



24 Hours Through the Bible*

*Primarily sourced from 'Learn the Bible in 24 Hours', by Dr. Chuck Missler, and *The Analyzed Bible*, by G. Campbell Morgan

Hour 24: Revelation 4-22 The Seventieth Week of Daniel & Beyond

Revelation (4-22)

Most notes and commentary from: Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum, some from G. Campbell Morgan (we will not read the verses, though they are included from Dr. Arnold's notes)

Jesus Christ and His Kingdom

It falls into three sections:

The first deals with millennial preparation, and is by far the largest ch.4-ch.18

The second in very brief sentences describes the millennium 19-20:6

The third has to do with millennial issues 20:7-22:5

The Heavenly Order Chs. 4 & 5

Chapter four deals with the Throne of God

Chapter five speaks of the Lamb and the Seven-Sealed Scroll.

Events in Heaven Prior to the Tribulation

Introduction: The final division of the book opens with the phrase, "After these things,"

- After the things of the seven fold church
- Chapters four and five of the Revelation record events transpiring in Heaven just before the Tribulation.
- With these chapters, the Revelation begins the third and major section of the book,
- This section comprises chapters 4–22.

The Throne of God—Revelation 4:1–11

-Verse one contains an introduction to these two chapters:

After these things I saw, and behold, a door opened in heaven, and the first voice that I heard, a voice as of a trumpet speaking with me, one saying, Come up hither, and I will show you the things which must come to pass hereafter.

- this verse merely contains an invitation for John to come to Heaven in vision (v. 2) in order that God can show him the things which must come to pass hereafter.
- John has already described the things which he saw (the Glorified Son of Man)
- and the things which are (the seven churches).
- Now the time has come for John to be shown what must follow the period of the seven churches.
- The phrase 'after these things' obviously refers back to 1:19,
- where the outline of the Revelation was first given.
- The invitation to John is not a symbol of the Rapture, for, as will be shown shortly, the Church is viewed as being already in Heaven.

-This is merely a personal invitation to John to come to where he can receive the rest of the prophecy involved in the Revelation.

Throughout the book two key phrases will be found.

- One is 'after these things', and the other is simply 'after this'.
- The first phrase is chronological.
- What is described after this phrase follows chronologically the events found in the previous passage.
- The connecting link, then, is a chronological one:
- It introduces events that will chronologically follow those events described in the immediate previous context.
- The second phrase only refers to the next thing John saw and does not necessarily imply chronology.
- The next vision John sees may chronologically precede or follow the previous context
- or he may be describing something contemporary with it.

In verse one, with the phrase 'after these things',

- John introduces events which will chronologically follow the previous context, namely, the seven churches.
- The events of Revelation four and five, then, chronologically follow the events of the seven churches.

In 4:2-3, John describes the Throne and the Throne-Sitter

Straight way I was in the Spirit: and behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and one sitting upon the throne; and he that sat was to look upon like a jasper stone and a sardius: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, like an emerald to look upon.

- That John was not physically taken into Heaven, but only saw it in a vision, is clear from the statement, **"I was in the Spirit."**
- The Person sitting on the Throne is God the Father.
- 4:4 describes the Throne attendants:
And round about the throne were four and twenty thrones: and upon the thrones I saw four and twenty elders sitting, arrayed in white garments; and on their heads crowns of gold.
- 24 Elders are redeemed and represent the church

Focusing

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- The identity of these 24 elders has been much debated.
 - Some take it to refer to celestial beings, while others take it to refer to and represent the Church.
 - While the text does not clearly state as to what these 24 elders refer,
 - there are clues in the text by which their identity can be deduced.
 - First**, these elders are clothed with white garments,
 - which throughout the Revelation are symbols of righteousness and salvation.
 - Celestial beings before the Throne of God did not need salvation, for they were not lost to begin with.
 - But these elders were at one time lost and at some point received salvation,
 - as is seen by their wearing of the white garments.
 - Second** is the fact that they are wearing crowns.
 - These crowns are not diadem crowns worn by those who are royal by nature,
 - which would have been the case had these been celestial beings.
 - These crowns are the *stephanos* crowns, the crowns of an overcomer,
 - the type of crown given as rewards to the members of the Church at the Judgment Seat of Messiah.
 - Third** is their very title of elders.
 - Nowhere else in Scripture is the term used to describe celestial or angelic beings.

-This term is used of humans in positions of authority either in the synagogue or church.

The figure 24 is probably taken from 1 Chronicles 24

-where David divided the Tribe of Levi into 24 courses to represent the whole.

-Since the Church is a kingdom of priests, these 24 elders represent the Church as a whole.

-This **fourth** clue to the fact that the 24 elders represent the Church and not angels.

-Hence, from these four clues, the 24 elders must represent the Church saints.

-If this is true, then they provide further evidence for a pretribulational Rapture.

-The Church is already in Heaven in chapters four and five before the Tribulation begins in chapter six.

It fits well in the chronological sequence provided by the Revelation.

-Chapters two and three viewed the Church on earth with a promise in 3:10 that the Church

-(not Christendom as a whole) will be kept from the very time of the Tribulation.

-In chapter four, the Church is in Heaven, and so the promise of 3:10 has been kept.

The fact that these 24 elders are wearing these Stephanas crowns

-also shows that the events described in chapters four and five occur

-after the Judgment Seat of Messiah but before the Marriage of the Lamb.

The third member of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, is found in verse five:

And out of the throne proceed lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God; ...

-These seven Spirits of God are representative of seven attributes of the Holy Spirit described in Isaiah 11:2.

4:6-8 describe the four living creatures:

And before the throne, as it were a sea of glass like unto crystal; and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, four living creatures full of eyes before and behind. And the first creature was like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face as of a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures, having each one of them six wings, are full of eyes round about and within; and they have no rest day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come.

-The fact that these creatures are described as having six wings and they cry the triad, Holy, Holy, Holy,

-would make them the same as the seraphim in **Isaiah 6:1-3:**

In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, Holy, Holy is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

4:9-11, describes the continuous worship before the Throne:

And when the living creatures shall give glory and honor and thanks to him that sits on the throne, to him that lives for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders shall fall down before him that sits on the throne, and shall worship him that lives for ever and ever, and shall cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Worthy are you, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power: for you did create all things, and because of your will they were, and were created.

-Following the crying of the triad, the 24 elders cast their crowns before the Throne.

-This need not be taken as a once for all action

-whereby the saints who have received their crowns give them up permanently to Messiah.

-The cry of the chorus is viewed as being continuous.

- The cry of the triad comes repeatedly, one after the other, and so does the chorus.
- Verse eight states that the crying of the triad is continuous, and therefore, so is the casting of the crowns.
- So then, it is not a question of the Church saints giving up the crowns forever,
- but a continuous removal of the crowns from their heads in worship of God the Father.

The Lamb and the Seven-Sealed Scroll—Revelation 5:1–14

- Chapter five describes the Lamb and the Seven-Sealed Scroll.
- It also serves as a prelude to the seven Seal Judgments.

All three series of judgments (seals, trumpets, bowls)

- will be preceded by a prelude in Heaven and the prelude to the Seal Judgments is to be found in chapter five.

5:1 The Seven-Sealed Scroll is introduced:

And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back, close sealed with seven seals.

- It is a scroll (the real meaning of the Greek term translated “book”)
- that is written upon both sides and is sealed with seven seals.

5:2–4 describe the problem of the scroll:

And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a great voice, who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no one in the heaven, or on the earth, or under the earth, was able to open the book, or to look thereon. And I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open the book, or to look thereon:

The problem of the Seven-Sealed Scroll

- No one was found worthy to open it.
 - This difficulty, however, is solved in verses 5–7:
 - The Second Person of the Trinity is the One Who is worthy to open the Seven-Sealed Scroll.
- And one of the elders said to me, weep not; behold, the Lion that is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome to open the book and the seven seals thereof. And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, having seven horns, and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth. And he came, and he takes it out of the right hand of him that sat on the throne.

Focusing....

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- In verse five, He is referred to as the Lion of Judah,
 - but when John looks, he sees the Lion of Judah as a Lamb standing (v. 6).
 - Thus, the two aspects of the two comings of the Messiah are seen.
 - In the First Coming, Messiah came as the Lamb of God Who died for the sins of the world.
 - But in preparation for His Second Coming, He is represented as the Lion ready to pounce.
 - The Lamb is viewed as though it had been slain.
 - This phrase is an idiom referring to a resurrected individual.
 - Messiah was killed and by all human experience He should have been dead.
 - But nevertheless, He was very much alive because of His resurrection.
 - But with both God the Father and the Holy Spirit present in Heaven,

How is it that only Messiah was worthy to open the scroll?

- In this context, to become worthy to open the Seven-Sealed Scroll required one to die for sins
- and then be resurrected. Only the Son was worthy in this respect.

-Since the Lion-Lamb is the One found worthy to break the seals,

5:8-14 concludes with a description of the worship of the Lamb

And when he had taken the book, the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they (24 Elders) sing a new song, saying, worthy are you to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: *why?* for you were slain, and did purchase unto God with your blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and made them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the earth. And I saw, and I heard a voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a great voice, worthy is the Lamb that has been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every created thing which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things that are in them, heard I saying, unto him that sits on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the dominion, forever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the elders fell down and worshipped.

-Thus, chapters four and five describe events in Heaven preceding the Tribulation.

-With the opening of the seven seals, the Tribulation judgments begin.

-It is now time to turn to a study of the Great Tribulation.

Summary: The Events of the Tribulation

Revelation 6-18 deals with the Great Tribulation period.

Chapters 6-9 and 17 are concerned with the events of the first half

Chapters 10-14 with the events of the middle

Chapters 15-16 and 18 with the events of the second half.

Focusing....

Regarding the events of the first half of the Tribulation

-two things should be noted.

First: some events occur in chronological sequence, with one event following the other in order.

-The Seal Judgments of chapter six and the Trumpet Judgments of chapters 8-9 fall into this category.

Second: other events occur throughout the first half simultaneously with the sequential events.

-There are five such events occurring throughout the first half.

-Two of these events actually begin before the Tribulation but continue on into and through the first half.

-One is the ministry of Elijah the Prophet.

-The other is the governmental system of the Ten Kings and the Ten Kingdoms.

-As was stated earlier, after the fall of the One World Government before the Tribulation,

-the world is divided into ten kingdoms.

-This Ten Kingdom Division continues into and throughout the first half of the Tribulation

-The ministry of the 144,000 and the worldwide revival (Rev. 7),

-And the rule of the Ecclesiastical Babylon that will control the religious affairs of the world during the first half (Rev. 17).

-The ministry of the Two Witnesses (Rev. 11),

Ch. 6-8:5 The Seal Judgments

-The Seal Judgments of Revelation six are the first of three series of judgments during the Tribulation.

-These begin as a result of the signing of the Seven-Year Covenant

-and are part of the decree of the destruction upon the whole earth (Is. 28:22).

- There are seven Seal Judgments, with the seventh containing the Seven Trumpet Judgments.
 - The seventh Trumpet Judgment contains the seven Bowl Judgments.
 - The first four of the seven Seal Judgments are also known as “the four horsemen of the Apocalypse.”
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The events immediately following the end of the Church dispensation are symbolically set forth. The first seal is opened, and one representing false authority is seen going “**forth conquering and to conquer.**”

The First Seal—Revelation 6:1–2

And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, Come. And I saw, and behold, a white horse, and he that sat thereon had a bow; and there was given unto him a crown: and he came forth conquering, and to conquer.

- With the first horseman of the Apocalypse,
- Revelation introduces a man wearing a crown and conquering, and to conquer.
- This figure on the white horse will play a major role in the Tribulation period.
- That the figure is not Messiah is indicated by the fact that the crown here is a stephanos crown,
- the crown of an overcomer or victor.
- It is not the diadem crown, the crown of sovereignty and royalty,
- the type of crown Messiah will wear in chapter 19.
- This figure who enters the Tribulation conquering, and to conquer is the Antichrist.**

Focusing

- To fully understand the person and the activities of the Antichrist, he needs to be viewed within the framework of the counterfeit trinity.
 - According to Revelation 13, an unholy trinity will be set up in the Great Tribulation.
 - Satan will play the role of the counterfeit father.
 - For just as the true Father gave all His authority to the Son,
 - Satan will give all his authority to the Antichrist.
 - The False Prophet will play the role of the counterfeit holy spirit.
 - The ministry of the Holy Spirit is to call men to worship Messiah.
 - The ministry of the False Prophet will be to call all men to worship the Antichrist.
 - In every detail, as will be seen later in this study, the Antichrist will play the part of a counterfeit son.
 - Once the role he is to play is comprehended, many things said of him in the Scriptures will be more easily understood.
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The second seal is opened, and carnage and bloodshed follow as the outcome of military despotism.

The Second Seal—Revelation 6:3–4

And when he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, come. And another horse came forth, a red horse: and to him that sat thereon it was given to take peace from the earth, and that they should slay one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

- With the second horseman of the Apocalypse, peace is removed from the earth.

Focusing

- The period of peace and false security that existed before the Tribulation is now shattered.
 - As the Antichrist comes conquering, and to conquer in his worldwide conquest,
 - the Tribulation begins with a war.
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There are three major wars during the period of the Tribulation,

-and the second seal is the first of these three wars. The second war will be in the middle of the Tribulation, and the third, which is the Campaign of Armageddon, toward the end of the Tribulation.

The third seal is opened, and famine follows in the wake of commercial despotism.

The Third Seal—Revelation 6:5-6

And when he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, Come. And I saw, and behold, a black horse; and he that sat thereon had a balance in his hand. And I heard as it were a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, a measure of wheat for a shilling, and three measure of barley for a shilling; and the oil and the wine do not hurt.

-The third horseman of the Apocalypse brings a worldwide famine which often comes as a consequence of war.

Focusing

-The expression, a measure of wheat for a shilling, and three measures of barley for a denarius, denotes a great scarcity of these food items.

-The judgment of a worldwide famine, however, is tempered by mercy.

-For while there is a famine of food, there will be an abundance of medicine,

-for the oil and wine are not hurt.

-These items were used for medicinal purposes.

The fourth seal is opened, and death in its most terrible forms reigns.

The Fourth Seal—Revelation 6:7-8

And when he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, Come. And I saw, and behold, a pale horse: and he that sat upon him, his name was Death; and Hades followed with him. And there was given unto them authority over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with famine, and with death, and by the wild beasts of the earth.

-The fourth horseman of the Apocalypse is the deadliest of all,

-for in this judgment, one-fourth of the world's population is destroyed.

-The population is destroyed by four means: the sword, which may mean

-either massive slaughter or another war; famine, meaning death by starvation;

-pestilence, meaning death by disease; and death by wild animals.

-Once food becomes scarce, wild animals which generally leave man alone will begin to attack man for food.

Focusing...

Summary of the four

-In the opening of these first four seals the true nature of evil is graphically set forth, as to its strength and weakness.

-The first of four seals revealed the development of lawless government.

At the opening of the fifth seal the cry of slaughtered saints is heard

-and to the martyrs are given the white robes which are the reward of fidelity.

-The fifth gave the cry of the saints, and the answer in heaven.

The Fifth Seal—Revelation 6:9-11

And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a great voice, saying, How

long, O Master, the holy and true, do you not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And there was given them, to each one a white robe; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little time, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, who should be killed even as they were, should have fulfilled their course.

-The fifth seal deals with the martyrs of the first half of the Tribulation.

-Thus, early in the Tribulation there is the persecution of the believers in Messiah.

Focusing....

This raises two questions:

First, with the Church already raptured, who are these saints and how is it that they come to believe?

Second, who is doing the persecuting?

-**How** these martyrs became believers will be explained in Revelation seven: namely, by the preaching of the 144,000 Jews.

-As to **who** is persecuting these believers, this will be answered by Revelation 17: namely, the Ecclesiastical Babylon.

The Sixth Seal—Revelation 6:12–17

And I saw when he opened the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the whole moon became as blood; and the stars of the heaven fell unto the earth, as a fig tree casts her unripe figs when she is shaken of a great wind. And the heaven was removed as a scroll when it is rolled up; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the princes, and the chief captains, and the rich, and the strong, and every bondman and freeman, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains; and they say to the mountains and to the rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of their wrath is come; and who is able to stand?

The opening of the sixth seal is immediately followed by premonitions of the coming One.

-At the opening of the sixth, signs are given of the established order of true government

-notwithstanding the apparent victory of the false.

-Each series of judgments ends with convulsions of nature,

-The sixth seal concludes the first series of judgments with such convulsions.

Focusing

-The convulsions begin with an earthquake (v. 12a) followed by a blackout of the sun and moon, followed by a meteor shower (vv. 12b–14).

-the Bible speaks of five blackouts during the end times, and this is the second blackout.

-Anarchy ensues as men begin to flee from the wrath of God rather than to turn to Him in faith (vv. 15–17).

-This passage shows that with the fifth seal, even unbelievers recognize that they are experiencing the wrath of God.

-They may have been able to explain away the previous judgments as natural catastrophes,

-but with the nature of the sixth seal, that will no longer be possible.

-It should be noted that the passage does not say that the wrath of God begins only with the sixth seal,

-but that only with the sixth seal do unbelievers recognize that it is the wrath of God.

The Seventh chapter divides itself into two sections (7:1-8 and 7:9-17)

-The Means of the Worldwide Revival—Revelation 7:1–8

-This passage describes the third of the five events happening throughout the first half of the Tribulation.

-The 144,000 Jews and the Worldwide Revival

After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that no wind should blow on the earth, or on the sea, or upon any tree. And I saw another angel ascend from the sunrising, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a great voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we shall have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads. And I heard the number of them that were sealed, a hundred and forty and four thousand, sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel:

Of the Tribe of Judah were sealed twelve thousand;

Of the Tribe of Reuben twelve thousand;

Of the Tribe of Gad twelve thousand;

Of the Tribe of Asher twelve thousand;

Of the Tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand;

Of the Tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand;

Of the Tribe of Simeon twelve thousand;

Of the Tribe of Levi twelve thousand;

Of the Tribe of Issachar twelve thousand;

Of the Tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand;

Of the Tribe of Joseph twelve thousand;

Of the Tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.

Revelation seven deals with the second major purpose of the Great Tribulation that of the worldwide revival.

-Restraining angels are now seen holding in check the forces of Divine judgment

-while the sealing of an elect number of the servants of God takes place.

-From this sealing the seer turns to contemplate a great vision in heaven

-of a vast multitude lifting the song of salvation.

-In response to the inquiry of John, the angel declares that these have come out of the great tribulation

This ministry of the 144,000 is something that occurs throughout the entire first half

-and not merely after the sixth seal judgment.

-In fact, it is going on during the Seal Judgments, and it is the means by which the fifth seal saints come to the Messiah.

-The passage begins with '**After this**', which is not chronological, but merely the next vision John sees.

Focusing....

In verses 1–3, the four angels which are commissioned to bring judgment on the earth

-are commanded to hold off their destruction until a specific number of servants are sealed.

-Sealing was done for two reasons: service and protection.

-Both reasons apply here.

-They are sealed for protection so that they cannot be hurt either by the judgments poured out by God

-or by the persecutions against believers.

-But they are also sealed for service, for they are the ones who will proclaim the message of the gospel in the Tribulation.

-The mention of the four winds shows that these 144,000 Christian Jews will come from all parts of the world and not only from Israel.

In verses 4–8, the identification of those who are sealed is clearly specified as 144,000 Jews.

- To make it even more clear, twelve tribes are listed with the statement that 12,000 are chosen from each of the twelve tribes.
- Such careful delineation definitely indicates that these 144,000 are Jews and will be nothing else, in spite of much speculation to the contrary.
- The emphasis is on the Jewishness of the 144,000.
- Looking at the list of tribal names, some have concluded that the Tribe of Ephraim is left out, but this is not the case.
- In place of the name of Ephraim there is the name of his father Joseph (v. 8), but it is the same tribe.
- Such an interchange between Joseph and Ephraim is not unusual and also appears elsewhere, as in Ezekiel 37:16.
- But one tribe is left out, namely, the Tribe of Dan. No reason for this is given.
- A great deal of speculation and guesswork has developed as a result,
- mainly the idea that the Antichrist will come out of this tribe.
- But this has already been dealt with earlier. Others claim that the False Prophet will arise out of the Tribe of Dan and that is why that tribe is left out. But this, too, is pure speculation.
- There is nothing in the context to suggest either of these suppositions.
- The text itself does not state the reason why the Tribe of Dan is left out.

The actual reason is simply to maintain the symmetry of twelve.

- When all tribal names are actually listed, the total comes to thirteen and not twelve because Joseph produced two tribes: Ephraim and Manasseh.
- In order to maintain the symmetry of twelve, one name must always be dropped.
- This is not the only place this happens.
- For example, in Deuteronomy 33, Moses presents his twelve tribal blessings, as Jacob did in Genesis 49.
- But to maintain the symmetry of twelve, Moses also had to drop one tribe, and that was the Tribe of Simeon.
- In Ezekiel 47–48, in describing the tribal settlement in the Messianic Kingdom, to maintain the symmetry of twelve,
- Ezekiel drops the Tribe of Levi, putting this tribe in a separate place and category.
- Just as there was no sinister reason for dropping Simeon, there is no sinister reason for dropping Dan.
- In all cases, it was merely to retain the symmetry of twelve.
- In the Book of Revelation, three numbers are prominent: four, seven, and twelve.
- Hence, the dropping of Dan.

This ministry of the 144,000 Jews preaching the gospel fulfills the prophecy of Matthew 24:14
14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

The Results—Revelation 7:9–17

After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands; and they cry with a great voice, saying, salvation unto our God who sits on the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels were standing around about the throne, and about the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, these that are arrayed in the white robes, who are they, and where did they come from? And I say unto him, My lord, you know. And he said to me, these are they that come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are before the

throne of God; and they serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sits on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.

-In verses 9–10, John sees a multitude of Gentiles from every nationality standing before the Throne of God.

-The expression after these things means that the salvation of these myriads of Gentiles follows chronologically the 144,000 Jews

-and there is a cause and effect relationship.

-After describing the worship of the One on the Throne (vv. 11–12),

-the text proceeds to identify who these Gentiles are that are found around the Throne (vv. 13–14).

-These Gentiles are identified as those who have come out of the Great Tribulation.

Focusing ...

-They are saved Gentiles, for they have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.

-Since they follow chronologically the ministry of the 144,000 Jews,

-the implication is that they are the Gentiles who come to Messiah as a result of the preaching of the 144,000 Jews.

-Included are the fifth seal saints who suffered martyrdom.

-Because of the massive persecution that these Tribulation saints have undergone,

-this passage concludes with a description of the comfort they now enjoy in the presence of God (vv. 15–17).

From this chapter it should be evident that the Holy Spirit will be still at work in the Tribulation

-for the work of regeneration is His particular ministry.

-While the work of restraining evil is removed, allowing the Antichrist to begin his evil rise to power,

-the Holy Spirit Himself will still be in the world and will have an active ministry.

-While He will no longer be baptizing into Christ aka the church (for that is a special ministry for the Church only),

-He will be performing some of His other ministries, such as regeneration, filling, sealing, etc.

-In all this, the second purpose of the Tribulation will be accomplished: that of bringing about a worldwide revival.

The seventh seal is opened 8:1

-Heaven is sensible of the stupendous importance of this seal,

-And its songs are hushed, and prayer is silent for half an hour.

Trumpets 8:6–9:21, 11:15–19

-Then seven archangels receive trumpets, and prepare themselves to sound.

-How long a period elapses between the sounding of the trumpets we cannot tell.

-The rapid grouping of the first four would seem to suggest their quick succession.

The Trumpet Judgments

The Prelude—Revelation 8:1–6

And when he opened the seventh seal, there followed a silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw the seven angels that stand before God; and there were given unto them seven trumpets. And another angel came and stood over the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should add it unto the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before

the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer; and he filled it with the fire of the altar, and cast it upon the earth: and there followed thunders, and voices, and lightnings, and an earthquake. And the seven angels that had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

-In verses 1–2, the seventh seal is opened, and the seventh seal contains the second series of judgments, called the Trumpet Judgments.

-Verses 3–5 describe events in Heaven and earth just preceding the Trumpet Judgments.

-The act of adding incense to the prayers of the saints indicates that the Trumpet Judgments

-will answer the prayers of the saints, prayers already voiced in the fifth Seal Judgment.

-As a warning to the earth that the Trumpet Judgments are about to start,

-it is made to tremble with convulsions of nature.

-Then, in verse six, the seven angels prepare to sound the seven trumpets.

Focusing ...

The First Trumpet—Revelation 8:7

-The sounding of the first is followed by a storm and tempest over the earth.

-And the first sounded, and there followed hail and fire, mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth:

-and the third part of the earth was burnt up, and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

-With the sound of the first trumpet, one-third of the earth's dry surface is destroyed.

The Second Trumpet—Revelation 8:8–9

-The **second** sounds, and another convulsion, more terrible than the first, follows

And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; and there died the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, even they that had life; and the third part of the ships was destroyed.

-The second trumpet destroys one-third of the salt waters, including sea life.

-The great mountain burning with fire may refer to a meteor or a volcano,

-but the results are supernatural, for they of themselves would not turn the sea to blood. A number of the

-Tribulation judgments are similar to the ten plagues God brought on Egypt, and here is one such similarity.

The Third Trumpet—Revelation 8:10–11

-The third sounds, and by the touch of a star God changes the character of a third part of the waters of the earth.

And the third angel sounded, and there fell from heaven a great star, burning as a torch, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of the waters; and the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

-The third trumpet destroys one-third of the sweet water.

-Whenever the word star is used symbolically, it is a common symbol of an angel, and this is the case here.

-The angel's name is Wormwood, showing the angel to be a fallen one.

-This fallen angel causes one-third of the sweet water to turn bitter, which in turn causes the death of many.

-Fallen angels will be used on several occasions to render judgment on the earth, and this is one such occasion.

The Fourth Trumpet—Revelation 8:12

- The fourth angel sounds, and the earth is affected by a display of power among the heavenly bodies.
- Between the sounding of the fourth and fifth trumpets there is a pause.
- A flying eagle proclaims a threefold coming woe, and the proclamation is an evidence of the long-suffering of God.

And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; that the third part of them should be darkened, and the day should not shine for the third part of it, and the night in like manner.

- The fourth trumpet destroys one-third of the earth's light sources.
 - These verses do not necessarily imply that one-third of the sun, moon, and stars are destroyed, only that their light is somehow hindered from reaching the earth.
 - As a result of this judgment, one-third of the light source for the daytime and one-third of the light source for the nighttime are completely blacked out.
-

The Prelude to the Woe Judgments—Revelation 8:13

And I saw, and I heard an eagle, flying in mid heaven, saying with a great voice, Woe, woe, woe, for them that dwell on the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, who are yet to sound.

- With the first four trumpets having sounded, this verse introduces the final three.
- Because the three final Trumpet Judgments are especially severe for mankind on the earth, they are called Woe Judgments.
- As bad as the first four judgments were, the latter three will be far more severe.

Focusing

- This severity is so pronounced that there is a warning of their approach sounded with a voice in the atmospheric heavens.
- The speaking-eagle is most likely a seraph (Rev. 4:7) chosen to give this warning to the earth.
- The first two of these Woe Judgments are demonic invasions, and the third one contains the Bowl Judgments.

The Fifth Trumpet: the First Woe Judgment—Revelation 9:1-12

- At the sounding of the **fifth** trumpet the procedure of judgment takes on a new form.
- New forces of a spiritual nature produce physical pain and death.

And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven fallen unto the earth: and there was given to him the key of the pit of the abyss. And he opened the pit of the abyss; and there went up a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And out of the smoke came forth locusts upon the earth; and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was said unto them that they should not hurt the grass on the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only such men as have not the seal of God on their foreheads. And it was given them that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when it strikes a man. And in those days men shall seek death, and shall in no wise find it; and they shall desire to die, and death flees from them. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared for war; and upon their heads as it were crowns like unto gold, and their faces were as men's faces. And they had hair as the hair of a woman, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to war. And they have tails like unto scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt men five months. They have over them

as king the angel of the abyss: his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek tongue he had the name Apollyon.

The first Woe is past: behold, there come yet two woes hereafter.

- The passage begins when a fallen star is given the key to the Abyss (v. 1).
- Once again, the word star is used symbolically of an angel.
- Once again, it is a fallen angel.
- The Abyss is a temporary place of confinement for fallen angels or demons.
- Those that are, are waiting there to be released for specific judgments on mankind.
- It is the place where the demons feared to be sent when they were cast out by Messiah (Lk. 8:31).
- It is temporary, for the final abode for fallen angels will be the Lake of Fire.
- Not all demons are confined in the Abyss at the present time.
- When the Abyss is opened by the fallen angel, the third blackout occurs (v. 2),
- and for the third time there is a total cessation of light from the sun reaching to the earth.
- But it is not the blackout that makes the fifth Trumpet Judgment the first Woe Judgment.
- Out of the Abyss a great number of demons are released for the first of two demonic invasions (v. 3).
- These demons are commissioned to carry out the fifth Trumpet Judgment (vv. 4-5).
- They are commanded to refrain from destroying any vegetation
- and told to torment only those who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.
- So the 144,000 are excluded from any harm in this first demonic invasion (7:3-4).
- In all likelihood it also includes all believers at that time.
- Furthermore, these demons are commanded to kill no one, but only to torment men for five months, or 150 days.
- Generally, John does not reveal the duration of time for each of these judgments,
- but in this case the timing is given.
- There will be a limit as to how much destruction these demons will be allowed to render.
- Unsaved mankind will be open to torment, but not death.

Not only will the demons be unable to kill, but the tormented men will not be able to kill themselves either (v. 6).

- Because of the tremendous torment inflicted by these demons, men will seek death.
- They will attempt suicide, but all suicide attempts will fail.
- Men will be forced to endure the torment in all its fury.

The description of these “locust-scorpions” given in verses 7-10

- clearly shows that they are something other than literal scorpions or locusts.
- Their origin being the Abyss further shows that they are demons.
- It is not unusual for demons and other angelic beings to have animal-like features.
- This was true of the seraphim in chapter four.

- The description of the first woe ends with the identity of the fallen angel who opened the Abyss.
 - His name in Hebrew is Abaddon and in Greek Apollyon. Both words mean “destruction.”
 - The five months of torment will eventually come to an end.
-

Although mankind may see some relief, it will be short lived, as verse 12 makes clear:

The first Woe is past: behold, there come yet two Woes hereafter.

The Sixth Trumpet: The Second Woe Judgment—Revelation 9:13-21

- The sounding of the sixth trumpet introduces a period in which an army of evil spirits that up to now were held in bondage are loosed.

And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the horns of the golden altar which is before God, one saying to the sixth angel that had the trumpet, loose the four angels that are bound at the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, that had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, that they should kill the third part of men. And the number of the armies of the horsemen was twice ten thousand times ten thousand: I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates as of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone: and the heads of the horses are as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceeded fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three plagues was the third part of men killed, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone, which proceeded out of their mouths. For the power of the horses is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails are like unto serpents and have heads; and with them they hurt. And the rest of mankind, who were not killed with these plagues, repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and the idols of gold, and of silver, and of brass, and of stone, and of wood; which can neither see, nor hear, nor walk: and they repented not of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

- With the sounding of the sixth trumpet, four fallen angles bound at the Euphrates River are released,
- for they are the leaders of the second demonic invasion (vv. 13–14).
- While the first demonic invasion was led by one fallen angel, this one is led by four.
- While the first demonic invasion was able to torment but not to kill, this one is commissioned to kill one-third of the earth's population (v. 15).
- So the second woe is indeed worse than the first.

Focusing

- The number of demons involved in the second invasion is given as two hundred million (v. 16).
- Sensationalism has had a field day with this figure, resulting in some fantastic speculation.
- In order for this speculation to stand, the two hundred million figure must be pulled out of its context.
- The speculation all rests on current events.
- Communist China once declared that they can field an army of two hundred million.
- Without even so much as questioning the truthfulness of this assertion,
- many have concluded that the two hundred million must involve a Chinese invasion of the Middle East.
- The context just will not allow for this.
- In support of a Chinese invasion, the ones who adhere to this theory
- say that this invasion is led by the kings of the east and that the east must refer to China.
- First of all, the kings of the east are found in chapter sixteen
- and are not connected by the text with the two hundred million of chapter nine.
- The kings of the east are part of the Bowl Judgments, and the two hundred million belong to the Trumpet Judgments.
- So they are not connected in any way. The events are separated by a period of time.
- Furthermore, the consistency of usage requires identifying the kings of the east as referring to
- Mesopotamian kings rather than to China.
- Who the kings of the east are will be explained in Chapter 14,
- The Campaign of Armageddon and the Second Coming of Jesus the Messiah.
- For now, it is sufficient to point out that the east in Scripture is always Mesopotamia and never China.
- This army of two hundred million are demons and not Chinese.
- The fact that they are led by four fallen angels shows that they are demons rather than humans.
- Furthermore, the location of the source of this invasion is the Euphrates River, which is not located in China,
- but in Mesopotamia or ancient Babylonia, a place the Scriptures often connects with demonism.

The announcement of the number in this army is followed by a description of what this army looks like (vv. 17–19).

- A person would be hard pressed to find just one Chinese person who looks like this, let alone two hundred million of them.
- The description given of the army clearly rules out their being human and requires that they be demonic.
- Furthermore, the means by which the destruction of one-third of the world's population is accomplished (fire, smoke, brimstone), involves the supernatural rather than the natural.

**To summarize why these two hundred million are demons and not Chinese
Four things should be noted**

- first**, they are led by four fallen angels;
- second**, the location of the army is stated to be the Euphrates, where Babylon is located (which in the future will be the headquarters of the counterfeit trinity)
- third**, the description given in the text rules out this army's being human; and
- fourth**, the kings of the east are not connected with this at all.

**The Trumpet Judgments come to an end by the middle of the Tribulation period
Under the period of the sixth trumpet we have an interlude**

- which chronicles the events preparing the way for the sounding of the seventh and last.
- A strong angel, full of glorious dignity, gives to the seer a book, and charges him to eat it.
- Following this, John measures the temple,
- The Events of the Middle of the Tribulation

The sixth Trumpet Judgment concludes at the time of the middle of the Tribulation

- and is followed by a temporary cessation of the judgments poured out of Heaven.
- The Tribulation enters into the temporary proverbial eye of the hurricane.
- But it does not mean that the earth will be at peace.
- The nations will be in turmoil as the Antichrist proceeds to take over the political, economic and religious control of the entire world.
- So many things happen at this point that it is difficult to put them in sequential order with any certainty.
- The following layout is more of a logical order, for the events may not necessarily come in this sequence.
- That all of the events listed in this chapter occur in the middle of the Tribulation is certain.
- What is uncertain is whether or not they all come in this particular sequence.
- In the Book of Revelation, the events of the middle of the Tribulation comprise chapters 10–14 and chapter 17.

The Little Book—Revelation 10:1–11

And I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, arrayed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire; and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left upon the earth; and he cried with a great voice, as a lion roars: and when he cried, the seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying, seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. And the angel that I saw standing upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his right hand to heaven, and swore by him that lives for ever and ever, who created the heaven and the things that are therein, and the earth and the things that are therein, and the sea and the things that are therein, that there shall be delay no longer: but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then is finished the mystery of God, according to the good tidings which he declared to his servants the prophets. And the voice which I heard from heaven, I heard it again speaking with me, and saying, Go, take the book which is open in the hand of the angel that stands

upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel, saying unto him that he should give me the little book. And he says unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make your belly bitter, but in your mouth it shall be sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and when I had eaten it, my belly was made bitter. And they say unto me, You must prophesy again over many peoples and nations and tongues and kings.

-The temporary suspension of the judgments from Heaven begins after the sixth Trumpet Judgment with the story of the Little Book.

-John saw a strong angel carrying a little book or scroll (vv. 1-2).

-This is the second scroll mentioned in Revelation.

-The first was the Seven-Sealed Scroll or book that contained the Seven Seal and the Seven Trumpet

-Judgments which described the events of the first half of the Tribulation.

-Now, a second scroll comes into the picture, the content of which will shortly be revealed.

-The strong angel cried a great shout, after which the Seven Thunders uttered something that John is forbidden to reveal (vv. 3-4).

Focusing

-Up to this point, six of the seven trumpets have sounded, so there is yet one more remaining.

-The results of the seventh trumpet are now announced by the strong angel (vv. 5-7).

-In the days of the seventh angel, the judgments of God will be completed.

-Just as the seventh Seal Judgment contained the Seven Trumpet Judgments,

-the seventh Trumpet Judgment will contain the seven Bowl Judgments,

-which will finish the judgments of God declared by the prophets.

-All the prophecies dealing with the Tribulation's second half will then be fulfilled.

-That the seventh trumpet will not be an all-at-once judgment but a process is evident from the statement,

-in the days of the voice of the seventh angel is the mystery of God finished.

-The plural number shows that a time period is involved.

-The Bowl Judgments all come toward the end of the Tribulation and with them the mystery of God is finished.

-The seventh trumpet that contains the seven Bowl Judgments is the third woe.

-For this reason, it is the worst of all.

-The Little Book contains all the information regarding the seventh trumpet with the Bowl Judgments, as found in Revelation 15-16.

-Attention is focused on the Little Book in verses 8-10.

-John was commanded to eat the book. In his mouth the taste was as sweet as honey,

-but it became bitter in the belly.

-The clue to the meaning of this symbolic act is found in verse 11, which states what the content of the book is:

And they say unto me, You must prophesy again over many peoples and nations and tongues and kings.

The content of the Little Book is prophecy, especially the prophecy of the middle and the second half of the Tribulation.

-This gives the clue to the meaning of verses 8-10.

-To almost all people, prophecy is sweet. Prophetic conferences draw larger audiences than virtually any other kind of conference.

-The voluminous sale of the more sensational prophecy books is another evidence of how "sweet" Bible prophecy has become to so many people.

-But if "sweetness" is all there is, then it is worth little.

-Every student of prophecy should have the second experience that John had: bitterness in the stomach.

- A knowledge of things to come should give every believer a burden for people.
 - For the way of escape from these things is the Rapture, and the requirement to qualify for the Rapture is acceptance of Messiah now.
 - A true student of prophecy will not simply stop with the knowledge of things to come.
 - Rather, this knowledge will create the strong burden to preach the gospel to others and thereby give them a way of escape.
-

John measuring the temple, Revelation 11:1-2

And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and one said, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. And the court which is without the temple leave without, and measure it not; for it has been given unto the nations: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.

- This passage also deals with the takeover of the Temple, as well as the City of Jerusalem
- (at least the Old City), and connects it with the Times of the Gentiles.
- This will be the final Gentile control of Jerusalem, and it will last 42 months, or 3½ years.
- It will be this Gentile takeover of the city and the Temple that will cause a cessation of the sacrifices.
- Although Gentile domination over the City of Jerusalem will last 3½ years,
- the Abomination of Desolation will continue an extra month.

Focusing

What, then, is the Abomination of Desolation? There are two elements or stages involved, the first of which is in **2 Thessalonians 2:3-4**

Let no man beguile you in any wise: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposes and exalts himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sits in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God.

- In this passage, the Antichrist is described as seating himself in the Temple of God,
- declaring to the world that he really is God.
- In all probability, he will sit in the very Holy of Holies.
- Thus, with his initial takeover of Jerusalem in general and the Temple in particular,
- he will seat himself in the very Temple of God, will claim to be god,
- and, by so doing, will set up the second religious system of the Tribulation: the Worship of the Antichrist.

His self-declaration of deity will be accompanied with miraculous signs

-to carry out the work of deception, according to **2 Thessalonians 2:8-12:**

And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nothing by the manifestation of his coming; even he, whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sends them a working of error, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

- His coming is said to be “energized” by Satan, for it is by Satan that he will be brought back to life.
- His post-resurrection rise to power will be with all power and signs and lying wonders.
- The aim of these counterfeit miracles, according to verses 10-12,
- will be to deceive men so that they will worship the Antichrist and accept him as god.

These verses have often been interpreted as teaching that if one hears the gospel before the Rapture and rejects it, he will not have an opportunity to be saved after the Rapture.

-But this is not the teaching of this passage.

- The point of no return is the acceptance of the “big lie” of the Antichrist’s self-proclaimed deity
- and the submission to the worship of him by means of taking the mark of the Beast.
- It is only then that the point of no return is actually reached.
- The option of taking the mark of the Beast only begins in the middle of the Tribulation.
- Even the context of this passage shows that it speaks of events that occur in the middle of the Tribulation.
- The worshipers of the Antichrist do so because they are deceived by the Antichrist’s power of miracles.
- They are deceived because they received not the love of the truth.
- The rejection of the gospel was not what they may have heard before the Rapture
- but rather the preaching of the 144,000 Jews and the Two Witnesses.

The Antichrist will not set up his throne there, but in Babylon

- Though he will declare his deity within the Holy of Holies of the Temple,
- The Abomination of Desolation is to last a total of 1,290 days,
- while the Antichrist himself is allowed to continue 1,260 days.
- Hence, the Abomination of Desolation must include something more than merely the Antichrist’s self-proclamation of deity.
- The Daniel and Matthew passages implied an image or idol that would be erected in the Temple.

Two witnesses deliver their testimony for three and a half years.

The Two Witnesses—Revelation 11:3–6

The fourth event transpiring throughout the first half of the Tribulation is the ministry of the Two Witnesses.

And I will give unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks, standing before the Lord of the earth. And if any man desires to hurt them, fire proceeded out of their mouth and devours their enemies; and if any man shall desire to hurt them, in this manner must he be killed. These have the power to shut the heaven, that it rain not during the days of their prophecy: and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they shall desire.

- In verse three, the timing of their ministry is given as 1,260 days, which is the equivalent of 3½ years.
- These 3½ years cover the first half of the Tribulation period.
- Their identity is given in verse four
- In verses 5–6, the character of their ministry and their authority is described.

Focusing

Their identity is given in verse four, and they are said to be the fulfillment of **Zechariah 4:11–14**

Then I answered, and said unto him, What are these two olive-trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? And I answered the second time, and said unto him, What are these two olive branches, which are beside the two golden spouts, that empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Know you not what these are? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.

- These Two Witnesses have been subject to much speculation.
- Many prophetic teachers try to identify them with two men who have lived in the past.
- One is always said to be Elijah, while the other is said to be either Moses or Enoch.
- Those who claim them to be Enoch and Elijah base it on the fact that these two men have never died,
- and so they will return to die in the Tribulation.
- Often, Hebrews 9:27 is used as evidence for “it is appointed unto men once to die.”

- But this is a general principle and not an absolute rule.
- For example, take the word once: some people have died twice, namely,
- all those who had been resurrected in the Old and New Testaments apart from Messiah.
- Furthermore, what about the living Church saints?
- If indeed Hebrews 9:27 is an absolute rule, it would mean that all living Church saints at the Rapture will also have to die at some time.
- Both 1 Corinthians 15:51 and 1 Thessalonians 4:15–17 show that Hebrews 9:27 is only a general principle.
- Also in the light of **Hebrews 11:5**, it cannot be that Enoch will die in the future:
By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God translated him: for he has had witness borne to him that before his translation he had been well-pleasing unto God.
- Enoch is clearly said to have been translated, and this involves corruption putting on incorruption and mortality putting on immortality (1 Cor. 15:50–58).
- Since Elijah has already been taken into Heaven, the same is true of him, for no man in his physical state can enter Heaven (1 Cor. 15:50).
- This means that neither Elijah nor Enoch can die, for they are now immortal.
- Those who wish to make them Elijah and Moses fall back on the fact that
- these were the two who appeared with Messiah at the Transfiguration.
- But this is very flimsy evidence and hardly shows a cause and effect relationship.
- Others say it is because these men had unfinished ministries, and they will return to finish them at this time.
- This is a very subjective judgment, and many from the Old Testament could be nominated for the same reason.
- The fact that the miracles performed by the Two Witnesses are similar to those of Moses and Elijah
- is hardly sufficient evidence, for God can use others to perform these same miracles.

-It is best to take these men to be two Jewish prophets

- whom God will raise up during the Tribulation itself.
- They are purely future persons and not two men from the past.

The Scriptures clearly teach that Elijah is to return before the Tribulation

- and will conduct a ministry during the Tribulation.
- But there is no scriptural warrant to make Elijah one of the Two Witnesses.
- The Two Witnesses will simply be two Jewish men living in that time
- whom God will elevate to the office of prophet and will endow with miraculous powers.
- Their exact identity, then, awaits the Tribulation.

They have the power to kill men by fire

- which will be used against those seeking to kill them before their proper time has come (v. 5).
- They also have authority to cause drought by withholding rain, to turn water into blood,
- and to cause other plagues (v. 6),
- perhaps similar to the ten that fell on Egypt (for the turning water into blood was one of them).

The center of their ministry will be the City of Jerusalem

- whereas that of the 144,000 Jews will be worldwide.
- More will be said about the Two Witnesses in the next chapter.

The Death of the Two Witnesses—Revelation 11:7–13

And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss shall make war with them, and overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. And from among the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations do men look upon their dead bodies three days and a half, and suffer not their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb. And they that dwell on the earth rejoice over them, and make merry; and they shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth. And after the three days and a half the breath of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them that beheld them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they went up into heaven in the cloud; and their enemies beheld them. And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell; and there were killed in the earthquake seven thousand persons: and the rest were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

- In order to gain further religious allegiance of the world masses,
- the Antichrist will also move against the Two Witnesses who, because of their supernatural abilities, caused so much havoc for the inhabitants of the earth during the first half of the Tribulation.
- The Antichrist will war against the Two Witnesses and will succeed in killing them (v. 7).
- They will lie where they die in the streets of Jerusalem for all to see (vv. 8–9).
- the inhabitants of the earth will rejoice over the death of the Two Witnesses because of the plagues they suffered via the Two Witnesses (v. 10).
- After 3½ days, the Two Witnesses will be resurrected and taken to Heaven in the sight of all (vv. 11–12).
- Jerusalem, where the murder will take place and where the bodies will be displayed, will receive sudden judgment (v. 13).

Focusing ...

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- That this incident will happen after the Antichrist's resurrection from the dead is clear from the statement,
 - The beast that comes up out of the abyss, and he will come back from the Abyss by means of his resurrection by Satan.
 - Along with his resurrection, the act of killing the Two Witnesses will provide another reason why mankind will worship him.
 - All previous attempts to kill the Two Witnesses fail
 - because of the miraculous powers of the Two Witnesses which kill those who attempt to murder them.
 - But now their ministry is over, and God allows the Antichrist to have the power over them and to kill them.
 - This power of the Antichrist over the Two Witnesses,
 - when all others failed, will be another reason why mankind will give its allegiance to the Antichrist.
 - Perhaps in order to display the new power, the Antichrist will not allow the bodies to be buried.
 - The fact that the whole world is able to view the bodies indicates that such things would be possible future to John's day.
 - Through modern technology this is no longer impossible to believe and has silenced many a former critic of the Scriptures.
 - The bodies will lie in the streets of Jerusalem unburied for 3½ days.
 - During the time that the bodies lie in the streets,
 - The rejoicing extends to the point that they will give gifts to one another in an outward display of joy over the death of the Two Witnesses.
 - The rejoicing will cease suddenly.
 - Suddenly fear will fall on all as they are able to observe the ascension of the Two Witnesses into Heaven.
-

- Jerusalem will suffer an earthquake that will destroy one-tenth of the city, killing 7,000 inhabitants.
- While the Gentiles will begin to worship the Antichrist, the Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem will give the glory to the God of Heaven.
- The salvation of the Jews of Jerusalem in the middle of the Tribulation will eventually lead to the saving of "all Israel" at the end of the Tribulation.

The Seventh Trumpet: The Third Woe Judgment—Revelation 11:14–19

The second Woe is past: behold, the third Woe comes quickly. And the seventh angel sounded; and there followed great voices in heaven, and they said, The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, who sit before God on their thrones, fell upon their faces and worshipped God, saying, we give you thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who is and who was; because you have taken your great power, and did reign. And the nations were angry, and your wrath came, and the time of the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to your servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear your name, the small and the great; and to destroy them that destroy the earth. And there was opened the temple of God that is in heaven; and there was seen in his temple the ark of his covenant; and there followed lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail.

- Closing the Midtribulation events and announcing the Bowl Judgments of the second half of the Tribulation
- is the seventh trumpet, which is also the third Woe Judgment (v. 14).
- When the seventh trumpet is blown an announcement is made that with this trumpet,
- Messiah will inherit the kingdom of the world (v. 15).
- It should be noted that the word kingdom is singular,
- and so Messiah will gain the one-world kingdom of the Antichrist.
- A further announcement is made that the time of the final judgments has also come
- in order to destroy the ones who are destroying the earth
- and to avenge the ones who are killing the prophets and the saints (vv. 16–18).
- These announcements are also declaring the results of the Bowl Judgments, the final series of judgments.

Focusing

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- Because the results of the seventh Trumpet Judgment are the same as the results of the Bowl Judgments,
- it shows that, just as the seventh Seal Judgment contains the Seven Trumpet Judgments,
 - the seventh Trumpet Judgment contains the seven Bowl Judgments (v. 19).
 - This last verse is the prelude in Heaven before the Bowl Judgments,
 - and the focus is on the Temple in Heaven.
 - The Ark of the Covenant mentioned is the original ark of which Moses made a copy.
-

The Persecution of the Jews

- A second passage describing the flight of the Jews out of Israel is in **Revelation 12:1–6**
- The passage begins with a historical review and summary in verses 1–5

And a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman arrayed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars; and she was with child; and she cried out, travailing in birth, and in pain to be delivered. And there was seen another sign in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads seven diadems. And his tail draws the third part of the stars of Heaven, and did cast them to earth: and the dragon stands before the woman that is about to be delivered, that when she is delivered he may devour her child. And she was delivered of a son, a man child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and unto his throne.

- These verses summarize the whole life of Messiah from just before His birth to His ascension.
- John saw two signs in the heavens.
- In the first sign (vv. 1–2), Israel is pictured as a woman,
- a motif taken from the Old Testament concept of Israel as the Wife of Jehovah.
- The sun, moon, and twelve stars are all common Old Testament figures relating to Israel.
- Then John described the second sign. The great red dragon is Satan in all his fierceness (v. 3).
- In verse four, the two signs come together. Satan brought his entire demonic host out of his third abode.
- Verse five points out the failure of Satan's attempt to destroy the child.

Focusing

The Old Testament background for this sign is Joseph's dream in **Genesis 37:9–11**

And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it to his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed yet a dream; and, behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father, and to his brethren; and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to you to the earth? And his brethren envied him; but his father kept the saying in his mind.

- From this passage, John's vision can easily be interpreted.
- The sun represents Jacob, who was renamed Israel, and both these names were often used to represent the entire nation (e.g., Is. 40:27; 49:5; Jer. 30:10, among others).
- The moon represents Rachel, who in turn becomes representative of Jewish women, especially Jewish motherhood (Jer. 31:15; Mat. 2:18).
- The twelve stars represent the twelve sons of Jacob who, in turn, fathered the Twelve Tribes of Israel.
- In verse two, this woman is seen in the final stages of pregnancy, about to give birth to a child.

Normally, whenever the word star is used symbolically, it always refers to angels.

- It has been used this way several times already in Revelation,
- and it is used this way again in verse four
- the verse that teaches that one-third of the angels God created fell with Satan.
- Verse one may be the only exception to this rule since,
- being based on Joseph's dream, the twelve stars obviously represent the twelve sons of Jacob,
- who fathered the Twelve Tribes of Israel.
- But it may not truly be an exception.
- What Joseph saw in his dream actually were stars and these stars represented the sons of Jacob.
- When a star is used symbolically for an angel, no actual star is seen.
- Rather, an angel is seen, but called a star, as in Revelation 8:11–12; 9:1, etc.
- What John saw was an angel, but called him a star since in the Old Testament, that was the symbol of angels.
- What Joseph saw actually were stars, but they represented his brothers.

Clearly, then, the woman arrayed with the sun, moon, and stars is representative of Israel (not the Church).

- The vision, then, is of the nation of Israel just before the birth of the Messiah.
- A good reason why this cannot be the Church is that it would be an anachronism,
- with the Church giving birth to Messiah whereas the opposite is true.

The seven heads and ten horns represent the final form of the Fourth Gentile World Empire

- now shown to be under Satan's control and authority.
 - The seven diadems point to a concept of conquest.
-

- Satan wrestled authority over the earth from man, and the Gentile empires wrestled authority from Israel.
- Using his permission of access to the earth, he brought them down to the earth in an effort to try to slaughter the child about to be born.
- The demonic-angelic host is enumerated as comprising one-third of the stars, meaning one-third of all the angels that God created.
- Only from this verse is it possible to learn just how many of the angels fell with Satan in the original revolt during his second abode.
- This attempt to destroy the child was the slaughter of the babes of Bethlehem in Matthew 2:16–18.
- Satan's attempt to destroy the Messiah both before His proper time (Passover)
- and by the wrong means (stoning in place of crucifixion) continued throughout the course of His ministry.
- The bringing down of the entire demonic-angelic host was evident throughout the life of Messiah.
- There is a tremendous amount of demonic activity in the Gospels in contrast to the minimal demonic activity found in the Old Testament.
- Following the Gospels, there is a decrease of demonic activity, as seen in the Book of Acts.
- The child, destined to rule the nations with a rod of iron, survived until His proper time for death came.
- After His resurrection, He ascended into Heaven and is presently seated at the right hand of God the Father.

After this historical survey

-John's vision moves forward to events that will occur in the middle of the Tribulation, one of which is in verse six:

And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared of God, that there they may nourish her a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

- As in the Matthew passage, the woman pictured here is in flight.
- In the Matthew passage, the flight was to the mountains,
- but here it is described as being in the wilderness,
- as well as to one particular place in that wilderness that God had prepared in advance.
- With Satan's attempt to destroy the child thwarted,
- Satan will then turn against the nation that produced Him.
- Satan's perpetual hatred of Israel is based on the fact that it is through Israel that God will fulfill His program of redemption.
- Furthermore, in this passage, the time of Israel's flight and hiding is given as 1,260 days or 3½ years.
- This refers to the second half of the Tribulation.

Satan Cast Down to the Earth—Revelation 12:7–12

At this point of time Satan is cast down out of his third abode in the atmospheric heavens to his fourth abode, the earth.

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels going forth to war with the dragon; and the dragon warred and his angels; and they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast down, the old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him. And I heard a great voice in heaven, saying, Now is come the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night. And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life even unto death. Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you that dwell

in them. Woe for the earth and for the sea: because the devil is gone down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he had but a short time.

- The next section of the chapter, verses 7–12 gives the reason or cause of Israel's flight.
- Satan is cast out of his third abode into his fourth abode (vv. 7–9)
- and is confined to the earth for the next 3½ years.
- There are two results of this angelic war.
- First, there is rejoicing in Heaven because the accuser of the brethren is now cast down (vv. 10–12a)
- and his access to Heaven is removed forever.
- But second, there is woe for the earth, for Satan is now full of wrath and anger,
- knowing his time is short (v. 12b), for he now knows it is only 3½ years before the Second Coming.
- Verses 7–12, then, are somewhat parenthetical, providing the reason for Israel's flight in verse six.

Focusing

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- In the middle of the Tribulation, while war breaks out on earth between the Antichrist and the ten kings,
 - war also breaks out in the atmospheric heavens, which is Satan's third abode (v. 7).
 - The conflict is between the Archangel Michael and his forces and the archenemy Satan and his forces.
 - Michael is victorious, and Satan and his cohorts are cast out of the atmospheric heavens and confined to the earth,
 - which now becomes Satan's fourth abode (vv. 8–9).
 - Five names are given to Satan, all describing his person and his work.
 - In the great dragon, his fierceness and ferociousness is seen.
 - The old serpent points back to the Garden of Eden where, due to his temptation, man fell, bringing sin and death into human experience.
 - The Great Tribulation is a judgment of man's sin.
 - In the word devil, Satan is viewed as the accuser of all of God's children.
 - Satan means adversary, and in this he is seen as the opponent to God's program.
 - As the deceiver, he is pointed out as the great master counterfeiter who attempts to deceive elect and non-elect alike.

Satan's confinement to the earth brings two results.

First: Satan's access to Heaven is removed, and he will no longer be able to stand before the Throne of God and be the accuser of the brethren.

-For this there is rejoicing in Heaven (vv. 10–12a).

Second: Satan is now full of wrath (v. 12b).

-His anger is due to the fact that he knows his time is short, namely, 3½ years.

-Because of Satan's wrath, it is woe for the earth.

-This is a very important point to note in the understanding of what is happening during the middle and second half of the Tribulation.

The next section, found in 12:13–17

And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman that brought forth the man child. And there were given to the woman the two wings of the great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness unto her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth after the woman water as a river, that he might cause her to be carried away by the stream. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the river which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon waxed wroth with the woman, and went away to make war with the rest of her seed, that keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus.

- Verse 13 states that once Satan is cast down to the earth he persecuted the woman, Israel.
- Verse 14, Israel flees into the wilderness, where she is nourished for a time, and times and half a time, which is the same as the 3½ years of verse six.
- In verse 15, the persecution is described in terms of the waters of a river causing a flood, so that Israel might be drowned or destroyed by the flood.
- But this invasion will fail (v. 16) in its attempt to destroy the Jews,
- for Israel will succeed in fleeing into the wilderness after being pursued by the invading army.
- The passage closes (v. 17) describing further the wrath of Satan
- because of his initial failure to destroy the Jews Divine intervention will destroy the pursuing army.

Focusing....

-
- Verse 13 should be connected with verse six as giving a further explanation for Israel's flight into the wilderness.
 - It should also be connected with verse 12, which concluded that there was woe for the earth, for Satan is full of wrath.
 - He knows his time is short, namely, 3½ years.
 - What does he do with this short time left to him?
 - He persecutes Israel, in verse 13.
 - A question that needs to be raised is: What is the logical connection between Satan's knowing his time is short and his persecuting the woman?
 - Destroy Israel and they cannot repent of rejecting Jesus and ask Him to return

The figure of the two wings of the great eagle has provided fertile ground for speculation among "newspaper exegetes."

- Amazingly, "the wings of the eagle" has been identified as the American Air Force!
- After all, the eagle is a symbol of the United States, and so it would appear that the American Air Force will help the Jews escape!
- But other nations use the eagle as a symbol, and for some reason their air forces are ignored.
- It has been stated in the very beginning of this book that every symbol in the Revelation
- is explained either elsewhere in the Revelation itself or somewhere else in the Bible.
- The figure of flight in connection with the wings of the eagle is to be interpreted by its usage elsewhere.
- This same figure is found in Exodus 19:4 and Deuteronomy 32:11 in connection with the Exodus from Egypt.
- Obviously, Moses did not have the help of the American Air Force.
- The figure, then, is to be explained by its usage elsewhere.
- It describes a successful flight or escape after being pursued due to divine intervention.
- Israel was pursued by the Egyptian army but succeeded in escaping into the Wilderness of Sinai due to divine intervention.
- Here, again, Israel is being pursued, but escapes safely into another wilderness due to divine intervention.
- This is all that "the wings of the eagle" represent.

Whenever the figure of a flood is used symbolically, it is always a symbol of a military invasion.

- A good example is Daniel 9:26, where the Roman invasion and devastation of Jerusalem fulfilled in A.D.70 is prophesied or described in terms of a flood.
 - This invasion of Israel sent by Satan was described in Daniel 11:41 as: He shall enter also into the glorious land.
 - This is the same invasion spoken of in Revelation 11:1-2
-

-by which the Antichrist will succeed in taking control of both Jerusalem and the Temple and will commit the Abomination of Desolation.

-In verse 17 Satan will then make war specifically against the believing Remnant among the Jews,

-for it states that he now goes to make war with the rest of the woman's seed,

-namely, those who keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus.

-These will include all the Jewish believers among the Jews at that time

-Revelation twelve is a picture of Satan's persecution of the Jews with all its fierceness during the Tribulation.

-It will begin in the middle, after he is cast down to earth.

-Now he organizes an all-out worldwide anti-Semitic campaign to try to destroy all the Jews once and for all.

-He will set out on a program to destroy all the Jews still living,

-But the initial attempt to destroy the Jews in the middle of the Tribulation will fail.

Revelation 13 describes the two beings whom Satan will use in his program of Jewish destruction

-the Antichrist and the False Prophet.

-it is important to see the connection between Revelation 12 and 13.

-In Revelation 12, John describes Satan's program and desire to destroy all the Jews once and for all.

-Chapter 13 then shows the means by which Satan will hope to carry out this program: the two beasts.

The Resurrection of the Antichrist—Revelation 13:1-3

And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns ten diadems, and upon his heads names of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his throne, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as though it had been smitten unto death; and his death-stroke was healed: and the whole earth wondered after the beast.

-As the rest of Revelation 12 makes clear, Satan then sets out on a course to destroy the Jews.

-The means by which he will attempt to accomplish this will be the two beasts of Revelation 13

-But he will begin on this course by bringing the Antichrist back to life.

Focusing.....

-It is now clear that it is Satan who will resurrect the Antichrist back to life.

-Many take the phrase, as though he had been smitten unto death, to mean that the Antichrist appeared to be dead but was not really.

-However, the same idiom is used of Messiah in Revelation 5:6, and there was no question that Messiah died.

-The idiom, then, refers to a resurrected individual.

-The person was killed and by all human experience should have remained dead.

-But suddenly he is very much alive because of resurrection.

-This idiom must mean here what it means elsewhere: a reference to a resurrected individual.

-The text clearly goes on to say that his death-stroke was healed, that is, by resurrection.

Some wish to interpret this as a reference to the revival of the Roman Empire

-feeling that this would be enough to cause man to worship it.

-But a revived Roman Empire would not cause man to worship it as God

-anymore than the revival of Poland or Israel did.

-This kind of thinking is purely imaginary.

-It is the resurrection of the man Antichrist which creates this worship.

Thus, the Antichrist is the counterfeit son in every respect.

-There has been a counterfeit multiplicity of names, a counterfeit virgin birth, a counterfeit god-man, and now a counterfeit death and resurrection.

-A counterfeit second coming to rule the world can be seen as he will move to possess the nations and kingdoms of the world.

-Satan is playing the part of the counterfeit father in this scenario.

-For as the True Father gave His authority to the True Son,

-so the counterfeit father will give his authority to the counterfeit son.

The Worship of the Antichrist—Revelation 13:3–10

And I saw one of his heads as though it had been smitten unto death; and his death-stroke was healed: and the whole earth wondered after the beast; and they worshipped the dragon, because he gave his authority unto the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? and who is able to war with him? and there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and there was given to him authority to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth for blasphemies against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, even them that dwell in the heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and there was given to him authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation. And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, every one whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that has been slain. If any man has an ear, let him hear. If any man is for captivity, into captivity he goes: if any man shall kill with the sword, with the sword must he be killed. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

-the seventh head is the Antichrist Stage and this is the head that is smitten unto death

-but the death-stroke was healed by means of resurrection (v. 3).

-Because he will give his authority to the Antichrist, men will begin worshipping Satan.

-Thus, Satan will become a counterfeit 'god the father'.

-As the Father gave His authority to the True Son, Satan will give his authority to the counterfeit son.

-Just as the Father is worshipped through the True Son,

-Satan is to be worshipped through the counterfeit son (v. 4).

-In verses 5–7a, the activities of this pseudo-god are related.

-He will speak great things and blasphemies (v. 5a), declare himself to be god,

-and call men to begin worshipping him.

-He will be given authority to continue for 42 months (v. 5b)

-which is equivalent to 3½ years, and so his control is to extend throughout the second half of the Tribulation.

-He will blaspheme against all that is in Heaven, both God and all those who are there (v. 6).

-He will war against the saints and overcome them (v. 7a),

-as is evident from his murder of the Two Witnesses, and he will continue to persecute all believers in Messiah.

-In light of all this, a warning is given (vv. 9–10):

-The very way that men will treat the saints, God will treat them.

Focusing

-The world will see the counterfeit resurrection of the Antichrist from the dead

-and his power over the Two Witnesses who had tormented the unbelievers for the first 3½ years.

-Although the Two Witnesses will be resurrected, they will disappear from view and will no longer be heard from.

-The inhabitants of the earth will begin to worship the Antichrist as the king of the world and as god.

And so men will worship him and will give him supreme glory by saying, who is like unto the beast?

-And who is able to withstand him?

-It should be noted that the worship is coming from the whole earth (v. 3) and not just from Europe.

-He will also hold political authority over the earth,

-for he will be given authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation.

-This verse also makes it impossible to limit this to Europe alone.

-What is stated in verses 5–7 is also found in Daniel 7:25.

-At this point in time he will not only have political authority over the whole world (v. 7b),

-but he will also have religious authority over all the earth (v. 8),

-and all unbelievers will worship him that have not had their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

-If they enslave the saints, they will find themselves enslaved.

-If they kill the saints, they will be killed. This is a word of patience to the saints.

-It is a word of comfort to believers living in this period of persecution.

-They will understand that whatever suffering they undergo,

-God will in turn judge those perpetrating the persecution in the same way.

The second aspect of the Abomination of Desolation is in Revelation 13:11–15

The False Prophet—Revelation 13:11–15

And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like unto a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his sight. And he makes the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose death-stroke was healed. And he does great signs, that he should even make fire to come down out of heaven upon the earth in the sight of men. And he deceives them that dwell on the earth by reason of the signs which it was given him to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast who had the stroke of the sword and lived. And it was given unto him to give breath to it, even to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as should not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

-In the second stage of the Abomination of Desolation, the False Prophet will be given authority to perform many signs and wonders (v. 13),

-deceiving mankind in order to cause them to worship the Antichrist (v. 12).

-His activities as the counterfeit 'holy spirit' are now spelled out (vv. 12–15).

-As the Holy Spirit exercises equal authority with the True Son,

-the False Prophet will exercise equal authority with the counterfeit son (v. 12a).

-Just as the Holy Spirit calls all men to worship the resurrected Son,

-the False Prophet will call all men to worship the resurrected counterfeit son whose death-stroke was healed (v. 12b).

-In order to fully carry out the deception, the False Prophet will have the power of the counterfeit spiritual gifts of miracles

-and will perform signs for the purpose of deception (vv. 13–14a).

These same ideas were evident in 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12

- and both help clarify what the Abomination of Desolation involves.
- The great deception is climaxed when the image of the Antichrist becomes alive and men are called upon to worship the image (vv. 14-15).
- So the deification of the Antichrist continues.
- The image will be set up in the Holy of Holies to carry on the Abomination of Desolation.
- Jerusalem will become the religious capital of the Antichrist,
- and the Temple will be the center of the worship of the Antichrist, where the living image will be standing.
- So while the Antichrist will be disposed of after 1,260 days, the image will remain in the Temple another thirty days beyond that. Then it, too, will be disposed of.

Thus, the two stages of the Abomination of Desolation

- lasting a total of 1,290 days will be the declaration of deity by the Antichrist in the Holy of Holies
- followed by the setting up of his image in the same place.

-In the previous section the rise of the counterfeit father and the counterfeit son was dealt with.

-To complete the counterfeit trinity,

-the passages contain a description of the rise of the counterfeit holy spirit in the person of the False Prophet.

Following the rise of the first beast, the Antichrist,

- John saw a second beast come out of the earth (as over against Heaven, Adam was of the earth),
- thus emphasizing his humanity.
- He will appear like a lamb, giving the appearance of a true religious character, and thus deceive many.
- But he will speak like a dragon and so will betray his true nature, for he will be an agent of Satan,
- who throughout the book is portrayed as a dragon.
- This second beast is elsewhere called the False Prophet (16:13; 19:20; 20:10).

After convincing the world of the supremacy of the Antichrist,

- he will command men to make an image of the Beast.
- After the image is made, it will be given life by the False Prophet.
- This power of giving life will be another factor why men will worship the Antichrist and the image,
- and those who refuse to do so are put to death (vv. 14b-15).

666: The Mark of the Beast—Revelation 13:16-18

And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the bond, that there be given them a mark on their right hand, or upon their forehead; and that no man should be able to buy or sell, except he that has the mark, even the name of the beast or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. He that has understanding, let him count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man: and his number is Six hundred and sixty and six.

- To counterfeit the seal of God on the foreheads of the saints, the seal of the Holy Spirit,
- the False Prophet will introduce his own counterfeit mark or seal.
- The counterfeit seal is the famous mark of the beast.
- The placing of the mark will be on the forehead or on the right hand (v. 16).
- The mark will serve as a passport for business (v. 17a)
- It will be given to all who will subject themselves to the authority of the Antichrist and accept him as god.

Focusing....

- They will be able to neither buy nor sell anything unless they have the mark.
- It should be pointed out that this mark has nothing to do with credit, as is often taught today. –
- In a credit system, everyone must have a different number.
- In this case, everyone has the same number.
- The purpose of the mark will be to serve as a sign of identification of those who will own the Antichrist as their god.
- Only those who have this number will be permitted to work, to buy, to sell, or simply to make a living.
- The verse does not speak of credit cards, banking systems, a cashless society, a one-world money system, or computers, etc.
- The interpretation of the mark is given by five clues (vv. 17b–18):
 - The name of the Beast
 - The number of his name
 - The number of the Beast
 - The number of a man
 - The number is 666.
- Following through this logical progression, the number of the Beast is also the number of a man
- because the Antichrist will be a man who will be the last ruler of the final form of the Fourth Gentile Empire.
- Furthermore, this number is the number of his very own name, and the numerical value of his name is 666.
- The point is essentially this: whatever the name of the Antichrist will be in Hebrew,
- the numerical value of that name will be 666.
- Each letter of the Hebrew alphabet has a numerical value.
- There are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet and in the order of numerical value they are as follows:
-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100, 200, 300, and 400.
- So everyone's name in Hebrew has a numerical value.
- The numerical value of the author's name is 966.
- The name of Jesus the Messiah has the numerical value of 749.
- In this passage, whatever the personal name of the Antichrist will be,
- if his name is spelled out in Hebrew characters, the numerical value of his name will be 666.
- So this is the number that will be put on the worshipers of the Antichrist.
- Since a number of different calculations can equal 666, it is impossible to figure the name out in advance.
- But when he does appear, whatever his personal name will be, it will equal 666.
- Those who are wise (v. 18) at that time will be able to point him out.

The Seven-year Covenant Broken

- Another event occurring at the halfway point of the Tribulation is the breaking of the Seven-Year Covenant made 3½ years earlier.
- In the context of the Daniel 11:40–45 passage it is stated in verse 41:
-He shall enter also into the glorious land.
- This involves the Antichrist's invasion of Israel, requiring a breaking of the covenant.
- In the Isaiah 28:14–22 at The Beginning of the Tribulation, verse 18 stated that the covenant will be annulled:

And your covenant with death shall be annulled, and your agreement with Sheol shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then you shall be trodden down by it.

-Other passages dealing with the breaking of the Seven-Year Covenant are connected with corollary events to be discussed next.

The Abomination of Desolation

- The first corollary event tied in with the breaking of the covenant is
- The Abomination of Desolation in connection with the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem.
- These three elements are all related together **in Daniel 9:27**

And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the middle of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that makes desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate.

- The signing of the Seven-Year Covenant will begin the Tribulation.
- This verse reveals just how long the Tribulation will last: a total of seven years.
- But now it goes on to say that in the middle of the week, that is, in the middle of the seven-year period,
- the Antichrist will cause a cessation of the sacrificial system that had been reinstituted.
- This forced cessation is followed by the statement, **upon the wing of abomination shall come one that makes desolate.**
- Thus, the cessation of the sacrifices in conjunction with the breaking of the covenant
- is followed by an act (or acts) which is labeled as “the abomination of desolation.”
- The exact nature of this act (or acts) is not spelled out at this stage.
- Exactly what the Abomination of Desolation consists of is not stated,
- only that it occurs in the middle of the Tribulation.
- However, the term ‘**wing**’ refers to the pinnacle of the Temple,
- emphasizing the concept of an “overspreading influence.”
- What begins here will spread elsewhere.
- The term abomination often refers to an image or an idol.

Another passage, Daniel 12:11, gives the duration of time that the Abomination of Desolation will last:

And from the time that the continual burnt-offering shall be taken away, and the abomination that makes desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.

- As in Daniel 9:27, the starting point is the cessation of the sacrificial system.
- According to this passage, the Abomination of Desolation will last a total of 1,290 days.
- This is a full thirty days beyond the end of the Tribulation.
- No reason is given as to why it is permitted to last this extra thirty days.
- Again, this passage does not reveal exactly what the Abomination of Desolation will be.
- But, as in Daniel 9:27, the term abomination refers to an image or an idol.

This event is also mentioned in Matthew 24:15–16

When therefore you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let him that reads understand), then let them that are in Judea flee unto the mountains.

- This passage is merely a reminder of the Daniel prophecy,
- with no explanation as to what the Abomination of Desolation is.
- The only clue given is that it will be something standing (like an image or idol) in the Holy Place.
- This passage helps to verify the futuristic interpretation of the Daniel passage,
- for it was still considered unfulfilled and future at the time of Messiah.
- The Abomination of Desolation will serve as a warning to the Jews of Israel to flee the Land.

Midtribulation Announcements

Revelation 14 serves as a connecting link

- between the description of the Midtribulation events of Revelation 10–13
- and the events of the second half of the Tribulation in Revelation 15–16.
- Most of what was found in Revelation 11–13 dealt with the activities of the counterfeit trinity
- in their attempt to usurp the authority of God and to destroy those who persist in worshiping Him alone.

In Revelation 14, there are seven proclamations given from the divine side

-aimed at doing three things:

First, to predict the failure of the program of the counterfeit trinity

Second, to announce the results of the approaching last seven judgments, known as the Bowl Judgments

Third, to give words of assurance, encouragement, and comfort to the saints living in the second half of the Tribulation.

Focusing

The first proclamation is in Revelation 14:1–5

And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on the mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and the voice which I heard was as the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sing as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders: and no man could learn the song save the hundred and forty and four thousand, even they that had been purchased out of the earth. These are they that were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they that follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These were purchased from among men, to be the firstfruits unto God and unto the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no lie: they are without blemish.

- The first verse presents what appears to be a millennial scene,
- with the 144,000 Jews of Revelation seven now on Mount Zion with Messiah, the Lamb.
- They have the name of God the Father on their foreheads,
- which is the seal that protected them from death (Rev. 7:3–4).

The question is: Why bring in a millennial scene at this juncture of the Book of Revelation?

- The answer lies in its connection with the previous two chapters,
- where Satan organized his attempt to destroy the Jews.
- The first verse of chapter 14 opens with the 144,000 Jews standing on Mount Zion
- with the protective seal on their foreheads prominently displayed.
- This shows that Satan's attempt at total Jewish destruction will fail.
- This is the purpose of the first proclamation, and it will provide comfort to the Tribulation saints.

Verses 2–3 describe the song of the 144,000, a song that they alone will know.

-Four characteristics are described next (vv. 4–5).

First, they are male virgins, a necessity in light of their calling to evangelize the world

-during the first half of the Tribulation.

-The severity of the judgments falling on the earth,

-and the persecution of the saints initially by the Ecclesiastical Babylon

-and then by the counterfeit trinity will not be conducive to marriage.

Second, they follow Messiah wherever He may lead.

Third, they are the firstfruits, a term that indicates the first of much more to come later.

-The very fact that the 144,000 are merely the firstfruits of many more Jewish believers to come

- further points to the failure of the program of the counterfeit trinity.
 - Where the rest come from is a point that was discussed in Chapter 13
 - The Great Tribulation: Additional Features and Facts.
- Fourth**, in relation to their morality, they are without a lie or blemish;
- they are not tainted by any kind of false religious or political system.

The second proclamation is in Revelation 14:6-7

And I saw another angel flying in mid heaven, having eternal good tidings to proclaim unto them that dwell on the earth, and unto every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he says with a great voice, Fear God, and give him glory; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made the heaven and the earth and sea and fountains of waters.

- This proclamation is a final call to the world to accept the gospel
- in light of the Revelation 13 problem where the Antichrist declares himself to be god,
- and the False Prophet is calling all men to take upon themselves the Mark of the Beast
- and thus show their submissive acceptance of the deity of the Antichrist.
- This proclamation is a call to the inhabitants of the world to choose between Messiah or Antichrist.
- With the announcement of a final call to heed the gospel
- comes an announcement of the coming final series of judgments about to be poured out through the Bowl Judgments.
- In light of the coming judgments, they are urged to worship Him Who made the heavens and the earth.

The third proclamation is in 14:8

And another, a second angel, followed, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, that has made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

- This proclamation announces the fall of political Babylon, something that will be detailed in Revelation 18.
- The announcement is made that the worldwide capital of the Antichrist is due for destruction.

The fourth proclamation is in 14:9-12

And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a great voice, If any man worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead, or upon his hand, he also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of his anger; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment goes up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, they that worship the beast and his image, and whoso receives the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints, they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

- This proclamation concerns those who take upon themselves the Mark of the Beast.
- This is the point of no return.
- The opportunity of salvation will be available to all as long as they are without the mark.
- But once the mark is taken, signifying the acceptance of the Antichrist as the one true god,
- they will have forfeited any further opportunity to be saved.

Those who take the mark are destined for two things:

First, they will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is the Bowl Judgments of Revelation 15-16;

Second, they are doomed to eternal torment in the Lake of Fire.

- By taking the mark, they have reached the point of no return.

No one will take the mark out of ignorance,

For by this time there will have been two worldwide proclamations of the gospel.

- The first was the 144,000 during the first half of the Tribulation,
- and the second was the angel in Revelation 14:6-7 in the middle of the Tribulation.

- Those who accept the mark are those who heard the love of the truth but rejected it (2 Thes. 2:8–12).
- The fourth proclamation concludes in verse 12, declaring that this fact is the patience of the saints.
- By refusing the mark, the saints will undergo heavy persecution and martyrdom.
- But the encouragement lies in the fact that the persecutors,
- those with the mark, are doomed to suffer the severe Bowl Judgments in this life and eternal torment in the next.

The fifth proclamation is in 14:13

And I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yes, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them.

- As a further word of encouragement and comfort,
- this proclamation concerns the saints who will die during the second half of the Tribulation.
- A special blessing is promised to them.

The sixth proclamation is in 14:14–16

And I saw, and behold, a white cloud; and on the cloud I saw one sitting like unto a son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the temple, crying with a great voice to him that sat on the cloud, Send forth your sickle, and reap: for the hour to reap is come; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud cast his sickle upon the earth; and the earth was reaped.

- This proclamation is one of reaping. Reaping is a common symbol for salvation.
- Thus, this proclamation announces that in spite of the majority accepting the mark,
- there will be many who, during the second half of the Tribulation, will come to a saving knowledge of Jesus the Messiah.

The seventh proclamation is in 14:17–20

And another angel came out from the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, he that has power over fire; and he called with a great voice to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Send forth your sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel cast his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vintage of the earth, and cast it into the winepress, the great winepress, of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and there came out blood from the winepress, even unto the bridles of the horses, as far as a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

- This proclamation is one of the treading of the grapes.
- Whereas reaping is a common symbol of salvation, treading is a common symbol of judgment.
- The grapes are gathered and then undergo the severity of the wrath of God, which is the coming Bowl Judgments;
- the treading, then, is by means of the Bowl Judgments.
- This treading takes place without the city of Jerusalem, where the Valley of Kidron, also known as the Valley of Jehoshaphat, is located.
- The treading in this valley results in blood coming out about 4½ feet high for about two hundred miles.
- With the close of the Bowl Judgments, there is to be a severe judgment of treading, resulting in massive bloodletting.
- This passage involves the Campaign of Armageddon

The Events of the Second Half of the Tribulation

- Obviously, the events beginning in the middle of the Tribulation continue into the second half, for it will take some time to accomplish all of the events.
- Thus, the second half will largely be comprised of events already described.

-But the latter part of the second half will contain the Bowl Judgments, recorded in Revelation 15–16.

The Prelude—Revelation 15:1–16:1

And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having seven plagues, which are the last, for in them is finished the wrath of God. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that come off victorious from the beast, and from his image, and from the number of his name, standing by the sea of glass, having harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are your works, O Lord God, the Almighty; righteous and true are your ways, you King of the ages. Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? for you only are holy; for all the nations shall come and worship before you; for your righteous acts have been made manifest. And after these things I saw, and the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: and there came out from the temple the seven angels that had the seven plagues, arrayed with precious stone, pure and bright, and girded about their breasts with golden girdles. And one of the four living creatures gave unto the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives for ever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and none was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels should be finished. And I heard a great voice out of the temple, saying to the seven angels, Go, and pour out the seven bowls of the wrath of God into the earth.

-Verse one picks up from where 11:19 left off and introduces the prelude with the seven angels who have the seven bowls.

-These are also the last seven judgments, and they contain and bring to completion the wrath of God.

-Again, the results spelled out under the seventh trumpet come after the seven Bowl Judgments are complete.

-Then, in verses 2–4, there is a view of the martyred saints of the second half of the Tribulation.

-These came off victorious from the pressures to worship the Beast and to take the Mark of the Beast.

-While they suffered martyrdom, they conquered in the spiritual warfare (v. 2).

They are viewed as singing two songs.

-One is the Song of Moses (v. 3a), which refers to either the song in Exodus 15:1–18, or the one in Deuteronomy 32:1–43.

-In both cases, it is a song of deliverance.

-The second is the Song of the Lamb (vv. 3b–4), the content of which is recorded here.

Then, in verses 5–8, the seven bowls are given to the seven angels

-commissioned to carry out the final series of judgments.

-As a result of the giving, the Temple in Heaven is filled with the Shechinah Glory, causing its closure until all the Bowl Judgments have been poured out.

-As in 11:19, the focus of the prelude is on the Temple in Heaven.

-Finally, in 16:1, the angels are commanded to pour out the seven Bowl Judgments of the wrath of God.

-The command comes by a voice out of the Temple of God, which has just been filled with the Shechinah Glory.

Focusing....

The Bowl Judgments

The First Bowl Judgment—Revelation 16:2

And the first went, and poured out his bowl into the earth; and it became a noisome and grievous sore upon the men that had the mark of the beast, and that worshipped his image.

-The first Bowl Judgment is clearly directed at affecting only those who have the Mark of the Beast in fulfillment of Revelation 14:9–11.

-It will result in a grievous sore upon the worshipers of the Antichrist.

-This sore will be some kind of skin ulcer or malignancy on the skin.

The Second Bowl Judgment—Revelation 16:3

And the second poured out his bowl into the sea; and it became blood as of a dead man; and every living soul died, even the things that were in the sea.

-Whereas under the second Trumpet Judgment one-third of the salt water was affected,
-in the second Bowl Judgment the rest of the salt water will be turned into blood, destroying the remainder of sea life.

The Third Bowl Judgment—Revelation 16:4-7

And the third poured out his bowl into the rivers and the fountains of the waters; and it became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters saying, Righteous are you, who are and who was, you Holy One, because you did thus judge: for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and blood have you given them to drink: they are worthy. And I heard the altar saying, Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are your judgments.

-Whereas in the third Trumpet Judgment one-third of the fresh water was destroyed,
-under the third Bowl Judgment the remainder of the fresh water in rivers and springs will be destroyed, as it too will become blood (v. 4).

-Apparently, water in wells and cisterns will survive.

- The act elicits two declarations:

First (vv. 5-6), the guardian angel assigned to water declares the righteousness of God's judgment in this act.

-Since men have shed the blood of the prophets and saints, mankind is given blood to drink.

Second declaration (v. 7) comes from the Altar,

-further affirming the assessment of God's righteousness being revealed through His judgments.

The Fourth Bowl Judgment—Revelation 16:8-9

And the fourth poured out his bowl upon the sun; and it was given unto it to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat: and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues; and they repented not to give him glory.

-Whereas the fourth Trumpet Judgment affected the sun by destroying one-third of the light source,
-the fourth Bowl Judgment will also affect the sun by increasing its temperature to the point that men are totally scorched.

-Mankind will recognize the source of this judgment as coming from God,

-but instead of turning to Him in faith, they will blaspheme His Name.

The Fifth Bowl Judgment—Revelation 16:10-11

And the fifth poured out his bowl upon the throne of the beast; and his kingdom was darkened; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they repented not of their works.

-Among the various results of the fifth Trumpet Judgment was the third blackout.

-The fifth Bowl Judgment will result in the fourth blackout of the end times.

-The entire kingdom of the Beast will be darkened which, at this stage,

-will include the entire world with the exception of the three Transjordanian nations where light will still exist.

-Along with the darkness comes a gnawing pain that will cause mankind to blaspheme all the more.

-This will be a thick darkness that can be felt.

-The circumstances are not unlike what befell Egypt in Exodus 10:21-23.

The sixth (16:12-16) and seventh (16:17-21) Bowl Judgments

-are both concerned with the Campaign of Armageddon,

The Campaign of Armageddon and The Second Coming of Jesus the Messiah

- The two climactic events of the Great Tribulation are the Campaign of Armageddon and the Second Coming.
- A considerable amount of data is given about this time period in the Scriptures.
- One of the greatest difficulties in the study of eschatology
- is placing these events in chronological sequence in order to see what exactly will happen in the Campaign of Armageddon.

The sixth Bowl Judgment, The Campaign of Armageddon will begin in Revelation 16:12-16

The First Stage

The Assembling of the Allies of the Antichrist

And the sixth poured out his bowl upon the great river, the river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way might be made ready for the kings that come from the sunrising. And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits, as it were frogs: for they are spirits of demons, working signs; which go forth unto the kings of the whole world, to gather them together unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. (Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.) And they gathered them together into the place which is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon.

- With the outpouring of the sixth Bowl Judgment, the Euphrates River will be dried up (v. 12).
- This drying-up process will be for the purpose of making it easier for the Antichrist to assemble his forces for the Armageddon Campaign.
- The sixth Bowl Judgment will dry up the Euphrates River to make it easier for the Antichrist's Babylonian forces to maneuver.
- A decree will be issued from the capital city of Babylon ordering the allies of the Antichrist to gather their armies together (vv. 13-14).
- The train of thought is now interrupted by a parenthetical remark (v. 15)
- that contains a message of comfort and hope to the believers living at this point in the Great Tribulation.
- The train of thought is picked up again in verse 16,
- which names the place where the allies of the Antichrist will be gathered: Har-Magedon.

It has become common to identify the kings that come from the sunrising, or "the kings of the east,"

- with the Chinese and to combine them with the army of the two hundred million of Revelation nine,
- neither consistency of exegesis nor the structure of the Book of Revelation will allow for this.
- Relative to the structure of Revelation, the "two hundred million" and the kings of the east belong to two different judgments which must be kept distinct and cannot be combined.
- The "two hundred million" are in a Trumpet Judgment, whereas the kings of the east are in a Bowl Judgment.
- Furthermore, within the discussion of Revelation nine, it was shown that the two hundred million are demons and not men, Chinese or otherwise.
- Thus, the structure of the book militates against making these two judgments into one.
- In regard to consistency of interpretation, it also rules out the kings of the east as a reference to the Chinese.

Everywhere else in the Scriptures, the east always refers to Mesopotamia (Assyria and Babylonia).

- Consistency demands that this, too, would be a reference to Mesopotamia and not to China (e.g., Mat. 2:1).
- The fact that the Antichrist's capital city of Babylon will sit on the banks of the Euphrates River
- further attests to the fact that the kings who come from the east will be Mesopotamian kings.

-Thus, consistency of interpretation also militates against matching this reference with China.
-Consistency of interpretation and not current events must be the basis of determining the meaning of any given text.

-The gathering for this final campaign against the Jews is clearly the work of the counterfeit trinity.
-All three members of the counterfeit trinity are involved:
-the Dragon, or Satan (the counterfeit father); the Beast, or the Antichrist (the counterfeit son); and the False Prophet (the counterfeit holy spirit).
-The summons will be reinforced by demonic activity to make sure that the nations will indeed cooperate in assembling their armies together.
-These demonic messengers will be empowered to perform signs in order to assure compliance
-and defeat any reluctance on the part of the other kings to fall into line.
-These kings are the seven kings that have been under the authority of the Antichrist since the middle of the Tribulation.

While the term "Battle of Armageddon" has been commonly used, it is really a misnomer,

-for more than one battle will be taking place.
-For this reason, many prophetic teachers have stopped employing that term and are using the term "Campaign of Armageddon," as in this chapter.
-But this, too, is a misnomer because there will be no fighting in Armageddon itself;
-all of the fighting will take place elsewhere.
-A more biblical name for this final conflict is found in the closing words of verse 14: **the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.**
-This is a more accurate description of the nature and extent of this final conflict.

Armageddon: the word is a combination of two Hebrew words which mean, "the Mountain of Megiddo."

-Megiddo was a strategic city located at the western end of the Valley of Jezreel,
-guarding the famous Megiddo Pass into Israel's largest valley.
-One can see the entire Valley of Jezreel from the mount upon which the city of Megiddo stood.
-So what is known as the Valley of Armageddon in Christian circles is actually the biblical Valley of Jezreel.
-The term Armageddon is never applied to the valley itself, but only to the mount at the western end.
-Here, in this large valley of Lower Galilee,
-the armies of the world will gather for the purpose of destroying all the Jews still living.

The passage says nothing of a battle in this valley,

-for no fighting will take place here.
-The Valley of Jezreel, guarded by the Mountain of Megiddo,
-will merely serve as the gathering ground for the armies of the Antichrist.
-Armageddon will play the same role that England played in the closing stages of World War II.
-The allied forces gathered their armies together in England,
-but that is not where the final battle took place.
-The final conflict began on the beaches of Normandy, France, on D-Day.
-Armageddon will also serve as a gathering place, with the battle beginning elsewhere.

This passage of the armies of the nations is more or less viewed from man's perspective.

-From man's standpoint, it is merely a military gathering called together by the Antichrist.
-The gathering of the nations is presented as a gathering against God the Father and His Anointed, that is, the Messiah Jesus.
-By seeking to destroy the Jews, Satan is also seeking to break the cords of God's control of the world.
-How foolish! Then God is portrayed as sitting in the heavens and laughing,

- because He will soon have these nations in confusion.
 - It is God Who will set His own king upon Zion, and Satan and the Antichrist will not be able to prevent it.
 - Although the nations will assemble to carry out the program of the counterfeit trinity,
 - they will actually accomplish the purpose of the Triune God.
- This gathering of the armies of the nations in the Valley of Jezreel will be the first stage of the Campaign of Armageddon.

To summarize Revelation Chapters 11–16

- Revelation 11 closes with the announcement that the Bowl Judgments are about to be poured out.
 - This point is now temporarily dropped, to be picked up again in chapters 15–16. Chapters 11–14 are parenthetical to do two things: first, to add some details about the events of the middle of the Tribulation; and second, to show why the Bowl Judgments are so necessary. Revelation 12–13 then points out the events on earth necessitating the seven Bowl Judgments contained in the seventh trumpet, namely, the actions of the counterfeit trinity. Revelation 14 shows how the program of the counterfeit trinity will fail and also announces some of the results of the Bowl Judgments. The Bowl Judgments are then described in Revelation 15–16. This is the topic of the next chapter.
- This chapter has been primarily concerned with the midtribulation events. Now it is necessary to go on to the events of the second half of the Tribulation.

The Ecclesiastical Babylon—Revelation 17:1–6

And there came one of the seven angels that had the seven bowls, and spake with me, saying, Come hither, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot that sits upon many waters; with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and they that dwell in the earth were made drunken with the wine of her fornication. And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness: and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stone and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations, even the unclean things of her fornication, and upon her forehead a name written, mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of the Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I wondered with a great wonder.

The woman is sitting upon many waters (v. 1), which is interpreted in verse 15 to refer to the world population:

And he says unto me, The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

- The fifth event that occurs throughout the first half of the Tribulation is the rule of the Ecclesiastical Babylon.
 - It is with this woman that the kings of the earth commit fornication (v. 2),
 - showing this to be a unity of religion and state.
 - Just as there will be two political systems during the Tribulation,
 - one during the first half (the ten kings) and one during the second half (the Antichrist),
 - there will also be two religious systems, one for each half of the Tribulation.
 - This passage describes the religious system of the first half of the Tribulation.
 - In verses 1–2, John is invited to come and to view the judgment about to fall on the Great Harlot.
 - To prostitute something is to take that which has a proper use and to turn it into an improper use.
- In verse three**, the harlot is seen to be sitting on the seven-headed and ten-horned beast.
- This means that this false religious system does have the support of civil government during the first half of the Tribulation and is able to rule because of government support.
 - The description and identification of this woman is given in verses 4–5.
-

- The woman is seen as being very wealthy and influential, and her full name is Mystery, Babylon the Great, The Mother of the Harlots, and of the Abominations of the Earth.
- What is found in these verses is the final form of religious apostasy, ending in a one-world super-church.
- In verse six, the woman is drunk with the blood of those who suffered martyrdom for Messiah. This answers the question as to who was killing and hurting the fifth seal saints: the false super-church.

Focusing....

-
- A prostitute takes sex, which has a proper use, and perverts it with an improper use, turning it into something illicit, causing fornication.
 - In this case, the harlot represents "religion," which has a proper use (Jas. 1:26-27), but here has been prostituted for improper use.
 - Rather than serving, it rules.
 - The false use of religion causes spiritual fornication.
 - The word fornication is used both of physical unfaithfulness and also of spiritual unfaithfulness, as in Hosea 1-2; Jeremiah 2:20; 3:1-9; Ezekiel 16:15-41; 23:5-44, etc.
 - It is the final form of the woman Jezebel cast into the Great Tribulation (Rev. 2:20-22) and united with the apostate Laodicean Church.
 - This is the counterfeit bride of messiah, presented as a prostitute, in contrast with the true Bride of Messiah, presented as a pure virgin (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-27; Rev. 19:6-8).
 - Babylon the Harlot represents the one-world religious system that rules over the religious affairs during the first half of the Tribulation.
 - She rules over the nations of the world (the many waters), fully controlling the religious affairs, and has the reluctant support of the government.
 - The headquarters of this one-world religion will be the rebuilt city of Babylon, the mother of idolatry, for it was here that idolatry and false religion began (Gen. 11:1-9).

The myriads of Gentiles who are saved under the ministry of the 144,000 Jews

- will suffer persecution by the Ecclesiastical Babylon, and many will be martyred.
-

Three Kings Killed—Seven Submit

Revelation 17:12-13 Once three of the ten are killed, the others submit to his authority.

And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings, who have received no kingdom as yet; but they receive authority as kings, with the beast, for one hour. These have one mind, and they give their power and authority unto the beast.

- The attempt of the Antichrist to gain political control will be interrupted by his death.
- But after his resurrection, the second world war of the Tribulation will continue until three of the ten kings are killed.

Revelation 17:14-15-War against the Lamb

- They will unsuccessfully, in the end, make war against the Lamb

These shall war against the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they also shall overcome that are with him, called and chosen and faithful. And he says unto me, the waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

Focusing

The text dealing with this has already been examined, and it is found in **Daniel 7:24**

And as for the ten horns, out of this kingdom shall ten kings arise: and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the former, and he shall put down three kings. And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings, who have received no kingdom as yet; but they receive authority as kings, with the beast, for one hour. These have one mind, and they give their power and authority unto the beast.

- The other kings will all come to one mind, which is to give their kingdom unto the beast.
- With this submission, the Antichrist will succeed in taking over the political control of the entire world, with the exception of Jordan.
- The second political system of the Tribulation will be initiated at this point.
- The Antichrist's next goal will be to gain world religious control.
- To accomplish this, he must try to remove all religious opposition.

This includes the Ecclesiastical Babylon, the Two Witnesses, and the Jews.

Destruction of Ecclesiastical Babylon—Revelation 17:16-18

And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these shall hate the harlot, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and shall burn her utterly with fire. For God did put in their hearts to do his mind, and to come to one mind, and to give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God should be accomplished. And the woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth.

- One of the Antichrist's first acts in gaining religious control
- will be the destruction of the first religious system of the Tribulation, the Ecclesiastical Babylon.
- Previously, this religious system had the support of the civil government, for the first 3½ years.
- With all civil authority turned over to the hands of the Antichrist, who is now in full control,
- civil government itself will destroy the domination of the Ecclesiastical Babylon.
- The ten horns of the beast are the ten kings (v. 12),
- but they eventually relinquish their power and authority to the Antichrist.
- The same point is made in verse 17:

Another extensive passage dealing with the destruction of Babylon is Revelation 18:1-24

-This chapter of Revelation deals specifically with political and economic Babylon that will rule the world for 3½ years.

Focusing....

The passage begins with a declaration of the fall of **Babylon in 18:1-3**

After these things I saw another angel coming down out of heaven, having great authority; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried with a mighty voice, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, and is become a habitation of demons, and a hold of every unclean spirit, and a hold of every unclean and hateful bird. For by the wine of the wrath of her fornication all the nations are fallen; and the kings of the earth committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth waxed rich by the power of her wantonness.

- With its destruction, Babylon is to become a habitation of demons.
 - This will be the place of demonic abode and confinement during the Messianic Age (vv. 1-2).
 - This is hardly true of Babylon today.
 - The reason for this severe judgment of Babylon will be the global political (kings of the earth)
 - and economic (merchants of the earth) corruption originating in this city because of the Antichrist's rule (v. 3).
-

-As in the Jeremiah prophecies of chapters 50-51

Revelation 18:4-5 reveals that there will be a call to the Jews to flee the city prior to Babylon's destruction:

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come forth, my people, out of her, that you have no fellowship with her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues: for her sins have reached even unto heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.

-The cup of Babylon's iniquity will then be full.

-Lest the Jews become subject to Babylon's judgment, they are urged to flee, and this they will do.

The indictment against Babylon is given next in **Revelation 18:6-8**

Render unto her even as she rendered, and double unto her the double according to her works: in the cup which she mingled, mingle unto her double. How much soever she glorified herself, and waxed wanton, so much give her of torment and mourning: for she says in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall in no wise see mourning. Therefore in one day shall her plagues come, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judged her.

-Babylon is condemned to receive double the punishment she inflicted on others (v. 6).

-Because this city, through the counterfeit trinity, will vaunt itself against the God of Heaven (v. 7),

-it will suffer a swift and sudden destruction by fire (v. 8).

-After Babylon's destruction there will be intense lamenting by those who invested heavily in her,

-became rich by her, but will now be bankrupt by her destruction.

Three classes of people will mourn over Babylon; their lamentations in **Revelation 18:9-19**

First is the lamentation of the kings, the political rulers of the world, in 18:9-10:

And the kings of the earth, who committed fornication and lived wantonly with her, shall weep and wail over her, when they look upon the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! for in one hour is your judgment come.

-These are the seven kings who have co-reigned with the Antichrist and submitted their authority to the Antichrist, the king of Babylon.

-Whatever power or authority they held, was held by the grace of Babylon.

-Seeing their authority waning with Babylon's destruction, they will lament the swiftness of the judgment.

-They will be able to see the smoke of Babylon afar off, for they will see it from the Valley of Jezreel in Israel.

The second group of mourners are the merchants in 18:11-17a:

And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, for no man buys their merchandise anymore; merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stone, and pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet; and all thyine wood, and every vessel of ivory, and every vessel made of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble; and cinnamon, and spice, and incense, and ointment, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and cattle, and sheep; and merchandise of horses and chariots and slaves; and souls of men. And the fruits which your soul lusted after are gone from you, and all things that were dainty and sumptuous are perished from you, and men shall find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, who were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning; saying, Woe, woe, the great city, she that was arrayed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stone and pearl! for in one hour so great riches is made desolate.

-Babylon will become the economic center of the world, the center of business and world trade,

-a city characterized by the luxury items listed in this passage.

- But it will suddenly all go up in smoke, and the wealth of the merchants will be no more.
- Swiftly becoming paupers, the merchants will be heard lamenting indeed.

The transporters of goods are the third group who will lament, in 18:17b-19

And every shipmaster, and every one that sails any whither, and mariners, and as many as gain their living by sea, stood afar off, and cried out as they looked upon the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like the great city? And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and mourning, saying, Woe, woe, the great city, wherein all that had their ships in the sea were made rich by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.

- Since the merchants will no longer have goods to market,
- the transporters will no longer have merchandise to transport, by which they have become rich.
- Hence, they, too, will lament greatly the sudden destruction.

While three groups are in mourning, there will be three other groups rejoicing in 18:20

Rejoice over her, you heaven, and you saints, and you apostles, and you prophets; for God has judged your judgment on her.

- There will be lamenting on the earth by kings, merchants, and transporters.
- But in Heaven there will be three groups rejoicing: saints, apostles, and prophets.
- The destruction of Babylon will mark the soon return of the Messiah.

The passage ends with a picture of the totality of Babylon's destruction in 18:21-24

And a strong angel took up a stone as it were a great millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with a mighty fall shall Babylon, the great city, be cast down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers and minstrels and fluteplayers and trumpeters shall be heard no more at all in you; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft, shall be found any more at all in you; and the voice of a mill shall be heard no more at all in you; and the light of a lamp shall shine no more at all in you; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in you: for your merchants were the princes of the earth; for with your sorcery were all the nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that have been slain upon the earth.

- Jeremiah commanded a scroll-wrapped stone to be thrown into the Euphrates River to symbolize the sinking of the city of Babylon.
- Now another person, an angel, also casts a stone, the size of a millstone, into the sea to depict how totally Babylon will disappear so as not to be found any more (v. 21).
- Babylon will cease to be the world center and capital (vv. 22-23)
- because she was guilty of the blood of the prophets (e.g. the Two Witnesses)
- and the slaughter of the Tribulation saints (v. 24).

To summarize the study of the second stage of the Campaign of Armageddon

- while the Antichrist will move his forces into the Valley of Jezreel,
- his enemies will take the opportunity to destroy the city of Babylon quickly and suddenly.
- According to Isaiah 13:3, they will be Gentile believers of the Tribulation.
- Just prior to this, however, the Jews will be warned to flee out of Babylon.
- This they will do, and will make their way to Jerusalem to report to the Jews who are there.
- This sudden destruction of the world political and economic capital will cause great consternation on the earth, but not in Heaven.
- For when Babylon's destruction comes, it will signal that the Second Coming will occur soon,
- and along with it the regeneration and restoration of Israel.

An extended passage on the Second Coming is in Revelation 19:1–18

-Prior to dealing with the manner of the Second Coming itself, this chapter has a prelude composed of three elements in 19:1–10. The first element in 19:1–8 is the fourfold hallelujah.

The second element of the prelude is an invitation to the Marriage Feast of the Lamb, in 19:9

The third element of the prelude comes in the declaration of the spirit of prophecy, in 19:10

With that prelude completed, the Apostle then describes the Second Coming in 19:11–16

Focusing....

The first hallelujah is for the fall of the Ecclesiastical Babylon, in 19:1–2:

After these things I heard as it were a great voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, Hallelujah; Salvation, and glory, and power, belong to our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he has judged the great harlot, her that corrupted the earth with her fornication, and he has avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

The second hallelujah, in 19:3, is for the destruction of the city of Babylon, the economic and political capital of the world:

And a second time they say, Hallelujah. And her smoke goes up for ever and ever.

The third hallelujah is a worshipful praise to God from those around the Throne, namely the 24 elders and the four seraphs, in 19:4–5:

And the four and twenty elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God that sits on the throne, saying, Amen; Hallelujah. And a voice came forth from the throne, saying, Give praise to our God, all you his servants, you that fear him, the small and the great.

The fourth hallelujah, in 19:6–8, is for the Marriage of the Lamb, which was discussed in Chapter 6, The Eschatology of the Invisible Church:

And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Hallelujah: for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigned. Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, and let us give the glory unto him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife has made herself ready. And it was given unto her that she should array herself in fine linen, bright and pure: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

The second element of the prelude is an invitation to the Marriage Feast of the Lamb, in 19:9:

And he says unto me, Write, Blessed are they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he says unto me, These are true words of God.

It is with the Marriage Feast that the Millennium will begin, but the invitations are sent out just prior to the Second Coming. They go out to all the redeemed who are not members of the Church, i.e., the Old Testament and Tribulation saints soon to be resurrected.

The third element of the prelude comes in the declaration of the spirit of prophecy, in 19:10

And I fell down before his feet to worship him. And he says unto me, See you do it not: I am a fellow-servant with you and with your brethren that hold the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

The spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus. He is the source of all prophecy, and all prophecy moves toward a fulfillment by Him with a view toward His own glory.

With that prelude completed, the Apostle then describes the Second Coming in 19:11–16

And I saw the heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and he that sat thereon called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he does judge and make war. And his eyes are a flame of fire, and upon his head are many diadems; and he has a name written which no one knows but he himself. And he is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and pure. And out of his mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treads the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of God, the Almighty. And he has on his garment and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

- This account of the Second Coming, which begins by describing Messiah as the Judge (vv. 11–13),
- has many similarities with the descriptions found in the first chapter of Revelation.
- The war He engages in against the nations is a result of judgment by Him Who is Faithful and True.
- He wears on His head the diadem crowns, indicating His natural royalty.
- His garments are stained with blood, just as in Isaiah 63:1–6, for reasons discussed earlier.
- This is the Second Coming of the Judge and the incarnate Word of God, Jesus returning in righteousness to judge the nations.
- When He returns, Messiah will be followed by armies (v. 14).
- The word is in the plural number, meaning that at least two separate armies will return with Him.
- One army is known as hosts of the Lord, or the angelic army.

Matthew 16:27 states:

For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds.

Another army that will return with Jesus is the army of the Church saints who had been raptured previously, before the Tribulation.

Jude 14–15 describes the events as follows:

And to these also Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, Behold, the Lord came with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their works of ungodliness which they have ungodly wrought, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

Revelation 19:17–19 Because of the massive slaughter of all the armies of the nations, another invitation is issued.

- This one invites the birds of the heavens to the great supper of God, in

And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in mid heaven, Come and be gathered together unto the great supper of God; that you may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of them that sit thereon, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, and small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat upon the horse, and against his army.

- The birds will eat the unburied carcasses of many who participated in the Campaign of Armageddon.
- In this way, the birds will be filled and satisfied, according to v. 21

The Antichrist

Regarding this member of the counterfeit trinity, **Revelation 19:20** states:

And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought the signs in his sight, wherewith he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast and them that worshipped his image: they two were cast alive into the lake of fire that burns with brimstone: ...

- It is declared that the Antichrist will be cast alive into the Lake of Fire.

- In the previous chapter, passages were cited that state that the Antichrist will be killed as one of the first casualties of the Second Coming.
- Therefore, this verse requires that the Antichrist be resurrected at this time and then be cast alive into the Lake of Fire.

Focusing

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- It is for this reason that Isaiah 14:20 declared that the body of the Antichrist will never see burial.
 - There is some irony to be found in this fact.
 - As will be seen later in this chapter, the term the first resurrection applies to the resurrection of all the righteous, although it comes in stages.
 - The term the second resurrection applies to the resurrection of all the damned, and this, too, will come in stages.
 - Jesus was the firstfruits of the first resurrection.
 - The irony to be found here is that he who would be the counterfeit son
 - will be allowed to act out the counterfeit role to completion by becoming the firstfruits of the second resurrection.
 - But the result of his resurrection will be the Lake of Fire.

The False Prophet

- Also according to Revelation 19:20, the False Prophet—the counterfeit holy spirit,
 - who will have a counterfeit gift of miracles by which he will do his work of deception,
 - calling men to worship the Antichrist, to take upon themselves the mark of the Beast
 - and to worship his image—he, too, will be cast alive into the Lake of Fire.
 - For the first thousand years that the Lake of Fire will be inhabited,
 - the Antichrist and the False Prophet will be there all by themselves.
-

Satan's Fifth Abode Revelation 20:1-3

As for Satan, the counterfeit father, he will be cast into his fifth abode, the Abyss

And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and cast him into the abyss, and shut it, and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years should be finished: after this he must be loosed for a little time.

Focusing ...

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- This passage records the binding of Satan into his fifth abode.
 - The binder will be a member of the rank of common angels (v. 1),
 - the lowest order of celestial beings, yet he will be able to bind a cherub who was the anointed cherub and sealed up the sun in wisdom and beauty.
 - The duration of Satan's confinement will be one thousand years (v. 2).
 - Verse three spells out the place, purpose, and promise regarding the binding of Satan.
 - As to the place, it will be the Abyss, the temporary place of confinement for fallen angels.
 - As to the purpose, it is that he should no longer be free to do his work of deception among the nations.
 - But the binding is done with the promise that he will be released for a short while to test mankind at least one more time.
-

The Resurrection of the Tribulation Saints

Revelation 20:4 Those saints who will be killed in the course of the Great Tribulation

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as worshipped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

-Two groups here the church to whom judgment is given and the tribulation saints

Focusing

-In this verse, John sees two groups of saints co-reigning with Messiah.

-The **first** are those to whom judgment was given. The judgment spoken of here is the Judgment Seat of the Messiah.

-These saints, then, will be the Church saints who will be resurrected at the Rapture of the Church and will receive their rewards in the course of the judgment.

-The **second** group of saints that John sees are identified as those who have been beheaded

-because they did not worship the Antichrist or his image,

-nor were they willing to consent to receive the mark of the Beast.

-Obviously, then, these cannot be anyone else but the Tribulation saints and they will be resurrected at this time.

The First Resurrection

-The first resurrection involves the resurrection of believers only. It is recorded in **Revelation 20:5-6**

The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection: over these the second death has no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

-According to verse five, the resurrection of the Tribulation saints completes the first resurrection,

- and it is separated from the completion of the second resurrection by one thousand years.

-The point of verse six is that the first resurrection involves believers only,

-and that is why it is blessed and holy to be a participant in the first resurrection.

Focusing

The Marriage Feast of the Lamb

-The fourth stage of the Jewish wedding system is the marriage feast which lasted seven days.

-While the Church is the Bride, the Old Testament and Tribulation saints make up the friends of the bridegroom.

-Now that they have been resurrected, the wedding feast can take place.

-The invitation has already gone out in Revelation 19:9:

And he says unto me, Write, Blessed are they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he says unto me, These are true words of God.

The Thousand Years that will expire

Premillennialists have often been criticized for basing their belief in a Millennium entirely on one passage of Scripture, Revelation 20.

-Because it is found in a book well noted for its high use of symbols, they say it is foolish to take the one thousand years literally.

-But that is hardly a valid criticism.

- To begin with, while it is true that the Book of Revelation uses many symbols,
- it has already been shown that the meaning of all those symbols is explained either within the Book of Revelation itself or elsewhere in the Scriptures.
- Furthermore, never are years used in a symbolic way in this book.
- If they are symbolic, the symbolism is nowhere explained.
- The mention of 1,260 days, 42 months, and 3½ years are all literal and not symbolic.
- Hence, there is no need to take the one thousand years as anything but literal years.

- The desire to spiritualize the text always places the burden of proof on the interpreter.
- Without objective proof it will result in a subjective interpretation.

It is, of course, true that the figure of one thousand years is only found in Revelation 20.

- But it is recorded six different times in this one text,
- and if repetition tries to do anything, it certainly endeavors to make a point.
- While it is true that the millennium (that is, one thousand years) is found only in Revelation 20,
- the belief in the Messianic Kingdom does not rest on this passage alone. In fact, it hardly rests on it at all.

The basis for the belief in the Messianic Kingdom is twofold.

First: there are the unfulfilled promises of the Jewish covenants, promises that can only be fulfilled in a Messianic Kingdom.

Second: there are the unfulfilled prophecies of the Jewish prophets.

- There are numerous prophecies of the Old Testament that speak of the coming of the Messiah
- Who will reign on David's Throne, and rule over a peaceful Kingdom.
- There is a great amount of material in the Old Testament on the Messianic Kingdom,
- and the belief in a Messianic Kingdom rests on the basis of a literal interpretation of this massive material.

The only real contribution that the Book of Revelation makes to the knowledge of the Kingdom

- is to disclose just how long the Messianic Kingdom will last—namely one thousand years—for which the term Millennium is used.
- This is the one key truth concerning the Kingdom that was not revealed in the Old Testament.
- It is in light of this that it is possible to understand why so much of the book is spent on the Great Tribulation and so little on the Millennium.
- While much of the material in Revelation 4–19 is found scattered in the pages of the Old Testament,
- it is impossible to place these events in chronological sequence using only the Old Testament.
- The Book of Revelation provides the framework by which this can be done.
- A great portion of the Book of Revelation was used to accomplish this goal.
- On the other hand, all of the various features and facets of the Messianic Kingdom have already been revealed in the Old Testament.
- It portrays the general characteristics of life in the Kingdom,
- which do not raise the problem of an order of sequence.
- Hence, there was no reason to spend a great deal of time on the Messianic Kingdom in the Book of Revelation.
- Most of what was needed to be revealed was already known from the Old Testament.

Two things about the Messianic Kingdom which were not revealed in the Old Testament.

- The first was the length of the Messianic Kingdom.
- While the Old Testament prophets foresaw a long period of time of a peaceful messianic reign, they did not reveal just how long this would last.
- To answer this question, the Book of Revelation states that it will be exactly one thousand years.

- A second thing that was unknown from the Old Testament prophets was the circumstances by which the Kingdom would come to an end
- and how this would lead into the Eternal Order.
- This is also revealed by the Book of Revelation.
- These two items are all that Revelation 20 added to the knowledge of the Messianic Kingdom.
- The belief in a Messianic Kingdom does not rest on this passage,
- but is based on the numerous prophecies of the Old Testament prophets.

The Kingdom and Four Covenants

- Another basis for the belief in a coming Kingdom rests on the four unconditional, unfulfilled covenants God made with Israel.
- These covenants are unconditional and so rely solely on God for their fulfillment and not on Israel.
- They are also unfulfilled, and since God is One Who keeps His promises, they must be fulfilled in the future.
- They can only be fulfilled within the framework of a Messianic Kingdom or a Millennial Kingdom.
- More will be said about these covenants in chapter 19, Israel in the Messianic Kingdom,
- but the main points will be summarized here.

The first of these is the Abrahamic Covenant,

- which promised an eternal Seed developing into a nation that will possess the Promised Land with some definite borders.
- While that nation—the Jews—continues to exist, never in Jewish history have they possessed all of the Promised Land.
- For this promise to be fulfilled, there must be a future Kingdom.
- Besides, the possession of the Land was not merely promised to Abraham's seed,
- but to Abraham personally when God said, to you will I give it, and to your seed forever (Gen. 13:15).
- For God to fulfill His promise to Abraham (as well as to Isaac and Jacob), there must be a future Kingdom.

The second covenant is the Palestinian Covenant, or Land Covenant,

- that spoke of a worldwide regathering of the Jews and repossession of the Land following their dispersion.
- While the dispersion has already occurred and is in effect today,
- the regathering and repossession of the Land still awaits fulfillment in the future.
- This, too, requires a future Kingdom.

The Davidic Covenant is the third covenant,

- and it promised four eternal things: an eternal house (dynasty), an eternal throne, an eternal kingdom, and one eternal Person.
- The Dynasty became eternal because it culminated in a Person Who is Himself eternal: Jesus the Messiah.
- For that reason the Throne and Kingdom will be eternal as well.
- But Jesus has never yet sat on the Throne of David ruling over a Kingdom of Israel.
- The reestablishment of the Davidic Throne and Messiah's rule over the Kingdom still awaits a future fulfillment.
- It requires a future kingdom.

The last of these covenants is the New Covenant,

- which spoke of the national regeneration and salvation of Israel,
- encompassing each individual Jewish member of that nation.

-This, too, awaits its final fulfillment and requires a future kingdom.

It is the extensive prophetic writings, as well as all of these covenants,
-that provide the basis for the belief in a future Messianic Kingdom,
-and not merely one chapter of a highly symbolic book.

To summarize, the basis for the belief in a Messianic Kingdom is twofold:

-the unfulfilled promises of the Jewish covenants, and the unfulfilled prophecies of the Jewish prophets.

The Church and the Tribulation Saints

The part that the Church is to have in the millennial reign of the Messiah is found in **Revelation 20:4-6**
And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as worshipped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection: over these the second death has no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

In verse four, John describes the saints who are to co-reign with the Messiah.

-First, there are those to whom judgment has been given.

-This would be a reference to the Church saints who were raptured at some time preceding the Great Tribulation.

-The judgment spoken of is that of the Judgment Seat of the Messiah,

-the judgment of the believer's works.

-In fact, it is the outcome of this judgment that will determine the position of each Church saint in the Kingdom.

-A second group of saints who are to co-reign with Him are those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus.

-These are the believers who will be martyred during the first half of the Great Tribulation and were mentioned under the fifth Seal (Rev. 6:9-11).

-A third group are those who did not worship the Antichrist or his image, nor received the mark of 666 on their forehead or on their right hand.

-Since these things were initiated only at the middle of the Tribulation,

-this third group of saints are those of the second half of the Great Tribulation.

-So then, both Church and Tribulation saints will co-reign with the King for one thousand years.

-The Old Testament saints will have a different destiny, to be discussed in the next chapter.

The facts of verse four mark the conclusion of the first resurrection.

-The first resurrection is the resurrection of all righteous ones and is separated from the second resurrection by one thousand years.

-Jesus was resurrected three days after His death, and thus He became the firstfruits of the first resurrection (1 Cor. 15:23).

-The Church saints will be resurrected at the Rapture some time before the Tribulation (1 Thes. 4:16).

-Finally, the Old Testament saints (Is. 26:19; Dan. 12:2) and the Tribulation saints (Rev. 20:4)

-will be resurrected in the seventy-five day interval between the Tribulation and the Millennium.

-Death during the Kingdom will be for unbelievers only.

-Therefore, since only unbelievers die during the Millennium, no resurrection of millennial saints will be necessary.

-As a result, the first resurrection will be totally complete with the resurrection of the Tribulation saints.

-One thousand years will pass before the second resurrection is brought to completion.

- The Church and Tribulation saints will co-reign with the Messianic King over the Gentile nations.
 - They will be the King's representative authority and will carry out His decrees to the nations.
-

The Aftermath

- During the time of the Millennium, the most ideal conditions will exist on the earth—the best since the Fall.
- But it will not be a perfect situation.
- Sin and death, though greatly reduced, will not be eliminated,
- and a great number of unregenerate men will be alive at the time of the close of the Messianic Kingdom,
- all born during the last century of the Millennium.
- It is after one thousand years of ideal conditions and environment that the Messianic Kingdom ends with one last test for man.

The Loosing of Satan and the Final Invasion of Israel

- The Millennium will end when Satan is released from his fifth abode.

This event is described in Revelation 20:7–10

And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall come forth to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to the war: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up over the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and the fire came down out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

- When the full one thousand years are completed, Satan will be released out of his confinement in the Abyss (v. 7)
- and will again do the work of deception among all the nations of the Gentiles in the earth (v. 8).
- By this time, a great number of unbelievers will exist, all of whom will be under one hundred years of age.
- But once these armies arrive at the Mountain of Jehovah's House,
- the invading forces will be quickly dispensed with by fire out of Heaven,
- destroying them massively and suddenly (v. 9).
- At this point, the instigator of this revolt will be placed into his sixth and final abode: the Lake of Fire (v. 10).
- This will be both his final and eternal abode—a place of torment for all eternity.

Focusing...

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- The expression Gog and Magog points to the extent of the work of deception
 - reaching the extremities of the earth
 - and hints at a similarity with the invasion described in Ezekiel 38:1–39:16, which will occur prior to the Great Tribulation.
 - The similarity is that this, too, will be an invasion of Israel.
 - The work of deception will be massive, and a worldwide revolt will begin to form.
 - Eventually, a worldwide invasion of the Millennial Israel will take place,
 - and the Millennial Jerusalem will be surrounded by these deceived Gentile armies.
 - He will now join the Antichrist and the False Prophet, who entered it one thousand years previously.
 - The career of Satan will then come to an end.
 - With this final revolt, the Millennial Kingdom will come to an end,
 - and there will be a transfer of authority as described in **1 Corinthians 15:24–28**:

Then comes the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death. For, He put all things in subjection under his feet. But when he says, All things are put in subjection, it is evident that he is excepted who did subject all things unto him. And when all things have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all.

-Ultimately, the power and the authority of the Kingdom must be turned over to God the Father.

-But this can only occur after every enemy of man is abolished and there is no longer any challenge to God's rule, authority, and power (v. 24).

-For this very reason, the Messiah must rule until every single enemy of man has been placed under subjection (v. 25).

-The last of the enemies of man is not Satan, but death itself (v. 26).

-It should be remembered that death will still exist in the Kingdom.

-It is only after Satan's final revolt and his confinement in the Lake of Fire that death can be abolished.

-It is Satan who caused death for man by tempting the first parents.

-It is only when the originator of death for man is forever confined in his final abode that death can be abolished.

-And at this point, it will be. With this, the Millennial Kingdom will come to an end.

-All things will now have been placed in total subjection to the Messiah,

-and that totality of subjection will now be subjugated to God the Father in order that God may be all in all (vv. 27-28).

The Great White Throne Judgment, described in Revelation 20:11-12

-will come after the end of the Millennium and in preparation for the establishment of the Eternal Order:

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works.

-This prophecy begins with a vision of one sitting on the Great White Throne (v. 11a).

-Although the throne-sitter is not named, in all probability it is Jesus the Messiah,

-for it is to Him that all judgment has been given (Jn. 5:22).

-A passing away of the old order will occur at the time of the Great White Throne Judgment.

-The present heavens and earth, in existence since Genesis one, will be done away with (v. 11b).

-That which was renovated for the Millennium,

-but polluted all over again with man's last revolt, will now be done away with forever.

This will leave all things ready for the judgment itself (v. 12).

-The judgment will be a judgment of all unbelievers of all time.

-The purpose of this judgment will not be to determine whether or not a person is saved, for that has been settled forever one way or the other at death.

-The purpose of this judgment will be to determine the degree of punishment.

Focusing....

There is a principle in Scripture that does teach degrees of punishment based upon degrees of sinfulness and upon greater or lesser light or knowledge and the response or lack of it to that light.

In Matthew 11:20-24, Jesus spoke of things being more tolerable for some than for others in the day of judgment:

Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not. Woe unto you, Chorazin! woe unto you, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for you. And you, Capernaum, shall you be exalted unto heaven? you shall go down unto Hades: for if the mighty works had been done in Sodom which were done in you, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you.

In Luke 12:47–48, Jesus spoke of few stripes and many stripes:

And that servant, who knew his lord's will, and made not ready, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. And to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required: and to whom they commit much, of him will they ask the more.

In John 19:11, Jesus spoke of greater and lesser sins:

Jesus answered him, You would have no power against me, except it were given you from above: therefore he that delivered me unto you has greater sin.

-One's appearance at this particular judgment will be a direct result of failing to believe on Jesus as Savior.

-However, the degree of punishment will be on the basis of one's works.

-In determining the degrees of punishment, books are mentioned in addition to the Book of Life.

-A threefold distinction should be made between the Book of Life, the Lamb's Book of Life, and the other books mentioned in verse 12.

The Book of Life contains the names of every person who was ever born, according to **Psalm 139:16**
Your eyes did see my unformed substance; And in your book they were all written, Even the days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was none of them.

Those who believe have their names retained in the Book of Life, according to **Revelation 3:5**

He that overcomes shall thus be arrayed in white garments; and I will in no wise blot his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

However, in Psalm 69:28, the unsaved have their names blotted out of the Book of Life:

Let them be blotted out of the book of life, And not be written with the righteous.

So then, at the Great White Throne Judgment,

-if their names are not found in the Book of Life, it will show them to be unsaved and worthy of partaking in this particular judgment.

It is at that point that the other books mentioned in verse 12 are used.

-These other books contain accounts of one's deeds and responses.

-It is on the basis of what is written in these books that the degrees of punishments will be determined.

Another book mentioned in the Scriptures that should be kept distinct is the Lamb's Book of Life.

-This book contains the names of every individual who is born again and only those who are born again.

-Their names were written into this book before the earth was ever created, according to **Revelation 13:8**

And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, every one whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that has been slain.

It is mentioned again in Revelation 17:8b:

And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, they whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast, how that he was, and is not, and shall come.

In Psalm 69:28, it is known as the Book of the Righteous:

Let them be blotted out of the book of life, And not be written with the righteous.

Based on God's election and foreknowledge, this book contains the names of only those who are born again. And because salvation is eternally sure, it is impossible to be blotted out of this particular book.

The second resurrection is described in Revelation 20:13

And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

- Following the description of the judgment, there is the account of the second resurrection.
- Whereas the first resurrection will be composed of believers only, the second resurrection will be composed of unbelievers only.
- The two resurrections will be separated by one thousand years.

Focusing ...

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- Just as the first resurrection is to be in stages (Jesus the firstfruits, the Church saints, the Old Testament saints, and then the Tribulation saints),
 - so the second resurrection will be in stages.
 - The firstfruits of the second resurrection will be the Antichrist, and his death and resurrection have already been described.
 - One thousand years after the resurrection of the Antichrist, there will be the resurrection of all other unbelievers.
 - The dead bodies of all unbelievers will be resurrected in order to be reunited with all the souls relinquished by Hell.
 - They will then be judged at the Great White Throne on the basis of their works.
-

The Second Death: the Lake of Fire

-Following the sentence of the Great White Throne Judgment will come the execution of it, according to **Revelation 20:14-15**

And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire. And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire.

- The second resurrection will soon give way to the second death in the Lake of Fire, which will be the eternal abode of the lost.

Focusing

-
- Evangelistic preaching is generally centered around the necessity of believing
 - in order to avoid spending eternity in Hell and in order to spend eternity in Heaven.
 - Neither point is biblically true.
- Throughout the pages of the Old Testament, both the righteous and unrighteous were said to go to a place called in Hebrew, Sheol, and in Greek, Hades.

- While the Old Testament sacrifices covered the sins of the Old Testament saints, it did not remove their sins (Heb. 10:4).
- Only the death of the Messiah could do that.
- So while the sacrificial system was sufficient to keep them from Hell, it was not able to get them into Heaven.
- So all who died, both the righteous and unrighteous, went to a place known as Sheol or Hades.

This place contained two compartments, and a description of the two sides of Sheol, or Hades, is found in **Luke 16:19–31:**

Now there was a certain rich man, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day: and a certain beggar named Lazarus was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table; yes, even the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom: and the rich man also died, and was buried. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things: but now here he is comforted, and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, that they that would pass from hence to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from thence to us. And he said, I pray you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. But Abraham said, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one go to them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead.

Sheol, or Hades, had two compartments.

- One compartment was for the unrighteous, and it could be called Hell in the way we use that term today;
- it was indeed a place of torment (vv. 23–25, 28).
- The other compartment where the righteous went was known as Abraham's Bosom (v. 22);
- it was a place of comfort (v. 25), but it was not Heaven.

Elsewhere, the righteous portion of Sheol, or Hades, is called Paradise, as in **Luke 23:43:**

And he said unto him, Verily I say unto you, today shall you be with me in Paradise.

- While the two sides could see each other and communicate with each other,
- they were separated by an immense gulf (v. 26) that made it impossible for someone on one side to cross over to the other side.
- When an Old Testament saint died, his body was buried in the earth while his soul went to Abraham's Bosom, or Paradise.
- On the other hand, when an Old Testament sinner died, his body was also buried in the ground, but his soul went into Hell.
- When Jesus died, He not only paid the price of all future sins,
- but He also paid the price of all previous sins (Rom. 3:25; Heb. 9:15).
- Thus, the sins of the Old Testament saints were removed.

What happened next is described in Ephesians 4:8–10:

Wherefore he says, When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, And gave gifts unto men. (Now this, He ascended, what is it but that he also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)

- While the body of Jesus remained in the tomb, His soul went down into the Paradise side of Sheol, or Hades, announcing that the atonement had been made.
 - At the time of His ascension, all the souls of the Old Testament saints were removed out of Abraham's bosom, or Paradise, and brought into Heaven.
 - In this way the righteous portion of Sheol, or Hades, was eliminated and is no longer in existence.
 - Today, when an unbeliever dies, his body is still buried in the ground and his soul still goes into Hell.
 - However, when the believer dies, though his body is also buried in the ground,
 - his soul goes immediately into Heaven, as Paul reveals in **2 Corinthians 5:8**
- We are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord.**

To be in Heaven at death is to be with Jesus, according to Philippians 1:23

But I am in a strait between the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better.

- At the time of the second resurrection, the bodies of the unsaved will be resurrected, and the souls of Hell will be removed to be reunited with the bodies.
 - At that time, the Hell portion of Sheol, or Hades, will also be eliminated, because Hell will not be the eternal abode of the lost: the Lake of Fire will be.
 - Hell is a place of torment for the soul only, but the Lake of Fire will be a place of torment for both soul and body.
 - On the other hand, Heaven will not be the eternal abode of the believer, as the last two chapters of the Revelation reveal.
-

The Eternal Order

- While the Messianic Kingdom is the high point of Old Testament prophecy,
- the Eternal Order is the high point of New Testament prophecy.
- Whereas much of the information in the first twenty chapters of the Book of Revelation can also be found in the Old Testament,
- the last two chapters of Revelation contain brand-new material not revealed to the prophets of the Old Testament.

The Millennium itself is only one thousand years long.

- However, according to the promises of the Davidic Covenant, there was to be an eternal Dynasty, an eternal Kingdom, and an eternal Throne.
- The eternal existence of the Dynasty is assured because it culminates in an eternal Person: Jesus the Messiah.
- All that is known about the Eternal Order is to be found in **Revelation 21:1-22:5**

The Passing Away of the Old Order and the Creation of the Eternal Order—Revelation 21:1-8

In preparation for the Great White Throne Judgment, the older order of the heavens and the earth will be done away with. Then, following the Great White Throne Judgment, there will be a creation of the Eternal Order, as recorded in **Revelation 21:1-2**

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.

- To replace the old order, new heavens and a new earth will be created (v. 1).
- Though the new heavens and the new earth will need to be created, the New Jerusalem will not, as it already exists in the present third Heaven
- and will be adorned with the beauty of a bride prepared for the marriage ceremony (v. 2).

Focusing

- A significant element missing on the new earth is the sea.
- The present earth was originally comprised of a mineral garden completely covered with precious stones and gems, and it served as Satan's second abode (Ezek. 28:11–16).
- But when Satan fell, not only was Satan judged, but also the earth which was under Satan's authority.
- That judgment included the covering of the earth with the oceans (Gen. 1:2).
- The oceans are part of God's judgment of the first earth, but they will be nonexistent in the new earth.
- When the new earth is created, the New Jerusalem will come down from Heaven in order to settle on the new earth
- While the greatest details of the New Jerusalem are found in these last two chapters of the Revelation, it was mentioned earlier in the pages of the New Testament.

Paul described the New Jerusalem as that which is free in **Galatians 4:26**

But the Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother.

- While the Jerusalem on earth was continually under bondage and subjugated by various forces,
- the New Jerusalem in Heaven has been eternally free and will always remain so.

It was this particular city that Abraham was seeking, according to Hebrews 11:9–10

By faith he became a sojourner in the land of promise, as in a land not his own, dwelling in tents, with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for the city which has the foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Then in Hebrews 12:22–24 it is described as the eternal abode of all the redeemed

But you are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better than that of Abel.

- This city will serve as the eternal abode of several groups.
 - It will be inhabited by the entire Triune God, the entire angelic host, the Church saints
 - and the spirits of just men made perfect, who are the Old Testament saints.
 - They were just in their day because they were justified by their faith,
 - but they were made perfect at the death of the Messiah.
 - Not mentioned but obviously included will be the Tribulation saints and the millennial saints.
-

Following the vision of the creation of the Eternal Order, the first declaration from the One on the Throne is given in Revelation 21:3–4

And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God: and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away.

Two points are made in this declaration.

First: the habitation of God will now be with men.

Second: He affirms that the curses of genesis 3:16-19 will be removed

Focusing....

-This is first a reaffirmation of Hebrews 12:22–24 that the New Jerusalem will be the eternal abode of God, angels, and redeemed humanity.

-The word translated dwell literally means “to tabernacle.”

-It is a reference to the Shechinah Glory’s abiding with men as it once did in the Tabernacle in the wilderness.

-He affirms that all the effects of the curse recorded in **Genesis 3:16–19** will be removed:

Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply your pain and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; and your desire shall be to your husband, and he shall rule over you. And unto Adam he said, Because you have hearkened unto the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree, of which I commanded you, saying, You shall not eat of it: cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil shall you eat of it all the days of your life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to you; and you shall eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of your face shall you eat bread, till you return unto the ground; for out of it were you taken: for dust you are, and unto dust shall you return.

-When the Fall of man came during the beginning of the old order,

-it caused a great number of side effects in the outworking of the Adamic curse.

-All these effects of the curse of the old order will be removed with the abolition of the old order.

-Therefore, in the Eternal Order there will be no tears, death, mourning, crying, or pain.

Then the second declaration from the Throne is given in Revelation 21:5–8

And he that sits on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said, Write: for these words are faithful and true. And he said unto me, They are come to pass. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcomes shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.

-The second declaration from the Throne of God concerns the works of God.

First: there is an affirmation that the future creation of the Eternal Order is assured,

-because the One Who makes the promise is both faithful and true (v. 5).

Second: there is the provision of the fountain of the waters of life (v. 6).

Third: the passage refers to the inheritance of the believers (v. 7),

-which is the new heavens, the new earth, and the New Jerusalem being described in these closing chapters of the Revelation.

Fourth: there is a description of the inheritance of the unbeliever (v. 8), which is the second death, in the Lake of Fire.

The Eternal New Jerusalem—Revelation 21:9–22:5

-The next major section contains a description of the eternal New Jerusalem.

-Again it should be noted that this is all that can be known from Scriptures about what the Eternal Order is going to be like.

-The Description of the New Jerusalem—Revelation 21:11–22:5

-There are eleven things that should be noted:

First: the glory of the New Jerusalem is revealed in Revelation 21:11

Second: a description of the city wall is given in Revelation 21:12–13

Third: the foundations of the wall are described in Revelation 21:14

Fourth: the measurements of the city are recorded in Revelation 21:15–17

Fifth: the composition of the city is described in Revelation 21:18–21

Sixth: in addition to the absence of oceans in the new earth, several other omissions: No Temple, no sun, no moon, no night

Seventh: there is a description regarding the entrance into the city in Revelation 21:25–27

Eighth: there is a description of the river of life in Revelation 22:1–2a

Ninth: the tree of life is described in Revelation 22:2b

Tenth: there is a description of the occupants of the New Jerusalem in Revelation 22:3–4

Eleventh: the presence of the Shechinah Glory is reiterated in Revelation 22:5

Focusing....

The Revelation of the Establishment of the City—Revelation 21:9–10

-This section begins in Revelation 21:9–10 with an elaboration of Revelation 21:2

-regarding the establishment of the New Jerusalem:

And there came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, who were laden with the seven last plagues; and he spoke with me, saying, Come hither, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb. And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.

-The announcement to John to come up hither again (as in 4:1)

-is so that God can show him more things to come.

-He is told that he is about to be shown more concerning the Bride of the Messiah (v. 9),

-namely, the eternal abode of the Bride—the New Jerusalem (v. 10)

-that will come down to the freshly created new earth from Heaven where it has eternally been.

The Description of the New Jerusalem—Revelation 21:11–22:5

-After the revelation of the establishment of the city, there is a detailed description of the city in Revelation 21:11–22:5.

There are eleven things that should be noted.

First: the glory of the New Jerusalem is revealed in Revelation 21:11

Having the glory of God: her light was like unto a stone most precious, as it were a jasper stone, clear as crystal.

-The glory is that of the Shechinah Glory, whose final abode will be in the New Jerusalem.

Second: a description of the city wall is given in Revelation 21:12–13

Having a wall great and high; having twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: on the east were three gates; and on the north three gates; and on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.

-The city wall emphasizes its enclosure and protection.

-The wall is said to be great and high, but no details about its size or height are given at this point.

-The city will have a total of twelve gates, and each gate will be given to the authority of an angel.

-The twelve gates will be named after the Twelve Tribes of Israel,

-meaning that for all eternity these Jewish names will be remembered.

-Furthermore, the text states that this great wall will have four sides with three gates on each side.

-Thus, all the gates will be equally divided.

Third: the foundations of the wall are described in Revelation 21:14

And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

-The foundations emphasize permanence, and there will be a total number of twelve foundations

- named after the Twelve Apostles.
- These names will also be remembered for all eternity.

Fourth: the measurements of the city are recorded in Revelation 21:15–17

And he that spoke with me had for a measure a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lies foursquare, and the length thereof is as great as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs: the length and the breadth and the height thereof are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel.

- The measurements of the city emphasize its spaciousness.
- The city will be foursquare, a cube with the height, length, and breadth being equal,
- that is, measuring about 1,500 miles long, wide, and high.
- Obviously, it will be the largest city ever known to man, with plenty of room for all the redeemed of all ages to live.
- As for the wall, it will measure 216 feet high, so it will indeed be a high wall, as stated earlier, in verse 12.

Fifth: the composition of the city is described in Revelation 21:18–21

And the building of the wall thereof was jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto pure glass. The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the several gates was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

- The wall will be built of jasper, and the entire cubed city will be made of transparent gold.
- As for the twelve foundations of the wall, each foundation will be composed of different precious stones with its own dominant color.

They can be delineated as follows:

1. Jasper—green
2. Sapphire—blue
3. Chalcedony—greenish
4. Emerald—green
5. Sardonyx—red and white
6. Sardius—fiery red
7. Chrysolite—golden yellow
8. Beryl—qua green
9. Topaz—greenish yellow
10. Chrysoprase—golden green
11. Jacinth—violet
12. Amethyst—purple

- The original earth of Ezekiel 28:13 had a total of ten stones
- and half of these stones also characterized the first earth before Satan’s fall in Ezekiel 28:13.
- The new earth will enjoy all the perfections of the first earth,
- plus two additional stones for a total of twelve.
- As for the twelve gates named after the Twelve Tribes of Israel,
- each gate will be made of a single huge pearl.
- The singular street of the city, like the city itself, will be composed of transparent gold.

Sixth: in addition to the absence of oceans in the new earth, several other omissions are mentioned in Revelation 21:22–24:

And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof. And the city has no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb. And the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof: and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it.

- A second item missing on the new earth is a temple.
- During historic time, a total of four Temples will have existed.
- But in eternity, there will be no temple, neither will there be any need for one,
- since the entire Triune God will inhabit the city along with all the redeemed of all ages.
- The third and fourth omissions are the sun and moon.
- In the original creation of the first earth, there was no sun or moon either,
- for they were only created on the fourth day of Genesis one.
- However, there will be a return to that original condition, with the absence of the sun and the moon.
- The source of light in the Eternal Order will not come from such created things,
- but will be provided by the Creator of light, the Shechinah Glory of the Lamb, which will lighten all for the Eternal Order.
- The Gentiles of the earth will walk by means of this light, as well as those who served as kings in the old order.
- The mention of Gentiles shows that the Jew and Gentile distinction will be maintained for all eternity,
- but there is no mention of any functional difference.

Seventh: there is a description regarding the entrance into the city in Revelation 21:25–27

And the gates thereof shall in no wise be shut by day (for there shall be no night there): and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it: and there shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean, or he that makes an abomination and a lie: but only they that are written in the Lamb's book of life.

- Though there will be twelve pearly gates around the city maintained by twelve angels,
- these gates will never be closed throughout eternity.
- Then a fifth omission in the Eternal Order is given: the absence of night.
- The existence of darkness was another result of the curse on the earth at Satan's fall (Gen. 1:2).
- During the six days of creation, there was only a partial removal of the darkness (the sun by day)
- and the night (the moon and the stars provided limited light) that existed.
- But in the Eternal Order, since all the effects of sin are to be removed forever, there will be no night.
- As for the forever-open gates of the New Jerusalem,
- the righteous of the Gentiles that are found in the Lamb's Book of Life will bring their glory into it.
- On the other hand, nothing of unrighteousness will ever be allowed to enter into the eternal city.
- All unrighteousness will now be confined in the Lake of Fire.

Eighth: there is a description of the river of life in Revelation 22:1–2a

And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street thereof.

- Out of the Throne of God and the Messiah, a river will begin to flow with the brightness of crystal.
- It will continue to flow throughout the singular street of the city of the New Jerusalem.

Ninth: the tree of life is described in Revelation 22:2b

And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

- The Tree of Life that existed in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:9; 3:11, 24) will now return.
- The trunk of the tree will extend to both sides of the eternal river of life
- and will be characterized by productivity, bearing fresh fruit each month of the year.

- It should be noted that the word month is used,
- so some kind of dating system will be present in the Eternal Order.
- Since there will be no sun, moon, or night, it will be a radically different dating system than the one in which we presently live.
- But there will be a dating system of some kind.
- The leaves of the Tree of Life are for the healing of the nations.
- The Greek word translated healing is the source of the modern English word “therapeutic.”
- The purpose of the leaves is not to heal existing sicknesses, for they will not exist in the Eternal Order;
- rather, they will be for health-giving to the nations.
- There will be no sickness in the Eternal Order because of the leaves of the Tree of Life.
- The Greek word for nations is the term that means “Gentiles.”
- This again shows that the Jewish-Gentile distinction continues though, there is no functional difference.

Tenth: there is a description of the occupants of the New Jerusalem in Revelation 22:3–4

And there shall be no curse any more; and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be therein: and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face; and his name shall be on their foreheads.

- There will be a total absence of the curse in the Eternal Order.
- The residents of the city will include the Lamb and all the redeemed of all ages,
- who will have the name of Jesus on their foreheads.

Eleventh: the presence of the Shechinah Glory is reiterated in Revelation 22:5:

And there shall be night no more; and they need no light of lamp, neither light of sun; for the Lord God shall give them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

- Once again, the text declares that night will not exist in the Eternal Order,
- and there will be no need for light of the sun or the light of a lamp.
- God Himself will provide all the light that is necessary.
- As previously stated, this light will be the Shechinah Glory, which will provide all the light that is necessary for all eternity.

Conclusion

The conclusion of the Book of the Revelation, found in Revelation 22:6–21,

- contains several important elements:

The Authentication of the Book of Revelation—Revelation 22:6–9

First: there is the authentication by God in Revelation 22:6–7

Second: in Revelation 22:8–9, the writing of John is authenticated by the very angel who gave John all the revelation in the first place:

Declarations in Light of the Revelation—Revelation 22:10–15

- The first declaration concerns the book itself in Revelation 22:10
- The second declaration is directed at the righteous and the unrighteous in Revelation 22:11
- The third declaration gives the purpose of the return of the Messiah, in Revelation 22:12
- The fourth declaration emphasizes the eternalness of the Person of the Messiah in Revelation 22:13
- The fifth declaration concerns the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem, in Revelation 22:14
- The sixth and final declaration, in Revelation 22:15
- The First Affirmation of Christ—Revelation 22:16
- The Invitation of the Holy Spirit and the Church—Revelation 22:17
- The Warnings—Revelation 22:18–19
- The Second Affirmation of Christ—Revelation 22:20
- The Benediction—Revelation 22:21

The Authentication of the Book of Revelation—Revelation 22:6–9

-The concluding words begin with the authentication of all that John had written in the book in Revelation 22:6–9.

First: there is the authentication by God in Revelation 22:6–7

And he said unto me, These words are faithful and true: and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass. And behold, I come quickly. Blessed is he that keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.

- God Himself, and Jesus in particular, authenticate all that John had written.
- The Spirit of the prophets Who inspired all previous writings of the Scripture also inspired this prophecy of the Book of the Revelation.
- The specific means of revelation to John was a holy angel.
- The Book of Revelation ends the same way it begins:
- with a promise of a blessing to those who keep (in the sense of watching for) the things prophesied in the book.

Second: in Revelation 22:8–9, the writing of John is authenticated by the very angel who gave John all the revelation in the first place:

And I John am he that heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel that showed me these things. And he said unto me, See you do it not: I am a fellow-servant with you and with your brethren the prophets, and with them that keep the words of this book: worship God.

Declarations in Light of the Revelation—Revelation 22:10–15

- In light of the revelation of things to come in God's program,
- certain declarations are given in this final chapter of the book, in Revelation 22:10–15.

The first declaration concerns the book itself in Revelation 22:10

And he says unto me, Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand.

-As Daniel the Prophet was closing his book, he was told to seal it in **Daniel 12:4a:**

But you, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end:....

Then, again, in **Daniel 12:8–9:**

And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my lord, what shall be the issue of these things? And he said, Go your way, Daniel; for the words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end.

- The revelation given to Daniel covered so much territory and expanded over such a long period of time
- that he was unable to understand much of what he wrote.
- Daniel was told to seal his book until the time when many of the prophecies would be explained and clarified by later revelation.
- With the Book of Revelation, much of the Book of Daniel has been clarified, expanded, detailed, and explained.
- So John, in contrast to Daniel, was told not to seal up his book,
- for all prophecy can now be understood and its fulfillment could begin at any time.

The second declaration is directed at the righteous and the unrighteous in Revelation 22:11

He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still: and he that is filthy, let him be made filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy, let him be made holy still.

- Those who are unrighteous are to confirm their unrighteousness by continuing in their unrighteousness,

- which is something that will naturally occur if God's revelation is rejected.
- But the righteous are to confirm their righteousness by continuing in their righteousness,
- which will naturally result if God's revelation is received.
- The former will be characterized by filthiness, but the latter by holiness.

The third declaration gives the purpose of the return of the Messiah, in Revelation 22:12

Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is.

- The purpose of the return of Jesus is to render to each man according to his works.
- His coming at the **Rapture** is to reward the saints for the works done in their bodies since salvation.
- The purpose of the **Second Coming** is to render judgment for the works of unrighteousness.

The fourth declaration emphasizes the eternalness of the Person of the Messiah in Revelation 22:13

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

The fifth declaration concerns the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem, in Revelation 22:14

Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city.

- The inhabitants of the New Jerusalem will be characterized by redemption.
- It is their redeemed state that will give them the authority to enter the city via the pearly gates and to partake of the Tree of Life.

The sixth and final declaration, in Revelation 22:15

- gives the characteristics of the unredeemed who will not have the authority to enter the New Jerusalem

Without are the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and every one that loves and makes a lie.

- The place 'without' will be the Lake of Fire.

The First Affirmation of Christ—Revelation 22:16

The six declarations are followed by the first affirmation of the Messiah in Revelation 22:16

I Jesus have sent my angel to testify unto you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star.

- Jesus Himself affirms that it was He Who sent the angel to John
- to reveal all the things found in the Book of Revelation so that John could deliver these things to the churches.
- It is the same Jesus Who, in His humanity, is the root and offspring of David,
- but as to His deity, He is the Shechinah Glory, as seen in the brightness and visibility of the light of the morning star.

The Invitation of the Holy Spirit and the Church—Revelation 22:17

The first affirmation of the Messiah is followed by an invitation given by the Holy Spirit and the Church in Revelation 22:17:

And the Spirit and the bride say, come. And he that hears, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely.

- These words contain an invitation to salvation which requires believing in Jesus as Savior.
- The call to salvation is a divine call by the Holy Spirit and the Church.
- The Holy Spirit does the work of conviction concerning the truth of the gospel,
- and it is He who does the work of effectual calling and regeneration.
- It is the Church that presents the message which the Holy Spirit uses to convict and to call.
- Those who respond will have the authority to partake of the waters of life in the New Jerusalem.

The Warnings—Revelation 22:18–19

The call to salvation is followed by two warnings in Revelation 22:18–19

I testify unto every man that hears the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book.

The first warning is against any and all additions.

- Those who add to what is written will receive the plagues of the Book of Revelation,
- ultimately the Lake of Fire.

The second warning is against any subtractions from this book,

- for those who do so will not dwell in the New Jerusalem and partake of the Tree of Life.
- Both those who would add and those who would subtract do so as evidence of their unsaved state.

These two warnings against additions and subtractions

- in their context are concerned specifically with the Book of Revelation,
- and the primary emphasis is not on the Bible as a whole.
- However, since the Book of the Revelation is the final revelation of God's Word,
- the principle behind the warning can be extended to the Bible as a whole,
- for the Bible as a whole is complete only with the Book of Revelation.
- Once the last Apostle died, no further inspired books would be written (Eph. 2:11–3:12).

Examples of those who add are the numerous cults

- that accept other writings as inspired and authoritative and place them on equal grounds with the Bible
- (i.e., the Mormons with The Book of Mormon and Christian Science with their Key to the Scriptures).
- Examples of those who subtract are those who refuse to accept the entire body of Scripture
- as God's inspired Word and hold to concepts of partial inspiration or no inspiration.
- However, both those who add and those who subtract do so because they are not willing to accept the Scriptures as the final authority.
- This demonstrates their unsaved state.
- Hence, they will lose out on dwelling in the New Jerusalem, and the Lake of Fire will be their eternal abode.

The Second Affirmation of Christ—Revelation 22:20

The second affirmation of the Messiah is given in Revelation 22:20:

He who testifies these things says, Yes: I come quickly. Amen: come, Lord Jesus.

- The second affirmation testifies to the truthfulness of all that John wrote
- by stating that He will be returning soon to fulfill all the prophecies contained in this book.
- The term quickly applies to the return of the Messiah at the Rapture from God's perspective.
- God is not bound to time as we know it, and the past and future are as vivid to Him as the present.
- For the believer, the term emphasizes immanency, meaning He could come at any moment.
- Although almost two thousand years have passed since this affirmation,
- nevertheless, the saints are always to be ready and looking for the appearing of the Son of God.

The Benediction—Revelation 22:21

The book ends with the benediction found in Revelation 22:21

The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints. Amen.
Selah.



