

## End Times Prophecy (Eschatology) 314: Revelation Chronology



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### Revelation Chronology: Structure in Revelation

#### *Learning from the Precedents*

At this point, we have concluded the examination of our three teaching texts from Genesis 1-2, Daniel, and Genesis 17:23-27. What we have found in these examples is that scripture often does not record chronology in strict accordance with the order in which items appear in the text. Instead, we have found that scripture employs structures that we have categorized as *Series* which is simply a chronological sequence of items or events, *Expansions* which provide additional details for specific items in a *Series*, *Parallel Descriptions* which either describe events related to and contemporary with those in another *Series* or describe the same events in alternate imagery, and *Redundant Summaries* which provide emphasis and clarity to key points of a preceding, longer narrative.

Most importantly, all of these structures we have found to be inherent to the text of certain passages of scripture. So, when we examine Revelation to see if it, too, contains these structural models for recording chronology, we will not simply be pulling arbitrary or ad hoc interpretations out of thin air. Instead, we will be testing for and applying biblical precedents.

Additionally, we should take note that these teaching texts directly address the issues illustrated during our discussion of the generic, existing models for dealing with Revelation's chronology. The discovery that these structures are inherent to scripture, as demonstrated by the teaching texts, does several important things.

First, the discovery of these structures explains why we find a duplication of seemingly unrepeatable events in the book of Revelation. Second, their discovery also provides a way for us to reconcile and arrange these repeatedly described events in a single chronology and in a way that removes duplication. Third, their discovery provides an identifiable, definable, governing logic for interpreting the structure of Revelation. Fourth, their discovery replaces any arbitrary or ad hoc structural models that might be imposed on the text by ignorance or convenience. And fifth, the discovery that scripture contains these more complicated yet still clearly discernable chronological structures rules out the application of any a-chronological approach to the book of Revelation on face value. Clearly, in light of the existence of these kinds of less straightforward structural models within scripture, suggesting that the chronology of the book of Revelation is either

indiscernible or not intended to be discerned is clearly shown to be the product of ignorance, premature excessiveness, or biased convenience.

This leads to a final question before we move on to the text of Revelation itself. Why would God choose to have Revelation recorded using these less straightforward structural models rather than simply employing a less complicated, single, linear chronology?

### *Why this Structure?*

There are four reasons why this structural model is employed in the book of Revelation instead of a single, linear chronology.

First, when considering the structure of Revelation or for that matter anything about the book of Revelation, it is quickly apparent that it is quite distinct from any other type of writing we have in the New Testament. The Gospels are straightforward narratives recording the teachings and major events in the life of Jesus Christ. Acts is also a straightforward narrative following the early years of the church and including the story of Paul. The epistles are straightforward letters containing segments of instruction concerning doctrine, church life, and moral living, as well as some plain-language discussion of the Return of Christ and his coming kingdom. But the book of Revelation is a single, mammoth prophetic vision employing symbols and references, without much explanation, on a scale that is virtually unparalleled in format or volume in the rest of the New Testament.

Yet despite its distinction from the other forms of writing found in the New Testament, Revelation's content, imagery, visionary format, and structure are all quite at home among the prophetic books of the Old Testament, including both the major and the minor prophets. This fact is not insignificant when it comes to the question of why Revelation has the structure that it does.

Revelation was written by the Apostle John in the mid to late 90's A.D., just over 60 years after the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ into heaven. Starting with the interaction with Simon Magus, as recorded in the book of Acts, the Church began to find itself in a struggle against a sect known as the Gnostics. The Gnostics were borrowing some terminology and aspects of Christian teaching and blending them with pagan mysticism. The apostles own efforts against these Gnostics can be traced in the epistles, including particularly Paul. However, the encroachment of Gnostic heretics upon the Church was also a significant issue in the epistles of the Apostle John, who notably took aim at one of the Gnostics primary doctrines, their perverse teachings denying the orthodox understanding of the incarnation and the person of Jesus Christ.

Concerning the question of Revelation's structure, it is significant to note that another one of the primary teachings of the Gnostics was that Jesus Christ was an intermediary god sent by the supreme God to free mankind from a lower deity

that created the material universe as evil and flawed. The Gnostics equated this lower deity who created the material universe with the God of the Old Testament, the God of the Jews. For the Gnostics and their successors, the God of the Jews, who is revealed in the Old Testament, is concerned with the material world, whereas the supreme god of the Gnostics had a different plan, which the Gnostics believed was revealed in the New Covenant. This Gnostic idea of salvation discarded the material salvation given to the Jews in the Old Testament in favor of a higher salvation and escape to the purely spiritual realm.

In short, the fact that Revelation opens with the description, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ,” is the last book of the New Testament, and yet is comprised of the same imagery, visionary format, chronological structures and completes the promises and prophecies contained in the Old Testament is itself a decisive argument against the Gnostic claims that the God and Father of Jesus Christ was different from the God of the Jews and the Old Testament. As such, we must consider that one prominent reason for writing Revelation in a format that is so distinct from any other New Testament book is that its format is a glaring statement that the God of the New Testament, the Father of Jesus Christ, is unquestionably the very same God of the Jews who wrote the Old Testament and who fully intended on completing the same plan he had revealed to the Jews all along.

Second, the reason that these structural models are employed in the book of Revelation is simply that they are normal ways that scripture records chronology. Their usage in the book of Revelation is not an anomaly but instead it is part of a larger patchwork that colors scripture as a whole. Perhaps these particular structural models are not used all the time or maybe even frequently in scripture. But they are normal structures that we do find in scripture. And so, since they are not unique or unprecedented, their presence in the book of Revelation does not require any particular explanation more so than their presence in any other passage does. Instead, what we find in Revelation is simply a concentrated, interwoven, and climactic masterpiece for a kind of structural device. In summary, Revelation’s structure isn’t doing anything new and our model of its structure is nothing unusual or novel as far as scripture is concerned.

Third, the reason these structures are used in Revelation relates to the larger question of why such structures are used at all anywhere in scripture instead of simple, linear accounts. And the answer is that certain narratives contain enough elements and a complex enough series of connections to other events, figures, and even symbolic imagery, that the only way to capture and convey the full picture of the narrative is to use such structures. In short, some narratives involve a complex enough combination of elements, each with their own background context, that in order to communicate all the related material in a single, linear chronology would require so many tangents and asides, that even a linear chronology would be equally complex and difficult to follow. And as a result, it actually becomes simpler to employ structures that are not limited to a single, linear chronology.

And while it may be easy to conceive of Genesis 1-2, for example, as being simple enough to be recorded as a single, linear chronology, how would we learn to understand these structures if the first time they were used was on a scale as grand and complicated as the book of Revelation, which has to disclose the culmination of millennia of storylines and imagery? Given the wide variety and level of interrelationships of the elements in the book of Revelation, what more suitable way is there to capture all of the diverse imagery and interweaving events together than with structural models that were designed to help fuse the connections between branching storylines? And this leads us to our next point.

Fourth, whether it's as elementary as Genesis 1-2 or as complex as Revelation, it is inescapably true that the structures employed in these passages do require some effort to understand correctly. They are clearly not written in a format that is so simple that just anyone can pick them up and correctly perceive them without thinking too much or trying too hard. Instead, from the more basic to the more advanced, these passages are structured in a way that requires us to think, to consider, to search, and to become familiar with the whole of God's Word. And that is God's deliberate intent.

Jesus explains this principle to his disciples in Matthew 13.

**Matthew 13:10** And the disciples came, and said unto him, **Why speakest thou unto them in parables?** **11** He answered and said unto them, **Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries** of the kingdom of heaven, **but to them it is not given.**

Here, in verse 10, the disciples come to Jesus and ask him what the purpose is of communicating God's truths in symbolic language that isn't easy for the masses to understand. Jesus' answer is that God uses forms of communication in which the meaning is not readily apparent because the information is given only to some and not to others. In short, the purpose of using a less apparent way to communicate something is so that some will understand and others will not.

But why does God want some to understand? And why does he want others not to understand? Jesus answers this as well in the next verse.

**Matthew 13:12** **For whosoever hath, to him shall be given,** and he shall have more abundance: **but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.** **13** **Therefore speak I to them in parables:** because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. **14** And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

Here Jesus reiterates that the purpose of communicating truths in formats that are not so easy to understand is in order to make sure some but not all understand. More to the point, according to Jesus' words in verse 12, those God wants to understand the parables are *the ones who already have* some understanding. Conversely, those that God does not want to understand the parables are *those*

*who already do not* understand much at all. But again, why is God trying to give more information to those who already have it? Don't those who are ignorant need the information most of all? The answer to that question comes from Jesus' next statement in which he explains why those who lack knowledge lack knowledge in the first place.

**Matthew 13:15** For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, **and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes**, and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, **and should be converted**, and I should heal them.

Verse 15 is critical because it explains why God wants the information to go to those who already have some understanding and, conversely, why God wants to keep information from the ignorant. Specifically, verse 15 explains that from God's point of view, people are ignorant because they deliberately "close their eyes" so that they won't see and understand because they don't want to be converted. In other words, God wants to keep the ignorant ignorant because from his point of view, they are ignorant because they choose to be so that they won't have to live in accordance with a knowledge of the truth. And for this reason, God wants to first force them to consider and think about what information is already available to them, to open their eyes instead of shutting them, before he gives to them more information by using a format that won't force them to think on or value his truths.

And in contrast to those who close their eyes deliberately because they don't want to see and be converted, Jesus says the disciples are blessed with more knowledge because, instead of closing their eyes and stopping up their ears, they have eyes with which they look and ears with which they listen.

**Matthew 13:16** But **blessed are your eyes, for they see:** and your ears, for they hear.

And because they look with their eyes and listen with their ears, wanting to know the truth, rather than closing their eyes to the truth, Jesus builds on what they have already come to know through looking and listening and helps them to understand the meaning when God communicates in ways that are less than readily apparent.

**Matthew 13:11** He answered and said unto them, **Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven**, but to them it is not given. **12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance:** but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

The blessing they receive is the additional insight for understanding the things of God, which God deliberately makes harder to understand.

But before we move away from Matthew 13, notice that this question pertains to Jesus' parables as a whole and not just to this one parable of the sower and the

seed found in the immediate context of Matthew 13. For, in verse 10, the disciples ask Jesus why he spoke in parables, not just why he used this one particular parable on this one particular instance. Notice from verse 11 that Jesus says the purpose deals with the knowledge of the mysteries that describe the kingdom of God. Do a search for the English word “parable” in the New Testament and notice how many of them either completely or partially pertain to the end of the age, the return of Christ Jesus, and the setting up of his kingdom, just like the symbolic imagery in the visions of Daniel and Revelation.

And not only that, but we also find specific statements in Daniel and Revelation also indicating this principle that God wants those who seek and consider understanding to be able to understand and conversely that those who do not seek and consider should not be able to understand.

Consider Daniel 9, for example.

**Daniel 9:2** In the first year of his reign **I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.** **3 And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes...**21 Yea, **whiles I was speaking in prayer**, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. **22 And he informed me**, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, **I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.** **23** At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, **and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.**

Here in Daniel 9, we see that at the beginning of this chapter Daniel is already looking into the previous revelations from God, particularly the prophet Jeremiah, in order to understand what the Lord was going to do in the future concerning Jerusalem. Then Daniel begins to pray and while he is still praying, God sends an angel to tell him to consider the vision and, as he does so, the angel will help him to understand even further from what he had already learned from Jeremiah concerning these matters. And, of course, the subject matter than Daniel is gaining understanding of is once again knowledge concerning the future events that surround the arrival of the kingdom of God.

Daniel 12 contains statements expressing similar sentiments.

**Daniel 12:10** Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and **none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.**

Daniel 12:10 reflects Jesus' statements in Matthew 13. In Matthew 13, Jesus states that those who want to do evil deliberately close their eyes so that they will not understand and so that, by understanding, they will not be converted from

evil. Jesus also states that those who have wisdom and understanding will be given more. Here Daniel likewise tells us in abbreviated fashion that those who pursue wickedness will not understand but that those who are already wise will understand.

And, of course, there is the famous vision and interpretation in Daniel 2.

**Daniel 2:17** Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions: **18 That they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret;** that Daniel and his fellows should not perish with the rest of the wise *men* of Babylon. **19 Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel** in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

Here in Daniel 2, we see that King Nebuchadnezzar has received a dream and Daniel diligently seeks God to give him understanding of that dream, and God does. As soon as God reveals to him the king's dream and its meaning, Daniel makes the following statements.

**Daniel 2:20 Daniel answered and said,** Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: **21** And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: **he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:** **22** He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what *is* in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him. **23** I thank thee, and praise thee, **O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of thee:** for thou hast *now* made known unto us the king's matter.

Notice in verse 21 and 23 Daniel states exactly what Jesus says in Matthew 13 concerning the interpretation of parables. Like Jesus, Daniel denotes that God gives wisdom to those who already have it and those that earnestly sought it from God, as he had. And, of course, it is no surprise that this narrative deals directly with this process being at work concerning visions and symbolic imagery describing the future and ultimately the events at the end of the Age.

Revelation also invokes this process described by Jesus in Matthew 13, not only in general by its usage of symbolic visions and references to previous prophecies, such as we saw with Daniel reading the prophet Jeremiah, but also in explicit statements inferring the process specifically.

**Revelation 13:18** Here is wisdom. **Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast:** for it is the number of a man; and his number *is* Six hundred threescore *and* six.

According to Revelation 13, wisdom is demonstrated or manifest in the following manner. Those who already have understanding are to decipher the meaning and identity of this description of the beast.

And Revelation 17 contains an episode that is very similar to how the angel in Daniel 9 came to help Daniel understand prophecy.

**Revelation 17:7** And the angel said unto me, **Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.** 8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. 9 **And here is the mind which hath wisdom.** The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.

The angel tells John that he will explain to him how the vision of the woman and the beast works. And as the angel begins his description of what is going on in the vision, he announces in verse 9 that this is for the mind who has wisdom, a phrase we also saw used in Revelation 13 when those who already had understanding were invited and instructed to consider and decipher the description of the beast's name. So, here again in Revelation 17, we find that those who already have wisdom and understanding are designated as those who will be able to understand these further parables or symbols concerning the events at the end of the Age.

Our point here is simple. God deliberately and frequently uses symbols and hard to understand formats when describing the events surrounding the return of Christ Jesus and the coming of Jesus' kingdom on earth. This fact is attested to explicitly by angels in Daniel and Revelation and by Jesus himself in Matthew. Moreover, as Matthew 13 explains, God does so specifically to force us to open our eyes and look diligently and to open our ears and listen intently, to think and consider the things of God. For, in thinking on these things, we gain wisdom and in having to strive and stretch for them we learn to value them more and more. And in valuing them and having wisdom we learn to keep the things of God rather than taking them for granted and neglecting them.

Thus, its no surprise that the greater the collection and volume of information about the end of the Age and the coming kingdom, the more we will see these tactics employed by God. It is for our benefit. He is trying to prompt us to push in and draw near and seek him out and value truth.

With that encouraging thought in mind, we now turn to the challenging opportunity of considering the structure and chronology inherent to the book of Revelation.

### *The Chronologic Structure of Revelation*

Immediately below we have placed two of the basic rearrangements from our previous teaching texts of Genesis 1-2 (**Figure 1**) and Daniel 2, 7, and 8 (**Figure 2**). Genesis 1-2 contains the basic chronologic structures of *Series* and *Expansion*, in which one segment outlines a sequence of events including a brief description

and the other segment focuses on one of the events in the sequence, providing expanded details and connections to other elements. Daniel 2, 7, and 8 contains the chronologic structure of *Parallel Descriptions*, particularly *Parallel Descriptions* in which each segment describes portions of the same events but using different symbolic imagery.

**Figure 1.**

**Figure 2.**

As we went through these teaching examples in the sections above, we mentioned that layouts such as these, although far simpler, help us to imagine the final picture that will emerge when we rearrange the book of Revelation according to these same chronological textual structures. For comparison, consider that **Figure 1** and **Figure 2** above are only 20 inches wide and 14 ½ inches tall at their greatest extent. Now, imagine a similar layout only instead of 2 or 3 columns wide, this time the layout is 19 columns wide. Instead of 2 or 3 chapters' worth of detail, it contains 22 chapters. It is a chart 97 inches wide and 63 inches tall. And it contains (by conservative estimation) over 375 cross-references to other passages of scripture, both inside and outside of the book of Revelation and over 55 different concepts or symbols.

Obviously, a chart that huge is not going to fit neatly into the confines of this webpage. However, below we have included a snapshot of the chart, and although the text of the book is too small to be legible, it at least gives a picture of the full layout. (See Figure 5 below.)

**Figure 5.** (The working model depicted in the chart below is reduced in size so that the entire width and length can be seen at one time. On the chart, the darker grey rectangles scattered across the image are the various segments of the text. The lighter grey, uniformly spaced rectangles behind them correspond to the lighter grey rectangles in **Figures 1-4** above and depict the 19 columns into which the text of Revelation was divided in order to align the underlying chronological structure. Very small, at the top of each column, you can see barely legible chapter and verse references, denoting which portions of the text appear in the column below it. This is similar to if we had written Genesis 1:1-2:3 and Genesis 2:4-25 above the two columns of **Figure 1** above. This is the working sketch that was developed once Revelation was divided into the various *Long Series*, *Short Series*, *Expansions*, *Parallel Descriptions*, *Interludes*, and *Redundant Summaries* that comprise its full text from chapter 1:1 to chapter 22:21.)

Because of the dimensions of the chart, displaying a legible, full-text chart here will not be possible. However, it is possible to at least display a chart showing how we have aligned the different segments of the text according to chapter and verse numbers. Effectively, this will be the exact same chart depicted in **Figure 5** above but simply without the text of the book. See Figure 6.

**Figure 6** – [Click here to open in new window.](#)

(The working model depicted in the chart below corresponds to the smaller snapshot of Revelation's chronology depicted in **Figure 5**. As **Figure 5** demonstrated, due to size considerations, to show a legible, full-sized chart with the text is not possible. It should be noted that the rearrangement was developed using the full text of Revelation, rather than simply the verse numbers, in order to align the specific contents of each verse appropriately. However, a legible chart is possible if we remove the text and list only the chapter and verse references.)

Just as in **Figures 1-4**, the chronology moves forward as verses move downward on the chart. Passages and verses that appear side by side are covering contemporary timeframes and related concepts. And, each new column designates what is believed to be a separate segment of the text or chronology, just as Genesis 1:1-2:3 and Genesis 2:4-25 are separate segments that appear in two columns in **Figure 1**.

In the chart below, whenever a chapter number is given, the entry has been bolded. Typically, chapter numbers were included on the first line where entries appear in a column, whenever a new chapter began during the vertical descent in a column, or whenever the spacing used for vertical alignment became large enough to require the chapter number to be reposted for clarity.

One addition to this chart that did not appear in **Figures 1-4** is the horizontal red, blue, and orange lines. These lines are intended to divide the major contemporary timeframes in order to help better keep track of alignment and provide an order for the commentary that follows in the next section of the study. However, it should be noted that these lines do not represent hard breaks, stopping points, or gaps in the sequences of events. To the contrary, the events are believed to flow rather than break and the lines are intended to be loose organizational aids.

### *Explaining the Layout*

This segment of the study is the object and climax that we've been driving toward. All of the earlier segments were preludes necessary to properly lay the groundwork so that the commentary that follows would flow naturally and concisely. After taking each step slowly and establishing the foundations with each step, we finally now arrive at where we've been trying to get all along.

In this portion of the study we will identify which portions of Revelation were identified as *Long Series*, *Short Series*, *Expansions*, *Parallel Descriptions*, *Interludes*, and *Redundant Summaries*. We will also present the explanation for why certain connections were made between the parts of the text, which are now aligned according to our chart. This will include an explanation of the interpretation of the symbols involved in the alignments as well as how and why the meaning of those symbols relates to the chronology that developed.

For quick reference, here again is the list of categories that were developed to describe the chronological structure of the text of Revelation.

*Long Series* – the basic building blocks, providing elements or events in their chronological order and with some description of each.

*Expansions* – occurring either within (*Interlude*) or after a Series and focusing in, providing more detail for one or more of the elements in the Series and perhaps additional connections to events or elements not described in that particular Series.

*Parallel Descriptions* – occurring either within (*Interlude*) or after a Series and providing either an alternate description using different prophetic imagery or a description of events or elements that relate to and overlap the timeframe of a particular Series.

*Interlude* – an *Expansion* or *Parallel Description* that occurs within the body of a *Series*, temporarily interrupting the flow of the *Series*, to provide additional, related information.

*Short Series* – a few verses providing a short summary list of events in chronological order, usually without details, designed to connect elements from different segments together.

*Redundant Summaries* – comprised of the Initial Description and the Repeating Description, usually around a half dozen verses total, providing two heavily redundant versions of the same events for the purpose of emphasis and clarity.

### *A Few Simple Threads*

As stated above, the book of Revelation is subdivided structurally into a combination of *Long Series*, *Short Series*, *Expansions*, *Parallel Descriptions*, *Interludes*, and *Redundant Summaries*. And these subdivisions all involve the use of symbols, which connect to one another as well as identify and define the events they represent. This creates a level of overlap, which when broken down according to these scriptural structures for relating chronology, really depict only a total of about 8 conceptual threads. The term thread is being used here to refer to major thematic categories that run throughout the entire book.

Or, to put it another way, the book of Revelation isn't about 100 different concepts. It isn't about 50 or even 20 concepts. Instead, it's about 8 concepts, 8 concepts that it covers in various levels of detail and interaction to each other. And consequently, understanding each segment of Revelation is simply a matter of identifying how many of those conceptual threads it contains, how it connects those threads to each other, and what details it provides for each thread.

The 8 overarching concepts described in the book of Revelation are as follows. (Please note that although all 8 threads interrelate, the threads can also be paired in groups of 2, with each pair containing a more direct interrelationship. Each odd numbered thread below starts a new pair. For example, the first pair is numbers 1 and 2, which are also perhaps the clearest example of this kind of more direct interrelationship. Likewise, thread 3 is paired with thread 4, 5 with 6, and 7 with 8.)

- 1.** The angel's appearing to John for the transmission of the Revelation to God's servants
- 2.** The transmission of the Revelation from the Father to Jesus
- 3.** The ministry of the 2 witnesses (including the Temple's building) and plagues
- 4.** God's covenant people, Israel: purging & protection; the 144,000; building the Temple
- 5.** The fall of the Satanic Kingdom and the subsequent falling away in the Church
- 6.** The rise of the last empire and the antichrist; tribulation and the persecution of saints
- 7.** The battle of Armageddon and the return of Christ
- 8.** Millennial reign of Christ and the final judgment

As we will see when we examine the book of Revelation segment by segment below, every detail in the book of Revelation can be identified as a detail pertaining to one of these larger 8 threads. By understanding that Revelation is really only about describing 8 overarching concepts and how those 8 relate to each other, we greatly simplify the challenge of understanding not only the meanings of its symbolic language but also its chronology. Ultimately, the chronology of the book of Revelation is simply a matter of understanding how descriptions of these 8 threads overlap each other in the chapters of Revelation. Once we understand what is included in each thread and how each thread relates to the others, the chronology of the events emerges with remarkable clarity and simplicity.