

The End-Times Time Line

Second Edition

by
Pastor Jim Mattison

THE END TIMES TIME LINE

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Pastor Jim Mattison

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FOREWORD

Jim Mattison brings a lifetime of devoted study and meditation to his book *The End-Time Time Line*. Jim is one of those rare individuals who has radically changed his mind on aspects of prophecy and other doctrines, when new light has been presented to him. He has a knack for presenting his material in a simple manner, condensing the heart and central point of biblical prophecies to a few short statements. His diagrams and charts and summaries are an excellent supplement to his commentary on the various passages dealing with the future of our world and the Kingdom of God to which all prophecy leads.

Jim has presented us with a clear classical premillennial view of the future. In this he is in line not only with the Bible, but with the earliest post-biblical “fathers” such as Irenaeus. At the same time Jim gives us fascinating material about the role of modern Babylon or Assyria, i.e. Iraq and neighboring countries. The author’s insistence that the massive amount of information on “the Assyrian,” particularly in Isaiah, be taken seriously and not dissolved as “figurative” is a special strength of Jim Mattison’s presentation.

Adopting a literal approach to the information provided by Scripture Jim has assembled the essential facts about the future from the words of Jesus in Matthew (and parallels). He rightly links Jesus’ reference to the Abomination of Desolation to its source in the words of Daniel. He does not, as do so many commentaries, ignore the vitally significant Abomination references in Daniel 11:31 and 12:11. Jim then arrives at what is known as a “futuristic” view of prophecy, connecting the celebrated “time, times and half a time” of Daniel with its obvious references in the book of Revelation.

Not everyone will agree with Jim Mattison’s approach. But this may be because systems of prophecy learned in other “schools” prevent the reader from seeing how well the author’s treatment of the various elements of prophecy fit the biblical scheme. Jim challenges us to the “Berean” exercise of following the clear connections between Jesus and Daniel in respect of the Abomination, Great Tribulation and the final wrath of God. Pulling together the various strands of biblical information, the author paints a clear picture of the future, final Antichrist, who will be the culmination of a long-developing departure from original apostolic Truth.

This book will inspire readers to redouble their efforts to make known the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and, without falling for the temptation to set any dates, to watch for the end-time events about which Scripture and especially Jesus and Paul have so much to say.

Sir Anthony Buzzard, Bt., M. A. (Oxon.), M. A. Th.
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INTRODUCTION

The idea of writing a second book on Bible prophecy came to me while sick in bed in Blantyre, Malawi February 7th, 2003 on my seventh mission trip to Malawi and Mozambique. Lying in bed the thought came to mind to write a book called The End-Time Time Line, one of putting end-time prophecies in the order of their occurrence.

Having done considerably more study of end-time happenings after the 1993 publishing of my third edition of *Prophecies of the End of the Age*, I felt a keen interest to try to set down in order end-time happenings that God has revealed to the Bible prophets. In my computer already were other studies, including the 7 Seals of Revelation, the 7 trumpets of Judgment, and the 7 final Vials of God's Wrath. So there was considerable work done toward a new book already.

Upon arriving home from that mission trip, I set my mind to work, continually asking God for understanding of His Word and for help in using the correct words in the writing of this book. It has been a great joy to ponder on these words of the ending of this age that God gave us, and seek to put them in God's order in the simplest terms. Always remembering God's words to Daniel that at the end "The wise shall understand," it was my great desire to be one of those "wise ones." The intent was to encourage the reader to be prepared for the coming Kingdom of God. It explains the frightening and appalling things that are foretold for sinful earth. How tremendously important it is for us to be "in Christ" when He comes the second time.

A very sincere and hopefully truthful attempt has been made to "rightly divide the word of truth." I offer to you this honest attempt to bring to you a deeper understanding of prophecy and a renewed zeal to seek the way of God. If this book causes this to happen, praise God.

Most of the Bible quotations in this book are from the New American Standard Version; a few are from the King James.

My great appreciation goes to Sir Anthony Buzzard, a good colleague, and Bible teacher at Atlanta Bible College for critiquing these pages. Also my heartfelt gratitude goes to my son Steve, who has made the tremendous effort to put this material in book form. Rebecca Dauksas has been invaluable in preparing the Web Page. Lastly my thanks goes to Pastor Gordon Landry for creating the front and back covers, and for his assistance in proof reading the manuscript, and making it grammatically correct.

Jim Mattison, 2004
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THE END TIMES TIME LINE

Chapter 1

THE 70 WEEKS OF DANIEL

9:24-27

BACKGROUND

This prophetic revelation from Gabriel to Daniel, in contrast to the prophecies in chapters two, seven, and eight, is primarily for Israel's future (but when Christ's sacrifice is mentioned, it concerns all men). It develops out of the problem of the 70-year captivity of the Hebrew people in Babylon. That time is now ended and a new phase of God's plan is to begin. We can expect that details of Daniel's former God-given prophecies will now be enlarged for a more detailed understanding of the end-time timeline.

Daniel's Chapter Two reveals the foundation outline of four Gentile kingdoms to hold sway over earth, to be succeeded by a fifth, God's own Kingdom on the earth. It names the first kingdom as Babylon. Chapter Seven gives the same outline, but enlarges the 4th Kingdom, and introduces the final Antichrist to come from it. Chapter Eight identifies kingdoms two and three as being Medo Persia and Greece, and says that out of one of the four divisions of the Grecian empire (v. 9) will come Little Horn (Antichrist) who will "stand up against the Prince of princes (Christ). It also speaks of the "sanctuary being cleansed," and refers to this as happening "at the time of the end" (v. 17).

As Chapter Nine opens, the people of Israel are still dispersed in Babylon under a foreign king because of their sins. Their promised land is in foreign hands, Jerusalem is in ruins, and their Temple destroyed. But the 70 years of captivity are about to end. It is time for God to reveal to them what the future holds.

This chapter will be about the future of Israel, their city Jerusalem, and their Holy Temple. A timetable of "Seventy Weeks" is introduced, at the end of which six things will be accomplished. Notice:

"Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people (Israel only) and your holy city (Jerusalem),

1) to finish (end) the transgression (of Israel). See Romans 11:25-27. "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins" (KJ). See also Zechariah 12 and 13, Israel's mourning and the fountain of cleansing that will be opened up for sin and uncleanness.

2) to make an end of sin (in Israel, and also in the world),

3) to make atonement for iniquity (for the whole world when Christ died),

4) to bring in everlasting righteousness (when the Kingdom of God is established here on earth, 2 Peter 3:13),

5) to seal up (Heb. Bring to a close) vision and prophecy (prophecies will cease, 1 Cor. 13:8),

6) and to anoint the most holy place" (NAS).

During this time period, in the immediate future, the city is to be restored to the Hebrews, and the Temple rebuilt (see the first two decrees of the kings, p.10) There is a promise that Messiah will come (who will bring a fulfillment to these six promises at the appointed times.) A prophecy of His death is mentioned (v. 26), followed by a prediction of a future Antichrist, along with an Abomination that he (Antichrist) will place in the temple that will begin a terrible desolation (Jesus called this the Great Tribulation), but **an end** will come to all of this, and the predicted six conditions will be fulfilled.

So we see this prophecy for Israel includes its return to Israel from Babylon, the city rebuilt, the coming of Messiah, His death, and the final resolution of Israel's sins when they repent and are finally saved. In other words, it takes in a period of time of some 2500 years, but with a gap of some 2000 years between Christ's death and Israel's final cleansing.

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Seventy WEEKS

This Hebrew word *shabua* means “sevens, i.e. a heptad or period of seven weeks (spec. of years)” (Strong). God is speaking of seventy times seven years (70×7), or 490 years. We can see this clearly because after 69 weeks have passed following “the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem,” “Messiah shall be cut off” (die), speaking about Christ’s death on the cross.

This time period concerning Israel was to begin with “the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem,” and would be divided into three main periods: 7 weeks of years (49 years), 62 weeks of years (434 years), and 1 week of years (7 years). $49 + 434 + 7 = 490$ years. Furthermore, the last week of years (7 years) would be divided into two parts – $3\frac{1}{2}$ years and $3\frac{1}{2}$ years. The end of the 70 Weeks would result in “a full end,” (Bullinger), or “the consummation” (King James). Everlasting righteousness would be brought in. Prophecy would be fulfilled. And the anointing of the Holy of Holies, or cleansing of the sanctuary mentioned in Daniel 8:14, will take place which “will immediately precede the ‘end’” (Bullinger). So we see that “end” cannot possibly be 33 A.D. or 70 A.D.

WHEN DID THE SEVENTY WEEKS BEGIN?

When was this “commandment” given, the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem?

In John Walvoord’s *Daniel* he says, “There are at least four decrees concerning the rebuilding of Jerusalem recorded in Scripture: 1) the decree of Cyrus to rebuild the temple (2 Chron. 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4; 6:1-5); 2) the decree of Darius confirming the decree of Cyrus (Ezra 6:6-12); 3) the decree of Artaxerxes (Ezra 7:11-26); 4) the decree of Artaxerxes given to Nehemiah authorizing the rebuilding of the city (Neh. 2:1-8).” “Most scholars, whether conservative or liberal, accordingly, accept the 445 B.C. date” (ibid, also Bullinger), which is No. 4. This is based upon Nehemiah 2:1, which says this happened in the 20th year of the reign of Artaxerxes (Longimus), which began in 465 B.C.

One can also figure back 483 years from the revealing of Christ at the triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

Daniel 9:25, 26: “From the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty two weeks” (483 years)... then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off.” It is plain that Jesus was to be living during the last of the 69 weeks, but would be “cut off,” or, crucified **after** the end of 483 years from the decree.

A very important part of God’s plan to redeem fallen men startles us here. God’s Messiah, the Prince, was to appear in this time frame. Not only that, but after 69 of these weeks of years was ended, He was also to be “cut off” or **die**, and “have nothing” (no Kingdom yet). The death of the Messiah is one of the most important events in the prophetic outlook of Israel and of the whole world in God’s plan. Salvation for all mankind hinges on it. As Isaiah, the Messianic prophet, states, “He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities... the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all... he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death” (Isa. 53:5, 6, 9 KJ). This MESSIAH would be the sacrifice to take away the sins of all who believe. Many will be made righteous by His knowledge, or by the knowledge of Him (Isa. 53:11).

THE SIXTY- NINE WEEKS

First, seven weeks of years (49 years). In this period of time Jerusalem “will be built again, with street and moat, even in troublous times” (Dan. 9:25). Nehemiah was sent by King Artaxerxes to Jerusalem to

rebuild the city (Neh. 2). Sanballet, Tobiah, and Geshem opposed this. Thirteen years earlier, Ezra had been sent by King Artaxerxes to Jerusalem to check on conditions there and begin rebuilding the temple (Ezra 7). There is no precise information in Ezra or Nehemiah as to how long this rebuilding took place. However, since God's Word is true, I will accept that forty-nine years after the decree, the work was done.

Second, sixty-two weeks of years (434 years). This covers the period from the completion of the work of rebuilding the city to "the anointed one, the prince" (Jesus, Messiah – the Anointed One). This obviously refers to some event in Jesus' life when His official claim to be King of the Jews should come before the Jewish people. Two ideas have been set forth: this occurred at His baptism, or at His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the donkey, fulfilling Zechariah 9:9, 10, in the closing days of His life. The latter more nearly fulfills this claim. Jesus appeared in the sixty-two week section of this prophecy.

These seven years, plus the sixty-two years came to their fulfillment near the end of Christ's lifetime. Jesus lived in that 69th week. **After** the 69 weeks of years He was cut off, or crucified.

WHAT ABOUT THE LAST SEVEN YEARS?

The Time

When have they taken place, or are they yet to take place?

There are two main theories: the "continuous-fulfillment theory," which holds that the 70th week immediately followed the 69th, and the "gap or parenthesis theory," which holds that there is a period of time between the 69th week of years and the seventieth period of seven years. If all this has been fulfilled, then this 70 weeks of Daniel is history. If there is a gap, then the last seven year period is still future.

The continuous-fulfillment interpretation. There seem to be at least four views: 1) the last seven years were fulfilled following the Maccabean persecution. 2) The Jewish scholars believe the seventieth week was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. (but this would be some **thirty-eight** years **after** the 69th week). 3) Others say this refers to an indefinite time beginning with Christ but extending to the end. 4) Most commonly held is the idea that the seventieth seven literal years began with "the public ministry of Christ and ended about three and a half years after His death" (Walvoord). The problem with these theories is that there is no significant event in the book of Acts that would mark the end of the period. Also, Israel's sin has not yet been "finished," "everlasting righteousness" has not been brought in, prophecy has not been sealed up, and the most holy place has not been anointed, or restored (8:14).

The gap interpretation is based on 1) the fact that there is no seven-year period in the Bible or history which has fulfilled this last seven-year unit of Daniel's prophecy. 2) If the 70th week immediately followed the 69th – if it began with Christ's three-and-a-half-year ministry and continued on three and a half years after His ascension, there is no great event recorded that showed it was fulfilled. 3) Jesus specifically stated that general signs would occur through the ages, (including the last one of preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God to all the world). He continued by saying, "then shall the end come," and immediately brought up "When you see the abomination spoken by Daniel standing in the holy place." We thus know Jesus is equating the abomination of Daniel with the end of the age, anticipated by Jesus and the Book of Revelation. Revelation was written at least sixty years after the death of Christ and twenty years after the destruction of Jerusalem.

This evil prince will enter into a covenant with Daniel's people, an unholy alliance that will bring ruin to Israel. In the middle of the seven-year period, this one who confirms the covenant will break it by putting a stop to the sacrifice and grain offering and establish a significant event known as "the abomination of desolation" on God's Holy Mount in God's Temple.

It is clear that sacrifices cannot be stopped and a temple desecrated unless both are in existence. Such an end-time Temple is taught in Revelation 11:1 and 2, and in 2 Thessalonians 2:4. Daniel, also, said "the sanctuary shall be destroyed" (9:26). How could it be destroyed unless it existed?

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The last half of verse 27 apparently describes the desecration of the temple by the words, “For the overspreading of abominations he (Antichrist) shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolator” (KJ).

We must notice that Daniel specifically speaks three times of “the sacrifice being abolished, and the abomination of desolation... set up” (Dan. 12:11; 11:31; and here in 9:27). Around 500 years after Daniel predicted this, Jesus Christ said, “When you see the Abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place... then there will be a great tribulation, such as was not... immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened... the sign of Christ will appear, and then all the tribes of the earth shall mourn, and they will see the Son of man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory.” Jesus explained that Daniel’s prediction of the abolished sacrifices and the setting up of the abomination would be events immediately happening just before, and in connection with, His second coming.

Jesus explained that this Abomination set up in the Holy Place would be the start of the Great Tribulation, and that after that Tribulation the sun would be darkened and He would come. Numerous places indicate that the coming Great Tribulation will last 3½ years (see chapter four), after which Jesus will come.

Jesus, in this teaching, places this prophecy of Daniel at the end of this age.

THE LAST WEEK, THE FINAL SEVEN YEARS

“He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation (grain offering) to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate (desolator, margin)” (KJ).

We must agree with Culver that “the seventieth week belongs to a seven-year relationship between Antichrist and Daniel’s people Israel in eschatological (final) times, and concludes with the second advent of Christ” (*Daniel and the Latter Days*). And with Walvoord: “Only futuristic interpretation allows any literal fulfillment.” (*Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*).

“The prince who is to come” will make a “Covenant” with Daniel’s people (v. 24) for seven years, the last seven years before everlasting righteousness will be brought in. But he will break that covenant after 3½ years. This leader is called “Little Horn” in Daniel 7 and 8, and is said to exist “at the time of the end” (8:17). He is the one who will take away the sacrifice (8:11) and will “stand up against the Prince of princes” (8:25, Christ). He is the one who will “speak great words against the most High, and... wear out the saints of the most High... and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time” (7:25, 3½ years; see also Dan. 9:27; 12:7; Rev. 13:5; 11:2-3; 12:6,14.) He is also called “the Assyrian” six times by Isaiah and Micah, a person and power coming from the Syria/Iraq region. Paul calls him the “man of sin.” Revelation calls him “the beast,” who along with his False Prophet, will be given authority over “all who dwell on the earth” for “forty-two months” (3½ years).

“In the middle of the week” obviously means after three and a half years of the seven-year peace covenant this prince will make with Israel. At that time this ungodly Leader will put a stop to the sacrifices Israel is offering to God. This, of course, necessitates the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple.

Not only will he stop the sacrifices, but Jesus said that an Abomination would be placed in “the holy place” (Matt. 24:15). The Holy Place to Jews is the Temple of God, and particularly the Holy of Holies in the Temple. Daniel, in 12:11, said that at the time the sacrifices are stopped at the halfway point in the final

seven years, the “Abomination” will also be “set up.” This implies the Abomination being set up in a new Jewish temple. We’ll study this Abomination later in Chapter Three.

During the last three and a half years of this age, just before Christ returns, there will be a world-wide time of “desolations.” “The city and the sanctuary” will be destroyed. Jerusalem and the Temple will be demolished and ruined. Jeremiah calls this “the time of Jacob’s trouble” (Israel’s trouble – Jer. 30:7), or distress. Yet this trouble and destruction shall affect all on earth, for Jesus said if these days are not shortened “no life” will be saved, or continue. This will be the time when many “saints” will be “overcome” by antichristian forces (Dan. 7:21; Rev. 13:7). This is the time when “no one” can “buy or sell” unless he has the mark, name, or number of the Beast (Rev. 13:16, 17). “Even to the end (of this time) there will be war” (Dan. 9:26). This desolation is likened to “a flood” covering the earth, a desolation that shall overflow the whole earth. Daniel later, in chapter 12:1, explained it this way: “There will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time.” Jesus taught: “Then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall” (Matt. 24:21.)

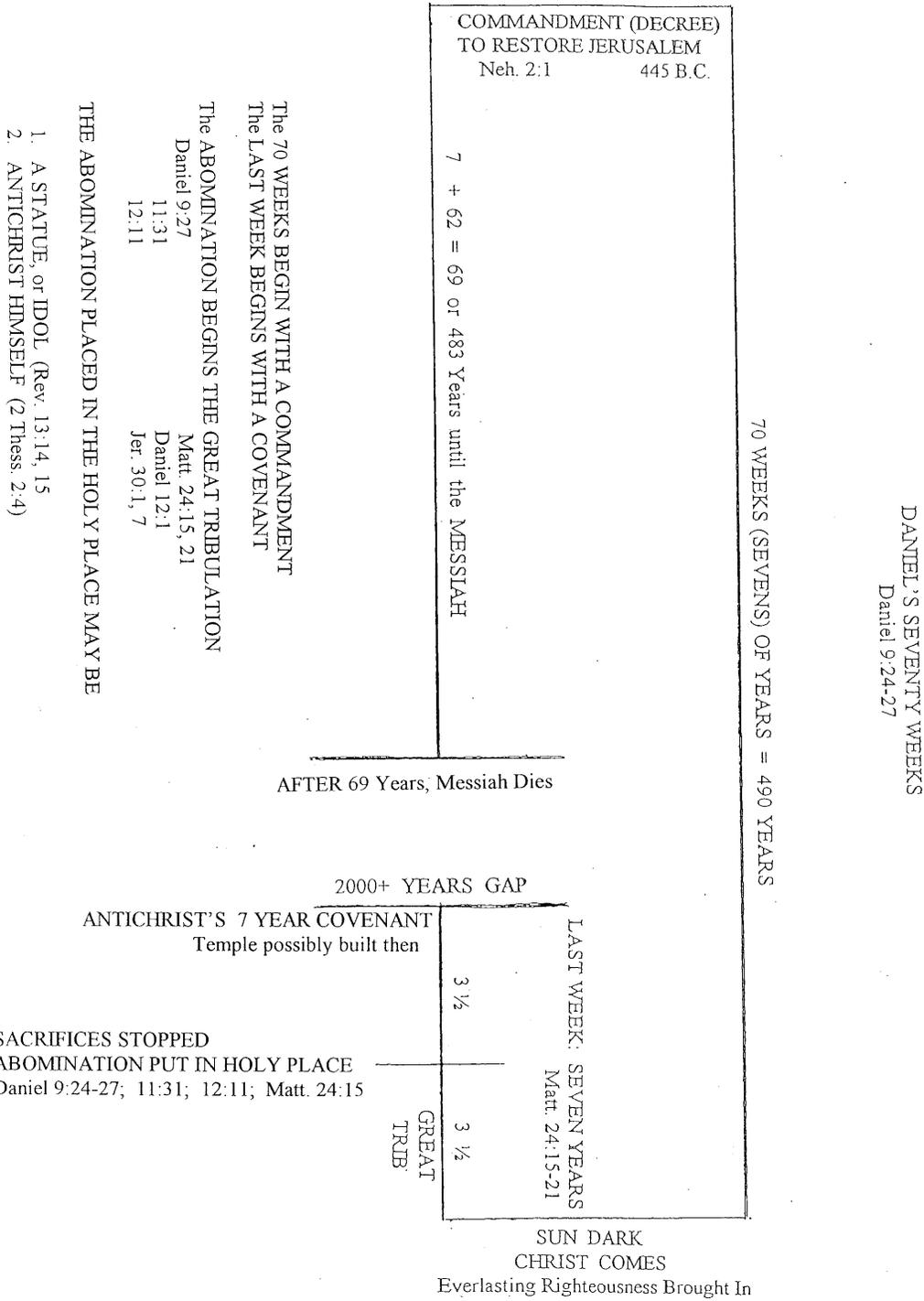
The last 3½ years ends with the “complete destruction” of this desolator. Daniel 7 adds that after the Antichrist’s demise, the Kingdom of God shall be established here on earth (7:26, 27). Daniel 8 adds that “the sanctuary shall be cleansed” (8:14-19). Daniel 12 adds that after another 45 days the one that “waits” will be rewarded (12:11, 12).

CONCLUSION

1. The seventy weeks refer to 490 years and speak of the future of Israel and Jerusalem beginning with the decree given to Nehemiah and ending with the final and complete cleansing of Israel’s sins at the second coming of Christ.
2. The seventy weeks are divided into three periods of seven weeks (49 years), sixty two weeks (483 years), and one week (7 years).
3. The first two periods ran out during the lifetime of Christ (“unto the Messiah the Prince”) and before His death on the cross.
4. The death of Christ would follow, or, occur after the 69 weeks ended, but not in the 70th week.
5. The seventieth week predicts the appearing of “the prince that shall come,” the “little horn” Antichrist and his seven year relationship to Daniel’s people in the seven years preceding Christ’s Second Coming. This period of seven years is divided into two parts, the first half seeing a “covenant” made with the Jews, the Jewish sacrifices resuming (in a new Temple), and the second half seeing the covenant broken, the sacrifices stopped, and an Abomination set up that will begin world-wide “desolations” (Jesus interpreted that to mean the Great Tribulation such as has never been).
6. However the “desolator” will come to his end, and the six great blessings will be fulfilled, including the bringing in of everlasting righteousness, or, the Kingdom of God being established on earth.

In Chapter Two we will notice Jesus’ time-line outline in Matthew 24, which gives details of what shall happen between Jesus’ first coming and His second coming.

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Chapter 2

JESUS' TIME LINE IN MATTHEW 24

As God through Daniel gave a time line for Israel of 70 Weeks of years from 445 B. C. until the second coming of Messiah, which emphasized the last seven years of this age, so Jesus, in Matthew 24, gives us a time line from His Day until the Trumpet Sound that will gather the Elect at His second coming. Jesus' outline places great emphasis on "the End" (He uses the term 3 times), saying in verse 14, "and then shall the end come." He immediately brings in Daniel's "Abomination," and said when we see it "standing in the holy place," "then there will be a great tribulation." "Immediately after the tribulation" the sun will be darkened, Christ's sign will be seen in heaven, and Christ will come! Jesus places Daniel's Abomination in the holy place at the end of this age, just before He returns.

BACKGROUND

As Jesus departed from the Temple in Jerusalem, His Apostles wanted to point out to Him the greatness of "the buildings of the temple." What a great shock to them His answer must have been! In effect He said, "Do you see this building? I tell you, 'There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down'" (24:1, 2).

Jesus was telling them that this magnificent Temple would be destroyed. As we see in the next verse, verse 3, they perceived that His words had something to do with His Second Coming (the Parousia) and the ending of this age. Jesus did not correct this connection because it was correct. His answer in the Olivet discourse is recorded in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, and there is a similar account in Revelation 6. Seal 5 refers to the Great Tribulation, as it occurs before Seal 6, which will be the darkening of the sun. The other seals preceding 5 refer to parts of the Matthew 24 outline.

TWO CONNECTED QUESTIONS

On the Mt. of Olives overlooking Jerusalem and their magnificent Jewish Temple, the apostles asked Jesus two connected questions. First, they asked when His prophecy of the destruction of the Temple would happen. The other question was: "What will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" (NAS)

Although the temple was destroyed by Titus in 70 A.D. the last-day temple will also be destroyed. Antichrist "will destroy the city and the sanctuary" (Daniel 9:26).

GENERAL SIGNS

Jesus' answer to these questions teaches us there would be General Signs throughout this 2000+ Year age, commencing after His ascension to heaven.

Deceivers

Wars This period is called "the beginning of
Famines sorrows." "But the end is not yet."

Pestilences

Earthquakes

Hatred of His people, hatred in general

False prophets

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Iniquity abounding
Kingdom of God preached “Then the end shall come.”

Thus Jesus fills in the details between the 69 weeks and the 70th week in Daniel. Here Jesus helps us understand the main occurrences in that GAP time period before the 70th Week (or, last seven years) begins. They are those listed above. It is this writer’s understanding that we are still living in this “beginning of sorrows” period, before the actual “**end.**”

We do notice all these general signs even now in our day. There are many deceivers and false teachers today. Wars have continued (we have just seen the war in Iraq). Africa is filled with AIDS. The West Nile virus has come. The deadly new SARS virus, plus the new monkey pox, carried by prairie dogs and transmitted to humans, and now people are worried about a bird flu pandemic. We are certainly seeing pestilences. And we have seen the recent African famine (the winter of 2002-2003). Earthquakes, too, are quite common all over the earth (see my first book).

Hatred of Jews and Christians by extremists among the Islamic billion is well-known. This “holy war” is called Jihad. “Iniquity” and violence in the last days is to be like it was in Noah’s day, when every imagination of man’s heart was only evil continually (Matt. 24:37-39; Gen. 6:5).

And now we see great efforts being made to preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God all over the world. (This writer himself is involved in this mission at present in Africa.)

After these General Signs, as we call them, especially after the preaching of the coming Kingdom of God to “all nations,” JESUS said, “THEN the End shall come” (v. 14).

SPECIFIC SIGNS OF THE ENDING OF THIS AGE

It is not the general signs that we are interested in now. We are living in the day of these General Signs. It is the specific signs we want to study. They end with the coming of Christ and His thousand-year Reign on Earth

1. The ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION

Jesus then said, “Therefore (a word that connects the “Abomination” to “the End”) when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand)...”

Jesus, of course, is referring to Daniel 9:24-27; Daniel 8:11, 12; Daniel 11:31; and Daniel 12:11, when Antichrist (1 John 2:18), “the Assyrian” (see my first book), will do away with the sacrifices in the “holy place” (Jewish Temple) and “set up the abomination of desolation” (Dan. 11:31). We will study this Abomination in Chapter Three.

When we see this, “then there will be a great tribulation.” (Matt. 24:21). Here is a “when” and a “then”. When one thing happens, then another thing happens. When you see the abomination standing in the holy place, then there will be great tribulation. The two are connected. One brings about the second. The Abomination will begin the Great Tribulation.

A. Since Jesus said, When you see this abomination standing in the holy place, it shows that this abomination was still future when He spoke. There was a type of this Abomination in the holy place in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes (about 170 B.C.) when that Syrian ruler set up a statue of Jupiter in the holy of holies (Davis), but Daniel’s Abomination is still future, three and a half years before Christ Himself comes.

B. The Abomination to which Jesus referred is the same one prophesied by Daniel in Daniel 9:24-27; 11:31; 12:11; and in 8:11 and 12. It will be placed in the Holy Place when the Jewish sacrifices, which will be resumed, will be stopped by Antichrist. Daniel 11:31 says the forces of this wicked leader will “take

away the daily sacrifice” and “place” the abomination that makes desolate. This abomination will be “set up” (12:11).

C. This shows that there will be a Holy Place just before Jesus comes, for this Abomination shall be placed or set up **in** this Holy Place. To the Jews the Holy Place was the Temple in Jerusalem. This indicates that the Jewish temple will be rebuilt and the sacrifices will be resumed. Then Antichrist shall stop the Jewish sacrifices and set up the Abomination in the Jewish Temple. This will initiate the Great Tribulation.

D. “Immediately after” the Great Tribulation the sun will be darkened, Christ’s sign will appear, and Christ will come! (v. 30).

Jesus places the Abomination of Daniel at the beginning of the Great Tribulation, which tribulation “immediately” precedes His second coming.

Paul prophesied of this same individual, and called him “the man of lawlessness” (NAS), or, “the man of sin” (KJ) in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-10. In the first part of the chapter Paul speaks of “the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to Him.” He tells this church (and us) that we need not become shaken or troubled thinking that “the day of the Lord has come.” Paul said “it will not come” (the day of the Lord) “unless the apostasy comes first (the falling away), and the man of lawlessness is revealed.”

Two things are to happen before Christ’s coming, according to Paul: 1) a falling away, and 2) the revealing of this man of sin “who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God” (v. 4).

He will be “the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved” (vv 9, 10).

“Whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming” (v. 8).

Thus we see this apostasy and the revealing of the man of sin happening just before the day of the Lord, that is, just before God’s wrath is poured out on an evil world through His Son, Jesus (Acts 17:31). Christ will come before the Day of the Lord begins, and He is authorized of God (John 5:22, 23; Rev. 19:15) to administer God’s wrath on sinful earth in that Day of the Lord. This falling away and the revealing of the man of sin will therefore occur **just before** Christ returns.

Revelation 13 calls the Antichrist a “Beast” having ten horns and seven heads, a blasphemous beast that had the body of a leopard (Dan. 7:6), feet of a bear (Dan. 7:5), and mouth of a lion (Dan. 7:4). “The dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority.” This Beast will have “authority to act for forty-two months” (three and a half years).

He will blaspheme God and “make war with the saints and overcome them.” He will have “authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation.” “And all who dwell on the earth shall worship him, everyone whose name has not been written... in the book of life of the Lamb” (Rev. 13:6-8).

His right-hand man (vv 11-18) is called the “false prophet” in Revelation 19:20.

2. The GREAT TRIBULATION

“Then shall be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall be. And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short” (Matt. 24:21, 22).

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Jesus was referring to Daniel 12:1, which speaks of this same period. The background in Daniel 11 shows Antichrist lifting himself up against God, entering “the Beautiful land” (Israel), Libya and Ethiopia following him, rumors from the east and north will disturb him, “and he will go forth with great wrath to destroy and annihilate many.” “He will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas (Mediterranean and Dead Seas) and the beautiful Holy Mountain (Mt. Moriah): yet he will come to his end...”

Chapter 12:1 immediately follows. “At that time Michael, the great prince (archangel) who stands guard over the sons of your people (Israel), will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued.”

The first resurrection follows immediately. “And many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.” (v. 2).

Daniel places the Resurrection *immediately after* the “Time of distress,” or “Great Tribulation” (as Jesus called it), just as Jesus does in Matthew 24:29-31. As the tribes of earth see Jesus coming in Power and Glory (Matt. 24:30), He will send His angels out with a trumpet sound (resurrection trumpet, 1 Thess. 4:16) to gather His elect. Jesus and Daniel agree that the resurrection of God’s people will occur very soon after this greatest of tribulations.

Jeremiah spoke of it as “The time of Jacob’s trouble” (30:7), and immediately added “but he (Israel) shall be saved out of it.” In verse 22 God says, “You shall be my people, and I will be your God.”

A Difference between Tribulation and Wrath

One of the keys of understanding end-time events is to notice that the Great Tribulation and the Wrath of God are **separated** by the darkening of the sun and other signs in heaven. One follows the other.

Jesus said that “**immediately after** the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened...” This will be followed by His heavenly sign, the mourning of the nations, and His coming in great Power and Glory.

Joel said, “The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood (the color of blood) before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes” (Joel 2:31).

Bible students know that the great and terrible day of the LORD refers to the day of God’s wrath on the sinners on earth. Isaiah 13:9: “Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, cruel with fury and burning anger, to make the land a desolation; and He will exterminate its sinners from it.” Joel 1:15: “Alas for the day! For the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.” Zephaniah said, “The great day of the LORD is near... that day is a day of wrath” (1:14, 15).

Thus we are told by the inspired prophet Joel that the sun shall be darkened before the great and terrible day of the Almighty’s wrath. In the correct order we are taught: The Great Tribulation before the sun is made dark. The wrath of God after the sun is darkened.

This is good to know. Though Christians will go through the great tribulation (the resurrection following it), God’s wrath is not for Christians, but for sinners (1 Thess. 5:9). First will come the Great Tribulation, after which Christ comes, resurrects His people, and they help Him judge the wicked in the time of Wrath (Psa. 149:5-9), which, we have seen, follows the darkening of the sun.

The Day of the LORD is the day of God’s final wrath on earth’s sinful people. Revelation 19:11-21 shows Jesus coming to “tread the wine press of the fierce wrath of God Almighty.” It will take place **AFTER** the Great Tribulation, and **AFTER** the darkening of the sun.

Jesus teaches us that first will come the Great Tribulation, after which Christ returns and resurrects His people. The prophet David said that “all the godly ones” will have the honor of helping execute God’s vengeance upon the ungodly (Psa. 149:5-9) in the great Day of the LORD’S Wrath.

Tribulation – Darkening of the sun – Wrath of God.

3. THE SIGNS IN THE HEAVENLY BODIES

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon shall not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens (planets? constellations?) will be shaken” (Matt 24:29 NAS).

Eight times in Scripture this sign of the end is given: Isaiah 13:9, 10; Joel 2:10, 11; 3:14-16; Matthew 24:29; Mark 13:24-26; Luke 21:25; Acts 2:19, 20; Revelation 6:12, 13.

It will be a major sign to all the peoples on earth that something spectacular is coming (which will be JESUS, coming from heaven in POWER and GLORY).

The Darkening of the Sun

The ninth plague over Egypt was darkness – “there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days” (Ex. 10:22) – which caused the Egyptians to not move from their places for three days, and “they did not see one another.” Years ago this writer went through Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico. Way down underground the guide turned off the lights to show us what real darkness was. In the dark I put my hand right in front of my face, and I could not see my hand. It was a “darkness which could be felt,” as the saying goes. Can you imagine how an event like the earth becoming dark as pitch will affect the people of this last generation? We are not told here how long this darkness shall remain. Even one day of it would cause many to really stop and think “WHAT IS HAPPENING?”

Two other places show a darkening of the sun. During the 7th Seal, in Revelation 8:12, the fourth angel of divine judgment will sound his trumpet and a third part of the sun, moon, and stars will be darkened. The other place is Revelation 16:10, where, under the 5th vial of God’s Wrath, the kingdom of the beast will be full of darkness.

A Literal Occurrence

There is no doubt in this writer’s mind that this will be a very literal occurrence. Here are several proofs for this.

1. The literal earth is contrasted to the literal heaven in Acts 2:19, 20. “I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath... the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood (*as blood*, dark, Rev. 6:12), before that great and notable day of the Lord come” (KJ).

2. Another proof that the literal sun, moon, and stars will not give their light is found in Isaiah 13:10, where even the constellations (star groups) are specifically named. “For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash forth their light; the sun will be dark when it rises, and the moon will not shed its light” (NAS).

3. A third proof is that many writers say the same thing: Isaiah (13:9, 10, 13); Ezekiel (32:7, 8); Joel (2:30, 31; 3:15, 16); Jesus (Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:24, 25; Luke 21:25); Peter (Acts 2:19, 20); and John (Rev. 6:12, 13).

WHAT Will Cause This Darkness?

Ezekiel seems to give the answer in chapter 32:7 and 8. “When I extinguish you (Egypt among other nations) *I will cover the heavens*, and darken their stars; *I will cover the sun with a cloud*. And the moon shall not give its light. *All the shining lights in the heavens I will darken over you* and set darkness on your land,” declares the Lord GOD.”

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It sounds to this writer that the reason the light of the heavenly bodies will be darkened is that a thick dark cloud will cover the earth. This cloud will prevent the light of the heavenly bodies from reaching earth. The earth, therefore, will be dark, or pitch black. John describes this darkness as “black as sackcloth made of hair” (Rev. 6:12).

What could cause such a world-encircling cloud? There have been times in the past when volcanic eruptions have made parts of the earth dark as pitch for days. A nuclear bomb may do the same thing. Remember, Jesus said this darkening would occur “immediately after” the Great Tribulation. Will so many nuclear bombs be burst all over earth that the cloud will cover the earth? We don’t know. Almighty God Himself could create an earth-circling cloud foretelling His coming judgment of earth.

However it may happen, it is in our best interest to know that when the heavens become dark to the eye, JESUS will then be returning, and we had better be ready for His coming by being **in** Him, and living the righteous life He taught us to live.

The Moon Darkened

The moon does not produce its own light, but rather reflects light from the sun. If the sun is dark, the moon will be dark also.

The moon governs the tides. It is interesting that Jesus spoke of “the sea and the waves roaring; men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on earth” in connection with the “signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars” (Luke 21:25, 26 KJ). The NAS renders it “There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon earth dismay among the nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming on the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.”

It sounds like the shaking of the heavens will cause the “roaring of the sea and waves,” causing consternation among men, who wonder what is coming next (which is, the Day of the Lord’s wrath). Thus we visualize a picture of great storms at sea in the midst of a great darkness over earth. No wonder men’s hearts will fail them for fear and cause them to wonder what will happen next.

The Stars Falling

“The stars will fall from the sky”

Jesus predicted this. Revelation 6:13 also says the stars will fall; while Isaiah and Joel say the stars will withdraw their shining. The planets, which look like stars, are like the moon, and only reflect light from the sun. With the sun dark, they also would not reflect light.

Many nights meteors “fall.” At particular times they give a spectacular show when many “fall.” People call these shooting stars, or “falling stars.” If many meteors fell all at once, don’t you think all men would sit up and take notice and wonder, especially with these other heavenly signs?

We can see why men who pay no attention to the Almighty God would quake in their boots as these warnings of coming judgment unfold before their eyes. Jesus said there would be weeping and gnashing of teeth at the judgment – Matt. 13:42; that “all the tribes of the earth will mourn” when they see Him returning – Matt. 24:30.

“Heavenquakes”

“The powers of the heavens will be shaken”

Many of these “heavenly signs” passages to which we have referred speak of the powers of the heavens being “shaken.” Haggai 2:6 speaks of the same thing: “Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land.”

This is in an end time setting, and is quoted in Hebrews 12:26 and 27).

A great world-wide earthquake is to be one of the signs on earth of the second coming of Christ. Revelation 16:18 explains that connected to Armageddon (v. 16) will be “a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake... and so mighty.” A similar sign announcing His coming will be seen in heaven, in a tremendous heavenquake.

Men today can predict many years ahead the positions of the heavenly bodies, for instance, Halley’s Comet. Will it be possible for men to foresee God’s “shaking” of the heavens and the earth? He said He will shake the heavens and the earth in the End time, that the earth shall move out of her place (Isa. 13:13), that “the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard” (Isa. 24:20), that the sky will be split apart like a scroll” (Rev. 6:14), that the heavens shall be changed as a garment (Psa. 102:25, 26). Peter spoke of a “new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells” (2 Pet. 3:13).

Great changes are in store for both heaven and earth, and its seas, when the heavens and earth are shaken, when the heavenly bodies will possibly move out of their orbits.

The Reason for the Coming Wonders in Heaven

At that time the **attention** of men on earth will be focused on these heavenly signs from God. The covetous and greedy will forget their money. The tyrants will forget their oppressing. Antichrist, with world-wide conquest in mind (Rev. 13:7, 8), will have his attention diverted. Evil men will pause in their evil deeds. All the world will be interested in only one thing – how to survive.

Isaiah (2:19) and John (Rev. 6:15-17) say this is the time that men – kings, great men, commanders, rich and strong, slaves and free men will hide themselves “in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains,” and ask that the mountains fall on them to hide them from the wrath of God and the Lamb, “for the great day of their wrath has come; and who is able to stand?”

When Will the Cosmic Disturbances Occur?

Does the Bible tell us *when* the sun and moon shall be dark, the stars fall, and the heavens shake? Yes, it does.

This will happen when the 6th Seal is opened according to Revelation 6:12, 13, 14: “I looked when He broke *the sixth seal*, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood; and the stars of the sky fell to the earth... and the sky was split apart like a scroll...”

The opening of the Sixth Seal announces the coming of the Wrath of God. This is the time when men will hide in the caves of the mountains and say, “Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of His wrath has come; and who is able to stand?”

The fourteen phases of the Wrath of God are described under Seal Seven in Revelation. We will come to them later.

4. CHRIST’S SIGN IN HEAVEN

“Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man (Christ) in heaven”

After the heavenly disturbances, the sign of Christ will appear in heaven.

We are not told what this sign shall be. “His star” announced His first coming (Matt. 2:2, 9, 10). Balaam predicted this long before in Numbers 24:17: “I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near; a star shall come forth from Jacob, and a scepter shall rise from Israel.” Because a star did announce His first coming, some have wondered if a Scepter will appear in the heavens as the sign of Jesus’ second coming as

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King of the Earth. A scepter is “a baton or staff borne by a sovereign as an emblem of authority” – Webster. Jesus certainly will be coming as “King of Kings” (Rev. 17:14).

Another interpretation is that the sign of Christ in heaven will be Christ Himself coming, and would punctuate Matthew 24:30 this way: “And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven.”

Or will it be another star? Whatever this special heavenly sign of Christ will be we do not know. But we are taught by Jesus Himself that His Sign will appear in heaven after the sun is darkened. And evidently people will realize its terrible significance for them, for they shall mourn.

Mourning of the People on Earth “Then all the tribes of the earth shall mourn”

Why will the people of earth mourn when Christ returns? This is that mourning predicted by Zechariah 12:10-14. Also Amos 9:5. Zechariah only mentions Israel’s mourning when they “look on him whom they have pierced,” but Jesus said all tribes on earth, not only Israel, will mourn after His sign appears.

Jeremiah 4:23-28 indicates that “when the heavens above be black,” it will be the approaching “fierce anger of the LORD” that will cause the people on earth to mourn: “for this shall the earth mourn.” Jesus said that there will be “weeping and gnashing of teeth” when He gathers the wicked and casts them into the lake of fire (Matt. 13:41, 42, 49, 50).

A different kind of mourning, a worldly one, is mentioned in Revelation 18:1-19, when Babylon’s fall will be lamented by the merchants of earth, because by her they were made rich.

5. THEY SHALL SEE CHRIST COMING “They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

This will be the Second Coming of Christ that at least 110 passages in the New Testament teach. A few of them are: John 14:3; Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; 2 Thessalonians 2:8; Hebrews 9:28; Revelation 22:12, 20.

But this time He will come as King over earth and the Judge of the living and the dead. All power in heaven and earth has been given to Him, and He will use that mighty power in several ways when He comes in power and glory. He will resurrect and reward the faithful. He will establish the Kingdom of God over earth and reign a thousand years. He will authorize the angels to cast the wicked into the lake of fire. He will rule until all enemies of God are put under His feet.

6. AT THAT TIME, THE GATHERING OF THE ELECT “He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.”

When Christ comes in power and glory He will send out His angels to gather together His people. This will be the First Resurrection (Rev. 20:6). This is after the Great Tribulation, but before the Wrath of God. In Jesus’ own outline, we call it His Timeline; it is clearly taught that the “elect,” the people of God, will experience the Great Tribulation. His coming is after the Great Tribulation. The gathering of the elect is after the Great Tribulation. The good angels, the “holy” ones (Matthew 25:31, KJ) will be sent out to collect the people of God, just as they will be sent out to gather together the evil people and cast them into a furnace of fire (Matthew 13:41, 42).

This is the Trumpet of the Resurrection

Paul called it “the last trump” in the Resurrection Chapter, 1 Corinthians 15. In speaking about inheriting the Kingdom of God in verse 50, Paul, by inspiration, continues: “Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep (die), but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable *must* put on the imperishable, and this mortal *must* put on immortality” (vv 51-53). To inherit God’s Kingdom, people must be made immortal by the Lord Jesus. This will happen when the Resurrection Trumpet sounds.

Paul explained this further in 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, “We who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

“Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord” (from that time forward, but not long in the air, for Christ shall descend to earth to be King over God’s Kingdom that He will establish here on earth). This passage is the place from which some have coined the phrase “the Rapture,” or, the catching up of the Saints to meet Christ in the air. This event will happen at the last trump, the Trump of God.

Also supportive of the fact that the resurrection is announced by God’s trumpet is Revelation 11:15-18, where the seventh trumpet sounds to announce the anger of the nations, the time of reward for the people of God, both dead and alive, and the coming destruction of those who destroy the earth. This seventh trumpet is the last trumpet mentioned in the Bible.

How important this trumpet will be to us who live in these last days! It will be the most beautiful music the people of God have ever heard. This trumpet will be heard by all on earth, if we can rightly interpret the word “sound.” May its sounding cause our hearts to leap with joy in the knowledge that eternal salvation has come to us, that the same immortality Jesus has, now courses vibrantly through our bodies! Woe to those who are not changed, then. Will you and I be ready when Jesus comes?

This is the Redemption Time – Luke 21:28

This will be the rewarding time (Matt. 16:27), the time of our change from mortality to immortality (1 Cor. 15:51-54). This will be the time perfect health will be restored to frail human bodies, which will then be “spiritual” bodies (1 Cor. 15:44). None of these good gathered ones will ever again feel pain, sorrow, or crying, or Death, because for them these things have “passed away” (Rev. 21:3, 4). None of the faithful will say, “I am sick,” (Isa. 33:24). “They will find gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing will flee away” when the “Redeemed” of the LORD, the “ransomed of the LORD,” will walk on that “Highway of Holiness” and come with joyful shouting to Zion, the city of God (Isa. 35:8-10).

“Then the eyes of the blind will be opened. And the ears of the deaf will be unstopped. Then the lame man will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb will shout for joy” (35:5, 6).

THAT is the DAY for which the Faithful wait. That is the DAY our “Redemption” draws nigh (Luke 21:28). All the true, suffering Christians, now bogged down with cancers, and all physical and mental ailments, pain, and suffering, will then be liberated, made free, from the shackles that bind us today. O blessed Promise! Thank You, O Lord! Save us! Allow us, by Your shed blood, to enter that rest, that Kingdom of God You will establish here on the earth to be made new! (Heb. 4:9-11; 2 Peter 3:13; Dan. 2:44; 7:27; Matt. 6:10).

CONCLUSION of JESUS' TIME LINE
in Matthew 24

General signs were to be seen from His ascension to His Second Coming: deceivers, wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, hatred, false prophets, worldwide wickedness, and the preaching of the gospel of the Kingdom of God. "... then the end shall come."

The "End" is Composed of Five Events

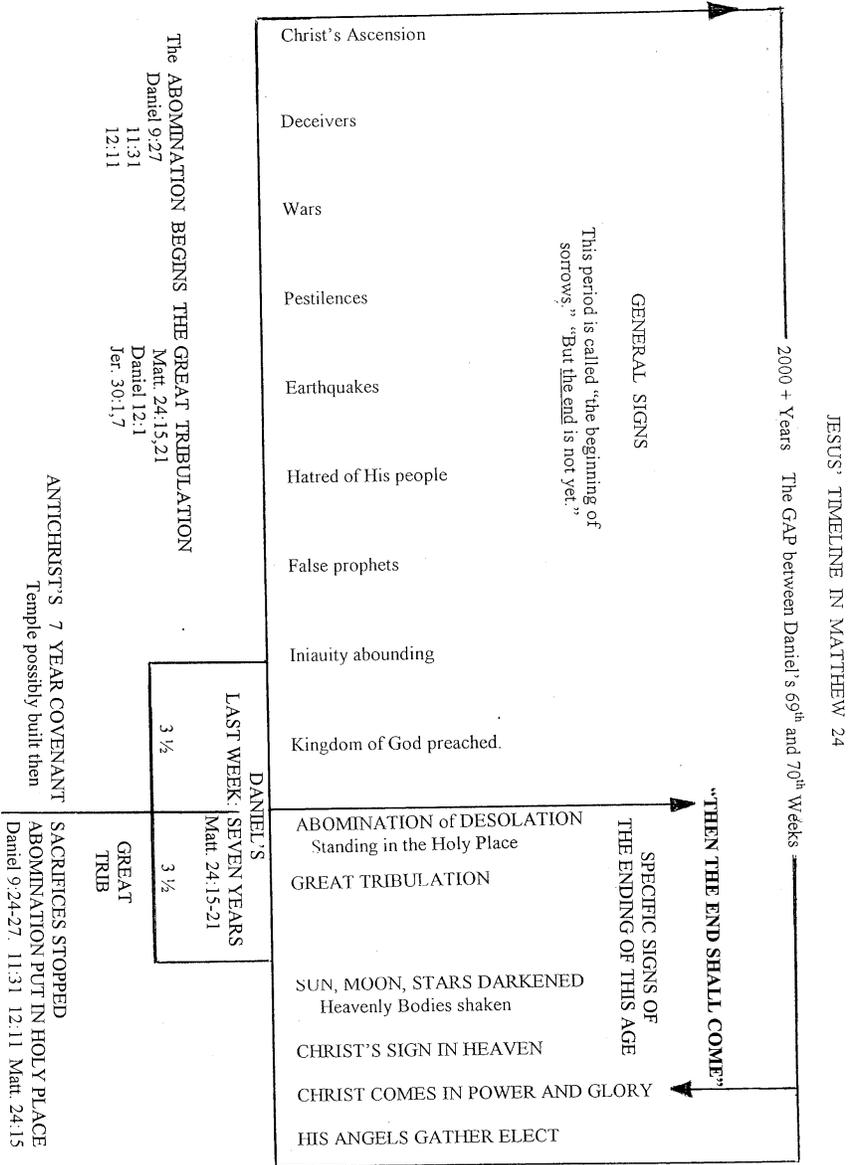
1. The Abomination, set up in "the holy place" causing "desolation" – the Great Tribulation – which will last "42 months," "a time, times, and half a time," "1260 days," or, 3½ years.
2. "Immediately after" the Great Tribulation the sun will be darkened, the moon will not shine, the stars will fall, and the powers of heaven will be shaken.
3. The sign of Christ will appear in the sky and the people on earth will mourn.
4. The people of earth will see Christ coming from heaven in Power and Glory.
5. Christ will send out His angels with a trumpet sound to gather His elect (the First Resurrection).

Though Jesus, in this outline, does not mention the Day of the LORD'S Wrath, it would be number 6. This is the time it will occur. Revelation 19:11-21 shows that when Christ comes with "many crowns" as King of Kings (also 17:14) He will tread "the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (v. 15). The "feast of the fowls" will take place then, when the fowls of the air will gather together to "the supper of the great God," to devour the flesh of the wicked who gather together to make war with Christ when He comes. Ezekiel predicts this feast of the fowls, God's "sacrifice," in 39:17-21. It is at this time the Beast and the False Prophet will be seized and cast alive into the lake of fire (Rev. 19:19, 20).

Then will follow the thousand-year rule of Christ over earth (Rev. 20:6).

Now, in Chapter 3, let us go back and examine this abomination, which will begin "the end" (Matt. 24:14, 15), and will cause such desolation as the Great Tribulation shall bring.

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Chapter 3

THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION

Matthew 24:15, 21. Daniel 9:26, 27. 11:31. 12:11-13.

In the signs of His coming that Jesus gave us, He places great emphasis on Daniel's Abomination that causes Desolation. This first specific sign after the last of the general signs (the preaching of the Kingdom of God worldwide) is of great importance in Jesus' outline of last-day events just before His return, for this event will begin the End (Matthew 24:14,15).

This abomination spoken of by Daniel will trigger the Greatest Tribulation the world has ever seen. And this Tribulation will be "immediately" before the signs in the heavens and Christ's coming in Glory!

Jesus was saying, when you see the abomination, great tribulation will come, and immediately after it, I will come! This is very comforting to last-day Christians. Even though they will go through the coming greatest tribulation of all time (of 3½ years), their precious Lord Jesus Messiah will come and rescue them. What a hope Christians have!

Matthew 24:15, 21, 22

"When you see standing in the holy place the abomination that causes desolation, spoken of through the prophet Daniel – let the reader understand... Then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now – and never to be equaled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened." (NIV)

"When you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the Prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand)... Then there will be a Great Tribulation, such as not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the elect's, sake those days shall be cut short." (NAS)

The teaching is clear. When one thing happens, then something else happens. When the abomination stands in the holy place, then the Great Tribulation will begin.

THE HOLY PLACE

The expression "the holy place" occurs 41 times in the Bible. In the Tabernacle, Solomon's temple, and Herod's temple, there were two divisions, or rooms; one called the holy place, and the other, the most holy place.

That this holy place in Matthew 24:15 means the temple can be seen by reading two verses. Acts 21:28 says, "Men of Israel, come to our aid! This is the man who preaches to all men everywhere against our people, and the Law, and this place; and besides he has even brought Greeks into the temple **and** has defiled this holy place." Hebrews 9:25: "nor was it that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood not his own."

Other Bible expressions for this holiest area on earth are: "Jerusalem, the holy city," "holy hill of Zion," "holy temple," and "holy mount."

To the Jews, the Holy Place was God's temple in Jerusalem. The Jewish temple was the most holy place on earth, for God had desired to put His name in that holy place in His own holy city (Deut. 12:5, 11, 14, 18, 21, 26; 1 Kings 8:29; 2 Chron. 7:12).

Jesus' message is, "When you see the abomination standing in the Jewish Temple, then there shall be terrible tribulation in the earth." This was still future in Jesus' day.

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Paul, by the Spirit, predicted the man of sin sitting in the temple of God before the coming of Christ and the Day of the Lord (2 Thess. 2:4). For this to be fulfilled, the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem will be rebuilt and in existence at the end. How else can the sacrifices be renewed, and then stopped by Antichrist? (Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11).

Connected to the stopping of the Jewish sacrifices is the placing of the abomination in the temple. Daniel connects the two in 12:11: “from the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days.” See also Daniel 11:31.

The future existence of a Jewish temple is found again in Revelation 11:1, 2. “Measure the temple of God... and leave out the court which is outside the temple.”

It will possibly be built in that first 3½ years of the last seven year week of Daniel. In the second half of that 70th week, the sacrifices are stopped, and the abomination will be placed in that temple.

THE END

Notice in Jesus’ Matthew 24 outline of end-time events, the word “end” is used three times. V. 6. “... but the end is not yet.” V. 13. “He that endureth to the end... shall be saved.” V. 14. “... this gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world..., and then shall the end come.” Jesus is speaking of the ending of this age, which begins with the abomination in the Holy Place, continues with the Great Tribulation, which is “immediately” followed by the sun darkened, then Christ coming. That will end this age.

Daniel, likewise, speaks of the end of this age seven times in chapter 12. 12:4: “Seal the book, even to the time of the end.” 12:6: “How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?” Answer: “A time, times, and a half.” (3½ years.) “When he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.” 12:8: “O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?” 12:9: “the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.” 12:13: “Go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.”

Daniel and Jesus are speaking of the same end, *the ending of this age*. The **END** begins with the abomination being placed in the Temple after which the 3½ year great tribulation occurs, immediately followed by the sun being darkened, the sign of Christ, and the mourning of the nations as they see Christ coming in power and glory. Then He shall send His angels to gather the elect, which is followed by the Wrath of God. (See the following chapter, The Last 3½ Years.) This shall complete the signs of His coming and the end of the age, for Christ Himself then will have come and a New Government will control earth on earth – the righteous Kingdom of God!

THE ABOMINATION

The Hebrew word for “abomination” in Daniel is *shiqqwt* or *shiqquts*, and means “disgusting, i.e. filthy; espec. idolatrous or (concr) an idol.” (Strong). The Greek word for “abomination” Jesus used is *bdelugma*, and means “a detestation, i.e. (spec.) idolatry.” (Strong). Notice: Both words connect abomination with idolatry.

In the Old Testament, idolatry, the worship of man-made idols or statues or images of some God-created thing, was, in God’s sight, one of the most abominable things Israel could do. The first two commandments of the ten were: “You shall have no other gods before me,” and, “You shall not make for yourselves an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.” The Book of Deuteronomy, especially, emphasizes the greatness of the sin of worshipping idols.

In the New Testament this same detestable sin is denounced. 1 Corinthians 6:9; Galatians 5:20; and Revelation 21:8 all say no one who is an idolater shall enter the Kingdom of God, but, rather, will be cast

into the lake of fire. Paul said, “Dearly beloved, flee from idolatry” (1 Cor. 10:14). He wrote that any wickedness, such as “immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed” “amounts to idolatry” (Col. 3:5).

God has always wanted the people whom He made in His image to love Him with their whole heart – Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:37.

This abomination that is placed in the rebuilt Jewish temple near the end of this age will bring on the Great Tribulation, which will be followed by the heavenly signs and Christ’s coming.

WHAT WILL THIS ABOMINATION BE?

It could be an idol or statue of the Beast. Rev. 13:14 and 15 speak of the second Beast (the False Prophet, see Rev.19:20) telling the people of earth to make an “image” of the Beast. Then he will have power to “give breath to the image of the beast.” This image will even “speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed.”

It could be the Antichrist himself sitting in the Temple. 2 Thess. 2:3, 4: “It (Christ’s coming) will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.” (NAS) Anthony Buzzard supports this position: “The Abomination of Desolation is a person – ‘standing where he (not it) ought not’ is the correct translation. Note “he” the participle is masculine. Certainly the Abomination of Desolation starts the trouble ‘for then shall be great tribulation.’”

Daniel’s King of the North, in 11:45, “will pitch his royal tents between the seas at the beautiful **holy** mountain” (NIV). He will also “exalt and magnify himself above every god, and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished” (v. 36). He will have the help of “a foreign god” (v. 39).

ANTIOCHUS WAS A TYPE OF ANTICHRIST

Antiochus Epiphanes, 175-164 B.C., was a type of the coming Antichrist. “He stirred up the Jews by robbing the temple and setting up a statue of Jupiter in the holy of holies. He also pulled down the walls of Jerusalem, commanded the sacrifice of swine, forbade circumcision, and destroyed all the sacred books that could be found. It was these outrages which induced the revolt of the Maccabees (1 Mac. 1:41-50)” (Davis Bible Dictionary, p. 40).

Titus was also a type of the coming Antichrist. Walvoord rightly says, “In many respects this ruler carries on a persecution of Israel and desecration of the temple similar to what was accomplished historically by Antiochus.” (*Daniel*. p. 199.)

This coming Antichrist will even “stand up against the Prince of princes” (Christ, Dan. 8:25, Rev. 17:14; 19:19). Antiochus lived long before this time. “The use of other terms such as *the end* in verses 17 and 19 (of Daniel 8), and *the last end of the indignation* in verse 19 are difficult to harmonize with Antiochus Epiphanes” (ibid).

Titus, who destroyed the city and the sanctuary in 70 A. D., did not stand up against the Prince of princes, neither was he “broken without hand” (Dan. 8:25).

CONCLUSION

We are thankful for Jesus' answer to the apostles' questions "What will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

Jesus gave a straightforward answer. After the general signs of wars, earthquakes, pestilences, and preaching the good news of the coming Kingdom of God, Jesus gave the five specific signs of the ending of this age.

He said, **1)** "When you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the Holy Place... Then there will be great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall... **2)** immediately after the tribulation... the sun will be darkened... **3)** the sign of Christ will appear in heaven, and **4)** then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory... **5)** And He will send forth His angels with a great sound of a trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds" (NAS).

Jesus' admonition then was, "Be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming" (v. 42).

How thankful we are that Jesus promised to be with us "to the end of the age." Terrible things are coming on the whole earth. But if we are in Christ we will not fear, for He will come and we will be saved. For has He not promised *Eternal Life* to His own at His coming? Then, for them, all pain, sickness, sorrow, trouble, and even Death will be gone, and a new and better life will then begin for them as Kings and Priests in God's Kingdom with Christ for 1000 years! What a glorious day that will be!

Chapter 4

THE LAST 3½ YEARS OF THIS AGE (THE GREAT TRIBULATION)

Daniel the Prophet spoke of a final “week” of seven years before everlasting righteousness would be “brought in,” or, the Kingdom of God would be established here on earth at Christ’s second coming. He is speaking of the last seven years of this “present evil age” (Gal. 1:4).

He said “the prince that is to come” “will make a firm covenant with many” (Daniel’s people, Daniel 9:27). This Antichrist, who is also called Little Horn in Daniel 7 and 8, will make a covenant with Israel for a duration of seven years. This treaty with Israel by this “prince” will begin the last seven years of this age.

Daniel then divided this week in half, showing us two periods of three and one half years in each. Nothing is mentioned about the first three and a half years. Evidently there will be no spectacular happenings. Possibly in this period the Jewish Temple will be rebuilt.

Daniel concentrates on the last three and a half years. He says, “In the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering (9:27), and “set up the abomination of desolation” (11:31). We studied this coming abomination in Chapter 3.

This same time period, described in several various ways – time, times, and half a time; in the midst of the week; 1260 days; 42 months – is predicted in eight verses in the Scriptures. They all describe the period of time Antichrist shall rule over the earth before he is destroyed by Christ at His coming. This 3½-year period is called by Jesus “the great tribulation” (Matt. 24:21).

Daniel 7:25

In this passage, Little Horn shall subdue three kings of ten. He shall speak against God. He shall wear out the saints of God. He shall change times and laws. The saints shall be given into his hand for “a time and times and the dividing of time.” Then his judgment will take place, and his dominion will end. The Kingdom of God will then be given to the people of God.

In the vision of the tree stump in Daniel 4, which referred to Nebuchadnezzar and his insanity for seven years, it says, “Let seven times pass over him,” meaning seven years. In that passage, a time would be one year, times – two years, and the dividing of time a half year, or 3½ years.

The Little Horn Antichrist shall have power for 3½ years before his dominion is taken away. Christ will then rule earth in righteousness a thousand years (Rev. 20).

Daniel 9:27

Daniel 9:24-27 speaks of 70 weeks of years. After 69 weeks of years had passed, Messiah was to be “cut off,” or, crucified. This leaves the last, or 70th week of years, or seven years. A wicked prince shall confirm a covenant with God’s people Israel for seven years, but in the midst of the week, or after 3½ years, he shall cause the sacrifice to cease and the abomination of desolation shall be placed in the Jewish Holy Place.

We have seen before, in Jesus’ statement in Matthew 24, that the abomination causing desolation was still future in Jesus’ day, and also that it will begin the Great Tribulation, which will “immediately” be followed by the darkening of the heavens and Christ’s coming.

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Daniel 12:7

After Daniel's prediction (from God) in chapters 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12 about a last day powerful wicked king called Little Horn, the last great "time of trouble," and the resurrection of the dead, one angel said to another, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?"

The answer given by God's angel was, "It shall be for a time, times, and a half." Again, we understand this refers to a time element of 3½ years.

Revelation 13:5

Revelation 13:1-10 pictures LITTLE HORN in the last days (check on him in Daniel 7 and 8). Here he is called the "Beast." This powerful "beast" Leader will have great authority, and will speak blasphemy against God and His angels. He will "make war with the saints" and "overcome them."

Power will be given him over all the world. "The dragon gave him his power, and his throne, and great authority" (v. 2). His power comes from Satan. "All who dwell on the face of the earth shall worship him, everyone whose name has not been written... in the book of the Lamb who has been slain."

He will continue 42 months (v. 5). That's 3½ years.

Who will stop him? Christ, at His coming (Rev. 14:1). This, once again, shows a 3½ year period of time just preceding Christ's return.

Revelation 11:2, 3

The "holy city" (Jerusalem) shall be trodden under foot "for forty-two months" (3½ years). In this same time period, God will give power to his two witnesses, and they shall prophesy 1,260 days – another way of saying 42 months, or, 3½ years.

Throughout the Bible, Israel's calendar was based on the moon, not on the sun, as ours is. Israel's year was based on the moon, 360 days in a year. Adding 360, 360, and 360 we get 1,080 days. Half of 360 is 180. Add 180 to 1,080 and the answer is 1,260 days, or 3½ years.

These witnesses for God shall use God's power "to shut up the sky, in order that rain may not fall during the days of their prophesying." "And they have power over the waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they desire."

Notice that God's two witnesses ("two prophets," v. 10) preach in a 3½-year period of time, the same time that Jerusalem shall be trodden under foot. They will be killed by the beast, but then they will be resurrected. This will complete the "second woe," which we will study later (chapter 12 of this book).

So we see this event predicted in this passage will happen in the ending of this age.

Revelation 12:6, 14

In this chapter, the great red dragon is the enemy of a woman who brought forth a man child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. This child was caught up to God and to His throne. This is describing our Lord, Jesus Christ. The woman that brought forth Christ was Israel.

In this last great persecution of Israel (Jacob's time of trouble, Jer. 30:7), "the woman fled into the wilderness where she has a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days," or 3½ years. The fourteenth verse expresses this time as "a time, and times, and half a time."

This means to this writer that the remnant of Israel will be sheltered by God from complete annihilation in the last 3½ years. Remember, this will be a time of trouble such as the world has never seen (Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21). Then Daniel says, "At that time thy people shall be delivered," and he immediately speaks of the resurrecting of the dead, which we know will occur at Christ's second coming (1 Thess. 4:16, 17).

Matthew 24:22

Matthew 24:22 states, "If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect, those days will be shortened."

Some believe Matthew 24:22 suggests that saints will not have to endure the whole 3½ year Great Tribulation, but will be raptured out early. I have come to believe this may not be the case. There are several passages that specifically say that the tribulation will last three and one half years:

Daniel 7:25 says, "The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times, and half a time."

Daniel 12:7 says, "...It will be for a time, times, and half a time. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed."

Rev 12: 6 Says that, "The woman fled into the desert to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days. Rev 12:14 says that, "The woman was given the two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to the place prepared for her in the desert, where she would be taken care of for a time, times, and half a time, out of the serpent's reach." This shows that the time, times, and half a time are 1260 days. Rev 12:17 says "Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring -- those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus. This suggests to me that Satan will make war on Christians for 1260 days.

Rev 13:5 says "The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for 42 months." Verse 7 says, "He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them." This verse, coupled with Daniel 12:7 lead me to believe the beast will make war against the saints for the whole 42 months, until their power is finally broken, then everything will end.

Because these above-mentioned passages all suggest that the saints will endure tribulation for 1260 days, I believe Matthew 24:22, means that if the Great Tribulation were not stopped after three and one half years, no one on earth would survive. But because of the elect, Jesus will stop this insanity short of destroying everyone on earth. Based upon these other scriptures, it appears to me that Jesus will stop it after 1260 days -- 42 months -- 3½ years.

Conclusion

By studying these passages and their time period carefully, we have to conclude that the last 3½ years will be that period of time Jesus called the Great Tribulation. During it, Little Horn will have power over the saints and destroy them; and the whole world will have trouble like it has never seen before. This will occur just before Christ returns.

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Chapter 5

THE COMING OF ELIJAH

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD... he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.” (Malachi 4:5, 6.)

“Jewish theology is replete with teaching that Elijah must appear to herald the coming of Messiah... These verses have been a cornerstone of Jewish theology for unnumbered centuries. Year after year, beginning on the fourteenth day of the Jewish month Nisan (corresponding to March/April) Jewish people the world over celebrate the feast of Passover. During this dinner (called the Seder) on the first evening of the feast, the story of the Egyptian exodus is recounted. The prophet Elijah plays a prominent role in the festivities. A place setting is set for Elijah. A chair is kept vacant. A cup larger and more ornate than the others, called “the cup of Elijah,” is placed before his setting. At one point in the ceremony, a youngster is sent to open the door with the great expectancy that Elijah will enter, sit down, drink from the cup, and announce that the Messiah is coming” (Marvin Rosenthal, *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church*, p. 157).

The prophet Malachi states clearly that the prophet Elijah shall come before the Day of the Lord (’s Wrath) begins.

Two Different Prophecies

There are two different prophecies involved in our study. One concerns John the Baptist coming to announce Christ at Christ’s **first** appearance. The other concerns someone called Elijah prophesying before “the Day of the LORD,” which will take place **in the end-time** AFTER the darkening of the sun (Joel 2:31; Matt. 24:29) **just before** Christ’s **second** coming. The prophecies are some 2000 years apart.

Matthew and Luke point out that John Baptist fulfilled Isaiah’s prophecy that one would come “crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord” (Matt. 3:1-12; Luke 3:2-17). Now Jesus used the end-time prophecy of Malachi 3:1-4: “Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me,” of John, **but** it was based on Israel’s acceptance of Christ – “If you will receive it, this is Elias, which was to come” (Matt. 11:7-14). Since Israel’s leaders did not accept this, the prophecy was not completely fulfilled. Jesus was not the Judge of all men at His first coming.

The Malachi 4 prophecy of Judgment at the “great and dreadful day of the LORD” has yet to be fulfilled, for the Day of the LORD will occur in connection with the darkening of the sun, as Isaiah 13:6-13 informs us.

The Jews asked John the Baptist who he was. He told them he was not the Christ. Then they asked him, “Are you Elijah?” He told them No he was not. A little later they asked him why he was baptizing, if he was not Christ, or Elijah, or the prophet (John 1:19-27). He answered that another man was coming after him whose shoe he was not worthy to loose, that he, John, was the one about whom Isaiah spoke in Isaiah 40:3, the voice crying in the wilderness who was to make straight the way of the Lord.

In this passage it is clear the Jews were looking for Elijah to come before the Messiah came.

Jesus, in a discussion with the Jews about who John the Baptist was, said that John was Elijah, if they would accept it (Matthew 11:7-15). But of course the Jews did not accept the fact that Jesus was the Messiah and the “Sun of righteousness” that would come with “healing in his wings” about whom Malachi spoke three verses before he said Elijah would come (Mal. 4:2). And therefore they would not recognize that John could have fulfilled that prophecy. Though the “kingdom was at hand” (Mark 1:14, 15) because

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the Messiah was present, the Kingdom of God could not begin then because the Jews would not accept it. The prophecy of Elijah coming before the Day of the Lord is still unfulfilled. But God's Word is sure. Elijah the prophet SHALL COME before Christ comes the second time.

When Jesus asked the apostles who men thought He was, they answered that some thought He was John the Baptist, some thought He was Elijah, or Jeremiah, or one of the prophets (Matthew 16:13,14). Some of the Jews thought Jesus was Elijah to come.

In the transfiguration vision, when Christ appeared in power and glory as He will at His second coming, there appeared with him in the vision Elijah and Moses (Mark 9:1-7). Later, they asked him why the scribes said Elijah should come first (v. 11). He answered that it was true; Elijah must come and restore all things (v. 12). Then He said again that Elijah had come (John the Baptist) and "they did to him whatever they wished, just as it is written of him" (v. 13). So we see again Malachi's prediction about Elijah coming before Christ comes was not fulfilled then. It remains to be fulfilled.

When Jesus on the cross cried out, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" ("My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?") some of the Jews mistakenly thought Jesus was calling for Elijah, and some of them said in derision, "Let us see whether Elijah will come to save him" (Matthew 27:49).

Revelation 11 says that God's two witnesses (called two prophets, v. 10) shall prophesy 1260 days, 3½ years) at the same time the nations shall tread Jerusalem under foot for 42 months (3½) years) before Christ comes. Who will these two witnesses be?

Evidence from the transfiguration vision and Malachi's prophecy suggest that they may be Elijah and Moses. What will these two prophets do? They will have power to shut up the sky that it rain not for 3½ years (v. 6), something that Elijah did (2 Kings 1:8-15).

They will also have power to turn waters into blood and smite the earth with every plague, something that Moses did (Exodus 7:17-12:30). The death and burial of both these men was unusual. Elijah ascended by a whirlwind up to heaven (2 Kings 2:1, 11). Moses was buried by the LORD God Himself (Deut. 34:5-12). This last passage says plainly there was never a prophet in Israel like Moses, who knew the LORD face to face.

These two prophets yet to come during the time of the Great Tribulation (which we have seen will be 3½ years long) will be mortal men, for they shall be killed (Rev. 11:7-10), then resurrected, which will cause great fear upon all who see this.

Elijah is to come before the Day of the Lord's wrath, which will occur after the darkening of the sun (Joel 2:30-31). Jesus also mentioned this darkening of the sun before His second coming (Matt. 24:29-31).

To this writer it seems possible that Elijah and Moses could be God's two witnesses (prophets) witnessing for Him during the last 3½ years before Christ comes. Or, it is also possible that these two witnesses may be two spirit-filled Jews that live in the end-time.

The Day of the LORD's wrath is preceded by the darkening of the sun (Joel 2:30, 31). That's when God's wrath on the sin of the world begins. Elijah is to come before that Wrath begins.

Chapter 6

THE DAY OF THE LORD

This phrase **The Day of the LORD** describes a short period of time after Christ raises and changes His saints, in which God, through Christ, shall bring His wrath on sinners. God's holiness requires that sinners be judged and punished. This is one of the most important doctrines in the Bible: the Judgment Day – the time when God's wrath will be poured out on sinners. True believers will not suffer the wrath of God (1 Thess. 5:9: "God has not destined us [those who believe and obey] for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through Jesus Christ.") Psalm 1 points out this about the wicked: "The wicked will not stand in the judgment... the way of the wicked shall perish."

God's salvation plan requires that each person be recompensed "according to his deeds" (Matt. 16:27). Those who accept Christ as Savior will receive Eternal Life (John 6:40). The destiny of unbelievers is death in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:15). This great sobering fact should motivate every person to "seek **FIRST** the Kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matt. 6:33). Today is the day of salvation (2 Cor. 6:2).

There are a few places in the Old Testament where the phrase "Day of the LORD" refers to God's judgment back then on some nations for their wickedness. (LORD in all capital letters in the Old Testament always means Jehovah.) But these verses which follow show that the **MAIN** Day of the LORD's anger will take place **AFTER** Christ comes back and the resurrection takes place.) The destruction of life by the flood, and the destruction of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim were judgments from God, but they were not THE Day of the LORD which eight prophets predict will come at the end of this age.

Here is what the Bible says about The Day of the LORD:

Isaiah 2:11, 12. "The LORD of hosts will have a day of reckoning against everyone who is proud and lofty, and against everyone who is lifted up." (See also verses 17-21.)

Isaiah 13:6-13. "Wail, for the day of the LORD is near! It will come as a destruction from the Almighty... the day of the LORD is coming, cruel with fury and burning anger, to make the land a desolation; and He will exterminate sinners from it. For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash forth their light: the sun shall be dark... and the moon will not shed its light. Thus will I punish the world for its evil."

Isaiah 34:1-8. "It is the day of the LORD'S vengeance."

Joel 1:15. "Alas for the day! For the day of the LORD is near. And it will come as a destruction from the Almighty."

Joel 2:1, 2, 11. "Sound an alarm on my holy mountain! Let the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming... a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness."

Joel 3. "I will gather all the nations, and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. Then I will enter into judgment with them there... Let the nations be aroused and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there will I sit to judge all the surrounding nations. Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, tread, for the wine press is full; the vats overflow, for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon grow dark..."

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Zephaniah 1. “Be silent before the LORD GOD! For the day of the LORD is near, for the LORD has prepared a sacrifice... a day of wrath... a day of trouble and distress, a day of destruction and desolation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet and battle cry...

“I will bring distress upon men... because they have sinned against the LORD; and their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung... All the earth will be devoured in the fire of His jealousy.”

Zephaniah 2. “Before the burning anger of the LORD comes upon you, before the day of the LORD’s anger comes upon you, seek the LORD... perhaps you will be hidden in the day of the LORD’s anger.”

Zephaniah 3. “My decision is to gather nations, to assemble kingdoms, to pour out on them my indignation, all my burning anger.”

Zechariah 14. “I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished... Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle... It will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts...”

1 Thessalonians 5:2, 3. “The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. While they are saying, ‘Peace and safety!’ then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.”

2 Thessalonians 2. “The day of the Lord... it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.”

2 Peter 3:10-13. “The day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar... What sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed with burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”

Revelation 16:14, 16. “They are the spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty... They gathered them together to the place which in the Hebrew is called Har-Mageddon.”

Revelation 19:11-21. “I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and makes war... His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems... He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God...

“From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty... and on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS...”

“And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse, and against His army. And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast... these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone... and the rest were killed with

the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat upon the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.”

Conclusions

The Day of the LORD will be

1. A time when the LORD punishes the world for its evilness (Isa. 13:6-13).
2. The time of Jehovah’s vengeance (Isa. 34:1-8).
3. A time when God will gather the nations to the valley of Jehoshaphat for Judgment (Joel 3).
4. A time of the LORD’s burning anger (Book of Zephaniah).
5. A time of sudden destruction for the wicked (1 Thess. 5:2, 3).
6. A time of fire from the LORD (2 Thess. 1:6-10; Heb. 10:27; 12:29; 2 Pet. 3:7; Rev. 21:8).
7. A time when the LORD will “shake terribly the earth” (Isa. 2:19-21).
8. A time when Jehovah “exterminates sinners” from the earth (Isa. 13:9).

Jesus Christ Will Be the JUDGE

Jehovah has ordained that His Son oversee the judgment (John 5:21-23). The reason for this is “that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.” God “has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead” (Acts 17:31).

Matthew 25:31-46 is a picture of Christ coming, sitting on His throne of judgment, and gathering all nations before Him for judgment. The prize for those on His right hand will be, “Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom.” The recompense for those on His left hand will be, “Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels.” This “eternal fire” is called the “lake of fire” in Revelation 20:15, and is said to cause Death, the “second death.”

Christ will also delegate to His newly resurrected saints authority to execute the Judgment with Him.

Jesus Himself said that “he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him will I give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron... as I also have received authority from My Father” (Rev. 2:26, 27).

Not only will the Righteous rule and reign with Christ as Kings and Priests (Rev. 20:6) over the earth but according to God’s prophet David, they will help their Lord to “execute judgment.” “Let the godly ones exult in glory; let them sing for joy upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand, to execute vengeance on the nations, and punishment on the peoples; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written; this is an honor for all His godly ones.” (Psa. 149:5-9)

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 6:2 “Do you not know the saints shall judge the world?”

So we see Christ’s people assisting Him in earth’s judgment. That this will be their first assignment after their resurrection or change (if living) to Eternal Life seems evident from Revelation 20:4: “I saw thrones, and they (the saints) sat on them, and judgment was given to them.” This is evidently the beginning of the 1000-year reign of Christ and His people – the Day of the LORD judgment. This is supported by Revelation 11:15-18. The sounding of the 7th trumpet summarizes the events coming: the Kingdom has come, “the nations were enraged, and Thy wrath came (is come, KJ), and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to Thy bond-servants the prophets and to the saints and to those who fear Thy name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth.”

WHEN Will This Day of the LORD’s Judgment Begin?

THE END TIMES TIME LINE

Joel said it would begin after the darkening of the sun (2:31). Isaiah supported this (Isa. 13:6-13).

Jesus said the darkening of the sun would occur after the Great Tribulation (which is the last half of Daniel's 70th week.) David said it would be after the godly ones were "in glory," or had the glory of God (Psa. 149:5-9). So the Day of the LORD will begin just after Christ sends His angels to gather the Elect (First Resurrection).

It will begin at the same time Jesus comes and transforms His saints. This is Jesus' teaching in Luke 17:26-30. "On the very same day" that Noah entered the ark "the flood came and destroyed them all. (Gen. 7:13).

"On the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. It will be just the same on the day that the Son of man is revealed."

As Marvin Rosenthal has said, "Deliverance of the righteous immediately precedes the judgment of the wicked."

This is the plain teaching of Paul in 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10. He speaks of God's righteous judgment: that the faithful would be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, while those who do not know God or obey the gospel of Jesus "will pay the penalty of eternal destruction" "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire." The "brethren" will be given "relief," while the Lord shall deal out "retribution" to unbelievers. Then to make sure his readers will fully understand, Paul says these two destinies will take place "when He (Christ) comes to be glorified in His saints in that day."

Once again we see the rewarding of the righteous and the destruction of the living active wicked at the coming of Christ. The dead wicked will not rise for judgment until after the 1,000-year reign (Rev. 20:5, 12-15).

In the parable of the wheat and tares in Matthew 13:24-30, when the apostles asked if they should gather up the tares, Jesus said, "No, lest while you are gathering up the tares, you may root up the wheat with them. Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, 'First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up, but gather the wheat into my barn.'" Jesus will reward both tares and wheat at His coming.

The same thing is taught in the parable of the net cast into the sea in Matthew 13:47-50. The net was cast into the sea and gathered every kind of fish, good and bad. The good fish were saved, but the bad fish were cast away. In His interpretation of this parable Jesus said, "So will it be at the end of the age; the angels shall come forth, and take out the wicked from among the righteous, and will cast them into the furnace of fire."

Angels will be used to gather the elect (Matthew 24:31), and will also be used to gather together the wicked (Matthew 13:41, 49).

Jesus explained in Matthew 16:27 that He "the Son of man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and will then recompense every man according to his works."

In Revelation 19, the rapture – the marriage of the Lamb with His wife (the saints) – takes place just before Christ captures the beast and false prophet and casts them into the lake of fire.

The Lake of Fire is at the Beginning of the 1000-year reign of Christ, and also at the End.

Revelation 19:19-21 bears this out. The beast and false prophet shall be seized by Christ at His coming and cast at that time into the lake of fire.

At the end of the 1000-year reign of Christ, the rest of the dead, not raised in the first resurrection (the one to Eternal Life), will be raised, and if their names are not in the Book of Life, they will be cast then into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:5,12-15). This indicates to this writer that the lake of fire will be in existence at both the beginning and the end of the thousand-year reign.

Thus we see the Bible teaches these two times of judgment and annihilation for the wicked: one at the Judgment of the living wicked at Christ's coming; the other of the dead wicked after Christ's 1000-year reign of righteousness at the second resurrection.

We Can Escape the Second Death by Accepting the Gospel as Jesus Preached It
And by Obeying Him (Mark 1:14, 15; Heb. 5:9)

We shall all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10), but our judgment can be decided today, according to 1 Timothy 5:24: "The sins of some men are quite evident, going before them to judgment; for others, their sins follow after." When we accept Christ and His gospel of the Kingdom we do "not come into judgment," but pass "out of death into life" (John 5:24). Why? Because when we accept Him, we are redeemed by His blood, and our sins are forgiven (Eph. 1:7). If we have no sin counted against us, our names will be found in the Book of Life, and we will take part in the First Resurrection, the one to Eternal life. This is in contrast to the Second Resurrection, where those not found written in the Book of Life will suffer the "second death" by fire.

We all will die the first death because of Adam's sin (1 Cor. 15:21, 22; Heb. 9:27; Rom. 5:12). The second death (eternal destruction, 2 Thess. 1:9) will come to those whose sins have not been forgiven (Rom. 6:23). These will pay for their unforgiven sins by their own death in the fire. We see how imperative it is, then, to have our sins covered by the sacrifice of Christ, which covers the sins of those who believe (1 John 1:7; Heb. 10:10-14).

Now we must go to the Book of Revelation to see the details of the Day of the LORD. You know its writer, John, said he was "in the Spirit on ("= in Gk *en*,") THE LORD'S DAY (1:10). The Lord's day = the day of the Lord (Isa. 2:12, etc.), the Heb. terms for which are equivalent to the Greek *he kuriake Hemera*, the Lord's day. Occ. 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Thess. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:10. Not our Sunday." – Bullinger's Companion Bible.

THE END TIMES TIME LINE

Chapter 7

REVELATION

The Introduction, Chapters 1-5

Since John the apostle was in the Spirit **in the Lord's day** (Rev. 1:10), we can expect to learn great details concerning happenings *before, during, and after* the Day of the LORD in this Book of Revelation.

Almighty God gave this revelation to His Son Jesus Who, in turn, gave it to John to record for the servants of God and of Christ. It is called "the revelation of Jesus Christ." The purpose is "to show to His bond-servants the things which must shortly (or, quickly) take place" (Rev. 1:1). Christ "signified it" to John, or revealed it through symbols and words.

"Shortly"

This word *shortly* (Gk. *en tachei*) means a quick space of time, and is translated *quickly* and *shortly*. The meaning is that these events will happen quickly, that when these things begin to happen, they will be completed quickly. Zephaniah 1:14 speaks of the day of the LORD hastening greatly (KJ) or, "coming very quickly" (NAS). Romans 9:28 says, "A short work will the Lord make upon the earth." Same verse in New American Standard: "The LORD will execute His word upon the earth, thoroughly and quickly." Isaiah said, "I have heard from the LORD GOD of hosts, of decisive destruction on all the earth" (28:22).

Evidently this Day of Judgment at Christ's coming will not take a long time, but a short time. When the judgments and vials of wrath begin, they will soon be completed. They are immediately followed by Christ's 1000- year reign over earth (ch. 20).

If there is a book of the Bible given us by our Lord Himself, it is the Book of Revelation.

The Title

Notice the title. It is "the Revelation of," not the concealment of Jesus Christ and His message for us of future happenings. Observe this, for many say Revelation is a book of mysteries, that it cannot be understood, that God never intended for people to understand it. The title refutes this view. So also do the next words that God gave it to Christ "to show to His servants." Therefore we cannot defend our ignorance of this book by saying it cannot be understood.

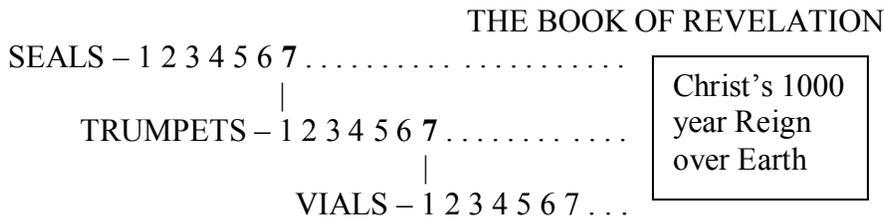
Further, rather than God telling us it is useless to read it, He pronounces a special blessing on all who do so. "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear (listen to) the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it" (1:3).

Remember that back in Daniel's day, when speaking about these same things contained in Revelation, God told Daniel to "seal the book, even to the time of the end" (12:4). But here in Revelation God says, "seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand" (22:10).

Revelation, then, is a book that can be understood. But to do so we must pay attention to its main outline: **the seven-sealed book, which is the very heart of the Revelation of Christ** (chap. 6-19, which tell of events before and during the day of the LORD).

THE END TIMES TIME LINE

We might write it this way:



Introduction

John is writing to these particular seven churches that were located in the Roman province of Asia: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea. But the book is also for all the servants of God, especially those who would be living in the days of its fulfillment near the coming of Christ.

The customary invocation of Paul in his letters of “grace and peace to you” from God and His Son is used here by John (1:4).

The salutation then centers on our Lord Jesus Christ – what He has done for us, and what He will do in the future. He is:

The faithful witness

The firstborn of the dead, and the (future) ruler of the kings of the earth

The One Who loved us, washed us by His blood, and promised us kingship and priesthood

To Him be glory and dominion forever!

We can see immediately that Revelation is about JESUS and His establishing the KINGDOM OF GOD on earth at His coming.

“Behold, He is coming,” and “every eye shall see Him,” even those who crucified Him.

“And all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him” (1:7).

Now John gives the setting of this wonderful story. He was on the island of Patmos (exiled). He was in the Spirit on (Gk – in) “the LORD’s Day,” (not Sunday). This is speaking of “the day of the LORD” that we have observed in the last chapter.

He hears behind him a great voice like a trumpet. He turns and sees seven golden candlesticks. These candlesticks are explained to be “the seven churches” (v. 20). In the midst of these he beholds the FIRST GREAT VISION of the Revelation. It is a picture of

The Christ of the Revelation

Immediately our thoughts go back to this “Son of man” Whom God gave to save earth. We think of His special birth and His youth, His obscure young manhood, His pure life, His teachings, His rejection, His sufferings, His shameful death at the hands of evil and wicked men.

And it is good for our minds to dwell long on the Christ Who paid the price for our sins. But in this Revelation vision we see the picture of *Christ as He is today*. It is the Christ Who sits at God’s right hand in glory. This is the coming Christ. This is the Christ of whom we should think as we wait and watch for His Coming.

Notice now, how “the Spirit ransacks the realm of nature for symbols that might convey some faint conception to our dull and finite minds of the glory, splendor, and majesty of this Coming One, Who is the Christ of Revelation” (James H. McConkey).

He was dressed like a priest.
His hair was as white as snow.
His eyes were like flashes of fire.
His feet were glowing like polished brass.
His voice was as the roar of many rushing rivers. (1:13-15)

No wonder John, who used to lean on Jesus' breast, "fell at His feet as a dead man," when He saw Christ as He is now and as He will come back to earth!

All the way through Revelation this Christ Whom we meet is a Christ of *majesty, kingship, power, and great glory!*

Now, at the word of the Lord, John records the first message of the Book. It is the message to

The Seven Churches of Revelation

All these churches existed in John's day and churches like these will exist in the day of the LORD, for Revelation is a book about events surrounding the day of the LORD.

To each of them was sent a definite message from the Lord Himself, for the all-seeing Christ stands in the midst of the churches! "In the middle of the lampstands one like a son of man" (1:13).

This is what John saw: Christ in the midst of the churches! The One with "eyes like... fire" intently scrutinizes each one. His piercing gaze sees them as they really are. Nothing is hid from Him. He sees their faults, lacks, lukewarmness, backslidings, coldness, and indifference.

He sees also their measure of faith, their goodness, and their loyalty to Him and His commands.

And here, after searching their very hearts He pronounces His verdict. His message is a two-fold one of rebuke and commendation. He finds in them shortcomings and overcomings. Note

The Shortcomings

Ephesus – left her first love (2:4)
Smyrna – troubles with hypocrites (2:9)
Pergamos – holders of false doctrines (2:14, 15)
Thyatira – suffering from corrupt teachers (2:20)
Sardis – spiritual deadness (3:1)
Philadelphia – a little strength (3:8)
Laodicea – spiritual lukewarmness (3:16)

Even Philadelphia, the best of them, had only "a little strength." But notice, too, what wonderful blessings the Christ promises for all who overcome in His church.

The Overcomers' Coming Rewards

Ephesus – they shall eat of the tree of life (2:7)
Smyrna – they shall not be hurt of the second death (2:11)
Pergamos – they shall eat of the hidden manna (2:17)
Thyatira – they shall rule the nations (2:26)
Sardis – they shall be clothed in white raiment (3:5)
Philadelphia – they shall be pillars in God's temple (3:12)
Laodicea – they shall sit with Christ on His throne (3:21)

These Churches –
A Type of Christ’s Complete Church

These seven churches appear to be a type of the whole church Christ is building. The very number of them suggests this. Seven in Scripture is the perfect number, signifying perfection, fullness, and completion.

Also note the space given them in the Book of Revelation – two chapters. Even the Millennium is condensed into only one chapter. These messages must be very important for our salvation!

Again, note that the Book is written to all the “servants” of God (1:1). Therefore the scope runs from those churches through the centuries to the churches existing just prior to Christ’s return.

The SECOND GREAT VISION:
God on His Throne
With a BOOK in His Hand!

The scene changes. John sees another vision. In the spirit he is transported into heaven and sees ALMIGHTY GOD seated in all His glory upon His throne, receiving honor from all the heavenly creatures (Rev. 4).

“Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they existed, and were created.”

God’s Appearance

“He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne like an emerald in appearance” (4:3).

Ezekiel saw a similar vision of God (Ezek. 1). “I noticed from the appearance of His loins and upward something like glowing metal that looked like fire all around within it, and from the appearance of His loins and downward I saw something like fire; and there was a radiance around Him. As the appearance of the rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the surrounding radiance. **Such was the appearance of the likeness of the Glory of the LORD**” (Ezek. 1:27, 28).

Twenty-four Elders

Around God’s throne were 24 thrones, and seated upon them were 24 Elders, clothed in white with golden crowns on their heads. Are they men or celestial beings? As to them being men, Jesus said, “No man hath ascended up to heaven” (Jn. 3:13). In Revelation 5:8-10 we see the elders singing a new song about how Christ purchased men, made them to be a kingdom and priests, and they will reign on earth. In that passage the elders are singing about someone else – redeemed men, hence it seems clear they are celestial beings in God’s court. “We may properly conclude that these elders are angels” (Tim LaHaye, *Revelation*, p. 81).

The Seven Spirits of God

These apparently refer to the seven characteristics of the Holy Spirit, revealed by Isaiah (11:2) as being:

1. the Spirit of the LORD
2. the Spirit of wisdom
3. the Spirit of understanding
4. the Spirit of counsel
5. the Spirit of might
6. the Spirit of knowledge
7. the Spirit of the fear of the LORD

The Sea of Glass

“And before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal.” This appears to be a foundation under the throne of God. This platform on which the throne of God sits is called in Ezekiel 1:22, 23, 25, and 26 the “firmament” (KJ, Amplified Bible, Douay, and Smith and Goodspeed), “expanse” (NAS and Young), “vault” (New English, Moffatt, Leeser), and “dome” (Good News Bible).

The Four Living Creatures

“In the center and around the throne, four living creatures... the first... like a lion... the second like a calf... the third had a face like that of a man, and the fourth... like a flying eagle” (4:6, 7).

It is unfortunate that the King James translates this Greek word *zoogoneo* as “beast,” for it means “living creature.” These are not base animals, but the cherubim that carry God’s throne like lightning wherever He wants to go (Ezek. 1:12-20). God visits earth (Ezek. 1:19). Ezekiel calls them “living beings” having “human form” (1:5) and says in chapter 10:20, “This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel by the river of Chebar; and I knew they were the cherubim.” Ezekiel 1:6 adds that these cherubim have 4 wings. The seraphim, however, have 6 wings (Isa. 6:2; Rev. 4:8), and appear to hover over God’s throne (Isa. 6:2), crying out continually, “

“Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts. The whole earth is full of His glory.”

The sea of glass rests on the heads of the cherubim. The throne of God rests on the transparent sea of glass. God sits on the throne (all this from Ezekiel). The seraphim hover over Him (Isaiah). Hundreds of millions of angels surround Him (Rev. 5:11). What an awe-inspiring and marvelous picture! This is our GOD! How awesome! How magnificent!

This is the ONE Who created us “for His pleasure” (Rev. 4:11, KJ). This is the ALMIGHTY Who has mercy on all those who love and obey Him!

In Rev. chapter 5 we see that as mighty as these orders of celestial beings are, none of them were able to redeem fallen man. It took a sinless man, even the SON OF GOD, to be the sacrifice that would take from believing men the penalty of the second death. Christ’s place in God’s plan is far above, higher, than any of these wonderful angelic beings! (Heb. 1:4-9).

Revelation Five
And in God's right hand there was a sealed Book!

After John sees the vision of God on His throne, his gaze fastens on an object in God's right hand, a scroll with seven seals. Although the word "book" is used, we must remember that there were no hard-backed books in John's time. In those days and in Old Testament days "all books were scrolls of either papyrus or vellum" (La Haye).

John noticed three things about this scroll: it was in God's right hand, it was written on both sides, and it was closed with seven seals.

The unsealing of the Sealed Book in God's hand by our Lord Jesus Christ is the very heart of the Book of Revelation. Notice the outline on page 43 of this chapter.

A seal may be a sign of authority, or it may also be used to conceal and safeguard the contents of a written document. We seal a letter for that purpose. In prophecy God used the Seal in exactly the same way. As we have already noticed, God asked Daniel to seal the prophecies made to him (until the end), while to John, God said, "Seal not the book" (22:10).

Here we have a quandary. God's prophecies have been sealed these many years. But now in the end of the age He wants them known. Yet who is there who can open this sealed book? There seems to be no one who can do so. John wept "greatly" until one told him,

"Stop weeping: Behold the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals" (5:5).

Then John beheld Christ again, this time as a Slain Lamb, with all the power of God! He came and took the book out of the right hand of the One on the throne (God). The heavenly ones rejoiced at this, singing, "Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to break its seals, for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God by Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. And Thou hast made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon earth" (5:9, 10).

Then, the hundreds of millions of angels (5:11) praised the glorious Christ, shouting loudly, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing" (5:12).

Notice how the Glorified JESUS is focused upon by the heavenly realm? HE is the One Who will open this book, for only HE is "worthy" to do so. HE is the One Who has elsewhere already given us the clue to the meaning of the seals. HE is the One Whom God will soon send from heaven to bring about the Restoration of all things God has promised to restore, in the messages of the prophets (Acts 3:19-21).

The first five chapters are clearly introductory to the great message of Revelation: The Seven Seals, the Seven Trumpets, and the Seven Final Vials of God's wrath before the establishment of The Kingdom of God upon earth.

They are the prelude for the opening of the book by Jesus Christ.

"They are the majestic avenue up which the mind of the reader travels until he stands before the Christ-opened portals of the Seals" (*The Book of Revelation*, 1921, by James H. McConkey, p. 15).

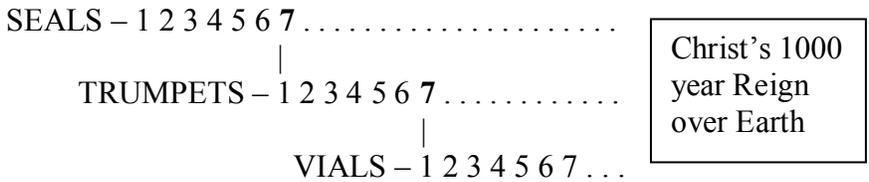
We have now reached the Sealed Book, the heart of the Book of Revelation. Let us go to the opening of the seals of that book by our Lord Jesus Christ in Revelation 6.

Chapter 8

The First Six Seals of Revelation
Revelation 6

Again, remember Revelation’s main outline:

THE SEVEN-SEALED BOOK –
THE VERY HEART OF THE REVELATION OF CHRIST



Christ Opens Six Seals

It is now time for prophecy to be unsealed, to be known and understood. In Revelation 6, Christ opens six of the seven seals. What do we see?

1. A White horse. Rider has bow and crown, goes out conquering.
2. A Red horse. Rider with great sword takes peace from the earth.
3. A Black horse. Rider has scales, is measuring food. Food scarce.
4. A Pale horse. Rider’s name is Death. Death for one fourth of the earth by four means: sword, famine, pestilence, and the wild beasts of the earth. (See Ezek. 14:21; Jer. 24:10).
5. 5th seal opened: Martyrs slain for God up to this time are to rest (in death) until the last martyrs are killed.
6. 6th seal: Great earthquake over earth. Sun black, heaven departs. (KJ)

What is the meaning of all this? Are our minds to mill about in confusion as to what God through Christ is saying to us? **No, for God desires that we understand what He is saying to us.** We have already seen that.

Where, then, shall we turn to find someone to explain this sealed book to us, this book which is now unsealed – and what is its meaning?

Is there any better One to which to turn than to our Lord Jesus Christ Himself? But has He said anything like this before in any other place in the Bible? Can some other sermon He gave help us? The answer is a resounding YES! (Praise God!) His spirit will guide us into all truth (John 16:13). We can see what is in store for earth and its inhabitants!

It is in Matthew 24; Mark 13, and Luke 21. You remember the story – Jesus’ disciples had been showing Him the greatness of the Temple. To this Jesus quietly replied:

“There shall not be left here one stone standing upon another that shall not be thrown down” (Matt. 24:2, KJ).

THE END TIMES TIME LINE

They must have been amazed and perplexed. I imagine they said to one another, “When we go up to the Mount of Olives we will ask Him what He means by this strange remark.” So when they had climbed the Mount and the Master was seated, they asked Him:

“Tell us, when shall these things be?”

“And what shall be the sign of Thy coming and of the end of the age?”

Note that they asked Him a double question. First, “When shall these things be?” They meant the downfall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple. This disaster occurred within 50 years.

Second, they asked Him, “What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the age?” These are dual events which have not yet taken place, separated from the first catastrophe by about 2000 years.

Thus Jesus’ answer covers events occupying many centuries, from the events surrounding Jerusalem’s fall to His second coming.

In His answer to their second question, as we noted in Chapter 2 of this book, He tells them of general signs to come that have occurred through these centuries, and of specific signs very near the end of this “present evil age.”

Revelation also encompasses this same period of time, from the seven churches then in existence 2000 years ago to the church at the end of this age. The Seals of the BOOK in Revelation also refer to general conditions and specific conditions. The first obvious similarity we see between the Seals of Revelation and Matthew 24 is **the darkening of the sun** (Rev. 6:12; Matt. 24:29).

The darkening of the sun under the sixth seal corresponds to the darkening of the sun immediately after the Great Tribulation in Matthew 24.

Now let’s go back to what Jesus said first in Matthew 24 and review very briefly these general conditions that have occurred throughout the last 20 centuries. There is no specific “age” for each one of these happenings. Jesus foretold that all these things would happen throughout the ages before the final “End” came.

General Conditions (Matthew 24)

1. Many deceivers, but the true gospel would be preached in all the world. 4, 5, 14.
 2. Wars. 6, 7.
 3. Famines. 7
 4. Pestilences and earthquakes. 7 (and Luke 21:11).
- Then Jesus’ comment: “But the end is not yet.” 6.
“All these are the beginning of sorrows.” 8.

But when these conditions have been fulfilled, Jesus said,

“Then shall the end come” (Matt. 24:14).

Now let’s briefly review the specific events that Jesus said would occur that would cause this age to end. Jesus has given the key. He said, “When you see the abomination standing in the holy place...” This is the key to the beginning of the END. When we see the Great Abomination placed in the Jewish Temple, the END will *begin*.

Specific Events (Matthew 24)

1. Abomination of Desolation and Great Tribulation. 15, 21.
2. Darkening of the sun. 29.
3. Sign of Christ. 30.
4. Christ descends in Glory. 30.
5. Christ gathers His people. 31.

Notice how Matthew 24 and the Seals of Revelation 6 say the same thing.

<p>MATTHEW (General Signs)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deceivers (but True Gospel preached) 2. War 3. Famine. 4. Pestilence (Death) <p>(Specific Signs)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Abomination in Temple, Great Tribulation 2. Signs in the sun. 3. 2nd Coming of Christ 	<p>THE SEALS (General Signs)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deceivers 2. War 3. Famine 4. Death (Pestilence) <p>(Specific Signs)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Great Tribulation. 2. Signs in the sun. 3. 2nd Coming of Christ
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Let's go back to Christ opening the six seals and compare them to Matthew 24.

1. A White horse. Rider has bow and crown, goes forth conquering. Not Christ Himself, but deceivers going throughout earth. Some would say this is the Gospel going forth, but Jesus said in Matthew 24 that deceivers would come.
2. A Red horse. Rider with great sword takes peace from the earth. (War)
3. A Black horse. Rider has scales, is measuring food. Food scarce. (Famine)
4. A Pale horse. Rider's name is Death. John: Death for one fourth of the earth by four means: sword, famine, pestilence, and the wild beasts of the earth (See Ezek. 14:21; Jer. 24:10. Jesus spoke of death, pestilences, earthquakes (Matt. 24:7-9; Luke 21:11).
5. 5th seal opened: Martyrs slain for God up to this time are to rest (in death) until the last martyrs are killed. (Great Tribulation)
6. 6th seal: Great earthquakes over earth. Sun darkened.

The first four seals deal with the General Signs Jesus gave in Matthew 24, while the 5th seal describes the Great Tribulation. Seal 5 is followed by Seal 6, the darkening of the sun, mentioned in Matthew 24 as coming **after** the Great Tribulation. Thus we see Seals 5, 6, and 7 showing us the time line of specific End-Time Events. Seal 7 is divided into 14 parts plus insets, giving many last-day details to ponder before, during, and after the Coming of Christ.

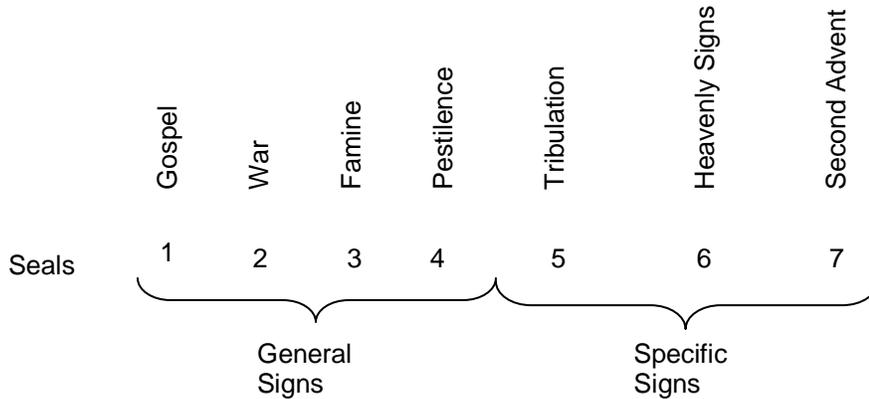
At the conclusion of the terrible conditions these first six seals foretell we see earth's kings and great men, and every man, hiding in caves and asking the mountains,

"Fall on us, and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, **for the great day of their wrath has come**; and who is able to stand?" (6:16, 17). See also Isaiah 2:11, 12, 17-21.

THE END TIMES TIME LINE

We see now that the Seals have concealed from our view awesome scenes of tribulations and judgments coming on earth before God's Kingdom can be established on earth. As they are opened one by one we are sobered by terrifying realities – strange horses representing an age of deceivers, wars, famines, pestilences, death, and, signs in the sky. Looking ahead, Seal 7 comes – seven trumpets announcing worse calamities upon earth after the darkening of the sun, and after that, the seven great vials full of God's final Wrath and Judgment.

Or we might picture it another way:



– James H. McConkey
The Book of Revelation, p. 39
1921

You may wonder why Matthew (24), Mark (13), and Luke (21) all record Jesus' famous Olivet discourse about the signs of His coming, but John does not record any of it in the Book of John.

But John does so in great detail from the Lord Himself in the Book of Revelation. So John also records what was given in the Olivet discourse, only in tremendous detail, in the Book of Revelation.

Still, here in the Last Days picture, we have not come yet to the return of Christ Himself.

Jesus said in the three Gospels His coming would be after the darkening of the sun. That is Seal 6. We must wait till Seal 7, for within its 14 parts we will clearly find that great event.

Chapter 9

Revelation 7

The 144,000 and the Great Multitude

The Two Companies

Revelation 7 inserts two great companies (Jew and Gentile) between the Great Tribulation (which is the 3½-year reign of Antichrist and Satan, see former chapters), and the 7th Seal, which ushers in the Judgments and Wrath of God. Here are pictures of two groups of individuals. They are mentioned here in the same time frame. Yet they are very separate groups.

The Time Period

The preceding chapter of this book (8) closes with the opening of the 6th Seal (v. 12). The sun is darkened (after the tribulation – Matt. 24:29-31) and the announcement is made that the Wrath of God is coming (this Wrath actually begins in chapter 15). Inserted between these two events are these two companies. This places them *after* the Great Tribulation, which was described under the 5th Seal (6:9), because here Revelation 7, the answer to John’s question as to the identity of the second group is:

“These are they which came out of the great tribulation” (7:14).

Thus it seems certain that the Tribulation is past when these are seen. Also, concerning the first group of 144,000 faithful Israelites, the angel cried:

“Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God” (v. 3).

But the hurting of the earth, the sea, and the trees takes place in the next chapter of Revelation (8) when the Judgments (plagues, 8:20) of God begin under Seal 7. The sealing of the 144,000 clearly takes place just *before* the 7th Seal.

These two companies will not have been sealed and separated *to escape the Great Tribulation*, for in the Revelation time-line outline, the great tribulation has already ended, and the Wrath is about to begin. These two companies are identified, sealed, and secured *to escape the Judgments of God!* which are about to fall on the earth, sea, and trees in Revelation 8. We have already seen that the people of God will go through the Great Tribulation. And we also have noticed that none of the people of God will experience God’s Wrath (1 Thess. 5:9). This shows when the First Resurrection will take place – *after* the Tribulation but *before* the Wrath. (We have already noticed that Jesus and Joel taught that the darkening of the sun separated the tribulation and the wrath – see chapter 2 of this book). This brings us to the conclusion that the rapture, rather than being a *pre-tribulation* rapture, will actually be a *pre-wrath* rapture.

The Two Companies

The first is Jewish, the second is Gentile. “And there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel” (v. 4, KJ). “a great multitude, which no man could number, of all the nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues” (v. 9, KJ).

Israel

It is plain that the first group is Jewish. All twelve tribes are mentioned, 12,000 from each tribe except the tribe of Dan and the tribe of Ephraim. Ephraim is probably counted here under “Joseph.” This would mean only Dan is omitted. The passage does not say why he is omitted. The reason may be that this tribe was connected to idolatry (Judg. 18:30, 31; Deut. 29:18-21). However, in Israel’s millennial tribal inheritance, Dan is listed (Ezek. 48:2).

Jacob had 12 sons. But Joseph, his youngest, had two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who took Joseph’s inheritance in the tribes. They are listed in the tribes of Israel. Always, the Bible speaks of “the twelve tribes of Israel.” Yet there were actually 13. Levi was set apart as the priestly tribe and not counted among the 12. Eighteen times the “twelve tribes of Israel” are listed in the Bible. One is always left out. Usually it is Levi. Here it is Dan and Ephraim. Joseph’s son, Manasseh is mentioned as one of the twelve. “Joseph” is mentioned as a tribe. This undoubtedly means Ephraim, his other son.

It is important to notice that God’s Word here divides Israel into twelve tribes. In God’s eyes there are yet twelve tribes of Israel, though Jews today may not know from what tribe they are. Here, representatives from each tribe are singled out for the honor of being sealed by their God. We might mention, too, that the term “Israel” is invariably used to speak of the descendants of Jacob, and not the church, Galatians 6:16 notwithstanding. The term “Israel” is never used of Gentiles. It would be rather ridiculous to think of the church as being divided into twelve tribes. Also, there is a belief that ten tribes are “lost”. But notice in King Asa’s day members of the 10 tribes moved down to Judah before the Assyrian captivity (2 Chron. 15:9). Also notice Anna was of the tribe of Asher (Luke 2:36). As far as God is concerned, none are lost. Every son of Abraham can be assured that God knows to which tribe he belongs. James, in his book, writes “to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad” (Jas. 1:1). All twelve tribes were in existence when he wrote.

This prophetic vision here shows that God has a future plan for Israel, that in spite of persecution by Antichrist and Satan in the tribulation, a righteous “remnant” will be here on earth when Jesus returns. Jesus Himself said to His apostles in Matthew 19:28, “You who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” This verse gives us a hint of part of God’s great Authority System in His coming Kingdom. Further, the apostle judges and the twelve tribes will evidently be under King David (Ezek. 37:24, 25; 34:23, 24), with Christ over all, King of the earth (Rev. 17:14; 19:16). We remember, too, that those in the First Resurrection, the faithful of all the ages, are to be Kings and Priests with Christ, reigning with Him a thousand years (Rev. 20:4-6).

We come now to the question, “Does this mean that exactly 12,000 literal individuals from each tribe are all the Israelites that will be saved?” I would rather think that this refers to the Israelites who are living in the end time, and does not refer to all those faithful Israelites through the centuries who have died and await resurrection. These 144,000 last-day “sealed” Israelites undoubtedly are the ones who are delivered from their persecutors in their time of trouble (Jer. 30:7), and “nourished” by the Lord “in the wilderness” for 3½ years until Christ comes, according to Revelation 12:12-17 (the “woman” obviously referring to Israel – see 12:1-5). Remember that Revelation is not written in chronological order. We are given the main outline, as we have noticed. Then there are visions given which we must insert into that outline in the proper place.

In Revelation 14 we see the 144,000 standing with Christ on Mount Zion (v. 1), singing a new song before the throne (14:3). The 144,000 are the only ones that can learn this song.

The Great Multitude

Revelation 7 shows that not only will a great company of Israelites be saved in the last days, but also many Gentiles “of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues” (7:9) will come to Christ in the time of the great tribulation. They will “come out of the great tribulation” (v. 14). This shows that the great tribulation is past. This great number of people clearly seems to be “the fellow-servants and brethren” of the dead martyrs of Revelation 6:9-11 who were to be “killed as they were” in the great tribulation, even as those waiting dead martyrs “fulfilled” their testimony and faithfulness unto martyrdom in the centuries past. These will be the martyred great-tribulation saints, possibly some of us Christians living today. They also may contain saints who have escaped the wrath of Antichrist and are still alive, for Paul said some saints would be alive when Jesus comes (1 Thess. 4:16,17).

This group is so large it cannot be counted. They stand before the throne clothed in white robes of righteousness (6:11; 19:8) with palms in their hands, serving God “day and night,” crying with a loud voice, “Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb” (7:15, 10). This is so comforting! With all the evilness, wickedness, and violence in the earth in the very last days plus going through the great tribulation, a multitude of people will come to understand the way of salvation clearly, will turn to Christ, and will be “washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.” Praise God! Even the angels rejoice. Notice the praise of the heavenly host:

“And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, saying, Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen” (Rev. 7:11, 12).

This great multitude will be martyred in the great tribulation because of their faith. It will be their faith in that terrible time of persecution and death that will count them worthy and save them. To me, this great number is referring to us today, who live just before the tribulation, the faithful church of the end-time who cement their salvation by their faith and testimony. They will not worship the beast or his image or take his mark or number (Rev. 20:4). They will be counted worthy of life in the age to come at Christ’s coming, which will occur shortly now in Revelation.

We see in Revelation 7, the sealing and saving of two large groups: the last-day Israelites and the faithful last-day Church of God worldwide who will go through the great tribulation. Both are found acceptable to God and the Lamb because of their faith and testimony and cleansing by the blood of the Lamb. First, God is going to allow Israel to go through this great trial (12:13-17), and 12,000 from each of the 12 tribes will be protected and sealed (Rev. 12:6) from the judgments and wrath of God which are about to begin (Rev. 8). Second, a great multitude of Gentiles will be saved also, though many of these will be martyred (6:11; 7:14). What a comfort this brings to us who very likely will be among them! Even in the tragic days of the ending of this age, countless people from both Jews and Gentiles will be united with Christ their Savior and, by His grace, be saved!

THE END TIMES TIME LINE

Chapter 10

Seal Seven

Revelation 8

A study of the First Four of the Seven Trumpets

The first six seals pass by our view with each presenting a **single** distinct picture, ending with the Great Tribulation under the Fifth Seal and the Heavenly Signs under the Sixth.

But when we reach the Seventh Seal, when it is opened the picture suddenly becomes far more detailed. Note the text concerning the seventh seal (Rev. 8:1-2).

“And when He broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. And I saw the seven angels who stand before God; and seven trumpets were given to them.”

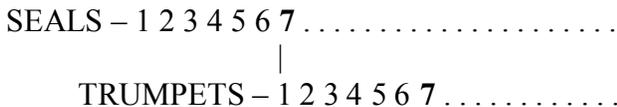
When this Seventh Seal is opened there will be silence in heaven for a time. Why? We suggest it is because of the terrible destructive Judgments under the seven trumpets and under the final seven Vials of God’s Wrath upon evil men and upon the earth. All Heaven is silent because of what is coming upon earth.

When this 7th seal is opened by the Lamb that was slain for us, instead of presenting a SINGLE picture it presents seven pictures under the sounding of 7 trumpets. Later, we find the 7th Trumpet is composed of seven vials, or, cups of God’s final terrible wrath. Thus Seal 7 has 14 parts, 14 pictures, each with many details. Thus, this one Seal expands first into seven trumpets, under which God pours forth a series of Judgments, or Plagues (9:20) upon earth.

Notice this carefully. It is not that the Seventh Seal ends and the trumpets begin. The Seventh Seal opens up into seven trumpet scenes. That is, there are seven sub-heads, or seven divisions of the Seventh Seal. They are details of that seal. They come under it. They compose it. The Seventh Seal is composed, first, of seven parts.

A simple diagram would look like this:

The Seventh Seal = 7 Trumpets



Thus in the diagram the dotted lines signify that the Seventh Seal is operational until the last trumpet is blown. The 7th Seal includes all the trumpets. Revelation, chapter 8, records four of these trumpets of judgment.

Trumpets

Trumpet blasts were used in war to assemble the army (Judg. 3:27; 6:34; 1 Sam. 13:3); to sound the attack (Job 39:24); to stop the pursuit (2 Sam. 2:28; 18:16); and announce the disbanding of the army (2 Sam. 2:28). Watchmen used trumpets to sound the alarm (Jer. 6:1; Amos 3:6). A trumpet was blown when a king ascended the throne (2 Sam. 15:10; 1 Ki. 1:34; 2 Ki. 9:13).

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Trumpets were used to announce the year of jubilee (Lev. 25:9). In the tabernacle worship they were used by the priests to announce holy convocations. 120 were used at the dedication of the Temple (2 Chron. 5:12). A trumpet will announce the Second Coming of Christ and the resurrection from the dead (Matt. 24:31; 1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16).

Here in our passage, God uses trumpets to announce Judgments upon earth and men. This reminds us of the seven trumpets that sounded at Jericho when that city fell (Joshua 6).

“And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them” (Rev. 8:6).

Do These Trumpets of Judgment Signify Actual Happenings?

No one suggests that God’s 10 plagues on Egypt in Exodus were not actual happenings. Why should we think these are not literal? Some of these judgments here are very similar, only instead of thrusting forth a rod and speaking, a trumpet is blown. Here, God’s judgments are on a larger scale than just upon the nation of Egypt, and they increase in intensity as other trumpets are blown.

This principle of increasing intensity is seen in Leviticus 26:14-42.

The purpose of these judgments (plagues, 9:20) is to cause earth to repent. Notice what is said at the end of the trumpets’ work at the end of Revelation 9. “And the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of” worshipping demons and idols. “They did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts.”

The Prayers of the Saints

Before the trumpets sound, mention is made of an angel with a golden censer. He had a great supply of incense, “that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne” (Rev. 8:3). “And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God.” This is a beautiful picture showing how important to God are the prayers of His people. See 1 Peter 3:12.

In the Old Testament the priests would burn incense; the scent would fill the Tabernacle or Temple, and then ascend to heaven. Burning fragrant incense was symbolic of worship and prayer, a reminder that their prayers were pleasing to God. He heard and He answered. We believe this is a reference to the anguished petition of the tribulation saints: “How long, O Lord?” (Rev. 6:9-11) In their misery they cry out to God. God has heard their prayers, and He has appreciated their plight.

But then the censer is filled with fire and is cast unto the earth! The thunder rolled, lightning flashed, and there was an earthquake! Judgments are coming! But special note is made here, at this particular time, when the Judgment of God is about to begin, that God is very mindful of the prayers of His people!

The First-Trumpet Plague

“There came hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were thrown to the earth; and a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up” (8:7).

This plague parallels the seventh plague in Egypt (Ex. 9:22-26). In that plague of thunder, hail, and flashing fire mixed with hail “very severe,” “the hail struck all that was in the field... both man and beast; the hail also struck every plant of the field and shattered every tree of the field.”

This scene of coming destruction and desolation appears to be directed at earth’s vegetation. In addition to a terrible hail storm a third of the trees and all the green grass will be burned up, possibly by lightning – called “fire.” The “blood” involved here probably is the blood of men and beasts caught out in the terrible

hail. How large the hail will be we do not know. In Revelation 16:21, in another judgment scene, we are told of “huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, came down from heaven upon men,” and men will blaspheme God because of the hail.

We cannot be surprised that God will also send fire to burn up a third of earth’s vegetation. He used fire from heaven to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. At the end of Christ’s millennial rule, fire will come down from heaven upon the enemies of God, “Gog and Magog,” who will try to overthrow Christ.

The Second Trumpet, or Plague

“The second angel sounded, and something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea; and the third of the sea became blood; and a third of the creatures, which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed” (8:8,9).

This judgment falls on “the sea.” The Sea covers “approximately 71% of the earth’s surface” (Funk and Wagnall’s Encyclopedia). The seas cover almost three fourths of the earth’s surface! What sea or which part of the complete sea we are not told.

Something like a fiery mountain (very large fiery object) will be thrown into the sea. Again, one-third will be affected. A third of it will become as “blood,” a third of the creatures in the sea will die, and a third of the ships will be destroyed.

What this fiery heavenly body may be we are not told. It could be a meteor or some large object falling from the sky. We notice it will be “thrown” into the sea, suggesting an intelligent force behind its falling; a decision made to do this. Also, if this many sea creatures die, think of the awful stench for some time where this happens. This flaming object will also “destroy” a third of the ships (burn them up?).

This picture is almost too much for us to understand. However, the main rule in Bible study is that a passage should be considered to be literal unless there is an interpretation given of it, or unless it is obviously a figure representing something else. “To make the mountain a form of human government, the sea the Roman Empire, and the ships that are destroyed the church or organized religion, is to read into the passage far more than is justified” (Walvoord, *Revelation*, p. 155).

Again, there is a parallel in the first plague of God’s plagues upon Egypt, when all the waters of Egypt were “turned to blood” (Ex, 7:17-20). And again we find judgment mixed with mercy, only one third, again, is destroyed. It sounds like when this happens all life and all ships will be destroyed in one portion of the earth (which is sea), the area around where the great burning mountain falls. But if this impacts a **third** of the 71% of the earth which is sea (that’s almost a fourth of earth’s surface), this will be a huge destruction.

The Third Trumpet

“The third angel sounded, and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters; and the name of the star is called Wormwood; and a third of the waters became wormwood; and many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter” (Rev. 8:10, 11).

Again we see judgment tempered with mercy. God tries again and again to bring people to repentance. But these plagues only make wicked men more bitter against God. This will be the reason for His final seven cups of **wrath** upon the earth during the 7th trumpet.

This judgment is similar to the one before, only this meteor or flaming heavenly body will fall on rivers and springs. We know that when heavenly masses fall through earth’s atmosphere, they burn “like a torch.”

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We saw this when the last spacecraft burned upon reentry. The fallout from this star will contaminate a third of the drinking water supply and many people will be poisoned and die.

In the journeys of Israel in the wilderness, when they were three days without water, they came to the waters of Marah. But “they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter” (Ex.15:22-27). This was a test for Israel, to see if they would trust God. The LORD showed Moses a tree and told him to cast it into the bitter water, which then became sweet. This was the place where He told them that if they would trust in Him, they would have none of the Egyptian diseases.

This judgment under the third trumpet affects men, though it is a plague that is upon earth itself. They drink the contaminated water and die of the poison. This indicates to this student that these plagues are literal.

The Fourth Trumpet Plague

“And the fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were smitten, so that a third of them might be darkened and the day might not shine for a third of it, and the night in the same way” (8:12).

The fourth judgment is directed against the heavens themselves, and is somewhat similar to the ninth plague over Egypt – darkness. (Ex. 10:22, 23). As John watches, he sees a third of the sun, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars darkened, as a very long eclipse would do. Never before has there been, to my knowledge, such a four-hour eclipse where the day and the night were darkened for a third of the day and night. Day and night are considered to be 12 hours each. A third of the day would be 4 hours, and a third of the night would be 4 more hours – 8 hours of darkness total. How many days this will last is not told, but probably these judgments come “quickly” as we have seen in Revelation 1:1. (See chapter 7 of this book.)

Here is an interesting comment: “It is of considerable interest to note the progress – one third of the trees and green grass, one third of marine life and shipping, one third of the (fresh) waters, and one third of the heavenly bodies. Food is destroyed; distribution is crippled; water supply is limited; production is hampered” (Smith, p. 140 – from Walvoord’s *Revelation*, p. 156).

These first four judgments (plagues) of God will be upon parts of His creation – the vegetation, the sea, the fresh water, and the heavens. But the last three will be upon men. Notice what is said after these first four Judgments have been fulfilled:

“Woe, woe, woe, to those who dwell on the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!”

The first Woe Judgment is the Fifth Trumpet (9:12). The second Woe Judgment is the Sixth Trumpet (11:4), and the third Woe Judgment is the Seventh Trumpet. We can call these The Woe Trumpets, for they will fall upon unrepentant MEN, and bring them grief and excruciating pain.

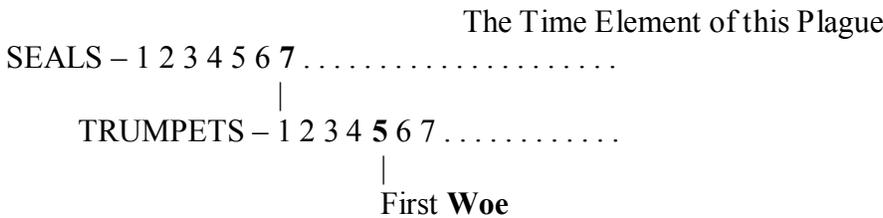
Chapter 11

**SEAL 7
Trumpet FIVE**

Revelation 9:1-12

The FIRST of the THREE-WOE Judgments

The First Woe Judgment is the Fifth Trumpet (Rev. 9:1-12).
 The Second Woe Judgment is the Sixth Trumpet (Rev. 9:13-11:14).
 The Third Woe Judgment is the Seventh Trumpet (Rev. 11:14 -)



Symbols

A symbol is a sign or picture used for a comparison. It is that which stands for something else. A music note in a song book stands for a sound on the scale. Jesus used parables this way: comparing the world to a field; a lost sheep to a sinner; a sower sowing seed to a person preaching the gospel, etc.

The symbols here stand for realities. We may think because a symbol is used, that it is unreal. And this is how some may interpret these trumpets. But this is not true. As James McConkey has stated, “A symbol is simply a concrete form of expressing a truth.”

Here in Revelation we see angels called stars, churches called candlesticks (1:20). And here under the fifth trumpet we see something called a bottomless pit, and locusts. These symbols stand for something that is real. God is using something which will nearest explain to our human understanding the tremendous reality behind the symbol.

These trumpets will be fully understood when the time comes for their fulfillment. Daniel said, “The wise shall understand” as these real happenings come to pass (12:10 KJ).

We must keep in mind that this book of Apocalypse is God’s last great revelation to the men of the end time revealing to us how this age will end and how His Kingdom will be established here on earth.

**The Fifth Trumpet Plague
(Rev. 9:1-12)**

“And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth; and the key of the bottomless pit was given to him. And he opened the bottomless pit; and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit. And out of the smoke came forth locusts upon the earth; and power was given them, as the scorpions of earth have power.

“And they were told that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, but only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.

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“And they were not permitted to kill anyone, but to torment for five months; and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man.

“And in those days men will seek death and will not find it; and they will long to die and death will flee from them” (Rev. 9:1-6).

Some used to see these “locusts” as possibly B-29’s, armored, with tail guns; today as possibly helicopter gunships. Others think it is a reference to the hordes of Arab Moslems. Others think it refers to Rome. Some see this as strong delusion. Some see these evil spirits as being impairment of the body or mind. Some think this has already been fulfilled. Albert Barnes sees this as the followers of Mohammed from the “east” (see Ex. 10:3-20). This writer has come to the following conclusions:

A Star

Elsewhere in chapter 6:13 and chapter 8:10 and 12, reference is made to literal stars or fragments of them. Here, however, the “star” signifies something else, as the Bible explains.

“Stars, in the language of prophecy,” says Lowman, “signify angels” (Benson’s Commentary, 1841, p. 739). This is borne out in Revelation 1:20: “The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches.” Also, the angels of the heavenly host are called stars in Job 38:4-7: “Where were you (Job) when I laid the foundation of the earth... when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?” This singing and shouting took place in the days when God created the heavens and the earth.

In a similar passage about the bottomless pit, or abyss, this time being “shut” in Revelation 20:1-3, it will be done “by an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss.”

These two passages are so similar, as well as being on the same subject, that they appear to this writer to explain themselves. The expression a *star* falling from heaven, or an *angel* coming down from heaven to open or shut the “bottomless pit” seems to indicate that these directives are from above; that Divine Providence will **allow** or even **cause** the opening of the abyss to allow this painful torment to come on unrepentant men: “power was given them”; “they were told...”; “they were not permitted...”

The Bottomless Pit

This phrase occurs seven times, all in Revelation: three times in this chapter – vv. 1, 2, 11; 11:7; 17:8; and 20:1, 3. The Greek word is *abussos* and means “depthless, i.e. (spec) (infernal) “abyss,” according to Strong’s, and is translated “deep (bottomless) pit.” Many translations, if not most, use the word “abyss.” It is used in Romans 10:7 (Don’t say, Who shall ascend up to heaven, or Who shall descend into the abyss), and in Luke 8:31. Let us notice verses 27 through 39.

Jesus had just stepped out of a boat in the country of the Gerasenes, across from Galilee. A certain man met him “who was possessed with demons.” As Jesus was telling the demons (called “unclean spirit” in v. 29) to come out of the man, the man fell down before Jesus, saying, “What do I have to do with You, Jesus, Son of The Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me.” Jesus asked his name. He replied, “Legion; for many demons had entered him. And they (the demons) were entreating Him not to command them to depart into the abyss.” A herd of pigs was feeding nearby, and “the demons entreated Him to permit them to go into the swine. And He gave them permission. And the demons came out from the man and entered the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.”

These many demons Jesus was exorcising did not want to be put into the abyss, or bottomless pit. I doubt the Devil will want to be bound and thrown into the abyss for a thousand years as Jesus begins His 1000-year reign on earth (Rev. 20:1-3). At the end of that thousand years, the Devil will be loosed from that “prison” (NAS) to deceive people once more, but he will be cast into the lake of fire (v. 10).

Another passage that may apply to this subject is Revelation 18:2, which says about Babylon the great that at her fall “she has become a dwelling place of demons, and a prison for every unclean spirit...”

We see, then, that the bottomless pit, or abyss, is associated with demons, unclean spirits, and the Devil. The abyss sounds to this writer like the abode of the demons and unclean spirits. As God’s judgments increase in intensity and come on men themselves, it appears God will loose all the demons and unclean spirits from the abyss upon men, and men will be very painfully tortured by their “stingers” for five months. We could call this Fifth Judgment: Demonic Torment Upon Men.

Anthony Buzzard’s opinion of these “locusts” is that they are demoniac beings.

Demons

Jesus cast out of people many demons that caused people to be deaf, blind, crippled, mentally unbalanced, and afflicted in various ways. This is mentioned 51 times in the New Testament. At least 17 times they are called “evil spirits.” Let’s make a little study here.

Four Greek words are used. The meanings are from the highly regarded Harper’s Analytical Greek Lexicon.

1. *daimon*. “a god, a superior power; in N. T. a malignant demon, evil angel, Mat. 8:31; Mark 5:12; Luke 8:29; Rev. 16:14; 18:2.” Strong’s 1142: “a demon or supernatural spirit (of a bad nature).”

2. *daimonizomai*. “in N. T. to be possessed, afflicted, vexed, by a demon, or evil spirit, Matt. 4:24; 8:16, 28, 33, et al.” Strong’s 1139: “to be exercised by a demon.”

3. *daimonion*. “a heathen god, deity, Ac 17:18; 1 Co. 10:20,21; Re. 9:20; in N. T. a demon, evil spirit, Mat. 7:22; 9:33, 34; 10:8; 12, 24, et al.” Strong’s 1140: “a demonic being; by extens. a deity.”

4. *daimoniodes*. “pertaining to or proceeding from demons; demoniacal, devilish.” Strong’s 1141: “daemon-like.”

Let’s read a few of these.

Matthew 4:24. “They brought to Him all who were ill, taken with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them.”

Matthew 8:31. “The demons began to entreat Him, saying, ‘If You are going to cast us out, send us into the herd of swine.’”

Matthew 9:32-34. “As they were going out, behold, a dumb man, demon-possessed, was brought to Him. And after the demon was cast out, the dumb man spoke; and the multitudes marveled, saying, ‘Nothing like this was ever seen in Israel.’ But the Pharisees were saying, ‘He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons.’”

Matthew 10:8. “Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons.”

Matthew 12:22-24. “Then there was brought to Him a demon-possessed man, who was blind and dumb, and He healed him, so that the dumb man spoke and saw. And all the multitudes were amazed, and began to say, ‘This man cannot be the Son of David, can he?’ But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, ‘This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons.’”

Revelation 16:14, 16. “They are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon.”

Conclusions:

1. Demons are not the same as diseases or sicknesses or mental deficiencies.
2. Demons caused people to be dumb, blind, deaf, and mentally unbalanced.

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3. They could come out of people and go elsewhere, as into swine.
4. When Jesus cast them out of people, those people were made whole. Acts 10:38: "He (Jesus) went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil."
5. Jesus gave this power to cast out demons to His apostles, to the seventy, to Paul (Acts 16:18)
6. The Pharisees believed there were demons (also Acts 23:8), and some were "Jewish exorcists" (19:13-17).
7. Paul acknowledged there were demons (1 Cor. 10:20, 21). He cast some out (Acts 19:12).
8. The demons were intelligent and could speak. They spoke to Jesus. They knew Him.
9. Demons are evil. They cause all kinds of afflictions.
10. They are from the abyss, not heaven.
11. They sound like they are the Devil's angels (Matt. 25:41). We know the angels that sinned have been cast into hell, imprisoned now in darkness, awaiting their judgment at Judgment Day (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Matt. 25:41). They shall be judged.
12. Jesus countered the criticism of the Pharisees by saying, "If I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you." We see two kinds of spirits: God's Spirit and the Devil's evil spirit. Jesus cast out demons by **God's** Spirit.
13. Jesus had control over these unclean spirits (Luke 4:33-36). So did the apostles and the seventy (Luke 10:17-20). When the seventy returned, rejoicing that even the demons were subject to them in Christ's name, Jesus replied

"I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning."

The unseen evil spiritual world was being uprooted. John 12:31, KJ: "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out." John 16:11: "The prince of this world is judged." Ephesians 6:12: "Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places." "Against spiritual wickedness" (KJ). Mortals cannot physically see today the unseen spirit world containing Almighty God and His angels and the Devil and his angels. Nevertheless the spirit world is there. The time is coming when redeemed men "shall judge angels" (1 Cor. 6:3).

Two Types of Angels

We should note here that there are two types of angels spoken about in Scripture: the holy heavenly angels (Matt. 25:31) and the Devil's angels (25:41), the angels that sinned. Christ will come with His heavenly angels, those who do God's will. Daniel called them "the host of heaven" (4:35). Luke called them "the heavenly host" (2:13). These angels will gather the elect (Matt. 24:31) and cast the wicked into the lake of fire (Matt. 13:41, 42). These hundreds of millions of heavenly angels (Rev. 5:11) give praise to God (Luke 2:13-15), carry out His wishes (2 Sam. 24:15, 16), and glorify Christ (Rev. 5:11, 12). God has used these angels many times through the ages in His dealings with various men.

But there are evil angels also. When Jesus comes with the holy angels to separate the good from the bad, He will say to those on His left hand, "Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41). Peter said, "God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell (Gk. tartaros) and committed them to pits of darkness, *reserved for judgment*" (2 Pet. 2:4). Job 4:18 records "Against His angels He charges error." Jude echoed, "And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He (God) has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day" (Jude 6).

Here are four passages that speak of sinful angels, whom God has imprisoned in “pits of darkness”, where they await the “Judgment of the Great Day.” This angelic judgment will be finalized in the lake of fire, which will be prepared for the devil and his angels, as Jesus said in Matthew 25:41.

Conclusions about the angels that sinned.

1. They sinned (2 Pet., 2:4). They did not keep their own domain but left it (Jude 6).
2. God cast them down to hell (2 Pet. 2:4). There they await final Judgment in “pits of darkness.”
3. Eternal fire has been prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41).

There are two other passages which may apply here: Isaiah 14:12-14 and Ezekiel 28:12-19, where the kings of Babylon and Tyre are likened to Lucifer (morning star) in Eden. These passages appear to describe the sins the angels committed. Let’s read. Isaiah 14:12-14:

“How have you fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations!

“But you said in your heart, I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of the assembly in the recesses of the north.

“I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.

“Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol” (hell, or the grave).

Ezekiel 28:12-19

“Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD God, ‘You had the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom, perfect in beauty.

“You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: the ruby, the topaz, and the diamond... beryl... onyx... jasper... lapis lazuli... turquoise, and the emerald...

“On the day that you were created they were prepared.

“You were the anointed cherub who covers, and I placed you there, you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked in the midst of the stones of fire.

“You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, until unrighteousness was found in you...

“You were internally filled with violence, and you sinned: Therefore I have cast you as profane from the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub.

“Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty: You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. I cast you to the ground... you will be no more.”

It appears to this writer that there are descriptions here that identify beings that are different from men. Notice these passages carefully. “How are you fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn” (compare Job 38:7); “I will raise my throne above the stars of God”; “I will make myself like the Most High”; “You were in Eden”; “You were the anointed cherub”;

“You were blameless... until unrighteousness was found in you”; “O covering cherub”.

Angels were created before men (Psalm 8:5). God “did not subject to angels the world to come” (Heb. 2:5), even though the angels long to look into the things about the gospel (1 Pet. 1:12). The law of God was “ordained of angels” (Acts 7:53; Gal. 3:19). They sometimes are identified with God, being His servants (Gen. 16:10-13; Ex. 3:2-4).

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The war that pits the Archangel Michael and his angels against the Devil and his angels is placed under the seventh seal, in Revelation 12:7-12. Michael will cast the Devil down to earth, who, knowing “that he has only a short time,” will go forth and persecute the woman (Israel).

Locusts

Their Description

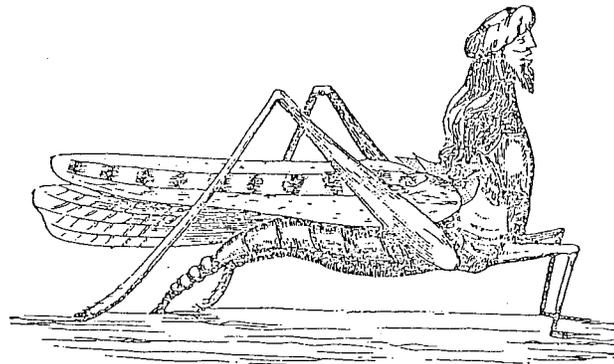
Rev. 9:7-11

They look like locusts, they resemble horses, have faces like the faces of men, hair like the hair of women, and teeth like the teeth of a lion. They had breastplates of iron and something on their heads that resembled crowns, and the deafening sound of their wings was like horses thundering into battle. Chapters 1 and 2 of Joel describe God’s “army” (locusts), with which he punished His people Israel. They looked like horses and had teeth like lions. “The land is like the garden of Eden before them, but a desolate wilderness behind them... nothing at all escapes them... they run like mighty men; they climb the wall like soldiers; and they each march in line... they do not crowd one another... they rush on the city, they run on the wall; they climb into houses, they enter through the windows as a thief. Before them the earth quakes... the LORD utters His voice before His army.” This army of God is an army of locusts (Joel 2:25, 11). They destroy everything in their path, like the plague of locusts upon Egypt (Ex. 10:3-21).

Two things stand out about locusts: their innumerable multitude, and their destructiveness of vegetation. The description and activity given above by these creatures/beings make it clear they are not ordinary locusts, and are called “locusts” only because of their special purpose as a judgment and plague from the Lord upon men.

An amazing thing about this plague on men is that these creatures distinguish between the people who have the seal of God and those who don’t. Their torment will be upon only the wicked and unrepentant.

Mr. Elliott’s sketch in Barnes’ *Notes on Revelation* (1851) pictures these creatures looking like this:



Smoke will boil up out of the abyss “like the smoke of a great furnace.” This is the description of the smoke that arose from Sodom and Gomorrah when God destroyed them (Gen. 19:28).

“And out of the smoke came forth locusts upon the earth.” They will be released from the abyss for the express purpose of bringing this short but terrible punishment on the ungodly. They will have power to torment men like the stings of scorpions torment men. Once again, a symbol is used. Remember this symbol represents a coming reality. In Joel 2 God used literal locusts to punish Israel. Actual locusts constituted the eighth plague in Egypt (Ex. 12-15). We know this is a symbol that stands for a reality because

1. They are not to hurt the grass, any green thing or tree – things that are locusts' normal food.
2. They are intelligent; able to distinguish between men who have the seal of the living God in their foreheads and those who do not have that seal.
3. They have a king over them (v. 11), which literal locusts do not have (Prov. 30:27). His name is Abaddon (Heb) and Apollyon (Gk), meaning destruction. He is “the angel of the abyss.” By using both Hebrew and Greek names, it is likely this plague will be on both unbelieving Jews and Gentiles.

“They are not literal locusts but demons from the bottomless pit under intelligent leadership” (C. W. M. Turner, *The Outline of the Book of Revelation*, p. 50, 1914). John Walvoord's comments: “The bottomless pit (Gk. *abyssos*) is the abode of demons according to Luke 8:31... It may be concluded that the pit of the abyss is none other than the place of detention of wicked angels. It is here that Satan himself is confined for a thousand years during the reign of Christ on earth” (*Revelation*, p. 159). “The abyss is not hell, but the present abode of the devil and his angels...” (Wycliffe Bible Commentary, p. 1509). George W. Davis in 1924, writing on this passage, comments, “Earth is destined to be invaded by hordes of emissaries of Satan from the pit” (p. 144). Tim LaHaye, giving scriptures, sees these “locusts” as being “imprisoned evil spirits” (*Revelation*, p. 136, 1975).

The torment they will afflict is compared to a sting of a scorpion.

The small scorpions of the southern United States and Mexico are only 2-2½ inches long. Their sting is like that of a yellow jacket, as we can attest. There are larger scorpions, up to 10 inches in length. Their sting is undoubtedly much more painful.

These unrepentant people will be tormented by this plague for five months, during which time the option of suicide will be supernaturally denied to them. This will be true justice for those who have used their bodies which were created to be temples of God's Holy Spirit as instruments to gratify their own evil lusts. The pain will be so great they will want to die, but they are prevented from dying.

Remember, this Judgment is under Seal 7, Trumpet 5, and happens after the darkening of the sun, which is Seal 6 (Rev. 6:12). Jesus said the darkening of the sun will occur after the Great Tribulation, but before His coming. So in God's time line, these “locusts” will appear after the sun will become dark in the **day of the LORD**. Thus it appears quite impossible for these Judgments to be historical, or, fulfilled. They are yet to come.

As terrible as this judgment will be, it will be eclipsed by the events under the Sixth Trumpet, (the second woe) when a **third** of mankind will be killed.

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Chapter 12

**SEAL 7
Trumpet SIX**

The SECOND of the THREE-WOE Judgments
(Rev. 9:13 – 11:14)

The Sixth Trumpet Plague: **Part One**
Death to a Third of Men
(Rev. 9:13-21)

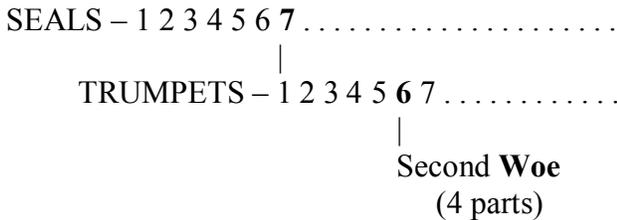
And the sixth angel sounded... Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates. And the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released, so that they might kill a third of mankind.

“And the number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million... And this is how I saw in the vision the horses and those who sat on them: the riders had breastplates the color of fire and of **jacinth** and of brimstone; and the heads of the horses are like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke and brimstone.

“A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone, which proceeded out of their mouths.

“For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents and have heads; and with them they do harm.”

The Time Element



The five previous judgments have brought us to Judgment number 6 with its four parts. This Trumpet Six is the second Woe (11:14): “the second woe is past.” The fourth and closing scene of this Sixth plague, which will be the death and resurrection of God’s two witnesses in Jerusalem, is the end of this second woe.

We agree with George Davis that “It must be evident; the subject matter under discussion **antedates** the Sixth Trumpet, but reaches its **consummation therein**” (*The Patmos Vision*, p. 59, 1924). Notice that the Book of Revelation is not completely chronological. For instance, the coming of Christ is detailed in chapter 19, but it occurs before God’s Wrath of 15 and 16, for Christ administers God’s wrath. Again, chapters 11, 12, and 13 occur in the Tribulation period before Christ’s coming, but actually occur under the Fifth Seal, which refers to the Great Tribulation, which, Christ said, occurs before the darkening of the sun (Matt. 24:29-31). We must be alert to notice these keys which help us understand. Jesus said, “Search the scriptures” (John 5:39).

Daniel said, “The wise shall understand” (Dan. 12:10). We want to be among the wise.

Notice again, The Antichrist in Revelation 13:5 will have power only these “forty-two months.”

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What shall end his rule over earth? Christ shall come and overthrow him, as explained in Daniel 7:25-27, and Revelation 19, six chapters after chapter 13.

Part One: One-Third of Men Killed

The Great River Euphrates

A voice from the golden altar which is before God told this sixth angel to loose from the great river Euphrates the four angels that had been prepared for this moment so that they might kill a third of mankind. “These angelic ministers of judgment are under divine control” (Walter Scott). Their special purpose is to kill a third of men. It appears that this will be done by a tremendous armed invasion from the east. Specific mention is made of the means by which death is administered: by fire, smoke, and brimstone (burning sulfur).

In this Judgment we are taken to a well-known geographical location of the Biblical world – the Euphrates River. As Alford says, “There is nothing in the text to prevent ‘the great river Euphrates’ from being literal” (John Walvoord’s *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, p. 164). The Euphrates is the most well-known river in the Bible. It was here on the plain of Shinar that the tower of Babel was built in defiance of God. And here Nimrod built Babylon, where idolatry originated. “Here, according to Revelation 18, the city of Babylon will be rebuilt and become the headquarters of the commercial, religious, and military activities of the world under the Antichrist’s rule” (Tim LaHaye, p. 140, *Revelation*). It was also the boundary of Israel (Gen. 15:18).

“The vision concerns an invasion from the Orient.” (Walvoord, *Revelation*, p. 164)

These angels are “bound.” The holy angels are never bound. But these – called “evil angels” by several commentaries – have been placed there to be released at a certain time, God’s time, to bring about the death of “a third of mankind.” This is Judgment number six. God is always in control. This is one of His end-time Judgments upon this “present evil world” (Gal. 1:4).

200,000,000 Horsemen

Some think this number is too large to be literal. Armies containing 200 million men would be astounding, a vast and overwhelming force. Yet considering the vast numbers of people east of the Euphrates it would be possible to be literal.

Under the sixth bowl of God’s wrath the Euphrates is to be “dried up, that the way might be prepared for **the kings of the east**” (Rev. 16:12). Is this a second phase of an Eastern invasion? (The trumpet judgments occur before the seven vials of God’s final wrath.)

This is called a vision (9:17). In the “vision,” the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions. Out of their mouths “fire and smoke and brimstone” are ejected. These do the killing, along with their tails, which are like serpents and have heads. “With them they do harm.”

Doesn’t this sound like these horsemen have weapons of modern warfare – missiles, tanks belching fire, multiple warheads, flame throwers?

Or, another view about these 200 million horsemen: “It is quite obvious that these are not to be taken as humans, for horsemen do not wear ‘breastplates of jacinth and brimstone,’ nor do horses have mouths that emit ‘fire and smoke and brimstone.’ Instead, this is a literal description of unnatural, demon-like evil spirits that come out of the abyss, advancing under the leadership of the four bound angels” (Tim LaHaye, *Revelation*, p. 140). According to this view this would be another judgment of God using evil angels to accomplish His purpose.

This host of 200 million destroying creatures (men, or evil angels) appears to be in contrast to the armies of Christ descending with Him from heaven on white horses at His coming (19:11-16), which could be

heaven's angels (Dan. 4:35; Rev. 5:11; Matt. 25:31), or His raptured, resurrected people (as they are "clothed in fine linen, white and clean"(19:8). It is the holy angels who, at Christ's command, will cast the evil people into the lake of fire (Matt. 13:41, 42, 45-50).

One Third of Men Killed

This fearful destruction will take place because of this army of horsemen. They come from the Euphrates area. This is now called Iraq. Notice that those killed are evidently incorrigibles, if we understand verses 20 and 21 aright: "The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent..." The purpose of this judgment seems to be to rid the earth of many people who are set in the ways of evil before the Kingdom is established. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 is a similar text to take place at the actual coming of Jesus back to earth: "dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." Remember, Jesus said the inhabitants of earth at His coming would be like those in Noah's day – very wicked – when He comes again (Matt. 24:37-39). The mark of the Beast has not yet been mentioned (Rev. 13), so it appears to this writer that they are not those who will have the mark of the Beast. Those appear to be destroyed later at the fall of Babylon (Rev. 14:8-11; ch. 18). These judgments of God should not provoke our sympathy for these destroyed ones, except to sorrow at their non-repentance. Wickedness and righteousness cannot coexist in God's coming Kingdom. Evil has to go. The numbers, however, are staggering. How true are Jesus' words, "Many are called, but few are chosen."

We have already seen a fourth of the people of earth killed under the Fourth Seal by sword, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts around the time of the Great Tribulation (Rev.6:8). Add to that another third of mankind and we see over half the people on earth destroyed by these judgments – 7/12ths to be exact. At the present (Sept. 1, 2003) world population of 6,314,000,000, one fourth would be 1,578,500,000, or about 1½ billion. Subtract that from the present total world population, and we have 4,736,000,000. Take from that number a third more, or 1,578,666,666, another 1½ billion. That will leave 3,157,333,334 persons still alive on earth – less than half of the present world population.

The LOCATION Again

This fearful destruction shall take place because of this great army of horsemen. They come from the Euphrates area. This area is now called Iraq.

We noted above the comment by John Walvoord: "The vision concerns an invasion from the Orient (East)." Todd, Weidner and others agree: "We are probably to look to this region as the scene of this great judgment, which is in exact conformity with the inferences to which we are led by the prophecies of Daniel, where those countries in the region of the Euphrates, once the stage of such mighty empires, are destined to become the scene of the last great struggle between the princes of the world and the people of God" (Wycliffe Bible Commentary, p. 1509).

This invasion from the Iraq/Syria region by the "Assyrian" Antichrist is the conclusion to which this writer came in his 1994 book, *Prophecies of the End of the Age*. (Note especially chapters 13, 9, and 10).

Part Two under this Sixth Trumpet
The Mighty Angel with the Little Book
Revelation 10

Angels play a prominent part in this book of Revelation. They are mentioned sixty-six times, always performing some service. They are fulfilling God's will among the children of men. This particular angel is called "mighty" or "strong." He is not named. Christ is never referred to as an angel. We know there are different orders of angels: archangels, cherubim, seraphim, and, we assume, just ordinary angels. There are millions of them (5:11). Hebrews 1:13, 14 says they are God's "ministering spirits sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation."

This mighty angel had in his hand a little book which was open. We are not told what the book contains. The angel cried with a loud voice and seven peals of thunder were heard. John was about to write what they had spoken when he was told not to record those things. "Seal up the things which the seven peals of thunder have spoken, and do not write them."

Then this angel lifted up his right hand to heaven and gave oath by the LORD God Almighty that there would be no more delay. When the Seventh Angel sounded his trumpet, the mystery of God would be finished.

Then a voice from heaven told John to "Go, take the book which is open... Take it and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey". So John ate the book.

Then John was told he must **prophesy again** "concerning many peoples and nations and tongues and kings." This leads us into chapter 11.

Part Three of the Sixth Trumpet
Measuring the Temple and its Worshipers
Revelation 11:1, 2

Remember, this is still part of the Second Woe (11:14). It has four parts. This word Woe, *ouai*, according to Strong's Concordance is an "exclamation of grief" or woe. What John is seeing in these scenes under this trumpet is not something uplifting and good. These are scenes full of trouble. This is part of what will happen in connection with the Great Tribulation, the last half of Daniel's 70th week.

Both parts of this vision in the 11th chapter concern, or will take place in, Jerusalem, "where also our Lord was crucified" (v. 8).

John was given a measuring rod and told, "Measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it." He was told to not measure the court outside the temple, "for it has been given to the nations," and "they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months" (v. 2).

Here are two different scenes: 1) The examination of the last-day temple worship, and 2) Jerusalem will be under Gentile domination for forty-two months (3½ years).

First a question: Why does God want the Temple, Altar, and Worshipers "measured"?

We understand that the temple spoken of here is that last-day Jewish temple that Daniel and Paul indicated will be built before Jesus returns. This may be built just before Antichrist comes, or in the first half of his seven-year covenant with Israel. It will be built by the Jews to reconstitute the Old Testament worship system with animal sacrifices. But this Temple will be rebuilt "apart from Messiah, since they believe He has not come" (LaHaye).

Here it appears that God wants us (and Israel) to examine the animal-sacrifice worship system that God instituted for the Old Testament believers. Animal-sacrifice was superseded at the death of Messiah for men's sins (Gal. 3:19). God is examining the spiritual life of Israel in the last days. Obviously Israel at this time has not yet accepted Jesus as the Messiah and Sacrifice as they will do shortly (Zech. 12:10-14; 13:6;

Rev. 12:17). They are still living in unbelief. They still think they must follow the Old Testament laws and way of worship, which became outdated when Christ died. Since that time He (JESUS) is the way to God. He was the true sacrifice for sins.

We remember Daniel showed that this Temple would be desecrated by Antichrist putting in it the Abomination in the middle of his seven-year covenant (Daniel 9:27).

Part Four of the Sixth Trumpet
The Two Witnesses
Revelation 11:3-14

God has never left Himself without witnesses. In every time and crisis He has always provided a witness to give His message to the people. So also here, in the great tribulation time, God will raise up these two holy Spirit-filled men (called prophets, v. 10) who will witness for Him in these coming days of great evilness on earth.

Notice the literalness of this chapter:

The holy city – identified in verses 8 and 2 as Jerusalem.

The temple of God: the Holy Place and Holy of Holies, but not the outer court.

The outer court as well as the City will be under Gentile control for 3½ years.

Time periods: Three and a half literal years and three and a half literal days.

The Two Witnesses will be literal men, prophets of God (vv. 10, 3).

The earthquake will be a literal earthquake that will kill 7,000 people in Jerusalem.

The death of the witnesses will be real, as well as their resurrection and ascension.

The Two Jewish (probably) Prophets

“And I will grant authority (give power, KJ) to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.” “These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth” (11:3, 4).

God will give power to these two who witness for Him in Jerusalem for three and a half years in the very last days. They are called the two olive trees and two lamp stands that stand before the Lord. This is probably based on the prophecy of Zechariah (4:1-6). The olive tree with its oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit of God. Through these two men God pours forth a stream of mighty power by His Holy Spirit. It was the same in the days of the apostles in Acts 2:1-4, 17-21. Also, in the last days God “will pour forth... My (His) Spirit upon all flesh.” This happened in Acts 2 and it will also happen in the last days. Even today, God’s people are empowered by His Holy Spirit. If we do not have His Spirit, we are none of His (Rom. 8:9).

These two candlesticks give forth the light, or word, of God. When we remember that it is in this latter-day temple at Jerusalem that Antichrist will set up the Abominable Idol, and then see that the two witnesses shall also preach the true Word of God in Jerusalem, what a remarkable situation this will be! Imagine the rage of Antichrist as he pours forth his lies and deceit to the throngs who crowd the temple court to worship him while in the same city, possibly in the same temple, God’s two holy and powerful men pour forth their stream of truth denying his claims as they speak of the glory and power of the True God and judgment to come, while witnessing to it by great authentic signs and wonders. Undoubtedly they go among these throngs who worship the False One with words about how short his reign will be, how the True Christ shall come and destroy him, and of the perils they face by trusting in this ungodly impostor.

THE END TIMES TIME LINE

It is certain that Antichrist will send men to kill them, for it says, “If anyone desires to harm them, fire proceeds out of their mouth and devours their enemies. They also have power to “shut up the sky, in order that rain might not fall during the days of their prophesying.” They also will have power to turn water into blood and to smite the earth with “every plague, as often as they desire (v. 6). What a great conflict will be going on in Jerusalem between Antichrist and God’s prophets! No man will dare to touch them. They are protected by the power of God.

The IDENTITY of the Two Witnesses

They are men, for they die after three and a half years when their witness is finished.

They are Prophets – “they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days.”

They are supernaturally endowed with power – 11:3-6.

They will possess Old Testament characteristics: using fire to kill enemies, causing it not to rain, turning water into blood. 11:5, 6.

This last ability causes us to think of Elijah and Moses. Elijah called down fire from heaven that burned up two companies of fifty men sent to capture him (2 Kings 1). He also prayed and it did not rain for three and a half years (James 5:17).

These two also will have power to turn water into blood, as Moses did (Ex. 7:20), and to “smite the earth with every plague,” again, as Moses did (Ex. 8, 9, 10, 11).

Many suggestions have been offered as to the identity of these two. Some think they represent Israel and the church; others, the Old Testament and New Testament; still others, Enoch and Elijah.

This writer believes they will be Moses and Elijah, or someone like them. Notice Moses and Elijah appeared with Christ in glory in the transfiguration vision (Luke 9:30). They were speaking of Christ’s approaching death. They represented the Law and the Prophets, both predicting the coming Messiah. “These two witnesses have a combination of the greatest powers ever given prophets on earth” (Walvoord, *Revelation*, p. 180).

It is predicted that Elijah shall appear before the Day of the Lord (Mal. 4:5, 6. see ch. 5).

Moses was the great lawgiver that Israel has always revered.

If these two famous Israelite men who appeared with Jesus in the Transfiguration appear in Jerusalem prophesying in the Tribulation period it would accomplish two ends: condemn the Antichrist, and help non-Christian Jews turn to Christ.

Their Death, the Congratulations, and the Gifts

“And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them” (v. 7).

The heartlessness and cruelty of this dark Tribulation period is seen in the brutal treatment of these two righteous Witnesses. After their 3½-year testimony, God will allow their enemies to kill them. The Beast Antichrist appears to be victorious. He has made war against them and finally has triumphed over them and killed them.

While their dead bodies lie in Jerusalem’s streets three and a half days in full view of all the world (by TV perhaps), their conquerors and “those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and make merry; and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on earth” (v. 10).

Apparently the whole evil earth will rejoice at their death and probably they will send one another congratulations as well as gifts! Verse 9 says that great throngs of people from all over the earth “will look at their dead bodies for three and a half days, and will not permit their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb.” With the present modern TV, it will be possible to see this. All the news cameras will be focused on their bodies! How callous, to gloat over their deaths like this!

This certainly reinforces Paul’s description about this present age, calling it “this present evil age” (Gal. 1:4). Earth’s people are happy that God’s prophets are killed! How depraved people will become in the last days! Jesus sighed and said: “When the Son of man comes, will He find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8.)

Their Resurrection, the Earthquake, Their Ascension

“After the three and a half days the breath of life from God came into them, and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell on those who were beholding them.

“And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, ‘Come up here.’ And they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies beheld them.

“And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; and seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven” (vv. 11-13).

Great fear came on their enemies as they saw them come to life and stand on their feet, then ascend into heaven. But it was not until after the deadly Earthquake that the remainder of the people “gave glory to the God of heaven.” It was not the resurrection of the two witnesses that caused these people to give glory to God; it was the terrible earthquake!

We wonder what attitude they will have as they “give glory.” It is certainly not praise and thanksgiving. We suspect it will be acknowledgment of and fear of approaching judgment and death upon themselves!

THE END TIMES TIME LINE

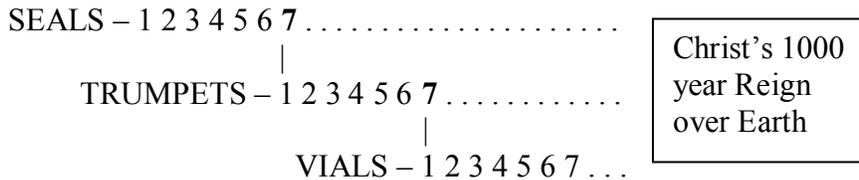
Chapter 13

**SEAL 7
Trumpet SEVEN**

The THIRD of the THREE-WOE Judgments

Revelation 11:14 – 14:20

The Time Line



Again, the dotted line indicates that the Trumpets also do not end until the final vial of wrath is poured out on sinful men.

The seventh SEAL extends over all seven TRUMPETS. And the seven TRUMPETS also extend over the seven VIALS. So it is obvious that the SEVENTH SEAL includes all the Trumpets and all the VIALS.

All the Seals, Trumpets, and Vials come to a climax at the same time, which is the time **our Lord Jesus Christ establishes the Kingdom of God over earth and then reigns 1000 years**.

Once again, let us get this main outline of Revelation firmly rooted in our minds. The Seven-Sealed Book forms the outline, the framework for the entire Book – when we understand this, all else will fall into place.

Also remember that The Book of Revelation is not written in chronological order. We will see this plainly when we come to the return of Christ, which is given in five different places. It is up to us to place each scene in its proper place in the main outline.

We have come to the Seventh Trumpet, which begins the Third Woe. This section contains four parts. First a **summary** of what will happen in the time of the Third Woe, then two scenes which will occur during the 3½ year Great Tribulation period before God's Wrath is poured out: 1) Revelation 12: The persecution of Israel for 3½ years; and 2) Revelation 13: Antichrist and False Prophet's reign in the same 3½-year end-time period. Finally, the fourth part is found in Revelation 14, The Coming of Christ **after** the Tribulation, and an introduction to the approaching Wrath. We will cover the first three parts here. We will cover the fourth part in chapter 17 of this book.

Part One: A Summary of the Transition from Man's Rule over Earth
 to GOD'S Rule over Earth
 Revelation 11:15-19

“The second woe is past; behold the third woe is coming quickly.

“And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.’

THE END TIMES TIME LINE

“And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshipped God, saying, “We give Thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who art and who wast, because Thou hast taken Thy great power and hast begun to reign.

“And the nations were enraged, and Thy wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to Thy bond-servants the prophets and to the saints and to those who fear Thy name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth.”

The verses above are a **summary** of the four things that will happen under the Seventh Trumpet. Remember that this Seventh Trumpet also contains the Seven Vials of God’s Wrath (Rev. 15 & 16). At the end of God’s Wrath, these four things will have been accomplished:

1. The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of God and Christ.
2. God’s Wrath has been completed.
3. The Faithful have been rewarded. (This presupposes Christ’s coming)
4. The wicked have been destroyed.

Here is injected a message of hope for the last-day reader of Revelation. Remember, “Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it” (1:3). The Great Tribulation will pass, and God’s Wrath on sinners will soon be over. Gods Kingdom **WILL** come to Earth!!! Our HOPE is **not** in vain!

Then the temple of God in heaven was opened, and the Ark of the Covenant appeared in that temple. Lightning flashed, thunder pealed, the earth quaked, and there was a great hailstorm.

In Revelation 12 the next vision is announced: the Woman and the Red Dragon, another picture of an event in the 3½-year Tribulation period: The persecution of Israel, and her remnant’s protection from God.

Part Two: The Woman and the Red Dragon Revelation 12

We emphasize again that this chapter is another inset or episode happening in the last 3½-year period. A mysterious woman appears in the heavens. She is clothed with the sun. The moon and stars are under her feet. A great red dragon stands ready to devour the man child to whom she is about to give birth. With his tail he had swept away a third of the stars and had thrown them to the earth.

Who is this woman? What is the story? What does this mean?

The Dragon is Satan

“And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil, and Satan” (v. 9).

A good method for Bible study is to look for keys to understanding, simple facts that interpret difficult passages. One such key we have already noticed is that the Tribulation and Wrath are separated by the darkening of the sun. The passage before us itself gives us the key as to who the dragon is. It is the Devil. The identity of the dragon is crystal clear. The word itself declares him to be “that old serpent called the Devil and Satan” (v. 9).

Some today do not accept a personal devil, but think of “the Devil” as an evil influence from within a person. To us and most other believers, the Bible plainly teaches a literal Devil. Notice a few things about him here.

Verse 3. He is RED. The red horse in Revelation 6:4 refers to men slaying one another. When the earth “is reaped,” blood will flow horse-bridle deep for “two hundred miles” (Rev. 14:20 NAS). Christ shed his blood for us. Blood is red. Probably the dragon is red because he has been behind much of the bloodshed down through the ages, from Cain to the present and into the future.

Verse 9. He is called “that old serpent.” This refers to the Garden of Eden, where the Devil is first seen. Notice in Genesis 3 there are three beings punished: Adam, Eve, and the serpent.

Verse 9. He is called the Devil. This is the word used for the Devil by the Gospel writers and Jesus. It means “accuser” or “slanderer.” Think of his work in Job 1 and 2 and in Revelation 12:10.

Verse 9. He is called Satan. The word Satan means “adversary.” The devil is the adversary of God’s people. Notice Luke 8:12: “then the Devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they may not believe and be saved.” He does not want God’s gospel to save anyone. Peter said the Devil goes about seeking whom he may “devour” or destroy (1 Pet. 5:8).

Verse 10. He is called “the accuser of our brethren.” This shows what his work is today. He is accusing God’s people before the throne of God today (12:12) seeking to discredit the saints. But Christ, at God’s right hand, is interceding for them before His Father. As this adversary to us is seeking to destroy us, we are taught to “resist” him (James 4:7). Peter says “Resist him in the faith” (1 Peter 5:9). We can overcome his temptation “by (through) the blood of the Lamb” and by “our testimony” when we are so loyal to God and to Christ our Lord that we do not “love our lives even to death” (Rev. 12:11). Friend, when you are tempted to sin, call upon Jesus to help you! He has asked us to come unto Him (Matt. 11:28-30). He is a friend that sticks closer than a brother. He will strengthen you to overcome.

We notice that this dragon has seven heads and ten horns (v. 3). Daniel’s fourth beast has ten horns (Dan. 7:7, 24). The Antichrist in the next chapter (Rev. 13) has seven heads and ten horns. Both the Devil and the beast are said to have seven heads and ten horns. They are so closely aligned as to be practically inseparable. Revelation 13:2 says plainly that it is the Devil who gives the Antichrist Beast his power. God will allow this. But at the proper time, the Devil will be destroyed (Heb. 2:14 KJ), or “rendered powerless” (NAS). Revelation 20:10 supports this, as does Isaiah 26:21 – 27:1.

Therefore we can start with a firm foundation as to who the dragon is. And this fact leads us to another great truth.

The Man Child is Christ

“And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne” (v. 5).

Although the passage does not name the man child; it is clear who He is from the facts.

1. It is Christ whom Satan tried to destroy at His birth (v. 4). Matthew 2 makes this plain. Herod was the tool, but Satan was the real assassin. Satan used Herod to try to get rid of the Messiah, just as he used Judas to assist in His death at the end (Luke 22:3).

2. It was Christ who was “caught up to the throne of God” (v. 5). Daniel 7:13, 14 predicted this. Christ is the only One who is at God’s right hand (Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Heb. 1:3, 4, 13). Stephen saw Him standing there (Acts 7:56).

3. Christ is the One who “is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron” (v. 5; Psa. 2:9). Revelation 19:15 says plainly of Christ the King, “and He shall rule them with a rod of iron.”

The Woman Clothed with the Sun is “Israel,”
The True People of God

Young Joseph had a dream where the sun, moon, and stars bowed down before him (Gen. 37:9-11). It signified that his father, mother, and his eleven brothers would bow before him when he was Prince of Egypt. Joseph saved his family just as Christ will save His brothers of the house of Israel.

The fact that this “woman is clothed with the sun,” with “the moon under her feet,” and “twelve stars” on her head is significant. These heavenly bodies give or reflect light. This symbol is used to show that all through the Old Testament God chose Israel to be His light-bearer, His Priests, to all men (Ex. 19:5,6; Deut. 14:2; 26:18,19). Unfaithful in her mission, and though God punished her for her unfaithfulness, God nevertheless used Israel to bring salvation to both Jews and Gentiles through the man-child she bore. However, she will, in the future, be God’s light-bearer to the nations (Zech. 8:20-23). (And even before Christ’s coming, at the very end, it appears that the 144,000 of Israel will be witnesses for God and for Christ (Rev. 7:1-9; 14:1-5). At present it is the Church that Christ is building that compose God’s “candlesticks” (Rev. 1:12,13 KJ) or “lampstands” (NAS) to carry the Gospel of salvation to the world (Mark 16:15, 16).

Israel’s Persecution by Satan
And
Her Preservation by God

This chapter (Revelation 12) foretells Israel’s persecution by Satan and her preservation through God’s grace. The great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns is the fearsome enemy of the woman (Israel) and in the end-time will seek to destroy Israel, even as Hitler and Eichmann tried to destroy Israel in the gas chambers and concentration camps of the late 1930’s and early 1940’s.

“And the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she might be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days (3½ years)” (Rev. 12:6).

This is the same time period in which the two witnesses will prophesy in Jerusalem, and the same time period of Revelation 13, when Antichrist will reign over earth for 42 months (v. 5). These things all take place in the Tribulation period before the Wrath of God comes on this sinful and blasphemous earth governmental system.

Notice Satan’s persecution of Israel. First, he tries to destroy Christ as soon as He is born, but fails. Then he apparently succeeds in destroying Him at Calvary. But again he is defeated. God raises His Son from the grave, and He ascends to God’s right hand. Then the picture leaps the centuries to the end of the Age, when Israel goes through the Tribulation, Jacob’s “time of trouble.” The last-day remnants of Israel flee “into the wilderness,” even as Christ warns them in Matthew 24 to “flee to the mountains” (v. 16). As Satan persecutes, God delivers. The time element is 1260 days for this protection, the same time period of the power of the Antichrist who heads this trouble for Israel.

We agree with James H. McConkey that “the fleeing to the wilderness and the deliverance by God are real events however difficult may be the interpretation of the symbolism of the eagle wings, the flood of waters, and the opening earth which swallowed up the latter. These will all be plain enough when fulfilled. That they stand for realities of deliverance one cannot doubt any more than doubt the divided sea, or Israel preserved in the wilderness of old. It is the same miracle-working God, saving His own, in both cases.” (*The Book of Revelation*, p. 77)

As to what “wilderness” this is to which Israel will flee, Isaiah 63:1-6 and 34:1-6 may have the answer. “Who is this who comes from Edom, with garments of glowing colors from Bozrah, this One who is majestic in His apparel, marching in the greatness of His strength? ‘It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save.’ Why is your apparel red?... ‘I have trodden the winepress... their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments... For the day of vengeance was in My heart.’” See also the valley mentioned in Zechariah 14:1-7. If these Israelites flee to Bozrah, Edom, they will see Christ there (see chapter 18 of this book).

Edom is “a mountainous and extremely rugged country, about 100 miles long. Extending from Moab on both sides of the Arabah (Great Rift Valley)... connecting the southern part of the Dead Sea with the gulf of Akaba (see verses given, *Davis Bible Dictionary*). Bozrah was an important city, as was Sela, or Petra.

To the caves in the rocks of this rugged uninhabitable region the remnant of Israel may flee for this 3½ years of God’s protection.

Part Three: War in Heaven Revelation 12:7-17

“There was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

“And prevailed not; neither was there place found any more in heaven.

“And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him” (12:7-9) KJ).

Michael the archangel (Jude 9; Dan. 10:5-14) is God’s appointed guard over Israel (Dan. 12:1). Here in Revelation he and his holy heavenly angels are victorious over Satan and his wicked angels who are persecuting the woman (Israel). Satan and his host will be cast down to earth. This will be the beginning of the Tribulation period predicted by Daniel (12:1). A loud heavenly voice shouted:

“Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night” (v. 10).

The “brethren,” however, “overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death” (v. 11).

The heavens will rejoice then, but the earth will quake. “Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time” (v. 12, NAS).

Naturally the Devil is enraged after being defeated by Michael. So he will go forth now to continue to persecute the Woman, Israel.

“When the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child. And the two great wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, in order that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and a half, from the presence of the serpent” (vv. 13, 14 NAS).

Once again it is emphasized that the remnant of Israel shall escape this persecution by flying into the wilderness. Undoubtedly some will think this refers to America coming to Israel’s aide with planes to convey her to Petra, but there is no proof of this. Israel appears to be alone with no friends at this time (Jer. 30:13; Zech. 14:1-5).

THE END TIMES TIME LINE

However, in this verse we have proof that a time, times, and the dividing of time is the same as 1260 days, mentioned in 12:6. It is also the same period as the 42 months of 13:5 – 3½ years.

When the Devil sees that this group of Israelites has been protected from him, he will go off “to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus” (v. 17. Christian Jews, possibly the 144,000 sealed Israelites).

Chapter 14

ANTICHRIST

PART ONE: A Short Summary

We have now come to Revelation 13, which informs us of the Antichrist and the False Prophet and their 3½-year reign over earth before they are removed by Messiah after His coming. But first, let us give an overall look at what the Bible has to say about this last-day deceiver.

The Apostle John, by revelation, said, “**You heard that antichrist is coming**, even now many antichrists have risen; from this we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not really of us” (1 John 2:18).

Scripture indicates that a strong wicked force from the Assyria/Babylonia area will be in existence at the end of the age, will invade Israel, but will be destroyed by Messiah. This force will be led by the evil and powerful Antichrist.

Antichrist is called by several different names or designations in the Bible.

1. **LITTLE HORN** of Daniel 7 and 8.
2. **The BEAST of Revelation 13**, same as Little Horn.
3. **The ASSYRIAN**. Micah 5. Isaiah 10. 14:24-26. 30:26, 31. 31:4,8,9.
(See chapter 13 of *Prophecies of the End of the Age*)
4. The **MAN OF SIN** of 2 Thessalonians 2.
5. The **VILE PERSON** of Daniel 11. (See Anthony Buzzard’s *Daniel Eleven and Twelve*)
6. The **PRINCE WHO IS TO COME** of Daniel 9.
7. The **KING OF THE NORTH** of Daniel 11.

It is apparent that Daniel, in chapters 7 through 12, is warning us who live in the last days of the coming of a wicked end-time ruler in the Middle East who will have tremendous power for a limited time.

Here is a short synopsis.

The Little Horn in Daniel

1. Daniel 7. A very powerful king called LITTLE HORN, after a 3½-year oppression of Israel, is to be overthrown by the Kingdom of God being established on earth.
2. Daniel 8. This very powerful LITTLE HORN will rise “at the time of the end” and “stand up against the Prince of princes” (Jesus Christ). He will come from one of the four divisions of the old Grecian empire, namely the Seleucus division – Syria / Iraq.
3. Daniel 9. During the 70th week, still future according to Jesus, a wicked prince of great power will reign seven years, until the “consummation” (end). In the middle of that period he shall set up the ABOMINATION in the Temple. “A complete destruction,” one God has “decreed,” will be “poured out on the one who makes desolate.”

THE END TIMES TIME LINE

4. Daniel 11. “At the time of the end” a mighty and wicked king shall invade Israel and “plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain,” but he shall be destroyed. He will be responsible for the “time of trouble, such as never was...,” which will be followed by the resurrection of the dead (Daniel 12:1, 2). He is called the King of the north and is the same one as the one in Daniel 8.

5. Daniel 12. This chapter explains several things that will happen as this age ends and the new age begins – including the Great Tribulation (the 3½-year period of the persecution of the people of God), the resurrection, and eternal life being given.

The Beast of Revelation 13

1. To rise out of the sea (of people, Rev. 17:15).
2. Has seven heads, ten horns, ten crowns (see Rev. 17:9-12; Dan. 7:19-27).
3. Main body like a leopard; feet of a bear; mouth of a lion (cp. Dan. 7:1-6).
4. Power and authority from the devil. Notice Daniel 8:24, “His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power.”
5. “It was given him to make war with the saints and overcome them; and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. And all who dwell on the earth shall worship him, everyone whose name has not been written... in the book of life of the Lamb” (vv. 7, 8).
6. One of his heads wounded, healed. All the world wondered.
7. World: “Who is like him? Who is able to make war against him?”
8. Blasphemous.
9. Power for forty-two months (3½ years).
10. Makes war with the saints, overcomes them (see Dan. 7:25; 8:24; 12:7).
11. Power over all nations. All on earth shall worship him, except God’s people.
12. This Beast carries the wicked woman, “BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH” (see Rev. 17).
13. Beast shall have the support of ten kings for “one hour” (short time, Rev. 17:12).
14. Beast will fight Christ when He comes, be defeated and destroyed (Rev. 17:14; 19:19, 20).

The Man of Sin

Summary of 2 Thessalonians 2:1-9

Before Christ comes, there will be a falling away from the faith, and the man of sin will be revealed. He will claim to be God while at the same time belittling the things of the one true God. He will sit in the temple of God. He will perform miracles and signs to deceive people into following him, but these will be from Satan.

Continue the story in Revelation 13:11-17. He will give life to a statue and make people worship it. He will put an identifying mark on everyone’s forehead or right hand, the mark of the beast. True Christians (who are still not immortalized at this time) must BEWARE of this false leader, for he will lead people to their death (Rev. 14:9-11). We must “try the spirits whether they are of God” (1 John 4:1).

He will come to his end (after 42 months of this). Our Lord Jesus Christ will destroy him with the breath of His mouth and the splendor of His coming (back to 2 Thess. 2:8).

The picture is clear. A cunning and powerful ANTICHRIST shall appear just before Christ comes. The word revealed: “he shall be **revealed**” is the same Greek word that is used about Christ being **revealed**: “The day when the Son of man is revealed” (Luke 17:30). We can expect a huge fanfare for Antichrist when he is “revealed.” We know Christ will come (be revealed) with all the holy angels in Power and Great Glory (Matt. 24:30; 25:31). Here is a counterfeit Christ.

The ASSYRIAN

The Antichrist is called “The Assyrian” in six passages in the Old Testament. As we noted before, in the end-time a powerful evil force from the Assyria-Babylon area will invade Israel but be destroyed by the Messiah, Jesus Christ. It seems clear that this “Assyrian” is the same one as “Little Horn” in Daniel.

In Micah 5, in the passage about “the Assyrian” invading Israel (v. 5), notice that the land of Assyria and the land of Nimrod are synonymous. Nimrod founded Babylon (Gen. 10:10. “They (Israel) will rule the land of Assyria with the sword, the land of Nimrod with drawn sword” (v. 6, NIV). So we can see a connection between the “Assyrian” and end-time Babylon, mentioned so often in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Revelation.

The Assyrian empire held sway over Babylonia, parts of Media, Armenia, Syria, Cyprus, Arabia, and Egypt for 700 years (Davis Bible Dictionary). Their religion was borrowed from the Babylonians, except that the name of their chief god was Ashur, instead of Bel, the chief idol of the Babylonians. By 625 B. C. Babylonian independence was secured by Nabopolassar, and the great Babylonian empire began to run roughshod over the Middle East. So Babylon rose out of the ashes, so to speak, of the Assyrian empire. Both ruled over the same territory. It was the same system, only under different rulers. When we read of Assyria and Babylon in these end-time prophecies, we understand they are speaking of the same people, the same system, and the same territory – the center of which is now Iraq.

Prophecies of the coming “Assyrian”

1. Micah 5:1-15. Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem, and would be smitten on the cheek (vv 1, 2). Messiah’s strength would come from God, and “at that time (end-time) He will be great to the ends of the earth” (v. 4). “This One (Messiah) will be our peace when the Assyrian shall come into our land” (v. 5). “He (Christ) will deliver us from the Assyrian.” (v. 6)

The gist of this is that the “Assyrian” shall invade the land of Israel at the end. Christ will deliver Israel from him. Then redeemed Israel will be among many peoples like dew from the LORD, giving them hope, also, of redemption (see Zech. 8:20-23).

2. Isaiah 10. The subject is Assyria, whom God has used in times past to chasten Israel (vv. 5-11). But the Assyrian shall also exist in the end-time, “when the LORD has completed all His work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, He will say, ‘I will punish the... arrogant heart of the king of Assyria and the pomp of his high looks’” (v. 12). God’s wrath will be poured out “in a single day.” The remnant of Israel shall return and cleave to the LORD. A “complete destruction” is decreed on this “Assyrian.” God says, “O My people who dwell in Zion, do not fear the Assyrian... In that day... his burden will be removed from your shoulders” (24-27).

Once again we see one called “the Assyrian oppressing Israel in the day when God *will finish His whole work on Mount Zion and Jerusalem.*” What will this *work* include? Christ coming, Israel seeing Him, true repentance by the remnant of Israel, and their cleansing (Zech. 12 and 13). When God sets His own King on Mt. Zion (Psa. 2:6), the power of the Assyrian shall be destroyed and the remnant of Israel shall return.

Notice that Isaiah 11 – the millennial reign of Christ – follows chapter 10 – the overthrow of the Assyrian.

3. Isaiah 14:24-26. “I (God) will *break the Assyrian* in my land (Palestine).” This happened in the past, a type of the coming fulfillment of the demise of Antichrist by Christ in the end (see Rev. 19:19-21).

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4. Isaiah 30:26, 31. At the time “the light of the sun shall be sevenfold... in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of His people... Through the voice of the LORD shall the Assyrian be beaten down” (KJ). See Revelation 16:8 and 9.

5. Isaiah 31:4-9. When the LORD comes down “to fight for Mount Zion... *then shall the Assyrian fall by the sword...* and his princes shall be afraid of the ensign” (Christ). In the very next verse, Isaiah 32:1, Christ and His saints are seen ruling: “Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.” (See Rev. 20:4-6.)

6. Isaiah 19:23-25. After the “Assyrian” Antichrist is destroyed, the people of Assyria will turn to God and they will be saved, and be a third with the repentant of Egypt and Israel. All three will be God’s people.

Conclusions About Antichrist

1. He will come from the Syria / Iraq region.
2. His power is from the Devil.
3. He will have power over the whole world.
4. His seven-year rule will be divided into two 3½-year segments. At the beginning of the last half (the middle of his rule), he will put the Abomination in the Temple which will begin the 3½-year Great Tribulation when he makes war on the people of God and overcomes them.
5. He will produce great signs and wonders to deceive the world into thinking he is God.
6. He will sit in the temple of God.
7. Christ will destroy him when He comes in power and glory. (The saints rise to meet Christ in the air, are resurrected and changed to be immortal as the angels are sent out to gather them.) (Matt. 24:31; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-54)

Thus, instead of a pre-tribulation rapture, we see a pre-wrath rapture, the people of God experiencing the Great Tribulation, but not experiencing the Wrath of God which follows (1 Thess. 5:9, 10). The Book of Revelation bears this out (chapters 6-20).

Chapter 15

ANTICHRIST

PART TWO: Revelation 13

Now that we have seen some of the places Antichrist is mentioned in the Bible we come in more detail to Revelation 13, the vision of the two “Beasts,” Antichrist and False Prophet (see Rev. 19:20).

The Time Frame

This scene is plainly in the Tribulation part of the end-time time line, in that 3½-year period Jesus called the Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:21). The Antichrist, here called the Beast, will be allowed to have authority over earth “for forty-two months” (v. 5). This is the same time period in which the two Witnesses prophesy in Jerusalem, and the Woman (Israel) is persecuted and finds God’s protection in the Wilderness. All three events will happen at the same time.

Christ has not yet come, but He will at the end of this period. That is brought out in Revelation 14 and 19, also 16:15. God’s seven Vials of Wrath have not yet been poured out (they are in Revelation 15 and 16).

Babylon is not yet destroyed. In this chapter, Revelation 13, we are given a picture of Antichrist at work in the last half of Daniel’s 70th week, after he has set the Abomination in the Temple beginning the Great Tribulation (see the chart in chapter 1).

Antichrist’s Background (Rises “out of the Sea”) Verse 1

John saw a beast coming up out of the sea. This is an obvious reference to Daniel 7. Daniel saw in a night vision this scene: “four great beasts came up from the sea” (v. 3). Daniel interprets this in verse 17: “These great beasts, which are four, are four kings (kingdoms), which shall arise out of the earth.” (They will be followed by the Kingdom of God. v. 27). The “many waters” of Revelation 17:1 are interpreted in verse 15 as “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” Antichrist will be a man, an evil mortal man rising out of the peoples of the earth.

Rises out of the Four Kingdoms of Men Verse 2

Daniel 2 and 7 are the “foundation” of prophecy. They speak of four great kingdoms of men that will have control over earth in succession. In their days God shall establish His righteous Kingdom over earth. The first three are named in Daniel. They are: Babylon, Medo Persia, and Greece. What Kingdom is number four? Many think it was Rome. But there may be another interpretation based on a study of **Little Horn**, the coming Antichrist of the End Time. In Daniel 7:19-27, Little Horn comes from the **FOURTH** Kingdom of men. In Daniel 8:8-11, Little Horn comes out of the **THIRD KINGDOM**, from one of its four divisions. We know **LITTLE HORN** will appear “at the time of the end” (Dan. 8:17). Daniel 8:25 says, “He shall also stand up against the Prince of princes,” who is **JESUS CHRIST** (Rev. 1:5).

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Little Horn will come from one of the four divisions of the Grecian Kingdom. Which one? They are listed below. We showed in *Prophecies of the End of the Age* that he will come from the Seleucian division. Seleucus took the Syrian/Iraq portion of the Greek Empire after Alexander's death.

I quote from my above-mentioned book:

"The legs and feet of the image are called 'the fourth kingdom.' (Dan. 2:40). There are only four human kingdoms. What is this fourth empire? Some think it was Rome. One reason we think Rome does not qualify as the fourth empire is that the last-day powerful wicked king will come from the area controlled by one of the divisions of the Grecian (3rd) empire, namely Iraq/Syria (Dan. 8:8,9). Rome did not possess all the dominion God gave Nebuchadnezzar. Hadrian proclaimed the Euphrates River as Rome's east boundary. All the land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers was never controlled by Rome. Who, then, did control all of Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom?

"We suggest it was the Arabs."

We must agree with J. W. McClain when he said, "Since Alexander's empire only one power has qualified for a place in the image by possessing the territory of the whole dominion, and that is the Arabian Empire. It possessed all the territory held by Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Grecia. It went beyond these empires, possessing North Africa and Spain. The Arabian empire stood a thousand years. It was the most extensive empire the world has ever seen."

From my *Prophecies of the End of the Age*: "In our library study of the Arabian empire, we found it could actually be called the march of the religion of Islam through Asia, up into south Russia, over into India, and down into Africa. Notice that the Arabs' Mohammedan religion is in direct conflict with the Jewish hope and the Christian religion. To the Arabs, the Messiah we acknowledge is not the Savior.

"Notice that the Arabs feel they should have Palestine because Abraham was Ishmael's father (the Arabs' father). Thus, they feel the promises made to Abraham of inheriting Canaan forever are to them. The other father of the Arabs was Esau, who despised his birthright (The Abrahamic Promises) and later 'sought it carefully with tears' (Heb. 12:15-17), but to no avail. God gave Palestine to Israel. This Arab/Israel hostility which began with Ishmael and Esau has carried over to the present day. The one main avowed desire of the 1,200,000,000 Arabs is to annihilate Israel."

The Arabian empire was made up of many individual sheikdoms, each having its own territory. It had no real government as such. Several caliphs and reformers tried to unite all the Arabs but were not very successful (see Funk and Wagnall's Encyclopedia).

Read of the fourth kingdom in Daniel 2 and 7 and see if the Arabian empire does not qualify as the fourth kingdom of men.

"The kingdom shall be divided" (Dan. 2:41).

"Strong as iron... Partly strong and partly broken" (Dan. 2:40, 42).

"They will not cleave one to another" (Dan. 2:43).

"It was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns" (Dan. 8:7).

Mark my words. Islam and the Arabs will be a force to be reckoned with in the last days. This writer understands the ten horns will be Arab nations, and Little Horn will come up after them and subdue three of them.

This "Beast" Man of Revelation 13 is a COMPOSITE, a compressed inclusive version of the Four "Beast" Kingdoms of Men that will rule the earth until they are overcome by Christ at His coming. He will be the last wicked leader of the earth's finite worldly kingdoms. Revelation 11:15 explains: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (KJ). This whole 2600 + year system of man's rule over earth will be ended and Christ will rule 1000 years. Daniel said, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed... it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever (2:44). He

explained that the elements of this mortal system of earth's government would be "broken to pieces together" (2:35). Antichrist will be the last element of Man's rule over earth.

Notice the main body of the Beast. It was like a leopard. The feet were like the feet of a bear. The mouth was like the mouth of a lion. The leopard is explained in Daniel 2:39 and 8:21 as being the third kingdom of men, the Grecian Kingdom. Little Horn Antichrist shall come from this third kingdom, particularly from one of the four divisions of the Grecian Empire (Dan. 8:9), namely the Seleucius division, which controlled the Syria and Iraq area (See my first book, Prophecies of the End of the Age, chapters 9 and 10).

Notice more precisely this leopard body of the Beast, the Grecian part of the kingdoms of men. After Alexander the Great died his four generals divided his kingdom four ways.

Ptolemy took Egypt.

Cassander took Greece, Macedonia, and Thessaly.

Lysimachus took Thrace, Cappadocia, and the north part of Asia Minor.

Seleucus took the part we know today as Syria/Iraq.

"Little Horn" (Antichrist) will come from the Seleucian part of the Grecian Empire. He is called "The Assyrian" by the prophets Micah and Isaiah. All four great kingdoms controlled this area between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, in the plain of Shinar, which is now called Iraq.

Source of His Power

Verse 2

"The dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority."

The Devil is called "the prince of this world" (John 16:11). It is the Devil that seeks to take out of men's hearts the seed of the Kingdom, lest they be saved (Luke 8:12). It was the Devil who offered Christ all the kingdoms of the world if Christ would worship him (Luke 4:5-7):

"The Devil, taking Him up into a high mountain, showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, all this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine." (KJ).

The Devil and the coming Antichrist will be on the same evil and unrighteous side. The Devil will give Antichrist his power and will support Antichrist. God will allow the Devil to give Antichrist power over the whole earth (Rev. 13:7, 8), but only for a very short time, namely three and a half years (Rev. 13:5).

The Beast's Seven Heads and Ten Horns

This writer agrees with Walvoord's statement that "Some consider the seven heads as successive phases of governmental and political history... the successive idea seems to be borne out by Revelation 17:10-12 where the heads are indicated as being successive rulers" (*Revelation*, p. 198).

"The seven heads... are seven kings (kingdoms): five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come... the beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is of the seven, and he goes to destruction." (NAS)

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Some think these are seven rulers in the Roman Empire. Others think “they are successive phases of governmental and political history” (above), as Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome or the Arabian Empire, plus a world government to come, possibly Assyria/ Babylon, with Antichrist as number 8.

It is interesting to notice Daniel does not mention the seven heads, only the ten horns. Perhaps his interpretation of the kingdoms of men sufficed for the heads. But he specifically mentions ten horns – out of Kingdom 4, and that Little Horn comes up “after them,” is different from them, and overcomes three of them (Dan. 7:23-24). Little Horn will speak against God, wear out the saints of God, and try to change “times and seasons” for three and a half years (v. 25).

The enigma can be resolved by regarding the seven great kings as successive, while the ten horns reign simultaneously, receiving their authority from the Beast (Rev. 17:12). But they reign only “one hour,” or a very short time. Notice again that these ten kings (Nations) will reign simultaneously with Antichrist for only a short time, by his authority. Let’s read Revelation 17:12-14.

“And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings, who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. “These have one purpose and they give their power and authority to the beast. “These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.”

Looking ahead, the ten horns will “hate the whore, and shall make her desolate, and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire” (17:16). In our study of Revelation 17 we identify the harlot/whore with apostate religion. It is called “Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth.” She is drunk with the blood of saints. Ancient Babylon was the originator of false religion.

Verse 18 says God is behind all this, to bring about His purpose. “God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose by having a common purpose, and by giving their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God should be fulfilled.” God uses one evil group to blot out another evil group and Christ shall overcome the remainder.

The Wounded Head

13:3

If the seven “kings” refer to seven successive world governments, because Antichrist is singled out as being an ASSYRIAN coming from Assyria (Iraq), we would think the wounded head would refer to Iraq. All the world “wondered” that this head was “healed.”

Recently the U. S. and the United Nations occupied and overthrew Iraq in the War of 2003 and 04. Her country and government is in shambles. If she rose again to great power, I can see why the world would be amazed.

Notice that though one head is “wounded,” the Beast itself is not said to be dead. We notice the second beast of Revelation 13, called the False Prophet in 19:20, tells the people of earth to make a statue of Antichrist, and “he had power to give life”(KJ) to that statue (13:14,15). It talked, and caused every person to be killed that wouldn’t worship this statue (v. 15). This man who is Antichrist’s right-hand man, will also be the originator of “the mark of the beast” on people’s foreheads and right hands. His number, 666, is the number of a **man** (v. 18).

Both Beast and False Prophet shall be overcome by Christ and thrown into the lake of fire (19:20).

World Worship

13:3, 4

“The whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast; and they worshipped the dragon (devil), because he gave his authority to the beast, and they worshipped the beast, saying, ‘Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war against him?’” (13:3).

“Authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given him. And all who dwell on earth shall worship him” except those whose names are in the book of life (13:7, 8).

The extent of the coming Antichrist’s power is mentioned here three times. He will have power over all the people on earth the last half of Daniel’s week. God will allow this for “42 months.” Yet while he is in control of the world he will wreak havoc among the redeemed ones on earth. He will actively seek out the people of God to destroy them.

Antichrist’s Character and Evil Work

13:5-7

“There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies... and he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven” (Christ, heavenly angels).

“And it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them.”

This is exactly what Daniel foresaw in visions of the end-time. Notice Daniel 7:21 and 25.

“I kept looking, and that horn (Little Horn) was waging war with the saints and overpowering them... And he will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations (change, KJ) in times and in law, and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time” (3½ years).

Then his judgment shall come, his dominion shall be taken away, and he will be annihilated. But while he has authority over earth, Antichrist will arrogantly boast against and blaspheme the only true God. He will set up a form of religion in the Jewish Temple that forces men to fall down before him and worship him as GOD. (2 Thess. 2:4. Perhaps Isaiah 14:12-17 was a preview of Antichrist). The power he will have to perform miracles (2 Thess. 2:9-11) will deceive the world into thinking he may be God.

He will boldly seek out God’s people to destroy them, and he will destroy many of them. But take courage. Those who overcome him by the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 12:11) may lose life, but he cannot take from them their faith in the promise of Eternal Life in the Resurrection. “Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do” (Luke 12:4). Remember that the Faithful Ones in Hebrews 11 all “died in faith,” looking forward to the Day of Eternal Reward. “Behold,” Jesus said, “I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done” (Rev. 22:12).

Jesus will easily destroy Antichrist, killer of His people. “Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming” (2 Thess. 2:8. See Rev. 19:19-21).

The Second Beast – The **False Prophet**
Revelation 13:11-18
Revelation 19:20

Whereas the first beast man will be a powerful political figure, this second beast man will be a religious figure with power to perform miracles.

Jesus predicted that in the last days “false christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect” (Matt. 24:24). Through the centuries, even up to today, many false teachers have risen and have deceived many. Yet this last false prophet will be the greatest deceiver of all.

“I saw another beast come up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke like a dragon.

“And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed.

“And he performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men.

“And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life.

“And there was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast might even speak and cause that as many as do not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

“And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead.

“And he provides that no one should be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name.

“Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty six.”

Notice how this religious “prophet” mimics the true Messiah. He looks like a Lamb. But he speaks like a dragon. Also notice the mimicking of fire from heaven. On Pentecost, tongues of fire came down from heaven upon the apostles and they were filled with the Holy Spirit of God. He calls down fire from heaven also. Then notice that this image (statue) of the beast breathes and speaks at his command. It looks like he has the power of creation. But it is all a trick to deceive, and those who worship the beast and take this mark will feel the Wrath of God forever (Rev. 14:9-11).

False Prophet and Beast Work Together

Both have great authority. But False Prophet is the tool of the Beast, bowing to Beast’s position as World King, making the people of earth worship the Beast. He supports the Antichrist. As the Holy Spirit seals men with the seal of God, this man seals them with the mark of the Antichrist. The Holy Spirit is “the spirit of truth” (John 14:17; 16:13). This man is the spirit of deception, and will cause all those who listen to him to die. As the Holy Spirit leads believers to worship the only true God and His Son Christ, this second beast compels men to worship the Antichrist and his image. As GOD’S Spirit is the life-giver, the beast is the life-destroyer. Both Antichrist and False Prophet will suffer the same final destiny – the lake of fire.

False Prophet's Characteristics

He comes out of "the earth," in contrast to the Antichrist who is said to come from the sea (of people?). But he has a similar nature to that of the beast. Both are devilish.

He looks like a Lamb. Christ is called the Lamb of God (John 1:29). False Prophet is a counterfeit. This also suggests his religious connection.

He speaks as a dragon. This implies his words are devil-originated. He also, like Antichrist, is a tool of the Devil. He appears to be the saving Lamb, but his words bring death.

He exercises all the power of the first beast. Both men work hand in hand. False Prophet is Antichrist's right hand man. The first beast received his power from the dragon. So does this man.

He causes all people to worship Antichrist. This is his main purpose, to be the Prophet of Anti-Christ, as John was forerunner of Christ. Yet his power shall continue the 3½ years until both are destroyed together.

He does great wonders (similar to Elijah who called down fire from heaven). He will do miracles, again mimicking the true Christ. He will cause this image/statue of the Antichrist to breathe (Gk. *pneuma* – breath. Not *zoe* – life), and speak. Ventriloquists have done this for years; remember Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy? With all the modern technology, this will be a snap. But it will be so sophisticated as to deceive unsuspecting people. A few miracles, fire from heaven – and people will believe him. This shows how far most end-time people will be from Jehovah. True believers will not believe this, but they will be sorely tempted to believe him (Matt. 24:24).

He causes everyone to receive the Antichrist's mark. No one will be able to buy or sell without it. This mark will identify a person as being a worshipper of Antichrist. Woe unto any person who takes this mark! What this mark will be has been asked for years. A book was written explaining it was credit cards, or bank cards. Another idea is that it will be a computer chip implanted in a person's forehead or hand that contains all the information about him, easily read by Antichrist's computer. These chips are powered by a lithium battery, which, when it leaks, causes a great sore. Some link this to Revelation 16:2. Whatever it is, it will probably be obvious to true believers when the time comes.

This scene makes us think about Nebuchadnezzar and his image. He wanted all men to bow to it. Men have not changed much through the centuries. They still try to rule their world their own way. The wise know God's way is the right way.

How good that this religious, deceiving and cruel monster will be cut off at Christ's coming!
The Beast and False Prophet – burned alive. Little do they realize.

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Chapter 16

JIHAD (pronounced Gee'hod) and the Last-Day Ten Kings of Daniel and Revelation

Jihad is the religious war of followers of the Islam religion against infidels. Infidels are those who are not followers of Mohammed – notably Jews and Christians. Jihad was established, among other principles, by Mohammed the founder of the Islam religion (570-632) and recorded in the Koran, the “Bible” to the followers of Islam. The Koran, supposedly heavenly revelations to Mohammed, became the Authorized Version for the religion of Islam in 650 A.D. Its 114 chapters contain “the religious, social, civil, commercial, military, and legal code of the Moslems” (Funk and Wagnall’s Encyclopedia, p. 5428). The chief doctrines are: there is one God and one true religion (theirs), all men will face a final judgment, the just will be rewarded with eternal bliss while sinners will be punished, when men turned from God, He sent prophets to lead the way back. The greatest of these were Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed. The Koran is a parallel to the Jewish Old Testament (ibid). Jesus is seen only as a prophet, not Savior. Full commitment to Allah will bring salvation. The jihad movement has as its design the conquering of the world by Islam.

Today’s jihadists in Iraq and elsewhere in the Arab nations have said, “Jihad is not made by us. It is made by the Prophet (Mohammed) and will continue to Judgment Day.” (Time, July 5, 2004, p. 27)

Islamists call it “Holy War.” They say they are fighting for “Allah.” A main leader of the Wahhabi sect of Islam, giving an interview to Time magazine, said, “The war in Iraq is one of liberation, not just of a country, but of Muslim lands, Muslim people, Islam itself. There is no room for negotiation with the enemy, no common ground.” (ibid, p. 22). What he and his brother jihadists offer is endless “righteous” resistance. “Maybe this war will take a long time. Maybe this is a world war.” (It was Muslim jihadists that flew the planes into the Twin Towers on 9/11 that caused such a massacre of innocent lives.)

“These militants are turning the resistance into an international jihadist movement” said one U. S. intelligence official. Their ruthlessness is seen every day in their attacks in Iraq, blowing up police stations, killing Americans and innocent civilians. They do not grieve over the dead civilians because they believe they go straight to “heaven”.

Now (July 2004) the insurgents are “calling on Muslims outside Iraq to join the fight.” “U. S. intelligence officials say they now believe Iraq is a magnet for fanatical Moslems around the world.” (ibid. page 27) “Insurgents in Iraq aim to create an Islamic state and turn the country into a terrorist haven.”

It seems very possible to this Bible student that this JIHAD movement in Iraq, this Holy War, will expand to include all the radical Moslems in the world. (There are over a billion Moslems in the world today.) One of their main leaders in Iraq is Abu Mousab al-Zarqawi. It is our educated guess that the Arab Jihad movement will play a large part in providing support for the Assyrian Antichrist. Ten last-day anti-Semitic Arab Islamic nations will very possibly use jihad (a holy war against infidels to Islam) in supporting his desire to control the world. (Dan. 7:7-27; Rev. 13:1; 17:12-16; Psalm 83).

The Ten Kings

Daniel, by inspiration, predicted ten kings coming out of earth’s fourth worldwide kingdom. Another king will come up among them (Antichrist). This “Horn” will make war with the saints and overcome them until the King sent by the Ancient of Days establishes GOD’S Kingdom on earth (Dan. 7:7-27).

This puts these ten kings in existence in the end time just before the Kingdom of God is established here on earth.

Revelation 13:1 and 17:12-16 speak of these same ten kings. They will support the Beast (Antichrist) for a time, but will hate the woman who is riding on (directing) the Beast and will destroy her. They will

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then make war against Christ but He shall defeat them: “These (ten kings) will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings...”

Does the Bible name these ten last-day kings? Psalm 83 appears to do so. These are (Arab) nations who say, “*Come, and let us cut them (Israel) off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee (Israel).*” Notice who they are:

Psalm 83

1. Edom. Abraham’s grandson Esau’s name was changed to Edom after he despised his birthright (the Abrahamic Promises) and sold it to Jacob for a bowl of pottage (Gen. 25:30). The Edomites were descendants of Esau. They settled in the southeast section of Palestine (Idumea) on the east side of the Arabah or great rift valley. Moab was to their north. Their country lay along the route the Israelites took from Sinai to Jericho.

Edom was called the land or mountain of Seir (Gen. 36:8; 32:3; Josh. 24:4; Ezek. 35). Sela was the capitol, Bozrah was a main city, and Teman is mentioned (see chapter 18 of this book). Esau’s many descendants are listed in Genesis 36. They are called “Dukes” or sheiks who ruled this land long before Moses appeared on the scene (Gen.36).

The Edomites refused to allow Israel to pass through their land as Israel journeyed from Egypt to the promised land (Num. 20:14-21). Saul and David overcame them (1 Sam. 14:47; 1 Ki. 11:15, 16). In Jehoshaphat’s reign, Edom, Moab, and Ammon tried to invade Israel but were miraculously destroyed (2 Chron. 20).

Edom is condemned by the prophets (Isa. 34:5-15; 63:1-4; Jer. 49:10-18; Ezek. 25:12-14; Amos 1:11,12; Obadiah 1). The Edomites worshipped idols (2 Chron. 25:14). This country is now part of Jordan.

2. The Ishmaelites. Ishmael was the son of Abraham by Sarah’s Egyptian servant Hagar but Sarah’s son Isaac was the son who inherited the Abrahamic promises (Gen. 17:21; Gal. 4:28-30). Even though Abraham made this mistake, God did give Ishmael a blessing (Gen. 17:18-21): “As for Ishmael... I will bless him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation” (17:20). Ishmael “was a wild man” (Gen. 16:12). “His hand will be against every man, and every man’s hand against him.” “Ishmael grew up in the wilderness of Paran, south of Canaan, where he lived by his bow. Eventually he married a wife from Egypt, his mother’s ancestral home (Gen. 21:3-21)” (*A Dictionary of the Bible*, by John Davis.) Ishmael and Esau were the fathers of the Arabs.

“Ishmaelite: The term is probably sometimes used as a general name for all the Abrahamic peoples from Egypt to the Euphrates, and perhaps to the Persian Gulf, their headquarters being in western Arabia” (*Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, p. 540). Evidently they were traders using caravans. In Genesis 37:25-28 it was evidently an Ishmaelite caravan that included a group of Midianites who bought Joseph from his brothers. See also Judges 8:22-24.

“Mohammed claimed descent from Ishmael... The claim is probable enough, since the pre-Mohammedan law of blood revenge, which required every one to know his ancestors for four generations back, would prevent all confusion in regard to race. And, after making due allowance of mixture with Keturahites (Abraham’s other descendants, Gen. 25:1-5), we may fairly regard the Arabs as an Ishmaelite race” (ibid).

Here is another line from Abraham that hated the God-chosen Isaac-Jacob line to whom were made the great Abrahamic promises. (These promises include the promise of the earth to the faithful in the Kingdom of God.) The Ishmaelites, too, will suffer the judgment of God for their attitude toward the chosen seed.

3. Moab. He was the son of the eldest daughter of Lot, born after the destruction of Sodom (Gen. 19:30-38). He was the founder of the Moabites, who established their home directly east of the Dead Sea.

The giants dwelt in this land before, but God gave this land to the children of Lot for an inheritance (Deut. 2). The Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites were enemies of God's chosen people Israel. These three nations are mentioned together a number of times in the Bible. They refused to allow Israel to pass through their lands as Israel journeyed from Sinai to Jericho. Moab is mentioned 167 times in the Old Testament. The entire 48th chapter of Jeremiah, plus Isaiah 15 and 16, and Ezekiel 25:8-11 give God's judgments on Moab. Daniel 11:40-45 predicts that these three nations shall escape being overthrown by Antichrist in the end-time (probably because they are on his side). These three nations now are called Jordan.

4. The Hagarenes (KJ), Hagriles (NAS). After being dispossessed by the two-and-a-half tribes of Israel whose inheritance lay east of the Jordan river in Gilead the Hagarenes dwelt on the east part of the tribe of Reuben (1 Chron. 5:10. 18-23). The power of the Hagarenes is seen by the force of 44,760 soldiers of these tribes sent against the Hagarenes, and by the wealth of their livestock (v. 18-21).

"It is generally supposed that the Hagarenes were descendants of Hagar. This is favored by the fact that of the three names, Jetur, Nephish, and Nodab, which are mentioned in 1 Chron. 5:19, apparently as names of Hagarite tribes or chiefs, two, Jetur and Nephish, appear in Gen.25:15 as names of the sons of Ishmael" (Unger's Bible Dictionary, p. 439.) The twelve sons of Ishmael are named in Genesis 25:12-18. "They settled from Havilah to Shur which is east of Egypt as one goes to Assyria." (Gen. 25:18)

Their father, Ishmael, dwelt south of Beersheba, in the wilderness of Paran (Gen. 21:21).

We only know the Hagarenes by the land that was taken from them in Gilead. As pastoral tribes they undoubtedly moved about over quite a large territory. Here in Psalm 83 they are listed as enemies of Israel, people who wanted the Isaac-Jacob line of Israel destroyed, as many Arabs and Palestinians do today. We must remember that neither Ishmael nor Esau have any inheritance in God's promises made to Abraham. The Arabs would like to inherit this land God promised to Israel and think that through Ishmael and Esau they have that right, but Scripture makes it plain they have no such rights. God told Abram "Unto thy seed (Isaac and Jacob) have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (Gen. 15:18-21).

5. Gebal (meaning mountain) was "the northern portion of the mountains of Edom (Antiq. ii; 9:1; Psa. 83:7); known also as Teman" (*A Dictionary of the Bible* by John Davis). Gebal "allied itself with Moabites and Arabians against Israel" (*Unger's Bible Dictionary*).

Here is another enemy that is against Israel that God will judge.

6. Ben-ammi, like Moab, was a son of Lot by his other daughter (Gen. 19:30-38; Deut. 2:19). "He is the father of the sons of Ammon to this day." "Ammon... dwelt E. and N. of Moab, from the Arnon to the Jabbok" (ibid, p. 45). Ammon was often in confederacies against Israel (Deut. 23:3, 4; Judg. 3:13; 2 Sam. 10:1-19). They were enemies of Israel. The sons of Lot had no share in the Abrahamic covenant. Notice Deuteronomy 23:3: "An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD." They were worshippers of the idol Chemosh.

"In the time of Justin Martyr (about 150 A. D.), the Ammonites were quite numerous, but in the time of Origen (about 186-254 A. D.) they were merged with the Arabs" (ibid).

7. Amalek was a grandson of Esau (Gen. 36:12) and chief for an Idumaeen tribe (v. 16). In the time of Abraham the Amalekites lived southwest of the Dead Sea (Gen. 14:7). In Moses' time they occupied the entire desert to the borders of Egypt and most of Sinai and south Palestine.

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“The Amalakies were always bitter foes of Israel.” (ibid, p. 41.) Once again we see animosity between Jacob and Esau carried down through the generations.

8. Philistia was an enemy of Israel located in what is now the Gaza Strip, a small country on the east coast of the Mediterranean from Gaza to Joppa. The country was about 50 miles long and 15 miles wide. This is the Plain of Sharon, a very fruitful plain. The Philistines were a powerful sea people, rivals of and enemies of Israel. They were non-Semitic and uncircumcised, and they came from the isle of Caphtor (Amos 9:7; Jer. 47:4). Jeremiah 47 is “The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Philistines.”

The strength of the Philistines lay in their governmental system of a league by the five main cities: Gaza, Ekron, Ashdod, Ashkelon, and Gath. Early they had a monopoly on iron, knowing how to smelt it and to make weapons and tools from iron (1 Sam. 13:19-22).

The Philistines were very religious, putting their war trophies “in the house of their idols.” (1 Sam. 31:9) They carried their gods into battle. (2 Sam. 5:21) Dagon their fish god had the hands and face of a man and the tail of a fish (1 Sam. 5:4; Judg. 16:23. They also worshipped Ashtaroth and Baal-zebul, which the Greeks later called Beelzebub, “the prince of the demons” (Matt. 12:24).

The judge Shamgar slew 600 Philistines with an ox goad (Judg. 3:31). Israel had been overrun by the Philistines for forty years at the time Samson was born (Judg. 13.) He began to deliver Israel from their hand but suffered death in the temple of Dagon. Later the Philistines overran Israel, destroying Shiloh and carried away the Ark of the Covenant which they later returned because of the calamities it caused them (1 Sam. 4.) Under Samuel, Israel recovered her territory from the Philistines (1 Sam. 7:1-14.)

Here is another idolatrous enemy of Israel that desired to see her destroyed. Today this area is called “The Gaza Strip.”

9. The inhabitants of Tyre. Tyre was a Phoenician city on the shore of the Mediterranean about forty miles north of Israel’s Megiddo. “It was composed of two parts – a rocky coast defense of great strength on the mainland, and a city upon a small but well-protected island, about half a mile from shore” (ibid, p. 1121). Isaiah spoke of Tyre as “the bestower of crowns, whose merchants were princes, whose traders were the honored of the earth” (23:8). David formed an alliance with them for trading purposes (2 Sam. 5:11; 1 Kings 5:1; 2 Chron. 2:3.) But later, when Ahab married Jezebel, the daughter of Sidon’s king, (1 Ki. 13:31) relations disintegrated, when Israel discovered that Phoenicia was buying Hebrew slaves and selling them to the Greeks and Edomites.

The prophets denounced the idolatry and wickedness of the city (Isa. 23:1-4; Jer. 25:22; Ezek. 26-28; Amos 1:9, 10; Zech. 9:2-4.) These passages show that God’s final judgments shall rest upon all these nations mentioned in Psalm 83.

10. Assyria (now Iraq). This country apparently had its beginning from Nimrod, descendant of Noah’s son Ham (Gen. 10:1-11). Nimrod is called “a mighty hunter before the LORD.” “Nimrod” means “to rebel” in Hebrew. Nimrod defied God. He “was a mighty hunter in defiance of God.” The beginning of his kingdom was Babel (associated with the tower of Babel and later, Babylon.) “From that land he went forth into Assyria, and built Nineveh” (v. 11, NAS).

Assyria was “a country on the river Tigris” (Davis Bible Dictionary). “It was originally the district dominated by the town of Asshur... With the growth of the city’s power and dominion, the name came to denote the region compassed by the Gordyaean Mountains of Armenia on the north, the ranges of Media on the east, and the little Zab River on the south. Westward it extended a short distance from the Tigris into Mesopotamia. This district is the Assyria proper of history.” (ibid.) Assyrian kings Tiglathpilezer, (1 Chron. 5:6, 26), Sennacherib (2 Chron. 32), and Shalmaneser (2 Ki. 17:3; 18:9) were enemies of Israel.

Today Iraq is also against Israel, God's chosen people. Isaiah and Micah call the coming last-day Antichrist "the Assyrian" (see chapter 14 of this book). He will come from Iraq, make a seven-year covenant with Israel, and put the Abomination in the Jewish temple, which will begin the Great Tribulation Jesus spoke about (see chapter 1).

Will Israel Be Wiped Out?

In the end time it may seem as though Israel will be overcome and destroyed. But God's plan is to restore Israel to her land forever after her iniquities have been purged (Rom. 11:26, 27). One of the main teachings in the Old Testament's Major and Minor Prophets is the restoration of Israel.

Isaiah by God's Spirit predicted, "The LORD shall set His hand the second time to recover the remnant of His people." (11:11).

Jeremiah said, "I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them" (33:26). See also 16:14-15; **23:5-8**; 30:1-24; 31:1-14, 31-40; 33:14-26.

Ezekiel said, "I will... gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them on the mountains of Israel" (34:13). See also 20:40-44; 34:11-15, 22-31; 36:6-12, and 24-38; 37:21-28; 39:25-29.

Amos gave this same hope in chapter 9, verses 11 through 15.

No, God will not allow Israel to be wiped out. After her great repentance for her sins, her great mourning, a fountain of cleansing will be opened to her and she will again be God's people (Zech. 12:9-13:9): "They will call on My name, and I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' and they will say, 'The LORD is my God.'"

Israel is God's example nation. Israel will show all nations that survive God's Judgment, by the way God has dealt with her and her reactions to God's working with her, how all nations may come to God in the reign of Christ (Ezek. 36:23; 38:23; 39:21-23). Israel shall be a blessing to the world (Rom. 11:12, 15). She will help lead the heathen people of earth to God (Zech. 8:20-23). She will be the chief nation on earth "The head and not the tail," in the millennial rule of Christ our Lord on a restored earth (Deut. 28:13; Acts 3:19-21).

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Chapter 17

THE RETURN OF CHRIST

Revelation 14:1-5

16:15

19:11-21

“And I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads” (Rev. 14:1).

The Great Tribulation Has Ended

The three events in the 3½-year Great Tribulation in Revelation 11, 12, and 13 have now come to an end:

- 1) The two Witnesses have prophesied in Jerusalem for the last 3½ years of this age (Rev. 11).
- 2) The remnant of Israel has fled to the wilderness where she is protected by God for 3½ years. (Rev. 12).
- 3) The Antichrist has ruled over earth for 3½ years (Rev. 13).
The last 3½ years of Antichrist’s seven years (Dan. 9:27) have come to a close.

At This Time God Will Send Christ back to the earth

(Acts 3:19-21; Psa. 110:1-4)

to:

- 1) Resurrect God’s people who meet Him in the air and escort Him to earth (1 Thess. 4:16, 17; John 5:28, 29; Dan. 12:1, 2).
- 2) Become KING OF KINGS over the earth, establishing God’s Kingdom on earth. (2 Tim. 4:1; Matt. 25:31; 19:28; Rev. 11:15).
- 3) Execute God’s Wrath and Judge the Earth (Rev. 19:11-15; Acts 17:31; 2 Tim. 4:1; Isa. 2:4; Jer. 23:5, 6; 33:15-16; Matt. 13:41; 2 Pet. 3:10,12; Rev. 20:12; Matt, 25:31-46) .
- 4) Reign over earth on David’s throne for 1000 years. Luke 1:32, 33; Rev. 20:4, 6; Psa. 2:6-9; Isa. 9:6, 7; 2 Sam. 7:13-16; Jer. 33:17-21; Acts 2:30; Matt. 25:31).

The Tribulation has ended. It is almost time for the Wrath of God. Jesus will come between the two – after the Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:29-31) and before God’s Wrath is poured out (Rev. 19:15). Rather than it being a Pre-Tribulation rapture, it will be a Pre-Wrath rapture. Christ is the One whom God has appointed to Judge the world (Acts 17:31; John 5:22) and He will be assisted in the Judgment by His people (Psa. 149:5-9; Rev. 2:26, 27; 3:21). God has also appointed Him to execute His Wrath (Rev. 19:11-15).

God’s coming Wrath was first announced in Revelation 6:17, right after the Sixth Seal was opened, and the sun was darkened. We’ve already seen that Joel prophesied that the sun would be darkened before the Day of the Lord’s Wrath (Joel 2:31). Notice again Revelation 6:12-17.

“And I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth... and the whole moon became like blood; “and the stars of the sky fell to the earth...“and the sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

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“And the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and every free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; “and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from **the wrath of the Lamb**; “for the great day of their wrath has come; and who is able to stand?”(Rev. 6:12-17).

The above passage will occur after the Great Tribulation of Seal Five has passed. Revelation is not written in chronological order. The main outline is given to keep us on track. But there are visions of things happening within that outline. We have to be alert and notice where in the main outline any particular vision happens.

So it is with Revelation chapters 11, 12, and 13. They belong in the Great Tribulation period. The terrible Wrath of God to come is announced as coming in Revelation 6:17, under Seal Six, but actually we pick it up again in Revelation 15 and 16, when God’s wrath is actually poured out.

THE FIVE EARTHQUAKES OF REVELATION

Five earthquakes are recorded in the book of Revelation – the first announcing the coming of Christ, while the other four are connected to the Wrath of God.

Notice the first one in Revelation 6:12, the great earthquake that will occur at the time of the darkening of the sun.

“There Was a Great Earthquake: and the Sun became Black...” – Revelation 6:12

This earthquake, the first of the 5, will occur when the 6th Seal is opened. It will happen in conjunction with the darkening of the sun, and moon, the stars falling, and the sky being split open. According to Jesus in Matthew 24, it will occur just before His sign appears in heaven and He comes in power and glory. Matthew does not mention it, but Jesus does to John in Revelation.

The second earthquake of Revelation is mentioned in 8:5, under the 7th Seal, announcing the 7 Judgments of God on the earth and heavens and the 3 Woes.

The third earthquake in Revelation, in 11:13 is in the Second Woe, after the Two Witnesses are slain. It brings earth's attention to the message of the 7th Angel's message: a Summary in 11:15 of events to happen, ending with the rewarding of the saints, the establishment of the Kingdom of God over earth, and the destruction of “those who destroy the earth.”

The fourth Revelation earthquake, in 11:19 will occur after this summary of events has been announced.

The 5th Revelation earthquake in 16:18 will be the granddaddy of all earthquakes, and will occur after the 7th Angel sounds the final Trump of God's Wrath. But to get the background for it we need to read Revelation 16, beginning with verse 13, a long passage.

“And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs;

“For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.

(“Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments, lest he walk about naked and men see his shame.”) v. 15.

“And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon. (Armageddon)

“And the seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air: and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, 'It is done.'

“And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder, and there was a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty.

“And the great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell.

And Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath.

“And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

“And huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, came down from heaven upon men; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague was extremely severe.”

All these earthquakes are announcing that the time for the Wrath of God has come. According to Revelation 16:12-16, this 5th earthquake will occur at Armageddon, just after “the kings of the whole world” are gathered together “for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.” Notice Christ's coming is mentioned in v. 15.

This passage agrees with the passage in **Zechariah 14**, when Christ's feet shall stand on the Mt. of Olives, “and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west...so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half to the south.” They speak of the same thing. We understand that the earthquake in Zechariah and the one in Revelation 16:18 refer to the same earthquake. Let's read Zechariah 14:1-5.

“Behold a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. (Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.” (KJ)

“For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, and half the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city.

“Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle.

“And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in the middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south...Then the LORD my God will come and all the holy ones with Him!”

Summary of Zechariah 14:1-4

1. The Day of the Lord is coming.
2. Israel's spoil will be divided.
3. God will cause all nations to come against Jerusalem for battle.
4. The city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, and half the city exiled.
5. Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations.
6. His feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives.
7. The Mount of Olives will split east and west, and a very great valley will be formed (Earthquake).
8. At the same time a 36-mile-long plain will be formed from Geba (10 miles north of Jerusalem) to Rimmon (10 miles from Beersheba), while Jerusalem will be “lifted up.” (This will be the site of millennial Jerusalem and the millennial Temple of Ezekiel 40-48. See the Millennial Temple booklet by the author.)

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WHAT DO WE SEE IN THESE TWO PASSAGES?

1. The gathering of the nations to Israel.
2. The coming of Christ.
3. The battle of Armageddon.

Zechariah 14 and Revelation 16 are speaking of the same thing. So does Revelation 19:11-21. The King of Kings, sitting on a white horse, comes from heaven “and in righteousness He judges and makes war... And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.” The result of this confrontation is that the King of Kings captures the Beast and False Prophet, “and the rest were killed by the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat upon the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.” The next scene is the Thousand Year reign of Christ with His people over earth in the Kingdom of God. Now we go back to

The Lamb and the 144,000 Standing on Mount Zion

The first view of the 144,000 of Israel in Revelation 7 told us that after that scary statement that the wrath of God was coming, comfort and assurance is given these 144,000 faithful Israelites that they will be sealed with the seal of God. In that same vision a great multitude of faithful ones is mentioned who have gone through the Great Tribulation. These have washed their robes in the blood of Christ. Both groups have experienced the Great Tribulation, are accounted worthy, and are able to sing the song of redemption.

Here in this chapter we are told what that seal is. It is the name of God and the name of Christ written in their foreheads. This tells us that these are people of God, and also people of Christ, as it goes on to say. We know that today there are Jews who devoutly worship God but have not yet seen Jesus as the Messiah. At this time, when Jesus comes and they see the prints in His hands, they realize their mistake, mourn for it, and a fountain of cleansing is opened to them (Zech. 12, 13). This fulfills that ancient prophecy. The saved of Israel are seen here standing with their Lord and Savior on Mount Zion. His feet had already stood on the Mount of Olives and the great Earthquake had occurred (Zech. 14:4; Acts 1:11). Now He is seen as standing on Mount Zion, about to take up His rule (Jer. 3:17; Isa. 8:18; 24:23; Joel 2:32).

Israel is not left out at the time of the end. God has not cast her off (Rom. 11:1, 11-27). “All Israel (that believe) shall be saved.” Christ will, in His Kingdom, fulfill to Israel all the rich promises God has promised her that are foretold in the Prophets.

The Lord does not see it necessary, here, to mention the Church who will rule with Him over His Kingdom, and will even assist Him in the Judgment (Psa. 149:5-9; Rev. 2:26,27; 20:6). This is revealed elsewhere. Yet they also, will be with Him from the time He returns to the Mount of Olives.

We see here a picture of the Glorious and Triumphant Christ following His second coming at the beginning of His reign over earth. After this scene has been described, the terrible wrath of God is described in the next two chapters, 15 and 16.

The Description of the 144,000

“And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth.

“These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb.

“And no lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless (forgiven)” (Rev. 14:3-5).

We are not told what this song is. Revelation 15:3 says that those who have been victorious over the Beast will sing the song of Moses. This may refer to Moses’ song in Deuteronomy 32:1-44 about God’s greatness and power and how He will save the righteous and destroy the wicked.

The Six Angels’ Messages

After seeing the vision of Christ standing on Mount Zion with the 144,000, six angels, one after another, give a summary, a list of events in order, of what will happen from the time Christ stands on Mt. Zion until the end of the battle of God at Armageddon.

J. B. Smith remarks that the rest of this chapter “presents a sevenfold division consisting of six angels, including a vision of the Son of man between two groups of three angels each,” which, of course, is true.

Angel 1 Preaching the Everlasting Gospel

“And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people;

“And he said with a loud voice, ‘Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters’” (14:6, 7).

This first angel will preach the Gospel of Salvation to everyone on earth, and tell all the people on earth to fear GOD and give Him glory; His judgment has arrived; WORSHIP GOD Who is the Great Creator.

The “everlasting gospel” (KJ) is the one and only gospel that has been preached for many years. There is only one gospel (Gal. 1:6-9). It was preached to Abraham (Gal. 3:8). Jude calls it the “the faith which was once delivered to the saints,” and “the common salvation.” Jesus called it “the Gospel of the Kingdom.”

“It is astounding that an *angel* (italics mine) is commissioned to go forth preaching the everlasting Gospel, for the preaching of the Gospel has not been committed to angels, but to men. *This astounding state of affairs could only be an indication of the severity of the circumstances*” (Tim LaHaye, *Revelation*, p. 196).

Remember, however, the great persecution under the Great Tribulation caused by Antichrist when many believers will die, has just ended, when the whole world was ordered to worship the Beast Antichrist, and most people will do so. The Wrath of God is about to be poured out. But first He gives them a “last chance,” so to speak. One of God’s practices has been to warn people before a coming judgment. He used Noah, Jonah, and others to do this. In like manner, this special angel will warn earth’s people to fear GOD and give glory to Him.

God gives opportunity one last time for men to repent (see Rev. 16:9, 11). The whole earth is about to feel God’s Wrath.

To give any person left the opportunity for salvation, God will send out this special angel to show men they need to listen to GOD if they expect to have any forgiveness and eternal blessing.

Any response to this kindness is doubtful (see Rev. 16:9, 11).

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Angel 2 Predicts the Coming Fall of Babylon

“And another angel, a second one, followed, saying, ‘Fallen, fallen, is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality’” (14:8).

Here is the first announcement that Babylon, that great evil religious power and world economic City, is about to fall by the hand of God’s appointed Regent. The actual fall of both is carefully detailed in Revelation 17 and 18. This end-time evil force has caused all nations to be infected with the greatest of sins. Her time has come.

Angel 3 The Fate of Antichrist’s Worshipers

“And another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, ‘if anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or upon his hand, he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

‘And the smoke of their torment goes up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name’” (14:9-11).

God has always hated idolatry. He said He is a jealous God. He has always wanted men to worship and love Him, for HE is the giver of every good and perfect gift (Jas. 1:17). HE is the One who has made the way for man to be redeemed from the death caused by man’s sin.

For this world of people that God has made, to “worship” the wicked Antichrist (13:4, 8) will be very displeasing to the “only true God” (John 17:3). HE is the great Creator of heaven and earth and all things therein (Isa. 40:28; Psa. 24:1; 146:6). HE is the One men should worship. He is about to punish those who worship the Beast and have his mark. Their smoke shall ascend up forever. But they shall be “ashes” (Mal. 4:3).

The Hallowed State of Martyred Saints

“Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. ‘And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, ‘Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!’ ‘Yes,’ says the Spirit, ‘that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them’” (Rev. 14:12, 13).

The grim warning directed to any who follow the Antichrist is followed by an encouraging word to those who continue to be faithful to Christ during the Great Tribulation. Though many of them will face martyrdom and others will go into hiding during that time, they are assured that their position is much to be preferred to those who decide they must do as the Antichrist says and worship him.

The concept here is that our present-day sufferings cannot be compared to the blessings to follow, if we follow God with all our hearts (Rom. 8:18; 2 Cor. 4:16, 17; 1 Pet. 1:5-7). Jesus said, “If you love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). One who really loves Christ will continue to be obedient, even to the extent of going through terrible suffering. Even today, some believers endure great pain and physical and mental torture, so to speak. In the days of Antichrist, true believers will be tested even to death. What will sustain them is the relief and joy that is set before them in the coming Kingdom Promises, as those same wonderful Promises sustain Christian sufferers today.

Those true believers who love not their lives unto death in the Great Tribulation will be “Blessed.” Our Lord Jesus told us, “I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear the One who after He has killed has authority to cast into hell (*geenna*, hell fire); yes, I tell you, fear Him!” (Luke 12:4, 5). The wicked can only kill us. They cannot take from us our relationship with the All-Powerful God and His Promises of life in the age to come! But GOD can destroy a person completely. So which one would it be best to worship – Antichrist, or Jehovah?

David, a man after God’s own heart, said, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me” (Psa. 23:4).

Angels 4, 5, and 6 The Reaping of the Earth

After these first three angels fulfill their work, and comfort and assurance is given the Great Tribulation martyrs, there is a vision of Christ the King sitting on a white cloud holding a sharp sickle. Three more angels then announce the gathering of the wicked to cast them “into the great winepress of the wrath of God.”

“And I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was one like a son of man (the Son of man, KJ), having a golden crown on His head, and a sharp sickle in His hand.

“And another angel (no. 4) came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, ‘Put in your sickle and reap, because **the hour to reap has come**, because the harvest of the earth is ripe.’

“And He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth; and the earth was reaped.

“And another angel (no. 5) came out of the temple which is in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle.

“And another angel (no. 6), the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar, and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, ‘Put in your sharp sickle, and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe.

“And the angel swung his sickle to the earth, and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

“And the winepress was trodden outside the city, and **blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses’ bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles**” (Rev. 14:14-20).

The fourth angel conveys to Christ God’s directive to His Son to begin reaping the earth. The word “reap” has the thought of gathering a harvest together. This is the focus of these last three angels.

It suggests Matthew 13:41, 42, and 49, 50: “The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire.” “So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire” (KJ).

The main thought here seems to be the reaping. Casting into the fire seems to come a short time later after the battle of God at Armageddon (Rev. 16:14-16 and 19:19).

The “vine of the earth” clearly refers to Antichrist and those who follow him, including “the kings of the earth and their armies” who shall perish at the word of Christ (Rev. 19:19). Jesus is the true vine and faithful believers in Him are the branches that will abide forever (John 15). Quite a contrast! Isaiah presents Jesus as the **treader** of the winepress (we encourage the reader to read Isaiah 63:1 and 2).

“The winepress was trodden” refers to the ancient custom of barefoot grape gatherers treading out the juice from the grapes in the winepress. Just as the grape juice spurts out, so the blood of the wicked will

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spurt out in this approaching day when the wicked are symbolically cast into **God's** winepress and squeezed.

Because it seems almost impossible that this blood would flow four feet or so deep for two hundred miles, some have suggested the interpretation means "as a liberal splattering of blood," based on Isaiah 63:3. Yet remember that hordes of people, even "the kings of the earth and their armies" (Rev. 19:19) will be gathered at the valley of Jehoshaphat near Jerusalem to God's winepress (Joel 3:11-16). That much blood, horse-bridle deep, even in some places, is a distinct possibility. This will be the final concentration of rebellious hosts who will come to make war with CHRIST, the Son of God.

"The winepress was trodden outside the City" (Jerusalem) possibly means that this final and terrible carnage will occur within a 200-mile radius of Jerusalem. To this writer this is speaking of: 1) the Revelation 16:13-16 battle of God Almighty at Armageddon, and, 2) the same battle in Revelation 19: Before we view those, however, let us summarize what we have learned in this chapter, Revelation 14.

1. A vision is seen on Christ standing on Mount Zion with the 144,000.
2. Three angelic warnings occur before His judgment is poured out on the wicked.
 - A. An angel preaches the saving Gospel to the whole world.
 - B. "Babylon" will fall.
 - C. The doom of those who worship the Antichrist.
3. The hallowed state of martyred saints.
4. The "Reaping" of the earth.

Christ's Coming in Revelation 16:13-16

"And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs; for they are the spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.

"('Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and men see his shame.')

"And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon" (Armageddon).

In parentheses between these two Armageddon verses, in verse 15 Jesus tells His faithful ones that this whole ungodly horde will know nothing of their coming judgment. "I am coming as a thief, continue to stay awake and be faithful." Little do these armies know their demise is at hand.

The nations are seduced and rush to this "valley of Jehosahaphat." This is the place of the carcasses where the vultures will gather (Luke 17:37). Isaiah 66:24 calls them "corpses." Revelation 19:21 says "all the birds were filled with their flesh."

Megiddo is about 57 miles north of Jerusalem. "The place had great strategic importance, since it commanded the pass through the mountains between the plains of Sharon (on the Mediterranean) and Esdralon" (Davis Bible Dictionary). Several battles have been fought here. Here, Barak defeated Sisera (Judg. 4:15). Here, King Ahaziah of Judah died at the hands of Jehu (2 Kings 9:27). Pharaoh Necho defeated King Josiah here (2 Kings 23:29; 2 Chron. 35:18-24).

This will probably be Joel's "valley of Jehoshaphat," which means "Jehovah has judged," as there is no actual valley in Israel by that name. It undoubtedly is used symbolically for the place of the final judgment.

Here, all the kings of the earth and their armies will die at the hands of the Messiah because they will align themselves with antichrist. This is to occur under God's sixth vial of wrath (Rev. 16:12).

What are these three unclean spirits that cause the kings of the earth to gather at Armageddon? We suggest they are:

1. From the Dragon (Devil): Worship Me (13:2, 4).
2. From the Beast (Antichrist): Down with God (13:6).
3. From the False Prophet: I am Christ. Worship this image.

These are influences from those who are evil. Revelation 16:14 says, “They are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for war of the great day of God, the Almighty.”

The Same Scene from Revelation 19:11-21

“And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war.

“And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself.

“And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God.

“And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.

“And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the winepress of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.

“And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, ‘KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.’

“And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, ‘Come, assemble yourselves for the great supper of God, “in order that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great.

“And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him who sat upon the horse, and against His army.

“And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshipped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone.

“And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat upon the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.”

The rider on the white horse refers to Christ. The “army of heaven” in Daniel 4:35 evidently is speaking of the holy angels. However, here, the armies of heaven are “clothed in fine linen, clean and white.” It is evident that it is speaking of Christ’s people in the first resurrection. They are mentioned in verses 7 through 9 in connection with Christ and His “marriage” and called “Blessed” (see Rev. 20:6). We notice that the “marriage of the Lamb” takes place before Christ’s conquering of the Beast, False Prophet, and the kings of the earth. The first resurrection saints will come with Christ, having ascended to meet Him at His coming (1 Thess. 4:16, 17). They will assist Him in this judgment scene (Psa. 149:5-9; Jude 14, 15).

The enemy He will fight will consist of the beast and false prophet plus the kings of the earth and their armies.

The sword of destruction will be the Word out of Christ’s mouth (2 Thess. 2:8).

The feast of the fowls is taken from Ezekiel 39:17-22, where God tells the birds He has a sacrifice to give them. The birds of earth will feed on the carcasses of men and horses, while the beast and false prophet will be cast into the lake of fire. (This happens **before** the thousand-year reign of Christ. The lake

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of fire will later burn up the wicked who come up in the second resurrection after the 1000-year reign.) 2 Thess. 1:6-10 also applies here, clearly meaning destruction by fire for the living wicked at Christ's coming.)

The other two places in Revelation where Christ's second coming is taught are Revelation 1:7:

"Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye shall see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of earth will mourn over Him. Even so, Amen."

And Revelation 22:7, 12, 20:

"And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book.

"Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.

"He who testifies to these things says, 'Yes, I am coming quickly.' Amen. Come Lord Jesus."

Comment

Revelation 1:3 tells us, "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it (speaking of the Book of Revelation). This includes the six Seals, the seven trumpets, the Great Tribulation under Antichrist, the Coming of Christ, and the Wrath of God. Following this comes His thousand-year reign, then New Jerusalem comes down from God out of heaven, at which time God himself will dwell with men.

Revelation 22:7 emphasizes how important it is to HEED the words of Revelation, for when Christ comes, His REWARD will be with Him, to give to every man according to what kind of life he has lived. The righteous will be given the Life of the Age to Come and enjoy eternity, while the wicked will die, never to live again. With these two destinies before us, we MUST yield ourselves to Him who **died** for us and live according to His teachings! The important question: Have WE yielded ourselves completely to Christ and to God, seeking FIRST their Kingdom and their righteousness?

Chapter 18

The Reorganization of God's Kingdom at Sinai And Christ's March Through Paran, Bozrah, Edom, the Mount of Olives, Megiddo, And Jerusalem

It seems probable from the texts below that as God set up His Kingdom over Israel at Sinai before Israel entered her temporary inheritance, in like manner Christ shall also organize His Kingdom at Sinai before He reigns in Jerusalem.

Note Firstly: The Mysterious Extra 45 Days of Daniel 12:11 and 12

“And from the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished, and the abomination of desolation is set up (by Antichrist), there will be 1,290 days (30 more days than 3½ years).

“How blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains to the 1335 days!”

Something of great importance happens in these 45 extra days! The one who waits and comes to the end of the 1335 days will be “blessed” with some great blessing, Daniel included (v. 13)! What this blessing is is not told here. Let us “search the Scriptures” as Jesus advised (John 5:39) and see if we can find why these additional 45 days are so important.

Note Secondly: The Kingdom, Dominion, and Glory over the whole earth and its peoples will be given **to** the Son of man **by** God the Father.

Daniel 7:13 and 14 expressly teach this. So do Psalm 2:6-12; Psalm 110:1-6; Luke 22:29 and 1:32. Jesus shall assume this heavenly appointed authority at His Second Coming (2 Tim. 4:1). It is then He shall reign on the Davidic throne of God over the whole earth (Matt. 25:31-46; 19:28). Since Christ will be ruling for God, naturally He will be inferior in power to His Father, as 1 Corinthians 15:24-28 declares. But at the same time Christ will be King of kings on earth (Rev. 17:14), the Prince of the kings of the earth (Rev. 1:5). “All power is given to Me in heaven and earth,” Jesus said (Matt. 28:18).

Note Thirdly: The **Time** of the **setting up** of Christ's Kingdom will be “In the days of these kings” (Dan. 2:44)

Daniel 2:44 tells us that prior to the final ending of Man's Rule, Christ's (God's) Kingdom will be set up. The Kingdom will commence – be organized – while Antichrist and the 10 Horns are in power. This organizing apparently will be done after the resurrection at some secret isolated place.

The Bible seems to indicate Christ coming *for* His saints (1 Thess. 4:16, 17), and Christ coming *with* His saints (1 Thess. 3:13). Peters says, “The Second Advent, to be appreciated, must be comprehended in its *several phases*, being *at first* secret, hidden to carry out certain purposes, and *finally* open, revealed” (*The Theocratic Kingdom*, by George N. H. Peters, Proposition 166, Vol. 3). Let us remember that the Resurrection occurs after the Great Tribulation, according to Jesus in Matthew 24:29-31. We have noticed already that rather than being a pre-tribulation rapture, it will be a pre-wrath rapture, for the church will go through the Great Tribulation. (Question: If there are two parts to Jesus' second coming, one *for* His people and one *with* His people to fight the kings of earth, between these two will Christ pass the interval of time at Mount Sinai in organizing His Kingdom?)

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“The breaking and consuming process upon which the Kingdom immediately enters, is expressive of a *previous* organization – for it is evidently an intelligent *organized* force that is set in motion against the kings of the earth and their armies” (ibid).

Does not the coming of the Son of man “**in His Kingdom**” (Matt. 16:27) signify a previous organization?

Remember that dispensations sometimes overlap each other, as the dispensation of the law and the dispensation of grace. Thus it seems to be with the coming of God’s Kingdom, administered by Christ. Does the Bible suggest this organization of God’s Kingdom the second time (reorganization) will take place at Sinai?

Note Fourthly: God Organized His Kingdom over Israel at Mount Sinai, the Holy Mountain

1. The Covenant of God with Israel.

Exodus 24. Moses wrote down and told all the people “the words of the LORD, and all the judgments.” “He took the book of the covenant...” “Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD has made with you...” “And the LORD said to Moses, Come up to Me on the mountain...and I will give you the stone tablets with the law and the commandment...” “The glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai...” “Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.”

Exodus 31. The Sabbath was to be a sign of a “perpetual covenant” between God and Israel forever.

Leviticus 6, 7. The laws of the offerings to God “which the LORD commanded Moses at Mount Sinai.” These involved the Priesthood and the Tabernacle system.

Leviticus 21. The laws for the priests of God.

Leviticus 26:46. “These are the statutes and ordinances and laws which the LORD established between Himself and the sons of Israel through Moses at Mount Sinai.”

Leviticus 27:34. “These are the commandments which the LORD commanded Moses for the sons of Israel at Mount Sinai.”

Numbers 28. The continual daily offering of lambs to God. “It is a continual burnt offering which was ordained in Mount Sinai...” (v. 6).

Nehemiah 9:13. “Then Thou didst come down on Mount Sinai, and didst speak with them from heaven; Thou didst give them just ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments...”

Deuteronomy 4. Notice verses 1, 5-9, 13, 20, 29, 30, 33, 34, 37-40.

Psalms 68:17. “The chariots of God are ...thousands upon thousands; the LORD is among them as at Sinai, in holiness.”

Galatians 4:24-26. “These women are **two covenants**, one proceeding from Mount Sinai...Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia...”

2. The Kingdom of Israel (a type of the future). Israel was to be to God “a kingdom of priests and a Holy Nation” (Ex. 19:5, 6).

The King, Moses (Deut. 33:4, 5)

The Priesthood

The Laws

The Temporary Inheritance of Land (Permanent in Ezek, 47:13 - 48:29)

The Subjects (conquered nations)

The Blessings (Deut. 28:1-14).

3. God had a throne on earth over His Kingdom of Israel. David’s house, kingdom, and throne were established for ever (2 Sam. 7:12-16; 1 Chron. 17:11-14 – “I will settle him in mine house and

in my kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established for evermore”). This was the unconditional Davidic Covenant.

Solomon sat “upon the throne of the kingdom of God over Israel” (1 Chron. 28:5). He sat on “the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father” (1 Chron. 29:23).

Because of wickedness God said this throne and this kingdom would be overturned “until He come whose right it is, and I will give it Him” (Ezek. 21:25-27).

God has two thrones: one in heaven upon which He sits governing the universe; and one on earth (David’s) overturned now, which Christ will restore when He comes again (Luke 1:32; Matt. 25:31; Rev. 3:21).

4. Of all the peoples on earth, God chose Israel to be His special nation (Amos 3:2; Deut. 7:6). God spoke of Himself as being her Husband, and referred to her as being His wife (Isa. 54:5; Jer. 3:14; 31:32). Jesus considers Himself as the Bridegroom (Matt. 25:1-13) and His people His Bride (Rev. 19:7-9; 2 Cor. 11:2). The marriage will take place before their battle with Antichrist and the kings of the earth (Rev. 19).

Note Fifthly: Verses that Connect Christ with Mount Sinai, and the Wilderness of Paran, Edom, Bozrah, and the Mount of Olives.

Psalm 68. Psalm 68 is a Messianic Psalm, a Psalm that contains a prophecy of Messiah. This Psalm has references to Christ and Mount Sinai. Notice especially verses 17 and 18 (KJ).

“The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord (note small letters) is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place” (the original omits the “as” – Anthony Buzzard. Ledener agrees, *Theocratic Kingdom*, Vol. 3, p. 20. Reading the verse without the “as” then would be: “The Lord is among them in Sinai.”)

“Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them.”

Inspired Paul, in Ephesians 4:8, ascribes verse 18 to Christ ascending and giving spiritual gifts to men who believe, even to those who were rebellious before. Christ led captivity (death) captive by overcoming the grave. God raised Him from the dead. Then He ascended.

In the verse before (17), it speaks of the twenty thousand chariots of God (see 2 Kings 6:17) and the angels, that the Lord is among them in Sinai. The Psalm contains a possible reference to the resurrection in verse 20; how the enemies of God will perish (vv. 1, 2, 21); how the righteous will be glad (3, 4), and how God gives strength and power to His people (possibly immortality) (v. 35).

The point is, this is a Messianic passage. Paul proves that. The passage speaks of the mighty power of the Lord (20,000 chariots) and of the angels (all the holy angels will come with Christ at His coming – Matt. 25:31), and the Lord being among them at Sinai. This puts Christ at Mt. Sinai with the angels, while Jude 14, 15 also puts 10,000 saints with Christ also. This seems to be a picture of Christ, His angels and His saints at Mount Sinai before He destroys His enemies at Megiddo.

What better place would there be for Christ to organize His Kingdom with its leaders for various works than here in this remote uninhabited region away from Jerusalem and Palestine where Antichrist and his legions hold sway?

Deuteronomy 33:2.

“The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of his saints....”

The Book of Jude gives a similar account of the Lord coming with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on the ungodly:

“Enoch...prophesied...Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all the hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him” (vv. 14, 15).

Isaiah calls Christ God’s “Arm” who will rule for Him (40:10). “His reward is with him.” (See Rev. 22:12; Matt. 16:27). Since God has ordained that His Messiah shall judge the world (Acts 17:31; John 5:22) it is apparent that Jude is speaking of the coming of Christ with His saints to judge the world.

The journeys of Israel from Mount Sinai to Jericho are recorded in Numbers 33. Forty-three places where they camped are mentioned. Deuteronomy 33:2 condenses the journey: Sinai, Paran, Seir (Edom).

We wonder if Christ and His people will have a similar march from the “setting up” of His Kingdom (possibly at Mount Sinai), because Isaiah 63 shows Christ coming from Edom and Bozrah. Since this is true, it appears Deuteronomy 33:2 has a dual fulfillment. As Israel marched from Sinai to Canaan, so Christ will march on the same route with His people.

Seir is the mountain range of Edom (Gen. 36:21; Num. 24:18; Ezek. 35:15). This was the abode of Esau, or Edom (Gen. 32:3; 25:30). Edom is the desolate desert mountainous region south of the Dead Sea extending almost to the Gulf of Acaba. It was east of the Arabah, or Rift Valley. The children of Israel passed through here. Christ will also come from Edom (Isa. 63).

Paran is the wilderness between Sinai and Canaan. It included the wilderness of Zin, mentioned in the wilderness journeys of Israel (Num. 33:36). It lay east of Beersheba. Here Israel wandered thirty-eight years (Davis). If Deuteronomy is a dual prophecy as we suppose, Christ will also march through this area. His march with His ten thousands of saints: Sinai, Paran, Bozrah, Edom, Mount of Olives, Megiddo, Jerusalem.

Isaiah 63:1-4. This passage shows that Christ has been in, and will come from, Edom and Bozrah. It speaks of the day of vengeance.

“Who is this who comes from Edom, with garments of glowing colors from Bozrah, this One who is majestic in His apparel, marching in the greatness of His strength? It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

“Why is Your apparel red, and Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press?

“I have trodden the wine trough alone, and from the peoples there was no man with Me. I also trod them in My anger, and trampled them in My wrath; and their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments, and I stained all My raiment.

“For the day of vengeance was in My heart, and My year of redemption has come.”

This passage cannot refer to Christ’s first coming. He did not come then as a destroyer of evil men. This passage refers to the Second Coming of Christ as King.

The prophet sees Him coming from the direction of Sinai – from Edom, which is on the way from Sinai. When we compare Scriptures it appears we have the route taken by Jesus from Mount Sinai to the Mount of Olives (then Megiddo): Sinai, Paran, Mt. Seir, Teman, Edom and Bozrah, Mount of Olives.

“This does not occur *by chance, but is a description of what shall truly take place.* Having the Mighty One with His Saints manifested at Sinai, and also by the wilderness of Paran on through Idumea, it seems to us faithless not to accept of these things” (Peters, Vol. 3, p. 22).

Isaiah 43:18-21 speaks about God doing “something new,” that is, “I will even make a roadway in the wilderness.” The last half of this route we suggest is called on the map “The King’s Highway” (Collins Atlas of the Bible, p. 56, 57, etc). It goes from the north end of the Gulf of Acaba to Jericho.

“Bozrah was the metropolis of N. Edom (1200-700 B. C.) and was famous for its dyed garments (Isa. 63:1)” (Unger’s Bible Dictionary). Notice another interesting prophecy – in Habakkuk 3:2 – that apparently fits into this picture of a march of Christ from Sinai to the Mount of Olives. “God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran.” Teman is a town south of Bozrah, in the center of Edom, or, Mount Seir. We have noted Mount Paran above.

Notice the descriptions of Christ coming from Bozrah:

1. His garments glow with color – red.
2. He is Majestic.
3. He is marching with great strength.
4. He speaks righteously.
5. He is mighty to save.
6. He treads the wine press in His anger.
7. Their blood is sprinkled on His garments.
8. The day of vengeance was in His heart.
9. His year of redemption had come.

Compare this to Revelation 19:9, 11-17 and 20:4-6.

1. His garments are colored red. “He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood.”
2. He is Majestic. “His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems.”
3. Marching in great strength. “The armies...in heaven...were following Him.”
4. He speaks righteously. “In righteousness He judges and makes war.” “From His mouth comes a sharp sword.”
5. He is mighty to save. “Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.”
6. He treads the wine press in His anger. “He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.”
7. Their blood is sprinkled on His garments. “He treads the wine press....”
8. The day of vengeance was in His heart. “Birds...Come, assemble for the great supper of God.”
9. His year of redemption has come. Revelation 20:4. “They came to life and reigned with Christ.”

Isaiah 63:1-4 is a picture of a King **marching** triumphantly with great glory and power, One who saves His own and destroys the enemies of God. One segment of His march is mentioned here – He is coming from Bozrah, in Edom.

It is possible, if we understand this correctly, that there will be here in Edom on Christ’s march, a battle with some of God’s enemies, whose blood is spattered on Christ. Antichrist probably has heard that some kind of a force opposing him is coming from this remote uninhabited desert region, and sends a detachment

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out to stop it. However, the great spattering of blood will come at ARMAGEDDON (Rev. 16:14-16; 14:19, 20).

Let us notice also another possibility – that Christ, His heavenly angels, and His immortalized church may possibly choose to be *invisible* during part of this march. God can become invisible at will (1 Tim. 1:17). When the inhabitants of Nazareth were in the process of trying to toss Jesus over the cliff, He passed through their midst and went His way (Luke 4:30). How did He do that – by an unseen power, or by becoming invisible? As Cleopas and another were going to Emmaus a miracle happened – “their eyes were prevented from recognizing him” (Luke 24:16). As the men of Emmaus were telling their story to the apostles, “Jesus himself stood in the midst of them” unexpectedly (Luke 24:36). It terrified them. When Thomas was now present with the apostles, “the doors being shut,” suddenly Jesus “stood in the midst,” saying “Peace.” After Philip baptized the eunuch, Philip was “snatched away,” and “found himself at Azotus” (Acts 8:39,40). One cannot see the wind, yet it is real, though invisible. Jesus explained that as one cannot see the wind, only hears it, so will one be after being fully born of the Spirit at resurrection (John 3:8; 1 Cor. 15:40, 44, 49). Immortal saints will be “like” their Savior (1 John 3:2; Phil. 3:21) and also like their God, with spiritual bodies that very likely can become invisible.

If this might happen, that Christ, the angels, and the immortal church should become invisible as they approach Megiddo, the immortals against the mortals, what a battle that would be. The Beast Antichrist will be “taken” or captured (Rev. 19:20). Who will do this? The angels? (Matt. 13:49.)

Isaiah 40:3-5. Christ offered the Kingdom to Israel at His first coming, but they refused it. (John 1:6-11; Matt. 21:43; 22:1-14). Prophet John the Baptist foretold Christ’s coming. But *it is extremely doubtful, in fact, impossible, that John fully fulfilled this passage of Isaiah 40:1-5.* John was a type of a greater fulfillment. Notice the final overall outcome of this passage.

“Comfort, O comfort My people,” says your God.

“Speak kindly to Jerusalem; and call out to her that her warfare has ended, that her iniquity has been removed, that she has received of the LORD’S hand double for all her sins.”

“A voice is calling, clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; make smooth in the desert a highway for our God.

“Let every valley be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; and let the rough ground become a plain, and the rugged terrain a broad valley;

“**Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all flesh will see it together;** for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

We noticed that John Baptist did not fulfill the requirements of this end-time prophecy.

1. Israel’s warfare has not ended. Her iniquity has not been removed. Her warfare will end and her iniquity will be removed (Rom. 11:25-27; Isa. 59:20 – 60:22).

2. All flesh has not yet seen the Glory of the Lord as it shall when Jesus comes. In Numbers 14:21 God said, “As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the Glory of the LORD.” Habakkuk prophesied, “The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea” (2:14).

Notice also: “Clear the way of the Lord **in the wilderness**; make smooth **in the desert** a highway for our God.” **THEN** the glory of the Lord will be revealed.

Zechariah 14:1-5. This is an end-time chapter, and it speaks of Christ standing on the Mount of Olives.

“Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil (Israel) shall be divided in the midst of thee.

“For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city will be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

“Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.

“And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave (split) in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

“And ye shall flee to the valley of the (My) mountains ... and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints (holy ones) with thee.” (KJ)

Here we see that Israel will be attacked in the end time by “all nations.” Jerusalem will be captured and sacked. Then the LORD will fight this powerful human Antichrist force and Christ, as God’s representative, will stand on the Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem. The mountain will split in half by a powerful earthquake (see ch. 16), half of it going north and half of it going south, making two mountains of God (v. 5) and forming a valley between them. The Lord will come with all the saints, or holy ones.

This is an open coming of Christ with His holy ones. Sometimes these “holy ones” mean angels, as in Job 5:1; Psalm 89:5, 7; and Daniel 4:13; and sometimes they refer to those who will rule and reign with Christ, as Matthew 24:30-31; 25:31; Jude 14; and Revelation 2:26 and 27 show us. Godly overcomers will be given power to rule over the nations. This is the time the Lord will fight against the nations that come against Jerusalem.

Notice Sixthly: After standing on the Mount of Olives we see Christ at Megiddo at the battle of Armageddon, (Rev. 16:14-16), then ruling over the earth from Jerusalem (Jer. 3:17; Psa. 2:6).

If our premise is correct, Christ will march from Sinai through the desert and the wilderness with ten thousands of His saints (and all the holy angels with Him), and all the earth will see the glory of the Lord. God’s enemies will be destroyed, The Kingdom of God will be established on earth in peace and righteousness, and Christ and His people will rule earth a thousand years, after which Christ will turn the Kingdom over to God (1 Cor. 15:24-28), that GOD may be all in all.

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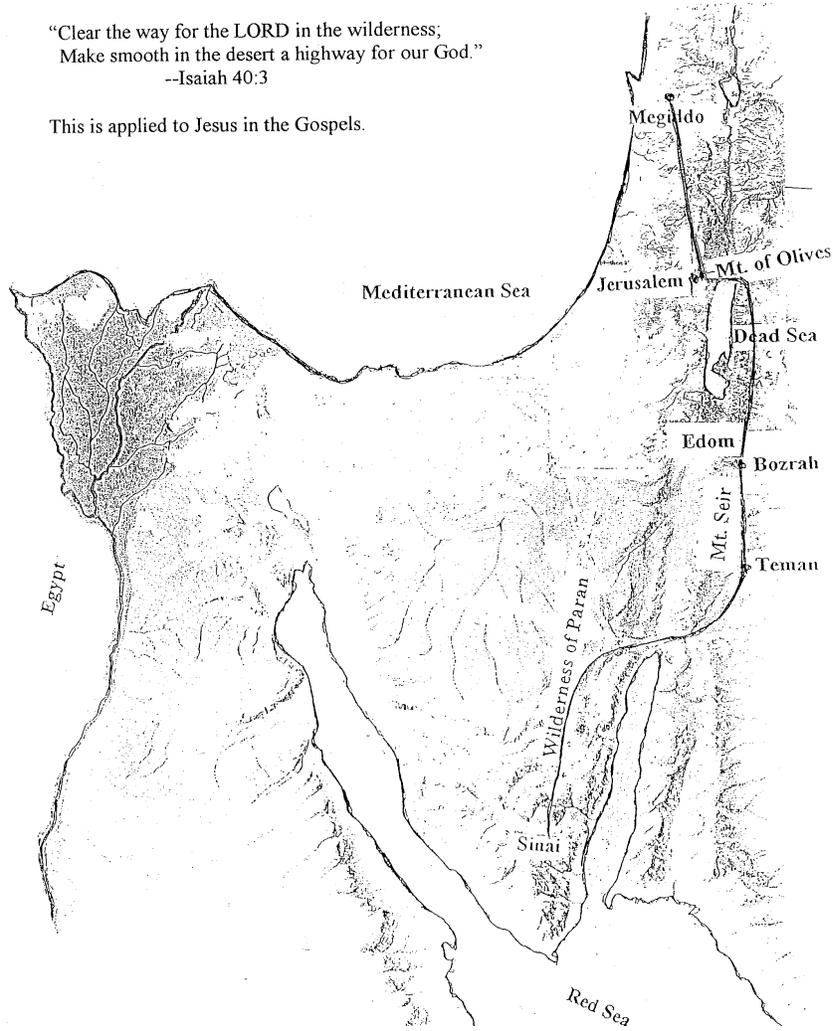
The Organization of Christ's Kingdom at Sinai

and

His March Through Paran, Bozrah, and Edom, to the Mt. of Olives,
Megiddo and Jerusalem

"Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness;
Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God."
--Isaiah 40:3

This is applied to Jesus in the Gospels.



Chapter 19

SEAL 7 Trumpet Seven

The WRATH of GOD Rev. 15, 16

The TRIBULATION period, that three-and-a-half-year time frame, has now been concluded. The Antichrist has now ruled the earth for the last 3½-year period of his seven year reign over earth. Christ has come (Rev. 14) and the Wrath of God is about to begin.

The WRATH of GOD

Remember one main reason God gave us Revelation was to inform us (even us who live in these last days) of happenings before, during, and after THE DAY OF THE LORD (Rev. 1:10). The Day of the LORD refers to the time of God's Wrath, as we saw in Chapter 6. The Resurrection occurs before the Wrath begins, for Christians are not appointed to wrath. Thus we see a pre-wrath rapture.

In the Book of Revelation, this Wrath is first mentioned in Revelation 6:16 and 17: "Fall on us (you mountains) and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath has come; and who shall be able to stand?" As the Wrath is not poured out until Revelation 15 and 16, we understand the above passage is announcing its coming. It has not come yet, but it is coming soon.

The next place in Revelation that God's wrath is mentioned is in Chapter 11:18, in the summary of events to happen: "The nations were enraged, and Thy Wrath came...." Still the seven parts of God's wrath have not been spelled out. It is mentioned in this summary of things to happen.

The third place the Wrath of God is mentioned is Revelation 14:9 and 10 where it says, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or upon his hand, he also will drink of the wine of the Wrath of God...." The wrath is still future. In verse 19, the Wrath is still to come.

Finally, in Revelation 15 and 16 we come to the actual pouring out of the wrath of God on sinful men. But first, let us see Who has been decreed to take charge of God's Wrath on sinners.

JESUS CHRIST THE JUDGE

It is JESUS the Christ Who will execute this judgment (Jude 14, 15). It is He whom God has appointed to judge the world (Acts 17:31). God has committed all judgment to Christ (John 5:22). He treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of God (Rev. 19:15; see 14:19). It is CHRIST who will destroy ANTICHRIST (2 Thess. 2:8). The reason he (Antichrist) reigns over the world only 42 months (Rev. 13:5) is because Christ comes and destroys him. It is our Savior who will take Antichrist's dominion away, and establish GOD'S KINGDOM on earth (Dan. 7:26, 27).

Revelation 15

"I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who had seven plagues, which are the last, because in them is filled up the wrath of God" (v. 1).

“And the seven angels who had the seven plagues came out of the temple (in heaven, v.5)... and one of the four living creatures (cherubim) gave to the seven angels seven bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever” (vv. 6, 7).

“And the temple (in heaven) was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished” (v. 8).

Revelation 16

“And I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, ‘**Go and pour out the seven bowls of the wrath of God upon earth.**’” (v. 1).

1. “**The first angel went and poured out his bowl into the earth; and it became a LOATHSOME and MALIGNANT SORE upon the men who had the mark of the beast and who worshipped his image**” (16:2).

We have already mentioned that chips can now be implanted in a person’s head or hand; chips that can be read by a computer. They are powered by a lithium battery. But if this battery leaks, it causes a terrible sore.

If this mark is an implanted chip, this may be a possible fulfillment.

2. “**The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it BECAME BLOOD like that of a dead man; and every living thing in the sea died**” (16:3).

The blood of dead creatures is thick, not thin and a liquid. If the sea water becomes thick and perhaps devoid of oxygen, all sea creatures would die.

3. “**And the third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and springs of water; and they became BLOOD**” (16:4-7).

This angel comments: “You (God) are just in these judgments, You who are and were, the Holy One, because You have so judged; for they have shed the blood of Your saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink as they deserve.”

4. “**And the fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun; and it was given to it to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with GREAT HEAT; and they blasphemed the name of God Who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent, so as to give Him glory**” (16: 8, 9).

Isaiah spoke similar words in chapter 30:26. “In the day of the great slaughter” (v. 25), “the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the LORD binds up the fracture of His people and heals the bruise He has inflicted.”

We can agree that the GOD Who made the sun for man’s blessing can and will use that sun to punish men. Yet this plague will still not cause them to acknowledge God; they will still not repent.

5. “**And the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast; and his kingdom became DARKened; and they gnawed their tongues because of pain, and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they did not repent of their deeds**” (Rev. 16:10, 11).

God can use darkness as well as brightness and heat to punish men. Such darkness was over Egypt for three days that they could not see one another nor did any move away from his place (Ex. 10:22, 23).

Great pain and sores in darkness are worse than in the light.

This fifth plague may give us an indication of the length of the final wrath of God, which we understand will take place “quickly.” These wicked people are still suffering from the sores and pain of the first vial of God’s wrath. The sores are still there. They are still in pain. This is speaking of those who will have the mark of the beast and worship his statue.

6. And the sixth angel poured out his bowl upon the great river, the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, that the way might be prepared for the kings from the east” (Rev. 16:12).

Then John saw coming out of the mouths of the beast, false prophet, and dragon three unclean spirits like frogs. “They are the spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to **gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty...and they gathered them together to the place which in the Hebrew is called Har-mageddon”** (Armageddon).

We have suggested in chapter 16 that the spirit coming from the dragon may be: Worship me, for Revelation 13:4 says “they worshipped the dragon”. In other words, “Worship the Devil.”

We have suggested the spirit coming from the beast may be: Down with God, for chapter 13:6 says “he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God.”

We have suggested the spirit coming from the false prophet may be: I am Christ. Worship this image, because in chapter 13:14 it says he will deceive people by his miracle-working power, telling them to make a statue of the beast. This false prophet (19:20), will even give this statue breath and the ability to speak and cause the people who do not worship the image to be killed. He also causes men to receive the mark of the beast. No one can buy or sell without this mark. The number of the beast is 666 (13:15-18).

This counterfeit power to give life (KJ) or breath to the statue is similar to Creation, or Resurrection, but is from the Devil, not from our ALMIGHTY GOD. He allows this.

Christians must be steadfast and not receive the mark of the beast, because if they do, they will experience the Wrath of God (14:10).

It appears that the Euphrates River will be dried up so the kings of the East may cross on dry ground. This sounds like an invasion from the East. It makes us think of the two hundred million horsemen of Revelation 9.

7. “The seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the AIR” (Rev. 16:17). A loud voice out of the temple from the throne said, “It is done.”

There were flashes of lightning and peals of thunder.

There was a great earthquake, such as never was before.

The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell.

Babylon was remembered before God, the recipient of “His fierce wrath.”

Every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

Huge hailstones, about 100 pounds each, came down from heaven on men, and men blasphemed God because of the terrible hail.

All of the 17th and 18th chapters of Revelation speak of the judgment and fall of Babylon. This is followed by the angelic hallelujah chorus, rejoicing at wicked Babylon’s demise by the hand of God (19:1-3). For a study of Revelation 19 see Chapter 17 of this book.

Chapter 20

Revelation 17

The Beast and Its Harlot Rider Babylon

BABYLON THE HARLOT

Revelation 17 gives the account of “**the judgment of the great harlot** who sits on many waters” and also sits on the blasphemous Beast that has seven heads and 10 horns (v. 1).

“Babylon is set before us in these two chapters under two different aspects. In chapter 17, she is identified with the great harlot.... In chapter 18 Babylon seems to be some city along a great river crowded with the ships of the merchants of the earth” (*The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, p. 1516).

Here is recorded the coming judgment of Babylon the Harlot (Apostate religion). Revelation 18 records the coming judgment of the great end-time CITY of Babylon, head of world commerce and finance. Both systems are called “BABYLON,” for they are two phases of the whole system of Wickedness: one a false religious system, the other the worldly commercial center.

In vision John said, “I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.

“And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality, “and upon her forehead a name was written, a mystery, ‘BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.’

“And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And when I saw her, I wondered greatly.

“And the angel said to me, ‘Why do you wonder? I shall tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has seven heads and the ten horns’” (Rev. 17:3-7).

Revelation, in vision, presents three women that represent something. There is the woman in chapter 12 that bore the man child that ascended to heaven. She signifies Israel. There is in chapter 19 the bride of Christ, chaste, pure, dressed in fine, clean, white linen, “which is the righteousness of saints” (v. 8). Then, in chapter 17, there is this filthy woman, Babylon, full of abominations, called the mother of harlots. In God’s sight she is a whore, both in life and in the false religion she originated and still proclaims. Note that this harlot woman called Babylon the mother of harlots will sit on (guide and direct) the Beast for a short time, but then will be removed.

This Bible student sees BABYLON as the originator of a past and future false and licentious idolatrous religion (ch. 17) and she is also an end-time literal powerful city and empire system that controls world-wide commerce and finances (ch. 18). The Beast (Antichrist coming from this area) and False Prophet (false religion) work hand in hand, both empowered at the End by the Devil. In chapter 17 the harlot woman Babylon rides the beast with ten horns until they tire of her and turn and destroy her.

But first we examine the BEAST with seven heads and 10 horns, because he endures after he and his 10 horns “hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire” (v. 16). However, his reign with these ten will be short, for they ‘will wage war with the Lamb (Christ) and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords, and King of kings, and those who

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are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful” (17:14). To finish that story, “the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet... these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire” (19:20).

So the Beast allows this Woman to ride him for a time, but he and his 10 Kings, near the end, will tire of her attempts to run things, and will destroy her. This will allow Beast to be in full control over the true saints the last 3½ years, overcoming and killing them, until he meets Christ who defeats him and casts the Beast and False Prophet into the lake of fire (19:19-21). Then the reign of Christ on earth will begin.

It appears this harlot woman, which we understand is false and apostate religion, will be riding the Beast, guiding and directing it the first 3½ years of Daniel’s last seven-year “week.” During this first 3½ years Antichrist apparently allows freedom of religion – the Jewish sacrifices are resumed by the end of the first 3½ years, because AFTER the first 3½ years of his rule, he will STOP the sacrifices, and institute his own religion – Worship Me, and then begin to persecute the real people of God.

This Beast with Seven Heads and 10 Horns

The seven heads are interpreted in 17:9 and 10 as being seven kings; five have fallen, one is, while the other has not yet come. The beast himself who was and is not is called the “eighth” and is one of the seven (v. 11). The 10 Horns are 10 Kings that support him for a short while (v. 12).

We were introduced first to this Beast (Antichrist) in Revelation 12:3, the enemy of Israel (the woman who bore the man-child Christ). We see him mentioned again in Revelation 13 where we are shown his desire for worship by the whole world, and his coming war with the saints of God; the one whom God will allow to have power 42 months (3½ years). We see him again here in Revelation 17.

This is clearly a picture straight from the Book of Daniel, Chapter 7. This Beast is the “fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all other kingdoms, and it will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. As for the ten horns (on his head), out of this kingdom ten kings will arise, and another after them (Little Horn), and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings.

“And he will speak out against the Most High (God) and wear down the saints of the Highest One... and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time (3½ years).

“But the court will sit for judgment, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever.

“Then the sovereignty, the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His Kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him” (Dan. 7:23-27).

What does this tell us?

1. Daniel’s 4th world-wide king and kingdom in the end-time will “devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it.”
2. Ten horns (kings, nations) will support him.
3. He will speak against God.
4. He will wear down God’s people for 3½ years.
5. God will judge him, take away his power and dominion, and Christ will cast him into the lake of fire (Rev. 19:20).
6. Then God’s Kingdom “under the whole heaven” shall be given to His people; that Kingdom of God shall last forever, and all peoples on earth will serve and obey God (Dan. 7:27).

Now let us seek to understand why the other half of our subject – the harlot woman Babylon – is called a harlot, and what that signifies.

The History of BABYLON

Babylon was built by Nimrod long ago (Gen. 10:8-11). This was “in the land of Shinar.” Shinar is the plain between the Tigris and the Euphrates, south of Baghdad. It was here the tower of Babel was built (Gen. 11:1-9). Both this man and the builders of the tower were anything but people of God. They were rebels, like the people in Noah’s day.

Of Nimrod the Bible says, “He became a mighty one on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; therefore it is said, ‘Like Nimrod a mighty hunter **before** (means, in defiance of) the LORD.’ And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel....”

His kingdom was the first kingdom on earth, and he was its ruler. He is called a “mighty one” (Heb. *gibbor*, meaning tyrant). The word “**before** the LORD” carries a hostile meaning. The name Nimrod means “let us rebel” (*Babylon, Mystery Religion*, Woodruff, p. 9). In plain language Nimrod set himself up **before** God (Heb. word is also translated **against** and **impudent**). The Jewish Encyclopedia says, “Nimrod was he who made all the people rebellious against God” (ibid, p. 9). This king of Babylon was a tyrant, a rebellious person, and one who set himself up above God.

It was here at Shinar (Gen. 11:2) that rebellious men burned brick to build a city and a tower that reached unto heaven, saying, “Let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth” (v. 4). This was in direct opposition to God’s word, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth” (Gen. 1:28). The LORD came down “to see the city and the tower.” The result of their disrespect was that God changed their languages and scattered them abroad upon the face of all the earth (11:6-9).

The name of Babel (Babylon) in the Bible means “confused” (Gen. 11:9). “Throughout the Bible, Babylon was a symbol of the confusion caused by godlessness. The name Babylon is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Babel” (*Ancient Babylonia*, p. 2). (We remember that around 605 B. C. Nebuchadnezzar, King of the first greatest empire over the world, said in his arrogance, “Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built... by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?” (Dan. 4:30.)

“Not only was Nimrod against the true God, he was also a priest of devil-worship and of heathenism of the worst kind... then, finally, Nimrod, the priest king of Babylon, died... after Nimrod’s death, his wife, Queen Semiramis, claimed he was now the Sun-god” (Woodruff, p. 9). Later, this adulterous and idolatrous woman gave birth to an illegitimate son, Tammuz (Ezek. 8:14), whom she claimed was Nimrod brought back to life. She is the one Jeremiah speaks of as “the queen of heaven” (Jer. 7:18; 44:17, 18, 19, 25). Thus we see the Devil introducing a counterfeit plan to overturn the Divine Plan that a woman would bear a son that would deliver his people. This happened centuries before Jesus came. Semiramis claimed that her son Tammuz was supernaturally conceived, that he was the promised seed, the savior.

As men spread out from Shinar (Gen. 11:9), they took with them this corrupt religious system until it filled the earth. Centuries before the Lord Jesus, every country worshipped a divine mother and god-son. “Among the Chinese, the Mother Goddess was called Shingmoo.” Her picture shows a child in her arms. In ancient Germany the worship was of the Virgin “Hertha,” with a child in her arms. Then in Scandinavia, it was “Disa,” also with a child in arms. The Etruscans called her “Nutria,” and among the Druids, “the Virgo-Paritura,” was worshipped as the “Mother of God.” In India, she was known as Indrani... The Greek Mother was known as “Aphrodite”; “Nana,” to the Sumerians; and as “Venus” to her devotees in the olden days of Rome, and her child was known as Jupiter” (ibid, pp. 13 and 14; see also Acts 14:12, 13; 19:35).

Even God’s people, the Jews, fell into this religious and idolatrous trap (Judg. 2:13). Israel knew this imaginary heathen “Goddess” as Ashtaroth, or Ashtoreth (Judg. 10:6; 1 Sam. 7:3,4; 12:10; 1 Ki. 11:5,33; 2 Ki. 23:13). It is beyond belief that people who had known the true God and had seen His wonders would sink so low as to follow these heathen practices. The prophet Jeremiah rebuked them sharply, as we have seen. In the days of Israel’s and Judah’s kings, when the king was evil, the people resorted to this licentious

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and idolatrous worship system (1 Ki. 14:21-24; 2 Ki. 16:1-4; 17:7-19; 2 Chron. 28:1-4). The golden calf was part of this system (Ex. 32).

The Roman Catholic Church has adopted this same idea of “the Mother of God.” But JESUS said, “This is life eternal, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent” (John 17:3). Does Truth matter? Jesus said, “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth will make you free” (John 8:32). Israel’s creed was “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might” (Deut. 6:4, 5). It is the same creed Christians are to have today (Matt. 22:36-40).

The Apostle Paul was very familiar with this ungodly, licentious and idolatrous worship system. He saw it at Athens: “While Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred within him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry” (Acts 17:16). We personally saw all these statues (idols) of the various many “gods” in Athens in 1973 with Bro. Alva Huffer. They are still standing. When in Ephesus we saw, as did Paul, the shameless sexual symbols engraved into the sidewalk on which we walked, pointing to the place of gratification. The island of Mykenos in the Aegean Sea is still filled with these idols.

Notice two statements Paul made about this manmade religious system. 1 Corinthians 10:18-21:

“Look at the nation Israel; are not those who eat the sacrifices sharers in the altar?

“What do I mean then? That a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God: and I do not want you to become sharers with demons.

“You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.”

Then notice Romans 1:22-25: “Professing to be wise they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

“Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, that their bodies might be dishonored among them.

“For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.”

Let’s take a further look at this harlot woman Babylon, even if we repeat some things we’ve said before. It is good to emphasize points.

The Last-Day Babylon And the Beast She Rides

As we have said above, Revelation 17 and 18 picture the Wrath of God against “Babylon.” Babylon is clearly both an apostate end-time religious system and also will be the end-time city; the financial and commercial center of world commerce and finance.

The Apostate Religious system Revelation 17

Notice again her description in Revelation 17. She is called “the great harlot who sits on many waters” (v. 1). These waters are identified in v. 15: “The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues.”

She is also called “THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH” (v. 5). A harlot is a prostitute. Now does this mean this “Babylon” woman is immoral physically or immoral religiously, or both?

In many places in the Old Testament, God calls the house of Israel a harlot. The second chapter of Jeremiah speaks of Israel being a harlot both physically and religiously. “Israel was holy to the LORD” but she forsook the LORD her God (2:3, 13). “Where are your gods which you made for yourself?” (v. 28.) But His people were also morally impure: “On every high hill and under every green tree you have lain down as a harlot” (v. 20). Jeremiah 3 continues this thought. Ezekiel also spoke much about this infidelity: Ezekiel 16 and 23. Hosea 4:15, 17: “You, Israel, play the harlot... Ephraim is joined to idols.” Hosea 5:4: “A spirit of harlotry is within them, and they do not know the LORD.” Many times, the people whom God had chosen to be His people committed fornication by leaving Him, their King and God. They became arrogant and proud and committed every abomination in their desire to be “free” from His dominion over them.

Two things are of importance here.

1. While sitting on the beast she was also sitting on “many waters.” This is interpreted in verse 15 as meaning “peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues.” In other words, this evil “Woman” Babylon in some way represents something all the world’s people have in common. What is it? We understand it is a false and ungodly religious system that does not honor the True God, JEHOVAH the ALMIGHTY, the God true Christians love and adore.
2. Notice, too, this “Woman” Babylon is the mother also “OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” As we study what these ABOMINATIONS were in the Hebrew writings (O. T.) we find they were:
 - a. Immorality – Leviticus 18
 - b. Witchcraft and idolatry – Deuteronomy 18; 20:17, 18; 32:15-18
 - c. All the abominations of the heathen – high places, sacred pillars, male prostitutes (1 Ki. 14:22-24); making their children pass through the fire, sacrificing and burning incense to idols (2 Ki. 16:3,4); erecting altars to Baal and “all the host of heaven” (2 Ki. 21:2-7) mediums, spiritists, teraphim, idols, abominations (2 Ki. 23:24), and so on.

One of the greatest abominations was to leave God and make and worship idols of things GOD had made, like the sun, bulls, snakes, fish, etc. (Rom. 1:22-25). Many of these stone idols still stand, especially in the Mediterranean area. Isaiah 21:9 supports the idea that Babylon’s harlotry was idolatry: “Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken to the ground” (KJ).

The first four of Israel’s ten commandments were designed by GOD to bring the honor to HIM in contrast to worshipping lifeless idols that could offer them no mercy, no forgiveness, no blessing, no eternal life. Mankind has a rebellious nature. God offers His help to tame it so it can worship and serve the one and only true God who made heaven and earth and us all. What God wants is man’s appreciation for everything God has done for men. When men make up their own religion so they can make acceptable to themselves what their sinful nature tempts them to do, this is sin. TV ads today promote this: “Do what you want to do.”

One of the precepts of God is that sin must be judged. Hence this judgment of “BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”

THE END TIMES TIME LINE

Chapter 21

Revelation 18

The Judgment of Babylon the City

End-time Babylon a Literal City

Babylon at the end of this age is clearly a CITY that controls the commerce and finances of all nations in the world. Notice these eight instances where end-time Babylon is said to be a city:

The woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth” (Rev. 17:18).

“Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment has come” (Rev. 18:10).

“Woe, woe, the great city, she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls” (Rev. 18:16).

“And were crying out as they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, ‘What city is like the great city?’ ... And they threw dust on their heads and were crying out, weeping and mourning, saying, ‘Woe, woe, the great city, in which all who had ships at sea became rich by her wealth, for in one hour she has been laid waste’” (Rev. 18:18, 19).

“And a strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, ‘Thus will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and not be found any longer’” (Rev. 18:21).

Thus the term “Babylon” refers to two different phases of the same wicked system: 1) an apostate religious system, and 2) the end-time world’s commercial center. The demise of the harlot woman Babylon in chapter 17 occurs before the destruction of the City Babylon: 1) Chapter 18 begins with “after these things,” meaning after the harlot’s end. 2) The names are different.

Chapter 18 just uses the single description “Babylon” while chapter 17 calls her The Mother of Harlots and Abominations. 3) When the harlot Babylon is destroyed, the beast and 10 horns will be happy, while all the nations mourn the burning of City Babylon in 18. 4) Harlot Babylon will be destroyed by Antichrist and his 10. City Babylon will be destroyed by God.

First, Babylon’s Splendor, Greatness, and Wealth

Notice what the quoted verses above say about City Babylon, the magnitude of her greatness. Time after time she is called “the great city,” the city “that reigns over the kings of the earth.” If she has sovereignty or control of the “kings” or nations on earth (17:18) she will be greater than all powers on earth.

Her wealth will be immense. It is likened to a woman being clothed in the best of clothing and adorned with gold, precious stones, and pearls. Other countries will become rich through her wealth. (18:3, 15, 19). We know Iraq has much of the world’s supply of oil under her sands. Notice the last statement describing this wicked city system: “In her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on earth” (18:24).

Babylon was located in what is now Iraq. Latter-day Babylon will be built in the same place. In fact, Saddam Hussein began the rebuilding of Babylon in 1978, reconstructing the Palace of Nebuchadnezzar, Procession Street, the Greek theatre, many of Babylon’s ancient temples, Nebuchadnezzar’s throne room, and a small model of the Ishtar Gate. This was done during Iraq’s war with Iran (Arabs against Persians).

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Recently the rebuilding has come to a halt as Saddam has been captured after his overthrow in 2003. But Babylon's rebuilding has begun. And it will be continued in due time so that this end-time city of Babylon will become the city of which God has foretold in the verses above.

The Prophecy of The Destruction of End-Time Babylon

After Harlot Babylon's end in chapter 17, another angel cried out with a loud voice,

“Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! And she has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird.

“For all the nations have drunk of (or fallen by) the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality.

“And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, ‘Come out of her, my people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues; ‘for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities’ (Rev. 18:2-5).

Isaiah also said of Babylon:

“And Babylon, the beauty of kingdoms... will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It will never be inhabited or lived in from generation to generation; nor will the Arab pitch his tent there, nor will shepherds make their flocks lie down there, “But desert creatures will lie down there, and their houses will be full of owls. Ostriches also will live there, and shaggy goats will frolic there. “And hyenas will howl in her fortified towers and jackals in their luxurious palaces. Her fateful time also will soon come and her days will not be prolonged” (Isa. 13:19-22).

Jeremiah foretold this same scene in Jeremiah 51:37: “Babylon will become a heap of ruins, a haunt of jackals, an object of horror and hissing, without inhabitants.” (See also Isaiah 34:8-15.)

These prophecies will happen in “The Day of the LORD” (Isaiah 13, entire chapter). Remember John was in the Spirit in the Day of the Lord (Rev. 1:10).

Babylon “will be burned up with fire” (Rev. 18:8). She will “be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer” (v. 21). “It shall be destroyed for ever” (Jer. 51:62). They shall “sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake... saith the LORD” (v. 39).

This complete destruction forever of Babylon has not yet been fulfilled. That is another reason we believe Babylon will be rebuilt. In the passage above we are told Babylon will suddenly be destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah. This has not yet happened. Isaiah 13 and 14 and Jeremiah 50 and 51 show it will happen in the future day of judgment. We know this because the darkening of the sun (Matt. 24:29) is mentioned in connection with her judgment. End-time Babylon's destruction will be accomplished, not only by fire from heaven (Rev. 18:8) and plagues (18:4), but by great hailstones also – hailstones that each weigh 100 pounds or so (Rev. 16:19-21). Isaiah 14:1-4, 7 informs us that that final destruction shall take place when God chooses Israel again and settles them in their own land, when Israel will finally be at peace and dwell in safety. Since 1948 Israel has been a nation, but never once has she dwelt in peace and safety.

The History of Wicked Babylon

“For nearly 2,000 years, Babylon was the most important city in the world. It was the commercial and financial center for all Mesopotamia, the center of a geographical ‘X’ that linked the Orient with the

Mediterranean and Egypt with Persia. Its scribes and priests spread its cultural heritage throughout the known world. The arts of divination, astronomy, astrology, accounting, and private commercial law all sprang from Babylon” (Caballero, *Rebuilding Babylon*, quoted by Charles Dyer, in *The Rise of Babylon*).

Remember her beginning. Built by the rebel Nimrod, she has always been a GODLESS city. God used her to punish other nations. He gave her Egypt as her wages for doing this (Ezek. 29:18, 19). Babylon was the head of gold on Daniel’s image of a man, which represented the kingdoms of finite and godless men. They will, when Christ comes, be overturned by the establishment of the Kingdom of God over earth.

Two main cities are mentioned in the Bible in detail. One is Jerusalem, the city that God has chosen (2 Chron. 33:7), and the other is Babylon, which represents the ungodliness and rebellion of mankind (Rev. 18:4, 5). In other words, City Babylon signifies the sinfulness of the whole world. Notice Zechariah’s prophecy about the woman in the ephah.

Zechariah’s Amazing Prediction

Zechariah 5:5-11

Here is a picture of an ephah (basket) with a woman sitting inside representing “**Wickedness.**” A lead cover closed over the woman to make sure she did not escape. The vision continues: two women with wings lifted up this ephah (basket) and flew off with it. Zechariah said to the angel,

“Where are they taking the ephah?” The answer came: “To build a temple for her in the land of Shinar; and when it is prepared, she will be set there on her own pedestal” (base). City Babylon will be “Home Base” for the Antichrist. This is “where he comes from.” (See my first book, *Prophecies of the End of the Age.*)

The tower of Babel was built in the plain of Shinar, where men rebelled against God (Gen. 11:1-9). Just so will Wickedness be concentrated in this rebuilt end-time city of Babylon, as we have seen in Revelation 18:4-5: “her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.”

The gist of Zechariah’s vision is that wickedness will be set up in a temple in Shinar (Babylon). Not only will this end-time city be full of immorality and sorcery (18:3, 23), but “in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on earth” (v. 24). This is exceptionally serious. To be lewd and immoral is one thing, but to deliberately kill God’s people is a far greater matter. The lifting of the curses on earth during the reign of Jesus will not include restoring “Babylon.”

In this sobering passage, Revelation 18:24, we immediately remember that killing God’s people is something the Beast and False Prophet of Revelation 13 will do, and the Little Horn of Daniel 7; 8; 11:33; and 12:8. This Great Tribulation shall be so fierce toward God’s people that Jesus said if God didn’t intervene, “no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short” (Matt. 24:22).

But we take comfort in God’s Word. He shows that some Christians will still be alive when Jesus comes (1 Thess. 4:15, “we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord”). Even though we may suffer death for our Lord, after men kill us, they have no more that they can do. But God can destroy both life and body in Gehenna, while giving **eternal life** to His Own (Matt. 10:28; Dan. 12:2).

Our name written in the Lamb’s Book of Life is the important thing (Rev. 13:8) along with refusing to worship the statue of the Beast (14:9-12). “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on,” says the Spirit (v. 13). Perhaps the guillotine will be reinstated, for many will be beheaded for their faith (20:4). Better be “slain for the word of the Lord” (6:9) than perish with the Beast and False Prophet (19:20). Those martyred for the Lord will rise again, to never-ending perfect life in the Kingdom of God. There they shall be Kings and Priests on earth with Jesus, rulers forever in righteousness and peace (20:6; 5:10; 2 Peter 3:13).

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Remember, the Beast and wicked Babylon are inseparable (Rev. 14:7-12). When Babylon falls, the Beast falls. The whole system will be destroyed together. God will pay her “double” (18:6-8) according to her deeds. The standard on which God judges Babylon is compared to the way she lived – “sensuously.” “To the same degree give her torment and mourning; for she says in her heart, ‘I sit a queen and I am not a widow, and will never see mourning.’ For this reason in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she will be burned with fire; for the Lord (Christ) who judges her is strong.”

Babylon’s destruction will be swift: “in one day.” (Notice the similarity of the overturning of Babylon by Cyrus the Persian around 538 B.C.: “in that night” (Dan. 5:30), the same night the handwriting on the wall appeared.) She will be burned up like Sodom and Gomorrah (Isa. 13:19), after she has suffered pestilence, mourning, and famine. Her hardheaded willful sinning will not be tolerated by the Almighty. In God’s Plan, it is necessary to remove sinners before His righteousness can shine forth over earth forever.

God’s Mercy for His People

In the prophecy in verse 4 of this chapter, Revelation 18, we see God, in His great mercy, calling to His people to get out of City Babylon: “Come out of her, my people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues; for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.”

This reminds us of God, in mercy, calling righteous Lot out of Sodom before her destruction (Gen. 19:12-19). Jesus, also, pleads with those of Judah when they see the Abomination placed in the Holy Place in the last days, to “flee to the mountains,” and the one on the housetop to not tarry to go into the house to save something, “for then there will be a great tribulation” (Matt. 24:15-21).

God has revealed that some of His people will be in Babylon just before her destruction. In His love for them, He will plead with them to come out of that city. Or, is this speaking to us now, to come out of earth’s evilness? Who are these people of God? Are they Jews? We know that God gave the Hebrews the ability to make money (Deut. 15:6; 28:10-13). We know Jews gravitate to cities where there is much wealth, and Babylon will be a very wealthy city. If Babylon is to be the leading city of commerce in the world, as this passage indicates, we can be sure there will be Jews there. Or is it speaking of some of the Church people who are living in Babylon? (Now, or then?) What God’s people are doing in Babylon without having the mark of the beast is hard to comprehend. Could it be they are Israelites who have not yet recognized Christ, and would repent if they had the opportunity? (See Zech. 12:10-13:9). Or could this be a warning to Christians before then, to forsake evil?

We know Christ is coming to execute God’s wrath (Rev. 19:15), but He will save His people first, when He comes (1 Thess. 4:15-18).

This call of God to His people in end-time Babylon demands that they “not participate in her sins, and that you may not receive of her plagues.” God is warning them of the consequences if they do participate in the sins of Babylon. They would be judged accordingly, for “whatsoever a man sows, this he will also reap” (Gal. 6:7).

This invitation of God is given to all who will heed God’s call to come out of sin and follow the righteousness in Christ. “Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Almighty” (2 Cor. 6:17, 18).

This is typical of God. If a person will repent He will forgive his sin and remove His judgment. The mercy of God is now available to all: “Behold, now is the acceptable time, behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6:2). In every age, God has received those who will repent of sin and seek His mercy through His Son, our Savior, Jesus. The people before Jesus’ first coming were justified by faith, and we who live after it are also justified by faith (Gal. 3:8; Heb. 10:38).

Only those who seek the Almighty and His Son will escape the Judgment (John 5:24). In fact, the sins of Christians are blotted out now in this age, “going before to judgment” (2 Tim. 5:24). All they will need when He comes is the “reward” He gives them (Matt. 16:27), which is “life in the age to come.”

Then, Rejoicing in Heaven

The closing scene of this picture of the complete destruction of the Babylonian system, both religiously and commercially, is how the angels in heaven react to this.

Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God;
 Because His judgments are true and righteous; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and He has avenged the blood of His bond-servants on her.”
 “And a second time they said, ‘Hallelujah! Her smoke rises up forever and ever.’
 “And the twenty-four elders (high order of the angels) and the four living creatures (cherubim) fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne, saying, ‘Amen. Hallelujah!’
 “And a voice came from the throne, saying, ‘Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great.’
 “And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude (hundreds of millions of angels, Rev. 5:11) and as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, ‘Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. ‘Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.’” (Rev. 19:2-7).

Contrasted to the grief and weeping by the world over the fall of Babylon is the rejoicing in heaven at her downfall. The entire heavenly host can finally rejoice because now has come the final triumph of Good over Evil, Righteousness over Wickedness, and Faithfulness over Faithlessness. This is what the heavenly angels have been longing for all these thousands of years. At the creation, the angels (sons of God, Job 38:7) “shouted for joy” at the greatness of God’s creation. But ever since the fall of man near the beginning, heaven has languished because of the terrible sinfulness that covered earth. Even God “repented that He had made man.” Yet when His salvation plan was presented, even the angels desired to look into it (1 Peter 1:12). But “unto the angels He has not put in subjection the world to come” (Heb. 2:5). Even though the salvation plan was for men, evilness on earth saddened the heavenly host. See how joyous they were when they announced Christ’s birth (Luke 2:9-15). And when evil has been removed from earth, see how happy they will be, according to the foregoing verses. They are glad to see their Almighty God in complete power and glory over earth, so they rejoice. Notice the meaning in the words they use about God. 1) Salvation (deliverance), 2) Glory (the brightness of His righteousness), and 3) Power (His mighty Authority over evil). “The Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us be glad and rejoice and give glory to Him.” Then this heavenly multitude announces the great theme that is the focus of The Book of Revelation: “The marriage of the Lamb is come,” and they will reign in God’s Kingdom over earth for 1000 years. This has been the hope of faithful men for thousands of years: The Second Coming of Christ, and the establishment of **God’s** Kingdom over earth.

THE END TIMES TIME LINE

Chapter 22

Revelation 20

The Kingdom of God – The Reign of Christ With His Saints

Here is a vision of the Great Consummation of the ages: the deposing of Satan, judgment and resurrection, the thousand-year reign of Christ and His people, the final rebellion of man, and their destruction in the lake of fire.

“Then shall the Assyrian (Antichrist) fall with the sword,” prophesied Isaiah (31:8), just before he said, “Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment” (32:1). What a welcome change! When Christ judges Antichrist and casts him into the lake of fire, and righteousness overturns evil, Isaiah was led to exclaim that it would be like “a refuge from the wind, a shelter from the storm,” like streams of water in a dry land, like the shade of a huge rock on a stifling hot day (32:2). These pictures from nature show the really welcome change from earth’s long dark night under sin and death.

The Prince of Darkness has been ruling the earth (John 12:31; 16:11). That reign is called the “darkness” of this age many times (John 1:5; etc.). Isaiah had said, “Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the LORD shall arise upon you, and His glory will appear on you” (60:2). The verse before showed that now His people can “Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen on you.”

The desolation at the end of this age is now replaced by Restoration (Dan. 9:27; Acts 3:19-21). One by one the enemies of God and Israel and the church have been annihilated. Now Satan himself is bound a thousand years before being consigned to the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10). Now we see in Christ’s Reign, Righteousness, and Peace filling the whole earth (2 Pet. 3:13; Psa. 72:7; Isa. 66:2; 2:2-4; 32:17)! The Edenic joy and happiness has been so marred by the intrusion of the Serpent it is impossible to imagine the joy of the whole creation when it is released from the bondage of sin. Here we see a world with Christ, and a world without a Devil.

“And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having a key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, And threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them. And I saw the souls (persons) of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with Him for a thousand years.” (Rev. 20:1-6).

The Final Doom of Satan

Satan is first confined in the bottomless pit, from whence the Beast came (17:8), then he will be thrown into the lake of fire (v. 10). Satan's confinement for a thousand years will be with the angels that sinned (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6).

Notice the four designations of the devil: the dragon (Rev. 12), the serpent of old (Gen. 3), the devil (Matt. 4:1-11), and Satan (Job 1; 2:1-7; 1 Chron. 21:1). These same four appellations are seen in Revelation 12:9. He is the evil one, the greatest deceiver among the fallen angels (Rev. 12:7-17; Matt. 4:8-11; 13:25, 28, 39; 25:41; 1 John 4:4; Jude 6). He "sinned from the beginning" (1 Jn. 3:8). The general opinion is that the sin into which he fell was pride (1 Tim. 3:6). He roams the earth "seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). He is the great enemy of God and man (aforementioned verses), who tempted Christ and men (John 13:2: "the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot... to deceive him"; Eph. 4:27). "Greater is he that is in you (a literal Christ) than he that is in the world" (a literal devil) – 1 John 4:4. He "deceives the whole world" (Rev. 12:9; 20:3, 8).

He is the one who tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3). Perhaps this is why he is called a "murderer from the beginning," and a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44; 1 John 3:8).

When the good seed is sown, the evil one, Satan, the devil, is there to snatch it away (Matt. 13:19; Mark 4:15: "Satan cometh immediately and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts"; Luke 8:12), or to sow tares (Matt. 13:38).

He lays snares or practices deceit to injure the children of God (Eph. 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:26). He seduces them by his subtlety (2 Cor. 11:3: "I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray"). The tempted one is not to yield to him, but resist him, and he will flee (Eph. 4:27; James 4:7).

He had power to produce possession of people by demons (Acts 10:38), and he instigated the imprisonment of some of the saints (Rev. 2:10).

People who are evil, and those who lie and murder, are called children of the devil (John 8:44; 1 John 3:8, 10). Judas was called by Jesus "a devil" (John 6:70).

Christ came to destroy the devil's works (1 John 3:8; Heb. 2:14). Jude alludes to a dispute between the devil and Michael the archangel over the dead body of Moses (Jude 9), but God settled it by Himself burying Moses in an unknown place, that later Israelites would not worship his grave as a shrine (Deut. 34:6).

In the time of the end Michael the archangel and his angels will wage war against the dragon (devil, Satan) and his angels and will throw the devil down to the earth, who, seeing he has "only a short time," persecutes the woman (Israel) who had the man child who ascended to heaven (Rev. 12:7-17).

We can see why all earth will rejoice when such a character is removed and the sons of God are glorified. All creation waits for this time (Rom. 8:19-23).

The Millennial Reign of Christ

Immediately following Christ's victory over God's enemies – the Beast, False Prophet, and their armies – His thousand year rule of peace and righteousness begins. All the prophecies of this Golden Age will come to pass. They are so many we cannot list them all here. Here are only a few:

"Nation shall not lift up sword against nation" (Isa. 2:4).

"They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:9).

“The work of righteousness will be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever” (Isa. 32:17).

“The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick” (Isa. 33:24).

“As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD” (Num. 14:21).

“There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon” (Psa. 72:16).

“The plowman shall overtake the reaper” (Amos 9:13).

“The meek shall inherit the earth” (Matt. 5:5).

“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on My throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with My Father on His throne” (Rev. 3:21).

“To him who overcomes will I grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God” (Rev. 2:7).

There are six references in this chapter to a time period of a thousand years. They are to be considered literally. The Old Testament prophets show a lengthy time for earth’s restoration, but never mention how long it will take. Here it does. These days are called “the times of restitution” in Acts 3:21. The term most frequently used by Jesus and the apostles of this Day is the phrase KINGDOM OF GOD. The Kingdom of God includes everything over which God rules, but in the Gospel of the Kingdom, which God commissioned Jesus to preach (Luke 4:43), the main emphasis is a restoration of EARTH, that man has defiled (Isa. 24:5).

We Shall Reign Upon the Earth

This is the promise God has given to the faithful (Matt, 5:5; Rev. 5:9-10; 3:21; 2:26-27; Psa. 37:22, 29, 34). Christ will reign on the throne of David on the earth over the earth (Jer. 23:5; 33:15-16; Zech. 6:12, 13; Isa. 9:6, 7; Luke 1:31-33; 2 Sam. 7:10-16; Rev. 1:5; 17:14; 19:15, 16).

Jesus taught us through a parable: this one will be over five cities, this one over ten cities (Luke 19:17, 19). How much plainer can Revelation 5:9 and 10 be? The righteous “shall reign on the earth”? and “the meek shall inherit the earth” (Matt. 5:5).

The heavens belong to God alone (Psa. 115:16). It is the earth God has given to the righteous children of men. He began this promise way back in the days of Abraham when He gave Abraham, the representative of all the faithful ones, the promise of land inheritance for ever (Gen. 13:14, 15; 17:7, 8; Rom. 4:13; Gal 3; Rom. 15:8). When God gave David the promise that his throne was established forever (and Christ shall inherit that throne when He comes – Luke 1:32; Matt. 25:31), it was the same throne Solomon sat on, and it was on earth (1 Chron. 28:5; 29:23). When Christ has put down all enemies during the thousand-year period, He will then turn over that Kingdom to His Father, that God “might be all and in all” (1 Cor. 15:22-28). New Jerusalem will come down to earth out of heaven from God after Christ’s thousand-year reign, and “God Himself shall be with them (righteous men) and be their God” (Rev. 21:2-7). Then “God Himself shall be among them” on earth; “He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people.”

The Order of the Kingdom

KING. The supreme KING of GOD’S KINGDOM will be Christ, God’s Holy Son, of course (Psa. 2:6-9; 72:9-11; 110:1, 2; Isa. 2:4; 9:6, 7; Jer. 23:5; 33:15; Dan. 7:13,14; Matt. 13:41; 19:28; 25:31-34; Acts 2:30; 1 Cor. 15:24-28; Heb. 10:13; Rev. 1:5; 11:15-18; 12:5; 17:14; 19:11-16; 20:4, 6).

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CO-RULERS. Christ shall appoint David King over all Israel (Jer. 30:9; Ezek. 34:22-30; 37:22-28). The apostles will be over the 12 tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:29, 30). All the saints in the first resurrection shall be kings and priests under Christ (Rev. 20:4, 6; 2:26, 27; Psalms 149:5-9; Dan. 7:27; Matt. 25:21, 23; Lk. 12:44; 19:17, 19; 22:29; Rom. 8:17; 1 Cor. 4:8; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 3:21; 5:10; 22:5).

TERRITORY. The Earth (Rev. 5:10; Matt. 5:5; Jer. 23:5; Psalms 37:22, 29, 34; Num. 14:21; Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14; Psalm 116:15; Isa. 45:18).

THE CAPITAL CITY. Jerusalem (Isa. 2:3; 24:23; 62:7; 65:18-19; Joel 3:17; Zech. 2:12; 8:3, 22; 14:16, 17; Matt. 5:35; Heb. 11:10; 12:22; Rev. 3:12; 21:2, 3, 10, 22-23).

SUBJECTS. The living nations remaining after Armageddon (Zech. 14:16; Psalm 72:11; Isa. 2:2-4; 11:10-12; 60:12; Jer. 3:17; Dan. 7:14; 7:27; Zech. 8:21, 22; Matt. 25:32; Rev. 22:2; Ezek. 47:12; Rev. 21:24).

CONTROLLING AUTHORITY. God's Law, or Instructions (Isa. 2:3, 4; Mic. 4:1-3; Dan. 7:27; Zech. 8:21, 22).

The Results of Christ's Reign

Saints Made Immortal

"We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed... the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed... this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality," says 1 Corinthians 15:52, 53.

The Faithful of all ages will be resurrected and made immortal when Christ comes. They will have glorious spiritual bodies (1 Cor. 15:42-53; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Matt. 8:11; Hebrews 11, made perfect). This will mean no more sickness, pain, or death (Isa. 33:21; Rev. 21:4; 1 Cor. 15:26; Rev. 20:6; John 5:28, 29; 6:40, 54). Perfect life will last through eternity. We can then see God (Matt. 5:8), for we will be like Christ (1 Jn. 3:2; Phil. 3:21). We will be filled with the glory of God (1 Thess. 2:12; Col. 3:4; 1 Cor. 15:43) as Christ, Moses, and Elijah were in the Transfiguration (Luke 9:27-32). Peter, James, and John saw that glory (v. 32).

World Peace – No More War

World Peace! When King Jesus reigns over earth from His capital city Jerusalem, the nations of earth will travel to Jerusalem to learn the ways of God (Psalms 2; Jer. 3:17; Zech. 14:16). Jesus will settle disputes for many people. Swords will be hammered into plows, and spears into pruning hooks. Nations will not go to war against other nations. Men will not train for war any more (Isa. 2:1-4).

Psalm 72 is a Messianic Psalm. It tells many things about Christ's reign. One is that peace will abound. Every living thing on earth will be at peace.

No one will harm another. The earth will be full of peace and God's righteousness (Isa. 11:9).

Peace Among Animals, and Between Animals and Man

"The wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little boy will lead them.

“Also the cow and the bear will graze; their young will lie down together; and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

“And the nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child will put his hand on the viper’s den.

“They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea” (Isa. 11:6-9).

Animals that have been enemies in this age will then live together in peace with tame natures: the lamb and the wolf; goats and leopards; cows and bears; lions will eat hay; young children will play among snakes. There will be nothing that harms or destroys in God’s Kingdom.

After the flood God put the fear and dread of man into every beast, fowl, and fish (Gen. 9:2). But in the day of God’s Kingdom on earth God will make a covenant for men “with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the battle bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely” (Hos. 2:18, KJ). This covenant between men and God’s creatures on earth will be that men will not fear earth’s creatures and earth’s creatures will not fear man. It will be like it was in the Garden of Eden.

The question has been asked, “Will there be animals in the Kingdom of God?” These above verses show there will be. As for beloved dog Fido coming back to life, to my knowledge there is no dog resurrection mentioned.

Health – No Sickness

No one living in Jerusalem will say, “I am ill” (Isa. 33:24) and the same will be true for all the resurrected faithful. It is difficult to imagine a redeemed one then with cancer, diabetes, or any other ailment. In fact we are assured there will be no more tears, death, sorrow, crying, and pain in the “new heaven and the new earth” (Rev. 21:1-5).

As Jesus destroys the enemies of God and men one by one, we see even death itself destroyed 1 Cor. 15:26; Rev. 20:14). Jesus has the keys of death and Hades (the grave) (Rev. 1:18). He can unlock death’s grip, or He can shut up death’s grip forever. Jesus has the keys of the kingdom (Matt. 16:19) and can open it or shut from it the children of men. Jesus “has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one will open” (Rev. 2:7; Isa. 22:22). Remember the judgment scene in Matthew 25 – sheep people on one hand; goat people on the other. LIFE for the one, and the LAKE OF FIRE for the other. We must make sure we are sheep by seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matt. 6:33). “Give diligence to make your calling and election sure,” for if we live by God’s virtues given in 2 Peter 1:5-7 we shall have an abundant entrance “into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:10, 11).

Isaiah 35 records promises that are a great comfort and hope for us. “THEN the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. THEN shall the lame man leap as an hart (deer), and the tongue of the dumb sing” (vv. 5, 6).

God has given Jesus all power in heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18). Will He open or close entrance into God’s Kingdom for you and me?

A Time of Great Plenty

Agriculture and construction seem to be the norm in the Kingdom. Isaiah said, “They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall also plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build, and another inhabit, they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and my

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elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they are the offspring of those blessed by the LORD.... It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall graze together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox; and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain," says the LORD" (Isa. 65:21-23, NAS and KJ).

The man reaping will be overtaken by the man plowing. The planter will be overtaken by the grape gatherer. "New wine will drip from the mountains and flow from the hills" (Amos 9:13, 14).

One of this writer's favorite verses about Kingdom plenty is Psalm 72:16. A handful of corn seed planted then on the mountain top will produce a crop looking like the mighty cedar trees of Lebanon. Now, mountain tops are rocky and infertile. Not so then! The curse on earth will be removed (Rev. 22:3). This is a picture of crops all year long. This happens in the southern states now. This writer harvested three crops off one row in Louisiana years ago.

The whole earth will be like the Garden of Eden then (Ezek. 36:35). Deserts will blossom with beauty. Springs will break out in the desert (Isa. 35:6, 7). This will happen in Israel, and also all over the earth, for the whole earth is to be restored (Acts 3:21).

"You will go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off" (Isa. 55:13).

"I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land fountains of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah (acacia) tree, and the myrtle, and the oil (olive) tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the box tree together: that they may see and recognize, and consider and gain insight as well, that the hand of the LORD has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created it" (Isa. 41:18-20; 35:6b, 7).

How different this will be from today! In this age, men have made the earth desolate (Isa. 24:5), and have "destroyed" the earth (Rev. 11:18). What God's RESTORATION will do for this groaning earth! (Rom. 8:19-22.)

Everyone who now overcomes by Christ's Spirit in him will eat from the tree of life (Rev. 2:7). Jesus will again eat with His apostles (Luke 22:29, 30), and very possibly, WE will sometimes eat at Jesus' table!

Earth Restored

Christ's thousand-year reign will bring about the restoring of all that God has promised to restore; the good conditions God put here in the beginning (Gen. 1:31).

The *cause* of this restoration will be because THE GLORY OF THE LORD WILL FILL THE EARTH (Num. 14:21; Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14).

We have seen that agriculture and construction seem to be the norm in the Kingdom.

The nations in the millennium will evidently live longer, as it was shortly after the fall: "No longer will there be... an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his days; for the youth will die at the age of one hundred and the one who does not reach the age of one hundred shall be thought accursed" (Isa. 65:20).

The heavens and the earth will actually be made new after the terrible upheaval in them around the time of Christ's return (2 Pet. 3:13; Isa. 65:17). That is the Day for which all the faithful have longed. We live on the same earth on which Noah lived. The way of men was destroyed off the earth then, and it will be again. The cleansing then was done by water. This time it will be by fire (2 Pet. 3:5-7; 10-14; 2 Thess. 1:8; Heb. 10:27; Rev. 21:8; Psa. 21:9; 50:3; Isa. 29:6; 30:26-33); 66:15, 16; Ezek. 38:22; Matt. 3:12; Rev. 20:9).

Israel Restored

God promised to Abraham and his descendants all the land from the Euphrates to the Nile for an everlasting possession (Gen. 13:14, 15; 15:18; 17:7, 8; Acts 7:2-5; Heb. 11:8-10, 13, 39, 40; Gal. 3:16-18; Rom. 15:8). They will receive their land inheritance forever when their King returns (Ezek. 47:13-48:35; Jer. 23:5-8; Ezek. 34:13; 36:24-38; Amos 5:15).

One of the major messages of the Hebrew prophets is the complete restoration of Israel. Israel has always been God's signpost of the times. Of course Israel's full restoration will be accomplished in the Kingdom of God. Notice how these prophecies of Israel we have seen fulfilled in our day lead up to, or are a foretaste of, her final and complete Physical and Spiritual Restoration in the Kingdom of God:

1. Israel's rebirth: "Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or *shall a nation be born at once?*" (Isa. 66:8). For a nation to spring into existence overnight is unheard of. Yet that is exactly what happened May 14, 1948: Israel became a nation again after being no nation for hundreds of years.

2. How this came about. Joel 3:2 shows that before Armageddon all nations (U.N.) would band together and divide, or part, God's land (Palestine). This took place in 1948.

The United Nations Organization, composed of representatives of the nations of earth, *did divide* the land of Palestine. This land was partitioned into two parts, one part for the Jews, and one part for the Arabs. The Arabs received the old city of Jerusalem where God's temple used to stand (fulfilling Ezek. 36:2 and Obadiah 16). Israel received the western and southern part.

3. The "shooting forth" of the fig tree and all the trees. "Behold the fig tree and all the trees," said Jesus, "as soon as they put forth leaves, you... know... that summer is now near.

"Even so you, too, when you see these things happening, recognize that the Kingdom of God is near. Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away, until all things take place" (Luke 21:29-32). (Notice that Jesus did not specify when "this generation" was to begin, nor how long a generation would be.)

It is evident from Joel 1:7 and elsewhere that the fig tree refers to Israel, and "all the trees" refers to other nations.

In the 1950's and 1960's there was a world-wide shaking up as colony after colony became free of their mother countries. They obtained freedom from the powers that had dominated them for many years. *Over 60 new nations were formed in those years.*

This newly achieved independence also caused unrest and civil war in most of these countries, for they have not known how to govern themselves well.

This "shooting forth" *has occurred*, beginning with Israel. "Israel shall blossom and bud (Isa. 27:6). Israel and many other nations have budded and shot forth leaves in our time. Summer (the Kingdom of God) is near.

4. Israel is to "dwell safely" before the end of this age, when the great northern army invades her (Ezek. 38:8, 11, 14, 16, 18). This temporary peace is still to come at this writing (Oct., 2003). It will come when Antichrist makes that seven-year covenant with her (Dan. 9:27).

5. A "time of trouble" is ahead for Jacob (Israel). "Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it" (Jer. 30:7, 11). Daniel said the same thing: "There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was" (12:1). One third of the Jews (6 million) were slaughtered under Hitler and Eichmann around WW2. Zech. 13:8, 9 states that two-thirds will be killed, but the final third will be saved by the coming of their Messiah. When they call upon God in the day of their trouble, He will hear, and save them. Jesus also spoke of this great trouble ahead for Israel. When the Abomination is placed in the Holy Place, great desolation shall follow (Dan. 9:27; Matt. 24:15, 21).

At that time, Israel's spoil shall be divided in the midst of her (Zech. 14:1). The invader will almost annihilate Israel. Yet, at the end, God will fight for her as when He fought in the day of battle. She will be

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His battle-ax and weapons of war against the heathen armies (Zech.12:2-9; Jer. 51:20). God will destroy all the nations that come against her (Jer. 30:10, 11).

6. God's correction and cleansing. God will continue to correct, chasten, and punish Israel until her heart is changed, until she sees Christ and accepts Him as her Messiah, and mourns for her sins (Zech. 13:6; Rev. 1:7; Mark 14:62; Zech. 12:10-14; Jer. 31:9; Ezek. 20:42, 43).

Then Israel will be cleansed from her sins, a new covenant will be made with her, and she will inherit the land of Canaan forever, as God promised (Ezek. 36:24-28; Zech. 13:1; Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 37:25; 47:13 – 48:29; Rom. 11:25-29).

Israel is God's example nation. By the way He deals with her, all nations shall see how they may come to God in the reign of Christ (Zech. 8:20-23; Ezek. 36:23; 38:23; 39:21-23). Israel shall be a blessing to the world (Rom. 11:12, 15). She will help lead the heathen people of earth to God (Zech. 8:20-23). She will be the chief nation on earth, "the head and not the tail," in the millennial rule of Christ our Lord on a renewed earth (Deut. 28:13).

When Jesus gave the teaching of the budding of the fig tree, He said, "When you see these things come to pass, know that the Kingdom of God is near at hand. Verily I say to you, this generation (that sees this) shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled." We have seen the budding of Israel. We can expect, then, that our generation shall not pass away until Christ comes. Are we ready for Him?

As we mentioned earlier in the chapter, when Christ has put down all enemies during His thousand year reign over earth, He will then turn over that world-wide righteous Kingdom authority to God His Father, that "GOD might be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:22-28). This is explained in Revelation 21. New Jerusalem will come down to earth out of heaven after Christ's reign, and "God Himself shall be with them (righteous men) and be their God" (Rev. 21:2-7). Then "God Himself shall be among them" on earth; "He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people." This will be the time the pure in heart will "see God" (Matt. 5:8).

Revelation 22 ends God's Word with mention of the tree of life and the river of life, the throne of God and Christ, an urging not to seal Revelation, nor to add to or subtract from it, the reward at Christ's coming, and a final invitation for everyone to come to God and to Christ. Jesus is coming! John's response and ours: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jim Mattison has been enthralled with the Word of God since his youth. He was born, raised, and educated in Oregon, Illinois, where he also attended Oregon Bible College (which has since moved to Morrow, Georgia, and has been renamed Atlanta Bible College). Graduating from Oregon Bible College in 1945, he immediately went into a pastoral ministry. For more than 40 years he pastored churches in Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, and Indiana. He also preached on the radio for 27 consecutive years.

Mattison is the grandson of S. J. Lindsay, founder of *The Restitution Herald* (a publication of the Church of God, Abrahamic Faith, General Conference). Lindsay founded churches in Tempe, Arizona, and Los Angeles, California, and was one of three founders of the Oregon, Illinois, Church of God.

As Lindsay was a devoted instructor of the Word of God, so also is his grandson. Mattison has been a prolific writer for the church at large, contributing lessons for Sunday School quarterlies for 19 years, and creating many tracts, articles, and booklets on important and difficult Bible teachings. He has been tireless in his efforts to enlighten old and young alike with the great message of salvation. For nearly twelve years he wrote a prophecy page for *The Restitution Herald*, later incorporating selections of that material into a book, *Prophecies of the End of the Age*, which, with revisions as his understanding deepened, was reprinted twice.

Mattison married Mary Helen Landry in 1945, and their union was blessed with eight children. His wife died in 1983 and he later married Martha L. Jones, widow of Elder Loie Jones. He credits his wives with adding much strength to his ministries.

Mattison's interest in prophecy led him to participate in Jesus' command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Coupling that command with the statement in Matthew 24:14, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come," one can understand Mattison's motivation to become more involved in mission work. Mission fields beckoned, and he responded in 1994.

Guided by his reliance upon God, he spearheaded work in Malawi, Africa, which had sprung up through faith and belief in the coming Kingdom of God. Mission-minded people sent him funds to help in the African work. Through generous donations, in conjunction with others, he has been able to build over 220 churches, and buy bicycles for pastors. In addition, the monies were spent to dig several water wells, provide flood relief, and donate food in times of famine. He has seen to the publishing of 100,000 native-tongue tracts on about 50 major Bible teachings. He and friend and cohort Anthony Buzzard (an author in his own right) provided the tracts to the mission fields for distribution.

Though 86 years of age (Nov. 2010), Mattison, for the past 16 years, has made eleven trips to Malawi/Mozambique, teaching, preaching, guiding, directing, praying for the people who have a thirst for God, and constantly thanking God for the opportunity of serving Him.

This book is a labor of love, of tremendous insight, of guidance by God's Holy Spirit. Herein you will find answers to many of the questions that may have been aroused by the cover display. Mattison's hope is that this book will strengthen faith, enlighten readers about prophesied terrible conditions coming upon this earth, and promote the blessed hope that the faithful will obtain eternal life in the Age to Come.

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