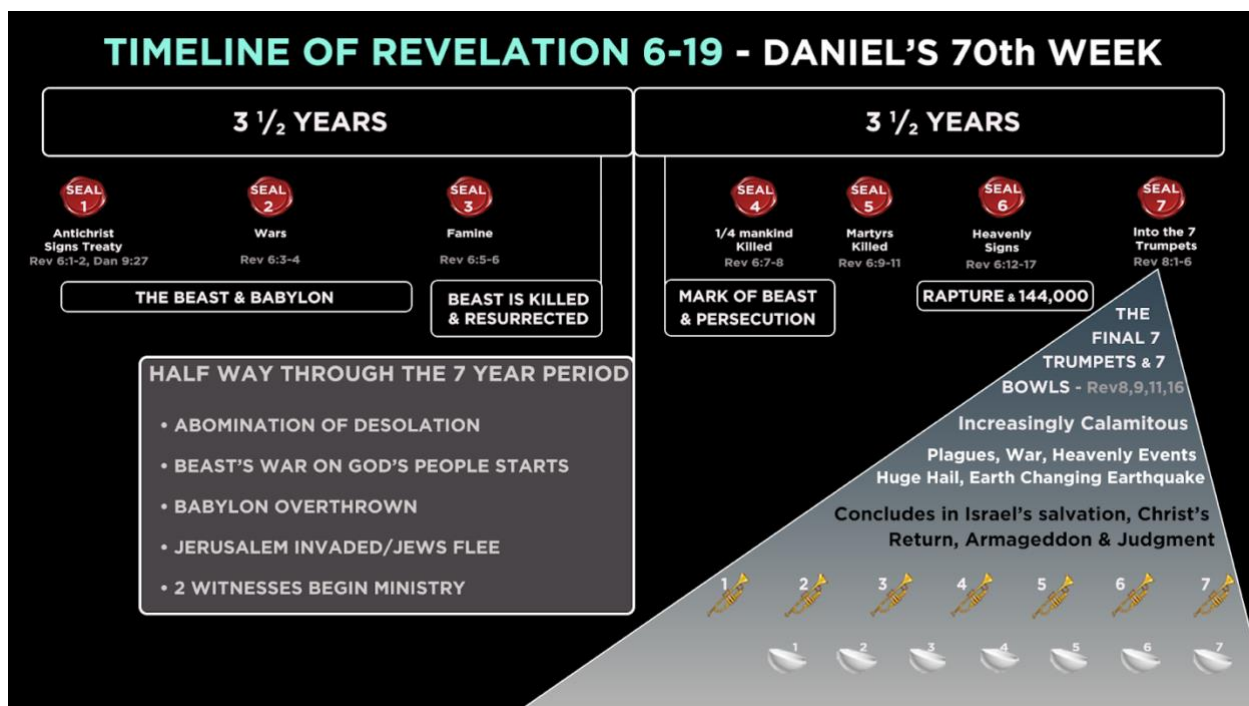
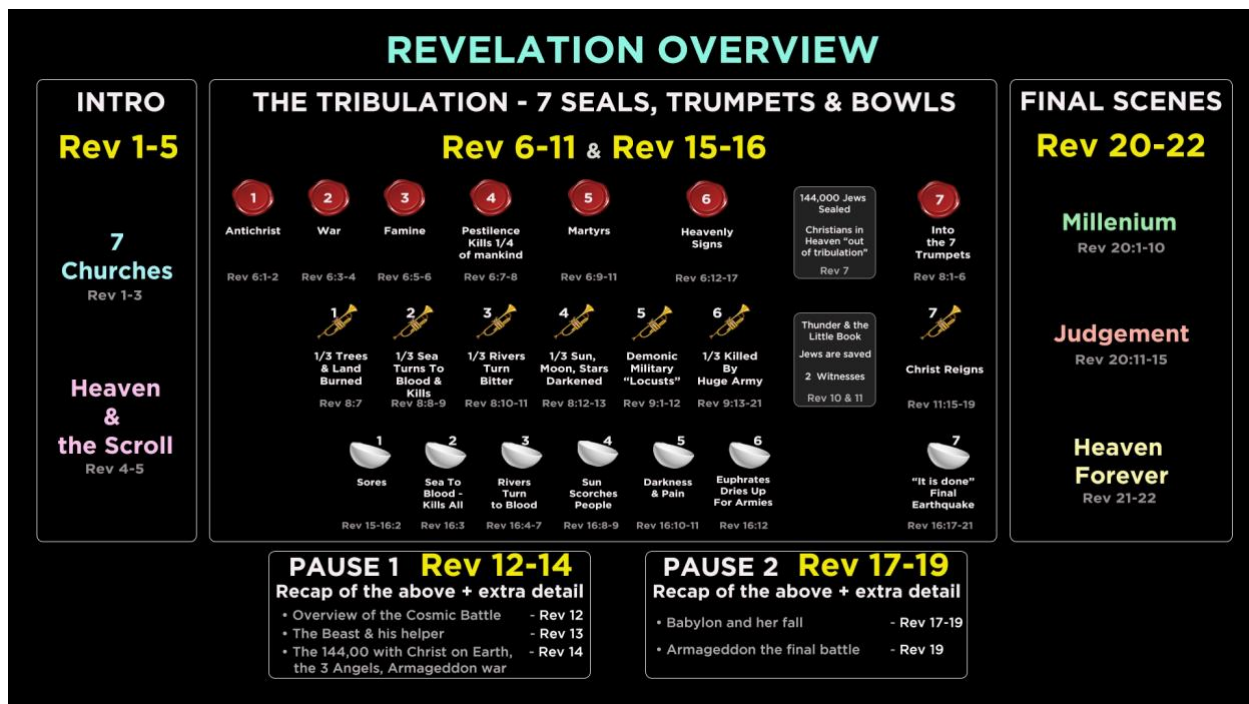


Revelation 12-14: Rulers and Authority

In the context of the whole of Revelation, and especially the 7 seals, trumpets and bowls, Rev 12-14 give us more information and detail about what is going on.

The larger theme of these chapters could be labelled “Who is in control?”, or, “Delegated Authority”



Revelation 12 :1-18 (NKJV)

1 Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars.
2 Then being with child, she cried out in labour and in pain to give birth.
3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. 4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. 5 She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne.
6 Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.
7 And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought,
8 but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer.
9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.
10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.
11 "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.
12 "Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time." 13 Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. 14 But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.
15 So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood.

This woman is Israel - see Gen 37:9-11. (See also Isaiah 54:1-6, Jeremiah 3:20, Ezekiel 16:8-14, and Hosea 2:19-20 for Israel as a woman)
The Child is Jesus.
The dragon is Satan (see verse 9 below)
The stars he drew down are fallen angels and this was his first fall (see more detail below).
He wanted to kill Jesus because He was born to dethrone Satan - similar to when Pharaoh tried to kill Moses (Ex 1:15-16). Herod tried to kill all the children (Mat 2:16-18).

Reference to 3½ years indicates that this is now speaking about the tribulation period.

Satan was cast out of heaven again - the changes in Satan's position:
1) - From his position in Heaven → cast to Earth taking 1/3 of the angels with him - Ezekiel 28:14-16
2) - Becomes the "ruler" of Earth by deceiving Adam & Eve (the rightful rulers) to obey him - Luke 4:5-6, Jn 12:31. This meant he had a certain amount of "legal" power and authority over the earth, and he had access to heaven to speak to God and accuse people. Job 1:6-12, Zech 3:1
3) - Cast out of his position as legal ruler of earth and "Disarmed" by Jesus on the cross - Jn 12:31, Col 2:15, Mat 28:18, Heb 9:23. He still has the ability to deceive people, however, and he has certain access to heavenly things and places - "the prince of the power of the air" Eph 2:2, 1 John 5:19 - We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.
4) - Cast out of Heaven totally but still active on Earth - Rev 12:9
5) - From the earth to the bottomless pit for 1,000 years (Revelation 20) 6) - From the pit to the lake of fire (Revelation 20)
Israel flees to the wilderness for 3½ years after the abomination of desolation, and she is protected.

Satan is enraged and attacks the woman's other offspring - Christians - more furiously for these remaining 3½ years. Their response? Vs 11 "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death."

<p>16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.</p> <p>17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.</p>	<p>The martyrs of this period were shown in Rev 6:9-11 and Rev 7:9-17.</p>
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<p><u>Revelation 13:1-18 (NKJV)</u></p> <p>1 Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.</p> <p>2 Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.</p> <p>3 And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast.</p> <p>4 So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?"</p> <p>5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months.</p> <p>6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.</p> <p>7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.</p> <p>8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.</p> <p>9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear.</p> <p>10 He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.</p> <p>11 Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.</p> <p>12 And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.</p>	<p>The first Beast - the 7 year tribulation period starts when the antichrist - the first beast - signs a major peace treaty with Israel - Dan 9:27</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "seven heads and ten horns" is the same as the dragon in Rev12:3 • His "Ten crowns" on his ten horns could indicate 10 nations Leopard, bear, lion - the animals in Daniel's empire vision of Dan 7. The devil gives him his authority and power. <p>He has a mortal head wound and he recovers.</p> <p>They worship him.</p> <p>He speaks so well and rules unhindered for the second 3½ years.</p> <p>Blasphemy is his trademark.</p> <p>They worship him by homage and by receiving his mark.</p> <p>He is given the ability to overcome the saints, but they have been given greater power to overcome him (Rev 12:11). Similar to the Jews in the time of queen Esther.</p> <p>The second Beast - This second beast is also called the false prophet (Revelation 16:13, 19:20, 20:10). He looks like Jesus but speaks like satan. He makes people worship the first beast.</p> <p>Miracles. Deceives.</p> <p>Makes an image of the first beast to be worshipped.</p>
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<p>13 He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.</p> <p>14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived.</p> <p>15 He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.</p> <p>16 He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads,</p> <p>17 and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.</p> <p>18 Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.</p>	<p>He institutes the mark or number of the beast. We will know what it is when the time is right. Why do we say this? See the next chapter regarding the angel's announcement Rev 14:9-11...</p>
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<p><u>Revelation 14:1-20 (NKJV)</u></p> <p>1 Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads.</p> <p>2 And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps.</p> <p>3 They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth.</p> <p>4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.</p> <p>5 And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.</p> <p>6 Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth--to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people--</p> <p>7 saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and</p>	<p>The 144,000 Jewish evangelists are with Jesus on Mt Zion at the end.</p> <p>The 3 angelic proclamations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL - Angels normally don't share the gospel - this is the only time. They are bringing in the last of the gentiles, before all the Israel will be saved (See Rev 10:7 - the "mystery" of God is fulfilled right at the end - the salvation of all the Jews).
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worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."

8 And another angel followed, saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

9 Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead

10 "he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

11 "And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

12 Here is the patience of the saints; here *are* those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

13 Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed *are* the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' " "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."

14 Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat *One* like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.

15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe."

16 So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.

17 Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

18 And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe."

19 So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

20 And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs.

2. BABYLON IS FALLEN - We will see in Rev 17:16 that this happens at the 3½ year point.

3. DON'T RECEIVE THE MARK - an angel warning people not to receive the mark.

Probably refers to the battle of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:2, 12; Zachariah 14:3) or Armageddon described in Revelation 16:6 and 19:11-19.

POINTS TO NOTE & PRATICAL TAKE AWAYS:

Don't worry and fear. He predicted it. He has it under control. He gives us power and strength. He will warn us and help us.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDES

Remember that the aim of the small group is to foster discussion and community, rather than for the leader or one individual to preach to everyone.

1 - Often an **Icebreaker question** is a great way to start discussion. You could ask a question like:

- What were the highs or lows of your week?
- What is your earliest memory?
- If you had to describe yourself as one animal, what would it be and why?
- What is your favourite type of holiday destination?

2 - Next, **read the passage**. You can ask various people in the group to help by each reading a portion of the passage.

3 - These are the **main questions** to ask to understand the passage:

- What is the main message of this talk / passage?
Allow discussion and even diverging from the main topic if it is helpful.
- What did you find particularly helpful or challenging?
- What did you not fully understand?
- What can we do PRACTICALLY in response to this teaching?

4 - Close by offering **prayer** for each person.

- Ask, "how can we pray for you / each other now?"
- Ask each person to pray or you, as leader, pray for each person's need

The blessing and opportunity in Small Groups is the possibility for...

- Each person to contribute and/or ask questions,
- People to pray for each other and to ask for prayer,
- People to learn to use and grow in their gifts,
- Community, friendship, and intimacy in relationships.

God Bless you in this very important ministry.