



The End Times

WEEK 1 PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Why talk about the End Times?

- ▶ The Bible talks a lot about the End
- ▶ To educate the Church
- ▶ To comfort and challenge the Church
- ▶ To help our Preachers

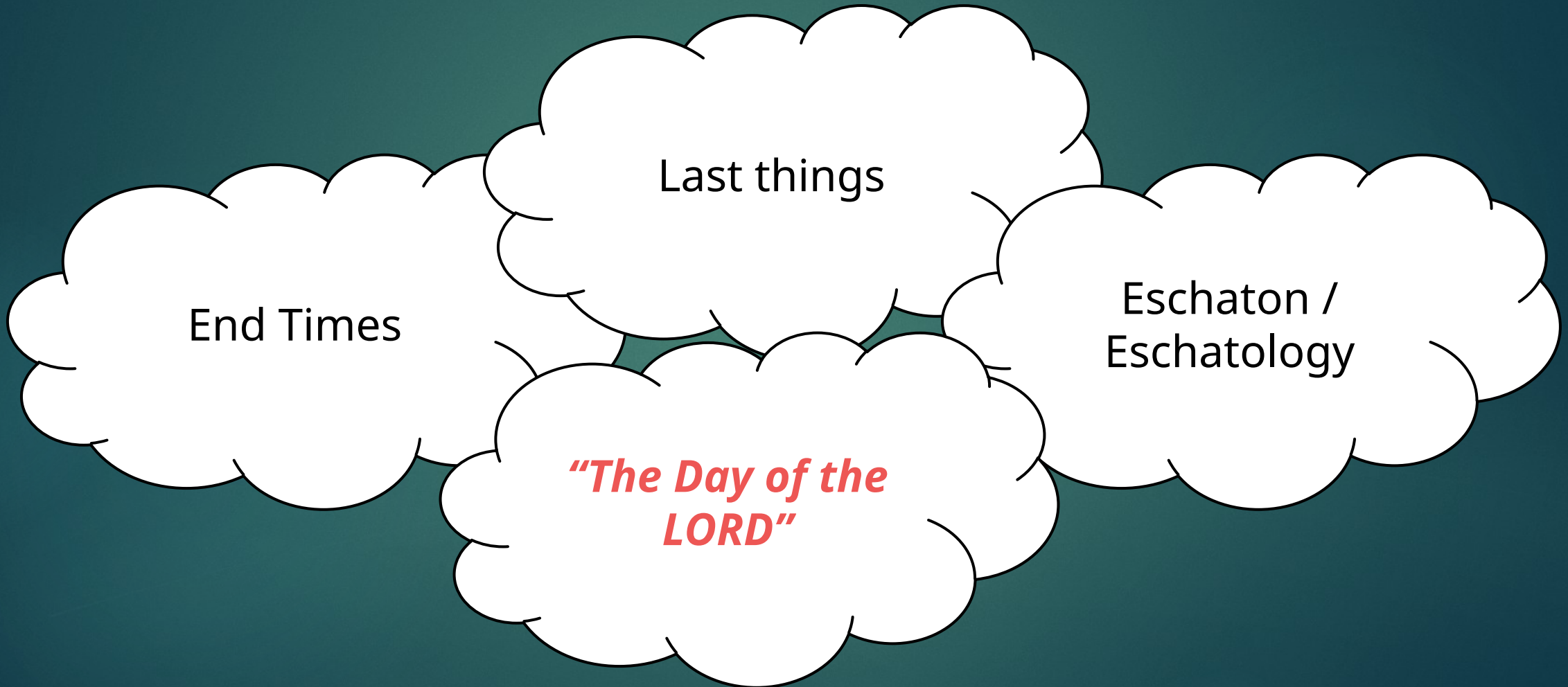
Orientation

- ▶ Week 1:
 - ▶ What All Christians Believe
 - ▶ Interpreting the Book of Revelation
- ▶ Week 2: Views on Israel
- ▶ Week 3: The Rapture, the Tribulation, and the Anti-Christ
- ▶ Week 4: The Millennium

Introduction



Introduction



The Day of the LORD in the NT

- ▶ “The Day” or “That Day” → associated w/ Jesus return
- ▶ Key Terminology

The Day of the LORD in the NT

- ▶ “The Day” or “That Day” → associated w/ Jesus return
- ▶ Key Terminology

epiphaneia
("appearing")

parousia
("coming")

apokalypsis
("revelation")



The End Times

WEEK 1 PART 2: WHAT ALL CHRISTIANS BELIEVE

What All Christians Believe

Jesus Will Come Again

Revelation 22:12: "Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done."
(ESV)

What All Christians Believe

Jesus Will Come in Majesty and Glory

Heb. 9:24,28: "For Christ has entered . . . into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. . . So Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him."

What All Christians Believe

When Jesus Comes, Everyone and Everything will be Affected

Revelation 20:12

[12] And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. (ESV)

What All Christians Believe

We Do Not Know When He Is Coming

Mark 13:32 “But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”
(ESV)

Conclusion

*Christians Should Desire Christ's Return and
Live Hopefully As We Wait*



The End Times

WEEK 1 PART 3: WAYS OF INTERPRETING
REVELATION

What kind of Genre?

Revelation 1:1–9

[1] The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place . . . [3] Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near. [4] John, to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace . . . [7] Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen. [8] “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.” [9] I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. (ESV)

What kind of Genre?

Revelation 1:1–9

[1] The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place . . . [3] Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near. [4] John, to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace . . . [7] Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen. [8] “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.” [9] I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. (ESV)

Apocalypse

What kind of Genre?

Revelation 1:1–9

[1] The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place . . . [3] Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near. [4] John, to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace . . . [7] Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen. [8] “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.” [9] I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. (ESV)

Apocalypse

Prophecy

What kind of Genre?



Revelation 1:1–9

[1] The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place . . . [3] Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near. [4] John, to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace . . . [7] Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen. [8] “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.” [9] I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. (ESV)

Apocalypse

Prophecy

Epistle

e

Revelation as Apocalypse

- ▶ Genre of Jewish literature that was written from between 200 BC and 200 AD
 - ▶ *e.g. 1 Enoch, 2 Baruch, and 4 Ezra*
- ▶ Features: use of visions, dualistic conflict between good and evil, division of history into segments, the expectation of the cataclysmic arrival of God's reign, events are cosmic in scope, the use of angels as intermediaries, etc
- ▶ Studies on the apocalyptic have MASSIVE implications on how we interpret Revelation

Interpretive Frameworks

Futurist

Idealist

Historicis
t

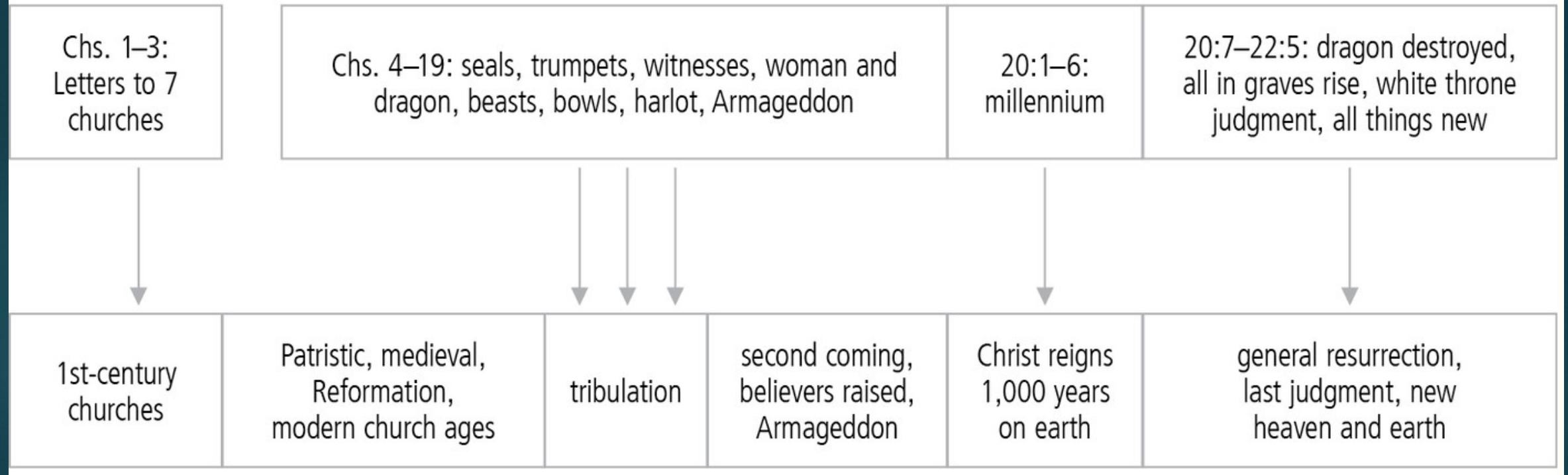
(Partial) Preterist

Futurist

- ▶ Text focuses on events at the end of time and the return of Christ: what, where, when
- ▶ Strengths: more “literal,” transferable, hopeful (esp. w/ rapture)
- ▶ Weaknesses: timelines are problematic (assumes chronological form), interpretation can get strange and alarmist, inconsistent with epistle/apocalypse genres, not exactly “soon”
- ▶ Most commonly held view in US Evangelicalism (dispensational vs non-dispensational)

Futurist (Historical Pre-Mil)

Revelation's Visions

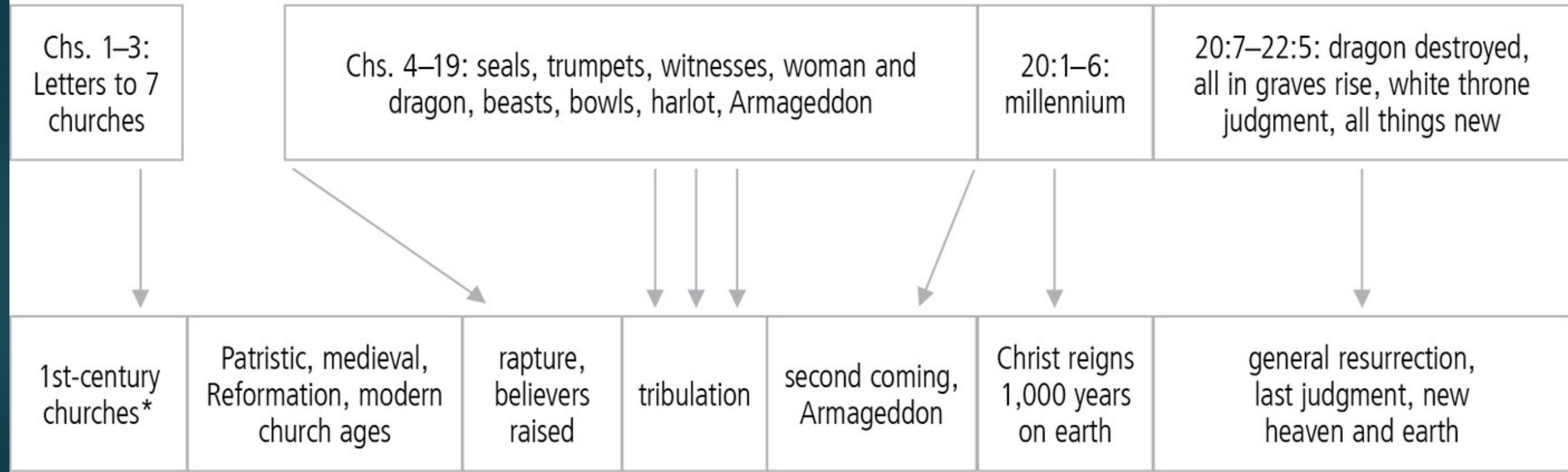


Source: ESV Study Bible

Futurist (Dispensational Pre-Mil)



Revelation's Visions



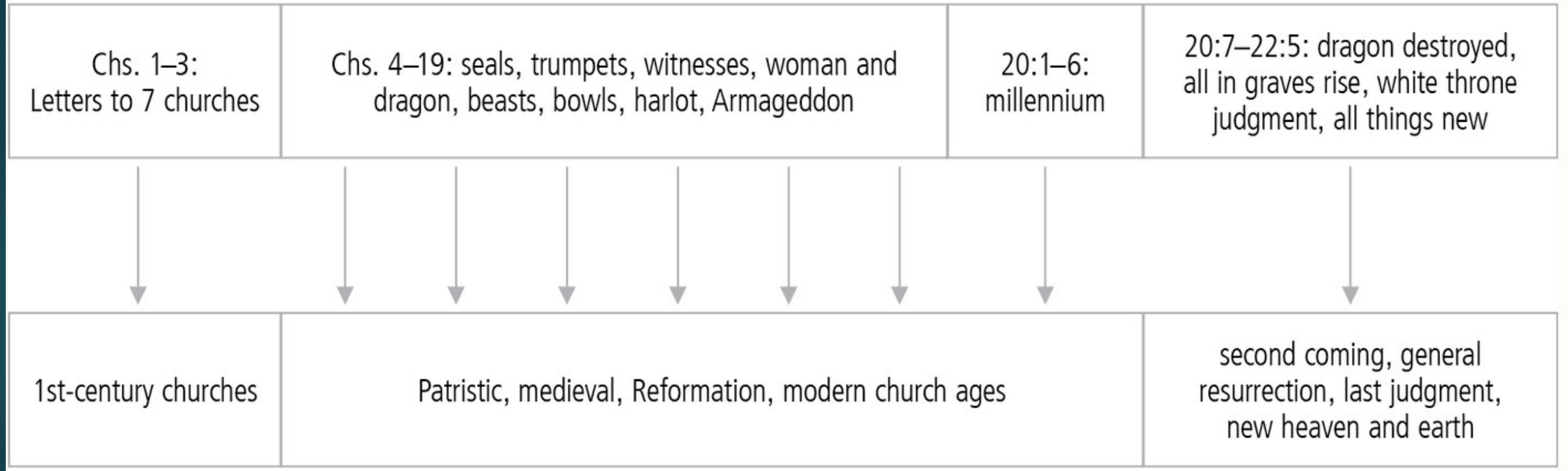
Source: ESV Study Bible

Historicist

- ▶ Events unfold in the course of history. Main difference w/ Futurism is that everything is not reserved for the end times.
- ▶ Strengths: more “literal,” transferable to each generation, intriguing to find out where you are on the “map”
- ▶ Weaknesses: structurally confusing, somewhat arbitrary (every age approaches it differently), myopic, focused on Western church, not anchored in 1st century, would make no sense to original readers
- ▶ Has fallen out of use

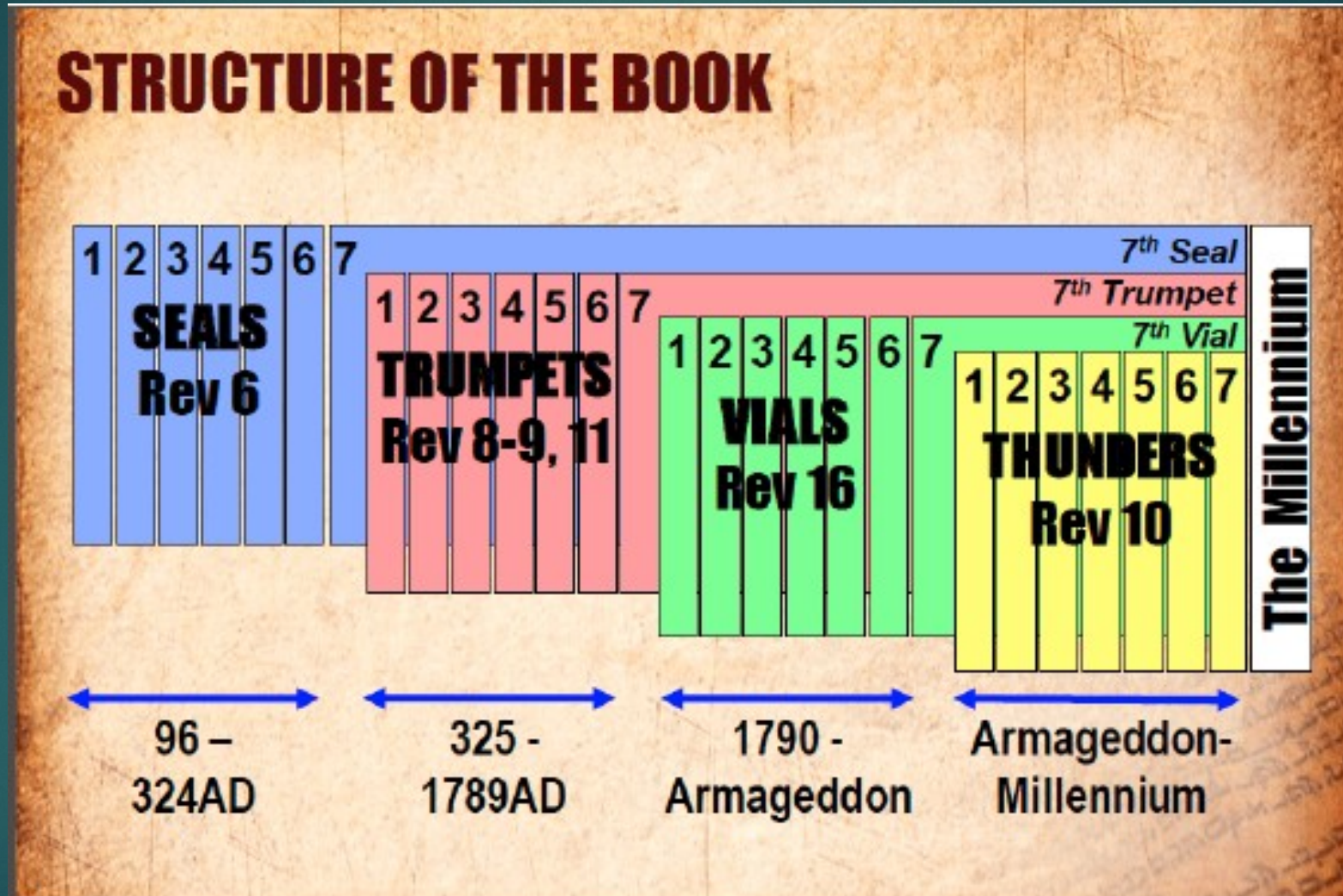
Historicist Structure

Revelation's Visions



Source: ESV Study Bible

Historicist Structure

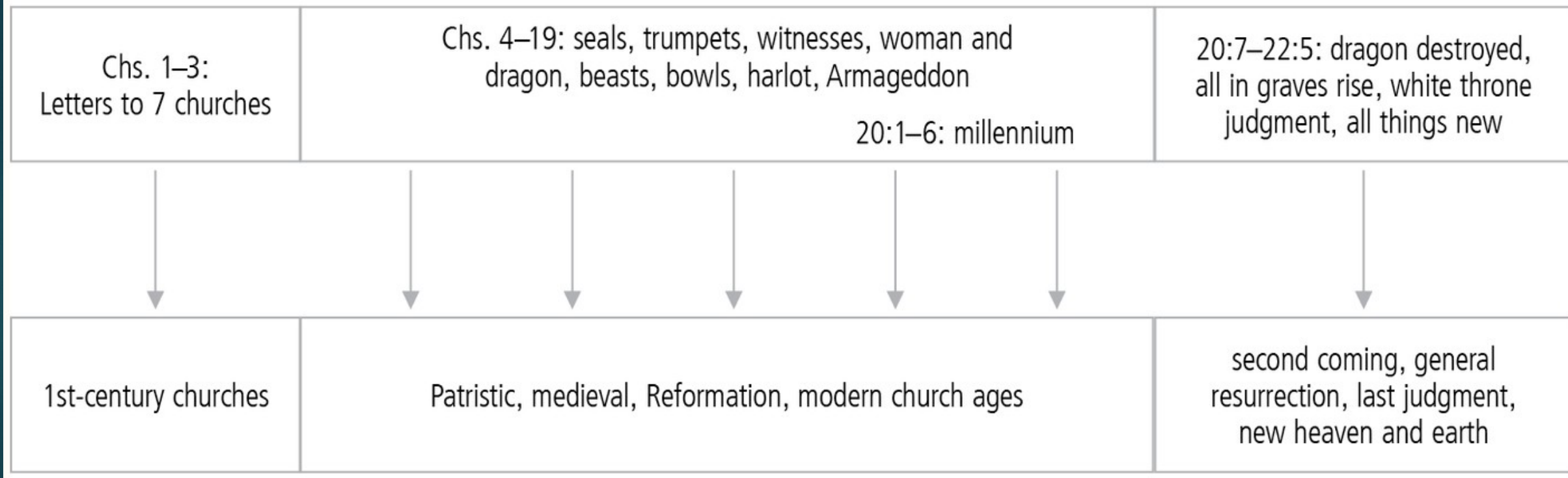


Idealist View

- ▶ “Imagery and metaphor denotes timeless spiritual truths which recur throughout human history.”
- ▶ Strengths: transferable, timeless, symbolism fits within “apocalyptic” genre. Less scary.
- ▶ Weaknesses: very elastic, not very reassuring, events to happen “soon” don’t seem to be events and “soon” loses its impact

Idealist Structure

Revelation's Visions



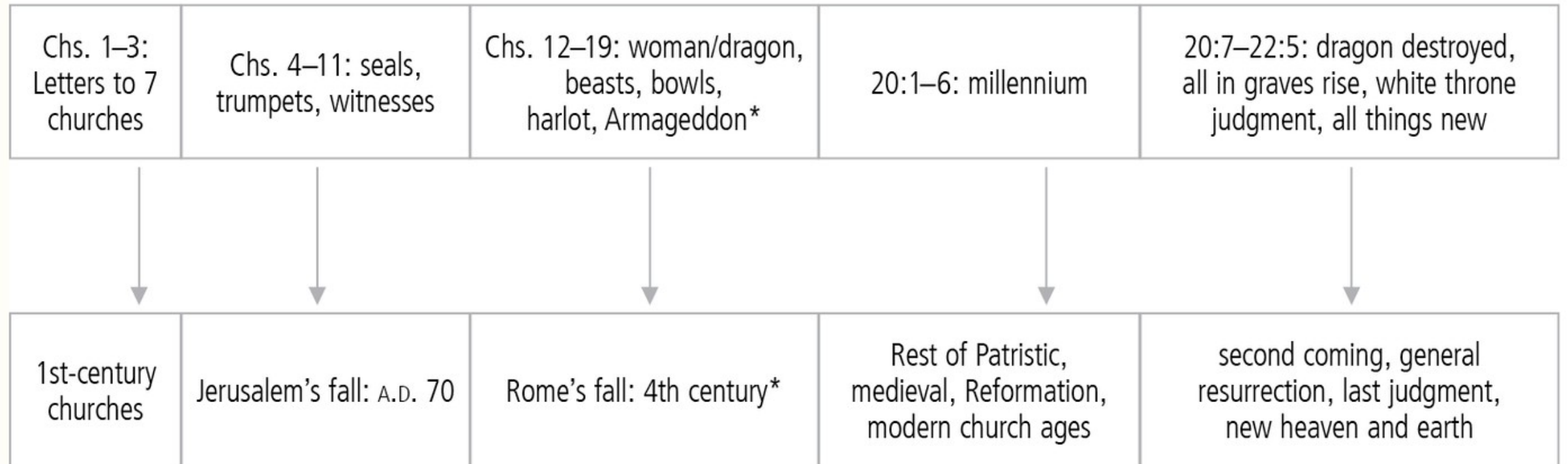
Source: ESV Study Bible

(Partial) Preterist View

- ▶ Most of the prophecies predict the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD, or the fall of the Roman Empire in 5th century, or both
- ▶ Full vs Partial Preterism
- ▶ Strengths: anchored in first century, makes sense to original hearers, "soon" = soon.
- ▶ Weaknesses: dating problems, hard to find the referents for the symbols, not easily transferable, dilution of future hope.

Preterist Structure

Revelation's Visions



Source: ESV Study Bible

Interpretive Frameworks

Futurist

→ *prophecy*

Idealist

→ *apocalypse*

Historicist

→ *prophecy*

Preterist

→ *epistle*

Revelation Interpreters

Futurist

→ *Robert Mounce (ND)*

John Piper (ND)

John MacArthur (D)

Idealist

→ *G.K. Beale*

Eugene Peterson

Eclectic

→ *Andrew Wilson*

(Idealist / Preterist)

Preterist

→ *Peter Leithart*

R.C. Sproul

N.T. Wright

CONTRIBUTORS

Kenneth L. Gentry Jr.

Sam Hamstra Jr.

C. Marvin Pate

Robert L. Thomas

FOUR
VIEWS
ON

THE BOOK OF REVELATION



Stanley N. Gundry, series editor
C. Marvin Pate, general editor

COUNTERPOINTS
BIBLE & THEOLOGY

Read across all
views for clarity
and charity



Interpreting the Symbols

- ▶ What's a symbol and what isn't?
- ▶ Figurative language? (Not "hyper-spiritual" or "allegorical")
- ▶ Futurism → less symbolism (more "literal")
- ▶ Idealism / Preterism → more symbolism (more "figurative")
- ▶ OT references shot through Revelation
 - ▶ How do we interpret cosmic language in the OT?

Cosmic Language

Habakkuk 3:6: He stopped and shook the earth; he looked and made the nations tremble. The eternal mountains were shattered; along his ancient pathways the everlasting hills sank low.

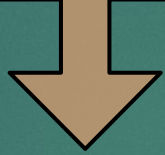
Micah 1:3-4: The Lord is coming out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth. Then the mountains will melt under him and the valleys will burst open, like wax near the fire, like waters poured down a steep place.

Isaiah 13:9-10: Behold, the day of the LORD comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger, to make the land a desolation and to destroy its sinners from it. For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be dark at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light.

Cosmic Language

Habakkuk 3:6: He stopped and shook the earth; he looked and made the nations tremble. The eternal mountains were shattered; along his ancient pathways the everlasting hills sank low.

***Judgment on
Samaria and
Judah by hand of
Assyria***



Isaiah 13:9–10: Behold, the day of the LORD comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger, to make the land a desolation and to destroy its sinners from it. For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be dark at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light.



***Deliverance of
Israel from
Babylon***

Micah 1:3–4: The Lord is coming out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth. Then the mountains will melt under him and the valleys will burst open, like wax near the fire, like waters poured down a steep place.



***Judgment of
Babylon***

Cosmic Language

Habakkuk 3:6: He stopped and shook the earth; he looked and made the nations tremble. The eternal mountains were shattered; along his ancient pathways the everlasting hills sank low.

***Deliverance of
Israel from
Babylon***

***Judgment on
Samaria and
Judah by hand of
Assyria***

Isaiah 13:9–10: Behold, the day of the LORD comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger, to make the land a desolation and to destroy its sinners from it. For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be dark at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light.

Micah 1:3–4: The Lord is coming out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth. Then the mountains will melt under him and the valleys will burst open, like wax near the fire, like waters poured down a steep place.

***Judgment of
Babylon***

Mark 13:24-25 But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, [25] and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

Cosmic Language

Habakkuk 3:6: He stopped and shook the earth; he looked and made the nations tremble. The eternal mountains were shattered; along his ancient pathways the everlasting hills sank low.

Deliverance of Israel from Babylon

Judgment on Samaria and Judah by hand of Assyria

Isaiah 13:9–10: Behold, the day of the LORD comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger, to make the land a desolation and to destroy its sinners from it. For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be dark at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light.

Judgment of Babylon

Micah 1:3–4: The Lord is coming out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth. Then the mountains will melt under him and the valleys will burst open, like wax near the fire, like waters poured down a steep place.

Mark 13:24-25 But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, [25] and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

Siege of Jerusalem in 70 AD

Cosmic Language

Acts 2:14–21

[14] But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. [15] For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. [16] But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

[17] “‘And in the last days it shall be, God declares that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; [18] even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. **[19] And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; [20] the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day.** [21] And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’ (ESV)

Symbolism in Revelation:

5:6: Christ as a Lamb
with seven horns and
seven eyes (which are
spirits)

5:8: Incense as
prayers
of the saints

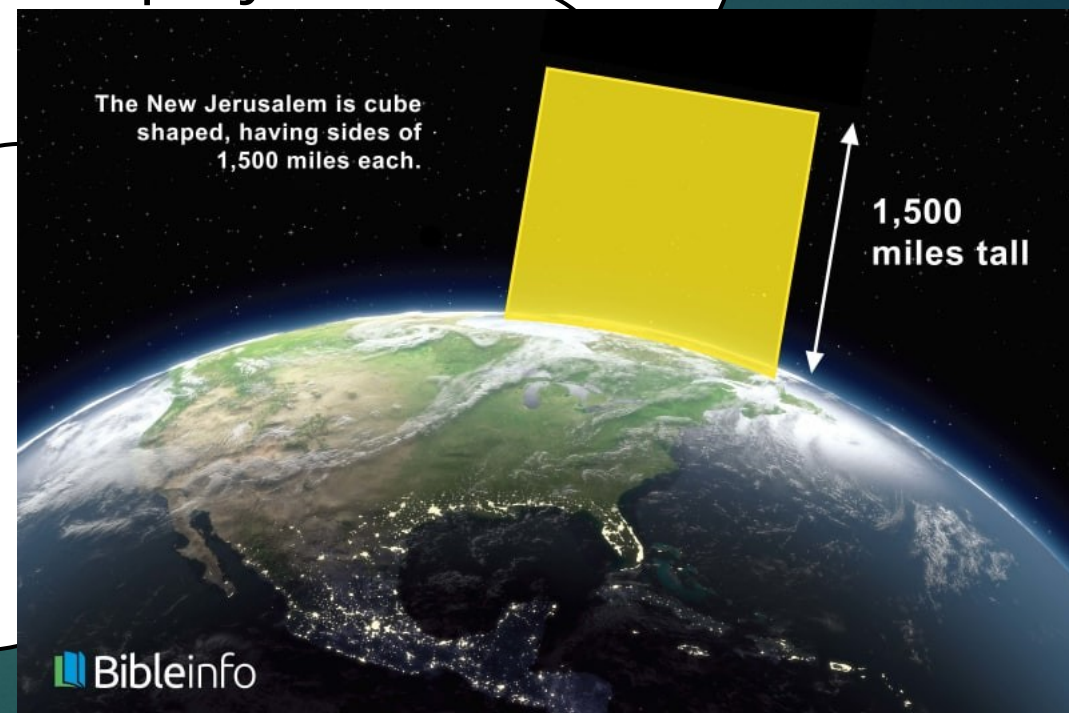
21:16 The new
Jerusalem as a
perfect cube

Symbolism in Revelation:

5:6: Christ as a Lamb with seven horns and seven eyes (which are spirits)

5:8: Incense as prayers

21:16 The new Jerusalem as a perfect cube



Symbolism in Revelation:

5:6: Christ as a Lamb
with seven horns and
seven eyes (which are
spirits)

5:8: Incense as
prayers
of the saints

21:16 The new
Jerusalem as a
perfect cube

Key: "*semaino*"
in Rev. 1:1 and
Dan. 2:45

“semaino” in Daniel and Revelation

Daniel 2:45

[45] just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure.

Revelation 1:1

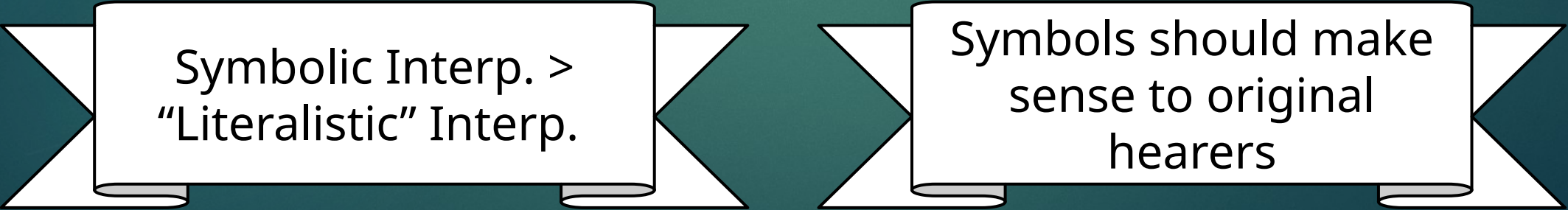
[1] The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, [2] who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. (ESV)

So, what is Revelation?

- ▶ It is a revelation (“apocalypse”) of spiritual realities, a witness (“martyr”) of truth, and a prophecy from God to warn and encourage suffering Christians.
- ▶ It is not a detailed timeline of the End Times

So, what is Revelation?

- ▶ It is a revelation (“apocalypse”) of spiritual realities, a witness (“martyr”) of truth, and a prophecy from God to warn and encourage suffering Christians.
- ▶ It is not a detailed timeline of the End Times



Symbolic Interp. >
“Literalistic” Interp.

Symbols should make
sense to original
hearers

Objection: “Isn’t this subjective,
‘hyper-spiritual’ allegorizing?”

“This” is about “That”

Final Thought

The Fruit of Your Reading > The Type of Reading You Use

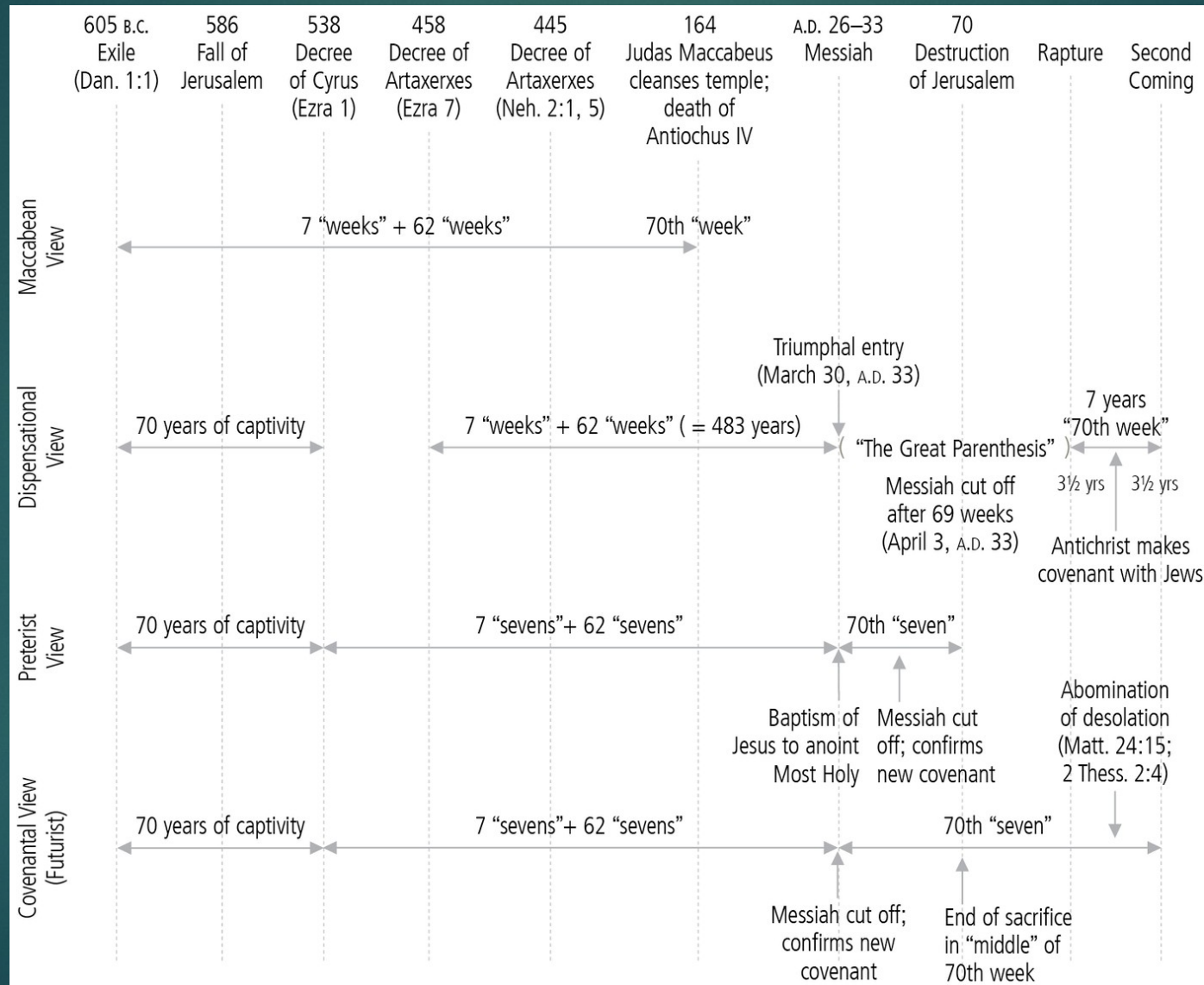
Revelation 1:17-18

[17] When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, [18] and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. (ESV)

Questions?



70 Weeks of Daniel 9



Source: ESV Study Bible

Possible Structure of Revelation

Structure: An Overview of Revelation

Vision 1 (chs. 1-3) PATMOS “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day”		Vision 2 (chs. 4-16) HEAVEN “At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven”					Vision 3 (chs. 17-21) WILDERNESS “He carried me away in the Spirit”		“He carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain” Vision 4 (chs. 21-22) MOUNTAIN	Conclusion and Words of Jesus (22:6-21)
Introduction and Vision of Jesus (1:1-20)	Messages (2:1-3:22)	The Heavenly Throne Room (4-5)	Seals (6:1-8:5)	Trumpets (8:6-11:19)	Visions (12:1-15:8)	Bowls (16:1-21)	The Overthrow of Babylon (17:1-19:10)	Visions (19:11-21:8)		
	Ephesus (2:1-7)		White horse (6:1-2)	Earth (8:6-7)	Woman (12:1-21)	Earth (16:1-2)		White horse (19:11-16)		
	Smyrna (2:8-11)		Red horse (6:3-4)	Sea (8:8-9)	Sea beast (13:1-10)	Sea (16:3)		Supper (19:17-18)		
	Pergamum (2:12-17)		Black horse (6:5-6)	Rivers (8:10-11)	Land beast (13:11-18)	Rivers (16:4-7)		Victory (19:19-21)		
	Thyatira (2:18-29)		Pale horse (6:7-8)	Heavens (8:12-13)	144,000 (14:1-5)	Sun (16:8-9)		Satan bound (20:1-3)		
	Sardis (3:1-6)		Martyrs (6:9-11)	Locorpions (9:1-12)	Three angels (14:6-13)	Darkness (16:10-11)		Martyrs (20:4-10)		
	Philadelphia (3:7-13)		Tribulation (6:12-7:17)	Angels (9:13-11:14)	Harvest (14:14-20)	Frogs (16:12-16)		Judgment (20:11-15)		
	Laodicea (3:14-22)		Silence (8:1-5)	Temple (11:15-19)	Sanctuary (15:1-8)	Temple (16:17-21)		New Creation (21:1-8)		
JESUS unveiled		GOD’S THRONE unveiled					HARLOT unveiled			

Source:
Andrew
Wilson

Enthronement / Ascension

Daniel 7:13–14 [13] “I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed. (ESV)

Mark 13:24-27 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. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. (ESV)

The Purpose of Revelation



“The fact that John explicitly and carefully contextualizes his prophetic message in seven specific contexts makes it possible for us to resist a common generalization about Revelation: that it is a book written for the consolation and encouragement of Christians suffering persecution, in order to assure them that their oppressors will be judged and they will be vindicated in the end ...” – Richard Bauckham

The Purpose of Revelation

“By no means all of his readers were poor and persecuted by an oppressive system: many were affluent and compromising with the oppressive system. The latter are offered not consolation and encouragement, but severe warnings and calls to repent. For these Christians, the judgments which are so vividly described in the rest of the book should appear not as judgments on their enemies so much as judgments they themselves were in danger of incurring, since worshipping the beast was not something only their pagan neighbors did. Worshipping the beast was something many of John’s Christian readers were tempted to do or were actually doing.” -- Richard Bauckham