. Rev. assures us that God's throne stands firm, that God sits on it, that the throne is not silent and has a plan. From there God intervenes mightily and effectively in world events in order to put an end to sin and injustice and to punish the sinner. To the question "Will it always go on like this?" Rev. answers confidently: No! God and the Lamb will be victorious. Until the appearing of the Lord, however, it will not look like victory for the Christians, but like defeat, because many die as martyrs. But their dying is their victory, just as the Lamb overcame through his death.

This outlook and the revelation of the Son of God through this letter lead the church, which is suffering now, to the worship of God and of the Lamb. That is the great difference: The inhabitants of the earth worship idols, the Christians worship the Lamb.

9. Connection with the OT and the Symbolism

Revelation only makes sense in the light of the OT. There are more than 500 references in Rev. to the whole of the OT (but no direct quotation). John refers most often to Daniel, Isaiah, and Ezekiel, as well as to Exodus.

The symbolic language of Rev. is clear and is based for the most part – but not only – on the OT.

- Symbols that can be explained on the basis of other books of the Bible
- Symbols that are explained in Rev. itself
- Symbols that can be explained from the context of Rev.
- Symbols that can be explained on the basis of other (or external) sources

10. Schools of Interpretation

In the course of church history, different ways of viewing Rev. have crystallized. So today one can speak of schools of interpretation. They differ fundamentally in how they place in time the things and events – the things John writes about. In the same way, and also as a consequence of this, there are differences in the interpretation of the symbols. This interpretation must be done with restraint and caution, because with some of them we lack the possibility of being 100% certain of the interpretation.

- *Preterist interpretation* (contemporary-historical): The prophecies were already fulfilled in John's time. For example, the beast and the number 666 were fulfilled in the person of Nero.
- *Historicist interpretation*: Fulfillments of the prophecies are sought and interpreted throughout the whole of church history (e.g., Luther, other Reformers, Isaac Newton).
- *Futurist interpretation* (end-historical): From John's point of view and from ours in the year 2012, most of the prophecies are still to be fulfilled, in the time shortly before Christ returns visibly for all people (e.g., J. N. Darby, C. I. Scofield, Walvoord, Ryrie, Hal Lindsey, above all the view of dispensationalism).
- *Idealist interpretation* (supra-historical): The prophecies do not describe historical events but, in a special way, express again and again that God will triumph over the evil one and over evil.
- *Salvation-historical interpretation*: This interpretation does not commit itself to one model, but tries to interpret each text in the way that best fits the text. So in this way of interpreting, all four of the previous methods are applied, without being slavishly bound to one model of interpretation

(T. Zahn, O. Cullmann, G. E. Ladd). Basically, history is seen from its goal: the coming of Christ is the future turning point that ends the old and ushers in the new.

For the sake of completeness, besides the individual schools of interpretation, the different views regarding the 1000-year kingdom must also be mentioned, which in turn are related to the schools of interpretation mentioned above.

Amillennialism: The 1000-year kingdom is interpreted spiritually and as already existing (realized) since Jesus' ascension. With the future coming of Jesus the new creation then begins.

Postmillennialism: The 1000-year kingdom will come into being in outward form over a long period of time through the spread of the gospel and will be handed over to the returning Christ.

Premillennialism: The 1000-year kingdom begins with the coming of Jesus, the arrival of the Messiah. It is to be understood as entirely future and literal. Within premillennialism there are 2 directions that hold this view in principle:

1. Dispensationalism (the most widespread): In this kingdom of peace all the promises are fulfilled for a spiritually restored national people of Israel, then with a temple and sacrificial service in Jerusalem and the Messiah's world rule from there. The church reigns with Christ. Chapters 4–19 of Rev. describe exclusively the time after the Rapture of the church, a 7-year period of tribulation.
2. Classic or historic premillennialism: The first Christians expected a future kingdom of peace and also, before it, the rule and oppression of Christians by the antichrist. Rev. describes future events, but it concerns the whole history of the church up to the coming of the Lord, at which the Rapture also takes place.

This diagram shows the view of premillennialism:

(Diagram: timeline from left to right)

- 1. Coming of Christ (cross, arrow pointing up)
- Time of the church
- Tribulation
- 2. Coming of Christ (arrow pointing down)
- Millennium – 1000-year kingdom

11. Structure and Outline

There are many proposals on this topic. Different outlines are based on different viewpoints and aspects. These are oriented toward points of emphasis, themes, high points, literary structure, interludes, interruptions, numbers, and other criteria.

In any case, the outline and the tracing of a structure in the text as a whole help to determine how one understands the book. In this respect, thorough (personal) work at this point is very helpful.

Many interpreters see the key to an outline in chapter 1, verse 19. Christ says to John:

Write, therefore,

1. what you have seen	the vision of the glorified Christ, 1:12–20
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2. and what is	the 7 churches in Asia Minor, 1st century, chs. 2 and 3
3. and what will take place after this	from ch. 4, or 6, from the 1st century on

This would make a rough division of Revelation into 2 parts possible:

1. Chs. 1–3 (what John had seen, Christ, and saw, the churches)
2. Chs. 4–22 (the heavenly vision up to the completion of the new creation).

Whether John intends in this verse to set out a “twofold” or “threefold” division of Revelation at all is not clear among interpreters. A simple explanation of this verse points *not* to 2 or 3 units (of time), but simply to the entire period that the NT calls the “last days.” These already began with the first coming of Jesus and will last until the Lord Jesus comes for the last time, the 2nd time.

In this connection G. K. Beale makes a remarkable observation: “The final part (of verse 19; *what will take place after this*) is probably a deliberate allusion to Daniel 2:28, 29, 45, which in its original context refers to the eschatological framework and scope of the vision of God’s kingdom, which will encompass the whole earth. In Daniel 2:28 and 29 the expression ‘last days’ is used synonymously with ‘after these things.’ If ‘after these things’ is used for the general eschatological (end-time or last) age, then 1:19 cannot express such a narrow chronological formula. It probably refers to the end-time period, which includes its beginning in the past as well as the present and the future.”

A simple and easily understandable division arranges Revelation in 4 parts, with the first and last parts forming the opening and the close of the letter, and the two main parts placed between them:

12. Broad Outline

Opening of the letter 1:1–8

First Main Part:

The vision on earth: The Son of Man and the 7 messages to the 7 churches 1:9–3:21

The vision of the Son of Man and the 7 golden lampstands 1:9–20

The dictation of the 7 messages to the 7 churches 2:1–3:21

Second Main Part:

Visions in heaven: “What will take place after this” 4:1–22:5

- First series of visions: God’s heavenly throne room; the 7 seals 4:1–8:1
- Second series of visions: The 7 trumpets 8:(1) 2–11:19
- Third series of visions: Visions (the woman and the child, the dragon, Michael, the beast out of the sea and out of the earth) and historical details 11:19–15:4
- Fourth series of visions: The 7 bowls of wrath or judgment 15:5–19:10
- Supplementary vision: The prostitute Babylon 17:1–19:10
- Fifth series of visions: God’s victory and the final judgments, 19:11–22:5
- Supplementary vision: The bride of the Lamb – the new creation 21:9–22:5

Close of the letter 22:6–21

13. Structure: Continuity and Parallelism

An important question in the search for a meaningful outline is the chronological sequence of the events described.

One view regards all the events of Rev. as following one another in a chronological sense.

Another view regards the main part of Revelation as speaking of several cycles running in parallel. These are not simple repetitions, but series of visions – interrupted again and again by explanatory interludes – that can encompass the entire Christian age. One cannot say exactly and with certainty where they begin, but their end is always the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ.

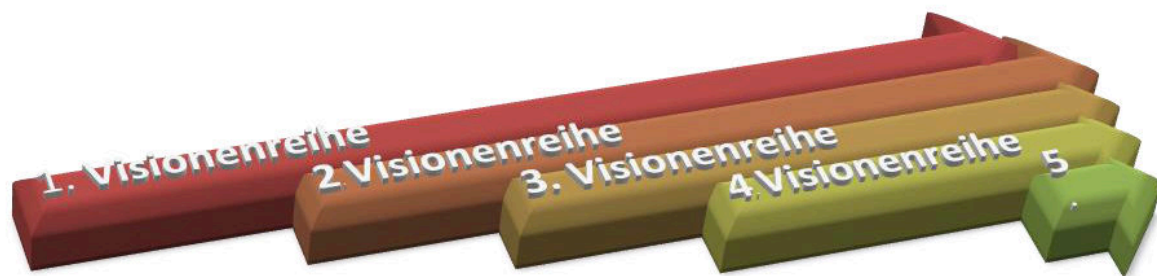
How can this parallelism, as opposed to a chronological sequence, be justified?

As shown in the following table, one sees striking correspondences. The most important is that the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is mentioned several times in the text. Although this event is described most intensively only in ch. 19:12, it is already discussed in detail several times before that. This coming and the praise of God that follows it is a goal and fixed point that concludes each series of visions and makes a parallel outline meaningful.

14. Parallelism Based on the 5 Series of Visions

4:1–8:1	8:1–11:18	11:19–15:4	15:5–19:10	19:11–22:5
opened	opened	opened	opened	opened
a door - in heaven	the 7th seal (only now is the book open); silence - in heaven	God's sanctuary - in heaven	the sanctuary of the tabernacle - in heaven	Heaven
Throne	Golden altar of incense	Ark of the covenant	Smoke from the glory and power of God	The Faithful and True
Lightning Voices Thunder	Voices Thunder Lightning Earthquake	Lightning Voices Thunder Earthquake Hail	Lightning Voices Thunder greatest earthquake greatest hail	He himself comes in person
The 7 seals	The 7 trumpets	(7 signs / sections)	The 7 bowls	7 times "And I saw"
6th seal: Coming of Christ	7th trumpet: Coming of Christ	The harvest of the earth: Coming of Christ	7th bowl: Coming of Christ	The coming of Christ
<i>Interlude: Ch. 7: The 144,000 The great multitude</i>	<i>Interlude: Chs. 10, 11a</i>	<i>Interlude: Ch. 14a: 144,000</i>	<i>Long appendix: The prostitute: Babylon</i>	<i>Long appendix: The bride: New Jerusalem</i>
7:11, 12: Rejoicing/worship v. 12: Praise, glory,	11:16ff.: Rejoicing/worship v. 17: .. Lord, God,	15:3f.: Rejoicing/worship v. 3: Great and	19:1ff.: Rejoicing/worship v. 1: Salvation and	

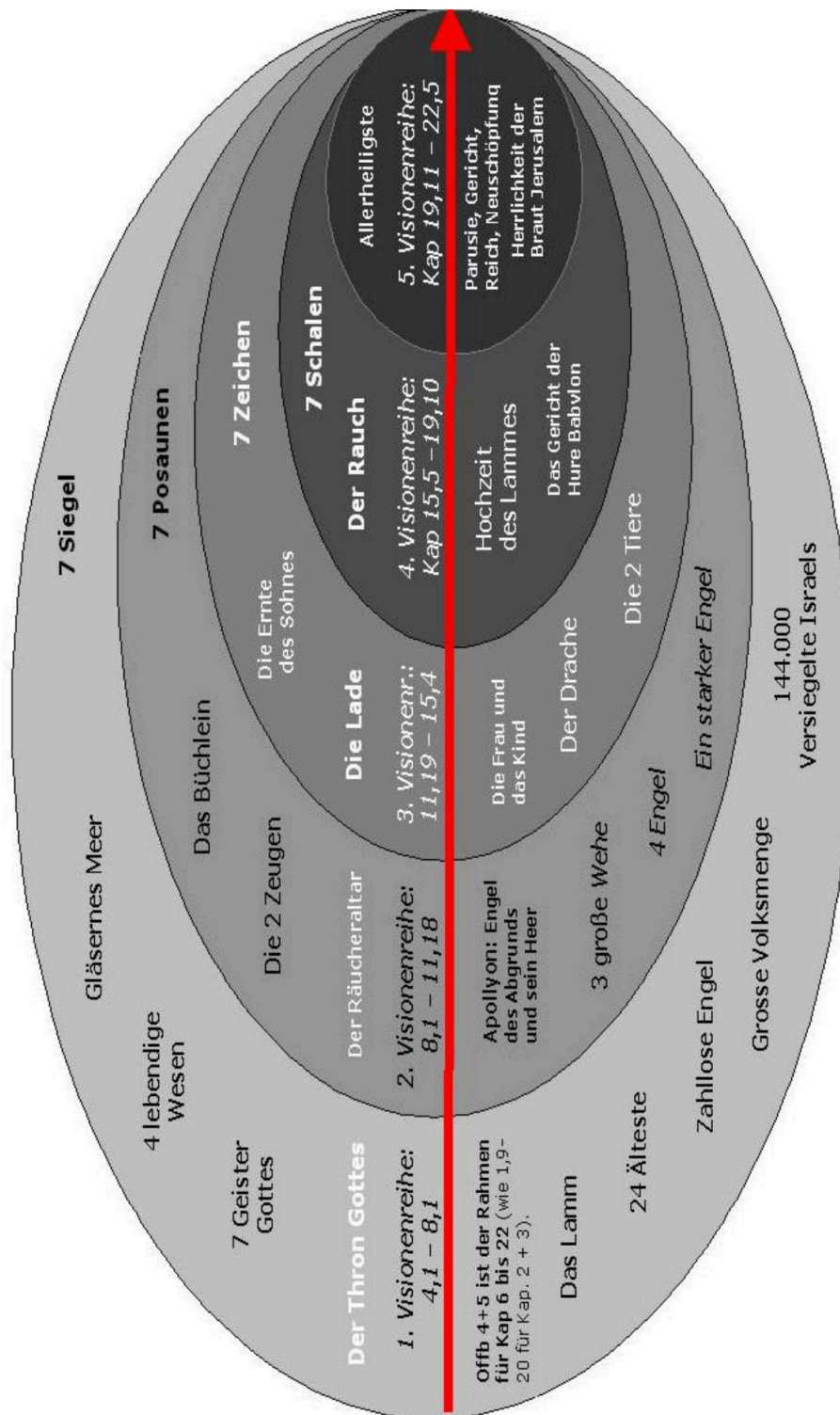
4:1–8:1	8:1–11:18	11:19–15:4	15:5–19:10	19:11–22:5
wisdom, thanks, honor, power, strength to our God ..	Ruler over all, .. because you have taken your great power...	marvelous are your works, Lord, God, Ruler over all ..	glory and honor and power to the Lord, our God	
7:17: The Lamb in the center of the <i>throne</i> .. will be their shepherd and lead them to springs of living water	11:17f.: You have begun to <i>reign</i> .. to give the reward to your servants	15:3f.: [You] <i>King</i> of the saints .. all nations will come and worship before you	19:6: the Lord has begun <i>his reign</i> .. v. 9: Blessed are those who are called to the wedding supper of the Lamb	22:3: The <i>throne</i> of God and of the Lamb .. v. 5: [His servants] will reign <as kings> forever and ever



(Diagram: five staggered arrows all running toward the same goal; the first is the longest, each following one starts later:)

- 1. series of visions
- 2 series of visions
- 3. series of visions
- 4 series of visions
- 5

Die Gliederung der Offenbarung anhand der 5 Visionenreihen



The Outline of Revelation Based on the 5 Series of Visions

(Diagram: five nested ellipses; a red arrow runs from the outer ellipse into the innermost one. From outside to inside:)

- 7 seals – The throne of God – 1st series of visions: 4:1–8:1
- Sea of glass
- 4 living creatures
- 7 spirits of God

- **Rev 4 and 5 is the framework for chs. 6 to 22** (as 1:9–20 is for chs. 2 and 3).
- The Lamb
- 24 elders
- Countless angels
- Great multitude
- 144,000 sealed of Israel
- **7 trumpets** – The altar of incense – *2nd series of visions: 8:1–11:18*
- The little scroll
- The 2 witnesses
- **Apollyon: angel of the Abyss and his army**
- 3 great woes
- 4 angels
- A mighty angel
- **7 signs – The ark** – *3rd series of visions: 11:19–15:4*
- The harvest of the Son
- The woman and the child
- The dragon
- The 2 beasts
- **7 bowls – The smoke** – *4th series of visions: chs. 15:5–19:10*
- Wedding of the Lamb
- The judgment of the prostitute Babylon
- Most Holy Place – *5th series of visions: chs. 19:11–22:5*
- Parousia, judgment, kingdom, new creation
- Glory of the bride Jerusalem

15. Detailed Outline

Opening of the Letter 1:1–8

1. Heading: 1:1a
2. Origin and purpose: 1:1, 2
3. Beatitude: 1:3
4. Greeting: 1:4, 5a
5. Doxology: 1:5, 6
6. Theme: 1:7
7. Introduction of the actual Giver of the revelation: 1:8

First Main Part: The Vision on Earth: The Son of Man and the 7 Messages to the 7 Churches 1:9–3:21

Introduction to the dictation of the seven messages to the seven churches 1:9–20

1. John's outward circumstances: 1:9

2. The Lord introduces himself and gives his commission to John: 1:10, 11
3. The seven lampstands 1:12
4. The Son of Man: 1:13–16
5. John's reaction and the Lord's encouragement 1:17, 18
6. The repetition of the commission: 1:19
7. The interpretation of the stars and the lampstands: 1:20

I. To Ephesus 2:1–7

1. Address and self-introduction: 2:1
2. Commendation: 2:2, 3
3. Rebuke: 2:4
4. Instruction with threat: 2:5
5. Praise: 2:6
6. Call to hear
7. Promise to the one who overcomes: 2:7

II. To Smyrna 2:8–11

1. Address and self-introduction: 2:8
2. Commendation: 2:9
3. Encouragement and preparation: 2:10a
4. Instruction: 2:10
5. Promise of reward: 2:10b
6. General call to hear: 2:11a
7. Promise to the one who overcomes: 2:11b

III. To Pergamum 2:12–17

1. Address and self-introduction: 2:12
2. Commendation: 2:13
3. Rebuke: 2:14, 15
4. Instruction: 2:16
5. Threat of judgment: 2:16
6. General call to hear: 2:17a
7. Promise to the one who overcomes: 2:17b

IV. To Thyatira 2:18–29

1. Address and self-introduction: 2:18
2. Commendation: 2:19
3. Rebuke: 2:20, 21
4. Threat of judgment: 2:22, 23
5. Encouragement for the faithful: 2:24, 25
6. Promise to the one who overcomes: 2:26–28

7. General call to hear: 2:29

V. To Sardis 3:1–6

1. Address and self-introduction: 3:1
2. Commendation = rebuke: 3:1
3. Instruction: 3:2, 3a
4. Threat of judgment: 3:3b
5. Encouragement for the faithful: 3:4
6. Promise to the one who overcomes: 3:5
7. General call to hear: 3:6

VI. To Philadelphia 3:7–13

1. Address and self-introduction: 3:7
2. Commendation and comfort: 3:8
3. Encouragement (regarding the enemies): 3:8, 9
4. Promise of protection: 3:10
5. Instruction: 3:11
6. Promise to the one who overcomes: 3:12
7. General call to hear: 3:13

VII. To Laodicea 3:14–21

1. Address and self-introduction: 3:14
2. Commendation = rebuke: 3:15
3. Threat of judgment: 3:16–17
4. Instruction: 3:18–19
5. Promise for the faithful: 3:20
6. Promise to the one who overcomes: 3:21
7. General call to hear: 3:22

Second Main Part: Visions in Heaven: “What Will Take Place after This” 4:1–22:5

I. First series of visions: The seven seals 4:1–8:1

Introduction to the seven seals: The God of history and his surroundings 4:1–5:14

1. The opening of the door in heaven and the seer’s being transported into heaven 4:1, 2a
2. The throne and the One seated on the throne: 4:2, 3
3. The surroundings of the throne: 4:4–8
4. The worship of the One seated on the throne by the 24 elders: 4:9–11
5. The scroll in the hand of the One seated on the throne: 5:1–5
6. The Lamb in the center of the throne: 5:6, 7
7. The worship of the Lamb: 5:8–14

The opening of the first six seals 6:1–17

- The first seal: Bow and victor's crown: conquests, victories: 6:1, 2
- The second seal: A large sword: wars: 6:3, 4
- The third seal: A pair of scales: hunger: 6:5, 6
- The fourth seal: Death: authority to kill by sword, famine, (plague) death, and wild beasts: 6:7, 8
- The fifth seal: Souls of martyrs under the altar: 6:9, 11
- The sixth seal: Upheavals: 6:12, 17

Two interlude visions 7:1–17

- The sealing of the 144,000: 7:1–8
- The countless multitude before the throne: 7:9–17

The opening of the seventh seal 8:1

II. Second series of visions: The seven trumpets 8:(1) 2–11:19

Introduction to the seven trumpets 8:(1) 2–6

- The appearance of the trumpet angels: 8:2
- The angel with the censer: 8:3–5
- The preparation for sounding the trumpets: 8:6

The sounding of the first six trumpets 8:7–9:21

- The first trumpet: Earth: dwelling place and plant food: 8:7
- The second trumpet: Sea: fishing and trade: 8:8, 9
- The third trumpet: Water: the bare necessities of life: 8:10, 11
- The fourth trumpet: Heavenly bodies, and announcement of the three woes: 8:13
- The fifth trumpet (the first woe) and announcement of the two further woes: 9:1–12
- The sixth trumpet (the second woe): 9:13–21

Two interlude visions 10:1–11:14

- The angel with the little scroll: 10:1–11
- The measuring of the temple and the two witnesses in Jerusalem: 11:1–14

The sounding of the seventh trumpet 11:15–18

- The announcement of the third woe: 11:14
- The sounding of the seventh trumpet (the third woe): 11:15a
- The announcement of God's reign: 11:15b
- The worship of God by the 24 elders: 11:16–18

III. Third series of visions: Additional visions and historical details 11:19–15:4

Introduction: The opening of the sanctuary in heaven 11:19

1. Visions of the invisible archenemy: The dragon's battle against the woman 12:1–17

- First picture: The dragon's attack on the newborn child: 12:1–6
- The 1st sign: The woman giving birth: 12:1, 2

- The 2nd sign: The dragon threatening the woman and her child: 12:3, 4
- The birth and protection of the child: 12:5
- The flight and protection of the woman: 12:6
- Second picture: The dragon's unsuccessful battle in heaven: 12:7–12
- His defeat and his fall to earth: 12:7–9
- The rejoicing in heaven over his defeat: 12:10–12
- Third picture: The dragon's attack on the woman and the rest of her offspring: 12:13–17
- His persecution of the woman and her protection: 12:13–16
- His battle against the rest of the woman's offspring: 12:17

2. Visions of the visible archenemy: The beast's battle against the saints 13:1–18

- The beast out of the sea: 13:1–10
- Description: 13:1–3
- Its worship: 13:4
- Its blasphemy against God: 13:5–6
- Its war against the saints: 13:7, 8
- Call to the saints to be faithful: 13:9–10
- The beast out of the earth: Rev 13:11–18
- The description of the second beast: 13:11–14a
- The teaching of the second beast: 13:14–18

3. A preview of the goal: The 144,000 with the Lamb on Zion – and their song 14:1–5

- Their description: 14:1
- Their song: 14:2, 3
- Their identification: 14:4, 5

4. The three angels announcing judgment 14:6–13

- The first angel: The eternal gospel: 14:6, 7
- The second angel: Fallen is Babylon: 14:8
- The third angel: Warning against apostasy: 14:9–11
- Call to keep God's commands and faith in Jesus: 14:12
- Beatitude for the dead from now on: 14:13

5. The Son of Man on the cloud and the three angels who call out 14:14–20

- The grain harvest of the earth: 14:14–16
- The grape harvest of the earth: 14:17–20

6. The preparation of the seven angels with the last plagues 15:1

7. A second preview of the goal: The overcomers by the sea of glass – and their song 15:2–4

- The overcomers: 15:2
- The song of the overcomers: 15:3, 4

IV. Fourth series of visions: The seven bowls (= conclusion of the judgments of the seventh trumpet) 15:5–19:10

Introduction to the seven bowls 15:5–16:1

- The opening of the sanctuary of the tent of the testimony: 15:5
- The appearance of the 7 angels with the 7 bowls: 15:6–8
- The command to pour out the 7 bowls: 16:1

The pouring out of the first six bowls 16:2–9

- The pouring out of the 1st bowl: Earth: 16:2
- The pouring out of the 2nd bowl: Sea: 16:3
- The pouring out of the 3rd bowl: Water: 16:4–7
- The pouring out of the 4th bowl: Sun: 16:8, 9
- The pouring out of the 5th bowl: Empire of the beast: 16:10, 11
- The pouring out of the 6th bowl: Euphrates: 16:12

Interlude vision: The gathering for war 16:13–16

- The going out of the impure spirits to gather the kings: 16:13–14
- Interjection: Beatitude for those who stay awake: 16:15
- The gathering for war at Armageddon: 16:16

The pouring out of the 7th bowl: Air 16:17–21

V. Supplementary vision to the fourth series of visions: The prostitute – her pseudo-glory and her fall 17:1–19:10

The prostitute and the beast 17:1–18

- Introduction: 17:1–3
- Description of the woman: 17:3–6
- Explanations about the woman and the beast: 17:7–18

The downfall of Babylon 18:1–24

- Announcement of the fall: 18:1–3
- Warning to leave her and to pay her back for her sins: 18:4–7
- Announcement of her plagues: 18:8
- Lament of the inhabitants of the earth over her fall: 18:9–19
- Consequences of her fall: 18:21–24

The four hallelujahs over the downfall of Babylon and the announcement of the wedding of the Lamb 19:1–10

- The first hallelujah: 19:1, 2
- The second hallelujah: 19:3
- The third hallelujah: 19:4, 5
- The fourth hallelujah and the announcement of the wedding of the Lamb: 19:6, 7

- The preparation of the wedding of the Lamb: 19:8, 9

The seer's reaction 19:10

VI. Fifth series of visions: God's victory and the final judgments: 19:11–22:5

1. The return of Jesus Christ 19:11–16

- a. The opening of heaven: 19:11a
- b. The rider on the white horse: 19:11.
- c. Description of the rider: 19:12–16
- His eyes: 19:12
- His crowns: 19:12
- His name: 19:12
- His robe: 19:13
- His essential name: 19:13
- His armies: 19:14
- His sword: 19:15
- His official title: 19:16

2. The announcement of God's supper of judgment 19:17, 18

3. The judgment on the beast and the false prophet and their armies 19:19–21

4. The provisional judgment on Satan 20:1–3

- a. The one who carries it out: 20:1
- b. The execution: 20:2, 3a
- c. The purpose: 20:3
- d. The time limit: 20:3b

5. The thousand-year kingdom 20:4–10

- a. The reign of the saints: 20:4–6
- b. The judgment on Satan: 20:7–10

6. The judgment of the dead 20:11–15

- a. The scene of judgment: 20:11–12a
- b. The judicial proceedings: 20:12b, 13
- c. The sentence: 20:14, 15

7. The new 21:1–8

- a. The new creation: 21:1
- b. The new Jerusalem: 21:2
- c. The new fellowship with God: 21:3, 4
- d. God's concluding words to John: 21:5–8

VII. Supplementary vision to the fourth series of visions: The bride – her glory 21:9–22:5

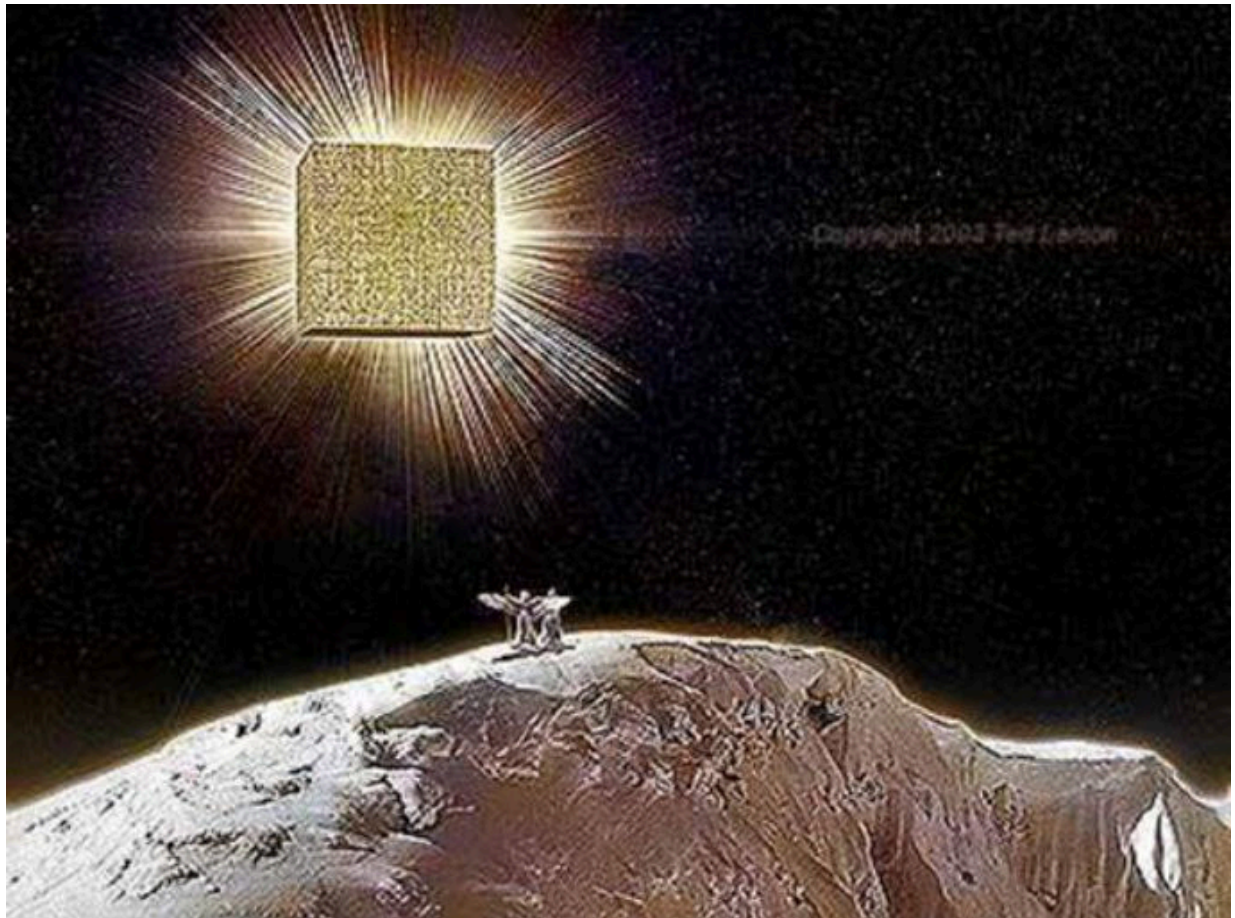
Introduction 21:9–10

The appearance of the city 21:11–27

1. Its radiance (its glory): 21:11
2. Its outward appearance 21:12–14
3. Its dimensions: 21:15–17
4. Its building material (beauty, preciousness): 21:18–21
5. Its sanctuary: 21:22
6. Its light: 21:23
7. Its inhabitants: 21:24–27

The life of the inhabitants of the city 22:1–5

1. Their water: 22:1
2. Their fruit: 22:2a
3. Their health: 22:2, 3a
4. Their guidance: 22:3
5. Their worship of God: 22:3, 4
6. Their light: 22:5
7. Their task: 22:5b



The Close of the Letter 22:6–21

Seven statements about this message 22:6–19

1. It is true. 22:6a
2. It is current. 22:6b, 7a
3. It is to be kept. 22:7
4. It is important: 22:8–15
5. It is from Jesus: 22:16
6. It is evangelistic: 22:17
7. It must not be changed: 22:18, 19

Jesus' last words 22:20a

Closing greetings 22:20, 21

After Thomas Jettel

16. A Possible Structure of Revelation

<i>Location</i>		<i>Chapter and verse</i>	<i>Content</i>
1:1–8	<i>PROLOGUE</i>	1–3	Preface
			1, 2 Title/heading 3 Beatitude
		4–8	Introduction
			4–6 Greeting with wish of grace and glorification of Christ 4a Address, 4b–5a Blessing 5b–6 Praise/doxology 7–8 Opening of the main theme (of the drama) 7 Theme/motto (of the book) 8 God, the Lord: Who is, was, and is to come
1:9–3:22	1st act or unit or cycle	<i>THE CHURCH ON EARTH BEING TESTED AND EVALUATED</i>	
		1:9–20	Prelude (overture) Vision of calling: the glorified Christ as the one who evaluates the churches
		2:1–3:22	The 7 letters to 7 local churches in Asia Minor Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea
4:1–8:1	2nd act or unit or cycle	<i>PREPARATION AND OPENING OF THE JUDGMENT</i>	
		4:1–5:14	Prelude: Throne vision of the Creator and of the Lamb
		6:1–17	<i>The opening of the 7 seals</i>
		7:1–17	Interlude (intermezzo, interlude)(144,000 sealed, the great multitude)

<i>Location</i>		<i>Chapter and verse</i>	<i>Content</i>
		8:1ff.	The 7th seal
8:2–11:18	3rd act or unit or cycle	THE 7 TRUMPETS	
		8:2–6	Prelude (The vision of the heavenly altar of incense)
		8:7–9:21	<i>The 7 trumpet (judgments)</i>
		10:1–11:14	Interlude (The 2 witnesses)
		11:15–18ff.	The 7th trumpet – Christ’s rule over the world has come.
11:19–14:20	4th act or unit or cycle	THE GREAT BATTLE BETWEEN GOD AND SATAN	
		11:19–12:12	Prelude (Vision of heaven: the ark of the covenant) The woman and the child
		12:13–13:18	The satanic trinity: 12:13–18 The dragon of heaven, the ancient serpent 13:1–10 The sea monster 13:11–18 The earth monster
		14:1–5	Interlude (The Lamb and the 144,000 sealed)
		14:6–13	The threefold angelic message: (Eternal gospel, Babylon fallen, announcement of eternal judgment)
		14:14–20ff.	Postlude (Vision of judgment at the coming of Christ) Grain harvest/grape harvest of the whole earth
15:1–16:17	5th act or unit or cycle	7 BOWL JUDGMENTS ON THE INHABITANTS OF THE EARTH	
		15:1–16:1	Prelude (Temple vision)
		16:2–17ff.	<i>The 7 bowl judgments that complete the wrath of God</i>
		16:15	Interlude (Beatitude)
16:18–19:10	6th act or unit or cycle	PUNITIVE JUDGMENT ON THE PROSTITUTE BABYLON	
		16:18–17:3a	Prelude (the 7th bowl angel)
		17:3b–18	The mystery of Babylon and its connection to the 1st beast
		18:1–24	The downfall of Babylon
		19:1–10ff.	Postlude (Rejoicing in heaven – the true bride of the Lamb in contrast to the prostitute Babylon)

<i>Location</i>		<i>Chapter and verse</i>	<i>Content</i>
19:11–21:1	7th act or unit or cycle	<i>THE THREEFOLD FINAL JUDGMENT</i>	
		19:11–18	Prelude (Christ appears – heaven opened)
		19:19–21	War against and final judgment on the sea and earth monsters
		20:1–10	1000 years of prison for the dragon, Satan, 1000 years of Christ’s reign, the millennium, last rebellion
		20:11–15	The white throne: final judgment on the dead
		21:1ff.	Postlude (New heaven and earth)
21:2–22:5	(8th) final act and climax	<i>THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST IN ITS PERFECTION</i>	
		21:2–10a	Prelude (a bowl angel)
		21:10b–22:5	Vision of the new Jerusalem, new heaven, new earth
22:6–21	<i>EPILOGUE</i>	6–9	Conclusion
		10–20	Afterword
		21	Blessing

After Rolf J. Pöhler

See, they had to be buried,
those who gave the world its laws,
and their word has not endured.
Their houses turned to rubble,
their coins are no longer valid,
the ones dug up from the earth.
Their names have faded away,
their songs are left unsung,
their kingdoms empty of people,
their seals are broken,
their languages unspoken,
their law has long since lost its force.

Jesus’ name will endure,
Jesus’ kingdom never fall,
his command holds for all time.
All must yield to Jesus’ word,
and no death can reach him.

Jesus reigns forever

17. The (Un)holy Trinity, Chapters 12–14

<i>The divine Trinity</i>	<i>The satanic trinity</i>
The Father	The dragon of heaven
gives the Son power & throne 2:28; 3:21; 12:5	gives the “beast” power and throne 13:2, 7
The Son	The 1st beast, out of the sea
<i>Michael = “Who is like God?” 12:7</i>	<i>“Who is like the beast?” 13:4</i>
a Lamb 5:6ff.; 11:1ff.	a monster/hybrid beast 13:2
with 7 horns 5:6	with 10 horns 13:1
and many crowns 14:14; 19:12	and 10 crowns 13:1
and (honorable) names 19:12, 16	and (blasphemous) names 13:1
works 3½ years on earth	rages 3½ years on earth 12:6, 14; 13:5
receives a mortal wound 5:6, 12	receives a mortal wound 13:3, 12, 14
was – is – is coming again 1:4, 8; 4:8; 11:17	was – is not – is coming again 17:8, 11
experiences a resurrection 1:18	experiences a resurrection 13:3, 12, 14
experiences an enthronement 3:21; 5:12; 12:5	experiences an enthronement 13:2, 7
is worshiped by the inhabitants of heaven 5:8ff.; 7:10; 12:10; 15:2–4; 22:3	is worshiped by the inhabitants of the earth 13:4, 8
who bear the seal 7:3; 14:1	who bear the mark 13:16; 19:20
is victor and overcomer 5:5	is victor and overcomer 13:7
fights for the saints 19:11ff.	fights against the saints 13:7
speaks in the name of God 19:13	speaks in the name of the dragon 13:5
The Holy Spirit	The 2nd beast, out of the earth
<i>the true prophet (spirit of prophecy)</i> <i>cf. John 14:16–26; 15:26; 16:5–15</i>	<i>the false prophet (spirit of false prophecy)</i> <i>Revelation 16:13</i>
is Christ’s representative	is the representative of the beast 13:12
	has horns like a lamb 13:11
speaks like the Lamb	speaks like a/the dragon
leads people to worship the Lamb	leads people astray to worship the beast 13:12, 14
makes fire fall from heaven Acts 2:3	makes fire fall from heaven 13:13f.
gives life 11:11	gives life 13:15
grants the seal of God = the name of the Lamb 7:1ff.; 14:1	forces the mark of Satan on people = the name of the “beast” 13:16–18

After Rolf J. Pöhler

18. Christ and His Names in Revelation

	Names	Number	Bible references in Revelation
1	Jesus Christ	4	1:1, 2, 5, 9
2	The faithful witness	1	1:5
3	The firstborn from the dead	1	1:5
4	The ruler of the kings of the earth	1	1:5
5	The Alpha and the Omega	3	1:8; 21:6; 22:13
6	Jesus	8	1:9; 12:17; 14:12; 17:6; 19:10, 10; 20:4; 22:16
7	The Lord	2	1:10; 12:13
8	One like the Son of Man	2	1:13; 14:14
9	The First and the Last	3	1:17; 2:8; 22:13
10	The Living One	3	1:18; 4:9, 10
11	He who holds the seven stars in his right hand	1	2:1
12	He who has the sharp, double-edged sword	1	2:12
13	The Son of God, who has eyes	1	2:18
14	The morning star	2	2:28; 22:16
15	He who has the seven spirits of God ...	1	3:1
16	He who is holy and true ...	1	3:7
17	The Amen	17	3:14
18	The faithful and true witness		3:14
19	The beginning of God's creation	1	3:14
20	The Lion of the tribe of Judah	1	5:5
21	The Root of David	2	5:5; 22:16
22	The Lamb	27	5:6, 8, 12, 13; 6:1, 16; 7:9, 10, 14, 17; 12:11; 13:8; 14:1, 4, 4, 10; 15:3; 17:14, 14; 19:7, 9; 21:9, 14, 22, 23, 27; 22:1, 3
23	Their Lord (of the witnesses)	1	11:8
24	His Christ	2	11:15; 12:11
25	A male son ...	1	12:5
26	The male child	1	12:13
27	He who sat on the cloud	2	14:15, 16
28	Lord of lords	2	17:14; 19:16

	Names	Number	Bible references in Revelation
29	King of kings	2	17:14; 19:16
30	Faithful and True	1	19:11
31	The Word of God	1	19:13
32	The Christ	2	20:4, 6
33	He who sat on the throne	1	21:5
34	The Beginning and the End	2	21:6; 22:13
35	The Root and Offspring of David	1	22:16
36	Lord Jesus	1	22:20
37	The Lord Jesus Christ	1	22:21
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Source: Werner Mücher, Die Offenbarung

19. Beginning and End – Moses and John

Between the beginning and the end of the Bible there are a number of connections that show us that the Bible is *one whole*, with *one* author and *one* plan.

At the beginning	At the end
Gen 1:1 In the <i>beginning</i> God created the heavens and the earth.	Rev 22:13b I am the <i>Beginning</i> ...
Gen 1:1 The <i>heavens</i> and the <i>earth</i> .	Rev 21:1 And I saw a new <i>heaven</i> and a new <i>earth</i> .
Gen 1:2 and <i>darkness</i> was over the deep.	Rev 22:5 And there will be no more <i>night</i> (cf. Rev 21:25).
Gen 1:3 And God said: Let there be <i>light!</i> and there was <i>light</i> .	Rev 21:23 The glory of God <i>gives it light</i> , and its <i>lamp</i> is the Lamb.
Gen 1:10 And the gathering of the waters he called <i>sea</i> .	Rev 21:1 And the <i>sea</i> is no more.
Gen 1:14–16 ... the <i>sun</i> and the <i>moon</i> , to give light to the earth.	Rev 21:23 The city does not need the <i>sun</i> or the <i>moon</i> to shine on it.
Gen 1:16 The stars as well.	Rev 22:16 I am the bright <i>Morning Star</i> .
Gen 2:4, 5 All things created and <i>made</i> .	Rev 21:5 And he who sat on the throne said: Behold, I <i>make</i> all things <i>new</i> .
Gen 2:9 The <i>tree of life</i> in the middle of the garden.	Rev 22:2 In the middle of the street of the city is the <i>tree of life</i> .
Gen 2:10 And the <i>river</i> went out from Eden to water the garden.	Rev 22:1 A <i>river</i> of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb.
Gen 2:11 The land of Havilah, where there is <i>gold</i> , and the gold of that land is good.	Rev 21:18 The city is of pure <i>gold</i> , like clear glass.

At the beginning	At the end
Gen 2:12 <i>Precious stones</i> .	Rev 21:19 And the foundations of the city wall were adorned with every kind of <i>precious stone</i> .
Gen 4:17 A <i>city</i> built by Cain.	Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy <i>city</i> , the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
Gen 2:15 God's fellowship with <i>human beings</i> .	Rev 21:3 And he will dwell with them (<i>human beings</i>).
Gen 2:21–23 A <i>bride</i> is brought to her husband.	Rev 21:2 As a <i>bride</i> adorned for her husband.
Gen 3:1 The <i>serpent</i> begins its work as a deceiver.	Rev 20:10 The ancient <i>serpent</i> , who deceives the nations, was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur.
Gen 3:4 The <i>lie</i> enters.	Rev 21:27 And nothing will enter the city that does what is detestable or a <i>lie</i> .
Gen 3:7 They realized that they were naked; they sewed <i>fig leaves</i> together and made themselves aprons.	Rev 19:8 And it was granted her to clothe herself with <i>fine linen</i> , pure and bright; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.
Gen 3:7 Humanity <i>lost</i> .	Rev 21:24 The nations <i>saved</i> .
Gen 3:8 And the man and his wife <i>hid</i> from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.	Rev 21:3 Behold, the dwelling place of <i>God</i> is with human beings.
Gen 3:17–19 <i>Toil</i> and <i>labor</i> imposed.	Rev 21:4 And he will wipe away every tear from their eyes. No mourning, no crying, <i>no pain</i> .
Gen 3:19 <i>Death</i> imposed.	Rev 21:4 <i>Death</i> will be no more.
Gen 3:17 A <i>curse</i> pronounced.	Rev 22:3 And there will no longer be any <i>curse</i> .
Gen 3:15 The great promise.	Rev 20–22 The promise fulfilled.

Source: magazine "KOMM," January 2012

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