

John's Revelation

We can assume the visions of Revelation were revealed to John in the order of the chapters and that they were not revealed all at once. John would have interpreted what was shown to him in the context of his personal knowledge and the culture of his day. To understand what the visions mean it would be a good approach to consider how John would or could have interpreted them as they were revealed to him in their specific order. With the visions not being revealed all at once, John would have had moments that he could reflect on what had been revealed to him so far, step by step forming an understanding about what the revelation was about.

Introduction Chapter 1-5

In chapter 1 John is introduced to Jesus in His resurrected state, besides the characteristics John already knew about Jesus, this introduction would help him to recognize Jesus in following visions.

- Rev 1:10 “loud voice like a trumpet”
- Rev 1:13 “in the midst of the lampstands One like a Son of Man”
- Rev 1:14 “His eyes were like a flame of fire”
- Rev 1:16 “from His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword”
- Rev 1:16 “His face was like the sun shining in full strength”

In chapter 2 and 3 Jesus recites the letters to 7 churches in Minor-Asia. It is now commonly accepted that these churches represent the state of the church in general throughout the Church era, John however knew these churches so he wouldn't have sought more behind this than straight-forward messages from Jesus to these churches.

In chapter 4 John is taken up into heaven and Jesus (“voice like a trumpet”) tells him that he will be shown what will happen “after this”. In Johns mind “after this” is after the letters to the churches, thus after his current time. In the light of these letters allegedly representing the state of the church throughout time “after this” may also mean after the church has reached its “final stage”.

He is shown the Throne of God in Heaven before which are the “Twenty-four Elders” (Rev 4:4) and the “Four Living Creatures” (Rev 4:6), these will be a reference in the following visions to recognize when events are taking place in Heaven.

In chapter 5 he is then shown how the Lamb of God, which John knows is Jesus because John the Baptist identified Him like that (John 1:29,36), is about to open the sealed scroll which only Jesus is authorized to do.

First 6 Seals, the Great Tribulation and the Rapture Chapter 6

Then John sees how the first 6 seals are opened, he would have recognized that the events that are described for each of the seals align with what Jesus told His disciples regarding the end of times (Matt 24:1-31 / Mark 13:1-27 / Luke 21:5-27).

1 st Seal	Conquer, destruction of the Temple, deception
Rev 6:1-2	Now I watched when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, “Come!” And I looked, and behold, a white horse! And its rider had a bow, and a crown was given to him, and he came out conquering, and to conquer.
Gospels	
Matt 24:1-5	Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. But he answered them, “You see all these, do you

	not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down." As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" And Jesus answered them, "See that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray.
Mark 13:1-6	And as he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!" And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? There will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down." And as he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, "Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?" And Jesus began to say to them, "See that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and they will lead many astray.
Luke 21:5-8	And while some were speaking of the temple, how it was adorned with noble stones and offerings, he said, "As for these things that you see, the days will come when there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down." And they asked him, "Teacher, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?" And he said, "See that you are not led astray. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is at hand!' Do not go after them.

2nd, 3rd, 4th Seal Wars, famines, natural disasters

Rev 6:3-4	When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" And out came another horse, bright red. Its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that people should slay one another, and he was given a great sword.
Rev 6:5-6	When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" And I looked, and behold, a black horse! And its rider had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures, saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not harm the oil and wine!"
Rev 6:7-8	When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!" And I looked, and behold, a pale horse! And its rider's name was Death, and Hades followed him. And they were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth.

Gospels

Matt 24:6-8	And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.
Mark 13:7-8	And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. This must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. These are but the beginning of the birth pains.
Luke 21:9-11	And when you hear of wars and tumults, do not be terrified, for these things must first take place, but the end will not be at once." Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences. And there will be terrors and great signs from heaven.

5th Seal	Martyrs, witnessing, persecution
Rev 6:9-11	When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. They cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.

Gospels	
Matt 24:9-14	"Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.
Mark 13:9-13	"But be on your guard. For they will deliver you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them. And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations. And when they bring you to trial and deliver you over, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. And brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death. And you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.
Luke 21:12-19	But before all this they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors for my name's sake. This will be your opportunity to bear witness. Settle it therefore in your minds not to meditate beforehand how to answer, for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict. You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and some of you they will put to death. You will be hated by all for my name's sake. But not a hair of your head will perish. By your endurance you will gain your lives.

6th Seal	<i>Signs in the sky</i>
Rev 6:12-14	When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.

Gospels	
Matt 24:29	"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.
Mark 13:24-25	"But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.
Luke 21:25-26	"And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves, people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

The first 4 seals have the common theme of the horsemen, this would be an indication to John they are to be interpreted in a similar manner. The events mentioned for these first 4 seals however are very common to all of human history, but as said these events likely refer to things that will happen after the time of John, or even later. John also knew that Jesus had said that the events related to the first 4 seals are the “beginning of the birth pains” (Matt 24:8 / Mark 13:8) which indicates that these events have the characteristics of birth labor. Birth pains will “come and go”, for which horsemen are a very striking metaphor because horsemen were the most mobile and agile entities in the Biblical times. Just like the intensifying of the birth pains are the indication that the birth of the child is approaching, the seals seem to be indicating an intensification of the described events in a certain period before the actual end time events will start. How long this period would be is not defined, just like the duration of child-birth can vary drastically, it may be centuries, but it just as well might be only a few or even just a single decade. So John could have concluded that the first 4 seals indicate the prelude to the actual end time events, but would not have been able to know when this period would start, nor how long it would last.

John knew that Jesus also mentioned the “Abomination of Desolation” (Matt 24:15 / Mark 13:14) that will be revealed in “the Holy place”. That event would be the start of a “Great Tribulation” (Matt 24:21 / Mark 13:19 / Luke 21:23) during which the believers would have to flee (Matt 24:16-20 / Mark 13:15-18 / Luke 21:21). The duration of this Great Tribulation would be “cut short” (Matt 24:22 / Mark 13:20) until the moment the signs of the 6th Seal appear (Matt 24:29 / Mark 13:24). At that time “the Son of Man” would appear to “gather the elect” (Matt 24:30-31 / Mark 13:26-27 / Luke 21:27-28). Jesus did not specify the duration of this Great Tribulation, nor is it specified in any other instance, but Jesus did say that the appearance of the Son of Man would come suddenly (Matt 24:44 / Matt 24:50 / Matt 25:13 / Mark 13:33-37 / Luke 21:34-36 / 1Thess 5:1-3) and in an instance “as the lightning” (Matt 24:23-27 / 1 Cor 15:51-52). It is even emphasized that the time of the appearance of the Son of Man would not be known by anybody but only God the Father (Matt 24:36 / Mark 13:32).

The event of the appearance of the Son of Man also aligns with the texts that speak about the so-called “Rapture” (1 Cor 15:52 / 1 Thess 4:16-17 / 2Thess 2:1,3) where it is mentioned that the Rapture happens at the sounding of the “last trumpet” and the “trumpet of God” while in Matt 24:31 the appearance of the Son of Man happens at a “loud trumpet call”. The reason why 1 Cor 15:52 speaks of the “last” trumpet while after the 6th seal there are still the “7 Trumpets” to be sounded might be because these 7 Trumpets are sounded by angels, while the trumpet of the Rapture is sounded by God Himself as 1 Thess 4:16-17 indicates, thus being the “last” trumpet because it ushers in the final events of God’s timeline.

These things were not mentioned in Rev 6, but the terrible prosecution during the Great Tribulation does align well with the martyrs mentioned with the 5th seal. So John might have concluded that the event of the revelation of the Abomination of Desolation would happen at the 5th Seal and the event of the Rapture would happen at the 6th Seal. The period of the Great Tribulation would happen between these two events.

Rev 6:15-17 states that the people who are left behind on earth after the Rapture will realize that after the 6th Seal the “Wrath of God” is about to be poured out on them.

After Jesus told His disciples about the end of times He illustrated these times in several ways.

- In Matt 24:37-39 He indicates that the coming of the Son of Man will be like the day that Noah’s Flood commenced, where the believers (Noah and his family) were taken out of the existing world into the ark with the door closed behind them by God Himself, while the unbelievers will remain in the existing world to face the Judgement of God.
- In Matt 25:1-13 He gives a metaphor for the same concept where the wise virgins were taken into the marriage feast with the door shut behind them. The foolish virgins were left outside, with the terrifying response from the Lord reserved only for the lost “I do not know you”.

Jesus also indicated that the revelation of the Abomination of Desolation was already prophesied by Daniel (Matt 24:15 / Dan 9:27) from which John would know that there would be a period of 3,5 years prior to this event and another period of 3,5 years after this event. This 7 year period is known as Daniel's 70th Week and will commence with the establishment of the "Seven Year Covenant" which will also entail the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem.

Events after the 7th Seal Chapter 7-10

In chapter 7 John is told that the next events are to be paused until 144000 people, 12000 of every tribe of Israel will have been sealed. At this point it is not clear to John where these people are, where they will be, nor what the purpose of their sealing is.

After this he sees a "Great Multitude" of people from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages standing before the Throne of God in Heaven, with reference to the Twenty-four Elders and the Four Living Creatures. Then John is told that this Great Multitude came out of the Great Tribulation, so this links this vision to the Rapture that happened at the 6th Seal.

In chapter 8 John is shown that the 7th Seal is opened followed by a silence "for about half an hour", John may have linked this to the pause mentioned in chapter 7 concluding that the sealing of the 144000 started with the opening of the 7th Seal.

Then John sees 7 angels with trumpets and the events that happen when each blows their trumpet one after another. John would have understood these events to be the Wrath of God because the people that were left behind after the 6th Seal indicated that this was the next thing that was going to happen (Rev 6:15-17). There are several texts like 1Thess 1:10, 1Thess 5:9, Rom 5:9 and Luke 21:35-36 that indicate that the believers will not face the Wrath of God, so it would happen after the Rapture.

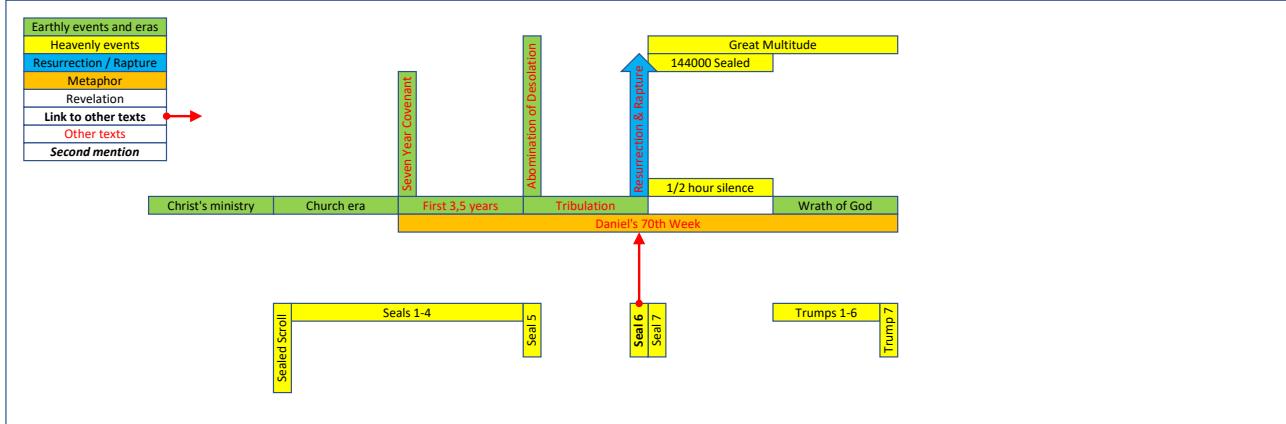
In chapter 10 John sees another angel that announced that with the 7th Trumpet the "Mystery of God" would be fulfilled, so this hints that it is the completion of the Wrath of God. The angel also has a "Little Scroll" that John is ordered to eat, which is the same as what is described in Ezek 3:2-3. The meaning of this is not made clear for neither, but it must have indicated to John that the revelations he had just received have a strong conformity with the visions of Ezekiel. The Four Living Creatures he saw at the beginning of the revelation would also have reminded John to Ezekiel's visions.

Then John is given personal instructions after which this part of revelation of the vision seems to end.

Below overview shows the relation between what had been revealed to John so far, together with what Jesus had told about the End of Times.

Theme	Revelation	Matthew	Mark	Luke
Introduction and Letters to the Churches	1-5			
1 st until 5 th Seal	6:1-11	24:1-14	13:1-13	21:5-19
Abomination of Desolation and Great Tribulation		24:15-28	13:14-23	21:20-24
6 th Seal	6:12-13	24:29-30	13:24-26	21:25-27
Appearance of the Son of Man and Rapture		24:30-51 25:1-13	13:26-37	21:27-36
7 th Seal	6:14-17			

Below timeline shows the chronology of what had been revealed to John so far, together with what Jesus had told about the End of Times and the reference that Jesus made to the book of Daniel.



Overview of eras until 7th trump linked to Daniel's 70th week Chapter 11-13

Now a new series of visions begins, starting in chapter 11 with John being instructed to measure the Temple, which is the same as what is described in Ezek 40-42, so again John receives confirmation of the conformity of this revelation with the visions of Ezekiel. Then he is told that the court outside the Temple will be trampled by the nations for 42 months, and that for 1260 days God will give authority to His "Two Witnesses", which are called the Two Olive Trees which refers to Zech 4:2-3,11-14.

He is then told that after this time the Two Witnesses will be killed by the "beast that rises from the bottomless pit" and that they will "lie dead" in Jerusalem (Rev 11:7-8) for "3,5 days". After that they are resurrected and taken up into Heaven.

So here John would have recognized that there are two periods of 3,5 years which make up the Seven Year Covenant of Daniel's 70th week. In the first period until the revelation of the Abomination of Desolation the believers (Two Witnesses being a metaphor for all the believers, both Jews and Christians) will be having great authority (such awakening would be a logical result of them seeing Biblical prophecy coming to pass with the confirmation of the Seven Year Covenant and the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem), but in the second period they will be overpowered and prosecuted like never before in history as prophesied in Dan 7:21, Dan 7:25 (a time, times, and half a time), Dan 12:7 and Rev 13:7.

Then, with the sounding of the 7th Trumpet, at the end of this second period when the Wrath of God is completed, it is stated that "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." Which indicates that Jesus has taken back full dominion over Creation. The resurrection of the Two Witnesses is a metaphor for the believers being fully restored.

In chapter 12 John is shown the "Vision of the Woman", he would have recognized that the first part is a metaphor for the Messiah coming into the world through Israel. After Christ was taken up into Heaven John sees the Woman "flee" to the "Wilderness" to be nourished for 1,260 days.

After that John is shown how there is a war in heaven after which the devil and his demons are thrown down to the earth after which John sees the Woman "fly" to the Wilderness to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. John would have regarded the devil being "defeated" to be the result of Christ victory on the Cross. The devil then "makes war" on the "offspring of the Woman", which are Christians.

The "Woman to the Wilderness" is mentioned twice practically similar with the only difference of the first time the Woman "flee" and the second time "fly". So John might have reasoned this is referring to the same event which could be for emphasizing. Because of the devil making war on the Christians the mentioned duration of 3,5 years seems to relate to the second part of the Seven Year Covenant. The first

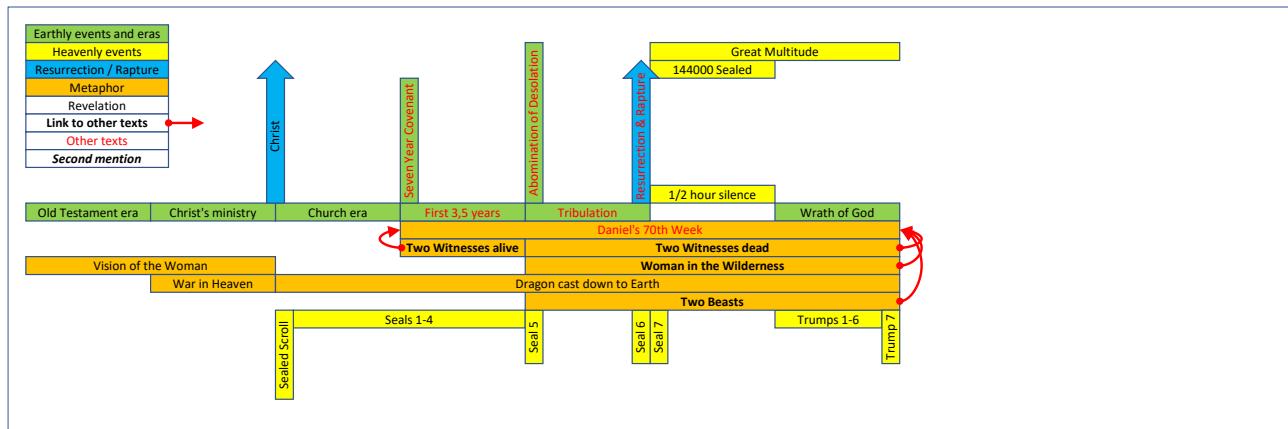
part of the vision indicates that this happens after the ascension of Christ, the second part of the vision indicates that this happens after the devil and his demons have been thrown down to the earth.
So the events of the Vision of the Woman might historically be placed as below.

- Rev 12:1-4 > The time until Jesus.
- Rev 12:5 > From Christ's birth until His ascension.
- Rev 12:7-10 > From Christ's birth until His victory on the Cross.
- Rev 12:11-13 > From Christ's ascension until the first 3,5 years of the Seven Year Covenant.
- Rev 12:6 & Rev 12:14-17 > Second 3,5 years of the Seven Year Covenant.

In chapter 13 John sees a beast rising out of the sea which will be given authority for 42 months, this beast resembles to the beasts mentioned in Dan 7. Then he sees a second beast rising out of the earth which exercises in the authority of the first beast. The saints are encouraged to endure.

Again the duration of 3,5 years is mentioned, and because these beasts obviously are having the power to oppose the believers it again seems to relate to the second part of the Seven Year Covenant.

Below timeline shows the chronology of what had been revealed to John so far, together with what Jesus had told about the End of Times and the reference that Jesus made to the book of Daniel.



Reiteration of events after 7th seal chapter 14-16

In chapter 14 John again sees the 144000 that were sealed and now it is shown these are also in Heaven because they are “before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders”, referring back to Rev 4. Heb 12:22 shows that “Mount Sion” can be taken as a metaphor for Heaven. It is indicated, by the term “firstfruits for God” and the “song that only they could learn”, that these 144000 will have a very special function, but it is still not clarified what their function actually is.

After this John sees Three Angels that address several groups that will be present on earth during the period of the Wrath of God.

- The believers: Encouragement to endure
- Babylon: Judgement (introducing Babylon)
- The unbelievers: Warning regarding worship of the Beast (revering back to chapter 13)

The parallel text Rev 7:1-8 places this event after the Rapture, confirming that the groups that are addressed are those that will go through the period of the Wrath of God.

Because with the Rapture all believers were taken away from the earth, the believers that are being addressed here will all be newly converts.

Then John sees one “like the son of man” reaping the “Harvest of the Earth” (generic) and an angel reaping the “Grape Harvest of the Earth” (specific).

For the Grape Harvest of the Earth it is indicated that this is related to the Wrath of God, so this seems to indicate this is the harvest of the unbelievers. For the first mentioned Harvest reference is made to “son of man” indicating this harvest is done by Jesus Himself.

John would have noticed the resemblance to Dan 12:2 and Matt 13:24-30 suggesting this is the final event before the Final Judgement.

In chapters 15 and 16 John sees the events of the Bowls, he would have noticed many parallels of these events with the events of the Trumpets. Some parallels are striking, some are less but the overall pattern is definitely matching very well.

- In Rev 15:1, Rev 15:7 and Rev 16:1 it is stated that the bowls are the Wrath of God.
In Rev 6:17 it was indicated that after the 6th Seal the Wrath of God had come, seemingly commencing shortly thereafter, and in Rev 11:18 it was indicated that after the 7th Trumpet the Wrath of God had happened. So these texts indicate that the Trumpets are also a metaphor for the Wrath of God.
- In Rev 11:19 it is stated that after the 7th Trumpet God’s Temple in Heaven was opened, while Rev 15:8 states that during the period of the Vails the sanctuary was filled with smoke and was inaccessible until the Bowls were finished, so this indicates that both during the Trumpets and the Bowls the Temple was hidden.
- The 1st Trumpet and Bowl have in common that the plague is poured out on the earth.
- The 2nd Trumpet and Bowl have in common that the plague is poured out in the sea causing it to turn into blood.
- The 3rd Trumpet and Bowl have in common that the plague is poured out on the rivers causing the water to become “bitter”.
- The 4th Trumpet and Bowl have in common that the plague affected the sun, moon and stars.
- The 5th Trumpet and Bowl have in common that the plague causes torment of the unbelievers.
- The 6th Trumpet and Bowl have in common that the plague affected the river Euphrates and that an immense war will occur.
- The 7th Trumpet and Bowl have in common that the plague caused “flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, a great earthquake, and heavy hail” and that they both are indicated to be at the completion of the Wrath of God.

So this confirm that the Trumpets and Vails are both metaphors for the events of the Wrath of God, and that these will happen after the 7th Seal.

In chapter 17 and 18 the “Judgement of Babylon” which was introduced in Rev 14:8 is then elaborated on.

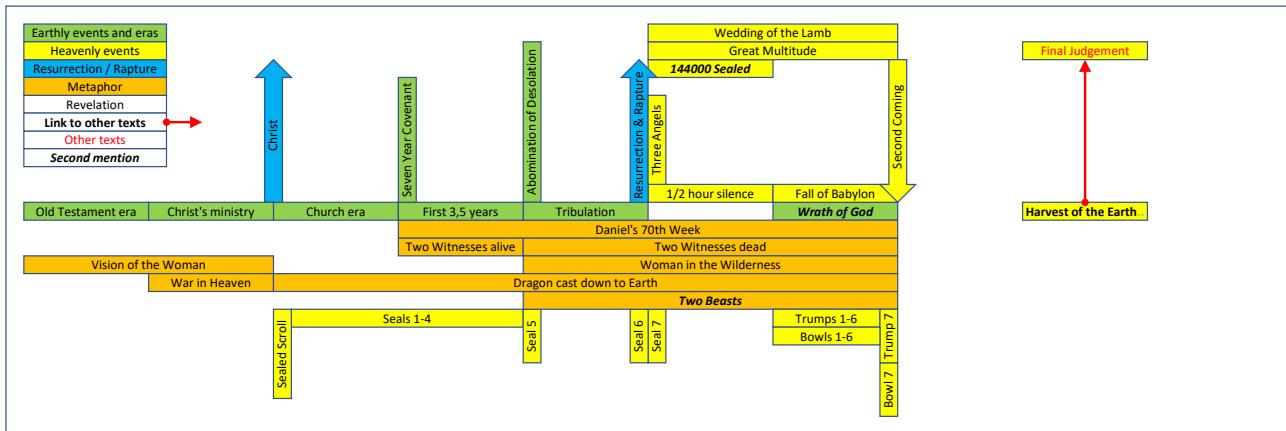
In chapter 19 the Multitude in Heaven which was introduced in Rev 7:9-17 is then elaborated on, indicating this is the “Wedding of the Lamb”.

After this John sees Christ with His army descending from Heaven to make war on the army of the unbelievers, John would have recognized this event aligns with the events of the 6th Trumpet and the 6th Bowl, indicating that during this event the Second Coming of Christ will happen. The result will be that Christ retakes dominion over the world as already indicated in Rev 11:15. The Beast and the False Prophet (the second Beast from Rev 13) are thrown into the “Lake of Fire”, which is Hell.

Below overview shows the relation between the different mentions of the vision of the 144000 and the Great Multitude, and the events of the Trumpets and the Bowls.

Theme	Revelation					
144000 sealed	7:1-8		14:1-5			
Great Multitude in Heaven	7:9-17					19:1-9
1 st until 5 th Trumpet / Bowl		8:7-13 9:1-12		16:2-11		
6 th Trumpet / 6 th Bowl		9:13-21		16:12-16		19:11-21
Babylon			14:8		17-18	
Winepress of the Wrath of God			14:19			19:15
7 th Trumpet / 7 th Bowl		10:5-7 11:15-19		16:17-21		

Below timeline shows the chronology of what had been revealed to John so far, together with what Jesus had told about the End of Times and the reference that Jesus made to the book of Daniel.



Recap on Daniel's 70th week

So from the book of Daniel John already knew that 3,5 years after the Seven Year Covenant was confirmed the Abomination of Desolation would be revealed by declaring himself god in the Temple as Paul also wrote about (2Thes 2:1-12), and after that there would be 3,5 years in which the “daily sacrifice” would be taken away, to John this would mean as much as that the “Abomination” would have complete dominion. But from the revelations he had received so far, he would learn that this second 3,5 years would have two distinct periods.

The first period would be the Great Tribulation where the believers would still be on earth.

Rev 7:9 indicates that the Rapture includes all believers of all times (of all nations and tribes, so also including Israel...). Rev 7:14 further indicates that these believers are “coming out of the great tribulation” which indicates that these believers were taken out of the world after the Great Tribulation happened.

The second period would be the “Outpouring of the Wrath of God” which would start after the Rapture. Both periods will be “hell on earth”, but with the distinction that only during the second period God will be executing His Judgement. It is in this second period that people in general will not repent because of the judgements (Rev 9:20-21 / Rev 16:9 / Rev 16:11 / Rev 16:21) it is only mentioned that after the Two Witnesses have been resurrected people are giving glory to God, but only out of fear (Rev 11:13).

Yet during this period of the Wrath of God there will still be people repenting because right after the Rapture there will be no believer left on earth because all have been taken up into Heaven, but Rev 20:4 indicates that during the period of the Wrath of God there will be believers that will be beheaded because of their faith, so these are new believers who repented during this period.

The last things Chapter 20-22

In chapter 20 John sees how the devil will be locked up in a bottomless pit for 1000 years. Then he sees how the resurrected believers from the period of the Wrath of God will rule during the 1000 years which is called the Millennium.

Rev 20:5-6 calls the resurrection of the believers that had been killed during the period of the Wrath of God the “First Resurrection”, this term may be interpreted in two ways, both may be applicable.

The first interpretation is that it is to differentiate between the resurrection of the believers and the unbelievers, this aligns with John 5:29 and Dan 12:2 where it is indicated that both the righteous and the wicked will be resurrected, yet each with a different destination. The first resurrection (of the believers) would then happen in separate events, while the second resurrection (of the unbelievers) would then happen in a single event after the Millennium.

The second interpretation is that the “First Resurrection” is only the resurrection of the physical mortal body, the “Second Resurrection” then is the receiving of the eternal body. This would mean that the believers that had been killed during the period of the Wrath of God will first be resurrected with a mortal body and will only receive their eternal body after the final resurrection after the Millennium, together with the other believers from the Millennium.

There are several resurrections mentioned in the Bible:

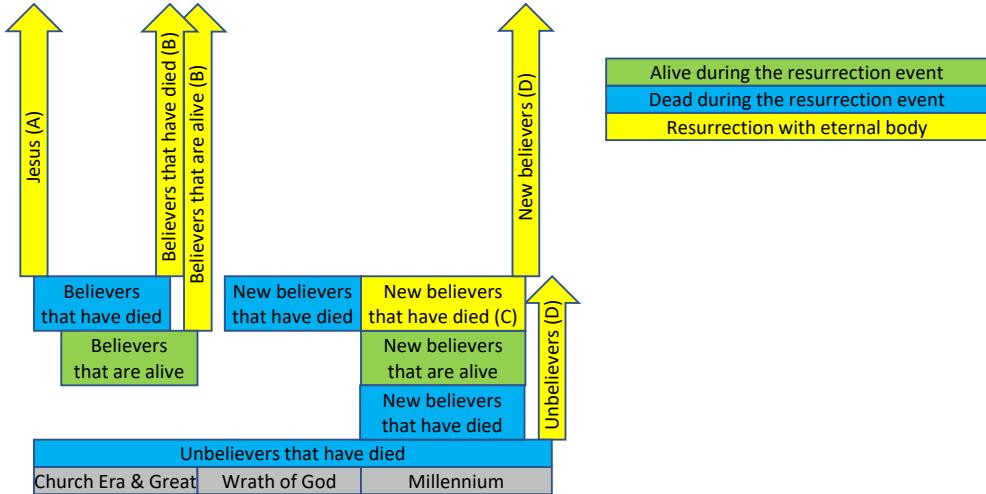
- A. Resurrection of Jesus.
 - 1Cor 15:20,23
 - First Fruit of Creation.
- B. The Rapture of all the believers.
 - Matt 24:30-31 / Mark 13:26-27 / Luke 21:27-28 / 1 Cor 15:51-52 / 1Thess 4:16-17 / 2Thess 2:1,3
 - All the believers of all nations and of all times that had died are resurrected.
 - Both the believers that are alive and that had died are “changed” to receive their eternal body.
 - All believers are taken up into Heaven to be where Jesus is.
- C. The resurrection of the believers that were killed during the period of the Wrath of God.
 - Rev 20:4-6
 - The believers of this resurrection will reign with Jesus during the Millennium.
 - Resurrection only of the mortal body or already with an eternal body,
but not taken up into Heaven yet.
- D. The resurrection after the Millennium.
 - Rev 20:13
 - Happens right before the Final Judgement.
 - All unbelievers are resurrected with an eternal body.
 - If believers had died during the Millennium then these will also be resurrected with an eternal body, if believers had not died during the Millennium then these would now receive their eternal body.

So at the end of the period of the Wrath of God all the unbelievers will be dead, but there will still be people alive, namely the new believers who had not been killed and the unbelievers who, out of fear, chose to humble themselves before God (Rev 11:13), during the Millennium these will be ruled by the resurrected believers that were killed during the period of the Wrath of God.

Then John sees how, at the end of the Millennium the devil will be released once more and he will again deceive many and make them to rebel, but they will all be killed by fire falling from heaven, the devil is now also thrown into the Lake of Fire.

then, at the end of chapter 20 John sees the Final Judgement with all the unbelievers resurrected and thrown into the Lake of Fire.

Below is an overview of the resurrections that will happen.



Finally chapters 21 and 22 speak about the New Heaven and Earth and the New Jerusalem.

So after chapter 22 John would have had below timeline of all that was revealed to him.

