

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

To Seven Congregations of Asia Minor

Translation and notes by Pastor Tim Warner
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Purpose

This translation is made in the hope of providing the serious student of Bible prophecy with a very accurate representation of the Greek text in the English language. It sacrifices some readability for the sake of accuracy.

Greek Text

In making a translation, there are three families of Greek texts from which to choose. They are the Textus Receptus (from which the KJV and NKJV are translated), the Majority (or Byzantine) Text (which represents the vast majority of known Greek manuscripts), and the Alexandrian Text (which represents a very small number of very ancient manuscripts from Egypt). Each of these text families has its strengths and weaknesses. The Textus Receptus' strengths are that it usually follows the majority of Greek manuscripts, and takes into account patristic quotations and other ancient versions. Its weakness is that it occasionally follows a very obscure reading for which there is scant evidence. The Majority Text's strength is its numbers, and the very wide geographical area represented by its witnesses. Its weakness is that it ignores ancient versions and patristic evidence. The Alexandrian Text's strength is its greater age. Its weaknesses are its extremely small numbers, many internal discrepancies among its few witnesses, and its very limited geographical area. It is the local text of Alexandria, and does not likely represent the text of other areas, particularly Asia Minor, the cradle of early Christianity where the original autographs were kept by the local churches founded by the Apostles.

Our translation generally follows the Textus Receptus. However, in cases where the Textus Receptus follows an obscure reading with scant evidence, and when the Majority Text and Alexandrian Text agree against it, we follow the Majority Text. Footnotes are provided where important textual variants occur.

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Chapter 1

Prologue

1 The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him, to show His servants what is required to take place, with suddenness.¹ And He communicated it, sending it by His Messenger to His servant John, 2 who reported the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, as much as he perceived.²

3 The reader and the listeners to the sayings of this prophecy are privileged, also those who heed the things written in it; because the season is impending.³

Greetings from the Trinity to the Congregations

4 John, to the seven congregations which are in Asia:

Grace to you and peace from the One who is, who was, and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits⁴ which are before His throne, 5 and from Jesus Christ – The Faithful Witness,⁵ The Firstborn from Among the Dead,⁶ and The Ruler of the Kings of the Earth.⁷ Glory and dominion forever and ever be to Him who loves⁸ us and washed⁹ us from our sins in His own blood, 6 and made us a kingdom of priests¹⁰ to His God and His Father. To Him be the glory and the power unto the ages of the ages, Amen.

7 Look! He is coming with the clouds! And every eye will see Him! And any of those who pierced Him, and all the tribes of the earth, will wail¹¹ because of Him! Even so, may it be!

8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord God¹² who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

The Vision of the Glorified Christ

9 I, John, (your brother and companion in the oppression, and in the Kingdom and hopeful resolve of Jesus Christ), was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and because of the witness of Jesus Christ. 10 I began to be in the Spirit¹³ on the chief day,¹⁴ and I heard behind me a loud voice, like a trumpet, 11 saying, **“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,”** and,

1. This prepositional phrase literally means, “within a very short space of time.” Nothing in this phrase implies that the beginning of this timeframe is close. (See vs. 3).

2. John seems to be expressing the limitations of his own understanding.

3. The sense is that the end time events are threatening or imminent (but not necessarily immediate). The whole series of events could come at any time. But, nothing indicates they must come within any specified period of time.

4. cf. Zech. 3:9; 4:10 LXX & Rev. 5:6

5. Isaiah 55:4

6. The Greek word, rendered “firstborn,” literally means “first produced,” the beneficiary of the father’s inheritance. It also sometimes refers to preeminence or rank. cf. Psalm 89:27-29 LXX & Col. 1:18.

7. Psalm 2:7-12

8. The KJV/NKJV based on the Textus Receptus follow a minority reading in this case which has the aorist indicative (past) form of the verb “love.” The majority of manuscripts, as well as the oldest manuscripts, have the present tense.

9. Several manuscripts read “loosed.”

10. The Textus Receptus reads “kings and priests.”

11. To beat one’s own breast.

12. The Textus Receptus omits “God.”

13. See Rev. 4:2

14. τη κυριακη ημερα, that is on Sunday, “the superior day” of the week on account of its being the first day. “Κυριακη” is an adjective related to the noun, “κυριος” (lord, chief, superior). Its only other occurrence in the Bible is 1 Cor. 11:20, where it ought to be rendered, “a *superior supper*.” Ignatius defined this term as he understood it from John’s own usage. “And after the observance of the Sabbath, let every friend of Christ keep τη κυριακη ημερα as a festival, the resurrection-day, *the queen and chief of all the days [of the week].*” (Ignatius, to the Magnesians, ix). The Didache, written about the same time, has, “κατα κυριακην δε κυριου συναθροεντες,” (“According to the superior [day], and, of the Lord, gather together”). (Didache, XIV:1)

R E V E L A T I O N

“What you see, write in a scroll and send to the seven congregations which are in Asia¹⁵: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.”

12 And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And upon turning, I saw seven golden lampstands.¹⁶ 13 And in the middle of the seven lampstands [I saw] One like the Son of Man, having been clothed with a foot length¹⁷ robe and fastened about the chest with a golden band. 14 His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire;¹⁸ 15 His feet were like white brass, as if having been molten in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters. 16 And He had in His right hand seven stars. Out of His mouth projected a sharp double-edged sword. And His appearance was like the sun shining in its power. 17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He placed His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. 18 And I am He who lives, and became dead, and look, I am alive unto the ages of the ages. Amen. And I hold the keys¹⁹ of Hades²⁰ and Death. 19 Write what you saw, and what is, and what is to come afterwards.²¹ 20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lamp stands [are this]: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven congregations. And the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven congregations.”

Chapter 2

Jesus' Letter to the Congregation at Ephesus

1 “To the messenger for the congregation in Ephesus write: ‘The One holding the seven stars in His right hand, the One walking in the midst of the seven golden lamp stands, says this: 2 “I have observed your deeds, the toil, your endurance, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you tested those calling themselves ‘apostles’ and are not, and found them false [apostles]; 3 and you have patience and endured, and through My name have labored.¹

15. Asia Minor, today's Turkey.

16. Zech. 4:2

17. Zech. 3:4

18. Daniel 10:4-6

19. By virtue of the fact that Jesus conquered death, having died, and risen again immortal, He alone possesses the authority over death and the grave. The resurrection unto life is through Him alone. See John 11:23-26. The Jews had a tradition that God had the sole custody of four keys which He entrusted to no one, not man nor angel: the Key of Rain, the Key of Provision, the Key of the Barren Womb, and the Key of Death and the Grave. (Sanhedrin, fol. 113, 1)

20. “Hades” was the abode of the dead souls. See Luke 16:19-31.

21. This statements provides a three part division to the book, past, present, and future. “What you saw” refers to the vision of Christ. “What is” refers to the current situation among the seven churches, described in the seven letters that Jesus was about to dictate. “What is to come” is the prophecy of the future, beginning in Rev. 4:1.

1. A few manuscripts, and the Textus Receptus, add, “and have not fainted.”

R E V E L A T I O N

4 But I have [something] against you, that you abandoned your original love. 5 Remember then from where you have fallen and repent, and do the original deeds. Otherwise, I am coming to you suddenly and will move your lampstand from its place — unless you repent. 6 But you have this: that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans,² which I also hate. 7 The one having an ear,³ listen to what the Spirit says to the congregations! 'To the one being victorious, I will give to him to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God'."

Jesus' Letter to the Congregation at Smyrna

8 "And to the messenger for the congregation in Smyrna write, 'The First and the Last, who died, and came to life, says this: 9 "I have observed your deeds, and the trials and the poverty. But you are rich. And [I have seen] the blasphemy of those claiming to be Jews, and they are nothing but the synagogue of Satan.⁴ 10 Fear nothing that you are about to suffer. Understand, the devil intends to throw some of you into prison so that you may be tested, and you will have trouble ten days. Be faithful until death and I will give you the crown of life.

11 "The one having an ear, listen to what the Spirit says to the congregations: 'The one being victorious shall not be injured by the second death'."⁵

Jesus' Letter to the Congregation at Pergamos

12 "And to the messenger for the congregation in Pergamos write, 'The One having the sharp two edged sword says this: 13 "I have observed your deeds, and where you live, where Satan's throne ⁶ is. And you retain My name, and did not deny My faith in the days of Antipas, My faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan lives.

14 "But I have a few things against you: that you have there [some] holding the teaching of Balaam — who taught Balak to place an obstacle before the sons of Israel — to eat idol's sacrifices and [engage in] fornication.⁷ 15 Likewise you also have some embracing the teaching of

2. The term means, "conquerors of the people." It is used here as a proper name of some group. Some suggest it referred to the division of "clergy" and "laity." But this is doubtful, since that seems to have begun at a later time. Irenaeus informs us that the Nicolaitans were a group of Gnostics who claimed that the Creator was a lesser deity and not the Father that Jesus proclaimed. They also distinguished between "Jesus" who they saw as entirely human, and the "Christ," which they viewed as a divine Spirit that descended upon Jesus at His baptism and left Him at the crucifixion. (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, III, xi).

3. This was a common expression of Jesus' referring to those inclined to heed His voice. (cf. Matt. 11:15; 13:9; 13:43).

4. John 8:39-47; Rev. 3:9

5. Rev. 20:14, 21:8

6. The city of Pergamos was noted for an enormous pagan altar. It contained a 371 foot long sculpture of the war of the gods against the Gigantes, a mythological race of giants. It is currently housed in the Pergamon Museum in Berlin.



7. The pagan temples held feasts in honor of the gods, during which the worshippers engaged in sex with temple prostitutes as part of the worship rituals.

R E V E L A T I O N

the Nicolaitans,⁸ which I hate. 16 Repent then, otherwise I am coming to you suddenly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.

17 “The one having an ear, listen to what the Spirit is saying to the congregations: ‘To the one being victorious, I will give some of the manna to eat that has been hidden.⁹ And I will give him a white pebble,¹⁰ and on the pebble a new name inscribed which no one has perceived except the one receiving it’.”

Jesus' Letter to the Congregation at Thyatira

18 “And to the messenger for the congregation in Thyatira write, ‘The Son of God, His eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like white brass, says this: 19 “I have observed your deeds, love, service, faith, and your endurance; and your works, that the latter are greater than the former. 20 But I have [something] against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel¹¹ who calls herself a prophetess. And she is teaching¹² and seducing My servants to eat sacrifices of idols and to [engage in] sexual immorality.¹³ 21 And I gave her time [so] that she might repent, and she is not willing to repent of her fornication. 22 Look! I am throwing her into a bed, and those committing fornication with her into great distress, unless they repent of their deeds. 23 And I will kill her children in death, and all the congregations will know that I am the One searching the minds and hearts. And I will give to each of you according to your works.

24 “Yet to you I am saying, to the rest in Thyatira who do not have this teaching, who did not ‘know the depths of Satan,’ as they say, I will lay on you no other burden 25 except [that you] keep holding what you have until I may come. 26 And the one being victorious, and keeping My works¹⁴ until the end, I will give him authority over the nations — 27 ‘*He shall shepherd them with a rod of iron; As the vessels of pottery are crushed*’ [Psalm 2:9 LXX]¹⁵ — as I also have received from My Father. 28 And I will give him the morning star. 29 The one having an ear, listen to what the Spirit is saying to the congregations.”

8. See note 2.

9. A portion of manna was hidden in the Ark of the Covenant, along with the stone tablets and Aaron’s rod.

10. In the ancient courts, the accused was condemned by judges giving him black pebbles, and acquitted by receiving white pebbles. Here, the sense seems to be not only acquittal, but a new beginning (new name).

11. 1 Kings 18 – 21

12. 1 Tim. 2:12-14

13. See note 7

14. “My works” refers to doing the works of Jesus Christ, obeying His commandments and carrying on His mission, cf. John. 9:5 & Matt. 5:14-16.

15. In this Psalm, God’s Son was promised the inheritance of all the nations, to shepherd them “with a rod of iron.” Jesus quoted the LXX, (the Hebrew has “break them,” while the LXX has “shepherd them”). Here Jesus promised to share His power and reign with His faithful followers. (cf. Rev. 20:1-4).

R E V E L A T I O N

Chapter 3

Jesus' Letter to the Congregation at Sardis

1 “And to the messenger for the congregation in Sardis write, ‘The One who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars says this: “I have observed your deeds, that you have a reputation for being alive, yet you are dead. 2 Wake up! And reinforce what remains, which have been on the verge of dying, for I have not found your deeds complete before My God. 3 Remember therefore the way you have received and heard; be attentive¹ and repent. If, therefore, you should not awaken, I will arrive above² you like a thief,³ and you may not know⁴ what hour I will arrive above² you. 4 You have a few names, even in Sardis, who have not soiled their clothes. And they shall walk with Me in white, because they are worthy. 5 The one being victorious shall be dressed in white clothing. And I will not erase his name from the Book of Life, but I will acknowledge his name before My Father and before His messengers.⁵ 6 The one having an ear, listen to what the Spirit is saying to the congregations’.”

Jesus' Letter to the Congregation at Philadelphia

7 “And to the messenger for the congregation in Philadelphia write, ‘The Holy One, The True One, The One with the key of David, who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens,⁶ says this: 8 “I have observed your deeds. Look! I have placed before you a door that has been opened, which no one is able to lock, because you have a little strength, have been attentive to My Word, and have not denied My name. 9 Look! I am arranging [things].⁷ Those of the synagogue of Satan, — those claiming to be Jews, who are not, but lie⁸ — look, I will prepare them, that they may come before you and may bow at your feet, and may know that I have loved you.⁹ 10 Because you were attentive to the Word of My endurance,¹⁰ I also will be attentive to you [as you] emerge from the hour of trial, the one about to appear over the whole world to test those who live on the earth.

1. τερεω - to guard, keep an eye upon, observe attentively, give one's full attention to, preserve.

2. επι - above, over, upon

3. Matt. 24:43-44; 1 Thess. 5:2,4; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 16:15

4. The verb γνωσ (to know) is in the subjunctive mood, which indicates probability, not certainty.

5. αγγελος - God's messengers, angels.

6. Isaiah 22:22

7. The verb describes present continuous action, not future action, as in most translations.

8. John 8:37-47; Rev. 2:9

9. The sense of this verse is that Jesus is working towards a goal, the end result being that unbelieving Israel will come to the realization of their error, and acknowledge their mistake. Some translations appear to say that they will be forced to bow before Christians. That is not correct. See: Rom. 11:13-32.

10. “The doctrine which has exposed you to so much trouble and persecution, and required so much patience and magnanimity to bear up under its attendant trials.” - (Adam Clarke Commentary). That is, they remained faithful to the teaching of Jesus Christ despite severe opposition.

R E V E L A T I O N

11 Look! I am coming suddenly! Hold what you have so that no one may take your crown. 12 The one being victorious, I will make him a column in the temple of My God, which he should not leave thereafter. And I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, (the New Jerusalem, the one descending out of heaven from My God), and My new name. 13 The one having an ear, listen to what the Spirit is saying to the congregations'."

Jesus' Letter to the Congregation at Laodicea

14 "And to the messenger for the congregation in Laodicea write, 'The Amen,¹¹ The Faithful and True Witness,¹² The Origin¹³ of the Creation of God, says this:

15 "I have observed your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I hoped you might be cold or hot.

16 Since you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of My mouth, 17 because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and need nothing.' And you have not perceived that you are the miserable one, and pitiful, poor, blind, and naked. 18 I advise you to purchase from Me gold having been refined in the fire so that you may be rich; and white clothes, so that you may be clothed and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen. And rub some lotion on your eyes so that you may see. 19 As many as I love, I admonish and discipline. Therefore be zealous¹⁴ and repent. 20 Look! I have stood at the door, and I am knocking [again].¹⁵ If anyone should hear my knock¹⁶ and open the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. 21 The one being victorious, I will permit him to sit with Me on My throne, as I also was victorious and sat down with My Father on His throne. 22 The one having an ear, listen to what the Spirit is saying to the congregations'."

11. "Amen" is a Jewish idiom, meaning, "certainty."

12. Rev. 1:1

13. αρχη - first cause, or superior one. See Heb. 1:1-2.

14. The literal meaning is to become heated or boiling.

15. The Greek word rendered "have stood" is a perfect indicative verb. It describes a past completed action with continuous results. The sense is that previously, Jesus stood at the door of this congregation and there was no response. He remains shut out. However, the word rendered "I am knocking" is a present indicative verb, meaning present continuous action. Therefore, the idea is that Jesus has tried to get a response before and was unable. He was informing them that He was trying again to get some response from at least one person within this church.

16. φωνης - a noise or voice of any kind. In this context, it appears to refer to Jesus' knocking.

Chapter 4

The Heavenly Vision

1 After these things I observed, and look, a door having been opened in heaven. And the first sound I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you what is required to take place after these things." 2 Immediately I became in the Spirit;¹ and look, a throne was sitting, and someone was seated on the throne. The One seated had an appearance similar to a jasper and sardine stone.² And a rainbow encircled the throne, similar in appearance to an emerald. 4 And encircling the throne were twenty-four thrones. And on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, having been clothed in white robes, and on their heads golden wreaths. 5 And lightening discharged from the throne, and thunders, and voices. And seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.³ 6 Before the throne was a glassy sea, similar to crystal. And in the center of the throne, and around the throne,⁴ were four creatures covered with eyes front and back.⁵ 7 The first creature was like a lion, the second creature like an ox, the third creature had a face like a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle. 8 Each of the four creatures had six wings covered with eyes outside and inside. And they take no rest day or night, saying:

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and who is to come."⁶

9 And when the creatures will give glory and honor and thanks to One sitting on the throne, the One living to the ages of the ages, 10 the twenty-four elders will fall down before the One sitting on the throne and will worship the One who lives to the ages of the ages. And they throw their wreaths before the throne, saying: 11 "Lord, You are worthy to receive the glory and the honor and the power, because You created everything. And through Your decree they exist, and were created."⁷

The First Sequence

Notes:

1. As in Rev. 1:10, this language appears to refer to some unusual spiritual state, of being enveloped by the Spirit, in which he was able to receive direct revelation from God. In chapter 1, when John first began to be in this state he immediately saw the vision of Christ. Here, he was immediately transported to heaven to receive further revelation about the future.

2. Both stones are red in color.

3. cf. Rev. 5:6

4. That is, in the center of each of the four sides.

5. Ezekiel 1:1-28

6. Isaiah 6:1-3

7. Col. 1:16-17, Heb. 1:1-3

Chapter 5

The Scroll with Seven Seals

1 And, in the right hand of the One sitting on the throne, I saw a scroll having been engraved inside and outside,¹ sealed with seven seals. 2 Then I saw a strong messenger proclaiming in a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?” 3 And no one in heaven, or on the land, or under the land, was able to open the scroll or to examine it.² 4 And I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open³ the scroll or to examine it. 5 And one of the elders said to me, “Don’t weep. Look! The Lion of the tribe of Judah,⁴ the Root of David,⁵ has been victorious to open the scroll and to break its seven seals.” 6 And I observed⁶ in the middle of the throne and four creatures, and in the middle of the elders, a Lamb, as if having been killed, was standing.⁷ He had seven horns, and seven eyes which are the seven Spirits of God⁸ sent out to all the land. 7 Then He approached and took [the scroll] from the right hand of the One sitting on the throne.

8 And when He took the scroll, the four creatures and the twenty four elders bowed down before the Lamb, each having a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sing a new song, saying:

“You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals, because You were slain, and have redeemed some⁹ to God with Your blood from every tribe, and language, and people, and nation, 10 and have made them¹⁰ kings and priests to our God. And they¹⁰ shall reign on the land.”

11 And I looked and heard the voice of many messengers around the throne, the creatures, and the elders. And the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice:

1. Ezekiel 2:9, Zech. 5:1-5

2. βλέπειν - present infinitive form of the verb “look,” to be examining the contents of the scroll.

3. Textus Receptus adds, “and read.” The majority and oldest manuscripts omit it.

4. Gen. 4:9-10

5. Isaiah 11:1-10

6. Textus Receptus adds, “and look!”

7. “having stood up.” The perfect tense emphasizes the result of standing after having stood up from being slain. See: Rev. 1:18.

8. Zech. 3:8-9; 4:10; Rev. 4:5

9. There are a variety of readings in the manuscript evidence as follows: “and have redeemed to God us”; “and have redeemed us to God”; “and have redeemed us”; “and have redeemed to God [some]” We have followed the last reading for two reasons: It is the only one that agrees with the third person readings in verse 10. Also, it is not likely that the four creatures (who were singing) were redeemed from among men of all nations, since they are not human.

10. The vast majority, and the oldest manuscripts, have “they/them” (third person plural).

R E V E L A T I O N

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!”

13 And I heard every creature, those in heaven, and on land, and under the land, and upon the sea, and all that are in them, saying:

“To the One sitting on the throne and to the Lamb [be] blessing and honor and glory and power unto the ages of the ages!”

14 And the four creatures said, “Amen!” And the twenty-four elders bowed down and worshiped.¹¹

Chapter 6

*The Four Horsemen*¹

1 And I observed when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four creatures, like the sound of thunder, saying: “Come and see.” 2 And I observed, and look, a white horse, and the one sitting on it had a bow. And a wreath was given to him, and he came out conquering, and that he may conquer.²

3 And when He opened the second seal, I heard the second creature saying, “Come and see.” 4 Another horse [that was] red went out. And it was granted to the one sitting on it to take peace from the land, and that they will kill one another. And there was given to him a great sword.³

5 And when He opened the third seal, I heard the third creature say, “Come and see.” And I observed, and look, a black horse, and the one sitting on it had a yoke⁴ in his hand. 6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, “A quart of grain for a denarius,⁵ and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not harm the oil and the wine.”⁶

7 And when He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth creature saying, “Come and see.” 8 So I observed, and look, a pale horse. And the name of the

11. The Textus Receptus adds, “the One who lives unto the ages of the ages.”

1. There can be no question that this chapter parallels the Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24). The four horsemen are similar to Zech. 1:8-17; 6:1-8, which represents God’s judgment on the Gentile nations as He is about to restore Jerusalem.

2. The rider on the white horse is deception, (cf. Matt. 24:4-5). Paul called it “strong delusion” and “the lie,” (2 Thess. 2:1-12), sent by God upon those who have refused the truth. This will include the rise of a “messiah” figure (Dan. 11:21), and will trigger a mass apostasy from the true Christian Faith, (Matt. 24:9-13).

3. The second horseman is war, (cf. Matt. 24:6-8).

4. The Greek word means a “yoke,” a device that attaches an animal to a heavy burden.

5. The usual salary for a day’s labor.

6. Oil and wine were the commodities of the wealthy. Taken together the third seal seems to suggest famine that will strike the poor particularly hard, (cf. Matt. 24:7).

R E V E L A T I O N

one sitting on it was Death. And Hades accompanied him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the land, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the wild beasts⁷ of the earth.⁸

Martyrdom

9 And when He opened the fifth seal, I saw beneath the altar⁹ the souls of those slain for the word of God and the witness they were having. 10 And they called with a loud voice, saying, "How much longer, Master, holy and true, before You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the land?" 11 And a white robe was given to each of them. And they were told that they will rest a little longer until their fellow servants and their brothers, those about to be killed like them, may be completed.¹⁰

The Cosmic Disturbances

12 And I observed when He opened the sixth seal, and look, there was a great shaking, and the sun became black like mohair, and the whole moon became like blood.¹¹ 13 And the stars of heaven fell to the ground, like a fig tree dropping its figs when shaken by a strong wind. 14 Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up,¹² and every mountain and island was stirred from its place. 15 And the kings of the land, the great ones, the commanders, the rich men, the strong, every slave and free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains,¹³ 16 and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! 17 For the great day of His wrath has arrived, and who is able to stand?"

Chapter 7

*The Remnant of Israel Preserved*¹

1 And after this I observed four messengers standing at the four corners of the land, holding the four winds² of the land, that the wind should not blow on the land, or on the sea, or on any tree. 2 And I saw another messenger

7. Ezek. 14:21

8. The fourth horseman seems to sum up the plagues listed by Jesus, war, famine, disease (perhaps animal borne), & natural disasters, (Matt. 24:6-8).

9. The altar is before the throne (Rev. 8:3).

10. Persecution and martyrdom of Jesus' followers was also described by Jesus in the Olivet Discourse, (Matt. 24:9-13).

11. Matthew 24:29; Joel 2:30-31; Acts 2:20.

12. Isaiah 34:4

13. Isaiah 2:10, 19, 21

1. Verses 1-8 are parenthetical, a kind of footnote letting the reader know that these have been sealed for protection before any of the calamities of chapter 6 take place. Parenthetical, (out of sequence sections), like this are common in Revelation. The reason this chapter is structured this way is because it is meant to follow the structure of Isaiah 49 (quoted in vss. 16-17), and cannot be rightly understood apart from that chapter.

2. The "four winds" are equivalent to the "four horsemen," (cf. Zech. 6:5 LXX), and represent the judgment of God on the Gentile nations.

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ascending from the rising of the sun,³ having the seal of the living God. And he called with a loud voice to the four messengers to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, 3 saying, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we should seal the servants of our God on their foreheads."⁴ 4 And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand were sealed, from every tribe⁵ of the sons of Israel: 5 From the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed. From the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed. From the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed. 6 From the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed. From the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed. From the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed. 7 From the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed. From the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed. From the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed. 8 From the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed. From the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed. From the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed.

The Preserved Gentiles Inherit the Kingdom

9 After these things I observed, and look, a crowd of many [people] which no one could count, from every nation, tribes and peoples and languages, having [come to] stand before the throne and before the Lamb, having been dressed in white robes, with palm branches⁶ in their hands. 10 And they shout with a loud voice, saying,

"Salvation [belongs] to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

11 And all the messengers had [come to] stand around the throne and the elders and the four creatures. And they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying:

"Amen! The blessing, and the glory, and the wisdom, and the thanksgiving, and the honor, and

3. the East

4. In Ezekiel 9, the same metaphor was used regarding the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the Divine preservation of the faithful Jewish remnant.

5. It is significant that "every tribe" does not include the tribe of Dan. Instead, the tribe of Joseph takes two places. When Israel blessed Joseph's two sons, Ephraim (the younger) was given the blessing of the firstborn (Gen. 48:8-21), and his descendants became the "tribe of Joseph." Manasseh was Joseph's oldest son, and is viewed here as a separate tribe. Some of the early Church Fathers believed that Dan was omitted because of that tribes' consistent idolatry, and that the Antichrist will come from that tribe (cf. Gen. 49:8-12 & Gen. 49:16-18). (Hippolytus, Treatise on Christ & Antichrist, 6-15).

6. This is a distinct feature of the Feast of Tabernacles celebration (Lev. 23:39-43). It is prophetic of the Kingdom of Christ, and will be celebrated after Christ returns as King (Zech. 14:16-20).

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the power, and the strength be to our God, unto the ages of the ages! Amen!"

13 Then one of the elders responded, saying to me, "Who are these dressed in white robes, and where did they come from?"

14 And I said to him, "My lord, you have perceived."

And he said to me, "These are the ones who emerge from⁷ the great tribulation,⁸ and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple.⁹ And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them.¹⁰ 16 They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; 17 for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters.¹¹ And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

8:1 And when He opened the seventh seal, it became silent in heaven for about half an hour.¹²

Chapter 8

The Seven Trumpets¹

2 And I observed the seven messengers who have stood before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. 3 And another messenger came and stood before the altar, having a golden censer. And much incense was given him that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the hand of the messenger. 5 And the messenger took the censer, and filled it from the fire of the altar, and threw it onto the land. And there were thunderings, noises, lightnings, and a shaking. 6 And the seven messengers having the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

7 And the first messenger sounded, and there came hail and fire,² mixed with blood, and it was thrown upon the land. And a third of the land burned,³ and a third of the trees burned, and all green vegetation burned.

7. The same language used in Revelation 3:10. This passage unquestionably shows the outcome of the promise made in that passage.

8. The same language is used in Matthew 24:21.

9. The Throne of God will be in His Temple in Jerusalem (cf. Jer. 3:16-17 & Ezek. 43:1-7). This is also the "Temple" in which Jesus promised to Philadelphia, to make the faithful permanent pillars (Rev. 3:12).

10. Psalm 5:11 LXX. God dwells with men (rather than men dwell with God). Heaven has come to earth.

11. Verses 16 & 17 are a direct quote from Isaiah 49:10. The Shepherd leads His faithful sheep out of the protection of the sheepfold into the pastures of His Kingdom. The "sheepfold" metaphor is also used of the Jewish remnant's preservation during this time in Micah 2:12-13; 5:3-4; 7:14-15.

12. The chapter division here is unfortunate. Since the sixth seal is associated with the second coming of Christ, the seventh seal must follow His return to earth. The silence in heaven represents ceasing of activity in heaven. The Kingdom has come to earth, (Isa. 2:2-4; Jer. 3:16-17, Ezek. 43:1-7, Zech. 14:9, 16).

The Second Sequence

1. The seven trumpets begin a new sequence of events, going back and overlapping the previous events of the seals (which culminated in the second coming and establishing of the Kingdom on earth).

2. Exodus 9:23-26; Psalm 18:12-13

3. Textus Receptus omits this clause

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8 And the second messenger sounded, and [something] like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood.⁴ 9 And a third of the creatures in the sea having life, died. And a third of the ships were destroyed.

10 And the third messenger sounded, and a great star fell from the sky, burning like a torch. And it fell on a third of the rivers, and on the springs of water. 11 And the name of the star is called, Wormwood.⁵ And a third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water that was made toxic.

12 And the fourth messenger sounded, and a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them may be obscured and a third of the day may not be illuminated, and the night likewise.

13 And I saw and heard an eagle⁶ flying in mid-air,⁷ saying with a great voice, "Woe, woe, woe, land dwellers, from the remaining trumpet blasts of the three messengers about to sound!"

Chapter 9

The Three Woes¹

1 And the fifth messenger sounded and I saw a star, having fallen from heaven to the ground,² and he was given the key to the shaft of the abyss. 2 And he opened the shaft of the abyss, and smoke ascended from the shaft, like the smoke of a great furnace. And the sun and the air were obscured from the smoke of the shaft. 3 And out of the smoke came locusts³ upon the land. And they were given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. 4 They were commanded not to harm the grass of the land, or any green thing, or any tree, but only the men not having the seal of God on their foreheads. 5 And they were not permitted to kill them, but to torment them for five months. And their torment is like the torment of a scorpion if it should strike a man. 6 In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will be yearning to die, and death will flee from them.

4. Exodus 7:17-21

5. "Wormwood" is a highly toxic plant, from which the ancients made insecticides. It derives its name from the practice of brewing the leaves in a tea, for people and animals as a worming medicine.

6. A minority of manuscripts have "messenger."

7. Lit. mid – heaven

1. The three woes correspond to the 5th, 6th, and 7th trumpets. The first four trumpets deal with man's environment. The three woes affect man directly.

2. Jesus used the same terminology regarding Satan in Luke 10:18.

3. The locusts represent demonic spirits. There is no question that this passage was meant to reference Luke 10:18-19. "And He said to them, 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.'" There are three clear connections to this passage, a) the messenger of the abyss who falls from heaven; b) the locusts; c) God's people are off limits.

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7 And the appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. And on their heads were something like wreaths of gold. And their faces were like the faces of men. 8 They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. 9 And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron. And the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running to battle. 10 And they have tails like scorpions, and stingers also in their tails. And their power was to injure men five months. 11 And they have a king over them, the messenger of the abyss. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek his name is Apollyon.⁴ 12 One woe has come, look, two woes are still coming after these things.

4. The meaning in both Hebrew and Greek is "the destroyer."

13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, the one before God, 14 saying to the sixth angel having the trumpet, "Release the four messengers, the ones having been restrained at the great river Euphrates." 15 And the four messengers were released, having been prepared unto the hour, and day, and month, and year, that they may kill a third of men. 16 And the number of the soldiers of the cavalry was two hundred million. I heard the number of them. 17 And this is how I saw the horses in the vision: those sitting on them had breastplates like fire,⁵ hyacinth,⁶ and sulfur.⁷ And the horses' heads were like the heads of lions. And out of their mouths goes fire, smoke, and sulfur. 18 From these three plagues a third of men were killed — from the fire, and the smoke, and the sulfur coming out of their mouths. 19 For their power of the horses is in their mouth and in their tails, for their tails are like serpents, having heads, and with them they injure.

5. Fiery red

6. Deep blue

7. Yellow

20 But the rest of men, who were not killed by these blows, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which are not able to see, nor to hear, nor to walk. 21 And they did not repent from their murders, nor from their drugs,⁸ nor from their fornication, nor from their stealing.

8. The Greek word literally means "drugs." It is sometimes used figuratively of sorcery, since drugs were often employed by sorcerers.

Chapter 10

The Little Scroll

1 And I observed another mighty messenger coming down from heaven, having been clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was above his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. 2 And in his hand was a little scroll having been opened. And he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, 3 and called out with a loud voice, as a lion roars. And when he called out, seven thunders proclaimed their sayings. 4 And when the seven thunders spoke, I was about to write. But I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up¹ the sayings of the seven thunders," and "you should not write them."

5 And the messenger whom I saw, having stood on the sea and on the land, raised his right² hand to heaven 6 and swore by the One living unto the ages of the ages, who created heaven and the things in it, and the earth and the things in it, and the sea and the things in it, that there shall be no more delay,³ 7 but in the days of the sounding of the seventh messenger, when he should be about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.

8 And the voice which I heard from heaven spoke to me again saying, "Go, take the little scroll open in the hand of the messenger standing on the sea and on the land."

9 And I went to the messenger, asking him to give me the little scroll. And he says to me, "Take and eat it. It will make your stomach bitter. But in your mouth it will be sweet as honey."⁴

10 And I took the little scroll from the hand of the messenger and ate it. And it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. And when I had eaten it, my stomach was bitter.

11 And they⁵ said to me, "It is necessary for you to prophesy again⁶ against⁷ many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings."⁸

1. Or conceal

2. The Textus Receptus omits "right."

3. Compare Rev. 6:10-11

4. Compare Ezekiel 3:1-3.

5. The Textus Receptus has "he"

6. *παλιν*, once more, at another time

7. The preposition "επι" with a dative case object means "against," implying an adversarial relationship. (See: LXX Ezek. 6:2; 11:4; 25:2; 28:21; 29:2 35:2; 38:2. See also: Matt 10:18-19; Mark 13:9).

8. Some early Christian writers understood that John would reappear in the last days to proclaim the message of the seven thunders and the contents of the little scroll. (See: Hippolytus, App. xxi). To "prophesy again against..." implies John's once again standing in opposition to these peoples, just as Ezekiel did. John died shortly after writing Revelation without completing this role.

Chapter 11

The Jerusalem Temple & the Two Prophets

1 And a reed, like a measuring rod, was given to me and I was told,¹ “Arise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those worshipping in it.² 2 And exclude the court outside the temple. You should not measure it, because it was given to the Gentiles. And they will trample the holy city forty-two months.³ 3 And I will give to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in mohair.”

4 These are the two olive trees and the two lamp stands who have stood before the Lord⁴ of the land.⁵ 5 And if anyone is willing to harm them, fire goes out from their mouth and consumes their enemies. And if anyone should be willing to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. 6 These have authority to lock heaven, so that no rain may fall in the days of their prophecy.⁶ And they have authority over the waters to turn them to blood,⁷ and to strike the earth with every blow, as often as they should be willing.⁸

7 When they should finish their witness, the beast, ascending⁹ out of the abyss, will do battle with them, will conquer them, and will kill them. 8 And their corpses will lie upon the street of the great city which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where also their¹⁰ Lord was crucified. 9 And those from the peoples, and tribes, and languages, and nations watch their corpses three-and-a-half days. They do not permit their corpses to be put in graves. 10 And the dwellers on the land cheer over them, and rejoice, and will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those dwelling on the land.

11 And after the three-and-a-half days, the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet. And great fear fell on those watching them. 12 And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here.” And they ascended into heaven in the cloud,

1. lit. “saying.” The Textus Receptus adds, “and the angel stood”

2. cf. Ezekiel 40. Those worshipping and offering sacrifices on the altar in the Temple are Jews. This must occur prior to the abomination of desolation, (within the first half of the 70th week of Daniel 9:27), because the abomination of desolation will stop the sacrifices, and render the Temple “desolate” (cf. Dan. 9:27; Dan. 11:31; Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:1-12. An arrangement, whereby the Jews are permitted to rebuild the Temple on the northern part of the Temple Mount with the Dome of the Rock still standing, would fulfill this prophecy exactly, since the Muslim section would overlap the outer court of the Temple, explaining why it was left out.

3. If John used Hebrew reckoning, 42 months is about 1239 days. However, in His Gospel, John used Roman reckoning (Jn. 19:14 – “the sixth hour” equals 6:00am). On the Roman (Julian) calendar, 42 months is about 1278 days.

4. The Textus Receptus has “God.”

5. The two prophets are identified with the prophecy of Zechariah 4:3,11-14. The two olive trees provide the oil (Holy Spirit) to the lamps. The two prophets will provide a fresh supply of the Spirit’s power to the churches.

6. Elijah shut heaven for the same period – 3.5 years (Luke 4:25).

7. cf. Rev. 8:8-11

8. The first four trumpets are called down by the witnesses, who prophesy during the first half of the 70th week, while sacrifices are being offered in the Temple (v. 1-3).

9. If John meant that the Beast, who had previously ascended from the abyss, will kill them, we would expect him to use the aorist participle here. His use of the present participle most likely indicates that the Beast will kill the witnesses when he ascends from the abyss. This will occur at the mid point of the 70th week. (cf. Rev. 17:7-11)

10. The Textus Receptus has “our.”

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and their enemies watched them. 13 In that hour there was a great shaking, and a tenth of the city fell, and seven thousand people were killed, and the rest became terrified and gave credit to the God of heaven.

The Third Woe – The Seventh Trumpet

14 The second woe has come. Look! The third woe is coming quickly. 15 Then the seventh messenger sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom¹¹ of the world has become¹² [the Kingdom] of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign unto the ages of the ages!” 16 And the twenty-four elders who are sitting before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying:

“We give You thanks, Lord God, the Almighty, The One who is, who was, and who is to come, Because You have taken hold of Your great authority and begun to rule! 18 And the nations were angry, And Your wrath has arrived, And the time for the dead to be judged, And to give reward Your servants the prophets, And the saints, and those fearing Your name, small and great, And to destroy those destroying the land.”

19 And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple.¹³ And there were lightnings, voices, thunderings, a shaking, and a great hail.¹⁴

Chapter 12

The Faithful Church Preserved

1 And a great sign appeared in heaven – a woman, having been clothed with the sun, and the moon beneath her feet, and on her head a wreath of twelve stars.¹ 2 And being with child, she cried out, travailing and laboring to give birth.²

3 And another sign appeared in heaven, and look! a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and on

11. The Textus Receptus has “kingdoms” (plural)

12. ἐγένετο - aorist indicative form of “become.” The sense is that just now the kingdom of the world has changed hands, and Christ is taking over.

13. cf. Hebrews 9:24-28

14. This event appears to mark God’s taking over the earth. It occurs at the end of the 7 seals (Rev. 8:5), the end of the 7 trumpets (Rev. 11:19), at the end of chapter 14, and at the end of the 7 bowls (Rev. 16:18).

The Third Sequence

1. The most ancient Christian writers understood this “woman” to represent the true (faithful) Church, both before and after Christ’s birth (Hippolytus, Treatise on Christ and Antichrist, 61). It is the same “woman” (Sarah) that Paul described in Galatians 4:21-31, who represents “Abraham’s seed,” the children of promise. (See also Gen. 3:15). This includes Gentile believers (Gal. 3:26-29). Her being “clothed with the sun” represents her shining forth the “Gospel of the Kingdom” – the good news of the coming of Messiah to reign, the “Sun of Righteousness,” (Mal. 4:2). The moon under her feet represents the saints who have died. The wreath of 12 stars represents the twelve tribes of Israel and the 12 Apostles of Jesus, (cf. Rev. 22:12-14).

2. Jesus’ birthday is Tishri 1. The sun rises in the constellation Virgo (the Virgin) with the moon beneath her feet on Tishri 1 of the Jewish calendar. This is “Rosh Hashanah,” the first day of Creation. It is the day following the new moon between Sept. 5 & Oct. 5.

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his heads seven crowns.³ 4 And his tail drags a third of the stars of heaven, and threw them to the ground. And the dragon was standing before the woman who was about to give birth, that when she should bear her child he might devour [it].

5 And she gave birth to a male son, who is to shepherd all the nations with a rod of iron.⁴ And her child was taken up to God and His throne.⁵

6 And the woman escaped into the wilderness where she has a place there, having been prepared⁶ from God, so that they⁷ may be nourishing her there a thousand two hundred sixty days.⁸

7 And there was war in heaven. Michael and his messengers fought the dragon,⁹ and the dragon fought and his messengers. 8 And they did not prevail, nor was any more room found for them in heaven. 9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the original snake, called the Devil, and Satan, the one deceiving the whole world. He was cast down to the ground, and his messengers were cast down with him. 10 And I heard a great voice in heaven saying; "Finally, salvation and power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ has come, because the accuser of our brothers, the one accusing them before our God day and night, was thrown down." 11 And they were victorious over him through the blood of the Lamb, and through the word of their witness, and they did not love their lives until death. 12 Through this rejoice, heavens, and those dwelling in them. Alas! to the inhabitants of the land and the sea, because the Devil has come down to you having great anger, having known that he has a brief time.¹⁰

13 And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the ground, he pursued the woman who gave birth to the male [child].

14 And two wings of a great eagle¹¹ were given to the woman, so that she might fly to the wilderness¹² to her place, where she is nourished there a time, times, and half a time¹³ from before the snake.

15 And the snake projected a current of water¹⁴ from his mouth after the woman, that he might sweep her away

3. The heads represent the former empires Satan has ruled. The ten horns represent the 10 kings who will reign with Antichrist for the last 3.5 years, (cf. Daniel 2:41-44; 7:7-8; Rev. 17:9-12).

4. This is a reference to Psalm 2 LXX. (See also Rev. 2:26-27 & 19:15).

5. See: Psalm 110:1, Hebrews 10:12-13.

6. The perfect tense indicates that this place is prepared entirely beforehand for this purpose.

7. The context does not identify the third person plural (they) pronoun. However, compare Psalm 78:24-25.

8. See: Isaiah 26:20 – 27:1, Matt. 4:15.

9. See: Daniel 10:13, 21 & 12:1

10. 3.5 years. See Revelation 13:5.

11. Some early Christian interpreters thought the two wings represent the two witnesses in chapter 11, (Victorinus, Commentary on the Apocalypse, 12).

12. This is an obvious reference to the Exodus. "You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself." (Exodus 19:4-5). In the Exodus, the Israelites also had "two witnesses" (Moses and Aaron). So, the wings in both passages may refer to the respective "witnesses." These two prophets of God will have a major role to play in the flight of believers to a place of safety.

13. 3.5 years. cf. Daniel 12:7.

14. A flood of water is often used as a metaphor for a large army (cf. Isaiah 59:19, Jeremiah 46:7-8, Daniel 9:26, 11:22). Just as the Egyptians pursued the Israelites into the wilderness, and were destroyed by God in the Red Sea, so too will the Antichrist send his army in pursuit of the righteous who flee into the wilderness. Like Pharaoh's army, they too will be destroyed by God's intervention.

with the current.

16 And the land rescued the woman. And the land opened its mouth and swallowed the current the dragon projected from its mouth.

17 And the dragon was enraged against the woman, and departed to battle with the remnants¹⁵ of her seed who are keeping the commandments of God and holding the testimony¹⁶ about Jesus.¹⁷

Chapter 13

The Beast from the Sea

1 And I stood on the sand of the sea. And I observed a beast rising out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on its horns ten crowns, and on its heads blasphemous names. 2 And the beast I observed was like a leopard. Its feet were like the feet of a bear, and its mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave his power to it, his throne, and his great authority.¹

3 And one of its heads [appeared] as having been wounded unto death. And its blow of death was healed. And the whole land marveled after the beast. 4 And they worshipped the dragon that gave authority to the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to battle with it?" 5 And a mouth was given to it, speaking great things and blasphemies. And it was given authority to act for forty-two months. 6 And it opened its mouth with blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tent,² and those who tabernacle³ in heaven.

7 And to it was granted to battle with the saints and to conquer them.⁴ And authority was granted to it over every tribe, people, language, and nation.

8 And all those dwelling⁵ on the land shall worship him,⁶ whose name is not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

A Warning to the Saints

9 If anyone has an ear, let him listen:⁷ 10 If anyone [is destined] to captivity, he goes to captivity.⁸ If anyone

15. Not all will flee to a place of safety. Many will abandon the Faith thinking that they are saving their lives and maintaining their lifestyle. Jesus warned of this when He said, "Remember Lot's wife. Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it." (Luke 17:32-33). Others will remain behind and stand boldly against the Antichrist, following the example set by the two prophets (v. 11).

16. The dragon will only pursue those remnants that continue to obey God's commands and hold firmly to the Gospel message proclaimed by Jesus' Apostles (See: 1 John 1:1-5).

17. The Textus Receptus adds "Christ."

1. The dragon gives his power, throne, and authority to the beast. This parallels the Father's giving His authority to the Son. (cf. Matt. 26:18; John 6:26-27; John 17:1-2).

2. "Tent, tabernacle, of that well known movable temple of God after the pattern of which the temple at Jerusalem was built" (Thayer)

3. the verb form of "tent" or "tabernacle" – to dwell in a tent. The implication seems to be a temporary residence, or a lowly one.

4. cf. Rev. 12:11

5. This word implies taking up a permanent residence.

6. The neuter pronoun (it) is used throughout because "beast" is neuter in Greek, and a pronoun must agree with its antecedent in gender. It is therefore significant that John switched here to the masculine pronoun (him) when giving the interpretation of the vision. This indicates that "the beast" represents a man. (cf. verse 18).

7. See: Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; Rev. 3:6, 13, 22.

8. See: Jer. 15:2. The Textus Receptus reads, "if anyone leads into captivity, he goes to captivity."

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kills with the sword, he must be killed with the sword.⁹
In this is the endurance and the faith of the saints.¹⁰

The Beast from the Land

11 And I observed another beast rising out of the land. And it had two horns like a lamb, and spoke like a dragon. 12 And it exercises all the authority of the first beast before it. And it compels the land and those dwelling in it, so that they will worship the first beast whose blow of death was healed. 13 And it does great signs, that also it may make fire come down from heaven¹¹ onto the land before men. 14 And it deceives those¹² who dwell on the land by the signs which were given to it to do before the beast, saying to those dwelling on the land to make an image to the beast which has the blow of the sword and lives. 15 And to it was granted to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast may speak, and may require as many as should not worship the image of the beast should be killed. 16 And it requires all, small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, that they should receive a mark¹³ on their right hand or on their foreheads, 17 and that no one may buy or sell without having the mark, the name of the beast, or the number of its name. 18 In this is wisdom: Let him that has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. His number is 666.¹⁴

Numeric Value of the Greek Alphabet¹⁵

Alpha [Αα] (a) = 1	Nu [Νν] (n) = 50
Beta [Ββ] (b) = 2	Xe [Ξξ] (ks) = 60
Gamma [Γγ] (g) = 3	Omocron [Οο] (o) = 70
Delta [Δδ] (d) = 4	Pi [Ππ] (p) = 80
Epsilon [Εε] (eh) = 5	*** [ο] (-) = 90
*** [ς] (-) = 6	Rho [Ρρ] (r) = 100
Zeta [Ζζ] (z) = 7	Sigma [Σσς] (s) = 200
Eta [Ηη] (ay) = 8	Tau [Ττ] (t) = 300
Theta [Θθ] (th) = 9	Upsilon [Υυ] (oo) = 400
Iota [Ιι] (i) = 10	Phi [Φφ] (f) = 500
Kappa [Κκ] (k) = 20	Chi [Χχ] (ch) = 600
Lambda [Λλ] (l) = 30	Psi [Ψψ] (ps) = 700
Mu [Μμ] (m) = 40	Omega [Ωω] (O) = 800

*** These letters became obsolete, but were still used for their numeric value.

9. cf. Matt. 26:52. Those who use force to resist capture will be killed.

10. Being passive in the face of capture and captivity will require great endurance and faith by the saints. (cf. Rev. 12:11).

11. This is intended to mimic Elijah, (1 Kings 18:20-38; 2 Kings 1:10-14). Elijah is to herald the coming of the Messiah for the Jews, (Mal. 4:5-6).

12. The Majority Text reads, "And it deceives my own people who dwell on the land." If this is the correct reading, John was referring to his own people – the Jews.

13. The Greek word "charagma" (mark) means an "engraving." This may refer to something engraved in the skin, such as a tattoo. Seals were "engraved" in wood or metal, and then used to stamp their image onto something. So, it may refer to some sort of logo impression. It may refer to a "brand" like those given to animals. "Deissmann (Bible Studies, pp. 240ff.) shows that in the papyri official business documents often have the name and image of the emperor, with the date as the official stamp or seal and with charagma as the name of this seal." (A.T. Robertson, Word Pictures).

14. Some early manuscripts spell out the number, "six-hundred, sixty, six." The rest have three characters, ϞϞϞ'. The first character has the value of "600," the second the value of "60," and the third the value of "6."

15. The Greeks did not have numerals. Numbers were represented by the letters of the alphabet. All letters have a numerical value. Therefore, every name has a value calculated by adding up the letters. For example, the Roman name "Τειταυ" (Titan) equals 666. T = 300, ε = 5, ι = 10, τ = 300, α = 1, ν = 50. Many early Christians thought that the name of the Antichrist would be "Titan." (Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Vol. V, ch. xxx).

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Chapter 14

The 144,000 on Mt. Zion

1 And I observed, and look, a Lamb having stood up on Mount Zion,¹ and with It one hundred and forty-four thousand, having Its name² and Its Father's name written on their foreheads.³

2 And I heard a sound [coming] from heaven, like the voice of many waters, like the sound of loud thunder. And the voice I heard was like lyre singers playing their lyres. 3 They sing a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders.

And no was able to learn the song except the hundred and forty-four thousand, those having been redeemed from the land. 4 (These are the ones who were not defiled with women,⁴ for they are virgins. These are the ones following the Lamb wherever He may lead. These were redeemed from beside⁵ men – firstfruits⁶ to God and to the Lamb. 5 And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are flawless⁷).⁸

The Declarations of the Three Messengers⁹

6 And I observed another messenger flying in mid-heaven, having the age-enduring good message to proclaim over those settled on the land, and over every nation, tribe, tongue, and people, 7 saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, because the hour of His judgment has arrived; and worship the One having made heaven and earth, the sea, and the springs of waters."

8 And another, a second messenger followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen, is Babylon the great! She has made all nations drink from the wine of the wrath of her fornication."¹⁰

9 And another messenger, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives the mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed undiluted in the cup of His wrath. And he shall be tormented in fire and sulfur in view of the holy messengers and in view of the Lamb.

1. Mt. Zion is Jerusalem, (Isaiah 5:3-6).

2. The Textus Receptus omits "Its (His) name."

3. Rev. 3:12

4. Gen. 6:1

5. The Greek preposition is "απο" which means "from beside," while "εκ" means "from among."

6. These are the first redeemed, referring to the righteous who lived before the flood.

7. The Textus Receptus adds, "before the throne of God."

8. This group of 144,000 appears to refer to the righteous "sons of God" who lived before the flood, at the beginning of the present period of six thousands years under the curse. The 144,000 in chapter 7 refers to the group redeemed at the dawn of the millennial Sabbath Rest. (cf. Hebrews 4:1-11).

9. The order of these three messengers is critical to understanding the sequence of events in Revelation.

The first messenger proclaims the Gospel, and warns of the judgment that was already beginning to be unleashed. This messenger represents the first half of the 70th week during which the two prophets will preach repentance and call down God's judgments (Rev. 11:1-13).

The second messenger comes in the middle of the 70th week, when the two prophets are killed. The ten kings will then give their power to the beast and destroy Babylon (Rev. 17).

The third messenger describes the beast system, when its mark, and worship of the image described in chapter 13. This occurs during the last half of the 70th week.

10. See chapter 17-18

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11 And the smoke of their torment ascends unto ages of ages, and they have no relief day or night – those worshipping the beast and its image – and if anyone receives the mark of its name.”¹¹

12 Here is the endurance of the saints; the ones keeping the commands of God and the Faith of Jesus. 13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are the dead, those dying in the Lord from this time.’ Yes, says the Spirit, so that they will be refreshed from their toils, and their deeds are following with them.”

*The Harvest of the Righteous*⁹

14 And I observed, and look, a white cloud, and on the cloud was sitting One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden wreath, and in His hand a sharp sickle. 15 And another messenger came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to the One sitting on the cloud, “Swing¹⁰ Your sickle and reap, because the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the land has dried up. 16 So the One sitting on the cloud swung His sickle over¹¹ the land, and the land was harvested.

*The Harvest of the Wicked*¹²

17 And another messenger came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. 18 And another messenger came out from the altar, having authority over fire, and he called with a loud voice to the one having the sharp sickle, saying, “Swing your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the land, for her grapes have ripened.” 19 So the messenger swung his sickle into the land and gathered the grape vine¹¹ of the land, and threw it into the great vat of the wrath of God.¹² 20 And the vat was trampled outside the city. And blood came out of the vat, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred stadia.¹³

11. The Scripture clearly teaches perpetual torment for the wicked, at least those living during the last 42 months who worship the beast and take his mark.

9. Matt. 24:29-31, 1 Thess. 4:15-18.

10. Lit. “send”

11. Compare verse 19

12. Joel 3:12-13

11. Not only the grapes, but the whole vine is cut down.

12. Rev. 19:15.

13. About 180 miles. A “stadion” was about 600 feet.

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Chapter 15

Prelude to the Seven Bowls of Wrath

1 And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last blows, because in them the wrath of God was finished.

2 And I saw [something] like a glassy sea having been mixed with fire, and the conquerors from [the presence of] the Beast, and from [the presence of] his image, and from [the presence of] the number of his name, having [come to] stand on the glassy sea, having lyres of God.

3 And they sing the song of Moses,¹ the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb,² saying:

“Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord, God the Almighty!

Just and true are Your ways, King of the nations³!

4 Who would not fear [You], Lord, and glorify Your name?

Because, You alone are holy.

Because, all the nations shall come and worship before You.⁴

Because, Your righteous judgments have been manifested.”

5 And after these things I observed, and the temple of the tent of the witness in heaven⁵ was opened. 6 And the seven messengers, having the seven blows, came out of the Temple,⁶ having been dressed in pure bright linen, and having been girded about their chests with golden belts.

7 And one of the four creatures⁷ gave to the seven messengers seven golden bowls having been filled with the wrath of the God who lives unto the ages of the ages.

8 And the temple was filled with the smoke from the glory of God and from His power. And no one was able to enter into the temple until the seven blows of the seven messengers should be finished.

The Fourth Sequence

1. Deut. 32

2. Deut 32:43

3. The Textus Receptus has “saints.”

4. Psalm 86:9; Isaiah 66:18-23; Zech. 14:16-21.

5. The “tent of witness” refers to the Tabernacle that Moses built. The “Temple of the tent of witness in heaven” refers to the Temple in heaven which was the pattern for the Tabernacle that Moses built. (Heb. 8:5, 11-12, 23-24).

6. It is significant that the final wrath of God proceeds from the very place where the atoning sacrifice of Christ’s blood was offered.

7. Rev. 4:6-9

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Chapter 16

The Seven Bowls of Wrath

1 And I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven messengers, “Depart and pour the seven bowls of the wrath of God upon the land.”

2 And the first went and poured his bowl upon the land, and a vicious and malignant ulcer came upon men – those having the mark of the beast and those worshipping its image.¹

3 And the second messenger poured his bowl into the sea, and it became as blood of a dead man. And every living creature in the sea died.²

4 And the third messenger poured his bowl into the rivers and into the springs of water, and they became blood. 5 And I heard the messenger of the waters saying:

“You are just, the One who is and who was, the Holy One, in that You judged these things. 6 Because they shed the blood of saints and prophets. And You gave them blood to drink, as they deserve.”

7 And I heard [a voice] from the altar saying:

“Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and just are Your verdicts.”³

8 Then the fourth messenger poured his bowl upon the sun, and it was granted to him to burn men with fire. 9

And men were burned with severe burns, and men cursed the name of God, the One having authority over these blows. And they did not repent, to give Him glory.⁴

10 And the fifth messenger poured his bowl upon the throne of the Beast, and its kingdom became darkened,⁵ and they gnawed their tongues out of misery. 11 And they cursed the God of heaven because of their miseries and their ulcers,⁶ and they did not repent of their deeds.⁴

12 And the sixth messenger poured his bowl upon the great river, the Euphrates, and its water dried up, so the way of the kings from the rising sun⁷ might be prepared.

1. It is significant that the bowls of wrath, which are the most severe blows of all, are specifically targeted at those who worship the Beast and take his mark. The obvious intent is to show that God’s wrath is selective, and that He distinguishes between the wicked and righteous when He pours out His judgments. Psalm 91 predicts these same judgments with precisely the same message.

2. While the trumpet judgments called down earlier by the two Prophets are similar in nature, they are different in scope. During the second trumpet judgment, only a third of the creatures in the sea die, (Rev. 8:8-9), but during the second bowl judgment, all creatures of the sea die. The other trumpet judgments also reflect a third, while the bowl judgments are universal. The trumpet judgments, therefore, are a warning of what is to come if people refuse to repent at the preaching of the two Prophets.

3. In all these judgments, the just character of God is vindicated, and the evil character of mankind is exposed.

4. At this point, repentance is impossible, once they have taken the mark of the Beast, (Rev. 14:9-10). All that remains for those whom God no longer grants repentance is to curse God and await His damnation, (Rom. 1:18-32; Heb. 10:26-29).

5. This corresponds with the darkening of the sun that precedes Jesus’ appearance in the sky, (Matt. 24:29-31; Rev. 6:12).

6. These blows are compounding rather than sequential. During the 5th bowl judgment, people are still suffering from the first bowl judgment.

7. The East.

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13 And I observed [coming] out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the Beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs. 14 For they are spirits of demons performing signs, which spread out over the kings of the whole world, to collect them unto the battle of the great Day of God Almighty.⁷ 15 (“Look! I am coming like a thief.⁸ Blessed is the one watching⁹ and guarding his garments,¹⁰ so that he should not walk naked and his shame be seen.¹¹”) 16 And He¹² assembled them into the place called in Hebrew, “Armageddon.”

17 And the seventh messenger poured his bowl upon the air, and a loud voice came from the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, “It has been done!” 18 And there were lightnings and thunders, and noises. And there was a great earthquake, unlike any that have occurred since men came to be upon the land, such a great earthquake of this magnitude!¹³ 19 And the great city was divided into three parts,¹⁴ and the cities of the nations collapsed. (And Babylon the great was recalled before God, to give to her the cup of the wine of the fury of His wrath.¹⁵) 20 And every island disappeared, and the mountains were not found. 21 And great hail, as a talent weight,¹⁶ fell from heaven upon men.¹⁷ And men cursed God because of the blow of hail, because this blow was extremely severe.

Chapter 17

The Woman Riding the Beast

1 And one of the seven messengers having the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute, the one sitting on many waters, 2 with whom the kings of the land fornicated, and those dwelling on the land became drunk from the wine of her fornication.”

3 And he carried me in spirit into a wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a red beast, being full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.¹ 4 And the woman was dressed in purple and red, adorned with gold and valuable gems and pearls, having a golden cup

7. 2 Peter 3:10-12

8. These words of Jesus are one final warning to His own, that His coming is now imminent. It is not imminent until the armies begin to gather for the battle of Armageddon.

9. Mark 13:32-37; Luke 21:36

10. Guarding one’s garments means to keep from soiling them with sin, (Rev. 3:4; Rev. 7:14).

11. Here Jesus reminds the reader of His warning to Laodicea, (Rev. 3:18).

12. While the unclean spirits deceive the kings of the earth to come with their armies to Jerusalem, it is God who ultimately is gathering them for judgment, (Joel 3:9-18 & Zech. 14:2).

13. Isaiah 24:19-23; Ezekiel 38:19:23; Zech. 14:4-5; Rev. 6:12.

14. Jerusalem (Zech. 13:7-9)

15. Babylon is not to be destroyed here, but 3.5 years earlier when the east comes to power (Rev. 14:8-9; Rev. 17:16-18). While John was observing the future destruction of all the cities through symbolic representations, some in heaven reminded God to carry out a similar judgment upon Babylon the Great (Rome), the one persecuting God’s people at the time Revelation was written.

16. A talent was a measurement of weight, about 120 lbs.

17. Comets consist of rock and ice. This final bowl of wrath very likely corresponds to Jesus’ statement in the Olivet Discourse, regarding the stars of heaven falling to the ground, (cf. Matt. 24:29-30 & Rev. 6:12-13).

1. There are two other “beasts” with seven heads and ten horns, (Rev. 12:3; Rev. 13:1-2). The three complete the unholy trinity, the Dragon (Satan) being the counterpart to the Father, the beast like a leopard (Antichrist) being the counterpart to Jesus Christ, and this red beast (a demonic principality) being the counterpart to the Holy Spirit.

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in her hand, being full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. 5 And on her forehead a name had been written: "Mystery, Babylon² the Great, The Mother of Prostitutes³ and of the Abominations of the Land." 6 I observed the woman being drunk from the blood of the saints, and from the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.⁴ And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.

7 And the messenger said to me, "Why did you marvel? I will explain to you the mystery of the woman and of the beast carrying her – the one having the seven heads and the ten horns.⁵

8 The beast which you observed used to be, and is not [now], and is ready to ascend out of the abyss, and is going to destruction.⁶ And those dwelling on the land shall marvel, (the ones whose name is not written in the Book of Life since the foundation of the world), observing the beast that used to be, and is not [now], and shall [again] be present.

9 Here is the mind having wisdom: The seven heads are seven hills. There the woman is seated on them.⁷ 10 Also, there are seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come.⁸ And whenever he should come, he must continue briefly. 11 And the beast that used to be, and is not [now], also is the eighth, and is from the seven,⁹ and is going to destruction.

12 And the ten horns which you observed are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom,¹⁰ but they receive authority as kings for one hour with the beast. 13 These have one mind, and give their power and authority to the beast. 14 These will do battle with the Lamb, and the Lamb will defeat them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings. And those who are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful."

15 And he says to me, "The waters which you saw, where the prostitute is sitting, are peoples and throngs and nations and languages. 16 Also, the ten horns which you observed, and the Beast, these will hate the prostitute, and having plundered [her], will strip her naked, and will eat her flesh, and will burn her down with fire.¹¹ 17 For God implanted into their hearts to do

2. "Babylon" was a code word for Rome. Peter used this code in his first epistle from Rome, (1 Pet. 5:13).

3. Rome became a "prostitute" when the "Christian" emperor Constantine seduced the churches, and married the pagan Roman government to Christianity in AD325. Many of the churches within the Roman empire united themselves with the state for political power. They were seduced away from Christ, and Rome became a "Christian" empire. But this church – state was a prostitute. After the fall of imperial Rome, religious Rome, the spouse of the emperor, continued and remains to this day in the Vatican.

4. Imperial Rome slaughtered many true Christians. But, the prostitute Rome has slaughtered many more in the name of maintaining her political power over nations and kings.

5. The seven heads on all three beasts represent seven world kingdoms used by Satan in his attempt to overthrow God's plans for Israel: Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Syria, Rome, and one to come.

6. This red beast, carrying religious Rome, represents one of the demonic principalities that had previously ruled a former kingdom (prior to John's day). It was confined to the abyss in John's day, but would be released in the future. This beast will kill the 2 witnesses, (Rev. 11:7).

7. Rome is the city on seven hills. She was seated there when John wrote Revelation.

8. The five fallen kings are Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, & Syria. The one that "is" was Rome.

9. The 7th king is equivalent to the head that was wounded to death (Rev. 13:3). This demonic beast will be revived, and become the demonic power behind the 8th king, Antichrist.

10. These ten kings are also the 10 toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image, (Dan. 2:42-44). Daniel writes, "In the days of these [10] kings the God of heaven will set up a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed."

11. While Satanic power carries the prostitute, and props her up for a while, when Satan is through with her, he will use his minions to destroy Rome. God puts it in their hearts because He is also judging her for her prostitution.

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His purpose, and to be of one purpose, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.¹²

18 And the woman whom you observed is the city, the great one, the one having dominion over the kings of the land."¹³

Chapter 18

The Fall of Mystery Babylon

1 After these things I observed another messenger descending from heaven, having great authority, and the land was illuminated from his glory.¹ 2 And he called with a strong voice, saying, "Babylon the Great fell! fell!² and became the home of demons, and the cage for every unclean spirit, and the cage for every filthy and detestable bird, 3 because all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and [because] the kings of the land fornicated with her,³ and [because] the merchants of the earth were enriched through her capacity for indulgence."

4 And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Flee from her, my people,⁴ so that you may have no fellowship with her sins, and so that you may not receive her blows, 5 because her sins have piled up to heaven, and God has recalled her iniquities."

6 "Pay back to her as also she paid. And double to her twice, also according to her deeds. In the cup that she mixed, mix for her double. 7 As much as she glorified herself and indulged, give to her that much torment and sorrow. Because in her heart she says, 'I shall not see sorrow, because I sit as queen. I am no widow!'⁵ 8 For this, her blows will come in one day, death, sorrow, and famine. And she shall be burned down with fire, because the Lord God, the One judging her, is powerful.

9 "Also, the kings of the land, who fornicated and indulged with her, shall lament and mourn over her when they see the smoke of her burning. 10 Having stood far off for fear of her torment, they exclaim, 'Alas! Alas! the great city, Babylon, the mighty city, that your judgment came in one hour!'

12. The 10 kings will destroy Mystery Babylon (Rome) at the time they give their power to the Beast (Antichrist). Since he will reign for 42 months (Rev. 13:5), Babylon will be destroyed at the mid point of the final 7 years.

13. Here, all doubt is removed. The prostitute is Rome, the only city that was reigning (present tense) over the kings of the earth when John wrote the book.

1. Rev. 14:8

2. The verb is in the active voice, implying that her fall is the result of her own doings, the result of her being drunk, (Rev. 17:6).

3. Rome, which claims to be the spouse of Christ, has "fornicated" with all the kings of the earth.

4. Despite the magnitude of her sins, Rome still has some who belong to Christ.

5. When the church in Rome married Imperial Rome and the emperor Constantine in AD. 325, she became a whore. When political Rome fell a century later, she became a widow. Yet, she lives like a queen.

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11 "Also, the merchants of the land weep and mourn over her, (because no one buys their cargo anymore: 12 cargo of gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linen, purple, silk, scarlet, every citron wood,⁶ every ivory instrument, and every instrument of precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble, 13 also cinnamon, incense, perfume, frankincense, wine, oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle, sheep, horses, chariots, and the bodies and souls⁷ of men.)

14 'The satisfaction of your yearning soul has left you, and all the elegant and gaudy things have perished from you, and they shall not be found, not anymore.'

15 And the merchants of these things, who were enriched from her, shall stand far off from fear of her torment, lamenting and mourning, 16 and saying, 'Alas! Alas! the great city, the one having been clothed in linen, purple and scarlet, and having been gilded with gold, precious stones, and pearls, 17 that in one hour so much wealth was destroyed.'

And every helmsman, and all those sailing by that location,⁸ and sailors, and as many as work on the sea, stood far off 18 and cried out, seeing the smoke of her burning, saying, 'Is there any [other] like this great city?'

19 And they threw dirt on their heads, and cried, weeping and mourning, exclaiming, 'Alas! Alas! the great city, in which were enriched through her wealth all those having ships on the sea, that she was destroyed in one hour!'

20 "Heaven, rejoice over her, also the saints and Apostles and prophets, because God carried out your sentence on her!"⁹

21 And a mighty messenger picked up a boulder, like a great millstone, and threw it into the sea, saying, 'With this kind of violence Babylon the great city shall be thrown down and shall not be found, not anymore. 22 And the sound of lyre-singers, of musicians, of flutists, and of trumpeters shall not be heard in you, not anymore. And no craftsman of any trade shall be found in you, not anymore. And the sound of a mill shall not be heard in you, not anymore. 23 And the light of a lamp

6. The citrus, an odoriferous North African tree used as incense, prized by the ancient Greeks and Romans on account of the beauty of its wood for various ornamental purposes – Thayer.

7. Rome most definitely traffics in the "souls of men." She maintains her control of kingdoms by the influence she holds over the masses. She has clams to wield the power to admit or deny souls into heaven – the "keys of the Kingdom." And in so doing, she gets people and kings to do her bidding. A review of the history of Europe will bear this out.

8. Rome has one of the largest seaports on the Mediterranean Sea.

9. Both Imperial Rome and the Vatican sentenced many Christians to death by burning. Rome will receive the same sentence.

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shall not shine in you, not anymore. And the voice of a bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you, not anymore; because your merchants were the greatest of the land, because by your witchcraft all the nations were deceived, 24 and [because] in her was found the blood of prophets and saints,¹⁰ and of all those who had been slain on the land.”¹¹

10. Rome certainly killed multitudes of Christ’s followers.

11. She also killed others, such as Muslims in the Crusades, and Jews.

Chapter 19

1 After these things I heard [what sounded] like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying,

“Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power is of our God, 2 because true and righteous are His verdicts, because He judged the great prostitute who was corrupting the land with her fornication, and [because] He avenged the blood of His servants from her hand.”

3 And a second time they said, “Hallelujah! Her smoke goes up unto the ages of the ages!” 4 And the twenty-four elders and the four creatures fell and worshipped God sitting on the throne, saying, “Amen! Hallelujah!”

The Wedding Announcement

5 And a voice came from the throne, saying, “Praise our God all His servants and those fearing Him, the small and the great!” 6 And I heard [what sounded] like the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters, and like the sound of mighty thunders, saying,

“Hallelujah, because the Lord God, the Almighty has begun to rule!¹ 7 [Now] we may rejoice, and may celebrate, and may give Him glory, because the wedding of the Lamb has arrived,² and His wife has prepared herself.”³

8 And it was granted to her that she may be dressed in linen, bright and clean, (for the linen is the righteousness

1. Compare Rev. 11:17

2. It is significant that the wedding of the Lamb is at the beginning of His reign, not at the beginning of the 7 year tribulation. The pretribulation view has Jesus living with his bride for 7 years before the wedding.

3. The bride has prepared herself by purifying herself (2 Cor. 6:14 – 7:1), and remaining faithful to Jesus Christ throughout the time of tribulation, (cf. Rev. 3:4-5,18; Rev. 7:14).

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of the saints). 9 And he says to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those having been invited⁴ to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he says to me, "These are the true words of God." 10 And I fell before his feet to worship him. And he says to me, "No! Look, I am your fellow servant and [one] of your brothers who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For Jesus' testimony is the spirit of the prophecy."⁵

The Second Coming of Jesus Christ

11 And I observed heaven having been opened,⁶ and look, a white horse! And the One sitting on him is called Faithful and True, and with justice He judges and makes war. 12 His eyes are like a flame of fire,⁷ and on His head are many crowns having a name engraved that no one knows except Himself. 13 And He was clothed in a robe having been dipped in blood.⁸ And He has been named,⁹ "The Word of God." 14 And the armies¹⁰ in heaven were following Him on white horses, having been dressed in linen, white and clean.

15 And out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike the nations. And He will shepherd¹¹ them with an iron rod.¹² And He treads the vat of the wine of the fury and wrath of God Almighty.¹³ 16 And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name having been engraved, "King of kings, and Lord of lords."

17 And I observed one messenger, standing in the sun. And he called with a loud voice to all the birds flying in mid-heaven, saying: "Come, assemble together for the great feast from God,¹⁴ 18 so that you may eat flesh of kings, flesh of captains, flesh of strong men, flesh of horses and their riders, and flesh of all, free and slave, small and great."

19 And I observed the beast and the kings of the land and their armies, having been brought together¹⁵ to do battle¹⁶ against the One sitting on the horse and against His army.

20 And the beast was captured, and [along] with it the false prophet¹⁷ who performed signs before it, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast

4. The verb is in the perfect tense. The invitations have already gone out at this time, (Matt. 25:1-13).

5. Worship the One who originated the message, not the messenger.

6. John's point of observation changes from heaven back to earth. He observed the sky parting. (cf. Rev. 6:14 & Isa. 34:4).

7. Rev. 1:14

8. Isaiah 63:1-6

9. lit. "His name has been called"

10. "Armies" (στρατευματα) refers to fighting forces (angels) not to Christians.

11. This is a direct quote from Psalm 2:9 LXX. Most significant is the fact that John quoted the Greek Old Testament rather than the Hebrew, (which has "smash" rather than "shepherd"). The verb rendered "shepherd" (ποιμανεις) in both means to "tend (feed) as a flock."

12. To "shepherd them with a rod of iron" implies two things. First, the intent is not to destroy the nations, but to lead them. Second, force will have to be used, at least initially. This verse, and the Psalm it quotes, are absolute proof that amillennialism is false, because it proves that Jesus will lead the nations on earth after His second coming, and cause them to submit to His Kingdom, (cf. Zech. 14:16-21).

13. Joel 3:13; Rev. 14:17-20

14. Ezekiel 39:17-20

15. The verb is in the perfect tense, and passive voice. They had been led here by the "lying spirits," (Rev. 16:12-16).

16. They know why they are gathering, in a brazen attempt to overthrow Jesus and His army at His coming.

17. Rev. 13:11-18

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and those who worshipped its image. These two were thrown alive¹⁸ into the lake of fire burning with sulfur. 21 And the rest¹⁹ were slain with the sword proceeding from the mouth of the One sitting on the horse. And all the birds gorged themselves with their flesh.

18. 2 Thess. 2:8

19. 2 Thess. 1:-10, Zech 14:12-13

Chapter 20

The Imprisonment of Satan

1 And I observed a messenger descending from heaven, having the key to the abyss, and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he seized the dragon,¹ the ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan,² and he bound him for a thousand years. 3 And he threw him into the abyss and closed and sealed it over him, so that he could no longer deceive the nations until the thousand years were expired. After these things he must be released for a short time.

1. Rev. 12:3-4

2. The Majority Text adds, "the deceiver of the whole world."

The Reign of Christ and the Saints over the Nations

4 And I observed thrones and those seated on them, and authority to judge was given to them. And the souls³ of those having been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, who did not worship the beast or his image and did not receive the mark on their forehead or on their hand, they also come to life and reign with Christ a thousand years. 5 (But the rest of the dead do not come to life until the thousand years should expire). This is the first resurrection.⁴ 6 Blessed and holy is the one having a part in the first resurrection. Over these the second death has no power, but they shall be priests⁵ of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.⁶

3. Rev. 6:9-11

4. This statement rules out a pretribulation resurrection.

5. Peter stated that Jewish believers are now being prepared for a future priesthood, so they may offer sacrifices to God on behalf of the people. "You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2:5-6).

6. There appears to be two classes of resurrected people, priests and rulers. It may be that Jewish believers will serve mostly as priests, (Ex. 19:6, Isa. 66:20-21), and Gentile believers serve mostly as governors and rulers, (Rev. 1:6; Rev. 5:10) .

The Final Revolt

7 And when the thousand years should expire, Satan will be released from his prison. 8 And he will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the land, Gog and Magog,⁷ to lead them together to the battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. 9 They

7. Ezekiel 38:1 – 39:20

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went up across the [whole] width of the land, and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city.⁸ And fire from God⁹ fell from the sky and consumed them. 10 And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, the place where the Beast and the False Prophet also [were thrown]. And they shall be tortured day and night unto the ages of the ages.

The Final Judgment

11 Then I saw a great white throne and the One sitting on it, from whose face the land and sky fled. And no place was found in them.¹⁰

12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing¹¹ before the throne, and the books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the [Book] of Life. And the dead were judged by the things having been written in the books, according to their works.¹² 13 And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them.¹³ And they were judged, each according to their works. 14 And Death and Hades were thrown into the Lake of Fire. This is the second death, the Lake of Fire. 15 And if anyone was discovered not having been written in the Book of Life,¹⁴ he was cast into the Lake of Fire.

Chapter 21

The Cohabitation of God and Man

1 And I observed renewed sky and renewed land,¹ for the former sky and former land passed away. And the sea is no more!²

2 And I saw the holy city, renewed Jerusalem,³ descending out of the sky from God, prepared like a bride having been adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Look! The tent of God is with men; and He will dwell with them; and they will be His people; and God Himself will be with them – their God."⁴ 4 And He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; nor will there be any more pain,⁵

8. Literally, "the city having been beloved." Jerusalem, (Psalm 78:67-69; Psalm 87:2; Psalm 132:13-15)

9. God was the cause of fire falling from the sky.

10. The land and sky fled, leaving no place to hide from God's face, (cf. Amos 9:1-5; Isa. 2:19-21; Rev. 6:15-17).

11. having been resurrected, (see v. 5).

12. All are condemned by their works, (Rom. 3:19-20; Gal. 2:16). Their only hope is to have their name written in the Book of Life.

13. Amos 9:1-5

14. Some of the dead are written in the Book of Life, and are spared, those converted during the millennium.

1. Isaiah 65:17, 66:22-24; 2 Peter 3:13. These parallel passages place the renewed sky and land at the beginning of the Millennium.

2. The Red Sea is gone. Isaiah 11:15-16; Isaiah 19:5; Isaiah 51:10-11.

3. Isaiah 65:18-19; Gal. 4:26-27; Heb. 12:22. The "renewed Jerusalem" consists of the restored Jerusalem and her inhabitants. In Galatians 4:26-27, Paul called "Jerusalem above" the "mother of us all," and immediately quoted the opening verses of Isaiah 54, a prophecy of Jerusalem's restoration. Isaiah 60 & 62 are also foundational to this passage.

4. The Renewed Jerusalem is a dwelling suitable for the Almighty to cohabit with perfected mankind. Yet, even this magnificent city is called God's "tent," because even its splendor is inadequate to fully reflect the glory of the Almighty!

5. Due to the resurrection.

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because the former things have passed away.”

5 And the One sitting on the throne said, “Look! I am renewing everything.” And He said to me, “Write! For these words are faithful and true.” 6 And He said to me, “[It] is accomplished. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give freely from the spring of the water of life⁶ to the thirsty one. 7 The one being victorious will inherit these things. And I shall be God to him, and he shall be a son to Me. 8 But to the unbelieving cowards, and to those having become foul, to murderers, to fornicators, to drug users, to idolaters, and to all the liars,⁷ their part [is] in the lake burning with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”

*The Bride's Eternal Home*⁸

9 And one from the seven messengers (having the seven bowls full of the seven last blows) came and spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.”⁹ 10 And he lifted me in spirit upon a great and high mountain. And he showed to me the city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of the sky from God, 11 having the glory of God. Its brilliance was like a most precious stone, like a crystalline jasper stone, 12 having a wall great and high, having twelve gates, and at the gates twelve messengers, and names engraved (which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel).¹⁰

13 [There were] three gates facing east, three gates facing north, three gates facing south, and three gates facing west. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them [were] the twelve names of the twelve Emissaries of the Lamb.¹¹

15 And he who spoke with me had a golden measuring rod, so that he could measure the city, her gates, and her wall. 16 And the city is laid out [in] a square. Her length was the same as her width. And he measured the city with the rod to twelve thousand stadia.¹² Her length, width, and height are equal.¹³

17 And he measured her wall, one hundred and forty-four cubits,¹⁴ by the measure of a man, (that is of the messenger). 18 And the construction of her wall was of

6. cf. Ezekiel 47:1-12, Zech. 14:8-9, Rev. 22:1

7. 2 Tim. 4:2

8. Much of the imagery of the New Jerusalem is drawn from Isaiah 54, 60, & 62. Those three chapters should be read alongside Rev. 21-22

9. Note the city is called “the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife.” See note 3.

10. Ezekiel 48:31

11. The only “Apostles” sent personally by Jesus (the Lamb) are the eleven and Paul.

12. It is impossible to determine from the Greek text whether John was using the plural form of “σταδιον” (neuter) or “σταδιος” (masculine), because in the genitive plural form, the spelling is exactly the same for both words. The masculine form (σταδιος) simply means “firm” or “fixed.” The neuter form (σταδιον) means a fixed measure of length. Having just mentioned the angel’s golden measuring rod, John likely indicated that the New Jerusalem was 12,000 rods in circumference. If this rod was 18’ in length, these measurements match Ezekiel’s measurements given in Ezek. 48:30-35, using a 12’ measuring rod (Ezek. 40:5).

13. Either a cube or a pyramid can fit this description.

14. A cubit is the distance from the elbow to the fingertip (about 20 inches). The wall was about 240 feet high.

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jasper. And the city was clear gold, like transparent glass. 19 The foundations of the wall of the city had been adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, 20 the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. 21 The twelve gates are twelve pearls. Each one of the gates was [made] from one pearl. And the street of the city was clear gold, like transparent glass. 22 And I saw no sanctuary in her, for the Lord God Almighty is her sanctuary, also the Lamb. 23 And the city has no need of the sun, or of the moon, that they may illuminate her. For the glory of God illuminated her, and the Lamb is her lamp.¹⁵ 24 And the nations shall walk by her light. And the kings of the land bring their glory into her. 25 And her gates should by no means be closed by day,¹⁶ for no night shall be there. 26 And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into her. 27 And there will by no means enter into her anything profane, or the one practicing idolatry and deceit, but only those having been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb.

15. Isaiah 60:19-21

16. Isaiah 60:11

Chapter 22

1 And he showed me a pure river of water of life,¹ shining like crystal, flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb. 2 In the middle of its street, and on this side and that side of the river, was the tree of life, producing twelve [kinds of] fruit, each according to its month.² And the leaves of the tree are to cure the nations. 3 And every curse will be abolished. And the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in her;³ and His servants will minister to Him, 4 and they shall see His face; and His name shall be on their foreheads.⁴ 5 And night shall no longer exist; there will be no need for a lamp, or light of the sun, because the Lord God will illuminate them.⁵ And they will reign unto the ages of the ages. 6 And he said to me, "These words are faithful and true." And the Lord, the God of the spirits⁶ of the prophets, sent

1. cf. Ezekiel 47:1-12, Zech. 14:8-9, Rev. 21:6

2. Ezekiel 47:12

3. Ezekiel 43:1-7

4. Rev. 14:1

5. Isaiah 60:19-21

6. The Textus Receptus omits "of the spirits."

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His messenger to show His servants the things which must occur rapidly.

Epilogue

7 “Look! I am coming swiftly! Blessed is the one heeding the words of the prophecy of this book.”

8 And I, John, (the one hearing and observing these things), when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the messenger showing these things to me. 9 And he said to me, “No! Look! I am your fellow servant, and [one] of your brothers the prophets, and [one] of those who heed the words of this book. Worship God!” 10 And he said to me, “You should not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.”

11 Let the unjust remain unjust; and let the filthy remain filthy. But let the just remain just; and let the holy remain holy.

12 “Look! I am coming quickly, and [bringing] My wage with Me, to distribute to each according to his work. 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.”

14 Blessed are those doing His commandments,⁷ so that they should have a right to the tree of life, and they may enter through the gates into the city.

15 But dogs, drug users, fornicators, murderers, idolaters, and everyone fond of practicing falsehood, are excluded.

16 “I, Jesus, sent My messenger to testify these things to you for the congregations. I am the Root and the Descendant of David,⁸ the Bright and Morning Star.”⁹

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ And the hearing one, say ‘Come!’ And the thirsting one, ‘Come!’ And the one who is willing, take the water of life freely!

18 I am testifying to everyone hearing the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone should add to them, God will add to him the plagues having been written in this book. 19 And if anyone removes from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of Life,¹⁰ and from the holy city, and from the things having been written in this book.

7. Those who obey Jesus’ commandments, the “Alpha and Omega,” the One who is coming quickly.

8. Jesus is both David’s creator, as well as his son, (Matt. 23:41-46).

9. Num. 24:17-19; 2 Pet. 1:19

10. The Textus Receptus has “Book of Life.”

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20 The One testifying these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly." Amen. Yes, come, Lord Jesus!

21 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.
