

NATURAL GRAMMATICAL OUTLINES
& COMMENTARY ON THE

REVELATION

A Study in the King James Bible



From
The PEN of a Ready Writer

*My heart is inditing a good matter:
I speak of the things which I have made touching the king:
My pen is the tongue of a Ready Writer.
[Psalm 45:1]*

By

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Revelation 1:1-3
WHICH GOD GAVE TO HIM

The following outline is based on the compound prepositional phrases modifying *record* in v. 2.

TEXT: *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: ²who bare record **of** the word of God, **and of** the testimony of Jesus Christ, **and of** all things that he saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.*

NOTE: This final book of the New Testament is a summary that the Father gave to his only begotten Son so that Jesus could, in turn, share with us the revelation of Jesus Christ: how and why he was made manifest and how he will bring all things unto an end, a conclusion: a final judgment. He will do this so that he might make for his Seed a new heaven and a new earth [Rev. 21:1].

That there is something only the Father knew does not cloud Christ's deity: Jesus himself, responding to the question of his returning, said, "of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels of heaven; but my Father only" [Matt. 24:36]. Just as the Trinity held conversations in the past [Gen. 1:26], God the Father held a conversation with the Son after his ascension. We know the contents of that conversation as the Revelation.

- I. The Revelation of Jesus Christ
 - A. Which God [*the Father*] gave
 - 1. Unto him
 - 2. To shew unto his servants things
 - a. *Things* which must come to pass
 - b. *Things which must shortly come to pass*
 - B. And he [*Jesus Christ*] sent it
 - C. And he signified it
 - 1. By his angel
 - 2. Unto his servant John
 - a. Who bare record of the word of God
 - b. And *who bare record* of the testimony of Jesus Christ
 - c. And *who bare record* of all things that he saw
- II. Blessed is he that readeth *this record*
- III. And *blessed are* they
 - A. That hear the words of this prophecy
 - B. And that keep those things which are written therein
- IV. *They are blessed:* for the time is at hand
 - A. *Both he that reads is blessed*
 - B. *And they that hear and keep are blessed*

Revelation 1:1-3 COMMENTARY

The Revelation consists of things that must shortly come to pass, as in 1:7; yet, we know that what is predicted in v. 7, has yet to take place. Though men may mock the promise of his coming, the disciples did not want us ignorant of this one thing: “that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousands years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” [II Peter 3:8,9].

Jesus Christ, after having received the revelation from the Father, “sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John.” This is the angel that asks John to “come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter” [4:1]. This is not unusual, for Jesus used angels for specific messages through the Bible [Heb. 2:2].

There are three princes as angels: Michael, “one of the chief princes” [Dan. 10:13,21]; Lucifer, “the prince of the power of the air” [Eph. 2:2]; and Gabriel, of whom less is said than we find of the other two. What we do find, however, is that Gabriel appears with enlightenment: that is, with revelation. He appeared to Daniel concerning the end of Jacob’s Trouble and he appeared to Mary concerning the birth of Jesus Christ. Most likely, Gabriel is the angel Jesus sent to John with the record of the revelation. Michael is always warring or contending with Lucifer, though not in his own name [Jude 1:9]. He wins the battle that allows Gabriel to reach the prophet Daniel. And he is seen defeating Lucifer again in Rev. 12. We could term Michael, “the angel of the Lord,” or Christ’s angel. Gabriel, because of his link with prophesy, can be viewed as “the angel of God,” or the Spirit’s angel, whom the Lord sends to John with the Revelation.

The first of many divisions in the opening chapter appears in v. 2: John bore record (1.) of the word of God, and (2.) of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and (3.) of all things that he saw. The “word of God” reminds us that this revelation is what the Father told the Son. Remember the words the Apostle wrote in his gospel concerning his familiarity with God’s word [John 14:26; 16:13-15]. And John has the testimony of the Son regarding these things, for it is the Son who testifies to him of the mystery [1:19 - 3:22]. He also gives us his eyewitness testimony, as in 5:1, “I saw.”

Regarding v. 3: the scene is of one reading and many listening, as in a pastor reading the record to his flock. There is a blessing given to those who not only hear, but also “keep” those things written herein. Unlike the Pentateuch, there is no list of commandments. The “keeping” is as Peter admonishes, to “have these things always in remembrance” [II Peter 1:15].

Revelation 1:4-6

THE TRINITY

The following outline is based on the compound predicate of the adjective *who* clause modifying Jesus Christ in v. 5.

TEXT: *John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; ⁵and from Jesus Christ, **who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth.** Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, ⁶and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

NOTE: The opening words to the seven churches are a comfort in the face of the content of the Revelation: grace and peace. The grace of God that brought salvation and the peace of God that salvation affords us is the desire of God for all who have received Jesus Christ by faith. This greeting hints at this reality: the troubles of this record will not be ours to endure. The reason? We are loved of God; we are loved of the Trinity. This message of grace and peace is from the Father, and from the Holy Spirit and from Jesus Christ himself. The Father loved the world and gave his only begotten Son [John 3:16]. And the Father loves the saint, that sinner who came out of the world and honored his Son by faith [John 16:27].

- I. John [*baring record*, v. 2]
 - A. To the seven churches
 - B. *To the seven churches* which are in Asia
- II. *John's opening words of comfort*
 - A. Grace be unto you
 - B. And peace *be unto you*
 - 1. From him [*the Father*]
 - a. Which is
 - b. And which was
 - c. And which is to come
 - 2. And from the seven Spirits
 - a. Which are before his throne
 - b. *The rainbow, symbolic of the Holy Spirit* [Gen. 9:13-15]
 - 3. And from Jesus Christ [*the Son*]
 - a. Who is the faithful witness
 - b. And the first begotten of the dead
 - c. And the prince of the kings of the earth
- III. *John's opening words of praise: a benediction of thanksgiving*
 - A. Unto him [Jesus]
 - 1. That loved us
 - 2. And washed us from our sins in his own blood
 - 3. And hath made us kings
 - 4. And *hath made us* priests
 - a. Unto God
 - b. And his Father
 - B. To him [Jesus]
 - 1. Glory be
 - 2. And dominion *be*
 - a. For ever
 - b. And ever

Amen

Revelation 1:4-6 COMMENTARY

The description given the Father in v. 4, is the same as the description given the Son in v. 8: “which is, and which was, and which is to come.” This suggests the term “the Almighty” as a reference to the Trinity: the Godhead united. The two descriptions also remind us of the words Jesus told the Jews, “I and my Father are one” [John 10:30]. And the words he told his disciples, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” [John 14:9].

The Father is referred to only as “him” because the focus is on Jesus. As Christ was of no reputation in the Old Testament, the Father is of no reputation in this record. Only one line describes the Spirit because he does not speak of himself. This record is the revelation of Jesus Christ. And that first revelation is a three-fold description of his life to this point: he was the “faithful witness” prior to his virgin birth; he is the “first begotten” from the dead [the purpose of his virgin birth]; and he is the “prince” of the kings of the earth, because he is yet to be crowned King of kings. That crowning will be described in chapter 5, and is another reason why the Church will not be on earth during the tribulation.

Another term for *witness* can be *word*; hence, John’s testimony in his gospel: “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us” [John 1:14]. Jesus was the Word God spoke at creation. His was the testimony of the spoken Word that came to Adam and Eve, to Noah, and to Abraham. His is the testimony of the unspoken word, written first in the stars: for the testimony of the stars [Psalm 19] do speak of the coming of Christ in redemption, beginning with the virgin that shall conceive: Virgo, the head of the Sphinx; and ending with Leo, the Lion [of the tribe of Judah], the body of the Sphinx. The constellations tell the story of redemption in an unending drama until the heavens shall pass away. And his is the testimony of the written word, beginning with Moses and the prophets.

The testimony of Jesus Christ is three-fold: he loved us while we were yet in our sins; and he washed us from our sins in his own blood, even the sins of the whole world. And of those who have received his cleansing, he hath made us kings and priests unto God, even the Father. We will be the kings of chapter 5, at the crowning of Jesus Christ, for we will cast our crowns at his feet and cry, “Worthy is the Lamb!” And we will follow him, this King of kings [Rev. 19]. His glory shall never fade, and his dominion will have no end. Is it any wonder John shouts, “Amen”?

Revelation 1:7,8
EVEN SO, AMEN

The following outline is based on the contrast of the two *Amen*'s, and the divisions given in v. 7, that warrant the *even so* of the second *Amen*.

TEXT: *Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen. ⁸I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*

NOTE: The Apostle describes what Jesus has done for us in v. 6, and declares "Amen." Yet, by the end of v. 7, the "Amen" is "even so." He knows what is described must come to pass; yet, there is sorrow in the recording of these events for they speak of great tribulation, such as never has been since the world began.

First, Christ "cometh with clouds." These are not the clouds that bring us rain; these are the clouds of the thousands of saints, clothed in linen pure and white, following him into battle on that day of deliverance when he shall save Israel [Rom. 11:26]. This is the day of Armageddon [Rev. 19].

Second, Christ shall have "every eye" behold him, before whose face the earth and the heaven shall flee away. No place shall be found to hide them from him, for the dead, small and great, shall stand before God at the White Throne Judgment [Rev. 20:11-14].

Third, Christ shall focus on those "which pierced him." Of all the dead who die without faith in Christ, there are those few who cried, "Crucify Him!" There are those Jews who plotted against Him. There are those soldiers who mocked and beat him. There are those who laughed him to scorn. They shot out their lip and gaped upon him with their mouths as he hung on the cross [Ps. 22]. It is most sobering to realize that he anticipates seeing them again, face to face.

Finally, "All kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him," for the names not found in the Lamb's book of life shall be cast into the lake of fire [Rev. 20:15]. Is it any wonder John writes, "Even so, Amen"?

- I. *The Revelation's four-part division of judgment*
 - A. Behold, he cometh with clouds
 - B. And every eye shall see him
 - C. And they also which pierced him *shall see him*
 - D. And all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him

Even so, Amen

- II. *The Lord saith*
 - A. *I am Alpha and Omega*
 - B. *I am the beginning and the ending*
 - C. *I am he*
 - 1. Which is
 - 2. And which was
 - 3. And which is to come
 - D. *I am the Almighty*

NOTE: And who is he that has the right to so judge this earth? The one who created it, he shall finish it: he is Alpha and Omega, he is the Almighty. He is the express image of the Father, and his enemies shall all be made his footstool.

Revelation 1:9-11

THE SEVEN CHURCHES

The following outline is based on the list of churches used as objects in compound prepositional phrases modifying *send* in v. 11

TEXT: *I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.* ¹⁰*I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,* ¹¹*saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.*

NOTE: The Apostle identifies himself as our brother in Christ. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for we are all one in Christ Jesus" [Gal. 3:28]. Believers are to help believers in the ministry, whether they be Gentiles helping Jews [III John] or freemen worshipping with bondmen [Philemon] or women who need assistance [Phil. 4:3]. Yet, John goes beyond being a brother in Christ, he assumes we are also companions with him in tribulation and in the patience of Jesus Christ. Every saint has been placed into the kingdom of God's dear Son [Col. 1:13]; but not every Christian knows the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. He that will live Godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution [II Tim. 3:12], and the key to possessing our souls in the midst of that tribulation is the patience afforded us by the blessed Spirit of Christ [Luke 21:19]. How will our lives compare to the Apostle John when we fail to be faithful to the church because of weather or a falling out with the brethren over political opinions?

- I. I John
 - A. Who also am your brother
 - B. And *your* companion
 - 1. In tribulation
 - 2. And in the kingdom of *Jesus Christ*
 - 3. And *in the* patience of Jesus Christ
- II. *I John* was in the isle that is called Patmos
 - A. For the word of God
 - B. And for the testimony of Jesus Christ
- III. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day
- IV. And *I* heard behind me a voice
 - A. *A great voice*
 - B. *A voice* as of a trumpet
 - 1. Saying
 - a. I am Alpha and Omega
 - b. *I am* the first and the last
 - 2. And *saying*
 - a. Write what thou seest, in a book
 - b. And send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia
 - 1.) Unto Ephesus
 - 2.) And unto Smyrna
 - 3.) And unto Pergamos
 - 4.) And unto Thyatira
 - 5.) And unto Sardis
 - 6.) And unto Philadelphia
 - 7.) And unto Laodicea.

Revelation 1:9-11 COMMENTARY

John was exiled to the island of Patmos under the Domitian persecution, and he remained there until the emperor's death. What placed John there was his stand for the Word of God and his testimony for Jesus Christ. Paul told us to believe in our hearts and confess with our mouths [Rom. 10:9], and John did just that. General Roman persecutions required a minimal yearly sacrifice to the gods of Rome and to the emperor himself. Most likely, John refused to comply under such a setting before local authorities, as would Cyprian in Carthage years later. Cyprian lost his life. John was exiled. God still had a purpose for John to fulfill: the writing of this Revelation.

While on the isle of Patmos, John was faithful to the Lord: he was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. Being "in the Spirit" is a command for every believer. We are to walk in the Spirit [Gal. 5:25]. And, if we walk in the Spirit, we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh [Gal. 5:16]; but, rather, we will have fellowship one with another [I John 1:7]. However, John is alone on the isle of Patmos. And when the scriptures record that he was "in the Spirit," it records that he was in prayer on the Lord's Day: "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" [Rom. 8:26]. John needed help in praying midst the tribulation he was suffering; and on the Lord's day, he was in the Spirit.

The Lord's Day is a reference to Sunday, the day we celebrate Christ's resurrection [Matt. 28:1]. And, like the disciples, we gather on the first day of the week for worship [John 20:19]. However, the term "the day of the Lord" has a prophetic application to the second coming of Christ [II Peter 3:10], which fits nicely into John's being "called up" as a type of the rapture of the church, complete with a reference to a shout and the trumpet of God [I Thess. 4:13-18].

This voice is Jesus' voice, the same one who will judge the earth [v.7]. This is his personal testimony to John [as referred to in v.2] of the revelation the Father had given him. And Jesus is still following the Father's instructions [John 8:29] by telling John to write this revelation and by telling him to send this revelation unto the churches.

Regarding the seven churches named in v.11, these are seven literal churches in an area known as Asia Minor or modern day Turkey. However, there are more than seven churches in Asia Minor, Galatia having a predominate position among them. But lest someone should suggest that Galatia is in another province, Colossi is not. The point is, although the seven churches existed, they are named for their typology as well. You see, they represent an overview of the church age itself.

Though most are familiar with typology in the Old Testament, such as Isaac as a type of Christ in his miraculous birth and the Gentile brides of the Jewish deliverers as a type of the Gentile bride of Christ. Many have not recognized that typology is used within the New Testament as well. One illustration that amazes my soul is the women at the well in John 4: she just happens to have had "five" husbands in a land that the Assyrians thousands of years earlier had populated with "five" races [II Kings 17]. Another is of the apostles themselves. Matthew 10 records Simon the Canaanite between the first ten and the last one: the first ten representing Israel under the law, the ten commandments. Between them and the restored position in the Apostle Paul is a Gentile, representative of the church age. And God will graft in Israel again, on the day of deliverance [Rom. 11:26], after he has "caught up" the wild olive branch.

Revelation 1:12-16 WHAT JOHN SAW

The following outline is based on the past participles modifying *Son of man* in v. 13.

TEXT: *And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; ¹³and in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, **clothed** with a garment down to the foot, and **girt** about the paps with a golden girdle. ¹⁴His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; ¹⁵And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. ¹⁶And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.*

NOTE: John is accustomed to responding to the voice of God: “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me” [John 10:27]. For since the day Jesus called him to service, he had followed the Lord. And what John sees this time will begin the fulfillment of Jesus’ words to Peter regarding John: “If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?” [John 21:22]. John saw Jesus serving the church, tending to the seven golden candlesticks in the heavenly tabernacle that are the seven churches [Rev. 1:20b].

In his description of “one like unto the Son of man,” John distinguishes between Christ’s appearance when the disciples saw him received up into glory and his appearance in the heavenly tabernacle. There will be another transformation. He will again be termed “like unto the Son of man” when John sees him in his regal robes as King of kings [Rev. 14:14].

- I. And I turned to see the voice that spake with me
- II. And being turned
 - A. I saw seven golden candlesticks
 - B. And in the midst of the seven candlesticks, *I saw one* like unto the Son of man
 - 1. Clothed with a garment down to the foot
 - 2. And girt about the paps with a golden girdle
 - 3. His head and his hairs were white
 - a. Like wool
 - b. As white as snow
 - 4. And his eyes were as a flame of fire
 - 5. And his feet were
 - a. Like unto fine brass
 - b. As if they burned in a furnace
 - 6. And his voice *was* as the sound of many waters
 - 7. And he had in his right hand seven stars
 - 8. And out of his mouth went a sword
 - a. *A sharp sword*
 - b. *A twoedged sword*
 - 9. And his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength

Revelation 1:12-16

COMMENTARY

In the service of the true tabernacle, where no veil separates the chambers, Jesus is seen tending to the churches in his priestly dress: the full-length linen garment [Ex. 29:5] and the girdle, here of gold. There is neither mitre [a covering for the head] nor crown, for he is yet to be crowned [Chap. 5]. Instead, we see his head and his hairs [both beard and hair] “as white as snow.” There is no scar evident on his brow; there is no gap from the plucking of his beard. He suffered once [Heb. 10:10] for the sins of all. And, though Thomas saw the imprints and felt his side, there will be no lack of beauty when we behold him in heaven.

The reference to his eyes as a flame of fire hint at how our works shall be tried by fire when we see him [I Cor. 3:13]. The Judgment Seat of Christ will not be a long, drawn out affair. Christ, who created all things in six days, can try all men on sight, for nothing can be hid from his gaze. Likewise, his feet being “as if they burned in a furnace” also speaks of judgment; but, unlike his eyes, his feet speak of the judgment of his enemies. They will be made his footstool. He has bruised the serpent’s head. That fire is the fire of hell and the lake. His feet are brass because they are now unaffected by either the serpent or the flame.

His voice, “as the sound of many waters,” not only captivates but pulls men unto him. Contrast the sound of many waters with the voice God used on Mt. Sinai: the voice of the trumpet, exceeding loud [Exodus 19:16]. The people fled from that voice, the sound, as it were, of heavenly battle. But we are drawn to the sound of many waters, even in the natural realm, as with Niagara Falls. There is a quality of awe and comfort. It tends to take away our cares.

The seven stars in his right hand are mentioned prior to the description of a sharp, twoedged sword coming out of his mouth. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches [Rev. 1:20b]. And I take them to be just that, angels. Jesus used an angel to signify this revelation to John [v.1]. And he used angels to guide his chosen nation, Israel.

After the Lord had given Moses commandments for the people, he told Moses, “Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him and obey his voice, provoke him not for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him. But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice and do all that I speak: then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies and an adversary unto thine adversaries” [Exodus 23:20-22].

Angels have had assignments over territories, as in the prince of the kingdom of Persia [Daniel 10:13]. They are all ministering spirits. And we learn in the Revelation that God has an angel assigned to each of the seven churches. How serious is this matter? If we are not faithful to the Lord, he will remove our candlestick out of his place [Rev. 2:5b], and the light we have with which to shine will shine no more.

The word the angel carries forth is as the angel of Israel described in Exodus, more powerful than we wish to provoke. His word is the Lord’s word. His word carries a sword sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow. There is no strength that can withstand him. He is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart [Heb. 4:12]. And to refuse his leadership is to turn his power against ourselves; it is to lose our place of service for the Lord. This is illustrated by our local churches. Too many have closed their doors or lost their edge because they have not obeyed the voice of the Lord.

Revelation 1:17-20

THE MYSTERY

The following outline is based on the parallelism of the three uses of *things* in verse 19, and their function as a reverse appositive for *mystery* in v. 20.

TEXT: *And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: ¹⁸ I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. ¹⁹ Write the **things** which thou hast seen, and the **things** which are, and the **things** which shall be hereafter; ²⁰ the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.*

NOTE: John illustrates what will happen when we see Jesus Christ: we will fall at his feet, as if we were dead. We will fall because of his splendor. We will fall because of his gaze. We will fall because of the dross within us that must be removed. But we have great encouragement. For the first words we shall hear from his lips are the words he has spoken to his servant John: "Fear not." Saved? Yes! That is the word of faith that is nigh us, even in our mouth: that we shall be saved [Rom. 10:9]. Saved? Yes! Though it may be "as by fire" [I Cor. 3:15], in Jesus Christ, we shall be saved!

I. And, when I saw him

A. I fell

1. At his feet
2. As *if I were* dead

B. And he

1. *He* laid his right hand upon me
2. *He*, saying unto me
 - a. **Fear not**
 - b. **I am the first and the last**
 - c. **I am he that liveth**
 - d. **And I am he that was dead**
 - e. **And, behold, I am alive**
 - 1.) **For ever**
 - 2.) **For evermore**
 - f. **Amen**
 - g. **And I have the keys**
 - 1.) **Of hell**
 - 2.) **And of death**

II. *And I heard him say*

A. *Write the mystery*

1. The things which thou hast seen
2. And the things which are
3. And the things which shall be hereafter

B. *Write the mystery*

1. Of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand
 - a. The seven stars are the angels
 - b. *The angels* of the seven churches
2. And of the seven golden candlesticks
 - a. The seven candlesticks are the seven churches
 - b. *The seven candlesticks* which thou sawest

Revelation 1:17-20 COMMENTARY

And who has the right to tell us to fear not? Christ Jesus, the righteous one, who is just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus [Rom. 3:26]. He is the Alpha and the Omega [1:8], the I am. He is the first and the last. His word is final!

Listen with the ears of your heart as Jesus testifies before John of what He hath wrought: "I am he that liveth and was dead." How important is that to our Saviour? "Behold," he says to John, with arms outstretched as he walks about the candlesticks, "I am alive forevermore." What he has wrought in dying for our sins and rising for our righteousness causes from his own lips the shout of victory: "Amen!" And his joy is not limited to himself, for he shows to John the keys of death and of hell midst his jubilation.

"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" [Rom. 5:9,10]. For "now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept [I Cor. 15:20].

"Behold, I shew you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" [I Cor. 15:51-58].

The verb for the noun *mystery* [v. 20] is in v. 19: "Write the mystery." The *mystery* is that mystery of the seven churches and the angels of those seven churches. It is a mystery that reaches far beyond the limits of the life of John. It is the mystery of the church throughout its age: "For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs and of the same body and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: whereof I am made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power, unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which, from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now, unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God" [Eph. 3:1-10].

John will describe this mystery in three parts: (1.) the things which he has seen, (2.) the things which are and (3.) the things which shall be hereafter. The third division picks up with chapter 4 [v. 1], "after this." The second division deals with that which now is: the church age [chapters 2 & 3]. The first division suggests that the Revelation was given John before he wrote his first epistle, hence his emphatic repetition of the words: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled of the Word of life" [I John 1:1-3].

Revelation 2 & 3 COMMENTARY

"Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are,
and the things which shall be hereafter; [write] the *Mystery* of the seven stars
which thou sawest in my right hand and the seven golden candlesticks."
[Rev. 1:19, 20a]

Each of the New Testament epistles is directed toward a specific group; yet, each is applicable to all believers throughout the church age. This is true of the Revelation more so, since it gives among its contents the record of Christ's glorious return [Rev. 19], as well as the fabulous description of the long awaited city: the New Jerusalem. These events, along with many other startling revelations, will come "after this" [Rev. 4:1]. They will come after the last of the churches has shined its light.

A reading of the history of the Church reveals periods of great occurrences, for example: the missionary outreaches of the 19th century and the Reformation of the 16th century. And Church history reveals great periods of trials, such as the Inquisition of the 13th and 15th centuries and the Imperial persecutions of the 2nd and 3rd centuries. Since dates can vary as to which major event characterizes certain movements, the dates given here may differ from others. However, the Church Age can be divided as follows:

EPHESUS [ca 30 - ca 200]

"Thou hast tried them which say they are apostles" – from the crucifixion of Christ [ca 30] to the rise of a stable, sizable group of believers in the capital of the Roman Empire itself [ca. 200], the seed of the gospel has been sown; and the good ground is bringing forth the promise of a bountiful harvest.

SMYRNA [64 - 313]

"The devil shall cast some of you into prison" – beginning with the persecutions of Nero [64], who blamed the burning of the city of Rome on the Christians for their having troubled the gods of the empire, to the close of imperial persecutions by Constantine [313] through the Edict of Milan, there resides on the pages of history ten "days" of tribulation under the following emperors:

- **1st Day: Nero** [64 - 68], who accused Christians of burning Rome.
- **2nd Day: Domitian** [94-96], under whom John is banished to Patmos.
- **3rd Day: Trajan** [98-117], who condoned local persecution (as under Pliny of Bithynia): "No Christians were to be sought out; but if someone reported that a certain individual was a Christian, the Christian was to be punished unless he recanted and worshipped the gods of the Romans" [Cairn's, p.91].
- **4th Day: Marcus Aurelius** [166-180], who was inclined to ascribe the natural and man-made calamities of his reign to the growth of Christianity [*Ibid.*].
- **5th Day: Septimius Severus** [202-211], following a campaign in the East in which he had gained great victories, he "passed a law which forbade, under severe penalties, that any of his subjects should become either Jews or Christians." "It left its deepest traces in Egypt and Africa" [Miller's Church History, p. 192]
- **6th Day: Maximinus Thrax** [235-238], "after the death of Septimius Severus - except during the short reign of Maximin - the church enjoyed a season of comparative peace till the reign of Decius" [Miller's, p. 195]. Maximin ordered the death of the bishops, and particularly those who had been the intimate friends of Alexander, the previous emperor of whom Maximin had been the "chief instigator, if not the actual murderer" [Miller's, p. 197].

Revelation 2 & 3 COMMENTARY [Page II]

- **7th Day: Decius** [249-251], attempting to save classical Roman culture, he viewed Christians “as a peculiar threat to the state” because of their rapid growth and their seeming attempt to set up a state within a state. His Edict of 250 demanded an annual offering of sacrifice at the Roman altars to the gods and to the genius of the emperor. His persecution ended upon his death, which occurred within a year of the Edict [Cairn’s, p.92]. He was killed in battle with the Goths [Miller’s, p. 201].
- **8th Day: Valerian** [247-259], who continued the demand for a sacrifice to the gods and to the emperor. Local authorities sentenced Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, “to expiate thy crime with thy blood” when he refused to make such a sacrifice [Miller’s, p. 262].
- **9th Day: Aurelian** [275], who rose through the rank militarily and was assassinated by a secretary whom he intended to call to account for dishonesty the same year [*Universal World Reference Encyclopedia*, 3:448].
- **10th Day: Diocletian** [303-305], whose persecution was the most severe. Beginning in 303, Diocletian ordered the cessation of meetings, the destruction of properties, the deposition of officers, the imprisonment of the persistent and the destruction of the scriptures by fire [Cairn’s, p.93]. The Donatist controversy arose from this persecution on the issue of reuniting with believers who turned over manuscripts rather than die at the hands of inquisitors. “The Diocletian persecution forced upon the church the problem of the canon of the New Testament” [Cairn’s, p.94].

PERGAMOS [313 - 590]

“Thou hast them there that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to eat things sacrificed unto idols and to commit fornication” – there is a marked change in the Church after Constantine, who begins to favor the Church. Rather than being persecuted, it is now “preferred” by those who seek the Emperor’s favor. The seed sown in the night comes to light as tares among the wheat. They claim “Christ” for social and economic benefit and not from a heart repentant of sin. What was meant to be the greatest of the herbs is becoming a tree for every “fowl of the air.”

- **Doctrine of Balaam** - it mixed the worship of Jehovah with the practices of divination [Smith’s *Bible Dictionary*]
- **Doctrine of Nicolaitanes** - the *deeds* become a *doctrine* and a priestly clergy funded by Constantine is born. “The *Pontifical Chronicle*...takes thirty pages to tell, very summarily, of the superb gifts in gold and silver, bronze and precious stones and fabrics, which Constantine and his family showered upon the new churches, so that they could outshine the temples; indeed, the gifts suggest that the practice now began of looting the temples to enrich the churches. The gifts to two of these include four hundred massive silver objects and seventy of gold, often encrusted with jewels, besides magnificent bronze and furniture. We read of one silver vessel, decorated with jewels, which stood five feet in height and weighed one hundred and twenty pounds, of seven solid silver altars weighing two hundred pounds each, and so on. Hundreds of estates were transferred to the churches to give them revenue” [McCabe’s *A History of the Pope*, p.49].

Revelation 2 & 3 COMMENTARY [Page III]

- **Antipas** - unknown outside of Rev. 2:13, was God's "faithful martyr," slain among those who dwelled where Satan's seat is. The only martyr named amidst the church age from among a host [Rev. 17:6], he represents his brethren, slain for the cause of Christ. Since many who had previously persecuted Christians when such was the policy of Rome had since joined the church as it entered imperial favor under Constantine, there were those "among them" who had not only seen Antipas die, but had most likely consented unto his death, as Saul did unto Stephen's [Acts. 8:1].

THYATIRA [590 - 1453]

"Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed unto idols" – "The consecration of Gregory I as the bishop of Rome constitutes a watershed that divides the ancient period of church history from that of the medieval period of church history.... The year 590 is chosen for this work because Gregory I ushered in a new era of power for the church in the West in that year" [Cairn's, p. 165].

"He stood, as Augustine did in his day, at the divide between the two worlds of classicism and medieval Christianity and became the symbol of the new medieval world in which culture was institutionalized within the church dominated by the bishop of Rome" [Cairn's, p. 166].

"Gregory's greatest work was to expand the power of the Roman bishop. Though he disclaimed the title of pope, he exercised all the power and prerogatives of the later popes. This he did to assert the spiritual supremacy of the bishop of Rome" [Cairn's, p. 167].

- **The bed of adultery** – "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth" [Rev. 17:5] ... "is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils and the hold of every foul spirit and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all the nations have drunk the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies" [Rev. 18:2b,3].

"The beginning of the pope's claim to be a temporal ruler dated from the grant of lands in Italy to the pope by Pepin, the ancestor of Charlemagne, in 756" [Cairn's, p. 195]. Charlemagne himself came to Rome to settle charges against Leo III, after having sent "ten prelates and nobles of high rank to watch the trial of the Pope at Rome" [McCabe's, p. 174]. Before the Emperor, "the Pope solemnly swore on the Gospels that he was not guilty, and the affair was closed" [McCabe's, p. 174]. However, "at the end of the Mass on Christmas Day [800] the Pope dramatically produced a crown and a purple mantle and made Charlemagne Roman Emperor... The best witness, Eginhard, Charlemagne's secretary, says that the Emperor was annoyed, and declared that he would not have attended the ceremony if he had known the Pope's design" [McCabe's, p. 174].

- **The space to repent** – "And I heard another voice from heaven saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities" [Rev. 18:4,5].

Revelation 2 & 3 COMMENTARY [Page IV]

NOTE: Sardis follows the call for space “repent of her fornication” [Rev. 2:21]; – in historical review, the greatest religious “repentance” is the Reformation. However, the location of the call to separate from “Jezebel” in the Revelation’s sequence [midst the judgment of the Great Harlot (chapter 18)] makes the call an echo of the knock at the door [Rev. 3:20-22] at the end of the church age.

SARDIS [1453 - 1804]

"Strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die" – the treasure that had been hid in the field and thought to have been lost will not die, but be revived.

- **Undefiled garments** – the treasure “hidden in the field” is the remnant whose works God has not found perfect [3:2]. The few names which have not defiled their garments are to strengthen that which remains. What is strengthened more than any other single religious item during the Reformation is the Word of God. The fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453, flooded Europe with the manuscripts of Greek scholastics, including the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, thus ending what historians often term the Dark Ages [500 to 1000 (Caim’s, p. 166)]. Erasmus prints the first Greek New Testament by 1516. Tyndale’s English New Testament is published in 1525. Olivetan’s French Bible is printed in 1537. And Luther’s German New Testament is printed in 1522. At the Hampton Court Conference of 1604, King James I of England agrees to a new translation that would become the greatest Bible of the Church Age: the Authorized King James Version. The KJV will mirror America’s growth and the greatest outreach for missions the world has yet to see.

PHILADELPHIA [1804 - ???]

"Thou hast kept my word and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan...to come and worship before thy feet and to know that I have loved thee" – there is a promise of God that we shall judge angels [I Cor. 6:3]. The Revelation itself promises us that we will be “kings and priests” [1:6] unto God. Over whom shall we rule? In part, “them of the synagogue of Satan.”

- **The open door** – “The religious forces, generated by the Wesleyan and later evangelical revivals, produced such practical fruits of social reform and missionary zeal that Latourette, the great modern historian of missions, has called the nineteenth century ‘The Great Century’ of missionary effort” [Cairn’s, p. 395]. Although many dates could be used, 1804 has been chosen. It is the founding of the British and Foreign Bible Society.
- **The hour of temptation** – The “hour” of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth [Rev. 3:10] is the seven-year period of Jacob’s Trouble, also known as the Tribulation. It is termed the hour of judgment on Babylon the Great [Rev. 18:10,17,19]. Since the church has the promise of being kept from the hour of temptation and since the church has not yet been “caught up,” the date is unknown. However, when the Holy Spirit is taken out of the way [II Thess. 2:7], we also shall be “caught up” [I Thess. 4:17], for we shall never be separated from the Spirit of Christ [Heb. 13:5]. The Pearl of Great Price will be lifted from the sea and placed on display for all to behold [Eph. 2:10].

Revelation 2 & 3 COMMENTARY [Page V]

LAODICEA [1948 - ???]

"So, then, because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" -- there will be a time when God's angels shall gather the good fish into vessels, but cast away the bad [Matt. 13:48]. That "casting away" of Matthew 13, is the "spewing out" of Revelation 3.

An illustration of a great religious union occurred in 1948: "Between 22 August and 4 September, 1948, over 350 delegates, representing about 150 churches from 44 countries, met at Amsterdam. This meeting completed the task of creating a world ecumenical council" [Cairn's, p. 468]. We know it as the World Council of Churches.

- **The chastening** – "Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth." But if ye be without chastisement, then are ye bastards and not sons [Heb. 12:6-8]. Bastards have neither faith nor the righteousness of God which is by faith; and, following the "catching up" of the church of Jesus Christ, they will continue the church of the anti-christ, which is led by the false prophet to worship the beast [Rev. 13:4,19:20].
- **The knock** – Although the Lord is knocking on the heart's door now by the Spirit of God and the Word of God, calling men unto repentance. There is a promise of sinners being saved during the tribulation period, for the beast will make war with the saints [Rev. 13:7]. "These are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" [Rev. 7:14]. These were they who had answered the knock on their hearts door [Rev. 3:20-22] and had refused to worship the beast [Rev. 14:9-12]. They will be overcome [Rev. 13:7], yet, in their death, they will overcome [Rev. 15:2] by Christ Jesus.

MATTHEW 13

The seven parables of Matthew 13, run a close parallel to the seven churches of Revelation 2 & 3. Concerning those parables, Jesus asked his disciples, "Have ye understood all these things?" Their response? "Yea, Lord." [Matt. 13:51]. If these parables were understood then, we should understand them now.

EPHESUS: Spreading the Gospel seed

1. The Seed (vv. 1-23) – The word sown and sprouting wheat.

SMYRNA: The enemy's trampling through the field

2. The Tares (vv. 24-30) – Tares sown amongst the wheat.

PERGAMOS: A local church out of proportion

3. The Mustard seed (vv. 31-32) – Size enough to lodge the birds of the air.

THYATIRA: When a "woman" takes center stage

4. The Leaven (vv. 33-35) – Hidden by a woman in three measures of meal.

SARDIS: A "few" protected

5. The Treasure (v. 44) – Hidden by the Lord in the world.

PHILADELPHIA: The Church's "Open Door," for now

6. The Pearl (vv. 45-46) – "Caught-up" out of the sea. and kept from temptation.

LAODICEA: A "Church" indifferent to Christ

7. The Dragnet (vv. 47-50) – Once full, the bad are "cast away."

Revelation 2:1-7
EPHESUS [ca. 30 - ca. 200]

The following outline is based on the compound objects of *know* in v. 2.

TEXT: *Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; ²I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: ³and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. ⁴Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. ⁵Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. ⁶But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. ⁷He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*

- I. Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write
 - A. These things saith he
 - 1. That holdeth the seven stars in his right hand
 - 2. Who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks
 - B. *These things he saith*
 - 1. I know thy works
 - 2. And *I know* thy labour
 - 3. And *I know* thy patience
 - 4. And *I know* how thou canst not bear them which are evil
 - 5. And *I know how* thou hast tried them
 - a. Which say they are apostles
 - b. And *which* are not *apostles*
 - 6. And *I know how* thou hast found them liars
 - 7. And *I know how* thou hast borne *with them*
 - 8. And *I know how* thou hast patience *with them*
 - 9. And *I know how*, for my name's sake, *thou* hast laboured *in spite of them*
 - 10. And *I know how* thou hast not fainted *because of them*
 - 11. Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee
 - a. Because thou hast left thy love
 - b. *Thou hast left thy first love*
- II. *Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write*
 - A. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen
 - B. And repent
 - C. And [*repeat*:] do the first works
 - 1. Or else I will come unto thee quickly
 - 2. And *I* will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent
 - D. But this thou hast
 - 1. That thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans
 - 2. Which *deeds* I also hate
- III. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches
 - A. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life
 - B. *I will give to eat of the tree of life* which is in the midst of the paradise of God

Revelation 2:1-7 COMMENTARY

Two items stand out in this opening age of the church as the seed of the Sower is sown: the deeds of Nicolaitanes and the testing of those who claim to be apostles. The term Nicolaitanes comes from “Nico” (*over, as in victorious*) and “lai” (*common, as in people*). They are a form of clergy, “a sect of heretics of the Apostolic period. They held it lawful to eat meat sacrificed to idols and to join in idolatrous worship” [Smith’s *Bible Dictionary*, p. 218].

Concerning the original apostles appointed by Jesus (Matt. 10) and using Paul as one “called out of due season” as a replacement for Judas (Rom. 11:13) – they spread the gospel seed [Matt. 28:19]. Those they taught to spread the seed, as Timothy and Titus, are often termed “Apostolic Fathers.” Apostolic fathers can stretch the time period of firsthand familiarity with the apostles and how they spread the gospel to approximately [ca.] 150 [Cairn’s *Christianity through the Centuries*, p. 73].

ABOUT “FIRST” LOVE

The use of “thy labour” in v.2, and “hast laboured” in v. 3, reveals a reversed order of repetition:

| Verse 2 | Verse 3 |
|--|---|
| 1 st - <i>thy works</i> | 4 th - <i>hast not fainted</i> |
| 2 nd - <i>thy labour</i> | 3 rd - <i>hast laboured</i> |
| 3 rd - <i>thy patience</i> | 2 nd - <i>hast patience</i> |
| 4 th - <i>thou canst not bear</i> | 1 st - <i>hast borne</i> |

What rests between them is the fact that they have tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars. And, though they had continued their labors for the Lord, something had changed: they had left their first love. Their zeal was gone. They had let the false apostles and their impact discourage them. An example of this is seen in Paul’s writings [II Cor. 11:13-20]. As a result, God was asking them to return unto their “perfect” love, where there is no fear [I John 4:11-21].

Peter is an illustration of the impact of false apostles on the labors of Christ’s servants. In Acts 1:14, Peter boldly stands before the multitude, defending the actions of the brethren on the day of Pentecost. By Acts 11, however, he laboriously “rehearses” the matter regarding Cornelius to those Jews who would “contend with him” on the matter of Jews mixing with Gentiles. By Galatians 2, Peter separates himself, “fearing them of the circumcision.” What happened to Peter? He grew weary of the battle. He became intimidated. He lost his first love!

THREE STEPS TO “REVIVAL”:

The three steps to revival are found in Rev. 2:5 – remember, repent and repeat [do again the first works]. The key is repentance, the word being repeated at the close of v. 5. Without repentance, remembrance only makes us sorrowful. Without repentance, there is no resolve, no determination to repeat those first works. And, without repentance, there will be no repetition of past glory.

THE PARADISE OF GOD

“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” The tree of life was in the midst of the garden of Eden [Gen. 3:23]. That tree will be along the river flowing from the throne of God in the New Jerusalem [Rev. 22:2]. Paradise, then, which has been moved twice already [called Abraham’s Bosom before being taken to Glory by Christ, appears to be destined for the “Central Park” of the New Jerusalem.

Revelation 2:8-11
SMYRNA [64-313]

The following outline is based on the imperative commands and their complements in v. 10.

TEXT: *And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; ⁹I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰**Fear none** of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: **be thou faithful** unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. ¹¹He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.*

NOTE: The terminology “unto the angel of the church in Smyrna, write” suggests to some that the angel is in Smyrna and is receiving (and reading) this message. Because of that relationship, they term the “angel” of each of these churches as the pastor of each of these churches. Keep in mind that a literal copy of the Revelation was sent to the seven churches in Asia and that it was received most likely by their pastors. We say “most likely” because there has been occasion when a pastor is not directing the local assembly: Gaius and Diotrephes [III John]. The message to Smyrna, as with all of these churches, includes more than the limited verses allotted each in these two chapters. Yet, only their portions are addressed to the angels. I still view them as angels, the messengers of God for their time [Rev. 1:1].

- I. *And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write*
 - A. *These things saith the first and the last*
 - 1. *Which was dead*
 - 2. *And which is alive*
 - B. *These things saith the first and the last*
 - 1. *I know thy works*
 - 2. *And I know thy tribulation*
 - 3. *And I know thy poverty*
 - a. *But thou art rich*
 - b. *And thou art not poor*
 - 4. *And I know the blasphemy of them*
 - a. *Which say they are Jews*
 - b. *And which are not Jews* [Rom. 9:6-8]
 - c. *But which are the synagogue of Satan* [II Cor. 11:12-15]
 - C. *These things saith the first and the last*
 - 1. *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer*
 - a. *Behold, the devil shall cast some of you*
 - 1.) *Into prison*
 - 2.) *That ye may be tried*
 - b. *And ye shall have tribulation ten days*
 - 2. *Be thou faithful unto death*
 - a. *And I will give thee a crown*
 - b. *I will give thee a crown of life*
- II. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches*
 - A. *He that overcometh shall not be hurt*
 - B. *He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.*

Revelation 2:8-11

COMMENTARY

The Lord reminds this church that he, too, faced death: he was dead, and is alive. He reminds them because they had to face death. No greater comfort can be afforded a child of God than to be assured that our Savior has already crossed the waters we face. They are to be faithful, even unto death. And they can be. There is a crown of life on the other side. He knows; he was dead and is alive!

Jesus knows their “works and tribulation and poverty.” Their faithful labors for the Lord caused them tribulation. Tribulation under Imperial Rome resulted in loss of possession and position, if not the loss of life itself. Christians faced local authorities who demanded compliance with Roman worship. Those who refused and lived were often imprisoned and impoverished. But God gives a great assurance: wealth is not in this life only. These martyrs were laying up treasure in heaven, where thieves cannot break through and emperors cannot steal [Matt. 6:19-21].

Concerning the claim of those who said they were Jews, but were not: the Apostle Paul explains that not all who are of Israel are sons of the promise [Rom. 9:6-8]. Those who would lead God’s people but who do not believe God’s Word are “of the synagogue of Satan” [II Cor. 11:13-20]. In the face of their false teachings and fierce wrath, God’s children are admonished to “fear not” but, rather, “be faithful.” History records ample occasion for their obedience: the “ten days” of tribulation. From Nero [64] to Diocletian [305], ten Roman emperors either instigated or allowed persecution of the early church. So much so that Tertullian, dean of Roman historians, wrote the dictum, “The blood of Christians is seed (for their faith)” [Cairn’s, p. 20]. A listing of the emperors and the dates of persecution under them is given in the commentary on Revelation 2 & 3.

When John writes, “The devil shall cast some of you into prison,” he reminds us of our true enemy, who goes about as a roaring lion, “seeking whom he may devour” [I Peter 5:8]. Peter is well familiar with the devil’s methods. When he rebuked the Lord [Matt. 16:23], Jesus’ response was to Satan, and not to Peter. And this after Peter had just been commended for echoing the Father’s testimony of Jesus: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” [Matt 16:16]. The devil puts thoughts into our minds that the old nature tends to follow. Fortunately, God’s children have a promise: if we will follow the Spirit, we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

We wrestle not against flesh and blood: we wrestle against the wiles of the devil [Eph. 6:11,12]. He desires to sift us, as he did Peter. He desires to try us, as God warned the church at Smyrna. But, be of good courage. As Jesus prayed for Peter [Luke 22:32], he prays for us. We have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world [I John 2:1b,2].

He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death: there is no wrath to fear in Christ Jesus. We have passed from death unto life. Our names are in the Lamb’s Book of Life; and the lake of fire, which is the second death [Rev. 20:14], has no place for us. We shall be saved, for we have called upon the name of the Lord [Rom. 10:13].

There are several ways in which God’s children shall be rewarded in the next life. Though some may wish to group all of the following together, the Bible tells us we can lay up treasure in heaven: “thou art rich” [Rev. 2:9]. And we can bestow upon the foundation labors that will yield gold, silver and precious stones [I Cor. 3:12] at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Then, there are rewards Christ will bring with him [Matt. 16:27] when he comes. And there are crowns we can earn. Revelation’s “crown of life” is a martyr’s crown, given to those faithful unto death [Rev. 2:10].

Revelation 2:12-17
PERGAMOS [313-590]

The following outline is based on the compound infinitives as objects of the verb *taught* in v. 14.

TEXT: *And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; ¹³I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. ¹⁴But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac **to cast** a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, **to eat** things sacrificed unto idols, and **to commit** fornication. ¹⁵So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. ¹⁶Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. ¹⁷He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.*

- I. And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write
 - A. These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges
 - 1. I know thy works
 - 2. And *I know* where thou dwellest
 - a. Where Satan's seat is
 - b. Even *where Satan's seat is*
 - 3. And *I know* thou holdest fast my name
 - 4. And *I know* thou hast not denied my faith
 - a. In those days
 - b. Even *in those days*
 - 1.) Wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr
 - 2.) *Antipas*, who was slain among you
 - 3.) *Antipas*, who was slain where Satan dwelleth
 - B. But, *he saith*, I have a few things against thee
 - 1. Because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam
 - a. Who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel
 - b. *Who taught Balac* to eat things sacrificed unto idols
 - c. And to commit fornication
 - 2. So hast thou also them
 - a. That hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans
 - b. Which thing [*the doctrine*] I hate
 - C. *These things he saith*
 - 1. Repent
 - 2. Or else I will come unto thee quickly
 - 3. And *I will* fight against them with the sword of my mouth
 - a. *Them who hold the doctrine of Balaam among you*
 - b. *Them who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans among you*
- II. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches
 - A. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna
 - B. And *I will* give him a white stone
 - C. And *I will give him*, in the stone, a new name written
 - 1. Which no man knoweth
 - 2. Saving he that receiveth it

Revelation 2:12-17

COMMENTARY

The “sword with two edges” can refer to the angels of the churches which go before them as the Angel of the Lord led Israel. That angel, God warned, would not pardon their transgressions, should Israel choose not to obey his voice [Ex. 23:21]. The churches have received that same warning. The angels of the churches will be as swift to punish the churches for transgression as they are swift to defend them before their enemies: “Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.” God’s word acts as a two-edged sword, seen in an illustration of a father with his two sons: the father gives a word of correction that is perceived as instruction by the wise son and as rebuke by the son who scorns both it and his father [Pro. 13:1].

Throughout the church age God is aware of our works. And he promised that even a cup of water would not go without reward [Matt. 10:42]. Consider how much more the rewards for faithfulness are where Satan’s seat is. This “third” church has seen the devil’s working so received [v.10] that he has taken up abode in the midst of a synagogue that serves him [v. 13]. And among those ministers of Satan? Men who had witnessed the martyrdom of Antipas, as Saul had witnessed the stoning of Stephen.

In spite of the opposition of Satan, God’s children had held fast his name and had not denied the faith. They were faithful, as their hero, Antipas, had been, though their opposition was no longer the persecutions of an empire. Imperial persecution ended with the Edict of Milan in 313. Toleration to all religions, including the Christian faith, was a means to peace in the empire. Eusebius tells of the vision of Constantine the night before he won the battle of the Milvian bridge: “He had a vision of a cross in the sky with the words “In this sign conquer” [Cairn’s, p. 124]. Taking it as a favorable omen, he crossed the Tiber river and defeated his enemies.

“During the next few years Constantine issued edicts that brought about the restoration of confiscated property to the church, the subsidization of the church by the state, the exemption of the clergy from public [including military] service, a ban on soothsaying, and the setting apart of the ‘Day of the Sun’ as a day of rest and worship” [Cairn’s, p. 124]. For more information, see the commentary under Pergamos for Revelation 2 & 3.

As a result of the changes toward the church, God’s saints would face a new challenge. Scores will claim the name of Christ for the favor of the emperor and not for the faith once delivered to the saints. They are the “them” of Rev. 2:16. They hold the doctrine of Balaam, a mixture of their pagan practices with the teachings of the New Testament, and the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which God hates. And the reason God hates this clergy? Each saint is part of the priesthood in God’s sight [I Peter 2:9].

The fornication of those holding the doctrine of Balaam is a spiritual fornication [Rev. 17:2]. An illustration is seen in how Jerusalem sought the protection of Egypt in the days of Ezekiel the prophet: “Thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God. But thou didst trust in thine own beauty and playedst the harlot because of thy renown and pourest out thy fornications on every one that passed by: his it was” [Ezekiel 16:14,15].

The hidden manna is Jesus, the bread of life [John 6:48], and his words, which are spirit and life [John 6:63b]. That manna is not “hidden” to his saints [John 10:27], for they overcome the world [I John 5:4].

The white stone containing our new, personalized name is for a memorial. As the stones bearing the names of the children of Israel were worn by the Old Testament priest before the Lord [Ex. 28:9-12], we will wear a white stone, in which is a new name only we ourselves and God will know [Rev. 5:10].

Revelation 2:18-23 [Part I] THYATIRA [590-1453]

The following outline is based on the compound infinitives as objects of the verb *sufferest* in v. 20.

TEXT: *And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass; ¹⁹I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. ²⁰Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, **to teach and to seduce** my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. ²¹And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. ²²Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. ²³And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.*

- I. And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write
 - A. These things saith the Son of God
 - 1. Who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire
 - 2. And his feet are like fine brass
 - B. *The Son of God saith these things*
 - 1. I know thy works
 - 2. And *I know thy* charity
 - 3. And *I know thy* service
 - 4. And *I know thy* faith
 - 5. And *I know thy* patience
 - 6. And *I know thy* works
 - 7. And *I know* the last *works*
 - a. To be more *works*
 - b. *More works* than the first *works* were
 - C. Notwithstanding, *the Son of God saith*
 - 1. I have a few things against thee
 - a. Because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel
 - 1.) Which calleth herself
 - 2.) *Which calleth herself* a prophetess
 - b. *Because thou sufferest Jezebel* to teach my servants
 - c. And *because thou sufferest Jezebel* to seduce my servants
 - 1.) To commit fornication *with idols*
 - 2.) And to eat things sacrificed unto idols
 - 2. And [*I have a few things against Jezebel*]
 - a. I gave her space to repent of her fornication
 - b. And she repented not
 - 1.) Behold, I will cast her into a bed [Rev. 17:1-7]
 - 2.) And *I will cast* them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation
 - a.) Except they repent
 - b.) *Except they repent* of their deeds [*fornication*, v. 21]
 - c. And I will kill her children with death [Rev. 20:14]
 - d. And all the churches shall know that I am he
 - 1.) *He* which searcheth the reins
 - 2.) And *he* which searcheth the hearts
 - e. And I will give unto every one of you according to your works

Revelation 2:24-29 [Part II] THYATIRA [590-1453]

The following outline is based on the adjective clauses modifying *rest* in v. 24.

TEXT: *But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. ²⁵But that which ye have already hold fast till I come. ²⁶And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: ²⁷And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. ²⁸And I will give him the morning star. ²⁹He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

NOTE: The mustard seed, which is the greatest of the herbs, grew beyond its boundaries and became a tree [Matt. 13:32]. The third parable fits the third period of the Church Age: Pergamos. A local church, which is started from the smallest seed of faith, was developed into lodging for the birds of the air. Such growth was begun by the gifts of Constantine and continued through the efforts of those who held his vision of an imperial church.

Thyatira is the spreading of the doctrine of Balaam and the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes by those fowls of the air. However, the mustard seed will become a cage [Rev. 18:2]. In the church of Thyatira there are three groups [like the three measures of meal]: those who “have not this doctrine” [v.24], those who teach this doctrine [v. 20], and those who are seduced by this doctrine [v. 20]. And what was the fault among those who had not this doctrine? “Thou sufferest that woman” [v. 20]. Though no other burden would be placed upon this church than dealing with the spread of false doctrine [v. 24], they had God’s warning, “I will give unto every one of you according to your works” [v. 23].

[outline continued]

3. But, I say
 - a. Unto you
 - b. And unto the rest in Thyatira
 - 1.) As many as have not this doctrine
 - 2.) And which have not known the depths of Satan
 - a.) As they speak
 - b.) *As they speak [the depths of Satan]*
4. I say
 - a. I will put upon you none other burden
 - 1.) But that *burden*
 - 2.) *That burden* which ye have already
 - b. Hold fast till I come
 - c. And I will give power over the nations
 - 1.) To him, he that overcometh
 - 2.) And to him, he that keepeth my works unto the end
 - d. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron
 - 1.) They shall be broken to shivers
 - a.) As vessels
 - b.) *As the vessels* of a potter
 - 2.) *They shall be broken* even as I received of my Father
 - e. And I will give him the morning star
- II. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches

Revelation 2:18-29

COMMENTARY

The judgment of God on the church at Thyatira is shown in two types: the first is the judgment of his eyes [Rev. 1:14b]; the second is the judgment of his feet [Rev. 1:15]. The judgment of his eyes speaks of judging his children, both those who have not the doctrine of Satan and those who have been seduced by the doctrine of Satan; however, the judgment of his feet is for his enemies, who seduce “his servants.”

The church’s labors in the face of false teachers and their seductive power over some of the brethren reflects the continued efforts of the Ephesian church [v. 3]. But unlike Ephesus, which had lost its first love, Thyatira reacted by multiplying their efforts, “more than the first.” Occupation, however, does not remove obligation: though they busied themselves with labor for the Lord, they still had an obligation not to suffer Jezebel to teach. And just how did the eating of things sacrificed, among other common practices, enter so strongly among “my servants”? Consider the effects of the efforts of Gregory the Great, bishop of Rome.

“It was a tradition in Rome for centuries – John of Salisbury learned it there – that Gregory burned the only collection of books which remained in Rome from pagan days and had the marble statutes which still survived broken up” [McCabe’s, p. 149]. “This same Pope Gregory who sent Augustine to Britain had issued a bull declaring that the decrees of the first four general councils of the church were of equal inspiration with the gospel” [Wilkinson, *Truth Triumphant*, p. 162]. “He held to verbal inspiration of the Bible but, strangely, gave tradition a place of equality with the Bible” [Cairn’s, p. 169].

“Monasticism, under the patronage of Gregory, especially according to the stricter rules of Benedict, was greatly revived and widely extended. The doctrine of purgatory, respect for relics, the worship of images, the idolatry of saints and martyrs [called veneration], the merits of pilgrimages to holy places, were either taught or sanctioned by Gregory, as connected with his ecclesiastical system” [Miller’s, p. 314]. “The Canon of the Mass, which he changed somewhat, was widely used in his day; and it revealed the growing tendency to consider the Communion as a sacrifice of Christ’s body and blood each time it is performed. He also emphasized good works and the invocation of the saints in order to get their aid. It may safely be said that medieval theology bore the stamp of Gregory’s thought. The pontificate of Gregory is indeed a landmark in the transition from ancient to medieval church history. Later successors built on the foundation that he had laid as they created the sacramental hierarchical system of the institutionalized church of the Middle Ages. He systematized doctrine and made the church a power in politics” [Cairn’s, p. 169].

And it was that “power in politics” that speaks of the bed [v.22] into which God cast this church. Her spiritual fornication is illustrated by Gregory’s reaction to the new Emperor Phocas: “By another of the sordid and have-savage revolutions that were now common in the Greek world, a particularly brutal, repulsive, physically deformed officer fought and bribed his way to the throne (602), and the Emperor Maurice, his father, his five brothers, his five sons, and a large number of their supporters were foully murdered. Yet Gregory at once sent to this most vicious and dissipated murderer, the new Emperor Phocas, a letter (XIII,31) which begins, ‘Glory be to God on high’ and ends ‘Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad.’ He was probably misinformed about the facts, say the apologists. But several months later, when the facts must have been fully known in every tavern, Gregory writes again (XIII,38) to Phocas in the same strain, rejoicing that the ‘night of tyranny’ has ended in ‘a day of liberty.’ ... Gregory even had a special column dedicated to Phocas in the Roman forum” [McCabe’s, p. 138]. To the credit of Gregory, Phocas granted permission “to convert the Pantheon, the ancient Roman temple of all the gods, into a Church of St. Mary” [McCabe’s, p. 139].

Dominated by the doctrine of a woman [v.20], these false teachers and the servants they seduce will become the great harlot of Rev. 17. It will also go into great tribulation [Rev. 2:22], feeling the wrath of God poured out on the earth during the years known as Jacob's trouble. The growth of this church will be so that it will become the church of the anti-christ, being left behind to face the hour of temptation [Rev. 3:10]. It will be the Laodicean church that has left Jesus Christ out, not realizing that they are blind and naked without him. Her children will be killed of the second death [Rev. 20:14]. And all the churches shall know on that judgment day not only who searches the reins and the hearts [Rev. 2:23], but also which church he loves [Rev. 3:9].

The burden of Thyatira is "to hold fast" the truth, in contrast to Jezebel's doctrine of eating that which is offered unto idols, and to keep God's "works." Concerning the Lord's Supper, Paul's command seems simple enough: "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" [I Cor. 11:26]. Yet, whether he means that the bread is the body of Christ in type and the wine is the blood of Christ in type or whether he means that the bread and wine literally become the body and blood of Christ has fueled centuries of debate. However, if Paul meant that the bread becomes the body and the wine becomes the flesh, as in a repetition of his sacrifice on Calvary, the question arises: how often does Christ die? The Bible answers that. He was "once offered" [Heb. 9:28]. We are sanctified "through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once, for all" [Heb. 10:10].

Who, then, would have an advantage in saying Christ is come in a "flesh" that is not a flesh, as the bread is not the body other than in typology? The Nicolaitanes, whose doctrine is hated of God [Rev. 2:15]. John wrote in his first epistle, "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" [I John 4:2,3].

James describes a "doer of the work" [1:25] as one who is not forgetful of the mercy God showed him through redemption in Christ, unlike the Nicolaitanes [James 2:13]. Our Lord describes the works of God as the means to bring souls to faith in Him: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" [John 6:29].

Those faithful in Christ's works will be granted power over the nations: they shall rule them with a rod of iron as the Lord rules from Jerusalem [Rev. 12:5]. This pattern of sharing in the victory is seen in the judgment of the brass feet: "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly" [Rom. 16:20]. Literally, the synagogue of Satan shall be broken into shivers during the 1000 year reign, between Armageddon and the White Throne Judgment.

The Morning Star

Peter speaks of the day star arising in our hearts [II Peter 1:19]. It is a result of our taking heed unto the word of prophecy. That "day star" is Jesus. John calls Him the "morning star" [Rev. 2:28]. And Jesus himself testifies, "I am the bright and morning star" [Rev. 22:16]. Since this star is to be given to those who will rule with Jesus, it is his symbol of authority. As a king would give a governor an insignia for the sealing of official documents, so the morning star signifies the authority of the King of Kings on every ruling these saints will make.

Revelation 3:1-6
SARDIS [1453-1804]

The following outline is based on the compound imperative verbs in v. 3.

***TEXT:** And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. ²Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. ³**Remember** therefore how thou hast received and heard, and **hold fast**, and **repent**. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. ⁴Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. ⁵He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. ⁶He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

- I. And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write
 - A. These things saith he
 - 1. That hath the seven Spirits of God
 - 2. And *that hath* the seven stars *of God*
 - B. *These things he saith*
 - 1. I know thy works
 - a. That thou hast a name that thou livest
 - b. And, *yet*, *thou* art dead
 - 2. Be watchful
 - 3. And strengthen
 - a. The things which remain
 - b. *The things* that are ready to die
 - 4. *Strengthen them*
 - a. For I have not found thy works perfect
 - b. *I have not found thy works perfect* before God
 - 5. Remember, therefore
 - a. How thou hast received [*the things which remain*]
 - b. And *how thou hast* heard [*the things that are ready to die*]
 - 6. And hold fast [*those things*]
 - 7. And repent [*or*]
 - a. I will come on thee as a thief
 - b. And thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee
 - 1.) If, therefore, thou shalt not watch
 - 2.) (*And strengthen, etc.*) [v. 2]
- II. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches
 - A. Thou hast a few names
 - 1. Which have not defiled their garments
 - 2. *Which have not defiled their garments*, even in Sardis
 - B. And they shall walk with me
 - 1. In white
 - 2. For they are worthy
 - C. He that overcometh
 - 1. The same shall be clothed in white raiment
 - 2. And I will not blot out his name out of the book of life
 - 3. But I will confess his name before my Father
 - 4. And *I will confess his name* before his [the Father's] angels

Revelation 3:1-6 COMMENTARY

The leaven of Jezebel's doctrine has affected all three measures of meal: those who had fought it were burdened by it; those who had taught it grew stronger in it, and those who had been seduced by it defiled their garments. It became so predominant that the treasure itself is hidden in the field. By the time of Sardis, only a "few" are worthy [v. 4].

The ideal of papal supremacy within the Roman church and over temporal rulers "is clearly defined in the *Dictatus Papae*, a document that was found among the letters of Hildebrand [Pope Gregory VII] after his death. Even if Cardinal Deusdedit, who is often credited with its authorship, wrote it, the document clearly expresses Gregory's ideal for the papacy. It made the most sweeping claims for papal supremacy that have thus far been noticed. It averred that the Roman church owed its foundation to 'God alone'; that its pontiff was 'alone to be called universal'; that he had full power over all bishops; that only his feet should be kissed by 'all princes'; that he could 'depose emperors'; and that he might absolve subjects of evil temporal rulers 'from their allegiances' " [Cairn's, p. 212]. These are powers which he readily exercised over Henry IV of Germany between 1075 and 1077 [Cairn's, pp. 212,213].

"Elected as pope in 1198, Innocent III (1161-1216) brought the medieval papacy to the zenith of its power....He believed that God had given the successor of Peter the task of 'ruling the whole world' as well as the church. The pope stood above man and below God" [Cairn's, p. 214].

Innocent used an interdict to force King Philip Augustus of France to reverse his annulment of a marriage to Ingeborg of Denmark; he "forced" John, King of England, to accept the appointment of Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury through the use of an interdict on England, and "he asserted the right of the pope to approve or disapprove the emperor elected by the German electors of the empire" [Cairn's, p. 214,215].

Innocent sponsored the Fourth Crusade. Sent to recover Palestine from the Muslims, its major accomplishment was to capture the city of Constantinople in 1204, and set up a Latin kingdom that lasted until 1261. Innocent "accepted the results because it brought the Eastern empire under his control" [Cairn's 216]. He also sponsored a crusade against the Albigenses of southern France in 1208. The crusade got under way in 1209 and "virtually exterminated the Cathari [Puritans] in southern France after many bloody battles" [Cairn's, p. 216].

"Having abolished heresy by force, Innocent attempted to make a positive statement of truth. In order to do this, he called a general council in Rome. This council, known as the Fourth Lateran [or Western] Council, made an annual confession to a priest by all the laymen mandatory and declared that all must be at Mass at least at Easter. The declaration of the dogma of transubstantiation, which all members of the Roman church had to accept as authentic doctrine from this time on, was more important. It was the teaching that the substance of the bread and wine became the actual body and blood of Christ after the words of consecration by the priest" [Cairn's, p. 216]. "Thus the priest performed a sacrifice each time he held mass. Small wonder that medieval men feared the clergy, who had power to give or withhold the life-giving sacraments" [Cairn's, p. 217].

"His one permanent monument was the Inquisition" [McCabe's, p. 351]. "Because the records of the Roman Inquisition are still kept secret – the Catholic historian Pastor (XII, 507) found that when Leo XIII boldly opened to scholars the doors of the Secret Archives, these and other documents had been removed – Catholic writers often say that no heretics were put to death at Rome. The Chronicle of Richard of San Germano tells us that even in this first hour of the Roman Inquisition a number of heretics were burned

alive, and the official life of Gregory IX boasts that he ‘condemned many priests and clerics, and lay people of both sexes.’ From this date every Senator on taking office at Rome had to swear that he would execute all who were denounced to him by the Inquisition as heretics. Gregorovius quotes a document of the year 1266 which shows that a Franciscan friar, who was then the Inquisitor – in full, ‘the searcher for Heretical Perversity’ – condemned a noble for sheltering heretics. His relatives to the third degree were outlawed, and the bones of his father and his wife were dug up and burned” [McCabe’s, pp. 356,357].

“From the start the Roman Inquisition was tainted with a vice which apologists never mention: half the condemned man’s property went to the informers. The rule in all countries was that at least a third of his property went to the informer, and, since few who were denounced ever escaped condemnation, the result can be imagined. Informers and witnesses, who remained anonymous, never had to confront the accused or his legal representative – if he could induce any lawyer to face the risk of defending him” [McCabe’s, p. 357].

Undefiled Garments

The treasure “hidden in the field” is the remnant whose works God has not found perfect [3:2]. The few names which have not defiled their garments were to strengthen that which remained: what is strengthened more than any other single religious item during the Reformation is the Word of God. The fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453, flooded Europe with the manuscripts of Greek scholastics, including the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, thus ending what historians often term the Dark Ages [500 to 1000 (Cairn’s, p. 166)]. Erasmus prints the first Greek New Testament by 1516. Tyndale’s English New Testament is published in 1525. Olivetan’s French Bible is printed in 1537. Luther’s German New Testament is printed in 1522. And at the Hampton Court Conference of 1604, King James I of England agrees to a new translation that would become the greatest Bible of the church age. The resulting Authorized King James Version will mirror America’s growth and the greatest outreach for missions the world has yet to see.

Such revelation is keyed to the expressions “the seven Spirits of God” (which is the perfect Spirit, the Holy Spirit) and “the seven stars” which speak of the angels who are messengers of revelation, such as Gabriel and those who serve under him. This is the church of the revived revelation of God: the strengthening of those things which remained through the Thyatira period. Though they are termed as “ready to die” [v. 2], God does not allow them to die. The “few” were to remember how they had received the Word and how they had heard it; and they were to hold it fast, repenting of the sin of putting it under a bushel: “If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost” [II Cor. 4:3].

A Name that Thou Livest

The works of the church of Sardis proclaimed that they lived; yet, God said it was in name only: “Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.” Paul described those who, having a form of godliness, denied the power thereof [II Tim. 3:1-5]. That power is the gospel of Christ: the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth [Rom. 1:16]. And this element of the church, which does not watch for the second coming of Christ, will find him coming on them as a thief: “The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat” [II Peter 3:10].

“For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For, when they shall say, Peace and safety: then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of

light and the children of the day: we are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" [I Thess. 5:2-6]. Herein are the three elements of Thyatira: the children of the night (Jezebel and the Nicolaitanes), the children of the day (those who have not the doctrine of Satan), and the children of the day who do not watch, but sleep ("his servants" seduced by Jezebel). Each will be present when the Lord returns. On those who repent not, that coming will be "as a thief" [v. 3].

Clothed in White

Our "garments" are either the filthy garments of the flesh or the righteous garment of the Spirit of Christ, which we term a covering for sins: "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered" [Rom. 4:6,7]. Yet, we are to put off the old man and be renewed in the spirit of our mind [Eph. 4:22,23]. In this way we "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" [Rom. 13:14], by being of the same mind as Christ [Phil. 2:5]. This walk is a walk of undefiled garments, a walk which is "in the light" [I John 1:7].

Clothed in White Raiment

There is also a promise to be "clothed in white raiment" before Christ's physical presence, when he confesses our name before the Father and before his angels [v.5]. These are they who have part in the first resurrection [Rev. 20:6]. His confession is paralleled to the promise he gave to every one that overcometh: "I will not blot out his name out of the book of life" [Rev. 3:5]. Indeed, we are to rejoice that our names are written in heaven [Luke 10:20]. And how do we know that they are written there? Because we have believed on the Son, our sin no longer remains [John 9:35-41].

There will also be many of whom Jesus will testify before the Father at the second resurrection [Rev. 20:11-15], "I never knew you" [Matt. 7:21-23]. He will say to those who work iniquity, "Depart from me"; and his angels shall "sever the wicked from among the just and shall cast them into the furnace of fire" [Matt. 13:49,50]. These are as the Pharisees who questioned Jesus, saying, "Are we blind also?" And to whom he responded, "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore, your sin remaineth" [John 9:40,41].

"Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" [I John 5:5]. The fulfillment of our faith in his blood will be seen in the robe it makes pure and clean [Rev. 7:14].

John's Understanding of the Resurrection

In his gospel, John records the following overview of the resurrection, given him by Jesus himself: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth: they that have done good unto the resurrection of life and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation" [John 5:28,29]. Herein are given two resurrections: the "resurrection of life" and the "resurrection of death."

In the last book of the Bible, John learns that the time between these resurrections is 1000 years [Rev. 20:4,5]. This "first resurrection," as it is called in the Revelation, involves those on whom "the second death hath no power" [20:6]. The "second death" is later identified as the lake of fire [Rev. 20:14]. It has no power over the saint because his name is found written in the Lamb's book of life [Rev. 3:5, 20:15].

Revelation 3:7-13 [Part I]
PHILADELPHIA [1804-????]

The following outline is based on the compound infinitive phrases used as objects of make in v. 9.

***TEXT:** And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; ⁸I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. ⁹Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them **to come** and **worship** before thy feet, and **to know** that I have loved thee. ¹⁰Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. ¹¹Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. ¹²Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. ¹³He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

NOTE: No man can shut the door God has set before this church because of the strength of this church. God termed it “little,” but Jesus also explained what a “little” faith can do: “If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you” [Matt. 17:20].

- I. And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write
 - A. These things saith *he*
 - 1. He that is holy
 - 2. He that is true
 - 3. He that hath the key of David
 - 4. He that openeth, and no man shutteth
 - 5. And *he that* shutteth, and no man openeth
 - B. *These things he saith*
 - 1. I know thy works
 - 2. Behold, I have set before thee an open door
 - 3. And no man can shut it
 - a. For thou hast a little strength
 - b. And hast kept my word
 - c. And hast not denied my name
 - 4. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan
 - a. Which say they are Jews
 - b. And are not
 - c. But do lie
 - 5. Behold, I will make them
 - a. To come
 - b. And *to* worship before thy feet
 - c. And to know that I have loved thee
 - 6. I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation
 - a. Which shall come upon all the world
 - b. *Which shall come* to try them that dwell upon the earth
 - c. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience

Revelation 3:7-13 [Part II]
PHILADELPHIA [1804-????]

The following outline is based on the compound objects of *write* in v. 12.

*TEXT: And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; ⁸I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. ⁹Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. ¹⁰Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. ¹¹Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. ¹²Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him **the name** of my God, **and the name** of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. ¹³He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

NOTE: Three elements are used [v. 8] in the explanation of why no man can shut the open door of Philadelphia: (1) they possess a little strength; (2) they have kept God's Word; and (3) they have professed God's name. These are the requirements for salvation [Rom. 10:8,9]. They had faith, though it be but a mustard seed in size. They had the Word of God, though it appeared once to be ready to die. And they championed God's name: JESUS – "For there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved" [Acts 4:12b]. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" [Phil. 2:9-11].

(continued from the previous page)

- II. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches
 - A. Behold, I come quickly
 - B. Hold that fast which thou hast
 - 1. That no man take thy crown
 - 2. *That no man take thy crown (from you)*
 - C. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar
 - 1. In the temple
 - 2. *In the temple* of my God
 - D. And he shall go no more out
 - E. And I will write upon him
 - 1. The name of my God
 - 2. And the name of the city of my God
 - a. Which is new Jerusalem
 - b. Which cometh down out of heaven
 - c. *Which cometh down from my God*
 - F. And I will write upon him my new name

Revelation 3:7-13 COMMENTARY

Up to this point, the opening descriptions of our Lord in each of the churches comes from the description of him in chapter 1: he who walks in the midst of the candlesticks [Ephesus]; he who was dead and is alive [Smyrna]; he who hath the sword with two edges [Pergamos]; he whose eyes are like unto a flame of fire [Thyatira]; and he who has the seven stars [Sardis]. However, in the opening of the portion to Philadelphia, we find a new element introduced, one that reflects John's first epistle and Isaiah's prophecy: "He that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David."

Holiness comes from obedience: God's command to Israel to be holy "for I am holy" [Lev. 11:45] is a command to act as God would act, to follow God. Jesus obeyed the Father in all things, including the matter of our redemption [Rev. 1:18]. He is holy, because of his obedience. And, because he was obedient, John could testify in his first epistle: "The true light now shineth" [2:8]: "We have known him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life" [5:20]. Our dwelling "in him" gives to us the same access Jesus possesses: "the key of David."

Rev. 3:7 contains a quote from Isaiah 22:22 –*And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder: so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.* Isaiah's reference is to Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah. Eliakim is the replacement for Shebna, the treasurer for the house of David [22:15]. He has the authority to open any room or account of the king's wealth, and none can shut him out. He also has the authority to deny access to the books or, literally, to the doors of the treasure rooms, and no man can open them without his consent.

But, you say, the king could also open or close the door. Yes. In this we see a type in the relationship of God the Father to God the Son: the one who gave him this authority is not going to reverse it: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" [Phil. 2:9-11].

The open door Jesus set before the church at Philadelphia was the direct result of their works: they strengthened the things that remained which were ready to die; that is, they took what faith they had and kept the word of God [3:8]. Hence, their open door involves the word of God.

"The religious forces, generated by the Wesleyan and later evangelical revivals, produced such practical fruits of social reform and missionary zeal that Latourette, the great modern historian of missions, has called the nineteenth century 'The Great Century' of missionary effort" [Cairn's, p. 395]. The date chosen here to illustrate the work of God's people during this period of the church age is 1804, the founding of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Such an outreach illustrates the "practical expression of the interest of the evangelicals in the spread of the gospel through the printed page" [Cairn's, p. 398].

The Synagogue of Satan

The synagogue of Satan is seen since the beginning. They are the tares planted among the wheat. But they will come and "worship" before the feet of the saints of God [Rev. 3:9]. They will be forced to acknowledge of us then, the positions they have forcefully claimed over us for centuries; and they will know that Jesus has loved us. When will this come to pass? When we rule with Christ for that 1000 years, for we "shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers."

How do we know this will come to pass? Because Jesus told us that this is what he had received from his Father [Rev. 2:27].

The Hour of Temptation

There is a promise to all of God's children that will only be "experienced" by those who are alive and remain when it does occur. That promise will be fulfilled at the second coming of Jesus Christ: "For ye have need of patience that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise: for yet, a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry" [Heb. 10:36,37]. It is what we call the "rapture."

Though not used in the Bible, the term *rapture* is often used to describe what will take place when the saints of God are "caught up" [I Thess. 4:17], because *to rapture* means *to catch up*. Hence, you hear people speak of the rapture taking place before the Hour of Temptation. Since Rev. 3:10, contains the promise of God "to keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth," the term is described as a "pre-tribulation" rapture.

Such an expression assumes that the "hour of temptation" is the tribulation period. Consider three reasons why this is so. First, it fits in the time-line of the Revelation's order of events. From the spread of the gospel seed by the Sower himself to the final harvest by his angels, there must come a judgment upon this earth. That judgment is called by many names. It is called "Jacob's trouble" by Jeremiah [30:7], and it follows their being brought again from captivity [30:3]. It is called the "tribulation of those days" by Jesus, after which "the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn [Matt. 24:29-30a].

In Matthew's passage, the tribes shall mourn for the same reason Rev. 1:7 concludes with "even so": judgment. The sign of the Son of man in heaven is his white throne [Rev. 20:11]. The Son of man shall ascend that throne, "coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory" [Matt. 24:30]. He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet [not to be confused with *the* trump of God in I Thess. 4:16] and shall gather together his elect "from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" [Matt. 24:31]. The elect, the redeemed of the Lord, shall witness the white throne judgment. And before the Lord Jesus Christ, they shall bow in thanksgiving from the jury boxes of heaven while the unsaved bow in mourning before the judgment bar [Phil. 2:10].

Second the bulk of the contents for which the Revelation is most known is the judgments, which include the seven seals of chapter 6, the seven trumpets of chapters 8 & 9, and the seven vials of chapters 15 & 16. These judgments are characteristic of the "tribulation of those days" [Matt. 24:29 reflecting Rev. 6:12,13] as well as being within the timing of the Revelation.

Third, the "hour of temptation" has no other logical application within the contents of the Revelation itself. It is the hour in which the great harlot will be judged [Rev. 17], just as God prophesied in Rev. 2:22. That "church" is the church of Jezebel. It has the doctrine of Balaam and the Nicolaitanes [2:14]. It seduces God's servants [2:20]. It is of the synagogue of Satan [3:9]. And it shall be "spued" out of God's mouth [3:16]. The hour of temptation will not be a trial of God's children; it will be a trial of those "that dwell upon the earth" [3:10]. God will "keep" his children from that hour [3:10]. Therefore, God must keep his children from dwelling upon the earth. And he will, with a pre-tribulation rapture.

To Try Them

Some of the confusion regarding agreement on terms and the sequence of events in the Revelation comes from the multiple relationships of the prophecy. For Israel, it is Jacob's Trouble. Physically, a third of the planet will be destroyed [the trumpets of chapter 8]. Yet, there is also a spiritual "trial": "because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved, and for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but *who* had pleasure in unrighteousness [II Thess. 2:10b-12]. The man of sin shall be revealed, that Wicked one "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming" [II Thess. 2:8]. Their believing a "lie" is their accepting the anti-christ. Those who will be saved during the tribulation period will be slain for rejecting the anti-christ and for refusing both to worship the beast and to receive his mark.

However, this "mystery of iniquity" doth already work. But that he might be revealed in his time, "he who now letteth" [the Holy Spirit who now allows the mystery to work] will let until he be taken out of the way. And when the Holy Spirit is taken out of the way [either *raptured* or *caught-up*, you choose] we shall be taken with him, for Christ's Spirit shall never leaves us nor forsake us. Should he ever do so, we would cease to be his, for to be without Christ's Spirit is to be none of his [Rom. 8:9b].

"But that day [the rapture] shall not come except there come a falling away first" [II Thess. 2:3]. That "falling away" is the result of the seduction of his servants [Rev. 2:20]. And "that day" shall not come except that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God" [II Thess. 2:4]. Hence all the interest by believers in the temple mount at Jerusalem and the eventual rebuilding of the Temple itself. This is the one thing that can be used to guarantee Israel's cooperation with anyone about anything: the new Temple.

It also demonstrates why there is so much speculation on naming the "son of perdition." He will be revealed before the rapture. Whether his efforts of exaltation are completed during the first of the tribulation period as indicated by the efforts of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet [Rev. 16] or before the tribulation period, no doubt clouds the abomination of desolation: by the mid-point of the seven years called Tribulation, the son of perdition will not only sit in the Temple at Jerusalem, but will require a sacrifice unto himself [Matt. 24:15; Dan. 9:27, 11:31, 12:11]. What will follow is the cessation of the sacrifices that had begun anew in the tribulation period Temple, and the remaining days of the tribulation itself shall be termed "great tribulation" [Matt. 24:21].

Protecting our Crowns

The coming of Christ is described as "quickly." Judgment is always swift upon those judged. Yet, this creation "groans," not to be unclothed, but that it might be clothed upon. We are to be looking for his coming, that the day not overtake us a thief in the night overtakes those seduced. And among the reasons we are to watch is the protection of our rewards, specifically, our crowns: "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels" [Col. 2:18]. The Nicolaitanes require voluntary humility. Bowing before shrines, regardless of the images, costs eternal reward. We affect our own tomorrow by the choices we make today.

A Pillar in the Temple of my God

Jesus will give to those who overcome a position in the temple of the New Jerusalem, termed the temple of God. By this wording, Jesus also confirms David's insight into the relationship of the Father to the Son: the Father is termed "my God" by Jesus, just as

David had written, “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool” [Ps. 110:1].

Paul tells Timothy the church is the ground and pillar of the truth [I Tim. 3:15]. Just as Jacob had established a pillar at Bethel to the testimony of what God had promised him and just as Joshua had set pillars at the crossing of the Jordan as a testimony of the power and promise of God for generations to come [Joshua 4:5-7], we shall be “pillars” in the temple of Christ’s God. We shall stand and testify to the faithfulness of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

And he shall go NO MORE OUT

When Jesus declared, “I am the door,” he added the words, “by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved and shall go in and out and find pasture” [John 10:9]. Beyond our present salvation there is an access into the presence of the Father. We go into his presence by Jesus, and we find pasture. We leave his presence, for we must function in a physical world, and find pasture through the person of his Spirit. But in the Revelation, he who overcomes in the Philadelphia church period will “go no more out” [3:12]. If it means positionally, as with the “pillar” standing before God, it may imply that these, out of all the servants of God from all of the church age, will function as the priests of God in the general statement “hath made us kings and priests” [1:6].

To be more specific, we may serve as ‘Eliakim’s,” treasurers of the temple, because of the introduction of the Lord as “he that hath the key of David” [3:7]. This may be why we find three names written upon these servants: the name of God the Father himself, the name of the city of God, and the new name of Jesus [3:12]. Such authority would give total access to open, and have no man shut, and to shut, and have no man open. To whom would they minister? To those who will need the leaves of the tree of life for healing: the nations of the new earth [Rev. 22:2].

If the phrase “to go no more out” refers to the light of this candlestick, it means that light will not cease: no closing date for this church period.

A New Name

Jesus tells us that there will be a “new name” for him, and that it will be written upon those who overcome. One “new” name for the Son was JESUS, if we can borrow the wording of the Revelation and speak of the eternal by progression. God the Father gave him that name because of the fulfillment of the events described in Philippians 2:5-8 – Jesus “thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men: and, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

What events will preclude this “new” name of Jesus, referred to by Jesus himself in Rev. 3:12? We know he is the “prince” of the kings of the earth at the time he is giving this revelation to John [1:5]. That new name could be the name as of his crowning [Rev. 5], since this church has the promise of being “caught-up” [“kept” from the hour of temptation that shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth”]. That new name? KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS [Rev. 19:16].

Revelation 3:14-18
LAODICEA [1948-????]

The following outline is based on this analogy: palatable food (verses 15 & 16).

***TEXT:** And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; ¹⁵I know thy works, that **thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.** ¹⁶**So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.** ¹⁷Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: ¹⁸I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.*

NOTE: “Neither cold nor hot” is “lukewarm.” Therefore, God is going to spew out of his mouth those who will not hear and refuse to buy of him. They are not palatable to him: they are not pleasing unto him. “Hot” is not a reference to zeal; neither is “cold” a reference to having forgotten we were purged from our old sins [II Peter 1:9]. The emphasis is on toleration of the synagogue of Satan, which will reach the end of his longsuffering.

- I. And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write
 - A. These things saith the Amen
 - 1. The faithful witness
 - 2. And the true witness
 - 3. The beginning of the creation of God
 - B. These things saith the Amen
 - 1. I know thy works
 - a. That thou art neither cold
 - b. Nor *art thou* hot
 - 2. I would thou wert cold or hot
 - 3. So then, I will spue thee out of my mouth
 - a. Because thou art lukewarm
 - b. And *because thou art* neither cold
 - c. Or *art thou* hot
- II. And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write
 - A. I counsel thee to buy of me
 - 1. Gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich
 - 2. And white raiment
 - a. That thou mayest be clothed
 - b. And that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear
 - B. And *I counsel thee to* anoint thine eyes with eyesalve that thou mayest see
 - C. *I counsel thee to buy of me*
 - 1. Because thou sayest
 - a. I am rich
 - b. And *I am* increased with goods
 - c. And *I* have need of nothing
 - 2. And *because thou* knowest not
 - a. That thou art wretched
 - b. And *that thou art* miserable
 - c. And *that thou art* poor
 - d. And *that thou art* blind
 - e. And *that thou art* naked

Revelation 3:19-22
LAODICEA [Post Rapture]

The following outline is based on the compound verbs of the adverbial clause in v. 20.

TEXT: *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.* ²⁰*Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man **hear** my voice, and **open** the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.* ²¹*To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.* ²²*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

NOTE: Just as the Philadelphian church has a unique position in being kept from the hour of temptation, the Laodicean church also has a unique position: it is the only church to be “spewed out” by God. He gave “Jezebel” space to repent [2:21] before he cast her into a bed where she could fulfil her adulterous ways [2:22]. He tolerated the presence of the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes since Pergamos, though he testifies to hating such teachings [2:15]. And now, when Laodicea is left without either “my servants” to seduce [2:20] or those who have not the doctrine of Satan [2:24], they will no longer be “palatable” to God. There is no reason to tolerate them once the rapture takes place [Matt. 13:28-30]. Until then, God rebukes and chastens those among them whom he loves. Afterwards, there will only be the knocking from without, characteristic of a Tribulation period “church” that denies the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ and turns to a “lie” in worshipping the son of perdition [Rev. 13:15].

- I. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.
 - A.. As many as I love, I rebuke
 - B. And, *as many as I love, I chasten*
 - 1. Be zealous, therefore
 - 2. And repent
 - a. Behold, I stand at the door
 - b. And I knock
 - 1.) If any man hear my voice
 - 2.) And *if any man* open the door
 - a.) I will come in to him
 - b.) And I will sup with him
 - c.) And he *will sup* with me
- II. To him that overcometh
 - A. I will grant *him* to sit with me
 - B. *I will grant him to sit* in my throne
 - 1. Even as I also overcame
 - 2. And *even as I also* am set down
 - a. With my Father
 - b. In his throne

NOTE: The fulfillment of the promises [3:20,21] made to those who will refuse to worship the beast [13:15] is pictured in Rev. 7:14 – “These are they which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” They shall “sit” in the throne with him: “Therefore are they before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them” [Rev. 7:15].

Revelation 3:14-22

COMMENTARY

The description of Jesus [3:14] is in a reverse order, from end to beginning: (1) the Amen, (2) the faithful and true witness, (3) the beginning of the creation of God. He is mentioned first as the “Amen” because the revelation itself is a closing of creation as we know it. We face a new heaven and a new earth, a new Jerusalem and new nations [22:2]. Jesus has sent to us this revelation given him of the Father [1:1], and in sending it, he has stamped “Amen” on its contents [1:2].

We recognize the creation [Gen. 1:1]. Yet, Jesus makes reference beyond creation. He refers to “the beginning” of the creation of God, to those counsels of God before the world began. It is not enough to testify, “Before Abraham was, I am.” No, we hear his testimony through John, “In the beginning was the WORD” before there was a creation. And the WORD that was the “beginning of creation” is that same WORD that is the ending of creation: the final “Amen.”

Between the beginning and the end, Jesus has been “the faithful and true witness.” That same expression was used to begin a three-part description of him earlier: “Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth” [1:5]. In the opening of this portion to Laodicea, it serves as a reminder that what Jesus had said from the beginning of creation has been maintained through the history of his creation. The Apostle Paul worded it this way to Timothy: “This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” [I Tim. 1:15]. Salvation by grace through faith was the theme of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world and manifest in these last times for us [I Peter 1:20]. That salvation has been finished; Jesus has been waiting at the right hand of the Father. It is now time for a completion that must ultimately come: all of his enemies will be made his footstool. The completion of the patience of his longsuffering is on the horizon. God has been faithful. It is time for the final “Amen.”

God’s “Merchandise”

The Lord counsels the church at Laodicea to buy of him gold and white raiment. He counsels that church to anoint their eyes “with eye-salve.” Why? Because they are spiritually poor and naked and blind. Though not so in the view of this world; it is so in God’s sight. Just the element of raiment is sufficient to understand that the group to which he speaks is an unsaved crowd: they are the Jezebel’s of the synagogue of Satan. They are those who seduced God’s servants. They promised his servants liberty while they themselves were the servants of corruption [II Pet. 2:19].

Paul explained this “raiment” regarding his brethren after the flesh: “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved. For I bear record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they, being ignorant of God’s righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God: for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth” [Rom. 10:1-4].

The Laodicean church is similar to the great harlot of Rev. 17, in her self-assessment: “I am rich,” she says, “and increased with goods, and have need of nothing” [3:17]. Yet, she is “wretched and miserable.” God looks on the heart. He sees whether the peace of God reigns or whether wickedness rules. A man’s profession is not the proof; a man’s possession is the proof. Do we have the Spirit of God within us, whereby we cry out to God, “Abba, Father” [Rom. 8:14-16]?

Out of His Mouth

Why the terminology, “Out of his mouth”? Remember Jezebel? She called herself a prophetess. And she taught God’s servants under her claim of being his spokesperson. She was taken at face value by some of God’s servants, and she seduced them. That group has been taken as God’s spokesmen ever since. But there is a promise, given to the faithful of Philadelphia, that this crowd will be made to know whom God loves, for they will be made “to come and worship” before our feet [Rom. 16:20].

Gold, Raiment and Eye-salve

Peter tells us that the trial of our faith is much more precious than the trial of gold, though that gold be tried by fire [I Pet. 1:7]. Jesus, then, is counseling Laodicea to have faith when he asks them “to buy of me gold tried in the fire.” As Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness, so we must believe the record of God’s Son to have the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

White raiment requires that our sins be “washed away.” Christ did that for us at Calvary, when he shed his own blood [Rev. 1:5]. The characteristic of the unsaved is to deny the Lord that bought them while bringing in damnable heresies [II Pet. 2:1]. They turn the grace of God [his longsuffering] into lasciviousness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ [Jude 1:4]. Their denial is of the very thing that can wash their robes white, his blood. Yet, it will be exercised by some of the tribulation who place their faith in the true and living God [Rev. 7:14].

The eye salve reminds us of our humility: our need for repentance. Ever wonder why some things are in the Bible? Consider the account of the blind man Jesus healed through the unusual means of an eye salve made from clay and spittle [John 9]. The blindness was not due to his own sin, nor of any sin of his parents. We inherited sin from Adam. Jesus had just declared to the man, “I am the light of the world”; yet, he could not see the light. He was blind. He could not understand what the Lord was doing when he took of the dust of the ground [clay] and the water of the Word [spittle] and made a salve for his eyes.

The blind man followed Jesus’ instructions. He went to the pool of Siloam and washed. Someone assisted him. Either a guide or a stranger lead him to the pool. When he obeyed the word of the Lord, he received his sight. It was on a sabbath day. The Pharisees, therefore, took offense. They cared not for the miracle. Their actions showed their disbelief of any miracle. They cared only for the enforcement of their law. But when some of them asked him, “Are we blind also?”, he answered, “If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore, your sin remaineth” [John 9:41]. They could only see the violation of their law and not the redemption that is freely given in Christ Jesus.

Rebuke and Chastisement

There are those within the church of Laodicea whom Jesus loves, as there were his servants seduced in Thyatira. He calls for them to repent through rebuke and chastisement. Because of this, the knock on the door [v. 20] could be applied as a warning of the rapture, though the rest of the verse clearly shows it a call to salvation.

Why rebuke and chastisement? Probably because of the two groups, since Thyatira, that each have a fault of their own. Remember that there were those false teachers who seduced God’s servants with the doctrine of Satan [2:20] and there were those who had not the doctrine of Satan [2:24].

These are the three measures of meal [Matt. 13:33]. The whole lump will eventually be leavened [a process helped by the rapture because the leavened measure is all that will remain (3:10)]. Once the rapture occurs, God will spew this church out of his mouth. In

the meantime, the sin of those seduced requires chastisement, for these are sons of God and not bastards [Heb. 12:8]. And what is the sin of those who have not known the depths of Satan? They “suffered” Jezebel to teach [2:20]. They tolerated the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes [2:15]. And they lost their first love [2:4].

Redeemed out of Great Tribulation

There is a division [v. 20]: God shifts from rebuking and chastening to knocking and “supping.” We know that some will overcome in the tribulation period, even in great tribulation. The promise to them is that they will sit with Jesus and his Father in his throne. To do this, they must hear his knock and open the door of their heart by faith. He will save them. Jesus promised. He will come in to them and will sup with them. And they will sup with Jesus. They will make their robes white in the blood of the Lamb [7:14], though they will die, refusing to worship the beast [13:15].

Why 1948?

The year selected to represent the beginning of this church period is, as the other dates, of an event that shows a clear change taking place. Two aspects of the year 1948 evidence such change. The first deals with Israel; the second deals with the religious Gentile community.

Arthur James Balfour, British philosopher and statesman, became first lord of the Admiralty in 1915. As foreign secretary (1916-1919) he issued the Balfour Declaration on Nov. 2, 1917. This declaration guaranteed British aid in establishing a Jewish national home in Palestine. Between 1920 and 1929 some 77,000 new settlers established a presence in the area. In ensuing years, thousands more entered their homeland. Finally, in May of 1948, under Arab protest, these Jews were able to proclaim the establishment of the republic of Israel.

Jesus gave a promise to the generation that would see the fig tree put forth leaves, for it is the sign that summer is nigh: the generation that saw Israel restored “shall not pass away, ‘till all these things be fulfilled” [Matt. 24:34]. Can we then set a date? It is best to remember that no man knows the day nor the hour; and too many have failed, trying to project the right year. Israel is being prepared by God for day they will again be grafted into the olive tree [Rom. 11: 24]. Sufficient is the knowledge that we are in the last days of the “last days.”

Regarding we Gentile, plans that started a decade earlier saw fruition; for, “between 22 August and 4 September, 1948, over 350 delegates, representing about 150 churches from 44 countries, met at Amsterdam. This meeting completed the task of creating a world ecumenical council” known as the World Council of Churches [Cairn’s, p. 468]. “The World Council increasingly, since its fourth assembly at Uppsala, Sweden, in 1968 has turned to the left socially, economically, and politically, making salvation earthly and physical rather than spiritual” [Cairn’s, p. 469].

Revelation 4:1-3

THE ANCIENT OF DAYS

The following outline is based on the noun clauses used as objects of *said* in v. 1.

TEXT: *After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. ²And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. ³And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.*

NOTE: Daniel describes the Ancient of days seated on his throne. He describes the rainbow round about the throne as “his wheels” in sight “as burning fire” [Dan. 7:9]. And Daniel sees the Son of man coming to the Ancient of days and receiving “dominion and glory and a kingdom” [compare Dan. 7 to Rev. 5]. The Father is described as Jesus is described: his garment is as white as snow, and his hair as the pure wool.

The “door” opened in heaven, if applied to Jesus standing at the door of time [Rev. 3:20], takes us back to the door through which the rapture occurs. The expressions “after this” and “things which must be hereafter” reflect the last of the three divisions given in Rev. 1:19, regarding the mystery of the church. And the command to “Come up hither” is the command we await as we listen for the trumpet sound [I Thess. 4:16].

The events of this chapter take place in heaven. We move from a synopsis of the church age back to John’s “being in the spirit” [1:10]. From the tabernacle of heaven, where Jesus ministers to the churches, we move to the throne room of the Father [4:2].

Two gem stones are used to describe the Father’s head, hands and feet; one is used to describe the Holy Spirit, the rainbow of seven Spirits [1:4]. The Father is to look upon as a jasper and a sardine stone. Jasper is opaque: not transparent. He does not reflect light; he is light. The colors are reddish, yellow and brown. The sardine is a deep orange-red variety of onyx made up of layers of white chalcedony, having the reflective luster of wax. He is the focal point, seated on the throne, distinctive midst the brilliance about him. And the color of the rainbow burns as the fire of an emerald’s lush green beneath his throne.

- I. After this I looked
- II. And, behold *what I beheld*
 - A. A door was opened in heaven
 - B. And the first voice which I heard was, as it were, of a trumpet
 - 1. Talking with me
 - 2. Which said
 - a. Come up hither
 - b. And I will shew thee things
 - 1.) Which must be
 - 2.) Which must be hereafter
- III. And immediately I was in the spirit
- IV. And, behold *what I beheld*
 - A. A throne was set in heaven
 - B. And one sat on the throne
 - 1. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper stone
 - 2. And he that sat was to look upon like a sardine stone
 - C. And there was a rainbow
 - 1. Round about the throne
 - 2. In sight like unto an emerald

Revelation 4:4-7 THE FOUR BEASTS

The following outline is based on the parallel clauses describing the four beasts in v. 7.

TEXT: *And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. ⁵And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. ⁶And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. ⁷And **the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle.***

NOTE: Place the throne on the face of a clock. Round about the throne are 24 seats, one set every half hour. In each seat sits an elder, clothed as God is clothed, wearing a golden crown and possessing a harp and a golden vial full of the odors of the prayers of the saints [5:8]. Who are they? We could divide them evenly, calling 12 the apostles and the others either the 12 sons of Jacob or 12 patriarchs of our own choosing.

Out of the throne go forth three distinct soundslightnings, thunderings and voices. The voice of God thunders from his throne [Job 40:9]; the impact of the arrows [angels] he sends forth are as lightening [Zech. 9:14]; and, under the altar are the souls of them slain for the word of God, crying, "How long, O Lord?" [6:9,10; 3:21]. These represent conversations between the Father and his saints, and the actions of angels that result therefrom.

- I. And round about the throne
 - A. *There* were four and twenty seats
 - B. And upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders
 - 1. Sitting
 - 2. Clothed in white raiment
 - 3. And they had on their heads crowns of gold
- II. And out of the throne
 - A. Lightnings proceeded
 - B. And thunderings *proceeded*
 - C. And voices *proceeded*
- III. And before the throne
 - A. There were seven lamps of fire
 - B. *There were seven lamps* burning
 - C. *The seven lamps* which are the seven Spirits of God
- IV. And before the throne
 - A. There was a sea of glass
 - B. *There was a sea* like unto crystal
- V. And in the midst of the throne
[And round about the throne]
 - A. *There* were four beasts
 - 1. Full of eyes before
 - 2. And *full of eyes* behind
 - B. *There were four beasts*
 - 1. And the first beast was like a lion
 - 2. And the second beast like a calf
 - 3. And the third beast had a face as a man
 - 4. And the fourth beast was like a flying eagle

Revelation 4:4-7 COMMENTARY

And the order of these three sounds change in relation to each other. At the presentation of the Lamb, the order is lightnings, thunderings and voices [4:5]. Before the sounding of the 1st trumpet, when the prayers of the saints are poured out, the order is voices, thunderings and lightnings, followed by an earthquake [8:5]. After the 7th trumpet, when the temple of God is opened in heaven, the order is lightnings, voices and thunderings [11:19]. At the pouring out of the 7th vial, when the angels declares “It is done,” the order is voices, thunders, lightnings and a great earthquake [16:18]. The lightnings are the angels as they obey God’s command. And the earthquake? The results on earth of a heavenly communication.

Lamps of Fire

The seven lamps of fire are the seven Spirits of God, representative of the Holy Spirit. They are before the throne, covering a span on that clock face [the one on which we set the throne of God for reference] of three hours or one-quarter of its circumference [showing four sides to that throne]. The seven lamps picture the head of the Spirit, facing the Father, waiting on his commands. They represent the head because they are part of the rainbow round about that throne, the wheels of Daniel [7:9] and Ezekiel [10:6]. Picture him as the band about the face of the clock, rising and falling in the spectrum of the light of God as he moves in response to the Father’s command, just as he had moved upon the face of the waters [Gen. 1:2].

The Sea of Glass

Picture the protective lens of the clock as the sea of glass upon which the throne rests. In that sea are the souls of those who were slain for the testimony of Jesus [6:9]. It is their voices conversing with God as the angels do his bidding. They are surrounded by his Spirit, in the midst of the elders.

The Four Beasts

The throne is high, and open. In the midst of its pillars and round about the throne are four beasts, flying. What is common for each of them is their eyes. They are full of eyes, before and behind [4:8]. And they each have six wings [4:8]. What is not common are their faces: one has the face of a lion, another has the face of a calf, the third has the face of a man, and the last has the face of an eagle. What symbolism could these literal beasts represent?

Ezekiel describes beasts with four heads, joined at the wings [1:10]. His order of description lists the man, the lion, the ox and the eagle. What Ezekiel saw were the same four beasts joined, “huttled” together, in you will. John saw them separated. Recall Daniel’s instruction on end time matters: “shut up the words, and seal up the book, even to the time of the end” [Dan. 12:4]. Ezekiel sees the beasts, whose heads and bodies are as two bookends joined, clasped tightly together. But when they concealed to Ezekiel is opened in the revelation to John.

Of the symbolism of the beasts, they represent four stages in the life of Christ, fulfilled by this time: the lion pictures Jesus through Judah’s standard as the Lion of the tribe of Judah; the eagle represents Jesus as the redeemer of the Gentiles, the unclean accepted into the camp of Israel as Ephraim, who was made the firstborn of Israel and given the covenant of promise [Gen. 48:5, 20; Lev. 11:13]; the calf [or ox] represents Jesus as the sacrifice for cleansing, as, for example, the red heifer is vital to the cleansing of the tabernacle and the priest. The man pictures Jesus made of a woman, a high priest that can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities. Christ has completed all four stages; and these creatures are reminders of his success, praising him without ceasing.

Revelation 4:8-11
CASTING CROWNS BEFORE HIM

The following outline is based on the objects of the infinitive *to receive* in v. 11.

TEXT: *And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. ⁹And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, ¹⁰the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, ¹¹Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive **glory** and **honour** and **power**: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*

NOTE: The terminology “full of eyes within” [v. 8], as with Ezekiel’s “and their rings were full of eyes round about them”[1:18], speaks of the presence of the Holy Spirit, as does the plummet in Zerubbabel’s hand, “with those seven eyes that run to and fro through the whole earth” [Zech. 4:10] and as the seven eyes of the seven horns of the Lord Jesus [Rev. 5:6].

- I. And the four beasts
 - A. Each of them had six wings about him
 - B. And they were full of eyes within
 - C. And they rest not day and night
 - 1. Saying, “Holy, holy, holy”
 - 2. *Saying*, “Lord God Almighty”
 - a. Which was
 - b. And is
 - c. And is to come
- II. And the four & twenty elders
 - A. Fall down before him that sat on the throne
 - B. And worship him that liveth for ever and ever
 - C. And cast their crowns before the throne
 - 1. *Saying*
 - a. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory
 - b. *And thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive* honour
 - c. *And thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive* power
 - 1.) For thou hast created all things
 - 2.) And for thy pleasure
 - a.) They are *created*
 - b.) And *they* were created
 - 2. When those beasts
 - a. Give glory to him
 - 1.) That sat on the throne
 - 2.) Who liveth for ever and ever
 - b. And *give* honour *to him*
 - c. And *give* thanks *to him*

NOTE: The Father is worthy of honor, for he was in Christ Jesus, reconciling the world unto himself. He so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son. He is worthy of glory and honor and power for, like the Son [Col. 1:16], all things were created by and for him. The mystery of the Godhead: perfect unity in distinctive diversity – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

Revelation 5:1-5

BEHOLD, THE LION

The following outline is based on the infinitives modifying the verb *prevailed* in v. 5.

TEXT: *And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. ²And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? ³And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. ⁴And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. ⁵And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed **to open** the book, and **to loose** the seven seals thereof.*

NOTE: The book in the right hand of the Father is as the book of Isaiah or the book of Daniel: it is a “book” in scroll form, written “within and on the backside.” As the Ethiopian Eunuch read the book of Isaiah [also written on a scroll], he needed someone to explain of whom the prophet spake: was it of himself or of another? In response, Philip began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus [Acts 8:26-40].

The book in the right hand of the Father was Jesus’ book. Christ was the only one found worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof. Hence, it is the Lamb’s Book, which implies that it is also the Lamb’s book of life [Rev. 20:15, 21:27]. That book, the Lamb’s Book of Life, will be opened by his angels at the close of the Revelation, a task made possible because the Lamb himself has prevailed to loose the seals thereof.

His “prevailing” involves, in part, his having “soiled principalities and powers” when he made an open show of them, triumphing over them in the cross [Col. 2:15].

- I. And I saw
 - A. A book
 - 1. In the right hand of him that sat on the throne
 - 2. Written within
 - 3. And *written* on the backside
 - 4. Sealed with seven seals
 - B. And a strong angel, proclaiming with a loud voice,
 - 1. Who is worthy to open the book?
 - 2. And *who is worthy* to loose the seals thereof?
 - a. And no man *was found worthy*
 - 1.) In heaven
 - 2.) Nor in earth
 - 3.) Neither under the earth
 - b. *And no man* was able to open the book
 - c. Neither *was any man able* to look thereon
- II. And I wept much
 - A. Because no man was found worthy to open the book
 - B. And *no man was found worthy* to read the book
 - C. Neither *was any man found worthy* to look thereon
- III. And one of the elders saith unto me
 - A. Weep not
 - B. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda
 - C. *Behold*, the Root of David
 - 1. *He* hath prevailed to open the book
 - 2. And *he hath prevailed* to loose the seven seals thereof

Revelation 5:1-5 COMMENTARY

That Jesus “prevailed” hints at the struggle involved with the redemption of man. The seriousness of this issue is reinforced by John’s tears: he wept. He wept because of what the strong angel was saying as John witnessed a search in heaven, in earth and under the earth. And the results of that search were conclusive: no man was found worthy to open the book in the Father’s right hand.

Is it out of place to suggest that this strong angels is Satan, prince of the power of the air, “questioning” the Father? He has access to the throne, as shown by the book of Job, up to his defeat in Rev. 11:9. This is the enemy of whom Jesus made an open show [Col. 2:15]. Satan had desired to be as God, to sit “upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north” [Is. 14:13]. His goal may have been to claim the book of life itself from the Father’s right hand. “Life” is what he had offered Eve: to be as God, knowing good and evil. And the pull of sin is still to “live it up.”

It may seem strange that John as the church in type at the opening of chapter 4, is weeping much in chapter 5, as he observes the strong angel’s “proclaiming with a loud voice.” Yet, we have no way of comprehending the seriousness of these events in heaven. We know, however, that they will lead to war in heaven itself [Rev. 12:7] and to great tribulation on earth [Rev. 12:12]. The accuser to the brethren presents an awesome scene, but our Redeemer is God himself.

THE ELDERS

The elders show their openness to all the saints in their concern for and comforting of John. They remind him of the great truth that the Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed. In their contact and concern, they reflect Abraham’s actions as he had comforted Lazarus in Paradise [Luke 16:23].

NO MAN WAS FOUND WORTHY

Just as John saw the future of the church age in chapters 2 & 3, so here he sees the past. Those who claimed the right to be worthy and failed. And, because of the shift from the book itself to the need for one to take the book and to loose the seals thereof, the focus turns to the Lamb “as it had been slain” [5:6], referred to here by the elder as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David.

THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH [THE ROOT OF DAVID]

The Lion of the tribe of Judah is the root of David. He who would end as the Lion, began unseen. He made himself of no reputation [Phil. 2:7], thinking it not robbery to be equal with God. He became the Seed of the woman, to be born of a virgin, born in the lineage of David. And he drew within that lineage such as the Moabitess Ruth.

As the constellations begin with Virgo and end with Leo [shown in the figure of the sphinx], so Jesus began as the root of David and ends as the Lion of the tribe of Judah: “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him [*Shiloh or Christ*] shall the gathering of the people be. Binding the foal unto the vine and his ass’s colt unto the choice vine, he washed his garments in wine and his clothes in the blood of grapes: his eyes shall be red with wine and his teeth white with milk” [Gen. 49:10-12].

THE SEVEN SEALS

“Seven” speaks of completion. It also speaks of the presence of the Spirit of God [Rev. 5:6]. The opening of these seals will be the closing of time. Notice that the wording is “to open the book and to loose the seals thereof.” The seven seals have a portion of the scroll closed, probably the major portion. As the seven are loosed, they will carry us from this point in time, the rapture [3:10], to the white throne judgment [20:11-15].

Revelation 5:6-10 BEHOLD, A LAMB

The following outline is based on the compound objects of the participle *having* in v. 6.

TEXT: *And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven **horns** and seven **eyes**, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. ⁷And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. ⁸And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. ⁹And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; ¹⁰And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.*

NOTE: Jesus is the Lamb who was “slain from the foundation of the world” [Rev. 13:8]. He was “foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you [I Peter 2:20].

- I. And I beheld, and, lo,
 - A. *There stood a Lamb*
 - 1. In the midst of the throne
 - 2. And *in the midst* of the four beasts
 - 3. And in the midst of the elders
 - B. *There stood a Lamb*
 - 1. As it had been slain
 - 2. Having seven horns
 - 3. And *having* seven eyes
 - a. Which are the seven Spirits of God
 - b. *Which are the seven Spirits* sent forth into all the earth
- II. And *I beheld, and lo*
 - A. He came
 - B. And *he* took the book
 - 1. Out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne
 - 2. And when he had taken the book
 - a. The four beasts *fell down before the Lamb*
 - b. And *the* four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb
 - 1.) Having every one of them harps
 - 2.) And *having* golden vials full of odours
 - a.) Which are *prayers*
 - b.) *Which are* the prayers of saints
 - c. And they sung a new song, saying
 - 1.) Thou art worthy to take the book
 - 2.) And *thou art worthy* to open the seals thereof
 - a.) For thou wast slain
 - b.) And *thou* hast redeemed us to God by thy blood
 - (1.) Out of every kindred
 - (2.) And *out of every* tongue
 - (3.) And *out of every* people
 - (4.) And *out of every* nation
 - c.) And *thou* hast made us unto our God
 - (1.) Kings
 - (2.) And priests
 - d.) And we shall reign on the earth

Revelation 5:6-10 COMMENTARY

In that Christ suffered death, he suffered once, for all [Heb. 10:10]. He offered one sacrifice for sins, forever; after which sacrifice he sat down on the right hand of God [Heb. 10:12]. For, by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified [Heb. 10:14]. Hence, when John sees in the midst of the throne a Lamb “as it had been slain,” he sees a sacrifice on the altar in the midst of the throne as a memorial to what Jesus had prophesied he would do and to what he had done.

Recall how the sacrifice was to be killed, cleansed and laid upon the altar [Lev. 1:10-13]. Link that to what we are told of Abraham’s sacrifice in Gen. 15, and we see Jesus, who is the Light of the world and the Light of the New Jerusalem, moving across this heavenly altar as the “burning lamp and smoking furnace” had passed through Abraham’s sacrifice. In this manner he makes his way from the candlestick of chapter one to the right hand of the Father for the restoration of the natural olive branch. Just as he had confirmed the covenant with Abraham in this way on earth, he reminds all in heaven and in earth and under the earth that he has confirmed the covenant there in heaven as well.

What made the Lion worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof was His sacrifice as the Lamb. His “seven horns and seven eyes” are the sign of the presence of the seven Spirits of God in him, sent forth into all the earth to reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment. “Of sin because they believe not on me,” Jesus said, “of righteousness because I go to my Father and ye see me no more, and of judgment because the prince of this world is judged” [John 16:8-11].

“Seven” is also the number of covenant, as seen in the seven ewe lambs used by Abraham in his covenant with Abimelech [Gen. 21:27-32].

THE ELDERS

On the “shore” of the crystal sea, which is before the throne [4:6] are the twenty-four elders, who fall down before the Lamb, along with the four beasts, and worship him [Rev. 5:14]. These elders, clothed in white and wearing crowns [4:4], have harps of gold and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of the saints. Upon the harps they play the melody of the new song they sing [v. 9]. And with the vials they service the heavenly altar of incense, placing before God the prayers of saints.

In this service the elders are not interceding for the saints. No. We, as saints, are instructed to come boldly before the throne of grace, that we may, ourselves, obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need [Heb. 4:16]. What the elders are doing is pouring out prayers God has assigned them to keep as a memorial or reminder. They are a sweet savour unto him. Just as we bring to remembrance the scripture that thrills our soul, so God reviews the prayers of his saints as a witness.

Imagine how cherished the prayers of the nation of Israel are to God, when they finally cried out to God in their bondage [Ex. 2:23]. Your prayer of faith may be in that number.

A NEW SONG

When Israel crossed the Red Sea on dry ground and saw their enemies overwhelmed in the flood of water as the river closed upon them, they sang a new song: the song of Moses. We will have safe passage over the lake of fire, on “dry ground.” Our spiritual enemies will be overcome. And we will sing a song of deliverance as well. It will be a new song: the song of the Lamb. He is worthy, having been slain and having redeemed us to the Father by his blood. We who are of every kindred, tongue, people and nation, shall praise him. For just as there will be those cast into eternal torment of all the earth [1:7], there shall also be those redeemed of all the earth. And God will fulfill his promise [1:6] by making us kings and priests unto the Father. And we will reign upon this earth [20:4].

Revelation 5:11-14
WORTHY IS THE LAMB!

The following outline is based on the compound objects of the adverbial infinitive *to receive*, used to modify *worthy* in v.12.

TEXT: *And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;* ¹²*saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive **power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*** ¹³*And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.* ¹⁴*And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.*

NOTE: The base or beginning number of the angels praising the Lamb is 100 million. Add to that “thousands of thousands,” and we get a number that is innumerable.

- I. And I beheld
- II. And I heard the voice
 - A. Of many angels round about the throne
 - 1. And the number of them was
 - a. Ten thousand times ten thousand
 - b. And thousands of thousands
 - 2. *And the number was* saying with a loud voice
 - a. Worthy is the Lamb
 - b. *Worthy is the Lamb* that was slain
 - 1.) To receive power
 - 2.) *And to receive* riches
 - 3.) *And to receive* wisdom
 - 4.) *And to receive* strength
 - 5.) *And to receive* honour
 - 6.) *And to receive* glory
 - 7.) *And to receive* blessing
 - B. And the beasts *round about the throne*
 - C. And the elders *round about the throne*
- III. And I heard every creature
 - A. Which is in heaven
 - B. And *which is* on the earth
 - C. And *which is* under the earth
 - D. And such as are in the sea
 - E. And all that are in them
- IV. *I heard them [the many angels & every creature],* saying
 - A. *Blessing be for ever and ever*
 - B. And honour *be for ever and ever*
 - C. And glory *be for ever and ever*
 - D. And power *be for ever and ever*
 - 1. Unto him that sitteth upon the throne
 - 2. And unto the Lamb
- V. And the four beasts said, Amen
- VI. And the four and twenty elders fell down
- VII. And *the four and twenty elders* worshipped him
 - A. That liveth for ever
 - B. *That liveth for ever* and ever

Revelation 5:11-14 COMMENTARY

When we consider that the great multitude John describes to us includes “every creature which is in heaven and on earth and under the earth, as well as such as are in the sea and all that are in them,” we get a grasp of the focus on four beasts and twenty-four elders standing out midst the throng. The scene reminds us of a day when, at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God” [Phil. 2:9-11]. But this is natural and right. It is normal. Jesus is highly exalted; and heaven’s throng, as pictured in Rev. 5, readily worships our Lord and Savior.

WORSHIP AND THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Recall how specific the commandments of God are regarding our worship [Ex. 20:1-6]:

1. “I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.”
2. “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the water under the earth.”
3. “Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.”

Yet, when we view Revelation 4 & 5 as a unit, we see both the worship of the Father on the throne [4:11] and the worship of the Son, who takes the book from the Father’s hand [5:8]. God the Father validates, by his acceptance of the worship the Son, the deity of Jesus Christ. Indeed, they are worshipped together [5:13], to which the four beasts say, “Amen.”

HIM THAT LIVETH FOR EVER AND EVER

The application of this clause in chapter 4 [v.10] is of God the Father, the Ancient of Days upon his throne. In chapter 5 [v. 14], the question then arises, “Before whom does the four and twenty elders fall down and worship? Is it the Father? Or is it the Son?”

The Son is to receive blessing and honour, and glory, and power “for ever and ever” [v. 13], for he is the Lamb. And the rule of antecedents, that requires a personal pronoun, such as *him*, to be taken back to the first noun of logical reference, locks this clause to describing the Lamb. Hence, in these two chapters we find the exact same wording applied to both the Father [4:10] and the Son [5:14]: “him that liveth for ever and ever.”

This follows a pattern seen in the first chapter, where the expression “which is, which was and which is to come” is applied to both the Father [1:4] and the Son [1:8]. These examples reinforce the scripture’s declaration that the Son and the Father are one [John 10:30].

All of this worship is a prelude to the great chapter on the four Alleluia’s [Rev. 19] and the marriage supper of the Lamb. What must transpire in between now [chapter 5] and then is the preparation of the bride: “his wife hath made herself ready” [Rev. 19:7]. Considering John’s tears as he first encounters the strong angel in his power [5:2-4] and John’s confidence as he sees the Lamb revealed, that preparation may be the declaration of the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony [12:11]. The church will overcome Satan in the presence of the Father and of the Lamb by these means. This may be how we “make ourselves ready.” And confessing Christ before men now is good practice.

Revelation 6:1,2

THE FIRST HORSEMAN

The following outline is based on the use of *conquer* as both a participle and an infinitive.

TEXT: *And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. ²And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth **conquering**, and to **conquer**.*

NOTE: The events of this chapter mark the beginning of Jacob's Trouble and conclude with the White Throne judgment [the 6th seal]. Among the "gaps" that will be filled in as we progress through the revelation is the 1000-year reign [20:4] and Satan's final rebellion [20:3].

Our current focus is on the first four seals which, together, will cover the events of the 7 years of Jacob's Trouble, divided between tribulation and great tribulation. Five horsemen are presented, with a focus on the first four [Hell is the fifth rider, following Death (v. 8)]. Hence, the four Horsemen of Revelation 6.

The first Horseman is introduced by the first beast, the Lion. He rides upon a white horse, which is said to symbolize peace, since the next rider will remove peace from the earth [v.3]. None of these riders are a reference to Christ. Nor are they the same individual or entity. Christ will appear on a white horse, but in chapter 19.

The first of these four horsemen is the antichrist. Of him the prophet Daniel has much to say. And the key centers around the mid-point of the tribulation, what divides great tribulation from the first half of that period.

This antichrist will cause the daily sacrifice to be taken away and be replaced by the abomination that maketh desolate [Dan. 12:11]. Often called the abomination of desolation, this break in the sacrifices of the new temple marks the beginning of the last thousand, two hundred and ninety days: that is, the last three and one half years of the tribulation period called "great tribulation."

We are told of this antichrist, called the little horn in Dan. 7:8 and 8:9, that "his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully and shall prosper and practice and destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand" [Dan. 8:24,25].

- I. And when the Lamb opened one of the seals
 - A. I saw
 - B. And I heard
 - 1. The noise of thunder [as it were]
 - 2. One of the four beasts, saying
 - a. Come
 - b. And see
 - C. And I saw
- II. And *when the Lamb opened one of the seals*
 - A. Behold, a white horse
 - B. And he that sat on him
 - 1. He had a bow
 - 2. And a crown was given unto him
 - C. And he went forth
 - 1. Conquering
 - 2. And to conquer

Revelation 6:1-6 COMMENTARY

The way the antichrist will be destroyed is through his own pride. This prince will confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it (the covenant) desolate, even until the consummation [Dan. 9:27]. As a result, until the end of the war, which will culminate with Jesus appearing on the plains of Megiddo in that great day of deliverance, “desolations are determined” [Dan. 9:26].

With the covenant broken, this “vile person” [Dan. 11:21] shall find the king of the south pushing at him and the king of the north coming against him like a whirlwind [Dan. 11:40]. He shall enter also into the glorious land, making Jerusalem his headquarters. “But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore, he shall go forth with great fury to destroy and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the sea in the glorious holy mountain; yet, he shall come to his end, and none shall help him” [Dan. 11:44,45].

The rise to power for the first rider, the little horn, is ascribed to his ability to overthrow, through the presence of his bow, three of ten horns [Dan. 7:8]. As a result, he is “given a crown” by the remnant of this old Roman empire.

His fall from power begins with the rise of the second horseman, who has power to take peace from the earth. With the breaking of the covenant by the anti-christ at the mid-tribulation point, this new rider shall “turn his face toward the fort of his own land” [Dan. 11:19]. He will arise from within the allegiances of the anti-christ, to press against him. He is the king of the north; but he, too, will stumble and fall, and not be found [Dan. 11:19] by the end of the battle of Armageddon.

What will aid the antichrist in his final three and one-half years is the appearance of the third horseman, characterized by the pair of balances in his hand. He will insure food for the people in exchange for their obedience. Just as Joseph had measured out the wheat in famine, first for money and then for land and possessions until there was naught else in Egypt [Gen. 47:14-26], this rider will press the people into servitude. In exchange for their food at minimal prices, they must protect and promote the industries centered around the oil and the wine.

THE BEASTS

What we have seen here is a prophesy concerning the three beasts of chapter 13: the beast out of the sea, the beast out of the land and the image made of the first beast. The beast out of the sea is the anti-christ, the little horn who will lead the ten horns of Daniel 7:7. After the abomination of desolation, there will be need for a second beast to arise, this one out of the earth, who will have a religious nature and cause the world to worship the first beast, thus stabilizing his support during great tribulation.

This second beast is the false prophet of Rev. 19:20. He calls for the image to be made of the first beast and “causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name” [Rev. 13:16,17].

But with this mark, he shall give to the people cheap food, as Elisha had prophesied to the starving inhabitants of Jerusalem that on the morrow a measure of fine flour would be sold for a shekel and two measures of barley for a shekel [II Kings 7], so the people of the anti-christ's kingdom will have a measure of wheat for a penny and three measures of barley for the same. But the oil to propel the machinery of war and the wine to deaden the deeds and dilemmas of the same must be protected, for they are the tools of his power over the masses.

Revelation 6:3-6

THE SECOND & THIRD HORSEMEN

The following outline is based on the infinitive *to take* describing power in v. 4.

TEXT: *And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.
4And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to
take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a
great sword. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see.
5And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.
6And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three
measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.*

NOTE: The second rider gives to the anti-christ his excuse for maintaining his going forth “conquering and to conquer.” His red horse speaks of the blood that will be shed as he wields his “great sword.”

The third rider sits upon a black horse, dark and sinister. His motives are hidden. His worship is false. He controls poverty and production to his own ends. His is the society of Orwell’s “Big Brother.” And with the attention he focuses on the image of the first beast, he frees the first beast to be that vile person Daniel reveals him to be: for, his image will not change, no matter how vile the anti-christ becomes.

- I. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say
 - A. Come
 - B. And see
 - 1. And there went out another horse that was red
 - 2. And power was given to him that sat thereon
 - a. To take peace from the earth
 - b. And that they should kill one another
 - 3. And there was given unto him a great sword
- II. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say
 - A. Come
 - B. And see
 - 1. And I beheld
 - a. And, lo, a black horse
 - b. And he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand
 - 2. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say
 - a. A measure of wheat for a penny
 - b. And three measures of barley for a penny
 - c. And see thou hurt not
 - 1.) The oil
 - 2.) And the wine

NOTE: The second and third horsemen come to light at the beginning of great tribulation. By the close of great tribulation the fourth rider will have made his appearance: Death. And Death will be followed by Hell.

Hell always follows Death for the unsaved. They are the natural consequences of the events as we see them described in this chapter. Death and Hell will continue their pillage until they are called to deliver the dead which are in them at the white throne judgment [Rev. 20:13], just prior to their being cast themselves into the lake of fire. Hell will then cease to be as a separate place; and Death will reign eternally over those within the confines of the lake that burns for ever and ever.

Revelation 6:7,8

THE FOURTH HORSEMEN

The following outline is based on the parallel prepositional phrases used to describe how Death and Hell were to kill in v. 8.

TEXT: *And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. ⁸And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill **with sword**, and **with hunger**, and **with death**, and **with the beasts of the earth**.*

NOTE: The power Death has to kill covers a fourth of the earth. This means that anarchy will set in over one-fourth of the seven continents. Antarctica is not likely to be populated soon, and Australia can only account for a small percentage of the total number of deaths.

With a need for the kings of the east to come to Armageddon, as well as for Gog and Magog to be sufficiently intact after the 1000 year reign to take part in a final revolt, the Americas take center stage as the beginning of Death's grasp, a reach that will move eastward until it reaches and destroys that great city, Babylon [Rev. 18:8].

The power of Death and Hell to kill will be limited during a five month period in which men will seek death by reason of the locust from the pit and not be able to find it [Rev. 9:6]. Yet, by the beasts from the bottomless pit, one third of men will eventually be killed [Rev. 9:18]. Death will also collect the dead from the "great sword" of the second rider, who has taken peace from the earth by his battles with the anti-christ [6:4].

Death will claim the lives of many outside the auspices of the first beast and the sale of wheat and barley for a penny, as controlled by the false prophet and the image of the beast, through starvation.

Last of all, Death will kill with death itself: disease will be epidemic. The Black Death that ravaged Europe from 1347 to 1350 will seem as a small matter in the face of a plague yet to come.

- I. And when he had opened the fourth seal
 - A. I heard the voice of the fourth beast say
 - 1. Come
 - 2. And see
 - B. And I looked
 - 1. And, behold, a pale horse
 - 2. And his name that sat on him was Death
 - 3. And Hell followed with him
- II. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth
 - A. To kill with sword
 - B. And *to kill* with hunger
 - C. And *to kill* with death
 - D. And *to kill* with the beasts of the earth

NOTE: How desperate of a situation can be created by death from the beasts of the earth? God so sent lions in number upon the inhabitants of the land that the Assyrians, who had attempted to repopulate Samaria to insure safe passage for their caravans, had to find and send a Levite priest to instruct them in the ways of the Lord [II Kings 17]. Though that Levite's efforts were not wholly followed, God did lift the curse of the lions. And, as a result of their "mixed" religious practices, the Samaritans continued to worship on the mountain, as the woman at the well explained to Jesus [John 4].

Revelation 6:9-11

“VICTIMS” OF THE HORSEMEN

The following outline is based on the parallel phrases describing *slain* in v. 9.

TEXT: *And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: ¹⁰and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? ¹¹And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.*

NOTE: The fifth seal shows us the dead who had rejected the anti-christ and had taken a stand against him from the outset of the first period of the tribulation. They are made up of both Jews, the “brethren,” and Gentiles, the “fellow servants,” [v.11]. And the answer to their prayers for judgment must wait through great tribulation for the redemption of those who will yet wash their robes white in the blood of the Lamb [Rev. 7:14].

These saints of the first half of the tribulation will be slain for tworeason: the word of God and the testimony that they held. In this, they give us a key to why those who follow them will also be slain. It is their knowledge of the Word of God that will cause them to question the anti-christ. And when they are put to the test [the two great examples of which are the abomination of desolation at the divide of the tribulation period and the worship of the image of the beast, as directed by the false prophet during great tribulation], they will maintain their “testimony” [6:9].

And what could that testimony be? It could be as simple as the promise of Isaiah that at Christ’s return the “wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them” [Is. 11:6]. And by such knowledge they shall denounce the anti-christ as a fraud and be killed for their faith, maintaining their testimony as the three Hebrew children had done, unmoved, even death [Dan. 3:16-18].

Their prayers will be the incense of the golden censer cast into the earth [8:3-5], and God’s answer will be the seven trumpets [11:18,19].

- I. And when he had opened the fifth seal
 - A. I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain
 - 1. For the word of God
 - 2. And for the testimony which they held
 - B. And they cried with a loud voice, saying
 - 1. How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge?
 - 2. And *how long doest thou not* avenge our blood?
 - a. On them
 - b. *On them* that dwell on the earth
- II. And *when he had opened the fifth seal*
 - A. White robes were given unto every one of them
 - B. And it was said unto them
 - 1. That they should rest
 - a. Yet
 - b. For a little season
 - 2. *That they should rest*
 - a. Until their fellow servants also *should be fulfilled*
 - b. And their brethren should be fulfilled
 - 1.) That should be killed
 - 2.) *That should be killed* as they were

Revelation 6:12-17
THE GREAT DAY OF GOD'S WRATH

The following outline is based on the compound subjects of *hid* in v. 15.

TEXT: *And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;¹³ and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. ¹⁴And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. ¹⁵And the **kings** of the earth, and the **great men**, and the **rich men**, and the **chief captains**, and the **mighty men**, and **every bondman**, and **every free man**, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; ¹⁶and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: ¹⁷for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?*

NOTE: The sixth seal shows us the scene of the white throne judgment [Rev. 21:11]. It begins with a great earthquake, “such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty and so great” [Rev. 16:18]. This is the day of the Lord, “in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. The earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up” [II Peter 3:10].

- I. And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal
 - A. And, lo, there was a great earthquake
 - B. And the sun became black as sackcloth of hair
 - C. And the moon became as blood
 - D. And the stars of heaven fell
 - 1. Unto the earth
 - 2. Even as a fig tree casteth her figs
 - a. Untimely
 - b. When she is shaken of a mighty wind
 - E. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together
 - F. And every mountain and island were moved out of their places
- II. *And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal*
 - A. And *they* hid themselves
 - 1. The kings of the earth
 - 2. And the great men
 - 3. And the rich men
 - 4. And the chief captains
 - 5. And the mighty men
 - 6. And every bondman
 - 7. And every free man
 - B. *They hid themselves*
 - 1. In the dens *of the mountains*
 - 2. And in the rocks of the mountains
 - C. And *they* said to the mountains and rocks
 - 1. Fall on us
 - 2. And hide us
 - a. From the face of him that sitteth on the throne
 - b. And from the wrath of the Lamb
 - 3. *Hide us*
 - a. For the great day of his wrath is come
 - b. And who shall be able to stand?

Revelation 6:12-17

COMMENTARY

An eclipse, unlike any other, will turn the sun “black as sackcloth of hair” and the moon “as blood.” The stars of heaven shall shake the earth, as a third part of them are smitten [Rev. 8:12, 16:10]. Ranging in size from “a great mountain” [Rev. 8:8] to “a great star” [Rev. 8:10], they will affect a third part of the sea [Rev. 8:8] and a third part of the rivers and fountains of waters [Rev. 8:10]. Yet, through all this, the earth will stand. It will stand because Jesus must fulfill the prophecy to rule on the throne of his father David for 1000 years [Rev. 20:3].

Known as the millennial reign, it will be fulfilled with a rod of iron. Jesus, as King of kings, will rule with a rod of iron [Rev. 19:15], and he will give those who assist him in his government that same authority. His judgment will be right, and it will be final. And those who will assist him in this rule? They are those who overcame [Rev. 2:27].

The earth, though altered, will withstand the physical events of the tribulation, until Jesus has fulfilled his reign on the throne of his father David. Following a final revolt at the close of the reign that will bind the last of the sons of Belial against Jesus Christ [Rev. 20:7-9], the heaven shall depart “as a scroll when it is rolled together” [Rev. 6:14]. And the dead, both small and great, shall be gathered together for the White Throne judgment.

AN OVERVIEW REVIEW

Chapters 4-7

John enters the throne room of heaven, in type as the church at the rapture. He sees the Father seated upon his throne, receiving glory and honor and praise. In his hand is a book of unique importance. Tears are brought to John’s eyes over the challenge to open the book. But the focus turns to the one person who is worthy: God the Son. He is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. He is worthy because he has redeemed us unto God. As he takes the book, he himself receives glory and honor and praise as heaven’s throng worships both the Father and the Son.

Once the book is in the hand of Christ, John sees the seals opened one at a time. They first show an overview of the tribulation period. Then, they remind us of the saving grace of God, before they reveal the final judgment. It is the grace of God with which chapter 7 concerns itself. Between the rapture of the church [3:10] and the opening of the first seal [6:1], God prepares for the grafting in again of the natural olive branch [Rom. 11:24].

The 144,000 of chapter 7, are the evangelists of the tribulation period. Just as Elijah had thought himself the only one left to stand for the Lord, only to learn of the 7,000 God had waiting in the caves, these 144,000 are the last day “seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal and every mouth which hath not kissed him” [I Kings 19:18]. They will travel the earth, proclaiming the false nature of the anti-christ. And, aided by the presence of the two witnesses from heaven [Rev. 11], they will succeed in turning many to righteousness.

Chapter seven opens with the sealing of the 144,000 and closes with the fruit of their labors: the numberless multitude “which came out of great tribulation and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” [Rev. 7:14].

THE SEVENTH SEAL

The gaps in the overview of events, revealed to John in chapter 6, will begin to be filled with the opening of the final seal. God begins answering the prayers of his tribulation saints [Rev. 6:10] when the angel of chapter 8 casts the censer filled the incense of their prayers into the earth.

Revelation 7:1-4

THE SEAL OF THE LIVING GOD

The following outline is based on the compound direct objects of the verb *hurt* in v. 3.

TEXT: *And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.* ²*And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,* ³*saying, Hurt not the **earth**, neither the **sea**, nor the **trees**, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.* ⁴*And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.*

NOTE: The Bible's description of the forces God has placed within nature are striking in their simplicity. The four angels standing on the four-corners of the earth are an wonderful example. A "corner" is where one turns. And the winds travel about the earth in circuits that allow men to sail the oceans, fly their machines and predict weather conditions.

Recall the description of God's throne on the crystal of a watch, and the "four corners" reflect where the legs of that throne might rest as God looks down upon the earth beneath his feet. Turn that timepiece into a globe, and the markings of 3, 6, 9 and 12 on the dial can show how four corners exist in time and space.

But the focus is not on the four-corners, nor on the angels that control them. The focus is on the 144,000 that shall be sealed [14:1]. They serve the same God we serve, the Lord God Jehovah; for, John calls their God "our God" [v.3]. They serve Jesus Christ. And they serve him by turning souls from the anti-christ to the only true and living God. God's seal, placed in their foreheads, may be an explanation of how the church is now "sealed with that holy Spirit of promise" [Eph. 1:13].

- I. And after these things I saw four angels
 - A. Standing on the four corners of the earth
 - B. Holding the four winds of the earth
 - 1. That the wind should not blow on the earth
 - 2. Nor *that the wind should blow* on the sea
 - 3. Nor *that the wind should blow* on any tree
- II. And I saw another angel
 - A. Ascending from the east
 - B. Having the seal of the living God
 - C. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels
 - 1. To whom it was given to hurt the earth
 - 2. And *to whom it was given to hurt* the sea
 - D. *And he cried*, saying
 - 1. Hurt not the earth
 - 2. Neither *hurt* the sea
 - 3. Nor *hurt* the trees
 - a. Till we have sealed the servants of our God
 - b. *Till we have sealed the servants of our God* in their foreheads
- III. And I heard the number of them which were sealed
 - A. And there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand
 - B. *And there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand* of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

Revelation 7:5-8

THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FOUR THOUSAND

The following outline is based on the parallel independent clauses listing the tribes and their number sealed.

TEXT: *Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand. ⁶Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephtalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand. ⁷Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. ⁸Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.*

NOTE: The order of the tribes by birth were as follows [Gen. 49]:

- | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|----------|--------------|
| 1. Reuben | 4. Judah | 7. Dan | 10. Naphtali |
| 2. Simeon | 5. Zebulun | 8. Gad | 11. Josephi |
| 3. Levi | 6. Issachar | 9. Asher | 12. Benjamin |

Reuben is replaced by Judah, who was surety to the father for his beloved son. This is the close of the typology begun in Adam himself and the second man Adam, which is Christ. It is pictured in Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, Reuben and Judah, and Manasseh and Ephraim; and it reminds us of the rightful head of the body.

Simeon, the type of the old nature in the pairing of Simeon and Levi, is number seven, the number of perfection. The “old man” is now made perfect. Levi, the pair’s new nature, is number eight, the number of new beginnings. Service is no longer limited to one tribe, there being a change made in the priesthood itself [Heb. 7:12].

Joseph replaces his son, Ephraim, which pictures the Father switching with the Son: Jesus, who was of no reputation, is now of all reputation.

Dan is missing, not counted among the twelve tribes. This is a time of judgment [Gen. 49:16], rather than sacrifice. Like Levi, who was the 13th tribe and not numbered among the ranks of the twelve camped about the tabernacle, Dan is not numbered here. God is judging Israel as a nation and the world as a whole. And “Dan” is the tribe of judgment: he shall bite the horse’s heels so that the rider shall fall backward [Gen. 49:17].

I. *And there were sealed a hundred and forty and four thousand*

A. *Of all the tribes of the children of Israel [v.4]*

B. Twelve thousand were sealed

1. Of the tribe of Juda
2. Of the tribe of Reuben
3. Of the tribe of Gad
4. Of the tribe of Aser
5. Of the tribe of Nephtalim
6. Of the tribe of Manasses
7. Of the tribe of Simeon
8. Of the tribe of Levi
9. Of the tribe of Issachar
10. Of the tribe of Zabulon
11. Of the tribe of Joseph
12. Of the tribe of Benjamin

II. *And they were sealed the servants of our God [v.3]*

Revelation 7:9-12
A MULTITUDE INNUMERABLE

The following outline is based on the objects to the preposition *of* in verse 9.

TEXT: *After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all **nations**, and **kindreds**, and **people**, and **tongues**, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; ¹⁰and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. ¹¹And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, ¹²saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.*

NOTE: The impact of the witnessing of the 144,000 is seen in these verses. Souls are saved out of “all nations, kindreds, people and tongues” [v.9]. The gospel has always been to “whosoever will,” and God does not change that principle during the tribulation period. He is no respecter of persons. These are clothed in the same white robes of the elders [4:4].

- I. After this I beheld, and, lo, *a multitude*
 - A. A great multitude
 - B. *A multitude* which no man could number
 - 1. Of all nations
 - 2. And *of all* kindreds
 - 3. And *of all* people
 - 4. And *of all* tongues
 - C. *That multitude* stood
 - 1. Before the throne
 - 2. And before the Lamb
 - D. *That multitude* stood
 - 1. Clothed with white robes
 - 2. And *having* palms in their hands
 - E. And *that multitude* cried with a loud voice, saying
 - 1. Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne
 - 2. And *salvation* unto the Lamb
- II. And *after this I beheld, and, lo*
 - A. All the angels stood
 - 1. Round about the throne
 - 2. And *round* about the elders
 - 3. And *round about* the four beasts
 - B. And *all the angels* fell
 - 1. Before the throne
 - 2. On their faces
 - C. And *all the angels* worshipped God, saying, Amen:
 - 1. Blessing *be*
 - 2. And glory *be*
 - 3. And wisdom *be*
 - 4. And thanksgiving *be*
 - 5. And honour *be*
 - 6. And power *be*
 - 7. And might *be*
 - a. Unto our God
 - b. For ever and ever

Amen

Revelation 7:9-12
COMMENTARY
THE GREAT MULTITUDE

The multitude which “no man could number” [v. 9] reminds us that there will be light in the midst of that great darkness which will characterize the kingdom of the anti-christ. To the saints slain during the first half of tribulation [6:11], “fellow servants” will be added, and “brethren” who shall be slain, as they were, but during great tribulation.

PALMS

Along with being clothed in white, these saints of the tribulation have in their hands palms. This is the sign used to welcome the triumphant. Recall that the crowd took branches of palm trees and went forth to meet Jesus, crying, “Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel, that cometh in the name of the Lord” [John 12:13], just days before they crucified him. Then, he fulfilled the prophesy to the daughter of Zion, “Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just and, having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass” [Zech. 9:9].

Then, he was lowly, having humbled himself, being obedient unto death. But now, when these saints see him in glory, it will be at the close of tribulation. He is preparing to descend to earth, to mount his white stallion. And they are participating in a proper sending for the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, for this palm-waving will be followed by the death of his enemies at Armageddon and his ascent to the throne of his father David.

“ABOUT THE ELDERS AND THE FOUR BEASTS”

The placement of the word *about* before “the elders and the four beasts” in verse 11, clarifies that it is the angels who “fell before the throne on their faces and worshipped God” [v.11]. We see the twenty-four elders worshipping the Father [4:10], as the four beasts give glory and honor and thanks to him [4:9]. And we see the twenty-four elders worshipping the Lamb, along with “every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such that are in the sea,” as the four beasts say, “Amen” [5:14]. Now, in chapter 7, we see not only the tribulation saints worshipping the Son [7:9,10]; but also the angels worshipping the Father [7:11].

WORSHIP

Worship is an outward act, both physical and vocal, in the scenes of heaven. The tribulation saints have palms in the hands, waving them and then laying them beneath Christ’s feet as he approaches his horse for the ride of victory. The angels are also verbal in their sentiment. These are the faithful angels who will have prevailed in the war of Rev. 12:7. They will have seen the church overcome Satan “by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony” [12:11]. And they will have seen the saints of the tribulation victorious in faith. They will worship God.

These angels will begin with a thunderous, “Amen” and close their worship with that same sentiment. They will acknowledge that the Lord is the only one deserving of blessing. They will speak of his glory and his wisdom. Thanksgiving will flow from their hearts. They will pay him honor by the obedience they have shown in keeping their first estate, and they will recount with their lips the demonstrations of his power and might.

Paul spoke of this when he wrote to the church at Ephesus of the unsearchable riches of Christ and the fellowship of the mystery: “which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now, unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord” [Eph. 3:9-11].

Revelation 7:13-17
GOD SHALL WIPE AWAY THEIR TEARS

The following outline is based on the compound verbs for Lamb in v. 17.

TEXT: *And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?* ¹⁴*And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.* ¹⁵*Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.* ¹⁶*They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.* ¹⁷*For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne **shall feed** them, and **shall lead** them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*

NOTE: The Father's relationship is a very special relationship to this multitude that is redeemed out of great tribulation [v. 14]. It is a tender relationship. You see, it is God the Father himself who will personally "wipe away all tears from their eyes" [v.17]. We cannot imagine how great their faith must be, nor how great the tribulation they will suffer at the hands of the image of the beast. But when they have loved not their lives unto death, Jesus shall show them the reality of a great spiritual truth, spoken of by their father David: he will make them to lie down in green pastures and lead them beside the still waters [Psalm 23:2]. Those waters are *still* that they might drink freely, without fear; those waters are *living fountains* that they might drink water that shall never run dry.

- I. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me
 - A. What are these which are arrayed in white robes?
 - B. And whence came they?
- II. And I said unto him
 - A. Sir [*politeness is still a sign of the presence of God's Spirit*]
 - B. Sir, thou knowest.
- III. And he said to me
 - A. These are they
 - 1. Which came out of great tribulation
 - 2. And *which* have washed their robes
 - 3. And *which* made them white in the blood of the Lamb
 - a. Therefore are they before the throne of God
 - b. And *they* serve him
 - 1.) Day and night
 - 2.) In his temple
 - c. And he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them
 - B. They shall hunger no more
 - C. Neither *shall they* thirst any more
 - D. Neither shall the sun light on them *any more*
 - E. Nor *shall* any heat *light on them any more*
 - 1. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne
 - a. *He* shall feed them
 - b. And *he* shall lead them
 - 1.) Unto *fountains of waters*
 - 2.) Unto living fountains of waters
 - 2. And God [the Father] *which is on that throne* [4:10]
 - a. *He* shall wipe away *tears from their eyes*
 - b. *He shall wipe away* all tears from their eyes

Revelation 7:13-17 COMMENTARY

THE “THEY” OUT OF GREAT TRIBULATION

- **WHAT THEY HAVE DONE**

By their rejection of the antichrist and their refusal to receive the mark of the beast [13:16], they set themselves apart, whether as individuals or as groups [the beast’s “war against the saints” may imply a major offensive, as well as the use of search-and-seizure tactics]. In resisting the beast, individually or in collective groups, they are effectively washing their robes white in the blood of the Lamb [v. 14].

- **WHAT THEY WILL DO**

Just as the Lord has a specific office and service for the churches comprising the church age [chapters 2 & 3], likewise the Lord has a special service in mind for these who have come out of tribulation and great tribulation: eternal service before the Father’s throne [v. 15].

That “temple” is the temple of the New Jerusalem. It will not be as we would imagine the temple, for “the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple” of that city [21:22]. Yet, it will have a continual service before the Father’s throne [7:15]. And these saints will have part in that glorious service.

- **WHAT THE LAMB WILL DO**

The Lamb is the light of that city [21:23] and, hence, the light of that temple. It may be in his capacity as light that he will lead them. One thing is certain: they will not lack for the necessities of life as they had lacked by their refusal of the mark of the beast. They will not be denied something because they could not buy nor sell without that mark. The Lamb will not only insure that they are fed, he will also “lead” them. And none shall deny them access, for he will personally clear their way.

- **WHAT THE FATHER WILL DO**

One of the most astounding statements of scripture is here in v. 17: “And God shall wipe away all their tears from their eyes.” God the Father, the Lord God Almighty of 21:22, shall “wipe their tears from their eyes.”

This is complete access to the Father. This is intimate contact with the Father. Adam never knew him as closely. Neither Abraham, Isaac nor Jacob could boast of such a closeness. Indeed, these saints shall see the reality of which Paul wrote to the church, “Ye are not come unto the mount that might not be touched and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness and darkness and tempest and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more (for they could not endure that which was commanded, ‘And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned or thrust through with a dart’: and so terrible was the sight that Moses said, ‘I exceedingly fear and quake.’). But ye are come unto mount Sion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all and to the spirits of just men made perfect and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel” [Heb. 12:18-24].

Revelation 8:1-6

SILENCE IN HEAVEN

The following outline is based on the compound verbs used in v. 5.

TEXT: *And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. ²And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. ³And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. ⁴And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. ⁵And the angel **took** the censer, and **filled** it with fire of the altar, and **cast** it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. ⁶And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.*

NOTE: The opening of the seventh seal marks the beginning of the events shown thus far. From the time of the church's arrival in heaven [4:1] to the Father's wiping away the tears of the tribulation saints [7:17], there has been challenge and worship in heaven. The challenge is mentioned briefly [5:2], compared to the scenes of worship [4:10; 5:9; 5:13; 7:10; & 7:12]. But a silence now settles over heaven as the review is ended and reality of what we have seen thus far begins.

- I. And there was silence *in heaven*
 - A. About the space of half an hour
 - B. When he had opened the seventh seal
 - 1. And I saw
 - a. The seven angels which stood before God
 - b. And seven trumpets were given to them
 - 2. And another angel came
 - 3. And *he* stood at the altar
 - a. Having a censer
 - b. Having a golden censer
 - 4. And much incense was given unto him
 - a. There
 - b. That he should offer it
 - 1.) With the prayers of all saints
 - 2.) Upon the *altar*
 - a.) *The* golden altar
 - b.) Which was before the throne
 - 5. And the smoke of the incense ascended up before God
 - a. Which came with the prayers of the saints
 - b. Out of the angel's hand
- II. *There was silence* in heaven
 - A. And the angel
 - 1. *He* took the censer
 - 2. And *he* filled it with fire of the altar
 - 3. And *he* cast it into the earth
 - a. And there were voices
 - b. And *there were* thunderings
 - c. And *there were* lightnings
 - d. And *there was* an earthquake
 - B. And the angels
 - 1. *The seven angels* which had the seven trumpets
 - 2. *They* prepared themselves to sound

Revelation 8:1-6
COMMENTARY
SILENCE IN HEAVEN

The opening of the seventh seal causes silence to prevail in heaven “for the space of half an hour.” The first rider has appeared, and heaven is watching. The seals are broken; the book is opened. God has sealed the 144,000 with his name. The first of their fruit, saints killed in tribulation, are arriving; and it will be their “voices” that will break this silence of heaven [8:5b] as they cry out to God, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” [4:10].

THE SEVEN ANGELS

While silence pervades heaven for “half an hour,” the seven angels of the seven churches [1:20] receive their next instructions. They have been standing before the Father’s throne since their shift from the seven candlesticks [1:20] to the seven lamps of fire [4:5], which are the seven spirits of God. These are the angels of revelation. Like the angels who delivered just Lot, their words were steadfast [Heb. 2:2].

Each of them is given a trumpet; and, as they prepare themselves to sound, another angel comes to the altar “in the midst of the throne” [4:6]. This angel could be Gabriel, for more prophecy is about to be fulfilled.

THE ALTAR

The angel with the golden censer comes forward and stands at the altar. This is the altar on which the Lamb appears, as it had been slain, “having seven horns and seven eyes” [5:6]. Jesus, who is that Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, has opened the final seal. Now, he is performing the service of the altar, just as he had performed the service of the candlestick [1:13].

Jesus gives to Gabriel “much incense” [8:3], to be offered with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar of incense, which is before the throne of the Father where the seven lamps of fire are burning [4:5b].

The prayers of saints in the golden vials of the twenty-four elders [5:8] may have been poured out among the crowns cast at the Lamb’s feet when they sung a new song upon their harps of gold, entitled “Thou art Worthy” [5:9]. This may explain why the shift from the “prayers of saints” [5:8] to the “prayers of all saints” [8:3] takes place between the chapters.

Since incense is linked to prayers [the “odors” of 4:8], the “much incense,” given along with the incense of the prayers of the saints, is the primary pray: it is Jesus’ prayer. Though it may be one we have not yet heard, it could be similar to Christ’s prayer in the garden: “Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: ²as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. ³And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. ⁴I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. ⁵And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was” [John 17:1-5].

THE GOLDEN CENSER

The angel takes the golden censer to the altar of incense, and the prayers ascend up before the Father. A gesture seems sufficient for the angel to understand that these petitions have been granted. He opens the censer, fills it with fire of the altar and casts it into the earth. Judgment has begun. The “voices” [6:10] have been heard. God thunders forth his directions. The angels, as lightening, busy themselves in carrying out their instructions. The seven angels are preparing themselves to sound, and the earth will quake from their impact.

Revelation 8:7-9
THE FIRST ANGELS SOUNDED

The following outline is based on parallel, introductory clauses, vv. 7, 8.

TEXT: *The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.* ⁸*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;* ⁹*And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.*

NOTE: God shows us his grace before he shows us his judgment. We are shown the redeemed out of great tribulation [7:14] before we are shown the judgment [8:6-13]. This was true in chapter 1 – we were reminded of God’s grace [1:5,6] before we were foretold of God’s judgment [1:7]. And this is true of the church age. We are promised deliverance [3:10] before we are shown Jacob’s trouble [7:2-8]. Even with regard to the tribulation period, we are reminded of God’s salvation before God’s pouring out of wrath [7:2].

- I. The first angel sounded
 - A. And there followed hail
 - B. And *there followed* fire, mingled with blood
 - C. And they were cast upon the earth
 - 1. And the third part of trees was burnt up
 - 2. And all green grass was burnt up
- II. And the second angel sounded
 - A. And, as it were, *a mountain*
 - 1. A great mountain
 - 2. *A great mountain*, burning with fire
 - B. *A great mountain* was cast into the sea
 - 1. And the third part of the sea became blood
 - 2. And the third part of the creatures died
 - a. Which were in the sea
 - b. And *which* had life
 - 3. And the third part of the ships were destroyed

NOTE: There is a progression in the first six trumpets of size and intensity. The first is hail and fire; the second is, as it were, a great mountain; the third is a great star, named Wormwood; the fourth is also a star or stars, for the sun and a third part of the moon and stars themselves are smitten. The fifth is a star, referred to as the “one who has the key to the bottomless pit”; and, the sixth also has a key, this one loosens the four angels bound in the river Euphrates.

The First Trumpet: a third of the trees & grass burnt up

What is the impact of our dwindling forests on the weather of the earth? Imagine a third of all forests destroyed overnight. Impossible? Consider the destructive power of Mt. Vesuvius, the only active volcano on the continent of Europe, sitting on the eastern shore of the Bay of Naples in southern Italy. Its earliest recorded eruption, and one of the most severe, took place in A.D. 79. The first sight of activity was a series of earthquakes starting A.D. 63. Then, on August 24, in the year 79, the appalling eruption occurred. It buried the cities of Pompeii, Herculaneum and Stabiae beneath tons of molten stone and ash.

Revelation 8:7-9
COMMENTARY
THE CIRCLE OF FIRE

The first two trumpets speak of hail and fire, mingled with blood, being cast upon the earth, and a great mountain being cast into the sea. The results of these events is the destruction of a third of the earth's forests and a third of the earth's sea. How could "blood" [vv. 7 & 8] so cover a third of the earth? The "circle of fire" is an effective illustration. It is a circle of great mountains, as described in Rev. 8:8, that burn with fire. And it is their fire that can turn their surroundings into blood.

"The total number of active and extinct volcanoes are in the hundred thousand. However, active volcanoes alone are estimated at over 300. These are distributed in regular belts that are associated with the regions of frequent earthquake disturbance. These regions are the areas of recent mountain-building processes and are zones of weakness in the earth's crust.

"The Circum-Pacific system of volcanoes forms a chain around the Pacific Ocean and is sometimes referred to as the circle of fire. This system includes volcanoes of New Zealand, and the New Hebrides, Kermadec, and Bismarck groups of islands, then swings north and west through the Philippines and Japan to Kamcharka. Here the belt crosses over to the Western Hemisphere adjoining the Aleutian Islands and the Alaska Peninsula and extends south along the western coast including the Pacific states, Mexico, Central America, the West Indies, the Andes of South America, and comes to an end in the Falkland Islands" [*Universal World Reference Encyclopedia*, 14:5336].

There is also the Alpine-Himalayan system of volcanoes, as well as three other systems that include the volcanic islands bordering regions of the Indian, Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

Enough volcanic activity to cut off two of the earth's oceans is imaginable. There is only a "short" distance for major volcanic and earthquake activity to cut off the Atlantic from the Pacific south of the Americas. It would mean a force great enough to cause a continental shift. Have you ever heard of the suggestion that South America was once connected to the continent of Africa? The power of the first two trumpets could cause a similar, if not greater, shift.

DESTROYING "A THIRD"

Marine animal activists concern themselves with the protection of endangered species. Their efforts often focus on restrictions that protect breeding grounds, such as those of seals. Since it is the instinct of the seal that gathers them together in large, localized populations, man has no control over their actions. Thus he attempts to control his fellow man.

Though not by instinct, the harbors that dot the circle of fire could account for a third of maritime traffic, should they be affected by massive volcanic or seismic activity at peak use.

The loss of a third of the earth's forests, the judgment of the first trumpet, and the loss of a third of the world's sea life and shipping tonnage, the judgment of the second trumpet, is not an unreasonable percentage given the geographical area involved. Consider just the devastation to California's coast, should the San Andreas fault break.

CAST INTO THE SEA

The first and second trumpets do not require that the point of origin for the hail and fire or the great mountain be heaven itself. Since the other seals specifically state "from heaven" [8:10, 9:1] or "from the four horns of the golden altar" [9:13]. The great mountain, "as it were," was cast into the sea. This great mountain will, on command, throw itself into the sea through its own volcanic explosion.

Revelation 8:10-13 BITTER WATERS

The following outline is based on parallel introductory clauses, vv. 10,12.

TEXT: *And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; ¹¹and 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. ¹²And 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; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. ¹³And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!*

NOTE: The “star from heaven” in the third trumpet is a physical star, in contrast to the stars of the fifth and sixth seals who are angels to whom is given the authority to open the pit and to loose the four angels. This star of the third seal will strike the earth at the source of one third of the fountains of waters, making them useless to both human and animal consumption.

The fourth trumpet reveals a physical affect in heaven to that same degree: a third of the sun, moon and stars are darkened. They are made useless, just as the fresh water was made useless on earth. And herein is a parallel between earth and heaven, a parallelism of water to light. Both are a source of life that has been turned to death by the power of bitterness.

- I. And the third angel sounded
 - A. And there fell a great star from heaven
 - 1. Burning as it were a lamp
 - 2. And it fell
 - a. Upon the third part of the rivers
 - b. And upon the fountains of waters
 - B. And the name of the star is called Wormwood
 - C. And the third part of the waters became wormwood
 - D. And many men died of the waters
 - 1. Because they were made bitter
 - 2. *Because they became wormwood*
- II. And the fourth angel sounded
 - A. And the third part of the sun was smitten
 - B. And the third part of the moon *was smitten*
 - C. And the third part of the stars *were smitten*
 - 1. So as the third part of them was darkened
 - 2. And the day shone not for a third part of it
 - 3. And the night, likewise, *shone not for a third of it*
- III. And I beheld and heard an angel
 - A. Flying through the midst of heaven
 - B. Saying with a loud voice
 - 1. Woe
 - 2. Woe
 - 3. Woe
 - a. To the inhabitants of the earth
 - b. By reason of the other voices of the trumpet
 - 1.) Of the three angels
 - 2.) *Of the three angels* which are yet to sound

Revelation 8:10-13
COMMENTARY
THE FOUNTAINS OF WATERS

In the days of the flood God first broke up all the fountains of the great deep [Gen. 7:11] and then stopped the fountains of the deep [8:2], as he fulfilled judgment on the earth by water.

Wisdom declares *The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men* [Pro. 8:22-31].

The mountains and the hills cap these fountains of the deep. They strengthen these fountains. And their destruction will ruin these “wells.” They will cease to be fresh water, being contaminated by the flood that will reach their chambers.

And which “third” of the fresh waters of the earth will be contaminated? It will not be the depths of the Tigris-Euphrates river system, since they will be affected later [Rev. 16:12]. They will be dried up to prepare the way of the kings of the East. And, herein is a possibility regarding that water supply. What will draw the kings of the East? It could be their need for a fresh-water supply, following the impact of Wormwood.

EXCEPT THOSE DAYS BE SHORTENED

In his Olivet discourse [Matt. 24], Jesus summarized the events of the last days in order: The beginning of sorrows will be marked by the many who shall claim to be Christ. And one of them will succeed in confirming the covenant with Israel for one week, though he will be the anti-christ.

The wars and rumors of wars, the nations rising against nations, the famines and pestilence and earthquakes will involve the four horsemen [Rev. 6], as will the deliverance of the faithful to affliction and to death [Rev. 6:10]. It is in this period that saving faith will be marked by death: loving not their lives “unto the death” [Matt. 24:13; Rev. 12:11].

This is the day of the gospel of the kingdom. The abomination of desolation will mark the mid-point, dividing Tribulation from Great Tribulation. Many eyes will be opened in the face of that desolation, and believers will flee. Jesus said, “Except those days be shortened there shall no flesh be saved.” But, for the elect’s sake, those days shall be shortened [Matt. 24:22]. What did Jesus mean by “shortened”?

Did he mean that the number of day shall be cut short? Or, did he mean that the length of the daylight and darkness will be shortened? The difference is in how we count time. “The evening and the morning were the first day” bases a twenty-four hour day on the movement of the sun across our skies [our orbit about the sun]. Reduce the sun by a third, and that orbit accelerates. Change the moon by a third, and the constellations about us in the heavens, and we still maintain a balance, but at a quickened pace. This faster pace hastens the passing of those days. It shortens their time.

The “number” of days are determined [Dan. 9:24], but those days shall be shortened for the elect’s sake [Matt. 24:22].

Matthew 24:2-31
THE OLIVET DISCOURSE
[A REVIEW]

TEXT: *Take heed that no man deceive you. ⁵For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. ⁶And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. ⁷For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. ⁸All these are the beginning of sorrows. ⁹Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. ¹⁰And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. ¹¹And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. ¹²And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. ¹³But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. ¹⁴And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*

THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION
[Rev. 13:6]

¹⁵*When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)* ¹⁶*Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: ¹⁷Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: ¹⁸Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. ¹⁹And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! ²⁰But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: ²¹For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²²And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.*

A WARNING AGAINST THAT DAY

²³*Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. ²⁴For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. ²⁵Behold, I have told you before. ²⁶Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.*

IN CONTRAST TO CHRIST'S COMING
[Rev. 19:11-18]

²⁷*For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. ²⁸For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.*

AND THE LAST PLAGUES UP TO ARMAGEDDON
[Rev. 16:1-21]

²⁹*Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: ³⁰And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*

WHICH IS THAT GREAT DAY OF DELIVERANCE
[ROM. 11:25-27 & ZECH. 14:1-11]

³¹*And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

Revelation 9:1-6

THE FIRST “WOE”

The following outline is based on the correlative conjunction in v. 4.

TEXT: *And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. ²And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose 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. ³And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. ⁴And it was commanded them that they should **not** hurt the grass of the earth, **neither** any green thing, **neither** any tree; **but** only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. ⁵And to them it was given 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 he striketh a man. ⁶And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.*

NOTE: Three *woe*'s are determined upon the inhabitants of the earth: the fifth, sixth and seventh trumpets. These shall come in rapid succession.

- I. And the fifth angel sounded
 - A. And I saw a star
 - 1. Fall from heaven
 - 2. Unto the earth
 - B. And to him was given the key of the bottomless pit
 - C. And he opened the bottomless pit
 - 1. And there arose a smoke
 - a. Out of the pit
 - b. As the smoke of a great furnace
 - 2. And the sun *was darkened*
 - 3. And the air *was* darkened
 - a. By reason of the smoke
 - b. *By reason of the smoke* of the pit
 - 4. And there came locusts
 - a. Upon the earth
 - b. Out of the smoke
 - 5. And unto them was given power as the scorpions of the earth have power
 - 6. And it was commanded them
 - a. That they should not hurt the grass of the earth
 - b. Neither *should they hurt* any green thing
 - c. Neither *should they hurt* any tree
 - d. But *they should hurt* only those men
 - 1.) Which have not the seal of God
 - 2.) *Which have not his seal* in their foreheads
 - 7. And to them it was given
 - a. That they should not kill them
 - b. But that they should be tormented five months
 - 1.) And their torment was as the torment of a scorpion
 - 2.) *As a scorpion* when he striketh a man
- II. And in those days [*of the fifth angel's trumpet*]
 - A. Men shall seek death
 - B. And *they* shall not find it
 - C. And *they* shall desire to die
 - D. And death shall flee from them

Revelation 9:7-12
ABADDON'S ARMY

The following outline is based on the expressions introduced as similes: a comparison of two different objects using the terms *like* or *as*.

TEXT: *And the shapes of the locusts were **like** unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were **as it were** crowns like gold, and their faces were **as** the faces of men. ⁸And they had hair **as** the hair of women, and their teeth were **as** the teeth of lions. ⁹And they had breastplates, **as it were** breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was **as** the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. ¹⁰And they had tails **like** unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. ¹¹And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon. ¹²One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.*

- I. *And there came out of the smoke locusts*
 - A. And the shapes of the locusts
 - 1. Were like unto horses
 - 2. *Like unto horses* prepared unto battle
 - B. And on their heads were as it were crowns like gold
 - C. And their faces were as the faces of men
 - D. And they had hair as the hair of women
 - E. And their teeth were as the teeth of lions
 - F. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron
 - G. And the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots
 - 1. *Chariots* of many horses
 - 2. *Chariots of many horses* running to battle
 - H. And they had tails like unto scorpions
 - 1. And there were stings in their tails
 - 2. And their power was to hurt men five months
 - I. And they had a king over them
 - 1. Which is the angel
 - 2. *Which is the angel* of the bottomless pit
 - a. Whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon [*destroyer*]
 - b. But in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon [*destroyer*]
- II. One woe is past
- III. And, behold, there come two woes more hereafter

Revelation 9:1-12 COMMENTARY

A STAR WITH A KEY

Unlike Wormwood, the star that will crash into the earth and turn a third of the freshwater supply bitter, the *star* of the fifth trumpet is referred to in the masculine gender. This *star* is an angel, as were the stars of the churches in chapter one. Only, this angel is given the key to the bottomless pit: he is given the key to hell itself.

Recall the victory Jesus won at Calvary. When he arose from the dead, he demonstrated that he had the keys of hell and of death [Rev. 1:18]. The Lord Jesus Christ has had to assign the key of hell to this angel for this one purpose. Since there is one angel who opens the bottomless pit at the sound of the fifth trumpet and another angel that sets free those angels bound in the river Euphrates, neither of these would be Lucifer.

Lucifer is busy making war against the remnant [Rev. 12:17] after his final defeat in heaven. The results of the two angels, the one who opens the bottomless pit and the one who loosens the four horsemen, is the torment of the worshipers of devils and the worshipers of idols. The result is the death of a third of them for their murders and sorceries and fornication and theft. These “angels” torment and kill the followers of Lucifer.

ABADDON, ALIAS: APOLLYON

Abaddon, or *destroyer* in the Hebrew, is associated with Hades. Apollyon, or *destroyer* in the Greek, is associated with Satan. Used only in Rev. 9:11, these names reveal their association with Satan. He is a destroyer. All devils are destroyers. Yet, Abaddon, though an angel, is not Satan (otherwise known as Lucifer) himself.

Satan is destined to everlasting fire. Jesus told us it was prepared for the devil and his angels [Matt. 25:41]. If Matthew’s reference is to the lake of fire, then this is not hell or the bottomless pit. Do not be confused here. The fire of hell is not quenched, and hell itself will be cast into the lake of fire. But hell will present the dead that are in it before Christ at the white throne judgment. Hell is where Satan will be placed during the thousand year millennial reign of Christ [Rev. 20:7]. It is the prison from which he will be loosed for a short season, as the locust and the horsemen were loosed for a season [Rev. 9].

Satan’s “entrance” into hell, when he shall be “brought down to the sides of the pit” for the thousand years, is described by Isaiah: “They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?” [Is. 14:16,17].

Three phases in the fall of Satan

First, there was a time before his fall: “And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them” [Gen. 1:31-2:1]. All the host of the heavens would include the angels, who were made as ministering spirits [Heb. 1:7].

Then, there was Satan’s fall: Jesus testified to his disciples, “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven” [Luke 10:18]. This occurred before Satan’s beguiling of Eve as the serpent in the garden [Gen. 3]. He had said in his heart, “I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the

congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High” [Is. 14:13,14].

From a throne in the heights of the clouds, he viewed the third heaven and declared he would take his place above the stars of God and sit upon the mount of the congregation. He declared he would be like the most High, and he was cast from that position as lightning falls from heaven.

For now, he is still the prince of the power of the air [Eph. 2:2]. As such he appears before God as the accuser of the brethren [Job 1:6], but only until the church is completed [Rev. 12:10]; for, he will be cast out of heaven in the final war of the angels [Rev. 12:7].

Finally, there will be an end to his fall: Satan lost the throne given him in creation, and he will lose his power. Though his tail will draw the third part of the angels down with him, he will eventually be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone for ever to suffer torment in its flames: “And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever” [Rev. 20:10].

ON THE APPEARANCE OF ANGELS

When the shepherds heard the good tidings on the night of Christ’s birth, the angel who appeared unto them “shone with the glory of the Lord.” He was then joined by a multitude of the heavenly host. Yet, when they finished their message, the shepherds were focused on finding the one of whom they spake, and not on any oddity in the appearance of the angels.

Daniel describes one [Dan. 10] like unto the description John gives of Jesus [Rev. 1]: clothed in linen, girded with a golden girdle; his face as lightning, his eyes as lamps of fire, his feet as polished brass, his voice as the voice of a multitude [many waters].

When Jesus appeared to Abraham in the plains of Mamre [Gen. 18], he had two angels with him. Although Abraham knows the Lord when he sees him, the appearance of the three are similar, with no outstanding differences between them. And later, as the two angels enter Sodom, they were treated as if they were men by the multitude. All of these angels appeared as men. Some with the glory of the Lord about them and some without, but all as men.

Isaiah describes the seraphims: “Each had six wings; with twain he covered his face and with twain he covered his feet and with twain he did fly” [Is. 6:2]. Ezekiel describes the cherubs: “Every one had four faces apiece, and every one four wings: and the likeness of the hands of a man was under their wings” [Ez. 10:21].

It is the likeness of the cherubs that rest on either end of the ark of the covenant: “And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat....And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings; and their faces shall look one to another, toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be” [Ex. 25:18,20].

But in the Revelation, there is the angel of the bottomless pit, the king of the locust. His name is Abaddon, and his appearance is as the locusts themselves: sized as locust, “shaped like unto horses prepared unto battle: and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates of iron: and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails” [Rev. 9:7-10]. These are the matured larvae, the full growth of the worm that dies not in the fires of hell [Mark 9:48]. They will come forth and live on the earth for five months, tormenting those who have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

Revelation 9:13-17 THE SECOND “WOE”

The following outline is based on the adverbial phrases modifying the verb *prepared*, used in the adjective clause beginning with *which* in v. 15.

TEXT: *And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, ¹⁴saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. ¹⁵And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. ¹⁶And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. ¹⁷And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.*

NOTE: The locust of the first woe make up in number what they lack in size when compared to the full-scaled horsemen of the Apocalypse. For the second woe presents the four horsemen whose armies will sweep across the continent of Eurasia midst the chaos of war and famine and pestilence [Rev. 6], working havoc in a world torn by catastrophic events [Rev. 8]. Their appearance on the battlefields of the tribulation will add to the confusion and condemnation of men. Fighting for none of men's armies, they will overwhelm the field in battle. No plunder will be worse than their presence. And in their wake, one third of men will be killed.

- I. And the sixth angel sounded
 - A. And I heard a voice
 - 1. From the four horns of the golden altar which is before God
 - 2. Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet
 - a. Loose the four angels
 - 1.) Which are bound
 - 2.) *Which are bound* in the great river Euphrates
 - b. And the four angels were loosed
 - 1.) Which were prepared
 - a.) For an hour
 - b.) And *for* a day
 - c.) And *for* a month
 - d.) And *for* a year
 - 2.) *Which were prepared*
 - a.) For to slay men
 - b.) *For to slay* the third part of *men*
 - B. And I heard the number
 - 1. *The number* of them
 - 2. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand
- II. *And the sixth angel sounded*
 - A. And thus I saw the horses in the vision
 - 1. And the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions
 - 2. And out of their mouths issued fire
 - 3. And *out of their mouths issued* smoke
 - 4. And *out of their mouths issued* brimstone
 - B. And *thus I saw* them that sat on them
 - 1. Having breastplates of fire
 - 2. And *having breastplates* of jacinth
 - 3. And *having breastplates of* brimstone

Revelation 9:17-21

NO REPENTANCE

The following outline is based on the compound prepositional phrases used to modify the verb *repented* in v. 21.

TEXT: *And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.* ¹⁸*By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.* ¹⁹*For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.* ²⁰*And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:* ²¹*neither repented they **of their murders**, nor **of their sorceries**, nor **of their fornication**, nor **of their thefts**.*

NOTE: It is amazing grace that an opportunity for repentance is available.

- I. *And thus I saw the horses in the vision*
 - A. *And the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions*
 - B. *And out of their mouths issued fire*
 - C. *And out of their mouths issued smoke*
 - D. *And out of their mouths issued brimstone*
- II. *And thus I saw them that sat on them*
 - A. *Having breastplates of fire*
 - B. *And having breastplates of jacinth*
 - C. *And having breastplates of brimstone*
- III. *By these three was the third part of men killed*
 - A. *By the fire which issued out of their mouths*
 - B. *And by the smoke which issued out of their mouths*
 - C. *And by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths*
 - 1. *For their power is in their mouth*
 - 2. *And their power is in their tails*
 - a. *For their tails were like unto serpents*
 - b. *And their tails had heads*
 - c. *And with them they do hurt*
- IV. *And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues*
 - A. *They yet repented not of the works of their hands*
 - 1. *That they should not worship devils*
 - 2. *And that they should not worship idols*
 - a. *Of gold*
 - b. *And of silver*
 - c. *And of brass*
 - d. *And of stone*
 - e. *And of wood*
 - 3. *That they should not worship idols*
 - a. *Which neither can see*
 - b. *Nor which can hear*
 - c. *Nor which can walk*
 - B. *Neither repented they*
 - 1. *Of their murders*
 - 2. *Nor of their sorceries*
 - 3. *Nor of their fornication*
 - 4. *Nor of their thefts*

Revelation 9:13-21 COMMENTARY

Regarding Repentance

The beginning of Christ's doctrine is repentance from dead works and faith toward God [Heb. 6:1]. And the New Testament abounds with the preaching of repentance: John the Baptist preached repentance to the masses, warning the Pharisees and Sadducees that having Abraham for their father was not enough [Mat. 3:1-9]. Jesus preached repentance to those Jews offended by Pilate's mingling Galilean blood with their sacrifices. He told them: "Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" [Luke 13:1-3].

Peter preached repentance to the Jews gathered at Jerusalem for the feasts. He declared unto them the resurrection of Jesus by God and the promise of the Holy Ghost; and when they were pricked in their hearts and asked what they must do to be saved, Peter cried, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" [Acts 2:38].

Paul writes to the Jews of Rome who thought they would escape the judgment of God, though they did the same things for which they condemned the Gentiles: "And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things and dost the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" [Rom. 2:3-4].

Yet, the New Testament is only a reflection of the Old Testament: God called on Cain to repent, and he refused [Gen 4:7]. There was a change in Seth after Enos' birth that resulted in men calling upon the name of the Lord and he himself being declared "in Adam's own likeness" [Gen. 5:3]. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord the same way you and I find it, through repentance [Gen. 6:8]. Abraham's leaving the Ur of the Chaldees was an act of repentance.

And it is here, in this passage of Revelation, that we so clearly find that from which God demands our repentance: the worship of devils, the worship of idols and the acts that characterize this old nature: murder, sorcery, fornication and theft [Rev. 9:20,21].

Like Abraham, we are to turn from dead works, the false faith of his fathers, and we are to put faith in God's promises. Like Noah, we are to turn from the wickedness of our generation and find grace in the sight of the Lord. Like Cain, we are required to leave our own works of righteousness for the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ; and like Cain, when any of us refuse, we identify ourselves as being of that wicked one. We must all repent of our dead works and wicked lives and place our faith in the shed blood of Jesus, believing that God has raised him from the dead and professing before men the Lord Jesus Christ, if we are to be saved.

The Four Horsemen

Though most think of the five riders of Rev. 6, hell being the fifth rider, it is here in chapter 9 that we see the four horsemen that shall roam the land, leading 50 million each as they fan out over the countryside. Why fanning out? Since God is no respecter of persons, I expect their divisions will travel in all the directions of the compass. But, unlike the locust who have a time limit of five months, this army will roam the earth until they have killed a third of men.

Revelation 10:1-6
THE SEVEN THUNDERS

The following outline is based on compound objects of the adjective clause beginning with *who* in verse 6.

TEXT: *And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: ²and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, ³and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. ⁴And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. ⁵And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, ⁶and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created **heaven**, and **the things** that therein are, and **the earth**, and **the things** that therein are, and **the sea**, and **the things** which are therein, that there should be time no longer: ⁷but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.*

NOTE: The seven thunders are the utterances of the “seven Spirits” [1:4].

- I. And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven
 - A. Clothed with a cloud
 - B. And a rainbow was upon his head
 - C. And his face was as it were the sun
 - D. And his feet as pillars of fire
 - E. And he had in his hand a little book open
 - F. And he set his right foot upon the sea
 - G. And his left foot on the earth
 - H. And cried with a loud voice
 - 1. As when a lion roareth
 - 2. And when he had cried
 - a. Seven thunders uttered their voices
 - b. And I was about to write
 - 1.) When the seven thunders had uttered their voices
 - c. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me
 - 1.) Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered
 - 2.) And write them not
- II. And the angel lifted up his hand to heaven
 - A. *The angel* which I saw stand upon the sea
 - B. And *which I saw stand* upon the earth
- III. And *the angel* sware by him that liveth for ever and ever
 - A. Who created heaven
 - B. And the things that therein are
 - C. And the earth
 - D. And the things that therein are
 - F. And the sea
 - G. And the things which are therein
- IV. And *the angel sware* that there should be time no longer
 - A. But the mystery of God should be finished
 - 1. In the days of the voice of the seventh angel
 - 2. When he shall begin to sound
 - 3. As he hath declared to his servants the prophets

Revelation 10:8-11

THE LITTLE BOOK

The following outline is based on the compound verbs and the parallel clauses describing the effect of the book in v. 9.

TEXT: *And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. ⁹And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, **Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.** ¹⁰And 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 as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. ¹¹And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.*

NOTE: The little book is the revelation John is yet to impart as he again prophesies before many peoples and nations and tongues and kings. An illustration can be seen in the opening of John's gospel: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...in him was life: and the life was the light of men...and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth" [John 1:1,4,14].

- I. And the voice which I heard from heaven
 - A. Spake unto me again
 - B. And said
 - 1. Go
 - 2. And take the little book
 - a. Which is open
 - b. *Which is open* in the hand of the angel
 - 1.) Which standeth upon the sea
 - 2.) And *which standeth* upon the earth
- II. And *I did as the voice from heaven told me*
 - A. I went unto the angel
 - B. And *I* said unto him
 - 1. Give me the little book
 - 2. *Give me the book which is open in thy hand*
 - C. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand
 - D. And *I* ate it up
 - 1. And it was in my mouth sweet as honey
 - 2. And as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter
- III. And he said unto me [vv. 9,11]
 - A. Take it
 - B. And eat it up
 - 1. And it shall make thy belly bitter
 - 2. But it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey
 - C. Thou must prophesy again
 - 1. Before many peoples
 - 2. And *before many* nations
 - 3. And *before many* tongues
 - 4. And *before many* kings

Revelation 10:1-11 COMMENTARY

The Mighty Angel

Of all the appearances of Jesus in the Bible, one of the most remarkable is that of him as the Angel of the Lord. An illustration is seen in Judges 2 – “And an angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you.” We know this is Christ appearing as an angel because of the words that he speaks. This is no mere angel. He clearly declares, “I have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers.”

Why is Christ seen at times as the angel of the Lord in the Old Testament? Because he made himself of no reputation [Phil. 2:7]. Yet, every time he is seen as such, he is identifiable by either his speech, his actions or his appearance. In Judges, his speech reveals who he is. He is identified by his actions in Genesis: Jacob declares of him that he is “the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil” [Gen. 48:15,16].

And in the Revelation, this mighty angel is identified by his description: he is clothed with a cloud, either the cloud of a congregation like that which received him up into glory [Acts 21:9] or the individual white raiment of his priestly office [Rev. 1:13]; he has a rainbow about his head, the presence of the Holy Spirit in the form which encircles the throne of God [Rev. 4:3]; his face was as it were the sun, as the appearance of lightening [Dan. 10:6]; and his feet as pillars of fire, like unto brass as if they burned in a furnace [Rev. 1:15].

He has in his hand a little book, probably the book taken from the Father’s hand [Rev. 5:7]. Its seals have been broken. The book has been unfolded. And “in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished;” and he declares that time shall be no longer!

Jesus, as the mighty angel, sets one foot on the earth and one foot on the sea, something he has demonstrated power to do [John 9:16]. He lifts up his hand to heaven, probably his right hand, and swears “by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein.”

The “him” is God the Father, referred to as “him” in the opening description of the Trinity in chapter one [vv. 4,5]. And this is not a contradiction with the New Testament’s declaration that all things were made by Christ Jesus [Col. 1:16]. The New Testament clarifies for us that God the Father is the one who created all things by Jesus Christ [Eph. 3:9]. So Jesus, as the mighty angel, swears by the Father that there should be time no longer in the days of the seventh trumpet, described for us in chapter 11.

Jesus, as the mighty angel, sheds light on the passage where the angels can be taken to be his fellows: “Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows” [Heb. 1:9]. Jesus is the leader of his armies, and as such is often referred to as one of them. He is the God-man, God come in the flesh, and as such is often referred to as a man, a high priest touched with the feelings of our infirmities [Heb. 4:15]. And he is God, whose God is the Father, a great marvel of the mystery which is the Trinity.

His stand is with one foot on the sea and one foot on the earth or land: this is literal, for he is about to command that time be no more. And his command carries us past the millennial reign and into the New Jerusalem: “And there shall

be no more curse” [Rev. 22:3]. In the new heaven and the new earth, there shall be no more curse, either on the sea or on the land.

With the passing of time is the passing of the curse. With the passing of time is the end of decay and death and sin. Only the tree of life, which shall bare twelve manner of her fruit every month [Rev. 22:2], appears to “tell” time in the New Jerusalem. But since what we now call a day is as a thousand years with the Lord, and what we now call a thousand years is to him but a day [II Peter 3:8], the twelve manner of fruit may be perpetually available.

The seven thunders

When Jesus cries with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth [and he is the Lion of the tribe of Judah], seven thunders utter their voices. And when John was about to write down the seven thunders, he heard a voice from heaven saying, “Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.” This voice from heaven was the voice of the Father. He will speak again to John [v.8], telling John to approach the angel and request the little book which is opened in his hand. But the utterances of the seven thunders, they are the utterances of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is first introduced in the Revelation as the seven Spirits [1:4]. He is also described as the rainbow about the throne of God, whose seven lamps of fire burn before the throne [4:5]. The Holy Spirit is present with this angel in that same form of that rainbow, identifying him as Jesus [10:1], just as he had identified Jesus, who appeared before John the Baptist in the flesh, when he descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove at his baptism [John 1:32]. Seven is the number of perfection. It is the number of God’s Spirit.

The voice of God is described as thunder [Job 40:9], revealing that the seven thunders are statements made by God himself, that is, God the Holy Spirit. As to the content of those statements, we can only surmise that they must be regarding Jesus himself, because the Spirit only speaks of that which pertains to the Son [John 16:13,14]. These seven utterances may ultimately be revealed, but only in God’s time.

To prophesy once again

There is a personal “revelation” given to John, as he obeys the Father and requests of the angel the little book: “Thou must prophesy again before many peoples and nations and tongues and kings.”

John had been exiled to the isle of Patmos “for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.” He had no hope of knowing when, if ever, his exile would or could be rescinded. But God gives him that knowledge, and he also gives to John the message he is to preach, contained in that little book.

John’s experience of “eating” the little book takes the prophesy of that book and makes it a part of his being. Recall Jesus’ answer to Satan concerning the temptation to turn stone into bread for the satisfaction of his own hunger: “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” [Matt. 4:4].

It is God’s words, Jesus declares to us, they are spirit and they are life [John 6:63]. And though they may be bitter to digest at times, they are sweet as honey to the taste, for they are gracious [I Peter 2:3]. An illustration of that which is sweet and yet bitter is in the first chapter of the Revelation itself. It is seen by contrasting John’s “Amen” [1:6] to his “Even so, Amen” one verse later [1:7]. His “Amen” resounds at the promise to make us “kings and priests unto God and his Father” for ever and ever; while his “Even so, Amen” reflects the knowledge that judgment will finally fall. Sin and man’s refusal to accept God’s redemption reaps an eternal death in the lake of fire. John writes, “All kindreds of the earth shall wail” as a result of that final judgment. Even so, Amen.

Revelation 11:1-6 UNDER FOOT OF GENTILES

The following outline is based on compound objects to the verb *measure* in v. 1.

TEXT: *And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the **temple** of God, and the **altar**, and **them** that worship therein. ²But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. ³And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. ⁴These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. ⁵And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. ⁶These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.*

NOTE: The court, “which is without,” is Jerusalem that now is.

- I. And there was given me a reed like unto a rod
- II. And the angel stood, saying
 - A. Rise
 - B. And measure
 - 1. The temple of God
 - 2. And the altar
 - 3. And them that worship therein
 - C. But leave out the court which is without the temple
 - D. And measure it not
 - 1. For it is given unto the Gentiles
 - 2. And they shall tread the holy city
 - a. Under foot
 - b. Forty and two months
 - E. And I will give power unto my two witnesses
 - 1. These are the two olive trees
 - 2. And *these are* the two candlesticks
 - a. Standing
 - b. *Standing* before the God of the earth
 - 3. These have power to shut heaven
 - a. That it rain not
 - b. *That it rain not* in the days of their prophecy
 - 4. And *these* have power over waters
 - a. To turn them to blood
 - b. *As often as they will*
 - 5. And *these have power* to smite the earth
 - a. With all plagues
 - b. As often as they will
 - 6. And if any man will hurt them
 - a. Fire proceedeth out of their mouth
 - b. And *that fire* devoureth their enemies
 - 7. And if any man will hurt them
 - a. He must be killed
 - b. *He must be killed* in this manner
 - F. And they shall prophesy
 - 1. A thousand two hundred and threescore days [3 _ years]
 - 2. Clothed in sackcloth

Revelation 11:1-3 COMMENTARY

The Reed and its Measurements

John was not only given the little book [10:10]; he was also given a reed with which to measure three areas: the temple of God, the altar of God and “them that worship therein.”

A reed is approximately ten feet in length. With one, John is to measure the temple of God, also called the temple of heaven [16:17]. This temple, wherein the ark of his testament can be seen, will be opened just before the white throne judgment [11:19]. In this temple, those that overcome of the church of Philadelphia have been made “pillars” [3:12]. There the saints of great tribulation fulfill the service of Levi day and night [7:15].

John is also told to measure the altar in the midst of the throne, where Christ is seen as the Lamb “as it had been slain” [5:6]. Under this altar are the souls of them which were slain in tribulation [6:9-11]. Out of the horns of this altar comes the command to the sixth angel to “loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates” [9:13,14]. From this altar come the angels who command the final harvest of the earth [14:18] and who declare that God's judgments are “true and righteous” [15:7].

John is told to measure them that worship “therein,” that is, in the temple. This is not a command to measure the four and twenty seats round about the throne [4:4]. We already have their measure, it is 24. Rather, this is a command to measure them “in there,” that is, in the temple. It is a command to number them. Why a numbering, unless that numbering has a significance?

God sealed 144,000 as witnesses for the tribulation period [7:4]. And power was given to the beast to make war with the saints and to overcome them [13:7]. But, just as the two witnesses could not be slain until they had finished their testimony [11:7], these 144,000 will be slain only after they have finished their testimony. They may be the specific “measure” with great significance. The last of them signaling the close of the period. How many had already arrived and how many had yet to come could be the purpose of measuring “them that worship therein.”

The Court “Which is Without”

The court which is without is called “the holy city” [v.2]. It is to be tread under the foot of the Gentiles forty-two months. The tribulation period itself is only seven years. Forty-two months is half of that time, the second half of that time. When the anti-christ confirms the covenant with Israel for seven years, the service of the earthly temple will be restored. But, in the midst of that period, the anti-christ will show himself to be that vile prince and demand that sacrifice be made unto him.

Jesus called this the abomination of desolation [Matt. 24:15], spoken of by Daniel the prophet. The flight into the mountains [Matt. 24:16] is that same flight into the wilderness describe in Rev. 12:6 & 14.

When God created the earth, he called it Eden. And he placed Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, the garden of the earth. God’s outer court to his temple in heaven is Jerusalem. And when the Gentiles, those who have not faith in Christ, mock his temple mount and his order of sacrifice and the temple itself, they are described as “treading them under foot.” They have cast down what light they might possess and have insulted God once again by grinding it under their feet. Is it any wonder that the wrath of God is poured out upon them?

My Two Witnesses

And yet, in spite of the sacrilege of the Gentiles, God gives power unto his two witnesses to prophesy unto them for that last half of the tribulation. Remember that the

tribulation period is the time of Jacob's Trouble. God is dealing with Israel, getting the natural olive branch ready to be grafted into the vine on that great day of deliverance [Rom 11:26]. And his two witnesses, who prophesy during great tribulation, the second half of the tribulation period, are witnesses sent to preach unto the remnant.

These witnesses will be Old Testament characters, among whom Enoch, Moses and Elijah are the leading candidates. Zerubbabel has some consideration, and even John the Baptist. And if it were not for John the Apostle having been freed from his exile to fulfill the prophesy on himself [10:11], he might even be considered as a candidate.

Why Enoch and Elijah? They are the only two men who left this world without a burial. Enoch was translated [Gen. 5:24], and Elijah when up by a whirlwind, parted from Elisha by the chariot of Israel [II Kings 2:11,12].

The scripture declares that it is appointed unto man once to die, and after this the judgment [Heb. 9:27]. Since neither of these men died as we die, some reason that they will be the two killed by the beast [Rev. 11:7].

To those who object that Enoch has had no experience with preaching, Jude informs us that he was preaching Christ's coming with ten thousands of his saints "to execute judgment" [Jude 1:15] long before we ever knew he was a preacher. And it was his preaching that reached Noah, thus saving faith upon the earth in the midst of total destruction.

Why Moses and Elijah? They are the two who appeared on the mount of transfiguration [Matt. 17:4]. The power to call fire down from heaven was exercised by Elijah on several occasions [II Kings 1:10,12]. He also has experience with shutting up heaven that it rain not [I Kings 17:1]. To Moses' account, he has experience with the plagues used in delivering Israel from Egypt. And, since Jerusalem is also called Egypt in this passage [11:8], there is a natural relationship in Moses' smiting the earth "with all plagues" [11:6].

Regarding the body of Moses, it is the only one God himself buried [Deut. 34:6]. And Satan disputed about the way God buried him [Jude 1:9]. But, though Elijah and Enoch were translated and Moses was buried, both Elijah and Moses appeared the same on the mount of transfiguration to Peter, James and John. This demonstrates that Elijah and Enoch are not wandering heaven in their natural bodies, as we know our bodies. Rather, Enoch's translation was in type like the rapture, in which we are promised a glorified body. And Elijah's translation was like that of these two witnesses [11:12], when the tribulation saints will be raptured at the close of the tribulation period.

Why Zerubbabel? Zechariah prophesies of the two olive trees upon the right and left side of the bowl of the candlestick [Zech. 4:3,14]. In his prophesy, he sees the ten visions relating to the end time, and he describes Zerubbabel as leveling mountains. He has laid the foundation of this house and "his hands shall also finish it" [Zech. 4:9].

John the Baptist is that spirit of Elijah "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" [Luke 1:17]. And Jesus said of John, "If ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come" [Matt. 11:14]. His reference was to Malachi's prophesy, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord" [Mal. 4:5]. And Christ's first advent was "before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord."

So, who are the witnesses? Who is the Jachin and Boaz of the temple of God, as the two pillars are called in II Chronicles 3:17? I lean toward Moses and Elijah because they were on the mount of transfiguration.

Revelation 11:7-10
THE BEAST OF THE BOTTOMLESS PIT

The following outline is based on the two adjective clauses used to identify that *great city* of v. 8.

TEXT: *And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. ⁸And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, **which** spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, **where** also our Lord was crucified. ⁹And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. ¹⁰And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.*

NOTE: The scripture is careful to state that the two witnesses will have finished their testimony before the beast out of the bottomless pit is allowed to kill them. This is very important for the child of God. It is a reminder that whatever victories the Devil may gain, with regard to God's servants, they are only those which are allowed him by God. The scripture is also careful to show that whatever victories the Devil may gain, they are only temporary: "And after three days and an half, the Spirit of life from God entered into them" [11:11]. So that even this "victory" by the beast from the pit becomes another means by which God shows his power over Satan.

- I. And when they shall have finished their testimony
 - A. The beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit
 - 1. *He* shall make war against them
 - 2. And *he* shall overcome them
 - 3. And *he shall* kill them.
 - B. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city
 - 1. Which spiritually is called Sodom
 - 2. And *which spiritually is called* Egypt
 - 3. Where also our Lord was crucified
- II. And *when they shall have finished their testimony*
 - A. They shall see their dead bodies three days and an half
 - 1. *They* of the people
 - 2. And *they of the* kindreds
 - 3. And *they of the* tongues
 - 4. And *they of the* nations
 - B. And *they* shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves
 - C. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them
 - D. And *they shall* make merry
 - E. And *they* shall send gifts one to another
 - 1. Because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth
 - 2. *Because these two prophets tormented them by their power*
 - a. *To shut heaven*
 - b. *To turn water to blood*
 - c. *To smite the earth*
 - d. *To devour by fire*

Revelation 11:7-10

COMMENTARY

The Beast out of the Pit

The Revelation contains references to the beast out of the bottomless pit [11:7], the beast out of the sea [13:1], the beast out of the earth [13:11], the image of the first beast, which is the beast out of the sea [13:14] and the scarlet-colored beast [17:3].

At the close of the Revelation, the beast and the false prophet, along with them that worshipped the image of the beast, are cast into the lake of fire [19:20]. Then, after the deception of the nations at the close of the millennial reign, the devil is cast into the lake of fire, “where the beast and the false prophet are” [20:10]. This clarifies that there are only two “beasts,” called the beast and the false prophet [19:20], other than the Devil himself.

That scarlet-colored beast that carries the great whore is that great red dragon, the Devil. He is described as having seven heads and ten horns in chapter 17 [v. 7], which is the same description of the devil in chapter 12 [v. 3]. The “beasts” that he empowers, the one out of the sea and the one out of the earth, have his characteristics in either appearance (the beast out of the sea has “seven heads and ten horns” [13:1]) or in speech (the beast out of the earth “spake as a dragon” [13:11]).

The beast out of the bottomless pit “was and is not, and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit and go into perdition” [17:8]. He is the one who shall make war against the two witnesses and shall overcome them and kill them [11:7]. He is the beast out of the bottomless pit, which is in the heart of the earth. He is also the one who causes an image to be made of the first beast [13:14], which is the beast out of the sea. He has power to give life unto the image, directing that the image itself should cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed [13:15].

The beast out of the sea is that first beast, the antiehrst or “little horn” of Daniel 7:8. He is the one who confirms the covenant with Israel for seven years as the rider of the white horse, seen in the first seal [6:1,2]. He has a crown given him, and he goes forth conquering and to conquer.

But his reign is not the millennial reign prophesied by Isaiah, for he is unable to fulfill the words of the prophet [Is. 65:25]. Instead, he will reveal himself to be that vile person [Dan. 11:21], committing the abomination of desolation [Matt. 24:15].

The beast out of the earth, known in the end as the false prophet, mimics the power of the two witnesses [13:13], as the magicians of Egypt had withstood Moses [Ex. 7:22]. Only, this beast will be allowed to overcome the two witnesses and to kill them. Their bodies will lie in the streets of Jerusalem for three and a half days.

So vile is their sin that God calls Jerusalem Sodom [11:8]; yet, so great is God’s grace that he cries unto them through the voice of the prophets, “Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom, ...when ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?...Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes...Come now, let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool” [Is. 1:10,12,16,18].

Sending Gifts

A characteristic of rejoicing over great victory is the sending of gifts. When Mordecai and Israel triumphed over the plot of Haman, they sent portions one to another and gifts to the poor [Esther 9:22]. But the feast of 13:10, is celebrated by wicked men. And their rejoicing shall be short-lived. When the witnesses rise from the dead, great fear shall cover them.

Revelation 11:11-14

THE REMNANT

The following outline is based on the compound predicates for the subject *remnant* in v. 13.

TEXT: *And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.* ¹²*And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.* ¹³*And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.* ¹⁴*The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.*

NOTE: The call of God to “come up hither” has resounded for the second time. The first time was at the beginning of chapter 4, where the church is called up in the rapture. Now, God has used another “rapture” call to demonstrate that the dead rise at his command. And though the men which were not killed by the plagues of the trumpets repented not [9:20], there is a “remnant” who give glory to the God of heaven by the close of the second woe. This remnant has found encouragement in the power of God. And it serves as a reminder that, even in the worst of times, God does not let his servants be tempted above that they are able [I Cor. 10: 13].

- I. And after three days and an half
 - A. The Spirit entered into them
 - 1. *The Spirit* of life
 - 2. *The Spirit* from God
 - B. And they stood upon their feet
 - C. And great fear fell upon them which saw them
 - D. And they heard a great voice
 - 1. *A great voice* from heaven
 - 2. *A great voice* saying unto them
 - a. Come up
 - b. *Come up* hither
 - 1.) And they ascended up
 - a.) To heaven
 - b.) In a cloud
 - 2.) And their enemies beheld them
- II. And the same hour
 - A. There was a great earthquake
 - 1. And the tenth part of the city fell
 - 2. And *there* were slain of men
 - a. Seven thousand
 - b. In the earthquake
 - B. And the remnant
 - 1. *They* were affrighted
 - 2. And *they* gave glory to the God of heaven
- III. The second woe is past
 - A. And, behold
 - B. The third woe cometh quickly

Revelation 11:15-19

THE THIRD WOE

The following outline is based on the compound verbs of the adverbial clause beginning with *because* in v. 17.

TEXT: *And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. ¹⁶And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, ¹⁷saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou **hast taken** to thee thy great power, and **hast reigned**. ¹⁸And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. ¹⁹And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.*

- I. And the seventh angel sounded
 - A. And there were great voices in heaven
 - B. *There were great voices*, saying
 - 1. The kingdoms of this world are become
 - a. The kingdoms of our Lord
 - b. And *the kingdoms* of his Christ
 - 2. And he shall reign
 - a. For ever
 - b. And ever
- II. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats
 - A. *They* fell upon their faces
 - B. And *they* worshipped God
 - C. *They worshipped God*, saying
 - 1. We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty
 - a. Which art
 - b. And wast
 - c. And art to come
 - 2. *We give thee thanks* because
 - a. Thou hast taken to thee thy great power
 - b. And *thou* hast reigned
- III. And the nations were angry
- IV. And thy wrath is come
- VI. And the time of the dead *is come*
 - A. That they should be judged
 - B. And that thou shouldest give reward
 - 1. Unto thy servants the prophets
 - 2. And to the saints
 - 3. And *to* them that fear thy name
 - a. *Both* small
 - b. And great
 - C. And *that thou* shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth
- VII. And the temple of God was opened in heaven
 - A. And there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament
 - B. And there were
 - 1. Lightnings
 - 2. And voices
 - 3. And thunderings
 - 4. And an earthquake
 - 5. And great hail

Revelation 11:11-19

COMMENTARY

The Remnant

Following the rapture of the great tribulation witnesses, there is seen on earth a remnant that, though affrighted, gave glory to the God of heaven [11:13]. It is with this remnant that the dragon has made war during the great tribulation. They are the remnant of the seed of Israel, described as having kept the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ [12:17].

What great encouragement must have been given them when they see Jerusalem shaken with a great earthquake. For it is from Jerusalem that the anti-christ has established his rule. Besides the destruction to property and the loss of goods, seven thousand men were slain, men who worshipped the image of the beast [13:15].

It is this remnant of the house of Israel that shall see their Deliverer come out of Sion, heavenly Sion [Rev. 19:11]. He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, and Israel shall be saved [Rom. 11:26].

The God of heaven and the God of the earth

When Abraham was old and well stricken in age, he made the eldest servant of his house swear, “by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of the earth [Gen. 24:3],” that he would not take a wife unto his son of the daughters of the Canaanites. His instruction was for Eliezer to go unto the country of his kindred and there to take a wife for young Isaac.

The Lord God of Abraham, he is the God of the earth [11:4]. The Lord God of Abraham, he is the God of heaven [11:13].

Between the Second and Third Woes

The first woe was the fifth trumpet: the bottomless pit was opened and Abaddon's army tormented men for five months. The second woe was the sixth seal: the four horsemen bound in the river Euphrates were loosed, for to slay a third part of men.

The third woe is the seventh seal. But before it sounds, the vials must be completed as the wrath of God is poured out. These vials are listed in Revelation 16. But the seventh vial, the destruction of Babylon the great, [mentioned in 16:19], is given greater description in chapter 18.

The Third Woe

Just as the sixth seal brought us to the white throne judgment [6:16,17], so the seventh trumpet brings us to “the time of the dead, that they should be judged” [11:18]. However, the seventh trumpet carries us beyond the white throne, for it shows us the opening of the temple of God in heaven.

Here's how its elements list the events to come:

Thou hast taken to thee thy great power – speaks of his return [19:11]. *And thou hast reigned* – speaks of his millennial reign [20:6]. *And the nations were angry* – speaks of Satan's final revolt [20:7,8]. *And thy wrath is come* – speaks of his devouring those armies [20:9]. *And the time that the dead should be judged* – speaks of the white throne judgment itself [20:13]. *And the time that thou shouldest give reward* – speaks of the new heaven and the new earth, along with the New Jerusalem [21:4]. *And the time that thou shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth* – speaks of the second death [21:8]. *And the temple of God was opened in heaven* – speaks of the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb themselves, for they are the temple of the New Jerusalem [21:22].

Revelation 12:1-6
A MAN CHILD

The following outline is based on the compound prepositional phrases used to modify **caught up** in v. 5.

Text: *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: ²and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. ³And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. ⁴And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. ⁵And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up **unto** God, and **to** his throne. ⁶And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.*

NOTE: Chapter 12 starts a new section. It is a summary of the fulfillment of the promised Seed [Gen. 3:15] and the opposition, and defeat, of Satan in relation to that Seed. Two wars are described in the chapter, one in verse 4 and one in verse 7. The description of the woman is split by the reference to that first war because it was fought prior to the birth of Christ.

- I. And there appeared a great wonder in heaven
 - A. A woman
 - 1. Clothed with the sun
 - 2. And the moon under her feet
 - 3. And upon her head a crown of twelve stars
 - B. And she cried**
 - 1. Being with child
 - 2. Travailing in birth
 - C. And she pained to be delivered
- II. And there appeared another wonder in heaven
 - A. And, behold, a great red dragon
 - 1. Having seven heads
 - 2. And *having* ten horns
 - 3. And *having* seven crowns upon his heads
 - 4. And his tail
 - a. *It* drew the third part of the stars of heaven
 - b. And *it* did cast them to the earth
 - B. And the dragon stood
 - 1. Before the woman which was ready to be delivered
 - 2. For to devour her child as soon as it was born
- III. *Regarding the first wonder: the woman*
 - A. And she brought forth a man child
 - 1. Who was to rule all nations
 - 2. *Who was to rule* with a rod of iron
 - B. And her child was caught up
 - 1. Unto God
 - 2. And to his throne
 - C. And the woman fled into the wilderness
 - 1. Where she hath a place prepared of God
 - 2. *Where she hath a place* that they should feed her there
 - a. A thousand two hundred and threescore days
 - b. *Or three and a half years*

Revelation 12:1-6 COMMENTARY

The Woman

This woman is not the queen of heaven. God is provoked by any offerings unto any one called the queen of heaven. The virgin Mary is not the queen of heaven. She would never have any part with that which would provoke God to cast out his people [Jer. 7:17-20].

This woman is Israel, through whom God kept his promise to Adam and Eve to send his Seed, who would bruise Satan's head [Gen. 3:15]. This also implies that Adam and Eve were Jewish, of the same seed as Abraham and, certainly, of the same faith as Abraham. For the promise of the man child was first given to Eve and Adam [Gen. 4:25]. This is the "childbearing" through which Eve and Adam were saved, having continued in faith and charity and holiness, with sobriety [I Tim. 2:15]

The description of Israel as the body of the faithful, her being clothed with the brightness of the sun, and the position of her body as being above the moon points us to the constellations: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world" [Ps. 19:1-4a].

The constellations tell the story of redemption. Beginning with the virgin, Virgo, who shall bear a son and ending with the lion, Leo, who shall reign forever, the Sphinx points us through the plan of the ages: God's plan of redemption written in the stars.

The twelve stars making up the crown of the woman are the twelve sons of Jacob.

The Man Child

From the garden of Eden God had promised the Seed, the Messiah. From the foundation of the world, he is the Lamb slain [Rev. 13:8], and he was manifest in these last times for us [I Peter 1:20].

This man is Jesus [Luke 1:31]. He is God come in the flesh [Is. 7:14; Matt. 1:23; John 1:14]. He is the Son of God [Mat. 17:5], and he is the Son of man [Matt. 9:4-6]. He will sit on the throne of his father David [Luke 1:32] and rule with a rod of iron [Rev. 2:27, 19:15] for a thousand years. Of his eternal kingdom there shall be no end [Luke 1:33].

But, until the time for him to take unto himself his great power on the battlefield of Armageddon [Rev. 11:17], he sits at the right hand of his Father, until his enemies be made his footstool [Heb. 10:12,13].

The Dragon

The dragon is Satan. In his rebellion, he drew a third of the stars of heaven. These are the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation [Jude 1:6]. They are reserved in everlasting chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day [Rev. 20:11].

Satan's fall [Luke 10:18; Is. 14:12] came after the completion of creation: "And God saw everything that he had made; and, behold, it was very good" [Gen. 1:31]. This is God's declaration when he had finished the heavens and the earth, "and all the host of them" [Gen. 2:1]. But Satan lifted himself up with pride [Is. 14:13,14]. Having left his first estate in heaven, he seeks to be as God through making Eve and Adam subservient to him [Gen. 3:1-7]. His efforts plagued creation with the curse.

The "Gap"

Between Christ's ascension [12:5] and the woman's flight into the wilderness during great tribulation [12:6] comes all the events of the church age, through to the abomination of desolation.

Revelation 12:7-12
WAR IN HEAVEN

The following outline is based on the parallel prepositional phrases modifying the verb *overcame* in v. 11.

Text: *And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, ⁸and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. ⁹And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. ¹⁰And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. ¹¹And they overcame him **by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony**; and they loved not their lives unto the death. ¹²Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*

- I. And there was war in heaven
 - A. Michael *fought against the dragon*
 - B. And his angels fought against the dragon
 - C. And the dragon fought
 - D. And his angels *fought*
 - 1. And *they* prevailed not
 - 2. Neither was their place found any more in heaven
 - E. And the great dragon was cast out
 - 1. That old serpent
 - a. Called the Devil
 - b. And *called* Satan
 - 2. *That old serpent* which deceiveth the whole world
 - a. He was cast out into the earth
 - b. And his angels were cast out with him
- II. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven
 - A. Now is come salvation
 - B. And *now is come* strength
 - C. And *now is come* the kingdom of our God
 - D. And *now is come* the power of his Christ
 - 1. For the accuser of our brethren is cast down
 - a. Which accused them before our God
 - b. *Which accused them* day and night
 - 2. And they overcame him
 - a. By the blood of the Lamb
 - b. And by the word of their testimony
 - 3. And they loved not their lives unto the death
- III. *The results of this war in heaven*
 - A. *Rejoicing*
 - 1. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens
 - 2. And ye that dwell in them, *rejoice*
 - B. Woe
 - 1. To the inhabitants of the earth
 - 2. And *to the inhabitants* of the sea
 - a. For the devil is come down unto you
 - b. *For the devil is come down*, having great wrath
 - 1.) Because he knoweth
 - 2.) *Because he knoweth* that he hath but a short time

Revelation 12:13-17

WAR WITH THE REMNANT

The following outline is based on compound predicates of the adjective clause modifying *seed* in v. 17.

Text: *And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. ¹⁴And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. ¹⁵And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. ¹⁶And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. ¹⁷And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, **which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.***

NOTE: The “seed” has always been those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. This is true of the Church [John 14:21], as it has been true from Adam to Abraham and from Moses to Malachi. Adam was told of the Messiah, the Seed of the woman. And Abraham was told of a miraculous Seed: “For they are not all Israel which are of Israel, neither because they are the children of Abraham are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called” [Rom. 9:6,7]. Moses saw the Seed as the Passover Lamb, and Malachi saw the prophet who would turn the heart of the fathers to the children in expectation of that Seed.

- I. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth
 - A. He persecuted the woman
 - B. *He persecuted the woman* which brought forth the man child
- II. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle
 - A. That she might fly into the wilderness
 - B. *That she might fly* into her place
 - 1. Where she is nourished
 - a. For a time
 - b. And *for* times
 - c. And *for* half a time
 - 2. *Where she is nourished* from the face of the serpent
- III. And the serpent cast water after the woman
 - A. Out of his mouth
 - B. As a flood
 - 1. That he might cause her to be carried away
 - 2. *That he might cause her to be carried away* of the flood
- IV. And the earth
 - A. *The earth* helped the woman
 - B. And the earth opened her mouth
 - C. And *the earth* swallowed up the flood
 - 1. Which the dragon cast
 - 2. *Which the dragon cast* out of his mouth
- VI. And the dragon
 - A. *The dragon* was wroth with the woman
 - B. And *the dragon* went to make war
 - 1. With the remnant
 - 2. *With the remnant* of her seed
 - a. Which keep the commandments of God
 - b. And *which* have the testimony of Jesus Christ

Revelation 12:7-17

COMMENTARY

The Victory of the Brethren

The accuser of the brethren is Satan, who has been charging God's saints with such lines as "Doth he fear God for nought?" [Job 1: 9] and "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now and touch his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face" [Job 2:4,5] since the garden. This is his "second estate," having left his first position [Jude 1:6]. But his accusing days are numbered.

There has been war in heaven [Dan. 10:13]. But this is the final war. And what makes it different from all the other warfare is the presence of the Church as a unit, glorified. Michael and the dragon will fight. Michael's angels will fight against the fallen angels. And Michael's forces will win. But what truly turns the tables is the "they" that overcame: the Church triumphant [Rev. 12:11].

The Church will overcome Satan, first, by the blood of the Lamb. It is the blood that takes away our sin. And by the blood Christ shed, we can have the righteousness that reigns by grace unto eternal life through faith [Rom. 5:17]. The Church will overcome Satan, secondly, by the word of their testimony: each will stand before the Father and give glory unto the Lamb. We will tell of how Christ found us and redeemed us unto himself. Our testimony will be of him. It will be of Jesus Christ [Rev. 1:9].

The principalities and powers that were spoiled at Calvary [Col. 2:15] will no longer have a place in heaven [Rev. 12:8].

The Rejoicing of Heaven

Recall that the angels are rejoicing after the tribulation saints are "clothed with white robes." Then they will be saying, "Amen: blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be unto our God for ever and ever" [Rev. 7:11,12]. But the rejoicing here [Rev. 12:12] is at the mid-point of the tribulation, when they witness Satan being cast into the earth.

And while the angels rejoice, the saints will rejoice: "For now is come salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God" [12:9]. We will see for ourselves the glorious grace of God, and the prophesy of our Lord will come to pass: "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father and ye are in me and I in you" [John 14:20].

A Short Time

However, "woe" is pronounced upon the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea, for the Devil is come down, having great wrath because he knows that his time is short. He will have only three and a half years left. His anger will fuel his efforts more. And God's wrath will continue to be poured out upon the men who worship the devil and who receive the mark of the beast. But, for the elect's sake, the days of great tribulation will be shorted [Matt. 24:22].

War with the Remnant

Israel, as the woman who gave birth to the man-child, flees into the wilderness, where there is a place prepared for her of God for this 42 month period. The flight of 12:6 and the flight of 12:14 is the same. Because of his defeat in heaven, Satan will persecute faithful Israel.

At first, those who recognize the scripture and believe the 144,000 will withstand the anti-christ, giving their lives for their testimony. But after the abomination of desolation, the serpent will cast out a flood against her [12:15]. Sela, Petra in the Greek, may be the wilderness set to protect the woman. But the remnant of her seed will suffer his wrath [13:7].

The beginnings of WOE

The term *woe* characterizes the last half of the tribulation period. And the *woe* of 12:12 can be linked to the *woes* of chapters 9 and 11. Here is a review:

At the midst of the seven years of Jacob's trouble, the antiehrst will reveal himself to be the son of perdition, that vile person. He will demand a sacrifice offered to himself upon the altar of the new temple in Jerusalem. This act is called the abomination of desolation. Israel as a nation will see his abomination. Many will believe the testimony of the 144,000. They will join in an outcry against the anti-christ.

In rapid succession the first five trumpets will sound. Fire will burn up a third of the earth's forests. Volcanic eruptions will devastate a third of its oceans. The earth's continents will shift. Its fresh water supply will be diminished by a third. And a third of the constellations themselves will be destroyed.

In the wake of all of this disaster, Satan will be cast upon the earth. And he will persecute Israel as never before. The serpent will cast out a flood after the woman [12:15]. This is a reference to a massive army, as seen in such scriptures as Isaiah 8:6-8. Only this army will be set for the annihilation of Israel, as Herod of old had sought to kill the Christ child [Matt. 2:16-18].

What will save Israel's faithful is the earth's swallowing up the flood by opening up her mouth: the bottomless pit. What will divert the army of Satan from destroying faithful Israel will be the "two wings of a great eagle": the shadow from a sky filled with locust from the first woe.

Abaddon's army, loosed from the earth's "mouth," will torment men for five months. Their attack will be so gruesome that men will seek to die, but cannot. Like the Egyptians of old, they will know that "the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel" [Ex. 11:7]. During that period, Israel's faithful will hide itself in the wilderness, as the 7,000 of Elijah's day who had not bowed to Baal nor kissed him [1 Kings 17:18].

Abaddon's army, as the earth's response to "swallowing up" the flood sent after Israel, gives us a reason for the specific reference to five months. The number 5 is the number of grace. And, although there is no grace shown in the torment by these locust, there is grace shown in the protection of God's people. Just as the 144,000 are protected by the seal of God in their foreheads [7:3] and the church was kept from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth [3:10], so shall God protect the woman.

Why, then, are there others killed [Rev. 13:15]? Hebrews holds forth the answer: "Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection" [Heb. 11:35].

The Remnant

During these forty-two months, the two witnesses will stand in Jerusalem, preaching and "smiting the earth with plagues as often as they will." Their stand, along with the witness of the 144,000, will maintain a remnant that will refuse the mark of the beast and the worship of the anti-christ.

These men and women will have two characteristics common to all of God's people through all of the ages: (1) they keep the commandments of God and (2) they have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Jesus fulfilled the law for righteousness to every one that believeth [Rom. 10:4], demonstrating that all the law is fulfilled in one word: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" [Gal. 5:14].

Revelation 8:1-6

SILENCE IN HEAVEN

The following outline is based on the compound verbs used in v. 5.

TEXT: *And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. ²And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. ³And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. ⁴And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. ⁵And the angel **took** the censer, and **filled** it with fire of the altar, and **cast** it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. ⁶And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.*

NOTE: The opening of the seventh seal marks the beginning of the events shown thus far. From the time of the church's arrival in heaven [4:1] to the Father's wiping away the tears of the tribulation saints [7:17], there has been challenge and worship in heaven. The challenge is mentioned briefly [5:2], compared to the scenes of worship [4:10; 5:9; 5:13; 7:10; & 7:12]. But a silence now settles over heaven as the review is ended and reality of what we have seen thus far begins.

- I. And there was silence *in heaven*
 - A. About the space of half an hour
 - B. When he had opened the seventh seal
 - 1. And I saw
 - a. The seven angels which stood before God
 - b. And seven trumpets were given to them
 - 2. And another angel came
 - 3. And *he* stood at the altar
 - a. Having a censer
 - b. Having a golden censer
 - 4. And much incense was given unto him
 - a. There
 - b. That he should offer it
 - 1.) With the prayers of all saints
 - 2.) Upon the *altar*
 - a.) *The* golden altar
 - b.) Which was before the throne
 - 5. And the smoke of the incense ascended up before God
 - a. Which came with the prayers of the saints
 - b. Out of the angel's hand
- II. *There was silence* in heaven
 - A. And the angel
 - 1. *He* took the censer
 - 2. And *he* filled it with fire of the altar
 - 3. And *he* cast it into the earth
 - a. And there were voices
 - b. And *there were* thunderings
 - c. And *there were* lightnings
 - d. And *there was* an earthquake
 - B. And the angels
 - 1. *The seven angels* which had the seven trumpets
 - 2. *They* prepared themselves to sound

Revelation 8:1-6
COMMENTARY
SILENCE IN HEAVEN

The opening of the seventh seal causes silence to prevail in heaven “for the space of half an hour.” The first rider has appeared, and heaven is watching. The seals are broken; the book is opened. God has sealed the 144,000 with his name. The first of their fruit, saints killed in tribulation, are arriving; and it will be their “voices” that will break this silence of heaven [8:5b] as they cry out to God, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” [4:10].

THE SEVEN ANGELS

While silence pervades heaven for “half an hour,” the seven angels of the seven churches [1:20] receive their next instructions. They have been standing before the Father’s throne since their shift from the seven candlesticks [1:20] to the seven lamps of fire [4:5], which are the seven spirits of God. These are the angels of revelation. Like the angels who delivered just Lot, their words were steadfast [Heb. 2:2].

Each of them is given a trumpet; and, as they prepare themselves to sound, another angel comes to the altar “in the midst of the throne” [4:6]. This angel could be Gabriel, for more prophecy is about to be fulfilled.

THE ALTAR

The angel with the golden censer comes forward and stands at the altar. This is the altar on which the Lamb appears, as it had been slain, “having seven horns and seven eyes” [5:6]. Jesus, who is that Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, has opened the final seal. Now, he is performing the service of the altar, just as he had performed the service of the candlestick [1:13].

Jesus gives to Gabriel “much incense” [8:3], to be offered with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar of incense, which is before the throne of the Father where the seven lamps of fire are burning [4:5b].

The prayers of saints in the golden vials of the twenty-four elders [5:8] may have been poured out among the crowns cast at the Lamb’s feet when they sung a new song upon their harps of gold, entitled “Thou art Worthy” [5:9]. This may explain why the shift from the “prayers of saints” [5:8] to the “prayers of all saints” [8:3] takes place between the chapters.

Since incense is linked to prayers [the “odors” of 4:8], the “much incense,” given along with the incense of the prayers of the saints, is the primary pray: it is Jesus’ prayer. Though it may be one we have not yet heard, it could be similar to Christ’s prayer in the garden: “Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: ²as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. ³And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. ⁴I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. ⁵And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was” [John 17:1-5].

THE GOLDEN CENSER

The angel takes the golden censer to the altar of incense, and the prayers ascend up before the Father. A gesture seems sufficient for the angel to understand that these petitions have been granted. He opens the censer, fills it with fire of the altar and casts it into the earth. Judgment has begun. The “voices” [6:10] have been heard. God thunders forth his directions. The angels, as lightening, busy themselves in carrying out their instructions. The seven angels are preparing themselves to sound, and the earth will quake from their impact.

Revelation 8:7-9
THE FIRST ANGELS SOUNDED

The following outline is based on parallel, introductory clauses, vv. 7, 8.

TEXT: *The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.* ⁸*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;* ⁹*And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.*

NOTE: God shows us his grace before he shows us his judgment. We are shown the redeemed out of great tribulation [7:14] before we are shown the judgment [8:6-13]. This was true in chapter 1 – we were reminded of God’s grace [1:5,6] before we were foretold of God’s judgment [1:7]. And this is true of the church age. We are promised deliverance [3:10] before we are shown Jacob’s trouble [7:2-8]. Even with regard to the tribulation period, we are reminded of God’s salvation before God’s pouring out of wrath [7:2].

- I. The first angel sounded
 - A. And there followed hail
 - B. And *there followed* fire, mingled with blood
 - C. And they were cast upon the earth
 - 1. And the third part of trees was burnt up
 - 2. And all green grass was burnt up
- II. And the second angel sounded
 - A. And, as it were, *a mountain*
 - 1. A great mountain
 - 2. *A great mountain*, burning with fire
 - B. *A great mountain* was cast into the sea
 - 1. And the third part of the sea became blood
 - 2. And the third part of the creatures died
 - a. Which were in the sea
 - b. And *which* had life
 - 3. And the third part of the ships were destroyed

NOTE: There is a progression in the first six trumpets of size and intensity. The first is hail and fire; the second is, as it were, a great mountain; the third is a great star, named Wormwood; the fourth is also a star or stars, for the sun and a third part of the moon and stars themselves are smitten. The fifth is a star, referred to as the “one who has the key to the bottomless pit”; and, the sixth also has a key, this one loosens the four angels bound in the river Euphrates.

The First Trumpet: a third of the trees & grass burnt up

What is the impact of our dwindling forests on the weather of the earth? Imagine a third of all forests destroyed overnight. Impossible? Consider the destructive power of Mt. Vesuvius, the only active volcano on the continent of Europe, sitting on the eastern shore of the Bay of Naples in southern Italy. Its earliest recorded eruption, and one of the most severe, took place in A.D. 79. The first sight of activity was a series of earthquakes starting A.D. 63. Then, on August 24, in the year 79, the appalling eruption occurred. It buried the cities of Pompeii, Herculaneum and Stabiae beneath tons of molten stone and ash.

Revelation 8:7-9
COMMENTARY
THE CIRCLE OF FIRE

The first two trumpets speak of hail and fire, mingled with blood, being cast upon the earth, and a great mountain being cast into the sea. The results of these events is the destruction of a third of the earth's forests and a third of the earth's sea. How could "blood" [vv. 7 & 8] so cover a third of the earth? The "circle of fire" is an effective illustration. It is a circle of great mountains, as described in Rev. 8:8, that burn with fire. And it is their fire that can turn their surroundings into blood.

"The total number of active and extinct volcanoes are in the hundred thousand. However, active volcanoes alone are estimated at over 300. These are distributed in regular belts that are associated with the regions of frequent earthquake disturbance. These regions are the areas of recent mountain-building processes and are zones of weakness in the earth's crust.

"The Circum-Pacific system of volcanoes forms a chain around the Pacific Ocean and is sometimes referred to as the circle of fire. This system includes volcanoes of New Zealand, and the New Hebrides, Kermadec, and Bismarck groups of islands, then swings north and west through the Philippines and Japan to Kamcharka. Here the belt crosses over to the Western Hemisphere adjoining the Aleutian Islands and the Alaska Peninsula and extends south along the western coast including the Pacific states, Mexico, Central America, the West Indies, the Andes of South America, and comes to an end in the Falkland Islands" [*Universal World Reference Encyclopedia*, 14:5336].

There is also the Alpine-Himalayan system of volcanoes, as well as three other systems that include the volcanic islands bordering regions of the Indian, Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

Enough volcanic activity to cut off two of the earth's oceans is imaginable. There is only a "short" distance for major volcanic and earthquake activity to cut off the Atlantic from the Pacific south of the Americas. It would mean a force great enough to cause a continental shift. Have you ever heard of the suggestion that South America was once connected to the continent of Africa? The power of the first two trumpets could cause a similar, if not greater, shift.

DESTROYING "A THIRD"

Marine animal activists concern themselves with the protection of endangered species. Their efforts often focus on restrictions that protect breeding grounds, such as those of seals. Since it is the instinct of the seal that gathers them together in large, localized populations, man has no control over their actions. Thus he attempts to control his fellow man.

Though not by instinct, the harbors that dot the circle of fire could account for a third of maritime traffic, should they be affected by massive volcanic or seismic activity at peak use.

The loss of a third of the earth's forests, the judgment of the first trumpet, and the loss of a third of the world's sea life and shipping tonnage, the judgment of the second trumpet, is not an unreasonable percentage given the geographical area involved. Consider just the devastation to California's coast, should the San Andreas fault break.

CAST INTO THE SEA

The first and second trumpets do not require that the point of origin for the hail and fire or the great mountain be heaven itself. Since the other seals specifically state "from heaven" [8:10, 9:1] or "from the four horns of the golden altar" [9:13]. The great mountain, "as it were," was cast into the sea. This great mountain will, on command, throw itself into the sea through its own volcanic explosion.

Revelation 8:10-13 BITTER WATERS

The following outline is based on parallel introductory clauses, vv. 10,12.

TEXT: *And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; ¹¹and 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. ¹²And 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; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. ¹³And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!*

NOTE: The “star from heaven” in the third trumpet is a physical star, in contrast to the stars of the fifth and sixth seals who are angels to whom is given the authority to open the pit and to loose the four angels. This star of the third seal will strike the earth at the source of one third of the fountains of waters, making them useless to both human and animal consumption.

The fourth trumpet reveals a physical affect in heaven to that same degree: a third of the sun, moon and stars are darkened. They are made useless, just as the fresh water was made useless on earth. And herein is a parallel between earth and heaven, a parallelism of water to light. Both are a source of life that has been turned to death by the power of bitterness.

- I. And the third angel sounded
 - A. And there fell a great star from heaven
 - 1. Burning as it were a lamp
 - 2. And it fell
 - a. Upon the third part of the rivers
 - b. And upon the fountains of waters
 - B. And the name of the star is called Wormwood
 - C. And the third part of the waters became wormwood
 - D. And many men died of the waters
 - 1. Because they were made bitter
 - 2. *Because they became wormwood*
- II. And the fourth angel sounded
 - A. And the third part of the sun was smitten
 - B. And the third part of the moon *was smitten*
 - C. And the third part of the stars *were smitten*
 - 1. So as the third part of them was darkened
 - 2. And the day shone not for a third part of it
 - 3. And the night, likewise, *shone not for a third of it*
- III. And I beheld and heard an angel
 - A. Flying through the midst of heaven
 - B. Saying with a loud voice
 - 1. Woe
 - 2. Woe
 - 3. Woe
 - a. To the inhabitants of the earth
 - b. By reason of the other voices of the trumpet
 - 1.) Of the three angels
 - 2.) *Of the three angels* which are yet to sound

Revelation 8:10-13
COMMENTARY
THE FOUNTAINS OF WATERS

In the days of the flood God first broke up all the fountains of the great deep [Gen. 7:11] and then stopped the fountains of the deep [8:2], as he fulfilled judgment on the earth by water.

Wisdom declares *The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men* [Pro. 8:22-31].

The mountains and the hills cap these fountains of the deep. They strengthen these fountains. And their destruction will ruin these “wells.” They will cease to be fresh water, being contaminated by the flood that will reach their chambers.

And which “third” of the fresh waters of the earth will be contaminated? It will not be the depths of the Tigris-Euphrates river system, since they will be affected later [Rev. 16:12]. They will be dried up to prepare the way of the kings of the East. And, herein is a possibility regarding that water supply. What will draw the kings of the East? It could be their need for a fresh-water supply, following the impact of Wormwood.

EXCEPT THOSE DAYS BE SHORTENED

In his Olivet discourse [Matt. 24], Jesus summarized the events of the last days in order: The beginning of sorrows will be marked by the many who shall claim to be Christ. And one of them will succeed in confirming the covenant with Israel for one week, though he will be the anti-christ.

The wars and rumors of wars, the nations rising against nations, the famines and pestilence and earthquakes will involve the four horsemen [Rev. 6], as will the deliverance of the faithful to affliction and to death [Rev. 6:10]. It is in this period that saving faith will be marked by death: loving not their lives “unto the death” [Matt. 24:13; Rev. 12:11].

This is the day of the gospel of the kingdom. The abomination of desolation will mark the mid-point, dividing Tribulation from Great Tribulation. Many eyes will be opened in the face of that desolation, and believers will flee. Jesus said, “Except those days be shortened there shall no flesh be saved.” But, for the elect’s sake, those days shall be shortened [Matt. 24:22]. What did Jesus mean by “shortened”?

Did he mean that the number of day shall be cut short? Or, did he mean that the length of the daylight and darkness will be shortened? The difference is in how we count time. “The evening and the morning were the first day” bases a twenty-four hour day on the movement of the sun across our skies [our orbit about the sun]. Reduce the sun by a third, and that orbit accelerates. Change the moon by a third, and the constellations about us in the heavens, and we still maintain a balance, but at a quickened pace. This faster pace hastens the passing of those days. It shortens their time.

The “number” of days are determined [Dan. 9:24], but those days shall be shortened for the elect’s sake [Matt. 24:22].

Matthew 24:2-31
THE OLIVET DISCOURSE
[A REVIEW]

TEXT: *Take heed that no man deceive you. ⁵For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. ⁶And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. ⁷For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. ⁸All these are the beginning of sorrows. ⁹Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. ¹⁰And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. ¹¹And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. ¹²And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. ¹³But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. ¹⁴And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*

THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION
[Rev. 13:6]

¹⁵*When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)* ¹⁶*Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: ¹⁷Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: ¹⁸Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. ¹⁹And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! ²⁰But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: ²¹For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²²And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.*

A WARNING AGAINST THAT DAY

²³*Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. ²⁴For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. ²⁵Behold, I have told you before. ²⁶Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.*

IN CONTRAST TO CHRIST'S COMING
[Rev. 19:11-18]

²⁷*For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. ²⁸For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.*

AND THE LAST PLAGUES UP TO ARMAGEDDON
[Rev. 16:1-21]

²⁹*Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: ³⁰And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*

WHICH IS THAT GREAT DAY OF DELIVERANCE
[ROM. 11:25-27 & ZECH. 14:1-11]

³¹*And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

Revelation 9:1-6

THE FIRST “WOE”

The following outline is based on the correlative conjunction in v. 4.

TEXT: *And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. ²And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose 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. ³And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. ⁴And it was commanded them that they should **not** hurt the grass of the earth, **neither** any green thing, **neither** any tree; **but** only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. ⁵And to them it was given 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 he striketh a man. ⁶And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.*

NOTE: Three *woe*'s are determined upon the inhabitants of the earth: the fifth, sixth and seventh trumpets. These shall come in rapid succession.

- I. And the fifth angel sounded
 - A. And I saw a star
 - 1. Fall from heaven
 - 2. Unto the earth
 - B. And to him was given the key of the bottomless pit
 - C. And he opened the bottomless pit
 - 1. And there arose a smoke
 - a. Out of the pit
 - b. As the smoke of a great furnace
 - 2. And the sun *was darkened*
 - 3. And the air *was* darkened
 - a. By reason of the smoke
 - b. *By reason of the smoke* of the pit
 - 4. And there came locusts
 - a. Upon the earth
 - b. Out of the smoke
 - 5. And unto them was given power as the scorpions of the earth have power
 - 6. And it was commanded them
 - a. That they should not hurt the grass of the earth
 - b. Neither *should they hurt* any green thing
 - c. Neither *should they hurt* any tree
 - d. But *they should hurt* only those men
 - 1.) Which have not the seal of God
 - 2.) *Which have not his seal* in their foreheads
 - 7. And to them it was given
 - a. That they should not kill them
 - b. But that they should be tormented five months
 - 1.) And their torment was as the torment of a scorpion
 - 2.) *As a scorpion* when he striketh a man
- II. And in those days [*of the fifth angel's trumpet*]
 - A. Men shall seek death
 - B. And *they* shall not find it
 - C. And *they* shall desire to die
 - D. And death shall flee from them

Revelation 9:7-12
ABADDON'S ARMY

The following outline is based on the expressions introduced as similes: a comparison of two different objects using the terms *like* or *as*.

TEXT: *And the shapes of the locusts were **like** unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were **as it were** crowns like gold, and their faces were **as** the faces of men. ⁸And they had hair **as** the hair of women, and their teeth were **as** the teeth of lions. ⁹And they had breastplates, **as it were** breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was **as** the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. ¹⁰And they had tails **like** unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. ¹¹And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon. ¹²One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.*

- I. *And there came out of the smoke locusts*
 - A. And the shapes of the locusts
 - 1. Were like unto horses
 - 2. *Like unto horses* prepared unto battle
 - B. And on their heads were as it were crowns like gold
 - C. And their faces were as the faces of men
 - D. And they had hair as the hair of women
 - E. And their teeth were as the teeth of lions
 - F. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron
 - G. And the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots
 - 1. *Chariots* of many horses
 - 2. *Chariots of many horses* running to battle
 - H. And they had tails like unto scorpions
 - 1. And there were stings in their tails
 - 2. And their power was to hurt men five months
 - I. And they had a king over them
 - 1. Which is the angel
 - 2. *Which is the angel* of the bottomless pit
 - a. Whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon [*destroyer*]
 - b. But in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon [*destroyer*]
- II. One woe is past
- III. And, behold, there come two woes more hereafter

Revelation 9:1-12 COMMENTARY

A STAR WITH A KEY

Unlike Wormwood, the star that will crash into the earth and turn a third of the freshwater supply bitter, the *star* of the fifth trumpet is referred to in the masculine gender. This *star* is an angel, as were the stars of the churches in chapter one. Only, this angel is given the key to the bottomless pit: he is given the key to hell itself.

Recall the victory Jesus won at Calvary. When he arose from the dead, he demonstrated that he had the keys of hell and of death [Rev. 1:18]. The Lord Jesus Christ has had to assign the key of hell to this angel for this one purpose. Since there is one angel who opens the bottomless pit at the sound of the fifth trumpet and another angel that sets free those angels bound in the river Euphrates, neither of these would be Lucifer.

Lucifer is busy making war against the remnant [Rev. 12:17] after his final defeat in heaven. The results of the two angels, the one who opens the bottomless pit and the one who loosens the four horsemen, is the torment of the worshipers of devils and the worshipers of idols. The result is the death of a third of them for their murders and sorceries and fornication and theft. These “angels” torment and kill the followers of Lucifer.

ABADDON, ALIAS: APOLLYON

Abaddon, ~~de~~*destroyer* in the Hebrew, is associated with Hades. Apollyon, or *destroyer* in the Greek, is associated with Satan. Used only in Rev. 9:11, these names reveal their association with Satan. He is a destroyer. All devils are destroyers. Yet, Abaddon, though an angel, is not Satan (otherwise known as Lucifer) himself.

Satan is destined to everlasting fire. Jesus told us it was prepared for the devil and his angels [Matt. 25:41]. If Matthew’s reference is to the lake of fire, then this is not hell or the bottomless pit. Do not be confused here. The fire of hell is not quenched, and hell itself will be cast into the lake of fire. But hell will present the dead that are in it before Christ at the white throne judgment. Hell is where Satan will be placed during the thousand year millennial reign of Christ [Rev. 20:7]. It is the prison from which he will be loosed for a short season, as the locust and the horsemen were loosed for a season [Rev. 9].

Satan’s “entrance” into hell, when he shall be “brought down to the sides of the pit” for the thousand years, is described by Isaiah: “They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?” [Is. 14:16,17].

Three phases in the fall of Satan

First, there was a time before his fall: “And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them” [Gen. 1:31-2:1]. All the host of the heavens would include the angels, who were made as ministering spirits [Heb. 1:7].

Then, there was Satan’s fall: Jesus testified to his disciples, “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven” [Luke 10:18]. This occurred before Satan’s beguiling of Eve as the serpent in the garden [Gen. 3]. He had said in his heart, “I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the

congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High” [Is. 14:13,14].

From a throne in the heights of the clouds, he viewed the third heaven and declared he would take his place above the stars of God and sit upon the mount of the congregation. He declared he would be like the most High, and he was cast from that position as lightning falls from heaven.

For now, he is still the prince of the power of the air [Eph. 2:2]. As such he appears before God as the accuser of the brethren [Job 1:6], but only until the church is completed [Rev. 12:10]; for, he will be cast out of heaven in the final war of the angels [Rev. 12:7].

Finally, there will be an end to his fall: Satan lost the throne given him in creation, and he will lose his power. Though his tail will draw the third part of the angels down with him, he will eventually be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone for ever to suffer torment in its flames: “And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever” [Rev. 20:10].

ON THE APPEARANCE OF ANGELS

When the shepherds heard the good tidings on the night of Christ’s birth, the angel who appeared unto them “shone with the glory of the Lord.” He was then joined by a multitude of the heavenly host. Yet, when they finished their message, the shepherds were focused on finding the one of whom they spake, and not on any oddity in the appearance of the angels.

Daniel describes one [Dan. 10] like unto the description John gives of Jesus [Rev. 1]: clothed in linen, girded with a golden girdle; his face as lightning, his eyes as lamps of fire, his feet as polished brass, his voice as the voice of a multitude [many waters].

When Jesus appeared to Abraham in the plains of Mamre [Gen. 18], he had two angels with him. Although Abraham knows the Lord when he sees him, the appearance of the three are similar, with no outstanding differences between them. And later, as the two angels enter Sodom, they were treated as if they were men by the multitude. All of these angels appeared as men. Some with the glory of the Lord about them and some without, but all as men.

Isaiah describes the seraphims: “Each had six wings; with twain he covered his face and with twain he covered his feet and with twain he did fly” [Is. 6:2]. Ezekiel describes the cherubs: “Every one had four faces apiece, and every one four wings: and the likeness of the hands of a man was under their wings” [Ez. 10:21].

It is the likeness of the cherubs that rest on either end of the ark of the covenant: “And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat....And the cherubims shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings; and their faces shall look one to another, toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubims be” [Ex. 25:18,20].

But in the Revelation, there is the angel of the bottomless pit, the king of the locust. His name is Abaddon, and his appearance is as the locusts themselves: sized as locust, “shaped like unto horses prepared unto battle: and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates of iron: and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails” [Rev. 9:7-10]. These are the matured larvae, the full growth of the worm that dies not in the fires of hell [Mark 9:48]. They will come forth and live on the earth for five months, tormenting those who have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

Revelation 9:13-17 THE SECOND “WOE”

The following outline is based on the adverbial phrases modifying the verb *prepared*, used in the adjective clause beginning with *which* in v. 15.

TEXT: *And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, ¹⁴saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. ¹⁵And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. ¹⁶And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. ¹⁷And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.*

NOTE: The locust of the first woe make up in number what they lack in size when compared to the full-scaled horsemen of the Apocalypse. For the second woe presents the four horsemen whose armies will sweep across the continent of Eurasia midst the chaos of war and famine and pestilence [Rev. 6], working havoc in a world torn by catastrophic events [Rev. 8]. Their appearance on the battlefields of the tribulation will add to the confusion and condemnation of men. Fighting for none of men's armies, they will overwhelm the field in battle. No plunder will be worse than their presence. And in their wake, one third of men will be killed.

- I. And the sixth angel sounded
 - A. And I heard a voice
 - 1. From the four horns of the golden altar which is before God
 - 2. Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet
 - a. Loose the four angels
 - 1.) Which are bound
 - 2.) Which are bound in the great river Euphrates
 - b. And the four angels were loosed
 - 1.) Which were prepared
 - a.) For an hour
 - b.) And for a day
 - c.) And for a month
 - d.) And for a year
 - 2.) Which were prepared
 - a.) For to slay men
 - b.) For to slay the third part of men
 - B. And I heard the number
 - 1. The number of them
 - 2. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand
- II. And the sixth angel sounded
 - A. And thus I saw the horses in the vision
 - 1. And the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions
 - 2. And out of their mouths issued fire
 - 3. And out of their mouths issued smoke
 - 4. And out of their mouths issued brimstone
 - B. And thus I saw them that sat on them
 - 1. Having breastplates of fire
 - 2. And having breastplates of jacinth
 - 3. And having breastplates of brimstone

Revelation 9:17-21
NO REPENTANCE

The following outline is based on the compound prepositional phrases used to modify the verb *repented* in v. 21.

TEXT: *And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.* ¹⁸*By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.* ¹⁹*For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.* ²⁰*And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:* ²¹*neither repented they **of their murders**, nor **of their sorceries**, nor **of their fornication**, nor **of their thefts**.*

NOTE: It is amazing grace that an opportunity for repentance is available.

- I. *And thus I saw the horses in the vision*
 - A. *And the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions*
 - B. *And out of their mouths issued fire*
 - C. *And out of their mouths issued smoke*
 - D. *And out of their mouths issued brimstone*
- II. *And thus I saw them that sat on them*
 - A. *Having breastplates of fire*
 - B. *And having breastplates of jacinth*
 - C. *And having breastplates of brimstone*
- III. *By these three was the third part of men killed*
 - A. *By the fire which issued out of their mouths*
 - B. *And by the smoke which issued out of their mouths*
 - C. *And by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths*
 - 1. *For their power is in their mouth*
 - 2. *And their power is in their tails*
 - a. *For their tails were like unto serpents*
 - b. *And their tails had heads*
 - c. *And with them they do hurt*
- IV. *And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues*
 - A. *They yet repented not of the works of their hands*
 - 1. *That they should not worship devils*
 - 2. *And that they should not worship idols*
 - a. *Of gold*
 - b. *And of silver*
 - c. *And of brass*
 - d. *And of stone*
 - e. *And of wood*
 - 3. *That they should not worship idols*
 - a. *Which neither can see*
 - b. *Nor which can hear*
 - c. *Nor which can walk*
 - B. *Neither repented they*
 - 1. *Of their murders*
 - 2. *Nor of their sorceries*
 - 3. *Nor of their fornication*
 - 4. *Nor of their thefts*

Revelation 9:13-21 COMMENTARY

Regarding Repentance

The beginning of Christ's doctrine is repentance from dead works and faith toward God [Heb. 6:1]. And the New Testament abounds with the preaching of repentance: John the Baptist preached repentance to the masses, warning the Pharisees and Sadducees that having Abraham for their father was not enough [Mat. 3:1-9]. Jesus preached repentance to those Jews offended by Pilate's mingling Galilean blood with their sacrifices. He told them: "Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" [Luke 13:1-3].

Peter preached repentance to the Jews gathered at Jerusalem for the feasts. He declared unto them the resurrection of Jesus by God and the promise of the Holy Ghost; and when they were pricked in their hearts and asked what they must do to be saved, Peter cried, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" [Acts 2:38].

Paul writes to the Jews of Rome who thought they would escape the judgment of God, though they did the same things for which they condemned the Gentiles: "And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things and dost the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" [Rom. 2:3-4].

Yet, the New Testament is only a reflection of the Old Testament: God called on Cain to repent, and he refused [Gen 4:7]. There was a change in Seth after Enos' birth that resulted in men calling upon the name of the Lord and he himself being declared "in Adam's own likeness" [Gen. 5:3]. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord the same way you and I find it, through repentance [Gen. 6:8]. Abraham's leaving the Ur of the Chaldees was an act of repentance.

And it is here, in this passage of Revelation, that we so clearly find that from which God demands our repentance: the worship of devils, the worship of idols and the acts that characterize this old nature: murder, sorcery, fornication and theft [Rev. 9:20,21].

Like Abraham, we are to turn from dead works, the false faith of his fathers, and we are to put faith in God's promises. Like Noah, we are to turn from the wickedness of our generation and find grace in the sight of the Lord. Like Cain, we are required to leave our own works of righteousness for the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ; and like Cain, when any of us refuse, we identify ourselves as being of that wicked one. We must all repent of our dead works and wicked lives and place our faith in the shed blood of Jesus, believing that God has raised him from the dead and professing before men the Lord Jesus Christ, if we are to be saved.

The Four Horsemen

Though most think of the five riders of Rev. 6, hell being the fifth rider, it is here in chapter 9 that we see the four horsemen that shall roam the land, leading 50 million each as they fan out over the countryside. Why fanning out? Since God is no respecter of persons, I expect their divisions will travel in all the directions of the compass. But, unlike the locust who have a time limit of five months, this army will roam the earth until they have killed a third of men.

Revelation 10:1-6

THE SEVEN THUNDERS

The following outline is based on compound objects of the adjective clause beginning with *who* in verse 6.

TEXT: *And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: ²and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, ³and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. ⁴And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. ⁵And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, ⁶and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created **heaven**, and **the things** that therein are, and **the earth**, and **the things** that therein are, and **the sea**, and **the things** which are therein, that there should be time no longer: ⁷but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.*

NOTE: The seven thunders are the utterances of the “seven Spirits” [1:4].

- I. And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven
 - A. Clothed with a cloud
 - B. And a rainbow was upon his head
 - C. And his face was as it were the sun
 - D. And his feet as pillars of fire
 - E. And he had in his hand a little book open
 - F. And he set his right foot upon the sea
 - G. And his left foot on the earth
 - H. And cried with a loud voice
 - 1. As when a lion roareth
 - 2. And when he had cried
 - a. Seven thunders uttered their voices
 - b. And I was about to write
 - 1.) When the seven thunders had uttered their voices
 - c. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me
 - 1.) Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered
 - 2.) And write them not
- II. And the angel lifted up his hand to heaven
 - A. *The angel* which I saw stand upon the sea
 - B. And *which I saw stand* upon the earth
- III. And *the angel* sware by him that liveth for ever and ever
 - A. Who created heaven
 - B. And the things that therein are
 - C. And the earth
 - D. And the things that therein are
 - F. And the sea
 - G. And the things which are therein
- IV. And *the angel sware* that there should be time no longer
 - A. But the mystery of God should be finished
 - 1. In the days of the voice of the seventh angel
 - 2. When he shall begin to sound
 - 3. As he hath declared to his servants the prophets

Revelation 10:8-11

THE LITTLE BOOK

The following outline is based on the compound verbs and the parallel clauses describing the effect of the book in v. 9.

TEXT: *And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. ⁹And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, **Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.** ¹⁰And 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 as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. ¹¹And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.*

NOTE: The little book is the revelation John is yet to impart as he again prophesies before many peoples and nations and tongues and kings. An illustration can be seen in the opening of John's gospel: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...in him was life: and the life was the light of men...and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth" [John 1:1,4,14].

- I. And the voice which I heard from heaven
 - A. Spake unto me again
 - B. And said
 - 1. Go
 - 2. And take the little book
 - a. Which is open
 - b. *Which is open* in the hand of the angel
 - 1.) Which standeth upon the sea
 - 2.) And *which standeth* upon the earth
- II. And *I did as the voice from heaven told me*
 - A. I went unto the angel
 - B. And *I* said unto him
 - 1. Give me the little book
 - 2. *Give me the book which is open in thy hand*
 - C. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand
 - D. And *I* ate it up
 - 1. And it was in my mouth sweet as honey
 - 2. And as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter
- III. And he said unto me [vv. 9,11]
 - A. Take it
 - B. And eat it up
 - 1. And it shall make thy belly bitter
 - 2. But it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey
 - C. Thou must prophesy again
 - 1. Before many peoples
 - 2. And *before many* nations
 - 3. And *before many* tongues
 - 4. And *before many* kings

Revelation 10:1-11 COMMENTARY

The Mighty Angel

Of all the appearances of Jesus in the Bible, one of the most remarkable is that of him as the Angel of the Lord. An illustration is seen in Judges 2 – “And an angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you.” We know this is Christ appearing as an angel because of the words that he speaks. This is no mere angel. He clearly declares, “I have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers.”

Why is Christ seen at times as the angel of the Lord in the Old Testament? Because he made himself of no reputation [Phil. 2:7]. Yet, every time he is seen as such, he is identifiable by either his speech, his actions or his appearance. In Judges, his speech reveals who he is. He is identified by his actions in Genesis: Jacob declares of him that he is “the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil” [Gen. 48:15,16].

And in the Revelation, this mighty angel is identified by his description: he is clothed with a cloud, either the cloud of a congregation like that which received him up into glory [Acts 21:9] or the individual white raiment of his priestly office [Rev. 1:13]; he has a rainbow about his head, the presence of the Holy Spirit in the form which encircles the throne of God [Rev. 4:3]; his face was as it were the sun, as the appearance of lightening [Dan. 10:6]; and his feet as pillars of fire, like unto brass as if they burned in a furnace [Rev. 1:15].

He has in his hand a little book, probably the book taken from the Father’s hand [Rev. 5:7]. Its seals have been broken. The book has been unfolded. And “in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished;” and he declares that time shall be no longer!

Jesus, as the mighty angel, sets one foot on the earth and one foot on the sea, something he has demonstrated power to do [John 9:16]. He lifts up his hand to heaven, probably his right hand, and swears “by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein.”

The “him” is God the Father, referred to as “him” in the opening description of the Trinity in chapter one [vv. 4,5]. And this is not a contradiction with the New Testament’s declaration that all things were made by Christ Jesus [Col. 1:16]. The New Testament clarifies for us that God the Father is the one who created all things by Jesus Christ [Eph. 3:9]. So Jesus, as the mighty angel, swears by the Father that there should be time no longer in the days of the seventh trumpet, described for us in chapter 11.

Jesus, as the mighty angel, sheds light on the passage where the angels can be taken to be his fellows: “Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows” [Heb. 1:9]. Jesus is the leader of his armies, and as such is often referred to as one of them. He is the God-man, God come in the flesh, and as such is often referred to as a man, a high priest touched with the feelings of our infirmities [Heb. 4:15]. And he is God, whose God is the Father, a great marvel of the mystery which is the Trinity.

His stand is with one foot on the sea and one foot on the earth or land: this is literal, for he is about to command that time be no more. And his command carries us past the millennial reign and into the New Jerusalem: “And there shall

be no more curse" [Rev. 22:3]. In the new heaven and the new earth, there shall be no more curse, either on the sea or on the land.

With the passing of time is the passing of the curse. With the passing of time is the end of decay and death and sin. Only the tree of life, which shall bare twelve manner of her fruit every month [Rev. 22:2], appears to "tell" time in the New Jerusalem. But since what we now call a day is as a thousand years with the Lord, and what we now call a thousand years is to him but a day [II Peter 3:8], the twelve manner of fruit may be perpetually available.

The seven thunders

When Jesus cries with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth [and he is the Lion of the tribe of Judah], seven thunders utter their voices. And when John was about to write down the seven thunders, he heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not." This voice from heaven was the voice of the Father. He will speak again to John [v.8], telling John to approach the angel and request the little book which is opened in his hand. But the utterances of the seven thunders, they are the utterances of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is first introduced in the Revelation as the seven Spirits [1:4]. He is also described as the rainbow about the throne of God, whose seven lamps of fire burn before the throne [4:5]. The Holy Spirit is present with this angel in that same form of that rainbow, identifying him as Jesus [10:1], just as he had identified Jesus, who appeared before John the Baptist in the flesh, when he descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove at his baptism [John 1:32]. Seven is the number of perfection. It is the number of God's Spirit.

The voice of God is described as thunder [Job 40:9], revealing that the seven thunders are statements made by God himself, that is, God the Holy Spirit. As to the content of those statements, we can only surmise that they must be regarding Jesus himself, because the Spirit only speaks of that which pertains to the Son [John 16:13,14]. These seven utterances may ultimately be revealed, but only in God's time.

To prophesy once again

There is a personal "revelation" given to John, as he obeys the Father and requests of the angel the little book: "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples and nations and tongues and kings."

John had been exiled to the isle of Patmos "for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." He had no hope of knowing when, if ever, his exile would or could be rescinded. But God gives him that knowledge, and he also gives to John the message he is to preach, contained in that little book.

John's experience of "eating" the little book takes the prophesy of that book and makes it a part of his being. Recall Jesus' answer to Satan concerning the temptation to turn stone into bread for the satisfaction of his own hunger: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" [Matt. 4:4].

It is God's words, Jesus declares to us, they are spirit and they are life [John 6:63]. And though they may be bitter to digest at times, they are sweet as honey to the taste, for they are gracious [I Peter 2:3]. An illustration of that which is sweet and yet bitter is in the first chapter of the Revelation itself. It is seen by contrasting John's "Amen" [1:6] to his "Even so, Amen" one verse later [1:7]. His "Amen" resounds at the promise to make us "kings and priests unto God and his Father" for ever and ever; while his "Even so, Amen" reflects the knowledge that judgment will finally fall. Sin and man's refusal to accept God's redemption reaps an eternal death in the lake of fire. John writes, "All kindreds of the earth shall wail" as a result of that final judgment. Even so, Amen.

Revelation 11:1-6 UNDER FOOT OF GENTILES

The following outline is based on compound objects to the verb *measure* in v. 1.

TEXT: *And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the **temple** of God, and the **altar**, and **them** that worship therein. ²But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. ³And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. ⁴These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. ⁵And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. ⁶These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.*

NOTE: The court, “which is without,” is Jerusalem that now is.

- I. And there was given me a reed like unto a rod
- II. And the angel stood, saying
 - A. Rise
 - B. And measure
 - 1. The temple of God
 - 2. And the altar
 - 3. And them that worship therein
 - C. But leave out the court which is without the temple
 - D. And measure it not
 - 1. For it is given unto the Gentiles
 - 2. And they shall tread the holy city
 - a. Under foot
 - b. Forty and two months
 - E. And I will give power unto my two witnesses
 - 1. These are the two olive trees
 - 2. And *these are* the two candlesticks
 - a. Standing
 - b. *Standing* before the God of the earth
 - 3. These have power to shut heaven
 - a. That it rain not
 - b. *That it rain not* in the days of their prophecy
 - 4. And *these* have power over waters
 - a. To turn them to blood
 - b. *As often as they will*
 - 5. And *these have power* to smite the earth
 - a. With all plagues
 - b. As often as they will
 - 6. And if any man will hurt them
 - a. Fire proceedeth out of their mouth
 - b. And *that fire* devoureth their enemies
 - 7. And if any man will hurt them
 - a. He must be killed
 - b. *He must be killed* in this manner
 - F. And they shall prophesy
 - 1. A thousand two hundred and threescore days [3 _ years]
 - 2. Clothed in sackcloth

Revelation 11:1-3 COMMENTARY

The Reed and its Measurements

John was not only given the little book [10:10]; he was also given a reed with which to measure three areas: the temple of God, the altar of God and “them that worship therein.”

A reed is approximately ten feet in length. With one, John is to measure the temple of God, also called the temple of heaven [16:17]. This temple, wherein the ark of his testament can be seen, will be opened just before the white throne judgment [11:19]. In this temple, those that overcome of the church of Philadelphia have been made “pillars” [3:12]. There the saints of great tribulation fulfill the service of Levi day and night [7:15].

John is also told to measure the altar in the midst of the throne, where Christ is seen as the Lamb “as it had been slain” [5:6]. Under this altar are the souls of them which were slain in tribulation [6:9-11]. Out of the horns of this altar comes the command to the sixth angel to “loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates” [9:13,14]. From this altar come the angels who command the final harvest of the earth [14:18] and who declare that God's judgments are “true and righteous” [15:7].

John is told to measure them that worship “therein,” that is, in the temple. This is not a command to measure the four and twenty seats round about the throne [4:4]. We already have their measure, it is 24. Rather, this is a command to measure them “in there,” that is, in the temple. It is a command to number them. Why a numbering, unless that numbering has a significance?

God sealed 144,000 as witnesses for the tribulation period [7:4]. And power was given to the beast to make war with the saints and to overcome them [13:7]. But, just as the two witnesses could not be slain until they had finished their testimony [11:7], these 144,000 will be slain only after they have finished their testimony. They may be the specific “measure” with great significance. The last of them signaling the close of the period. How many had already arrived and how many had yet to come could be the purpose of measuring “them that worship therein.”

The Court “Which is Without”

The court which is without is called “the holy city” [v.2]. It is to be tread under the foot of the Gentiles forty-two months. The tribulation period itself is only seven years. Forty-two months is half of that time, the second half of that time. When the anti-christ confirms the covenant with Israel for seven years, the service of the earthly temple will be restored. But, in the midst of that period, the anti-christ will show himself to be that vile prince and demand that sacrifice be made unto him.

Jesus called this the abomination of desolation [Matt. 24:15], spoken of by Daniel the prophet. The flight into the mountains [Matt. 24:16] is that same flight into the wilderness describe in Rev. 12:6 & 14.

When God created the earth, he called it Eden. And he placed Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, the garden of the earth. God’s outer court to his temple in heaven is Jerusalem. And when the Gentiles, those who have not faith in Christ, mock his temple mount and his order of sacrifice and the temple itself, they are described as “treading them under foot.” They have cast down what light they might possess and have insulted God once again by grinding it under their feet. Is it any wonder that the wrath of God is poured out upon them?

My Two Witnesses

And yet, in spite of the sacrilege of the Gentiles, God gives power unto his two witnesses to prophesy unto them for that last half of the tribulation. Remember that the

tribulation period is the time of Jacob's Trouble. God is dealing with Israel, getting the natural olive branch ready to be grafted into the vine on that great day of deliverance [Rom 11:26]. And his two witnesses, who prophesy during great tribulation, the second half of the tribulation period, are witnesses sent to preach unto the remnant.

These witnesses will be Old Testament characters, among whom Enoch, Moses and Elijah are the leading candidates. Zerubabel has some consideration, and even John the Baptist. And if it were not for John the Apostle having been freed from his exile to fulfill the prophesy on himself [10:11], he might even be considered as a candidate.

Why Enoch and Elijah? They are the only two men who left this world without a burial. Enoch was translated [Gen. 5:24], and Elijah when up by a whirlwind, parted from Elisha by the chariot of Israel [II Kings 2:11,12].

The scripture declares that it is appointed unto man once to die, and after this the judgment [Heb. 9:27]. Since neither of these men died as we die, some reason that they will be the two killed by the beast [Rev. 11:7].

To those who object that Enoch has had no experience with preaching, Jude informs us that he was preaching Christ's coming with ten thousands of his saints "to execute judgment" [Jude 1:15] long before we ever knew he was a preacher. And it was his preaching that reached Noah, thus saving faith upon the earth in the midst of total destruction.

Why Moses and Elijah? They are the two who appeared on the mount of transfiguration [Matt. 17:4]. The power to call fire down from heaven was exercised by Elijah on several occasions [II Kings 1:10,12]. He also has experience with shutting up heaven that it rain not [I Kings 17:1]. To Moses' account, he has experience with the plagues used in delivering Israel from Egypt. And, since Jerusalem is also called Egypt in this passage [11:8], there is a natural relationship in Moses' smiting the earth "with all plagues" [11:6].

Regarding the body of Moses, it is the only one God himself buried [Deut. 34:6]. And Satan disputed about the way God buried him [Jude 1:9]. But, though Elijah and Enoch were translated and Moses was buried, both Elijah and Moses appeared the same on the mount of transfiguration to Peter, James and John. This demonstrates that Elijah and Enoch are not wandering heaven in their natural bodies, as we know our bodies. Rather, Enoch's translation was in type like the rapture, in which we are promised a glorified body. And Elijah's translation was like that of these two witnesses [11:12], when the tribulation saints will be raptured at the close of the tribulation period.

Why Zerubabel? Zechariah prophesies of the two olive trees upon the right and left side of the bowl of the candlestick [Zech. 4:3,14]. In his prophesy, he sees the ten visions relating to the end time, and he describes Zerubabel as leveling mountains. He has laid the foundation of this house and "his hands shall also finish it" [Zech. 4:9].

John the Baptist is that spirit of Elijah "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord" [Luke 1:17]. And Jesus said of John, "If ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come" [Matt. 11:14]. His reference was to Malachi's prophesy, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord" [Mal. 4:5]. And Christ's first advent was "before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord."

So, who are the witnesses? Who is the Jachin and Boaz of the temple of God, as the two pillars are called in II Chronicles 3:17? I lean toward Moses and Elijah because they were on the mount of transfiguration.

Revelation 11:7-10
THE BEAST OF THE BOTTOMLESS PIT

The following outline is based on the two adjective clauses used to identify that *great city* of v. 8.

TEXT: *And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. ⁸And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, **which** spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, **where** also our Lord was crucified. ⁹And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. ¹⁰And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.*

NOTE: The scripture is careful to state that the two witnesses will have finished their testimony before the beast out of the bottomless pit is allowed to kill them. This is very important for the child of God. It is a reminder that whatever victories the Devil may gain, with regard to God's servants, they are only those which are allowed him by God. The scripture is also careful to show that whatever victories the Devil may gain, they are only temporary: "And after three days and an half, the Spirit of life from God entered into them" [11:11]. So that even this "victory" by the beast from the pit becomes another means by which God shows his power over Satan.

- I. And when they shall have finished their testimony
 - A. The beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit
 - 1. *He* shall make war against them
 - 2. And *he* shall overcome them
 - 3. And *he shall* kill them.
 - B. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city
 - 1. Which spiritually is called Sodom
 - 2. And *which spiritually is called* Egypt
 - 3. Where also our Lord was crucified
- II. And *when they shall have finished their testimony*
 - A. They shall see their dead bodies three days and an half
 - 1. *They* of the people
 - 2. And *they of the* kindreds
 - 3. And *they of the* tongues
 - 4. And *they of the* nations
 - B. And *they* shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves
 - C. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them
 - D. And *they shall* make merry
 - E. And *they* shall send gifts one to another
 - 1. Because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth
 - 2. *Because these two prophets tormented them by their power*
 - a. *To shut heaven*
 - b. *To turn water to blood*
 - c. *To smite the earth*
 - d. *To devour by fire*

Revelation 11:7-10

COMMENTARY

The Beast out of the Pit

The Revelation contains references to the beast out of the bottomless pit [11:7], the beast out of the sea [13:1], the beast out of the earth [13:11], the image of the first beast, which is the beast out of the sea [13:14] and the scarlet-colored beast [17:3].

At the close of the Revelation, the beast and the false prophet, along with them that worshipped the image of the beast, are cast into the lake of fire [19:20]. Then, after the deception of the nations at the close of the millennial reign, the devil is cast into the lake of fire, “where the beast and the false prophet are” [20:10]. This clarifies that there are only two “beasts,” called the beast and the false prophet [19:20], other than the Devil himself.

That scarlet-colored beast that carries the great whore is that great red dragon, the Devil. He is described as having seven heads and ten horns in chapter 17 [v. 7], which is the same description of the devil in chapter 12 [v. 3]. The “beasts” that he empowers, the one out of the sea and the one out of the earth, have his characteristics in either appearance (the beast out of the sea has “seven heads and ten horns” [13:1]) or in speech (the beast out of the earth “spake as a dragon” [13:11]).

The beast out of the bottomless pit “was and is not, and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit and go into perdition” [17:8]. He is the one who shall make war against the two witnesses and shall overcome them and kill them [11:7]. He is the beast out of the bottomless pit, which is in the heart of the earth. He is also the one who causes an image to be made of the first beast [13:14], which is the beast out of the sea. He has power to give life unto the image, directing that the image itself should cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed [13:15].

The beast out of the sea is that first beast, the anti-christ or “little horn” of Daniel 7:8. He is the one who confirms the covenant with Israel for seven years as the rider of the white horse, seen in the first seal [6:1,2]. He has a crown given him, and he goes forth conquering and to conquer.

But his reign is not the millennial reign prophesied by Isaiah, for he is unable to fulfill the words of the prophet [Is. 65:25]. Instead, he will reveal himself to be that vile person [Dan. 11:21], committing the abomination of desolation [Matt. 24:15].

The beast out of the earth, known in the end as the false prophet, mimics the power of the two witnesses [13:13], as the magicians of Egypt had withstood Moses [Ex. 7:22]. Only, this beast will be allowed to overcome the two witnesses and to kill them. Their bodies will lie in the streets of Jerusalem for three and a half days.

So vile is their sin that God calls Jerusalem Sodom [11:8]; yet, so great is God’s grace that he cries unto them through the voice of the prophets, “Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom, ...when ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?...Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes...Come now, let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool” [Is. 1:10,12,16,18].

Sending Gifts

A characteristic of rejoicing over great victory is the sending of gifts. When Mordecai and Israel triumphed over the plot of Haman, they sent portions one to another and gifts to the poor [Esther 9:22]. But the feast of 13:10, is celebrated by wicked men. And their rejoicing shall be short-lived. When the witnesses rise from the dead, great fear shall cover them.

Revelation 11:11-14

THE REMNANT

The following outline is based on the compound predicates for the subject *remnant* in v. 13.

TEXT: *And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.* ¹²*And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.* ¹³*And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant **were affrighted**, and **gave glory** to the God of heaven.* ¹⁴*The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.*

NOTE: The call of God to “come up hither” has resounded for the second time. The first time was at the beginning of chapter 4, where the church is called up in the rapture. Now, God has used another “rapture” call to demonstrate that the dead rise at his command. And though the men which were not killed by the plagues of the trumpets repented not [9:20], there is a “remnant” who give glory to the God of heaven by the close of the second woe. This remnant has found encouragement in the power of God. And it serves as a reminder that, even in the worst of times, God does not let his servants be tempted above that they are able [I Cor. 10: 13].

- I. And after three days and an half
 - A. The Spirit entered into them
 - 1. *The Spirit* of life
 - 2. *The Spirit* from God
 - B. And they stood upon their feet
 - C. And great fear fell upon them which saw them
 - D. And they heard a great voice
 - 1. *A great voice* from heaven
 - 2. *A great voice* saying unto them
 - a. Come up
 - b. *Come up* hither
 - 1.) And they ascended up
 - a.) To heaven
 - b.) In a cloud
 - 2.) And their enemies beheld them
- II. And the same hour
 - A. There was a great earthquake
 - 1. And the tenth part of the city fell
 - 2. And *there* were slain of men
 - a. Seven thousand
 - b. In the earthquake
 - B. And the remnant
 - 1. *They* were affrighted
 - 2. And *they* gave glory to the God of heaven
- III. The second woe is past
 - A. And, behold
 - B. The third woe cometh quickly

Revelation 11:15-19

THE THIRD WOE

The following outline is based on the compound verbs of the adverbial clause beginning with *because* in v. 17.

TEXT: *And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. ¹⁶And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, ¹⁷saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou **hast taken** to thee thy great power, and **hast reigned**. ¹⁸And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. ¹⁹And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.*

- I. And the seventh angel sounded
 - A. And there were great voices in heaven
 - B. *There were great voices*, saying
 - 1. The kingdoms of this world are become
 - a. The kingdoms of our Lord
 - b. And *the kingdoms* of his Christ
 - 2. And he shall reign
 - a. For ever
 - b. And ever
- II. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats
 - A. *They* fell upon their faces
 - B. And *they* worshipped God
 - C. *They worshipped God*, saying
 - 1. We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty
 - a. Which art
 - b. And wast
 - c. And art to come
 - 2. *We give thee thanks* because
 - a. Thou hast taken to thee thy great power
 - b. And *thou* hast reigned
- III. And the nations were angry
- IV. And thy wrath is come
- VI. And the time of the dead *is come*
 - A. That they should be judged
 - B. And that thou shouldest give reward
 - 1. Unto thy servants the prophets
 - 2. And to the saints
 - 3. And *to* them that fear thy name
 - a. *Both* small
 - b. And great
 - C. And *that thou* shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth
- VII. And the temple of God was opened in heaven
 - A. And there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament
 - B. And there were
 - 1. Lightnings
 - 2. And voices
 - 3. And thunderings
 - 4. And an earthquake
 - 5. And great hail

Revelation 11:11-19

COMMENTARY

The Remnant

Following the rapture of the great tribulation witnesses, there is seen on earth a remnant that, though affrighted, gave glory to the God of heaven [11:13]. It is with this remnant that the dragon has made war during the great tribulation. They are the remnant of the seed of Israel, described as having kept the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ [12:17].

What great encouragement must have been given them when they see Jerusalem shaken with a great earthquake. For it is from Jerusalem that the anti-christ has established his rule. Besides the destruction to property and the loss of goods, seven thousand men were slain, men who worshipped the image of the beast [13:15].

It is this remnant of the house of Israel that shall see their Deliverer come out of Sion, heavenly Sion [Rev. 19:11]. He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, and Israel shall be saved [Rom. 11:26].

The God of heaven and the God of the earth

When Abraham was old and well stricken in age, he made the eldest servant of his house swear, “by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of the earth [Gen. 24:3],” that he would not take a wife unto his son of the daughters of the Canaanites. His instruction was for Eliezer to go unto the country of his kindred and there to take a wife for young Isaac.

The Lord God of Abraham, he is the God of the earth [11:4]. The Lord God of Abraham, he is the God of heaven [11:13].

Between the Second and Third Woes

The first woe was the fifth trumpet: the bottomless pit was opened and Abaddon’s army tormented men for five months. The second woe was the sixth seal: the four horsemen bound in the river Euphrates were loosed, for to slay a third part of men.

The third woe is the seventh seal. But before it sounds, the vials must be completed as the wrath of God is poured out. These vials are listed in Revelation 16. But the seventh vial, the destruction of Babylon the great, [mentioned in 16:19], is given greater description in chapter 18.

The Third Woe

Just as the sixth seal brought us to the white throne judgment [6:16,17], so the seventh trumpet brings us to “the time of the dead, that they should be judged” [11:18]. However, the seventh trumpet carries us beyond the white throne, for it shows us the opening of the temple of God in heaven.

Here’s how its elements list the events to come:

Thou hast taken to thee thy great power – speaks of his return [19:11]. *And thou hast reigned* – speaks of his millennial reign [20:6]. *And the nations were angry* – speaks of Satan’s final revolt [20:7,8]. *And thy wrath is come* – speaks of his devouring those armies [20:9]. *And the time that the dead should be judged* – speaks of the white throne judgment itself [20:13]. *And the time that thou shouldest give reward* – speaks of the new heaven and the new earth, along with the New Jerusalem [21:4]. *And the time that thou shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth* – speaks of the second death [21:8]. *And the temple of God was opened in heaven* – speaks of the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb themselves, for they are the temple of the New Jerusalem [21:22].

Revelation 12:1-6
A MAN CHILD

The following outline is based on the compound prepositional phrases used to modify **caught up** in v. 5.

***Text:** And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: ²and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. ³And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. ⁴And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. ⁵And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up **unto** God, and **to** his throne. ⁶And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.*

NOTE: Chapter 12 starts a new section. It is a summary of the fulfillment of the promised Seed [Gen. 3:15] and the opposition, and defeat, of Satan in relation to that Seed. Two wars are described in the chapter, one in verse 4 and one in verse 7. The description of the woman is split by the reference to that first war because it was fought prior to the birth of Christ.

- I. And there appeared a great wonder in heaven
 - A. A woman
 - 1. Clothed with the sun
 - 2. And the moon under her feet
 - 3. And upon her head a crown of twelve stars
 - B. And she cried
 - 1. Being with child
 - 2. Travailing in birth
 - C. And she pained to be delivered
- II. And there appeared another wonder in heaven
 - A. And, behold, a great red dragon
 - 1. Having seven heads
 - 2. And *having* ten horns
 - 3. And *having* seven crowns upon his heads
 - 4. And his tail
 - a. *It* drew the third part of the stars of heaven
 - b. And *it* did cast them to the earth
 - B. And the dragon stood
 - 1. Before the woman which was ready to be delivered
 - 2. For to devour her child as soon as it was born
- III. *Regarding the first wonder: the woman*
 - A. And she brought forth a man child
 - 1. Who was to rule all nations
 - 2. *Who was to rule* with a rod of iron
 - B. And her child was caught up
 - 1. Unto God
 - 2. And to his throne
 - C. And the woman fled into the wilderness
 - 1. Where she hath a place prepared of God
 - 2. *Where she hath a place* that they should feed her there
 - a. A thousand two hundred and threescore days
 - b. *Or three and a half years*

Revelation 12:1-6 COMMENTARY

The Woman

This woman is not the queen of heaven. God is provoked by any offerings unto any one called the queen of heaven. The virgin Mary is not the queen of heaven. She would never have any part with that which would provoke God to cast out his people [Jer. 7:17-20].

This woman is Israel, through whom God kept his promise to Adam and Eve to send his Seed, who would bruise Satan's head [Gen. 3:15]. This also implies that Adam and Eve were Jewish, of the same seed as Abraham and, certainly, of the same faith as Abraham. For the promise of the man child was first given to Eve and Adam [Gen. 4:25]. This is the "childbearing" through which Eve and Adam were saved, having continued in faith and charity and holiness, with sobriety [I Tim. 2:15]

The description of Israel as the body of the faithful, her being clothed with the brightness of the sun, and the position of her body as being above the moon points us to the constellations: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world" [Ps. 19:1-4a].

The constellations tell the story of redemption. Beginning with the virgin, Virgo, who shall bear a son and ending with the lion, Leo, who shall reign forever, the Sphinx points us through the plan of the ages: God's plan of redemption written in the stars.

The twelve stars making up the crown of the woman are the twelve sons of Jacob.

The Man Child

From the garden of Eden God had promised the Seed, the Messiah. From the foundation of the world, he is the Lamb slain [Rev. 13:8], and he was manifest in these last times for us [I Peter 1:20].

This man is Jesus [Luke 1:31]. He is God come in the flesh [Is. 7:14; Matt. 1:23; John 1:14]. He is the Son of God [Mat. 17:5], and he is the Son of man [Matt. 9:4-6]. He will sit on the throne of his father David [Luke 1:32] and rule with a rod of iron [Rev. 2:27, 19:15] for a thousand years. Of his eternal kingdom there shall be no end [Luke 1:33].

But, until the time for him to take unto himself his great power on the battlefield of Armageddon [Rev. 11:17], he sits at the right hand of his Father, until his enemies be made his footstool [Heb. 10:12,13].

The Dragon

The dragon is Satan. In his rebellion, he drew a third of the stars of heaven. These are the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation [Jude 1:6]. They are reserved in everlasting chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day [Rev. 20:11].

Satan's fall [Luke 10:18; Is. 14:12] came after the completion of creation: "And God saw everything that he had made; and, behold, it was very good" [Gen. 1:31]. This is God's declaration when he had finished the heavens and the earth, "and all the host of them" [Gen. 2:1]. But Satan lifted himself up with pride [Is. 14:13,14]. Having left his first estate in heaven, he seeks to be as God through making Eve and Adam subservient to him [Gen. 3:1-7]. His efforts plagued creation with the curse.

The "Gap"

Between Christ's ascension [12:5] and the woman's flight into the wilderness during great tribulation [12:6] comes all the events of the church age, through to the abomination of desolation.

Revelation 12:7-12
WAR IN HEAVEN

The following outline is based on the parallel prepositional phrases modifying the verb *overcame* in v. 11.

Text: *And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, ⁸and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. ⁹And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. ¹⁰And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. ¹¹And they overcame him **by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony**; and they loved not their lives unto the death. ¹²Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*

- I. And there was war in heaven
 - A. Michael *fought against the dragon*
 - B. And his angels fought against the dragon
 - C. And the dragon fought
 - D. And his angels *fought*
 - 1. And *they* prevailed not
 - 2. Neither was their place found any more in heaven
 - E. And the great dragon was cast out
 - 1. That old serpent
 - a. Called the Devil
 - b. And *called* Satan
 - 2. *That old serpent* which deceiveth the whole world
 - a. He was cast out into the earth
 - b. And his angels were cast out with him
- II. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven
 - A. Now is come salvation
 - B. And *now is come* strength
 - C. And *now is come* the kingdom of our God
 - D. And *now is come* the power of his Christ
 - 1. For the accuser of our brethren is cast down
 - a. Which accused them before our God
 - b. *Which accused them* day and night
 - 2. And they overcame him
 - a. By the blood of the Lamb
 - b. And by the word of their testimony
 - 3. And they loved not their lives unto the death
- III. *The results of this war in heaven*
 - A. *Rejoicing*
 - 1. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens
 - 2. And ye that dwell in them, *rejoice*
 - B. Woe
 - 1. To the inhabitants of the earth
 - 2. And *to the inhabitants* of the sea
 - a. For the devil is come down unto you
 - b. *For the devil is come down*, having great wrath
 - 1.) Because he knoweth
 - 2.) *Because he knoweth* that he hath but a short time

Revelation 12:13-17

WAR WITH THE REMNANT

The following outline is based on compound predicates of the adjective clause modifying *seed* in v. 17.

Text: *And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. ¹⁴And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. ¹⁵And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. ¹⁶And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. ¹⁷And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, **which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.***

NOTE: The “seed” has always been those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. This is true of the Church [John 14:21], as it has been true from Adam to Abraham and from Moses to Malachi. Adam was told of the Messiah, the Seed of the woman. And Abraham was told of a miraculous Seed: “For they are not all Israel which are of Israel, neither because they are the children of Abraham are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called” [Rom. 9:6,7]. Moses saw the Seed as the Passover Lamb, and Malachi saw the prophet who would turn the heart of the fathers to the children in expectation of that Seed.

- I. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth
 - A. He persecuted the woman
 - B. *He persecuted the woman* which brought forth the man child
- II. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle
 - A. That she might fly into the wilderness
 - B. *That she might fly* into her place
 - 1. Where she is nourished
 - a. For a time
 - b. And *for* times
 - c. And *for* half a time
 - 2. *Where she is nourished* from the face of the serpent
- III. And the serpent cast water after the woman
 - A. Out of his mouth
 - B. As a flood
 - 1. That he might cause her to be carried away
 - 2. *That he might cause her to be carried away* of the flood
- IV. And the earth
 - A. *The earth* helped the woman
 - B. And the earth opened her mouth
 - C. And *the earth* swallowed up the flood
 - 1. Which the dragon cast
 - 2. *Which the dragon cast* out of his mouth
- VI. And the dragon
 - A. *The dragon* was wroth with the woman
 - B. And *the dragon* went to make war
 - 1. With the remnant
 - 2. *With the remnant* of her seed
 - a. Which keep the commandments of God
 - b. And *which* have the testimony of Jesus Christ

Revelation 12:7-17

COMMENTARY

The Victory of the Brethren

The accuser of the brethren is Satan, who has been charging God's saints with such lines as "Doth he fear God for nought?" [Job 1: 9] and "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now and touch his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face" [Job 2:4,5] since the garden. This is his "second estate," having left his first position [Jude 1:6]. But his accusing days are numbered.

There has been war in heaven [Dan. 10:13]. But this is the final war. And what makes it different from all the other warfare is the presence of the Church as a unit, glorified. Michael and the dragon will fight. Michael's angels will fight against the fallen angels. And Michael's forces will win. But what truly turns the tables is the "they" that overcame: the Church triumphant [Rev. 12:11].

The Church will overcome Satan, first, by the blood of the Lamb. It is the blood that takes away our sin. And by the blood Christ shed, we can have the righteousness that reigns by grace unto eternal life through faith [Rom. 5:17]. The Church will overcome Satan, secondly, by the word of their testimony: each will stand before the Father and give glory unto the Lamb. We will tell of how Christ found us and redeemed us unto himself. Our testimony will be of him. It will be of Jesus Christ [Rev. 1:9].

The principalities and powers that were spoiled at Calvary [Col. 2:15] will no longer have a place in heaven [Rev. 12:8].

The Rejoicing of Heaven

Recall that the angels are rejoicing after the tribulation saints are "clothed with white robes." Then they will be saying, "Amen: blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be unto our God for ever and ever" [Rev. 7:11,12]. But the rejoicing here [Rev. 12:12] is at the mid-point of the tribulation, when they witness Satan being cast into the earth.

And while the angels rejoice, the saints will rejoice: "For now is come salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God" [12:9]. We will see for ourselves the glorious grace of God, and the prophesy of our Lord will come to pass: "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father and ye are in me and I in you" [John 14:20].

A Short Time

However, "woe" is pronounced upon the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea, for the Devil is come down, having great wrath because he knows that his time is short. He will have only three and a half years left. His anger will fuel his efforts more. And God's wrath will continue to be poured out upon the men who worship the devil and who receive the mark of the beast. But, for the elect's sake, the days of great tribulation will be shorted [Matt. 24:22].

War with the Remnant

Israel, as the woman who gave birth to the man-child, flees into the wilderness, where there is a place prepared for her of God for this 42 month period. The flight of 12:6 and the flight of 12:14 is the same. Because of his defeat in heaven, Satan will persecute faithful Israel.

At first, those who recognize the scripture and believe the 144,000 will withstand the anti-christ, giving their lives for their testimony. But after the abomination of desolation, the serpent will cast out a flood against her [12:15]. Sela, Petra in the Greek, may be the wilderness set to protect the woman. But the remnant of her seed will suffer his wrath [13:7].

The beginnings of WOE

The term *woe* characterizes the last half of the tribulation period. And the *woe* of 12:12 can be linked to the *woes* of chapters 9 and 11. Here is a review:

At the midst of the seven years of Jacob's trouble, the anti-christ will reveal himself to be the son of perdition, that vile person. He will demand a sacrifice offered to himself upon the altar of the new temple in Jerusalem. This act is called the abomination of desolation. Israel as a nation will see his abomination. Many will believe the testimony of the 144,000. They will join in an outcry against the anti-christ.

In rapid succession the first five trumpets will sound. Fire will burn up a third of the earth's forests. Volcanic eruptions will devastate a third of its oceans. The earth's continents will shift. Its fresh water supply will be diminished by a third. And a third of the constellations themselves will be destroyed.

In the wake of all of this disaster, Satan will be cast upon the earth. And he will persecute Israel as never before. The serpent will cast out a flood after the woman [12:15]. This is a reference to a massive army, as seen in such scriptures as Isaiah 8:6-8. Only this army will be set for the annihilation of Israel, as Herod of old had sought to kill the Christ child [Matt. 2:16-18].

What will save Israel's faithful is the earth's swallowing up the flood by opening up her mouth: the bottomless pit. What will divert the army of Satan from destroying faithful Israel will be the "two wings of a great eagle": the shadow from a sky filled with locust from the first woe.

Abaddon's army, loosed from the earth's "mouth," will torment men for five months. Their attack will be so gruesome that men will seek to die, but cannot. Like the Egyptians of old, they will know that "the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel" [Ex. 11:7]. During that period, Israel's faithful will hide itself in the wilderness, as the 7,000 of Elijah's day who had not bowed to Baal nor kissed him [1 Kings 17:18].

Abaddon's army, as the earth's response to "swallowing up" the flood sent after Israel, gives us a reason for the specific reference to five months. The number 5 is the number of grace. And, although there is no grace shown in the torment by these locust, there is grace shown in the protection of God's people. Just as the 144,000 are protected by the seal of God in their foreheads [7:3] and the church was kept from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth [3:10], so shall God protect the woman.

Why, then, are there others killed [Rev. 13:15]? Hebrews holds forth the answer: "Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection" [Heb. 11:35].

The Remnant

During these forty-two months, the two witnesses will stand in Jerusalem, preaching and "smiting the earth with plagues as often as they will." Their stand, along with the witness of the 144,000, will maintain a remnant that will refuse the mark of the beast and the worship of the anti-christ.

These men and women will have two characteristics common to all of God's people through all of the ages: (1) they keep the commandments of God and (2) they have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Jesus fulfilled the law for righteousness to every one that believeth [Rom. 10:4], demonstrating that all the law is fulfilled in one word: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" [Gal. 5:14].

Revelation 13:1-5
A BEAST OUT OF THE SEA

The following outline is based on the objects of the present participle *having*, modifying *beast* in v. 1.

TEXT: *And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. ²And 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 seat, and great authority. ³And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. ⁴And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? ⁵And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.*

NOTE: Regarding the first beast's wound, it was "as it were" unto death. The wound appeared to have killed this beast; yet that same deadly wound is healed. This deadly wound was inflicted by sword [v. 14]: that is, by battle. The beast is an emperor, an office which has been slain by Europe's armies time and again. From the fall of Rome, three major individuals have achieved limited success in the revival of the office of emperor over Europe: these men are Charlemagne, Napoleon and Hitler. Each has been met with decreasing success with the passage of time, but in these last days, the deadly wound shall be healed, and an emperor will reign.

- I. And I stood upon the sand of the sea
 - A. And *I* saw a beast rise up out of the sea
 - 1. Having seven heads
 - 2. And *having* ten horns
 - 3. And *having* ten crowns upon his horns
 - 4. And *having* the name of blasphemy upon his heads
 - B. And the beast which I saw was
 - 1. Like unto a leopard
 - 2. And his feet were as the feet of a bear
 - 3. And his mouth as the mouth of a lion
 - C. And the dragon gave him
 - 1. His power
 - 2. And his seat
 - 3. And great authority
 - D. And I saw one of his heads
 - 1. As it were wounded to death
 - 2. And his deadly wound was healed
 - E. And there was given unto him a mouth
 - 1. Speaking great things
 - 2. And *speaking* blasphemies
 - F. And power was given unto him
 - 1. To continue
 - 2. To *continue* forty and two months
- II. And all the world wondered after the beast
 - A. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast
 - B. And they worshipped the beast, saying
 - 1. Who is like unto the beast?
 - 2. Who is able to make war with him?

Revelation 13:6-10

BLASPHEMY AGAINST GOD

The following outline is based on the objects of the infinite *to blaspheme* in verse 6.

TEXT: *And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his **name**, and his **tabernacle**, and **them** that dwell in heaven. ⁷And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. ⁸And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. ⁹If any man have an ear, let him hear. ¹⁰He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.*

NOTE: The beast out of the sea, the end time emperor, has the name of blasphemy. This name has been common to all of the seven heads that, throughout time, make up the “multiple head” of the beast. This beast out of the sea was like unto a leopard, having feet as the feet of a bear and a mouth as the mouth of a lion [13:2]. These are the first three beasts of Daniel’s vision revisited: Daniel first described the lion, then the bear, then the leopard [Dan. 7:3-6]. But there is also a fourth beast which he described, one with ten horns, diverse from the others [Dan. 7:19]. And it is after these ten horns that the little horn, the anti-christ, arises. He is the embodiment of the beast out of the sea, and he shall subdue three kings in the claiming of his power. As emperor, “he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time” [Dan. 7:25].

- I. *Regarding the beast John saw rise up out of the sea*
 - A. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God
 - 1. To blaspheme his name
 - 2. And *to blaspheme* his tabernacle
 - 3. And *to blaspheme* them that dwell in heaven
 - B. And it was given unto him
 - 1. To make war with the saints
 - 2. And to overcome them
 - C. And power was given him [*as emperor*]
 - 1. Over all kindreds
 - 2. And *over all* tongues
 - 3. And *over all* nations
 - D. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him
 - 1. Whose names are not written
 - 2. *Whose names are not written* in the book
 - a. *In the book* of life
 - b. *In the book* of the Lamb
 - 1.) *The Lamb* slain
 - 2.) *The Lamb slain* from the foundation of the world
- II. *Regarding the saints of God during this period*
 - A. If any man have an ear, let him hear
 - 1. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity
 - 2. He that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword
 - B. Here is the patience *of the saints*
 - C. And *here is* the faith of the saints

Revelation 13:1-10 COMMENTARY

A brief review

After the seven trumpets [11:15-19], which takes us through the white throne judgment [11:18] and up to the opening of the temple of God in heaven [11:19], the Revelation carries us back in time and shows us an overview of the war between Satan and the Seed. The promise of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world was written in the creation of the constellations, which explains why Satan desires to “change times and laws” [Dan. 7:25].

Two major wars are fought in heaven, the first resulting in the fall of Lucifer and a third of the “stars of heaven” when they chose to leave their first estate [Jude 1:6]. Satan, having fallen, beguiles Eve, blinds Cain and bludgeons Abel; yet, he cannot thwart the plan of redemption. The second major war in heaven sees the accuser of the brethren cast out at the mid-point of the tribulation. The focus, therefore, shifts to the spiritual battle on earth, which takes us into chapter 13.

In this chapter we find a review of the seven heads of the beast. It is a review of history, showing how Satan has attempted to rule the world through men. And this review culminates in the final king, Daniel’s little horn, that will be the beast out of the sea: a world emperor [13:7]. He will be so lifted up in pride that his decree will call for him to be worshipped, and the abomination of desolation will come to pass.

The abomination will coincide with Satan’s fall from heaven and the rising of the beast out of the earth, who is the false prophet that will be cast into the lake of fire with the beast out of the sea after the battle of Armageddon [Rev. 20:10].

From the promise of the Seed [chapter 12] to the presentation of the Seed [chapter 14], the story line of these chapters unfold, reminding us that, however powerful the enemy may be, our Redeemer has triumphed over his enemies!

The Seven Heads

By comparing Daniel’s vision of the four great beasts [Dan. 7:3] to the composite beast out of the sea [Rev. 13:2], one might conclude that three kingdoms (heads) follow Rome:

Daniel’s Vision of World Empires

- 1st Head -- 1st Beast – the lion with eagle’s wings [Babylonian]
- 2nd Head -- 2nd Beast – the bear devouring 3 ribs [Media-Persian]
- 3rd Head -- 3rd Beast – the leopard bearing 4 fowl’s wings [Alexandrine]
- 4th Head -- 4th Beast – the diverse beast [Roman]

(The three that might appear to complete the Seven Heads)

- 5th Head – Charlemagne
- 6th Head – Napoleon
- 7th Head – Hitler

However, it is the diverse beast, Daniel’s fourthbeast, that is of major interest in both passages. The reason is the feet, a mingling of iron and clay [Dan. 2:42], out of which the ten horns that shall arise [Dan. 7:24]. Each horn will have its own crown [Rev. 13:1], though they have “received no kingdom as yet” [Rev. 17:12] because the Roman empire, the head that is, still rules at the time God gives this revelation to John. What is unique about them is that they receive power “as kings” one hour with the beast though, again, they have no kingdom [Rev. 17:12]. Their power begins in a form of government other

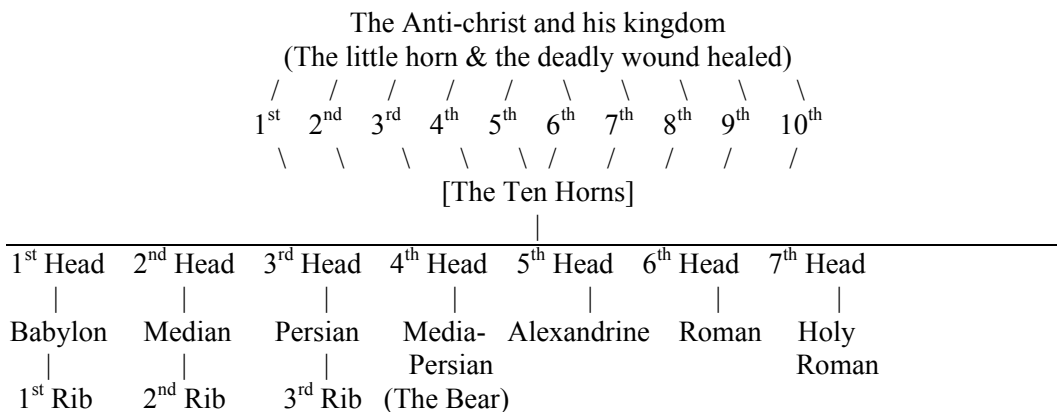
than a monarchy, hence the reason why the European union is of such interest in the study of the Revelation, especially as it reaches toward the toes of the eastern leg.

It is the Roman Empire that is the head “as it were wounded to death” [Rev. 13:3]. And after its toes are re-united, there will arise the little horn [Dan. 7:20]. This little horn is a reference to both the kingdom of the anti-christ and the anti-christ himself, for the empire is always associated with its emperor. Its leader is the anti-christ, the embodiment of the beast.

The anti-christ is called a beast because he reflects the spirit of the beast: the great dragon, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan [Rev. 12:9]. Lucifer is the beast behind the beast out of the sea, as well as the beast out of the earth. Paul reminds us that the mystery of iniquity doth already work [II Thess. 2:7]. It is only the power of the Spirit of Christ that holds him back. However, when the Holy Ghost is taken out of the way in the rapture of the church, that Wicked will be revealed, “whom the Lord shall consume with the brightness of his coming [II Thess. 2:8; Rev. 19:20].

Satan, as the beast behind these kingdoms [the seven heads of the beast], is also the beast that carries the great whore [Rev. 17]. And it is in this 17th chapter that we find wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth [Rev. 17:9]. These are seven kings (or kingdoms): five of which “are fallen and one is, and the other is not yet come...and the beast is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition” [Rev. 17:10,11].

The head “that now is” is Rome itself. And since five are fallen at the time of John’s writing, Daniel’s fourth beast, as Rome, is John’s sixth head of the beast:



[The Holy Roman Empire had its birth in the surprise of Charlemagne with a “gift” of the papacy by Pope Leo III. In Rome to judge the validity of charges against Leo that “impeached the Pope’s morals” and included “gross unfairness in the administration of the Papal finances,” the emperor decide the fate of the pope by accepting his solemn oath sworn on the Gospels that he was not guilty (McCabe’s *A History of the Popes*, p. 174). At the end of the Mass on Christmas Day the Pope dramatically produced a crown and a purple mantle and made Charlemagne Roman Emperor.... The best witness, Eginhard, Charlemagne’s secretary, says that the Emperor was annoyed, and declared that he would not have attended the ceremony if he had known the Pope’s design” (McCabe’s, p. 174).]

The ten horns shall hate the whore, they will eventually make her “desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire” [Rev. 17:17]. This hatred will be fueled by resentment over finances.

The little horn shall arise after the ten and “shall subdue three kings” [Dan. 7:24]; he will wax exceeding great toward the south, the east and the pleasant land [Dan. 8:9], gaining the trust of Europeans, Arabs and Jews.

False worship

As the anti-christ heals the deadly wound all the world wonders after the beast; and they worship the dragon [Rev. 13:4]. This is what Satan desires: man’s worship. He desires to be as God [Is. 14: 14]. And man will give power unto the beast and worship the beast: they will so lift him up that he will come to the place that he believes himself to be a god, decreeing that he should be worshipped by sacrifice, even in the temple of Jerusalem. And when that act is forced upon the Jews, the abomination of desolation will be fulfilled.

This act has a major impact upon the church of the tribulation period, which is made up of the tares left behind from the church age of Laodicea. For it is from this group that support for the anti-christ will rally through the efforts of one world religious leader, called the beast out of the earth. He is the false prophet and is the subject of the second half of this chapter.

The Book of Life

Though the anti-christ will be given power to make war with the saints “and to overcome them” [Rev. 13:7], their names are written in the “book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” [Rev. 13:8]. These are the souls of them “that were slain for the word of God and the testimony which they held” [Rev. 6:9]. And they cry out to the Father, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth” [Rev. 6:10]? His answer? That they should rest a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled [Rev. 6:11].

The book of life is the registry of those having eternal life. It is the Lamb’s book of life, and it will be opened at the white throne judgment [Rev. 20:12,15] to demonstrate to the lost that their name was not found written within it. Their names had been blotted out, for there shall in no wise enter into the New Jerusalem “anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie” [Rev. 21:27].

When are our names written into the Lamb’s book of life? Jesus declared to the seventy sent out before his face, “Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven” [Luke 10:20]; yet, he did not explain when they were written. Instead, Jesus made a simple declaration, “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life” [John 3:36]. Faith in the Son of God results in our names being legible in the Lamb’s book of life.

Recall the admonition to the church at Sardis: “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot his name out of the book of life” [Rev. 3:5]. And how do we overcome? By believing that Jesus is the Christ. “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God” [I John 5:4b,5].

Another warning regarding having one’s name blotted out of the book of life concerns taking away from the word of God: “If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life and out of the holy city and from the things written in the book” [Rev. 22:19]. Just as the ungodly before us took away from the law of Moses, today’s false teachers take away from the Revelation of Jesus Christ. Jesus himself revealed this to us when he declared to the Pharisees, “Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me” [John 5:46].

This “blotting out” is also an Old Testament truth: the Psalmist speaks of the wicked and declares, “Let them be blotted out of the book of the living and not be written with the righteous” [Psalm 69:28].

With both the wicked and the righteous initially in the book of the living, the question is better asked, “Why are names blotted out of the book of life?” The Psalmist understood that his substance was not hid from God and that, being yet imperfect, “in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there was none of them” [Psalm 139:16]. What truth: while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us!

We are all written in the Lamb’s book of life before the foundation of the world: in him was life, and the life was the light of men [John 1:4]. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world [John 1:9].

And as Jesus gave life to every man, he died for the sins of the whole world [I John 2:2] to give eternal life to every man. However, man must receive the gift of eternal life, and he does so by repentance from dead works and faith in Christ. Hence the declaration that the grace of God hath appeared to all men [Titus 2:11-14], and the warning that the Spirit of God will not always strive with men [Gen. 6:3]. Today is the day of salvation; seek the Lord while he may be found. Do not sin away your day of grace. Remember the words of the Lord, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life” [John 3:16], and believe today.

Though the Lord bought them at Calvary, false teachers deny the Lord. They bring in damnable heresies and pernicious ways. And they bring upon themselves swift destruction [II Peter 2:1,2]. This is why Peter admonishes the church to make their calling and election sure. One who is spiritually blind “cannot see afar off and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins” [II Peter 1:10,11]. It is difficult to tell a believer who is in such a blinded state from a soul still lost in his sin. Hence the need to check on our calling: was it the Spirit of God that called us to repentance from sin and faith in Christ? Or was it a society of men or a religious order that called us to follow them? Did we elect faith in Christ? Or do we look to Mary or Allah or Buddha, or science or philosophy for our peace of mind and heart through faith in them?

Indifference affords no protection, for we are all sinners [Romans 3:23], already condemned [John 3:18]. Without Christ, we are dead in our trespasses and sins. But the grace of God is reaching out to a lost world with the gospel of Jesus Christ: the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth [Romans 1:16]. And we must each let God use our light to reach others with the gospel, that they might also believe unto everlasting life.

The patience and the faith of the saints

“He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword” [Rev. 13:10]. The saints of the tribulation period can be divided into two groups: those who will flee and those who will fight. This is seen in the reaction of the faithful to the abomination of desolation: “and to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time” [Rev. 12:14].

Yet, while there is the group who flees into the wilderness, there is also the remnant who fight with the dragon [Rev. 12:17]. These keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. It is scriptural to say that they will enjoy a better resurrection [Heb. 12:35], as their brethren before them who, not accepting deliverance, had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, being stoned, sawn asunder and slain with the sword: they endured for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 13:11-14

A BEAST OUT OF THE EARTH

The following outline is based on the compound predicate of vv. 13 & 14.

TEXT: *And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. ¹²And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. ¹³And he **doeth** great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, ¹⁴and **deceiveth** them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power 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, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.*

NOTE: The two beasts in this chapter, one out of the sea and one out of the earth, are the anti-christ and the false prophet. The sea is the “waters on which the whore sitteth” [Rev. 17:15]. They are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues. The earth is that on which the sea of people dwell [Rev. 17:12]. This second beast will cause both the earth and “them that dwell therein” to worship the first beast [Rev. 13:12]. The “them that dwell therein” are the people called the sea [Rev. 17:15]. The earth is a reference to the “things under the earth” [Phil. 2:10]. The beast out of the earth [Rev. 13:11] is that same beast which came out of the bottomless pit [Rev. 11:7]. Hence, the earth is a reference to those below.

Both the anti-christ and the false prophet have a three and a half year “reign”: the first as the false messiah, and the second as the leader of his false worship, made necessary by reaction to the abomination of desolation. Both are leaders on the battlefield of Armageddon, and both will be cast alive into the lake of fire [Rev. 19:20]. And their companionship sheds light on the “son of perdition” and his relationship to Judas Iscariot, for both the anti-christ [II Thess. 2:3] and Judas [John 17:12] are called “the son of perdition.”

- I. And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth
 - A. And he had two horns like a lamb
 - B. And he spake as a dragon
 - C. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him
 - D. And *he* causeth the earth to worship the first beast
 - E. And *he* causeth them which dwell therein
 - to worship the first beast*
 - 1. Whose *wound was healed*
 - 2. Whose deadly wound was healed
 - F. And he doeth great wonders
 - 1. So that he maketh fire come down
 - a. From heaven
 - b. On the earth
 - c. In the sight of men
 - 2. And *he* deceiveth them that dwell on the earth
 - a. By the means of those miracles
 - 1.) Which he had power to do
 - 2.) Which *he had power to do* in the sight of the beast
 - b. Saying to them that dwell on the earth
 - 1.) That they should make an image
 - 2.) That *they should make an image* to the beast
 - a.) Which had the wound by a sword
 - b.) And *which* did live

Revelation 13:15-18

THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST

The following outline is based on the objects of the clause modifying *he* in verse 17.

TEXT: *And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. ¹⁶And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: ¹⁷and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the **mark**, or the **name** of the beast, or the **number** of his name. ¹⁸Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.*

NOTE: The beast out of the earth takes center stage during the great tribulation. He makes war with the two witnesses, and he overcomes them [Rev. 11:7]. He deceives the world by the great wonders and miracles he is able to perform in the sight of the beast, just as the magicians deceived Pharaoh when they imitated by trickery, up to a point, the miracles of Moses. As a result, the world will accept the worship of the beast, which is the final, self-deifying act in the resurrection of the office of emperor: as Emperor Decius, who “ordered religious search to be made for all suspected of refusing compliance with the national worship. Christians were required to conform to the ceremonies of the pagan religion. In case they declined, threats, and afterwards tortures, were to be employed to compel submission. If they remained firm, the punishment of death was to be inflicted, especially on the bishops, whom Decius hated most bitterly. The custom was, wherever the dreadful edict was carried into execution, to appoint a day when all Christians in the place were to present themselves before the magistrate, renounce their religion and offer incense at the idol’s altar. Many, before the dreadful day arrived, had fled into voluntary banishment. The goods of such were confiscated, and themselves forbidden to return, under penalty of death” [Miller’s Church History, pp. 199].

- I. *And the beast out of the earth*
 - A. He had power to give life unto the image of the beast
 - 1. That the image of the beast should both speak
 - 2. *And that the image should* cause that as many should be killed
 - a. As would not worship the image
 - b. *As would not worship the image* of the beast
 - B. And he causeth all
 - 1. Both small and great
 - 2. *Both* rich and poor
 - 3. *Both* free and bond
 - C. *He causeth all*
 - 1. To receive a mark in their right hand
 - 2. Or *to receive a mark* in their foreheads
 - D. *And he causeth* that no man might buy or sell
 - 1. Save he that had the mark
 - 2. Or *he that had* the name of the beast
 - 3. Or *he that had* the number of his name
- II. Here is wisdom
 - A. Let him that hath understanding count
 - B. *Let him count* the number of the beast
 - 1. For it is the number of a man
 - 2. And his number is Six hundred threescore and six [666]

Revelation 13:11-18

COMMENTARY

from Andrew Miller's *Church History*

“Those who remained firm,” during these persecutions, “after repeated tortures, were cast into prison, [where] the additional sufferings of hunger and thirst were employed to overcome their resolution. Many who were less firm and faithful were let off without sacrifice by purchasing themselves, or allowing their friends to purchase, a certificate from the magistrate. But this unworthy practice was condemned by the church as a tacit abjuration.

“Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, in describing the effect of this terrible decree, says, ‘that many citizens of repute complied with the edict. Some were impelled by their fears and some were forced by their friends. Many stood pale and trembling, neither ready to submit to the idolatrous ceremony, nor prepared to resist even unto death. Others endured their tortures to a certain point, but finally gave in’ ” [pp. 199,200].

The Son of Perdition

The terminology “son of perdition” is used twice in the New Testament: Jesus called Judas Iscariot the son of perdition as he prayed in the garden the night of his arrest. And the Lord explained why he used that term: “that the scripture might be fulfilled” [John 17:12]. The Apostle Paul writes to the church at Thessalonica regarding the day of Christ and declares that the second coming must wait until “there come a falling away first and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition” [II Thess. 2:3]. Paul speaks here of the anti-christ, “who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” on the day of the abomination of desolation [II Thess. 2:4].

That the anti-christ is the son of perdition is confirmed by John when he writes, “ And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition” [Rev. 17:11]. However, John also reveals that both of the beasts of chapter 13, the anti-christ and the false prophet, go into perdition: “And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone” [Rev. 19:20].

Is Judas the anti-christ or are there two known in scripture as “the son of perdition”? Assume for a moment that the wound by a sword [Rev. 13:14] which was “as unto death” [Rev. 13:3], is one literal strike upon the head of a single man. How does scripture record Judas Iscariot’s death?

According to Matthew, Judas hanged himself [Matt. 27:5]. “When he saw that he was condemned,” he “repented himself and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood” [Matt. 27:3,4]. The chief priests were indifferent to his condemnation, and “he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed and went and hanged himself.”

Luke tells us that Judas had hung himself in such a way that, when he finally fell, he fell headlong and “burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out” [Acts. 1:18]. Though wounded in the head from the fall, his death was by hanging. And since the description is so graphic regarding his bowels, the scriptures want us to know he had hung there for some time: minimally, three days.

Regarding Judas and Satan, Satan entered into Judas when Judas communed with the chief priests and captains about betraying the Lord Jesus Christ [Luke 22:33-6]. And Satan put into the heart of Judas the idea to betray the Lord [John 13:1]. Satan also

entered him after the sop was given to Judas at the last supper [John 13:27]. Together, these references demonstrate that Satan entered into Judas on more than one occasion.

Keep in mind that Satan had put an idea into the mind of Peter, through whom the Lord directly rebuke Satan [Matt. 16:23]. Part of Satan's rebuke may have been because he had put the idea into the wrong mind, if we were to assume that Judas was standing behind Jesus at the time. However, the difference between Judas and the rest of the apostles is revealed in Jesus' prayer on the night of his arrest: "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled" [John 17:12]. Jesus' disciples are still kept by him through his Spirit: "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" [Rom. 8:9b].

There are two men called the son of perdition in scripture, for they have a unique relationship to Satan's spirit. Both of them shall go into perdition. One is the anti-christ, who will be revealed at the time of the rapture and who will reveal his true nature at the time of the abomination of desolation. The other is the false prophet, Judas, who will ascend out of the pit.

Peter is given this knowledge, revealed through his prayer, that Judas "by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place" [Acts 1:25]. That "place" is perdition. That place is hell. It is also known as the bottomless pit. And he will once again be called forth to fulfill the scriptures as the beast out of the earth.

The Beast out of the Earth

The beast out of the earth has two horns like a lamb, showing his "religious" nature; but he is betrayed by his speech, for "he spake as a dragon" [Rev. 13:11]. Satan allows him to exercised all of the power of the first beast when he is "before the beast out of the sea" [Rev. 13:12], thus revealing their interdependence. The major concern of the beast out of the earth is worship of the first beast and control of financial affairs. To this religious end he wars with the two witnesses [Rev. 11:7], overcoming them for three and a half days.

The world's rejoicing and sending of gifts one to another over the defeat of God's two witnesses may correspond to the first major buying spree under the forced use of the number of the beast. But the celebration is short-lived. And the fear that fell upon the world at the resurrection of God's two witnesses [Rev. 11:11], may be the opportunity for the ten horns, who hate the whore the false prophet represents, to destroy her city and thus fulfill God's will [Rev. 17:16-18].

The Image of the Beast

The false prophet give "life" to the image of the anti-christ, causing it to be able to speak and to react in such a way as to kill those who fail to bow in its presence. The image of the beast is used to oversee transactions: none can buy or sell without its mark, name or number. The number of which is the number of a man: 666, the number of the anti-christ. The mark will be forced upon one's head, as a symbol of surrendered intellect, and the right hand, as a symbol of surrendered service. And though the technology is here today to engraft such a mark and although some may voluntarily receive and use such a mark earlier in the tribulation period, it will not be forced in mass unto the closing days of great tribulation.

Some have suggested that Nero was the anti-christ. And though his numerical reference was 666, according to the Roman use of numerology to identify military messages sent surreptitiously, too much does not fit, including the many prophecies yet to be fulfilled.

Revelation 14:1-5

A LAMB ON MOUNT ZION

The following outline is based on the parallel *these* clauses of v. 4.

TEXT: *And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. ²And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: ³and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. ⁴**These are they** which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. **These are they** which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. **These** were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. ⁵And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.*

NOTE: The Revelation has brought us back to the 144,000 -- the servants of God introduced in chapter 7. We see them again, triumphant. They are standing with the Lamb on mount Zion. They have fulfilled their mission, testifying to the everlasting gospel of God. They sing a song we cannot learn, but we will be able to enjoy, and what a song that will be! Accompanied by heavens musicians, they will sing in the presence of the Lamb as he stands before Jerusalem following the battle of Armageddon. Here is the reminder that our Redeemer liveth and that he is victorious over all of his enemies.

- I. And I looked, and, lo
 - A. A Lamb stood on the mount Sion
 - B. And with him *stood* an hundred forty and four thousand
 - 1. Having his Father's name
 - 2. *Having his Father's name* written in their foreheads
- II. And I heard a voice from heaven
 - A. As the voice of many waters
 - B. And as the voice of a great thunder
- III. And I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps
 - A. And they sung as it were a new song
 - 1. Before the throne
 - 2. And before the four beasts
 - 3. And *before* the elders
 - B. And no man could learn that song
 - 1. But the hundred and forty and four thousand
 - a. Which were redeemed
 - b. *Which were redeemed* from the earth
 - 1.) These are they which were not defiled with women, for they are virgins
 - 2.) These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth
 - 3.) These were redeemed from among men
 - a.) Being the firstfruits unto God
 - b.) And *being the firstfruits* to the Lamb
 - 2. And *regarding the hundred and forty and four thousand*
 - a. No guile was found
 - b. No guile was found in their mouth
 - 1.) For they are without fault
 - 2.) *They are without fault* before the throne of God

Revelation 14:1-5

COMMENTARY

The Lamb on Mount Zion

Mount Zion is the joy of the whole earth: beautiful for situation, the city of the great King is on the sides of the north [Ps. 48:2]. There, in the mountain of his holiness, is the city of our God. And in this city, he is greatly to be praised. Mount Zion is synonymous with Jerusalem because Solomon built the temple of God there, doubling the size of the city of David by including Zion, the “sides of the north.”

“Bethel, the Mount of Olives and Bethlehem are all parts of the same great range, but these and other points are superior in elevation to the City of David. While this is also applicable to the several hills of Jerusalem, it is especially true regarding the city of the psalmist which was located on Ophel at the southern end of the eastern ridge. This was the original fortress of the Jebusites, the boasted impregnable city which David conquered and converted into his capital.

“The wedge-shaped city occupied the slopes of the eastern ridge, considerably elevated above the beds of three great valleys bordering it on the east, the south and the west. The Kidron Valley, now partially filled in with debris of the ages, was probably between 150 and 200 feet below the city, while the Tyropoeon on the west was perhaps shallower. The two depressions converged on the south to form another valley, subsequently known as the Gehenna or Topheth (Hinnom). On the other hand, the northern portion of the city gradually ascended with the slopes of Mount Moriah, having at the foot of Mount Moriah a small natural valley intervening” [J. McKee Adams’ *Biblical Backgrounds*, p. 115].

When Jesus as the Lamb stands upon Mount Zion [Mount Moriah], he will be standing on the temple mount. But before he stands on Mount Zion [Rev. 14:1], he will have already stood upon the Mount of Olives, which overlooks Jerusalem: *And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley: and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.* [Zech. 14:4].

Then will follow a triumphal entry into the city, with the 144,000 singing to a heavenly orchestra; *and it shall be in that day that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem: half of them toward the former sea and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be* [Zech. 14:8].

The water supply of the earth shall be replenished from Mount Zion herself, giving relief to the masses plagued by the bitter waters of Wormwood and the stench of seas affected by the blowing of the second trumpet [Rev. 8:8-11].

The Lamb stands on Mount Zion. God has kept his promise to King David: “Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne” [Ps. 132:11]. This is not fulfilled in Solomon, though Solomon sat upon his father David’s throne. This is fulfilled in Jesus, for the Father “will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever” [II Sam. 7:12b]. The babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger in Bethlehem by Mary has entered the Holiest, wrapped in the righteousness of the glory of God!

A Voice from Heaven

Jesus is the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion with the 144,000 witnesses. From heaven a voice is heard: it is “as the voice of many waters and as the voice of a great thunder.” The “voice of many waters” is the description of Jesus’ own voice [Rev. 1:15], yet this is not Jesus. He stands on the earth, while this voice is from heaven. The “voice of a great

thunder” is the description of the voice of the Father [Job 40:9], yet this is not the Father. This voice has the sound as both the Father and the Son: it is, therefore, the voice of the Holy Spirit. He is called by many names in the scriptures, the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of God being two of them [Rom. 8:9]. Once the Spirit speaks, a heavenly band begins to play upon their harps; and the 144,000 break into a new song.

The 144,000

The 144,000 are those sealed at the beginning of this seven-year period. They are the firstfruits of those redeemed [Rev. 7:3, 14:4] during this time of Jacob’s Trouble, and they will stand before the throne of God without guile. They are men, holy before the Lord because they are “not defiled by women” [Rev. 14:4]. They are virgin men.

The Bible has a clear presentation regarding the Lord’s service: Adam taught Cain and Abel how to sacrifice; it is Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Moses, and then Joshua, led the people of God. The priesthood was appointed only to the house of Levi, and it was the sons of Aaron that functioned as priest. God’s pattern is too clear to change. And the New Testament maintains that pattern: the bishop is to be “the husband of one wife” [I Tim. 3:2].

We are all born in the state we call “virgin.” And we ought to remain that way until we marry. These 144,000 never married. It is not that marriage is sin; on the contrary. God saw that it was not good for Adam to dwell alone, and God gave him Eve. Marriage is also God’s way to avoid sin [I Cor. 7:2]. If a man or woman cannot contain, he is to marry “for, it is better to marry than to burn.” The reason these men do not marry is seen in their liberty to “follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth” [Rev. 14:4].

They are without carefulness regarding the short ministry to which they have been called, seeing that “he that is unmarried careth for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married careth for the things of the world, how he may please his wife” [I Cor. 7:32,33]. It is not a sin to marry [I Cor. 7:28]. Marriage is honorable in all things, and the bed is undefiled [Heb. 13:4]. But these men go beyond refusing to marry, they keep their virginity by remaining “undefiled with women.”

The office of the priest was a particular office, and the Lord laid out specific limitations that separated him. For example, “there shall none be defiled for the dead among his people” [Lev. 21:1]. Exceptions to this were made for his mother, his father, his son, his daughter, his brother, and even for his virgin sister [Lev. 21:2-4]. Yet, there were no exceptions for the high priest [Lev. 21:10,11]. The priesthood was not the profession of morticians. Contrast this to the priests of Egypt who were masters at embalming and you see a picture of God’s service as life unto life and man’s service as death unto death.

The priest was not to make himself bald, nor to shave the corners of his beard, nor to “make any cuttings in their flesh” [Lev. 21:5]. This is another contrast between God’s service and the service men claim to be of God. This also clarifies the nature of the name written in the foreheads of the 144,000. Though they have “his Father’s name written in their foreheads,” it is written in the Spirit of God. God does not violate his own word. If the Old Testament priests were not allowed “cuttings in his flesh,” these 144,000 would not be allowed such a mark. No, the mark is similar to the seal of the church: “In whom, after that you believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession” [Eph. 1:13b,14].

The seal of the church is written within: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” [I Cor. 3:16]. And in contrast to the church, who can hide the gospel from a lost and dying world [II Cor. 4:3], the 144,000 cannot. The Spirit of God, who is in the church, is the same Spirit who is with the tribulation

saints as he was with the Old Testament saints. This is the distinction revealed by Jesus to his disciples [John 14:17], the Spirit was with the saints before the day of Pentecost. After his official appearance, he abode “in” them. Like Moses, the 144,000 will shine with a heavenly face, and the wicked will be “afraid to come nigh” unto them to do them harm [Ex. 34:29-35].

But, back to the matter of defiling: the priest was not to take a wife “that is a whore, or profane;” neither was he to take a woman “put away from her husband” [Lev. 21:7]. He was to take a wife in her virginity. He was not to marry “a widow, or a divorced woman, or profane, or an harlot” [Lev. 21:14]. Know that a woman can be defiled by a man, and she is when she is raped [Gen. 34:2]. And, though espoused to be married as Mary was to Joseph, she also has the power to write a bill of divorcement [Mark 10:11,12]. However, should she be divorced and remarried, she would be labeled an adulterous until the time of her first husband’s death, when she is no longer called an adulterous “though she be married to another man” [Rom. 7:3].

The scripture distinguishes between a harlot and a profane woman. Just as that priest was not to “profane his seed among his people” (fornication or adultery) [Lev. 21:15], a woman was not to be “profane” or morally loose. A priest was not to marry a woman who was not a virgin, and the three categories were the harlot, the profane and the divorcee [Lev. 21:7]. Neither a profane woman nor a divorcee is viewed as a harlot. A father could refuse to accept a man who enticed a daughter not espoused and accept on her behalf the dowry of virgins [Ex. 22:16,17]. Such a woman is the “profane” woman the priest was not to marry. However, should the daughter of a priest profaned herself by playing the whore, she was to be “burnt with fire” [Lev. 21:9].

In type, as Christ

The typology they represented is the reason stricter regulations were placed on the priesthood: they had to come into the presence of God. God changed that priesthood through Jesus Christ, making us acceptable unto him through the blood of the Lamb. Reflective of this “priesthood” of the church, which is a priesthood of believers [I Peter 2:9], the “priesthood” of the tribulation is also no longer limited. It is not the tribe of Levi. It is 12,000 from every tribe [Rev. 7:5-8]. The proclamation of the everlasting gospel is a service of every tribe, equally.

But the Old Testament priest was also a type of our High Priest. Aaron was taken from among men that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins as one who can have compassion on the ignorant and on them that are out of the way, “for he himself also is compassed with infirmity.” And for this reason, he ought to offer sacrifices for his own sins, as he offers sacrifices for the sins of his people [Heb. 5:1-4]. And Jesus became flesh that he might save us.

Our High Priest, being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself and became obedient unto death. He who knew no sin became sin for us, that we might become the sons of God. He is touched with the feelings of our infirmities, being tempted in every point like as we are, yet without sin [Heb. 4:15]. And being touched with the feelings of our infirmities, he is able to succor us in the midst of our temptation [Heb. 2:18]. This is the typology toward which the priest was to strive, for our High Priest is the Lamb of God, without spot or blemish.

Why they are called “Evangelists”

The 144,000 are the same as those mentioned in chapter 7 – they are the first fruits of the redeemed. The implication of the term “first fruit” is that more fruit will follow or come after the first. Israel who believes is a first fruit [Rom. 11:16]. Christ is the first fruits [1Co 15:23]. The rest of the fruit that follows Christ includes those that believe in

the Church Age and those that have believed at his coming. Israel is re-grafted after the rapture of the Church. Once the Church is caught away, there will be a first budding of that re-grafted branch: the 144,000 “believers” in Christ at the start of the Tribulation [chapter 7]. They are a part of Israel “engrafted.” During the seven years, they will gain followers to their like precious faith in the Lamb [Rev. 14:4].

Their witness [call it personal testimony, public proclamation or preaching] is by word of mouth because “in their mouth was found no guile.” Would it not be wonderful if we could all be assured that every one who proclaimed the name of Christ today had no guile? It is not so in the Church Age. As Paul declared, “The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: but the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel. What then? Notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice [Philippians 1:16-18]. The hour is such during the Tribulation that no man will name the name of Christ for his own agenda.

“Guile” takes us back to the garden, where Eve was beguiled. “Guile” is the reason we know Nathaniel was not alone when Jesus saw him under the fig tree. There is a message, a piece of information presented by the 144,000 – thus, I refer to them as evangelists. They are men [virgins not defiled with women] who never married and who never committed fornication. Their life is holy, their word is holy, and their work is holy.

The angel sent to hurt the earth and the sea had to wait for the 144,000 to first be sealed: they were untouched by this angel [Rev. 7:1,2]. The angel following the angel of Rev. 7 is the angel that preached the everlasting gospel [Rev. 14:6]. Could not the 144,000 be the means by which this angel accomplishes his task?

This would give a type of “Passover” in their sealing; followed by a proclamation period for the “everlasting gospel” (which is the gospel of Jesus Christ), which is finally followed by judgment on “Babylon” [Rev. 14:8]. It is after these events that the patience of the saints is mentioned: “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

This progression of protection, proclamation and judgment has been the progression of events for Israel: God gave them the Passover, he gave them a period to proclaim it and then he judged Israel for their unbelief. Prior to Moses, God gave Israel the promises, he gave them protection in the land of Goshen, and he let them fall into slavery for their indifference to the will of God. This is the progression for the Church Age: God gave to the Church Christ; he has given the Church a period to proclaim Jesus Christ; and when that period is over, he will judge the world for its unbelief. This is the progression for the Tribulation period.

Revelation 14:6-8

THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL

The following outline is based on the imperative verbs that are the summation of the everlasting gospel in v. 7.

TEXT: *And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,⁷ saying with a loud voice, **Fear** God, and **give** glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and **worship** him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.⁸ And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*

NOTE: Seven angels make up the content of the rest of this chapter. The first two are seen in these verses. Together, the seven angels are a review of God's judgment upon those who have rejected the everlasting gospel. The first angel is the bearer of the gospel itself, the gospel the 144,000 have preached. It is "everlasting" because man's redemption has been from everlasting to everlasting, from the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world to the everlasting life given to whosoever believeth on the Son. Three parts make up this gospel: (1) the fear of God, (2) the giving to him of glory and (3) the worship of God. The "fear of God" is that work of conviction unto repentance. The "giving to him of glory" is the faith that results from such repentance. "Worship" is that fellowship with God made possible through the Word of God and the Holy Spirit. This is the message given us by Jesus. It is repentance from dead works and faith toward God [Heb. 6:1]. God required this of Abraham. He had to leave the paganism of Ur and to look by faith toward God's promise.

The second of these seven angels [v. 8] shows the judgment of the great whore for failing to accept this everlasting gospel: "Babylon is fallen, is fallen" [Rev. 14:8]. That message is repeated in Rev. 18:2.

- I. And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven
 - A. Having the everlasting gospel
 - 1. To preach unto them that dwell on the earth
 - 2. And *to preach* to every nation
 - 3. And *to preach* to every kindred
 - 4. And *to preach* to every tongue
 - 5. And *to preach* to every people
 - B. Saying with a loud voice
 - 1. Fear God
 - 2. And give glory to him
 - a. For the hour *is come*
 - b. *The hour* of his judgment is come
 - 3. And worship him
 - a. That made heaven
 - b. And *that made* earth
 - c. And *that made* the sea
 - d. And that made the fountains of waters
- II. And there followed another angel, saying
 - A. Babylon is fallen, is fallen
 - B. That great city *is fallen*
 - 1. Because she made all nations drink of the wine of her fornication
 - 2. *Because she made all nations drink of the wine* of the wrath of her fornication

Revelation 14:9-11

THE CUP OF HIS INDIGNATION

The following outline is based on adjective clauses modifying *they* in verse 11.

TEXT: *And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, ¹⁰the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: ¹¹and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, **who** worship the beast and his image, and **whosoever** receiveth the mark of his name.*

NOTE: The number of the beast is 666 [Rev. 13:18], but we are warned to beware is mark [Rev. 14:9]. The wine of the wrath of God is “poured out without mixture”: it is not weaken, but given full strength into the cup of his indignation for all who worship the beast and who worship his image and who receive his mark in their forehead or in their hand. These shall be tormented “with fire and brimstone” [v. 10], and the smoke of their torment “ascendeth for ever and ever” [v. 11].

Judgment is eternal. This is the last of the six foundational doctrines taught by Christ: (1) the doctrine of repentance, (2) the doctrine of faith, (3) the doctrine of baptisms [both of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 6:3,4; 8:9-11) and of the physical body (Matt. 28:19,20; I Cor. 15:29)], (4) the doctrine of laying on of hands [the ordaining of elders (Titus 1:5, II Tim. 1:6)], (5) the doctrine of the resurrection and (6) the doctrine of eternal judgment [Heb. 6:1,2].

The beast and the false prophet, which are cast alive into the lake of fire [Rev. 19:20], suffer eternal judgment. The dead which are cast into the lake of fire, along with death and hell [Rev. 20:14], suffer eternal judgment. This is the second death, from which we shall be saved if we confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in our heart that God raised him from the grave [Rom. 10:8-13].

- I. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice
 - A. If any man
 - 1. Worship the beast
 - 2. And *worship* his image
 - 3. And receive his mark
 - a. In his forehead
 - b. Or in his hand
 - B. The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God
 - 1. Which is poured out without mixture
 - 2. *Which is poured out* into the cup of his indignation
 - C. And he shall be tormented
 - 1. With fire
 - 2. And *with* brimstone
 - D. *He shall be tormented*
 - 1. In the presence of the holy angels
 - 2. And in the presence of the Lamb
- II. And *I testify that*
 - A. The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever
 - B. And they have no rest day nor night
 - 1. Who worship the beast
 - 2. And *who worship* his image
 - 3. And whosoever receiveth the mark of his name

Revelation 14:12-16

THE HARVEST IS RIPE

The following outline is based on the compound objects of the present participle *having*, which modifies *one* in v. 14.

TEXT: *Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.* ¹³*And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.* ¹⁴*And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.* ¹⁵*And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.* ¹⁶*And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.*

NOTE: The one “having on his head a golden crown and in his hand a sharp sickle” is Jesus, whom John describes as “one like unto the Son of man” [Rev. 14:14]. This is the same description given the Lord when John saw him as the high priest tending to the candlestick [Rev. 1:13]. Just as he had angels appointed to watch over the church [Rev. 1:20], so he has angels appointed to fulfil his judgment. This is the parable of the dragnet, which gathers every kind in the kingdom of heaven. The angels gather the good into vessels and cast the bad away: they “shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth” [Matt. 13:47-50].

- I. *Regarding their refusal to worship the beast*
 - A. Here is the patience of the saints
 - B. Here are they
 - 1. That keep the commandments of God
 - 2. And *that keep* the faith of Jesus
- II. And I heard a voice from heaven
 - A. Saying unto me, Write
 - B. Saying, *Write*, Blessed are the dead
 - 1. Which die in the Lord
 - 2. *Which die in the Lord* from henceforth
 - C. Yea, saith the Spirit,
 - 1. That they may rest from their labours
 - 2. And *that* their works do follow them
- III. And I looked, and behold
 - A. A white cloud
 - B. And upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man
 - 1. Having on his head a golden crown
 - 2. And *having* in his hand a sharp sickle
 - C. And another angel came out of the temple
 - 1. Crying with a loud voice
 - 2. *Crying* to him that sat on the cloud
 - a. Thrust in thy sickle
 - b. And reap
 - 1.) For the time is come for thee to reap
 - 2.) For the harvest of the earth is ripe
 - D. And he that sat on the cloud
 - 1. *He* thrust in his sickle on the earth
 - 2. And the earth was reaped

Revelation 14:17-20
THE GREAT WINEPRESS

The following outline is based on the verbs describing the angel's actions in v. 19.

TEXT: *And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.* ¹⁸*And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.* ¹⁹*And the angel **thrust in** his sickle into the earth, and **gathered** the vine of the earth, and **cast** it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.* ²⁰*And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.*

NOTE: It is in the valley of Megiddo that Jesus Christ will tread under his feet the enemies of God on that great day of deliverance [Rom. 11:26]. This is the battle field of Armageddon, where his word shall go forth as a sharp, two-edged sword [Rev. 19:15] and as a sickle thrust into the harvest of grapes [Rev. 14:19]: “Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?” they shall ask of him in that day. And he will answer, “I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come” [Is. 63:2-4].

None on earth shall stand with him in that battle, but the saints of God. These are the “ten thousands of his saints” [Jude 1:14] who follow him out of heaven. Clothed in fine linen, white and clean, they are those redeemed to God by the blood of the Lamb “out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation” [Rev. 5:9]. And they shall reign on the earth as kings and priests unto God [Rev. 5:10].

- I. And another angel
 - A. *He* came out of the temple which is in heaven
 - B. He *came out*, also having a sharp sickle
- II. And another angel
 - A. *He* came out from the altar
 - 1. Which had power
 - 2. *Which had power* over fire
 - B. And *he* cried with a loud cry
 - 1. To him
 - 2. *To him* that had the sharp sickle
 - C. Saying
 - 1. Thrust in thy sharp sickle
 - 2. And gather the clusters of the vine of the earth
 - a. For her grapes are ripe
 - b. *For her grapes are fully ripe*
- III. And the angel [*of v. 17*]
 - A. *He* thrust in his sickle into the earth
 - B. And *he* gathered the vine of the earth
 - C. And *he* cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God
 - 1. And the winepress was trodden without the city
 - 2. And blood came out of the winepress
 - a. Even unto the horse bridles
 - b. By the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs

Revelation 14:6-20

COMMENTARY

THE SEVEN ANGELS

1st Angel [vv. 6,7]: the everlasting gospel

The 144,000 standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion [Rev. 14:1] are the evangelists of the tribulation period. They have carried the gospel of Jesus Christ for seven years, leading “a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues” to faith in God and the Lamb [Rev. 7:9-10]. Their work is shown from a heavenly perspective in Rev. 14:6. Just as God the Spirit used seven angels to guide the seven church periods of chapters 2 & 3, so he also has a heavenly hand helping them, flying in the midst of heaven, “having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth.”

2nd Angel [v. 8]: the fall of Babylon

Following the preaching of the everlasting gospel, a view is presented of the great whore [Rev. 17:1-6]. It is a view of judgment upon the church that rejected the everlasting gospel. This is the church of the anti-christ, the tares of Laodicea [Rev. 3:17]. The fall of this church is so great, that her description [Rev. 17] and her destruction [Rev. 18] are given in great detail. This is the church of the anti-christ. It is the mustard seed that grew to such size that it became “the habitation of devils and the hold of every foul spirit and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird” [Rev. 18:2].

3rd Angel [vv. 9-11]: the judgment of idolaters

The third angel deals with the judgment of those who “worship the beast and his image and receive his mark” [Rev. 14:9]. The focus is on the tribulation years themselves. Though the false church is from ages past, this third angel specifically deals with those who worshipped the anti-christ.

The saints of the ages will rejoice at the destruction of the harlot church: “Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets: for God hath avenged you on her” [Rev. 18:20]; and the saints of the tribulation period will rejoice at the avenging of their blood on “them that dwell on the earth” during this seven year period [Rev. 6:10].

4th Angel [v. 13]: blessing upon the saints

These dear souls are blessed for their faith [Rev. 6:9]. Their works will follow them, showing to them others who will follow in their path of faith.

5th Angel [v. 15]: the time to reap

Following the preaching of the everlasting gospel and the destruction of Babylon the Great, the “time” is right for reaping. Regarding the second coming, and specifically the day of the battle of Armageddon, Jesus told us “of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father” [Mark 13:32]. Jesus is shown sitting on a cloud, with a

sickle in his hand, ready to reap [Rev. 14:14]. And here we see the Father sending word to his Son, by the angel out of the temple of God [Rev. 14:15].

6th Angel [v. 17]: the Reaper

Jesus has a sickle in his hand, ready. And when the Father sends him word, he “thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.” Yet, a sixth angel, also having a sickle, thrusts and gathers and casts [v. 19]. This “reaper” is an angel of the Lord. And just as the Lord smote all the firstborn of the land of Egypt [Ex. 12:29] by the “destroyer” which came into their houses [Ex. 12:23], so he smites the earth through the reaper.

7th Angel [v. 18]: the reaping (Armageddon)

The Lord, who is now shown crowned and seated on a cloud with a sickle in hand [Rev. 14:14], is soon to be shown seated on his white horse, ready to judge and make war [Rev. 19:11] at the battle of Armageddon, where he treadeth “the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” [Rev. 19:15]. These angels thus carry us from the beginning of the tribulation period to its close: from the sealing of the 144,000 to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Revelation 15:1-4
THEM THAT HAD GOTTEN THE VICTORY

The following outline is based on the parallel adverbial prepositional phrases beginning with *over* in v. 2.

TEXT: *And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. ²And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory **over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number** of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. ³And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. ⁴Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.*

NOTE: The seven last plagues are about to be revealed; but before they are, there is rejoicing in heaven. As the 144,000 sang a special song that “no man could learn” [14:3], so the tribulation saints now take center stage. No longer are they crying out, “How long, O Lord?” [Rev. 6:10]. They have been joined by their brethren [Rev. 7:14]. Together they sing the song of Moses, a song of deliverance over their enemies: “The Lord hath triumphed gloriously” [Ex. 15:1]. And they sing the song of the Lamb. The song of Moses recognizes God the Father; the song of the Lamb recognizes Jesus Christ. It is of the Father’s Word and the Lamb’s testimony that they sing [Rev. 6:9].

- I. And I saw another sign in heaven
 - A. *A great sign*
 - B. And *a marvellous sign*
 - 1. Seven angels
 - 2. *Seven angels* having the seven last plagues
 - a. For in them is filled up *wrath*
 - b. *In them is filled up* the wrath of God
- II. And I saw
 - A. A sea of glass mingled with fire, as it were
 - B. And them stand on the sea of glass
 - 1. That had gotten the victory
 - a. Over the beast
 - b. And over his image
 - c. And over his mark
 - d. And over the number of his name
 - 2. Having the harps of God
- III. And they sing
 - A. The song of Moses the servant of God
 - B. And the song of the Lamb
- IV. *They sing*, saying
 - A. Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty
 - B. Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints
 - C. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord?
 - D. And *who shall not* glorify thy name?
 - 1. For thou only art holy
 - 2. For all nations shall come *before thee*
 - 3. And *all nations shall* worship before thee
 - a. For thy judgments
 - b. *Thy judgments* are made manifest

Revelation 15:5-8

THE TEMPLE OF THE TABERNACLE

The following outline is based on the parallel prepositional phrases modifying *smoke* in v. 8.

TEXT: *And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: ⁶And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. ⁷And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. ⁸And the temple was filled with smoke **from the glory of God, and from his power**; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.*

NOTE: The seven angels [v. 6] are dressed as the Lord was dressed when John saw him walking in the midst of the golden candlestick [Rev. 1:13]. They are in the service of the tabernacle in heaven [Heb. 8:2], of which the earthly tabernacle was a shadow [Heb. 8:5], and they have the seven last plagues assigned to their care. As they come out of the temple, one of the four heavenly beasts [described in Rev. 4] gives to each of them a golden vial. But before the Father commands them to go their ways and to pour out its contents, the temple itself is filled with smoke.

Recall that, at the dedication of the temple, when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifices; “and the glory of the Lord filled the house” so that the priest could not enter the house [II Chron. 7:1]. The smoke of the glory and the power of God now fills the heavenly tabernacle. The glory of God is his brightness [Heb. 1:3]. It is Jesus Christ himself. And the power of God is his Spirit [Zech. 4:6], the Spirit of Christ [Rom. 8:9]. Jesus is moving from under the throne as the Lamb [Rev. 5:6] to the saddle of his great stallion as Lord. He who is Faithful and True [Rev. 19:11] is mounting to ride forth in righteousness, to judge and to make war.

- I. And after that I looked, and, behold
 - A. The temple was opened in heaven
 - 1. *The temple* of the tabernacle
 - 2. *The temple of the tabernacle* of the testimony
 - B. And the seven angels came out of the temple
 - 1. Having the seven plagues
 - 2. Clothed in linen
 - a. Pure
 - b. And white
 - 3. And having their breasts girded with golden girdles
- II. And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels
 - A. Seven *vials*
 - B. *Seven* golden vials
 - 1. Full of *wrath*
 - 2. *Full of* the wrath of God
 - a. Who liveth
 - b. *Who liveth* for ever and ever
- III. And the temple was filled with smoke
 - A. From the glory of God
 - B. And from his power
- IV. And no man was able to enter into the temple
 - A. Till the seven plagues *were fulfilled*
 - B. *Till the seven plagues* of the seven angels were fulfilled

Revelation 16:1-7

THE FIRST THREE VIALS

The following outline is based on the compound imperative verbs in v. 1.

TEXT: *And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, **Go** your ways, and **pour** out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. ²And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image. ³And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea. ⁴And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. ⁶For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. ⁷And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.*

NOTE: The angels are sent out simultaneously [v. 1], and they pour out their vials in rapid succession during the last days of great tribulation. It is possible that they do so following the resurrection and return of the two witness to heaven [Rev. 11:12].

- I. And I heard a great voice
 - A. Out of the temple
 - B. Saying to the seven angels
 - 1. Go your ways
 - 2. And pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth
- II. And the first *angel* went and poured out his vial upon the earth
 - A. And there fell a noisome *sore*
 - B. And *there fell* a grievous sore
 - 1. Upon the men which had the mark of the beast
 - 2. And upon them which worshipped his image
- III. And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea
 - A. And it became as the blood of a dead man
 - B. And every living soul died in the sea
- IV. And the third angel poured out his vial
 - A. Upon the rivers
 - B. And *upon the* fountains of waters
 - 1. And they [*the rivers*] became blood
 - 2. And they [*the fountains*] became blood
- V. And I heard the angel of the waters say [*the third angel*]
 - A. Thou art righteous, O Lord
 - 1. Which art
 - 2. And *which* wast
 - 3. And *which* shalt be
 - B. *Thou art righteous, O Lord*
 - 1. Because thou hast judged thus
 - a. For they have shed the blood of saints
 - b. And *they have shed the blood of* prophets
 - 2. And thou hast given them blood to drink
 - a. For they are worthy
 - b. *For they are worthy to drink blood*
- IV. And I heard another out of the altar say
 - A. Even so, Lord God Almighty, thy judgments are true
 - B. And *thy judgments are* righteous

Revelation 16:8-12

THE NEXT THREE VIALS

The following outline is based on verbs of one independent clause, vv. 10 & 11.

TEXT: *And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.⁹ And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.¹⁰ And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they **gnawed** their tongues for pain,¹¹ and **blasphemed** the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and **repented not** of their deeds.¹² And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.*

NOTE: Repentance is the key to faith. It is the first foundation in the doctrine of Christ [Heb. 6:2]; and without it, man cannot place faith in God. Though often associated with remorse and penance, it is neither. A remorseful man does not automatically repent. And a man who is diligent in penance may be so with the intention of repeating that for which he is penitent. Repentance is a change of mind and attitude. When Jesus preached repentance from dead works and faith toward God, he preached an irreversible change. No longer would the repentant of John's preaching follow the false worship of the temple in Jerusalem. No longer would the follower of Christ seek solace in the self-righteousness of the deeds of the law. And no longer would the Gentile worship in the temples of Diana. They had found the Christ. They had repented of their dead works and had believed on Him. And even in the day of the 5th vial there appears time for repentance. By the preaching of the everlasting gospel, there is still hope. But of those in the kingdom of darkness who believed a lie [II Thess. 2:11] they "repented not of their deeds" [v. 11].

- I. And the fourth angel
 - A. *He* poured out his vial upon the sun
 - B. And power was given unto him [*the sun*]
 - 1. To scorch men
 - 2. *To scorch men* with fire
 - a. And men were scorched with great heat
 - b. And *they* blasphemed the name of God
 - 1.) Which hath power
 - 2.) *Which hath power* over these plagues
 - c. And they repented not to give him glory
- II. And the fifth angel
 - A. *He* poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast
 - B. And his kingdom was full of darkness
 - 1. And they gnawed their tongues for pain
 - 2. And *they* blasphemed the God of heaven
 - a. Because of their pains
 - b. And *because of* their sores
 - 3. And *they* repented not of their deeds
- III. And the sixth angel
 - A. *He* poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates
 - B. And the water thereof was dried up
 - 1. That the way *might be prepared*
 - 2. *That the way* of the kings of the east might be prepared

Revelation 16:13-16

THE THREE UNCLEAN SPIRITS

The following outline is based on the parallel prepositional phrases that modify the verb *come* in v. 13.

TEXT: *And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come **out of** the mouth of the dragon, and **out of** the mouth of the beast, and **out of** the mouth of the false prophet. ¹⁴For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. ¹⁵Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. ¹⁶And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.*

NOTE: The three unclean spirits look and move “like frogs.” They are “unclean” because they are unholy: “they turn the grace of God into lasciviousness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ” [Jude 1:4]. And like Legion, whom Jesus cast out of the maniac of Gadara [Luke 8:26-39], these spirits “are many.” Even the dragon has taken lodging in a physical form now, as when he used the serpent to beguile Eve: for an unclean spirit proceeds out of his mouth as well [Rev. 16:13].

These spirits are ambassadors. They personally go to the kings of the earth, and they make their appeals at large to the inhabitants of the whole world [v.14]. Using miracles, such as fire from heaven [Rev. 13:13], these spirits, now inhabiting three other men, believe they are gathering an army to defend the kingdom of the anti-christ against an invasion from the east [v. 12]. In reality, they are gathering themselves to the battle of that great day of God Almighty, the battle of Armageddon.

God himself is gathering them [v. 16], for he is the one who allows these lying spirits to stir the wicked to the battle, as he had sent a lying spirit into the mouths of the false prophets to deceive Ahab [II Chron. 18:19-22]. And the Lord will break forth upon them “as a thief” in that day, for they have no understanding of his second coming [II Peter 3:4].

To the remnant of Israel, there is this ageless advice: “Blessed is he that keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked” before his enemy and they see his shame [v.15]. The saints of God are to keep looking for that great day of deliverance [Rom. 11:26] when Jesus Christ shall appear.

- I. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs
 - A. Come out of the mouth of the dragon
 - B. And *come* out of the mouth of the beast
 - C. And *come* out of the mouth of the false prophet
 - 1. For they are the spirits of devils
 - 2. *They are the spirit of devils*, working miracles
 - a. Which go forth unto the kings of the earth
 - b. And *which go forth* of the whole world
 - 1.) To gather them to the battle
 - 2.) *To gather them to the battle* of that great day of God Almighty
 - a.) Behold, I come as a thief
 - b.) Blessed is he that watcheth
 - c.) And *blessed is he that* keepeth his garments
 - (1.) Lest he walk naked
 - (2.) And they see his shame
- II. And he gathered them
 - A. Together
 - B. Into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon

Revelation 16:17-21 THE SEVENTH VIAL

The following outline is based on the compound sentence whose three independent clauses identify the cities of significance in v. 19.

TEXT: *And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. ¹⁸And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. ¹⁹And **the great city** was divided into three parts, and **the cities** of the nations fell: and **great Babylon** came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. ²⁰And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. ²¹And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.*

NOTE: There is a thousand year gap between the 6th and 7th vials, which is why the placement of the account of Armageddon is in between them. The drying up of the river Euphrates prepares the way for the kings of the east to invade Israel at Armageddon. But the 7th vial speaks of final judgment [v. 19] and the nature of wicked men [v.21] at the white throne.

- I. And the seventh angel
 - A. *He* poured out his vial into the air
 - B. And there came a great voice
 - 1. Out of the temple of heaven
 - 2. From the throne
 - 3. Saying, It is done
 - C. And there were
 - 1. Voices
 - 2. And thunders
 - 3. And lightnings
 - 4. And there was a great earthquake
 - a. Such as was not
 - b. *Such as was not* since men were upon the earth
 - 1.) So mighty an earthquake
 - 2.) And so great *an earthquake*
- II. *The results of that vial*
 - A. *Regarding the cities*
 - 1. And the great city was divided into three parts
 - 2. And the cities of the nations fell
 - 3. And great Babylon came in remembrance before God
 - a. To give unto her the cup
 - b. *To give unto her the cup* of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath
 - B. *Regarding the earth*
 - 1. And every island fled away
 - 2. And the mountains were not found
 - C. *Regarding men*
 - 1. And there fell upon men *hail* out of heaven
 - a. A great hail
 - b. Every stone about the weight of a talent
 - 2. And men blasphemed God
 - a. Because of the plague of the hail
 - b. For the plague thereof was exceeding great

Revelation 16:1-21

THE SEVEN VIALS

1ST Vial [v.2]: sores upon idolaters

In the midst of the world's making merry over the death of God's two witnesses [Rev. 11:10], "the spirit of life from God" enters into Moses and Elijah; and those who had rejoiced now behold their ascension to heaven. This is the time of the second woe: there was a great earthquake, a tenth part of Jerusalem fell, and seven thousand men were slain in that quake [Rev. 11:13]. With swift succession, the first six vials fill the gap between this second woe and the last, for the seventh trumpet, which is the third woe, pictures the same event as the 7th vial: the white throne judgment.

Those who had the mark of the beast and had worshipped his image find themselves smitten with a "noisome and grievous sore," possibly as when the Lord used the ashes of the furnace, sprinkled toward the heaven, to spread a small dust that broke forth into boils upon the Egyptians throughout all their land [Ex. 9:8,9].

2nd Vial [v.3]: the sea smitten

A third part of the sea became blood, killing a third of the creatures which were in the sea and destroying a third part of the ships that had sailed the sea, when the second trumpet sounded [Rev. 8:8,9]. Now, that which had plagued those waters reaches the remainder of the sea.

3rd Vial [v.4]: the rivers and fountains smitten

A third part of the rivers and fountains of waters had been made bitter at the sounding of the third trumpet, when Wormwood fell from heaven. Many men died from the bitter waters [Rev. 8:10,11]. Now, the remainder of the rivers and fountains of waters reflect the seas from which they draw and to which they flow: they also turn to blood.

4th Vial [v. 8]: the sun empowered

A third part of the sun was smitten, along with a third of the moon and the stars, at the sounding of the fourth trumpet; thus affecting the time of the days by shortening day and night [Rev. 8:12]. Now, the sun is again so affected that it scorches men throughout the day with its heat, causing many to burn alive.

5th Vial [v.10] darkness in the beast's kingdom

For the first five months of Satan's fall from heaven, when he cast out a great flood against Israel, the earth helped the woman and "swallowed up the flood" [Rev. 12:13-16]: by the sending forth of Abaddon's minions through the fifth trumpet, the armies of the beast forgot Israel and sought relief in death, but could not find it [Rev. 9:6].

Now, with the scorching by day and the black of darkness by night, a darkness so filled with pains inflicted by the burning of the sun [4th Vial] and so filled with agony from the "noisome and grievous" sores [1st Vial] that they gnawed their own tongues, they blaspheme the God of heaven.

6th Vial [v.12]: the Euphrates dried up

The river Euphrates had already been touched by the sixth trumpet, when the four angels were loosed, "prepared for an hour and a day and a month and a year, for to slay a third part of men" [Rev. 9:15]. And their force of two hundred thousand thousand [200,000,000] keep the armies of the anti-christ and the armies of the world occupied after the five month ravage of locust.

Now, the river itself is dried up, useless in its flow. However, its death prepares the way of the kings of the east to march upon the kingdom of the anti-christ. And when they arrive in Megiddo, they find themselves on the battlefield of Armageddon [Rev. 16:16].

7th Vial [v. 17]: It is done

As with the declaration that time be no longer in the days of the voice of the seventh angel [Rev. 10:7]; so now with the Father's "It is done!"

Revelation 17:1-5

BABYLON THE GREAT

The following outline is based on appositives to the name *Mystery* in v. 5.

TEXT: *And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: ²with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. ³So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. ⁴And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: ⁵and upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, **BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.***

NOTE: That the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits [v.9] is not the reason to label this city as Rome, though Rome sits on seven hills (as does Moscow and Jerusalem). The reason this city is Rome rests in Rome's history. Rome, more than any other city, is "drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" [v.6].

- I. And there one of the seven angels which had the seven vials
 - A. *He* came
 - B. And *he* talked with me, saying unto me
 - 1. Come hither
 - 2. I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore
 - a. That sitteth upon many waters
 - b. With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication
 - c. And the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication
- II. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness
 - A. And I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast
 - 1. *A beast* full of names of blasphemy
 - 2. *A beast* having seven heads
 - 3. And *having* ten horns
 - B. And the woman was arrayed
 - 1. In purple *colour*
 - 2. And *in* scarlet colour
 - C. And *the woman* was decked
 - 1. With gold
 - 2. And *with* precious stones
 - 3. And *with* pearls
 - D. *A woman*
 - 1. Having a golden cup in her hand
 - a. Full of abominations
 - b. And filthiness of her fornication
 - 2. And upon her forehead was a name written
 - a. MYSTERY
 - b. BABYLON THE GREAT
 - c. THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS
 - d. **AND THE MOTHER OF ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH**

Revelation 17:6-8

INTO PERDITION

The following outline is based on the compound verbs of the main clause and of the adjective clause modifying *beast* in v. 8.

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

NOTE: The beast on which the woman rides “was and is not and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit and *shall* go into perdition” [v. 8]. It is the beast that has the seven heads and the ten horns [v.7], the heads of which are called both mountains [v.9] and kings [v. 10], and the horns of which are also called kings “which have received no kingdom as yet” [v. 12]. The beast spans history [vv. 8-10], which is the view of him as world empires. He is also seen as one yet to come [vv.12, 16], which is why he is viewed as the anti-christ, who will lift himself up as world emperor.

John sees the span of kings, the mountains [Rev. 13:1-3]; and he sees the beast rise again, out of perdition, in the form of the anti-christ: “the beast that was and is not, yet is” [v. 8]. John also sees his defeat at Armageddon, where the beast that shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, shall go back to the bottomless pit. God always reminds us of our victory.

I. *The woman*

- A. And I saw the woman
 - 1. Drunken with the blood of the saints
 - 2. And *drunken* with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus
- B. And when I saw her
 - 1. I wondered
 - 2. *I wondered* with great admiration

II. *The angel*

- A. And the angel said unto me
 - 1. Wherefore didst thou marvel?
 - 2. I will tell thee the mystery of the woman
 - 3. And *the mystery* of the beast that carrieth her
 - a. Which hath the seven heads
 - b. And *which hath the* ten horns
- B. *And the angel said unto me*
 - 1. The beast that thou sawest
 - a. Was
 - b. And is not
 - c. And shall ascend out of the bottomless pit
 - d. And *shall* go into perdition
 - 2. And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder
 - a. Whose names were not written
 - 1.) In the book of life
 - 2.) *In the book of life* from the foundation of the world
 - b. When they behold the beast
 - 1.) That was
 - 2.) And *that* is not
 - 3.) And yet *that* is

Revelation 17:9-13 THE MOUNTAINS

The following outline is based on compound independent clauses used to identify the seven kings in v. 10.

TEXT: *And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.* ¹⁰*And there are seven kings: **five are fallen**, and **one is**, and **the other is not yet come**; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.* ¹¹*And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.* ¹²*And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.* ¹³*These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.*

NOTE: The beast “that is the eighth” is the world order that will next arise. It is of the seventh [see *Part II, Commentary on 13:1-10*]. This eighth empire, led by the anti-christ, will give power to the ten horns, who, in turn, will give their support to this beast. The anti-christ is the rider of the first seal who will go forth conquering and to conquer, even though he has only a bow [Rev. 6:2]. He will promise peace to Israel, confirming the covenant with them; but he will be unable to fulfill the prophesies of the kingdom as described by Isaiah [65:25]. And his failure to fulfill the word of God will show his true nature to those who believe Moses and the prophets. They will hear the message of the 144,000 and resist the beast unto death.

- I. And here is the mind which hath wisdom
 - A. The seven heads
 - 1. Are seven mountains
 - a. On which the woman sitteth
 - b. *On which the Mother of Harlots sitteth [v.5]*
 - 2. And there are seven kings
 - a. Five are fallen
 - b. And one is [*as John writes: the Roman Empire*]
 - c. And the other is not yet come [*the anti-christ's empire*]
 - 1.) And when he cometh
 - 2.) He must continue a short space
 - II. *And here is the mind which hath wisdom*
 - A. And the beast
 - 1. That was
 - 2. And is not
 - B. *That beast*
 - 1. Even he is the eighth
 - 2. And is of the seven
 - 3. And goeth into perdition
 - III. *And here is the mind which hath wisdom*
 - A. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings
 - 1. Which have received no kingdom as yet
 - 2. But *which* receive power as kings
 - a. One hour
 - b. With the beast
 - B. These have one mind
 - 1. And *they* shall give their power *unto the beast*
 - 2. And *they* strength unto the beast

Chapter 17:14-18

THE TEN HORNS

The following outline is based on the predicate adjectives used to describe the army that will return with the Lord at Armageddon [Rev. 19:11-14].

TEXT: *These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are **called, and chosen, and faithful**.¹⁵ And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.¹⁶ And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.¹⁷ For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.¹⁸ And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*

NOTE: The woman, first described as the “Mother of Harlots” [v.5] and now described as “that great city” [v.18], is that Jezebel “which calleth herself a prophetess” and teaches men to commit spiritual fornication and to eat things sacrificed unto idols [Rev. 2:20]. She is Rome, upon which the ten horns will turn at the close of the tribulation period. Their wrath will be fueled by three and a half years of financial control wrested from them by her. And they will seize as their opportunity the setting of the battle that will turn out to be Armageddon.

- I. *Regarding the ten horns [v.12]*
 - A. These shall make war with the Lamb [Armageddon, 19:19]
 - B. And the Lamb shall overcome them
 - 1. For he is Lord of lords
 - 2. And *he is* King of kings
 - a. And they [*the lords and kings* - 1:6]
 - b. *They* that are with him
 - 1.) Are called
 - 2.) And *are* chosen
 - 3.) And *are* faithful
- II. *And regarding the waters* he saith unto me
 - A. The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth
 - 1. Are peoples
 - 2. And *are* multitudes
 - 3. And *are* nations
 - 4. And *are* tongues
 - B. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast
 - 1. These shall hate the whore
 - 2. And *these* shall make her desolate
 - 3. And *these shall make her* naked
 - 4. And *these* shall eat her flesh
 - 5. And *these* burn her with fire
 - a. For God hath put in their hearts
 - 1.) To fulfil his will
 - 2.) And to agree
 - 3.) And *to* give their kingdom unto the beast
 - b. Until the words of God shall be fulfilled
- III. *And regarding the woman* which thou sawest
 - A. *She* is that great city
 - B. *She is that city* which reigneth over the kings of the earth

Chapter 18:1-3

BABYLON IS FALLEN

The following outline is based on the compound predicate nominatives that describe the progression of the great whore's fall in v. 2.

TEXT: *And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. ²And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become **the habitation** of devils, and **the hold** of every foul spirit, and **a cage** of every unclean and hateful bird. ³For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.*

NOTE: The first six vials come quickly, at the close of the tribulation. Their concentration on the destruction of the kingdom of the anti-christ is paralleled by their focus on the destruction of the church of the anti-christ: that great city known as the Mother of Harlots. Her description is given by one of the angels which had the seven vials [17:1]. It is a second angel, presumably also of the seven, that pronounces her fall [18:2]. John then observes for more angels prior to the white throne judgment: there is the angel who calls for separation from her by God's people [18:4]; there is the angel who casts the stone that shall crush her [18:21]; there is the angel who calls the fowls of the air to the supper of the great God at Armageddon [19:17]; and there is the angel who imprisons Satan during the millennial reign [20:1].

The three-fold description of Babylon's fall [v. 2] shows the fulfillment of Christ's prophesy regarding the mustard seed [Matt. 13:31-33], which was intended to be a great herb. Instead it becomes a tree in which "the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches." That tree, which at the first is merely a habitation, soon becomes a strong hold of false doctrine [Rev. 2:20]. And it is that same tree that will turn into a cage [Rev. 18:2]. The tares will be bundled and severed from among the just, that they might be cast into the furnace of fire [Matt. 13:49, Rev. 20:15].

- I. And after these things I saw
 - A. Another angel come down from heaven
 - 1. Having great power
 - 2. And the earth was lightened with his glory
 - B. And he cried mightily with a strong voice
 - 1. Saying
 - a. Babylon the great is fallen
 - b. *Babylon the great* is fallen
 - c. And *Babylon* is become
 - 1.) The habitation of devils
 - 2.) And the hold of every foul spirit
 - 3.) And a cage of every unclean *bird*
 - 4.) And *a cage for every* hateful bird
 - 2. For [*the reason why he proclaims her fall*]
 - a. All nations have drunk
 - 1.) Of the wine
 - 2.) *Of the wine* of the wrath of her fornication
 - b. And the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her
 - c. And the merchants of the earth are waxed rich
 - 1.) Through *her delicacies*
 - 2.) *Through* the abundance of her delicacies

Chapter 18:4-8

COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE

The following outline is based on the compound adverbial clauses, both beginning with *that*, in v. 4.

TEXT: *And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, **that** ye be not partakers of her sins, **and that** ye receive not of her plagues. ⁵For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. ⁶Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. ⁷How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. ⁸Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.*

NOTE: The voice [v. 4] is a solemn reminder of the deceptive power of the enemy. Even the saints of the church age are not immune [Rev. 2:20]. As the church is commanded not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers [II Cor. 6:14-17], so the call to separation comes for God's people midst the tribulation period: "Come out of her, my people." The reasons for this call are the same, (1) that ye be not partakers of her sins [Eph. 5:1-5] and (2) that ye receive not of her plagues [Eph. 5:6,7]. There are those of God's people who received the witness of the 144,000 during tribulation [Rev. 6:9-11], and there are those who separate themselves after the abomination of desolation [Rev. 13:7]. Now, God is giving a final warning for the fearful to have faith.

- I. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying
 - A. Come out of her
 - B. *Come out of her*, my people
 - 1. That ye be not partakers of her sins
 - 2. And that ye receive not of her plagues
 - a. For her sins have reached unto heaven
 - b. And God hath remembered her iniquities
- II. *And I heard another voice from heaven, saying*
 - A. Reward her even as she rewarded you
 - B. And double unto her double according to her works
 - 1. In the cup which she hath filled
 - a. Fill
 - b. *Fill* to her double
 - 2. How much she hath glorified herself
 - 3. And *how much she hath* lived deliciously
 - a. So much torment *give her*
 - b. And *so much* sorrow give her
 - 1.) For she saith in her heart
 - a.) I sit a queen
 - b.) And *I* am no widow
 - c.) And *I* shall see no sorrow
 - 2.) Therefore shall her plagues come in one day
 - a.) Death
 - b.) And mourning
 - c.) And famine
 - 3.) And she shall be utterly burned with fire
 - a.) For strong is the Lord God
 - b.) *Strong is the Lord God* who judgeth her

Chapter 18:9-14

THE MERCHANDISE OF BABYLON

The following outline is based on the compound prepositional phrases that list the merchandise in vv. 12 & 13.

TEXT: *And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, ¹⁰standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. ¹¹And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: ¹²the merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, ¹³and cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. ¹⁴And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.*

NOTE: The saddest of all her merchandise are the souls of men.

- I. *And I heard that voice from heaven, saying [v. 4]*
 - A. The kings of the earth
 - 1. Who have committed fornication *with her*
 - 2. And *who have* lived deliciously with her
 - B. *The kings of the earth* shall bewail her
 - 1. When they shall see the smoke
 - 2. *When they shall see the smoke* of her burning
 - C. And *the kings of the earth* shall lament for her
 - 1. Standing afar off for the fear of her torment
 - 2. Saying
 - a. Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city!
 - b. For in one hour is thy judgment come
 - D. And the merchants of the earth shall weep *over her*
 - E. And *the merchants of the earth* shall mourn over her
 - 1. For no man buyeth their merchandise
 - 2. *For no man buyeth their merchandise* any more
 - a. The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones and pearls
 - b. *The merchandise of* fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet
 - c. *The merchandise of* all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory
 - d. *The merchandise of* all manner vessels of most precious wood
 - e. *The merchandise of* vessels of brass, and iron, and marble
 - f. *The merchandise of* cinnamon, and odours, and ointments
 - g. *The merchandise of* frankincense, and wine, and oil
 - h. *The merchandise of* fine flour, and wheat
 - i. *The merchandise of* beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots
 - j. *The merchandise of* slaves and the souls of men
- II. *And I heard that voice from heaven, saying [v. 4]*
 - A. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee
 - B. And all things are departed from thee
 - 1. Which were dainty
 - 2. And *which were* goodly
 - C. And thou shalt find them no more at all

Chapter 18:15-19

ALAS, ALAS, THAT GREAT CITY

The following outline is based on the compound present participles in vv. 15 & 16 and again in v. 19.

TEXT: *The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, **weeping and wailing**,¹⁶ **and saying**, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!¹⁷ For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,¹⁸ and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!¹⁹ And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, **weeping and wailing, saying**, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.*

NOTE: That the shipmasters see her destruction not only shows how circumscribed sea trade had become from the trumpets [Rev. 8:8], but also indicates how quickly the vials come in succession at the end [Rev. 16:3], even to following the one hour in which she is desolated [Rev. 18:19].

- I. *I heard that voice from heaven, saying [v. 4]*
 - A. The merchants of these things
 - B. *The merchants* which were made rich by her
 - 1. *They* shall stand afar off
 - 2. *They shall stand afar off* for the fear of her torment
 - a. Weeping and wailing
 - b. And saying
 - 1.) Alas, alas, that great city
 - a.) *That city* that was clothed
 - (1.) In fine linen
 - (2.) And *in* purple *linen*
 - (3.) And *in* scarlet *linen*
 - b.) And *that city that* was decked
 - (1.) With gold
 - (2.) And *with* precious stones
 - (3.) And *with* pearls
 - 2.) For in one hour so great riches is come to nought
- II. *I heard that voice from heaven, saying [v. 4]*
 - A. And every shipmaster
 - B. And all the company in ships
 - C. And *the* sailors
 - D. And as many as trade by sea
 - 1. *They* stood afar off
 - 2. And *they* cried when they saw the smoke of her burning
 - a. Saying, What city is like unto this city
 - b. *Saying, What city is like unto this* great city
 - 3. And they cast dust on their heads
 - 4. And *they* cried
 - a. Weeping and wailing
 - b. Saying
 - 1.) Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich
 - a.) All that had ships in the sea
 - b.) By reason of her costliness
 - 2.) For in one hour is she made desolate

Chapter 18:20-24

A GREAT MILLSTONE

The following outline is based on the compound prepositional phrases modifying *blood* in v. 24.

TEXT: *Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.* ²¹*And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.* ²²*And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee;* ²³*and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.* ²⁴*And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.*

NOTE: These last words [v.24] return us to her introduction [Rev. 17:6].

- I. *I heard that voice from heaven, saying [v. 4]*
 - A. Rejoice over her
 - 1. Thou heaven
 - 2. And ye holy apostles
 - 3. And ye *holy* prophets
 - B. *Rejoice over her*
 - 1. For God hath avenged you
 - 2. *For God hath avenged you* on her
- II. And a mighty angel
 - A. *He* took up a stone like a great millstone
 - B. And *he* cast it into the sea
 - C. *He* cast it, saying
 - 1. Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down
 - 2. And *that great city Babylon* shall be found no more at all
 - D. And *he* cast it, saying [*to her*]
 - 1. The voice shall be heard no more at all in thee
 - a. *The voice* of harpers
 - b. And *the voice* of musicians
 - c. And *the voice* of pipers
 - d. And *the voice* of trumpeters
 - 2. And no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee
 - 3. And the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee
 - 4. And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee
 - 5. And the voice shall be heard no more at all in thee
 - a. *The voice* of the bridegroom
 - b. And *the voice* of the bride
 - 6. *Their voices shall be heard no more in thee* [vv. 22,23a]
 - a. For thy merchants were the great men of the earth
 - b. For by thy sorceries were all nations deceived
- III. And in her was found
 - A. The blood of prophets
 - B. And *the blood* of saints
 - C. And *the blood* of all that were slain upon the earth

Chapter 18:20-24

COMMENTARY

The prayers of the 5th seal have been fulfilled. The saints who cried, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” [Rev. 6:10], those saints are now told to “rejoice over her, for God hath avenged you on her” [Rev. 18:20]. However, that rejoicing is not just reserved for the tribulation saints of the 5th seal; no, it is given to “thou heaven and ye holy apostles and prophets” as well.

It is difficult to envision false worship as a perpetuation of that begun in rebellion by Cain. The many religions and philosophies of the ages divert our attention, yet there is such a continuity between them and Cain’s rebellion. Jude best describes it when he writes that they all turn the grace of God into lasciviousness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ [Jude 1:4].

And among all that has challenged the voice of the bridegroom and the bride, this great city, shown in her desolation, has been the personification of the mother of all spiritual harlotry.

The voice of the bridegroom and of the bride

Of all the voices that will be silenced in her streets, that there is still the presence of the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride is most remarkable. This is the close of the tribulation period, the end of great tribulation. The Church has been raptured out of this world in fulfillment of God’s promise [Rev. 3:10]. And with the Holy Spirit’s hindrance removed, the anti-christ has been revealed [II Thess. 2:7,8]. The seals have been broken [Rev. 6]. And these seven years are about to close, as described by John, through the Revelation.

Yet, midst all of Jacob’s trouble, there is the 144,000 souls sealed and sent forth as evangelists [Rev. 7:3]. And their witness bears fruit in the tribulation saints who are overcome by the beast [Rev. 13:7], as well as in the remnant nourished in the wilderness [Rev. 12:14]. And midst the tapestry of religion woven by Babylon the Great, there is still the echo of the bridegroom and bride, now forever silenced in her streets [Rev. 18:23].

By thy sorceries were all nations deceived

The power of Babylon the Great to deceive potentially reaches to the very elect, hence the warnings given to Israel [Matt. 24:5-27]. And her tares have so infiltrated the field that their deeds [Rev. 2:6] have become doctrines [Rev. 2:15], tolerated by and taught to some of God’s own servants [Rev. 2:20]. Her sorceries lead men to eat things sacrificed unto idols [Rev. 2:20], and the kings and the merchants and the great men of the earth partake of her fornication [Rev. 18:9,11, & 23].

The blood of prophets and of saints

When John first sees the woman sitting on the scarlet colored beast, he wondered at her “with great admiration” [Rev. 17:6]. She is drunken, drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; yet, she is arrayed in purple and scarlet, decked with gold and precious stones. How can this be?

The cost of her “delicacies” has been provided through the sale of her merchandise. It is the reward of her wickedness, a wickedness that enjoys her pleasure only for a season. She has made men slaves and sold their souls [Rev. 18:13], and she is rewarded by the beast on which she rides. But her ride comes to an end with the stone cast into the sea [Rev. 18:21]. And she will no longer massacre the saints of God nor martyr their champions. Amen, and amen.

Revelation 19:1-6 THE FOUR “ALLELUIAS”

The following outline is based on the four interjections of *Alleluia*.

TEXT: *And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. 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 thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.*

NOTE: The call to rejoice [Rev. 18:20] overflows heaven. The saints’ rejoicing causes the Lord Jesus to rejoice [as “the voice of many waters” (Rev. 1:15)] and the Father himself to rejoice [the “voice on mighty thunderings” (Rev. 4:5)].

- I. And after these things I heard a great voice
 - A. Of much people
 - B. In heaven
 - C. Saying
 - 1. Alleluia
 - 2. *Salvation be unto the Lord our God*
 - 3. *And glory be unto the Lord our God*
 - 4. *And honour be unto the Lord our God*
 - 5. *And power be unto the Lord our God*
 - a. For his judgments are
 - 1.) True
 - 2.) And righteous
 - b. For he hath judged the great whore
 - 1.) Which did corrupt the earth
 - 2.) *Which did corrupt the earth* with her fornication
 - c. And hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand
 - D. And again they said, Alleluia
 - E. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever
- II. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts
 - A. *They* fell down
 - B. And *they* worshipped God that sat on the throne
 - C. *They worshipped*, saying
 - 1. Amen
 - 2. Alleluia
- III. And a voice came out of the throne, saying
 - A. Praise our God, all ye his servants
 - B. And *praise our God* ye that fear him
 - 1. Both small
 - 2. And great
- IV. And I heard as it were the voice
 - A. *The voice* of a great multitude, *saying, Alleluia*
 - B. And as the voice of many waters,
 - C. And as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia
 - 1. For the Lord God *reigneth*
 - 2. For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth

Revelation 19:7-10
THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB

The following outline is based on the compound verbs for the subjective *let us* clause in v.7.

TEXT: *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*

NOTE: The rejoicing in heaven over the defeat of Babylon the Great is followed by the mention of an even greater occasion: the marriage supper of the Lamb [v. 7]. This is the marriage to which the virgins are called [Matt. 25; Rev. 19:9]. The wise virgins are the friends of the Bridegroom, as John the Baptist describes himself [John 3:29]. It is the bride, called his wife in 19:7, that has “made herself ready.” She is revealed after the Lord has made all things new [Rev. 21:2], where the city itself is called “as a bride adorned for her husband.” Hence, the implication of the words “making herself ready” is taken as the bride’s having taken occupancy of the city. The marriage supper of the Lamb may be the very first official function of the new,, eternal kingdom. But the invitation [Rev. 19:9] is specific to Israel as the Lamb prepares himself for the battle of Armageddon [Rev. 19:19]. The Lord’s appearance on the Mount of Olives [Zech. 14:4] and his subsequent entry into Jerusalem are the opportunity for the virgins to meet him [Matt. 25:6].

- I. *And a voice came out of the throne, saying* [taken from v. 5]
 - A. Let us be glad
 - B. And rejoice
 - C. And give honour to him
 - 1. For the marriage of the Lamb is come
 - 2. And his wife hath made herself ready
 - a. And to her was granted
 - 1.) That she should be arrayed in fine linen
 - 2.) *That she should be arrayed in fine linen*, clean and white
 - b. For the fine linen is the righteousness of saints
- II. And he saith unto me
 - A. Write
 - B. *Write*, Blessed are they which are called
 - 1. Unto the marriage supper
 - 2. *Unto the marriage supper* of the Lamb
- III. And he saith unto me
 - A. These are the *sayings of God*
 - B. *These are the* true sayings of God
- IV. And he said unto me [because] I fell at his feet to worship him
 - A. See thou do it not
 - 1. I am thy fellowservant
 - 2. And *I am* of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus
 - B. Worship God
 - 1. For the testimony of Jesus
 - 2. *The testimony of Jesus* is the spirit of prophecy

Revelation 19:7-10 COMMENTARY

The Judgment Seat of Christ

What has been thus far omitted from any specific mention in the Revelation is the event known as the Judgment Seat of Christ. Paul declares that “we (who are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ) shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ” and that “every one of us shall give account of himself to God” [Rom. 14:10, 12]. Paul’s conclusion, therefore, is this: “Let not your good be spoken evil of [Rom. 12:16]. To those who would speak evil of us, the Apostle Paul asks, “Why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at nought thy brother?” The truth is plain enough: a man’s servant standeth or falleth to his own master; and, Christ is our Master [Rom. 14:4].

A Pastor’s Report

A pastor is to be obeyed, as one who must give an account unto the Lord that is profitable for another. He is obeyed that the account he gives may be given with joy, as in Paul’s “ye are my crown of rejoicing” testimony in this life. He is to be obeyed; but he is not to “rule” as with a rod of iron. A pastor’s account, given in grief, is unprofitable for those over whom he has authority [Heb. 13:17]. However, any assumption that, by his report, an elder is going to inform God on that day of judgment of something which God himself is unaware is arrogance on the part of that pastor. One who has a responsibility of watching over the souls of men gives account unto God every day of his own service by prayer and meditation. In his report, he reveals his own labors among men.

A Personal Report

We shall all give an account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead [1 Peter 4:5]. And Paul reveals to us that fire will be the means by which the labor of our lives will be made manifest, for the day will declare it [1 Cor. 3:12-15]. Where is that “fire” of the judgment seat of Christ? It is mentioned early in the church’s appearance in heaven, immediately after the rapture of the church, being pictured by John’s falling at Jesus’ feet [Rev. 1:17].

When the eyes of our Creator and our Redeemer look upon us, eyes that appear as a flame of fire, we too shall fall before him. No answer will be possible for any lack of faith, fault or failure. No excuse, no eloquent explanation. Nothing will “work” to our favor except for the grace of God (for our salvation is by grace). We will know, and we will gladly render unto him the praise for whatever we have done that remains before his view as gold, silver or precious stones.

The words that summarize the judgment seat of Christ in the Revelation are these: “Fear not, I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death” [Rev. 1:17b,18]. Paul’s “Fear not” is wrapped up in the words, “If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire” [1 Cor. 3:15].

The Day of Deliverance

Blindness has happened to Israel in part until “the fullness of the Gentiles be come in” [Romans 11:25]. Their having been cast away for a season, which led to the crucifixion of Christ, has been the reconciling of the world through faith in the sacrifice Christ made of himself, for he testified to all that no man took is life [John 10:18]. This blindness of Israel as a nation will be lifted on the day “there shall come out of Sion the Deliverer” [Romans 11:26]. On that day he shall turn away ungodliness from Judah, and all Israel shall be saved. They shall be saved from the anti-Christ, saved from the armies of the east and saved from the effects of the wrath of God [Matt. 24:22].

Who is that “Fellow servant”?

Most of the Revelation is given John by angels [Rev. 1:1; 17:1; etc.]. And, it is an angel that speaks to John in this passage, identifying himself as a fellowservant and “of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus” [Rev. 19:10]. Paul and Peter and James and Jude all declare themselves the servant of Jesus Christ and of God the Father. Faithful angels are those angels who minister unto the Lord [Matt. 4:11]. They are faithful because they have the testimony of Jesus: they have kept their first estate. These angels will rejoice with us in that day [Rev. 12:12].

Revelation 19:11-16

KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS

The following outline is based on parallel structures such as the prepositional *on* in v. 16.

TEXT: *And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath **on** his vesture and **on** his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.*

NOTE: Jesus Christ has been introduced as the prince of the kings of the earth [Rev. 1:5], seen as the high priest [Rev. 1:3], revealed to be the Lion of the tribe of Juda [Rev. 5:5] and shown to be the Lamb as it had been slain [Rev. 5:6]. This man child, born of Israel [Rev. 12:5], is the Son of man who was seated upon a cloud [Rev. 14:14]. Now, he is seen seated upon a white horse [Rev. 19:11].

- I. And I saw heaven opened
- II. And behold
 - A. A white horse
 - B. And he that sat upon him
 - 1. *He* was called Faithful
 - 2. And *he* was called True
 - 3. And in righteousness he doth judge
 - 4. And in righteousness he doth make war
 - C. *He that sat upon the white horse*
 - 1. His eyes were as a flame of fire
 - 2. And on his head were many crowns
 - 3. And he had a name written
 - a. *A name* that no man knew
 - b. But he himself [*he knew that name*]
 - 4. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood
 - 5. And his name is called The Word of God
 - 6. And the armies which were in heaven
 - a. *They* followed him upon white horses
 - b. *They were* clothed in fine linen
 - 1.) *Linen* white
 - 2.) And *linen* clean
 - 7. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword
 - a. That *he* should smite the nations
 - b. That with it he should smite the nations
 - 8. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron
 - 9. And he treadeth the winepress
 - a. Of the fierceness of Almighty God
 - b. And of the wrath of Almighty God
 - 10. And he hath a name
 - a. KING OF KINGS
 - b. AND LORD OF LORDS
 - 1.) Written on his vesture
 - 2.) And written on his thigh

Revelation 19:17-19

THE SUPPER OF THE GREAT GOD

The following outline is based on the compound direct objects of the verb *eat* in v. 18.

TEXT: *And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye 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 on them, and **the flesh** of all men, both free and bond, both 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 on the horse, and against his army.*

NOTE: Much attention has been given to the marriage supper of the Lamb, and rightly so: it speaks of the union of the bridegroom and the bride, as well as speaking of the blessed presence of his friends. But there is another supper in the Revelation: the supper of the great God. This supper is one set for the vultures, as they are called to feast on the remains of Armageddon.

In the valley of Megiddo, the blood shall flow “even unto the horses’ bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs” [Rev. 14:20]. God will give the bodies of the enemy *unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured* [Ez. 39:4]. *It shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the noses of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it The valley of Hamongog. And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land* [Ez. 39:11,12].

And the passengers that pass through the land, when anyeeth a man’s bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamongog. And also the name of the city shall be Hamonah. Thus shall they cleanse the land [Ez. 39:15,16].

- I. And I saw an angel standing in the sun
 - A. And he cried with a loud voice
 - B. *And he cried*, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven
 - 1. Come
 - 2. And gather yourselves together
 - a. Unto the supper
 - b. *Unto the supper* of the great God
 - 3. *Gather yourselves together*
 - a. That ye may eat the flesh of kings
 - b. And *that ye may eat* the flesh of captains
 - c. And *that ye may eat* the flesh of mighty men
 - d. And *that ye may eat* the flesh of horses
 - e. And *that ye may eat* of them that sit on them
 - f. And *that ye may eat* the flesh of all men
 - 1.) Both free and bond
 - 2.) Both small and great
- II. And I saw *gathered together*
 - A. The beast
 - B. And the kings of the earth
 - C. And their armies
- III. *And I saw them* gathered together
 - A. To make war against him that sat on the horse
 - B. And *to make war* against his army

Revelation 19:20-21

ARMAGEDDON

The following outline is based on the parallel objects modified by an adjective clause in v. 20.

TEXT: *And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived **them that** had received the mark of the beast, and **them that** worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.*

NOTE: It is the multitude buried at Hamongog [Ez. 39:12] that partly motivates Gog and Magog to gather themselves together to battle the Lord after his thousand year reign. Their resentment and their desire for taking a spoil, which motivated their slain ancestors at Armageddon, explains why Christ rules with a rod of iron: not because of his fierceness, but because of their fierceness. And when Satan is loosed out of his prison [Rev. 20:7], he will find them sympathetic to his plans. From the four corners of the earth he will deceive them into thinking that they could defeat the Lord.

Seven months will be required for the burial of the bones left after the battle of Armageddon. The graves of the slain will be the largest monument to war on earth and a reminder to God's people of their deliverance by the Lord's direct intervention. The beast out of the sea, who is the anti-Christ, and the beast out of the earth, who is the false prophet, are taken in battle and cast alive into the lake of fire. The remnant of their armies is slain with the sword of Christ's mouth: the power of his words: Jesus speaks, and what he says comes to pass. That an angel comes down from heaven and lays hold on the Devil [Rev. 20:21] suggests he is not present at the battle's end. The remnant of the enemy is destroyed by the Lord's command. The Lord's engagement in this battle will be as it was for Jehoshaphat: Israel's cry for help will be met with their rescue by the Lord [2 Chron. 20:20-23].

- I. *And I saw gathered together* [from v. 19]
 - A. *The beast*
 - B. *And the kings of the earth*
 - C. *And their armies*
- II. *And I saw that*
 - A. The beast was taken
 - B. *And with him the false prophet was taken*
 - 1. That wrought miracles
 - 2. *That wrought miracles* before him [*the beast*]
 - a. With which [*miracles*] he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast
 - b. *And with which [miracles] he deceived* them that worshipped his image
 - C. These both were cast alive
 - 1. Into a lake of fire
 - 2. *Into a lake* burning with brimstone
- III. *And I saw that*
 - A. The remnant were slain
 - 1. Of him
 - 2. *Of him* that sat upon the horse
 - B. *They were slain*
 - 1. With the sword
 - 2. *With the sword* which proceeded out of his mouth
 - C. And all the fowls were filled with their flesh

Revelation 20:1-4

THE MILLENNIAL REIGN

The following outline is based on compound verbs for the subject *he* in verse 2.

TEXT: *And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

NOTE: The Lord Jesus was shouting “Amen” over the fact that he had the keys of death and of hell [Rev. 1:18], reflecting his victory at Calvary [Rom. 6:32] by having tasted death for every man [Heb. 2:9]. Because of the Lord’s faithfulness, even unto death, the Father has given the Son all judgment, along with those keys [John 5:22]. That key of hell is the key to the bottomless pit. Used by the fallen angel to loosen the locust from the pit [Rev. 9:1-3], it is now used to imprison Satan for a season.

- I. And I saw an angel
 - A. Come down from heaven
 - 1. Having the key of the bottomless pit
 - 2. And *having* a great chain in his hand
 - B. And he laid hold
 - 1. On the dragon
 - 2. *On* that old serpent
 - a. Which is the Devil
 - b. And *which* is Satan
 - C. And *he* bound him a thousand years
 - D. And *he* cast him into the bottomless pit
 - E. And *he* shut him up
 - F. And *he* set a seal upon him
 - 1. That he should deceive the nations no more
 - a. Till the years should be fulfilled
 - b. *Till the thousand years should be fulfilled*
 - 2. And after that he must be loosed a little season
- II. And I saw thrones
 - A. And they sat upon them
 - B. And judgment was given unto them *that sat upon the thrones*
- III. And I saw the souls of them
 - A. That were beheaded
 - 1. For the witness of Jesus
 - 2. And for the word of God
 - B. And which had not worshipped the beast
 - C. Neither *which had worshipped* his image
 - D. Neither *which* had received his mark
 - 1. Upon their foreheads
 - 2. Or in their hands
- IV. And *[regarding those souls which I saw]*
 - A. They lived *with Christ a thousand years*
 - B. And *they* reigned with Christ a thousand years

Revelation 20:1-4
COMMENTARY
The Millennial Reign

Christ will reign from the throne of his father David for a thousand years [Rev. 20:4]. The saints slain during the tribulation [“and I saw the souls of them”] will reign with him. There is also the “they” [v. 4] that sat upon thrones, exercising judgment during the thousand years. The “they” are a passing reference to the church of Christ, the body of believers among which we will have our portion through faith in Jesus Christ.

Isaiah gives clear teaching as to the nature of the millennial reign: “The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord” [Is. 65:25].

What office will be fulfilled by the church and by the tribulation saints? It may be that which was suggested in the promises given those who “overcame” [chapters 2 & 3]:

1. Ephesus is to eat of the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God [2:7] – the emphasis is on where their souls and spirits rest until the second coming of Jesus Christ, in Paradise.
2. Smyrna is given a crown of life and a guarantee not to be hurt by the second death [2:10-11] – the emphasis is on not fearing death at the hands of those who threatened them [2:10], with an outside suggestion that they will serve in some way at the White Throne Judgment, which regards the second death [20:14].
3. Pergamos is allowed to eat of the hidden manna and to have a new name written, on a white stone [2:17] – the emphasis is on the Word of God (as the hidden manna) and authority (the white stone as a badge), suggesting that they may serve as instructors or “scribes”.
4. Thyatira is given power over the nations, and they shall rule them with a rod of iron [2:26,27] – the emphasis is on a direct contact. These are “they” [Rev. 20:4] who rule as emissaries of Christ.
5. Sardis is clothed in white raiment, with a name not blotted out of the book of life, but confessed before the Father and his angels [3:5] – the emphasis is on direct service before the Father, possibly as portions of the Levi served the Tabernacle in the wilderness.
6. Philadelphia will see those of the synagogue of Satan worship before their feet [3:9]. These saints shall go no more out, and the name of God will be written upon them, as well as both the name of the city of God and the new name of our Lord Jesus [3:12] – the emphasis is on administrative duties that may reach into the new earth era [21:1].
7. Laodicea is to sit with Christ in his throne, at his right hand [3:21] – the emphasis is likened to “the souls of them” slain during the tribulation [Rev. 20:4] in this way: they shall reign with Christ. The souls slain during the tribulation, who had not worshipped the beast and who had not received his mark shall reign from Jerusalem with Christ a thousand years [20:4].

Satan's "little season"

Isaiah tells us what Satan's reception will be like in the pit at the start of those thousand years: "Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee" [Is. 14:9-11]. "They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners [Is. 14: 16,17]?"

Yet, Satan shall be loosed for a season. He will deceive the nations of the earth into believing they can revolt against Christ one last time [Rev. 20:8].

Revelation 20:5-8

THE BATTLE OF GOG AND MAGOG

The following outline is based on the predicate adjectives used in v. 6.

TEXT: *But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.*

NOTE: The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished because this is the time of the first resurrection: the resurrection of those to whom God has promised reward [Rev. 1:6; 20:6]. They are blessed, having not walked in the counsel of the ungodly [Ps. 1:1]. On them, the second death hath no power [Rev. 20:6].

Jesus revealed that the resurrection (which some think of as a general resurrection) would be of two groups: they that have done good unto the resurrection of life and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation [John 5:29]. The gospel of John tells us that the only “good” man can do is to believe God concerning Jesus Christ. This is God’s work, and God’s work is the only truly good work [John 6:29]. The Revelation shows us that these two groups will actually come in separate stages, with some one thousand years separating the majority of the dead raised: the resurrection of life being the first stage or the resurrection of those that have done “good” [Rev. 20:5]; and the resurrection of damnation being the second stage or the resurrection of those who have done evil [Rev. 20:6].

Regarding the resurrection of life, Christ is the first fruits of them that slept [Cor. 15:20], being the firstborn from the dead [Col. 1:18]. He is the first fruits that he might have the preeminence in all things, just as he is termed the firstborn of every creature [Col. 1:15]. Being the first born of every creature does not mean that Christ was created first, for he has always been [John 1:1]. It does mean that Christ, as the Son of God, is the only begotten of the Father. He is the eldest son, so to speak. He let his life be taken by the death angel in our place, thus fulfilling the typology of the lamb slain at the very first Passover in Egypt. God gave his “firstborn Son” that we might be saved by his blood.

- I. *They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years* [v. 4]
 - A. But the rest of the dead
 - 1. *They lived not again*
 - 2. *They lived not again* until the thousand years were finished
 - B. This is the first resurrection.
 - 1. Blessed is he that hath part in the first resurrection
 - 2. And *holy is he that hath a part in the first resurrection*
 - a. On such the second death hath no power
 - b. But they shall be priests of God
 - c. And *they shall be priests* of Christ
 - d. And *they* shall reign with him a thousand years.
- II. And when the thousand years are expired
 - A. Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,
 - B. And *he* shall go out to deceive the nations
 - 1. Which are in the four quarters of the earth
 - 2. *Which are* Gog
 - 3. And *which are* Magog
 - C. And *he shall go out* to gather them together to battle
 - 1. The number of whom is as the sand of the sea
 - 2. *The number of* Gog and Magog

Revelation 20:9-10

THE FATHER'S DEFENSE

The following outline is based on the compound verbs for the subject *fire* in v. 9.

TEXT: *And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*

NOTE: There will be a second “Armageddon.” It comes at the end of the thousand year reign, and it is called the battle of Gog and Magog. At Armageddon [Rev. 19], Jesus returned to the earth as KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. His appearance as the Deliverer [Rom. 11:26] completed the grafting in again of the true vine [Rom. 11:23]. The armies of the earth had gathered themselves to battle against Israel [Rev. 19:19], and the Lord came forth from heavenly Zion (where he had been preparing a place for his disciples) to deliver his people [Zech. 14:3; John 14:2]. The devastation is so great that the blood flow measured to his horse’s bridle [Rev. 14:20]. Jesus then went to the Mount of Olives, which cleft, letting living waters go forth from Jerusalem [Zech. 14:8]. He sits on the throne of his father David and rules as KING over all the earth.

At the close of this thousand year reign, Satan is loosed for a season. The devil goes forth to deceive the remnants of Gog and Magog, who are now the ones scattered to the four corners of the earth. They will encompass the camp of the saints round about Jerusalem and the Beloved City itself. Jesus will stay on the throne; he does not go forth to battle. God his Father will fight for him. Without an army, without a warning, GOD Almighty will send fire from heaven and devour his enemies [Rev. 20:9].

The scene may unfold like that of Elijah’s summons by the wicked king Ahaziah [2 Kings 1:9-15]. Recall the disregard for God or the servant of God shown by the first two captains of fifty. The first said to the prophet: “Thou man of God, the king hath said, ‘Come down’.” The second commanded the prophet: “Come down quickly.” Elijah’s response to both was this: “If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven and consume thee and thy fifty.” And the fire fell! GOD will do no less for his Son, then for his prophet.

- I. *The final uprising: Gog and Magog*
 - A. And they went up on the breadth of the earth
 - B. And *they* compassed the camp of the saints about
 - C. And *they* compassed the beloved city
- II. *The Father’s intervention*
 - A. And fire came down from God out of heaven
 - B. And *fire* devoured them
 - C. And the devil that deceived them was cast
 - 1. Into the lake of fire
 - 2. *Into the lake of fire* and brimstone
 - a. Where the beast
 - b. And *where* the false prophet are
- III. And *the devil* shall be tormented
 - A. Day and night
 - B. For ever and ever

NOTE: The lake of fire and brimstone, into which the devil will be cast, is eternal: the Bible declares that the devil’s torment will be day and night, for ever and ever [Rev. 20:10]. He will be placed there after this battle and will never be loose again. This is in keeping with the first principles of the doctrine of Christ: judgment is eternal [Heb. 6:2].

Revelation 20:11-15

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE: FINAL JUDGMENT

The following outline is based on such compounds as the adjectives modifying *the dead* in v. 12.

TEXT: *And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire,*

NOTE: After a thousand years of peace, men will clamor again for war. God will allow them to amass themselves against the camp of the saints and the beloved city of Jerusalem [Rev. 20:9]. Apparently, as their movement of rebellion develops to its final stages, God will draw his saints ahead of them, into the area of Judea, where they will be “compassed about.” What they will witness could be termed the judgment of the nations, for the nations of Gog and Magog will enter into everlasting punishment, being destroyed by fire [Mt 25:32-46], and the saints will see a new heaven and a new earth, being delivered by GOD the Father.

I. *The White Throne Judgment*

- A. And I saw a great white throne
- B. And *I saw* him that sat on it
 - 1. From whose face the earth *fled away*
 - 2. And *from whose face* the heaven fled away [Rev. 6:14]
 - 3. And there was found no place for them [the “them” of Rev. 6:15]
 - a. *For the kings of the earth*
 - b. *For the great men*
 - c. *For the rich men*
 - d. *For the chief captains*
 - e. *And for the mighty men*
 - f. *And for every bondman*
 - g. *And for every free man*
- C. And I saw the dead
 - 1. *Those who were* small
 - 2. And *those who were* great
- D. *I saw the dead* stand before God
 - 1. And the books were opened
 - 2. And another book was opened, which is the book of life
- E. And the dead were judged
 - 1. Out of those things which were written in the books
 - 2. *Out of those things which were written*, according to their works

II. *And before the White Throne*

- A. The sea gave up the dead which were in it
- B. And death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them
 - 1. And they were judged, every man
 - 2. *They were judged* according to their works
- C. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire
 - 1. This is the second death.
 - 2. *This is the judgment* [Heb. 9:27]

III. *And at the White Throne*

- A. Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast
- B. *Whosoever was not found written in the book of life* was cast into the lake of fire

Revelation 20:11-15

COMMENTARY

The Great White Throne

Following the Battle of Gog and Magog, Satan will be cast into the lake of fire for ever and ever, never to trouble God or angel or man again. And following that battle, the Great White Throne will appear. On that throne sits Jesus Christ the Lord, the one to whom the Father has given all judgment [John 5:22].

The saints of the Millennial Reign have already been assembled in a camp about the earthly Jerusalem [Rev. 20:9]. Their attention has no doubt been focused on the fire God the Father sent down from heaven. Now, they, too, see the White Throne appear. Heaven unrolls itself as a scroll above them, and every mountain and island are moved out of their place across the globe [Rev. 6:14]. They see the Throne, and they see their Redeemer, and they have no fear: for, the second death has no power over them [Rev. 20:6].

The BOOKS

The saved are not appearing before the White Throne for judgment, they have already been judged. The saints of the Church Age have joined the Lord, serving by his side since the rapture of the Church [1 Thess. 4:17]. The saints of the Tribulation period have reigned with the Lord since his return to Jerusalem at Armageddon [Rev. 6:9,10; 20:6]. The saints of the millennial reign are the sheep nations who have done “good” [Matt. 25:33]. They are the righteous in that they have believed in God (that is, in Jesus Christ, their KING of KINGS and LORD of LORDS) [Matt. 25:46; Rom. 4:5]. Jesus has already tasted their death for them [Heb. 2:9]. The works of the Church Age were tried at the Judgment Seat of Christ [2 Cor. 5:10]. The works of the tribulation saints were tried and made event by their rejection of the Beast [Rev. 13:15]. The works of the millennial saints were tried in the temptation of Satan to rebel against Christ. Instead, they look to Jesus in faith as Gog and Magog encamp around them [Rev. 20:9]. Each of these groups have their names written in heaven through faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ, a fact over which God’s children are to rejoice even in this life [Gal. 3:26; Luke 10:20].

Jesus told his disciples not to rejoice over circumstances (circumstances change), but to rejoice “because your names are written in heaven” [Luke 10:20]. By the Lord’s own instruction we know that men can know their names are written in heaven. How does one know that his name is written in the Lamb’s Book of Life? The same way the Apostle Paul knew that the names of his co-laborers in the gospel were written in heaven [Phil. 4:3]: “Whosoever believeth in Jesus should not perish, but have everlasting life” [John 3:16]. If we confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in our heart that God raised him from the dead, we shall be saved [Rom. 10:9].

There were no “books” opened at the Judgment Seat of Christ, for we who believe in Jesus do not challenge God’s Word. But there are “books” for the wicked who will cry out in the day of their judgment: “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name done many wonderful works?” [Matt.

7:22]. And on that day, the day of the White Throne Judgment, the Lord will declare: “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

The dead shall be judged out of the books, according to their works. There is no deliverance in this judgment: it is the second death. All who stand here for judgment will be thrown into the lake of fire [Rev. 21:8]. One’s works may determine the intensity of one’s punishment, seeing that it shall be better for the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon than for Chorazin and Bethsaida at the judgment [Matt. 11:21,22]. Although there will be degrees of punishment, there will never be a reprieve from the torment the wicked are condemned to endure [Matt. 9:43,44]. There is no “purging” period; there is not consumption point: judgment is eternal [Heb. 6:2]. God is able to destroy both soul and body in hell [Matt. 10:28]; but, he has declared this punish as eternal.

The dead who have died without faith in the Lord will be judged out of the “books,” according to their works. The “books” will demonstrate that they have not done God service by putting the disciples of Jesus Christ out of the synagogues or by taking their lives [John 16:2]. They did not do God service by prophesying in his name things contrary to his written Word or by attributing their “wonderful works” to his presence and power [Matt. 7:22]. The dead are there to face their eternal judgment.

No punishment in Hell will be pleasant. Hell is only the holding area for departure into the lake of fire. In Hell there are torments [Luke 16:23]. Hell is a place where the worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched [Mark 9:44]. The least punishment to be endured in hell or the lake of fire is not worth rebellion against God. Men must have repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ [Acts 20:21]. No man knows the day of his death: behold, today is the day of salvation. “Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near” [Isaiah 55:6]. There is no “second chance” after this life, and to wait until one stands before God to “find out” is to have waited too late.

The Book of Life

How does one’s name get into the book of life? Why is it blotted out? Does this mean I could lose my salvation? These questions stir the heart to fear, and they should. But faith in Jesus Christ casts out fear [1 John 4:18].

Malachi reveals to us that God has a book of remembrance written before him “for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name” [Mal. 3:16]. Paul demonstrates that we can know that others are written in that book of life by their faith [Phil. 4:3; 1 Thess. 1:4]. Jesus said that his disciples not only had their names written in heaven, but that they were to rejoice that it was so [Luke 10:20].

Most references to the book of life, also called the Lamb’s book of life [Rev. 21:27], are found in the Revelation itself because this epistle deals with end times and final judgment. Moses mentioned the book. He interceded for Israel with such passion that he was willing to have his own name blotted out. From this instance, we gain a picture through typology: a picture of how much Jesus loved us. We also learn that God blots out the names of those that have sinned against him [Ex. 32:32,34].

Before, of old, God ordained such men (those who have sinned against him) [Ex. 32:32,34] to this condemnation: for they turn the grace of God into lasciviousness and they deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ [Jude 1:4]. Remember that “God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil” [John 3:17-19].

However, the grace of God (the Spirit of Christ) that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world [Titus 2:11,12]. There is none righteous [Rm. 3:10]. All have sinned. All have come short of the glory of God, revealed to men in Jesus Christ [Rom. 3:23]. We all inherited death from Adam and his sinful nature [1 Cor. 15:22], which we all exercise [Rom. 7:7-24]. Yet, we can all know the deliverance that comes through Jesus Christ: he came into the world to save sinners [1 Tim. 1:15].

The Apostle Paul shares the same burden for his brethren as that of Moses: “For I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh” [Rom. 9:3]. Though Israel was blinded, his desire is that the Gentile Church would, by any means, provoke to emulation them which are his flesh, that God might save some of them [Rom. 11:14]. From Romans 11, we understand that those “lost” can be “saved,” by grace through faith [Eph. 2:8].

Regarding his enemies, David pleads, “Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous” [Psalm 69:28]. Although we may all feel that way at times, it is when God feels that way that men must take concern [Ex. 32:33]. Those who deny the Lord that bought them [2 Peter 2:1] because they will not believe that Jesus died for their sins when he died for the sins of the whole world [1 John 2:2] will have their names “blotted out” of the book of life as they pass from this life to the next [John 9:4]. Pray that the Lord of the harvest will send forth more laborers into the harvest [Matt. 9:38].

From Psalm 69:28, we can say that the book of life contains both the names of the righteous and the names of the unrighteous, which have been blotted out of the book. We know that the life of men, which was the light of men [John 1:4], lights every man that comes into the world [John 1:9]. We also know that this book of life has been kept “from the foundation of the world” [Rev. 17:8]: it began with Adam. We have life, as a soul, because of Christ [John 1:3]. For us to have eternal “life,” rather than eternal death or condemnation, we must obtain this life from Jesus Christ: he that believeth on the Son is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already [John 3:18]. Men must repent of their sin and place their faith in Jesus Christ alone [Acts 4:12].

Blotted Out

Those of Israel who turned their heart from the Lord who brought them out of Egypt to serve the gods of the nations, they would find their names blotted out from under heaven [De. 29:20]. Their actions demonstrated their unbelief. Their

heart boasted that they would have peace, though they walked in the imagination of their own hearts [De. 29:19]. Man cannot bless himself in his sin and escape the warning of God's Word thereby. Israel as a nation fell because of unbelief [Rom. 11:20]; yet, God would save whosoever would believe on His Son [John 3:16]. Unbelief is not unchangeable [Rom. 11:23]; belief is unchangeable [Phil. 1:6].

Man's natural state is unbelief (he is lost, without God and without hope); however, man can come to saving faith in the grace of God: thus the Spirit calls men to repentance and faith [2 Thess. 2:13]. When a man believes on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, he is termed an "over comer" [1 John 5:5]. As the Revelation promises to the church at Sardis, so we have this promise today: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels" [Rev. 3:5].

Those who worship the beast will have their names blotted out of the book of life [Rev. 13:8]. There is a warning concerning the words of this prophecy we know as the Revelation: "If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" [Rev. 22:19]. What is the focus of this book? It is the revelation of Jesus Christ. To change that is to reveal that you have no hope.

Revelation 21:1-4

FORMER THINGS, PASSED AWAY

The following outline is based on the subjects introduced by the expletive *there* in v. 4.

TEXT: *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more **death**, neither **sorrow**, nor **crying**, neither shall there be any more **pain**: for the former things are passed away.*

NOTE: God created the heaven and the earth. He finished them “in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens” [Gen. 2:4]. The heaven became “heavens” as the Lord God divided the waters from the waters by the firmament and placed lights in the firmament for signs and seasons and days and years, and to divide the day from the night.

- I. And I saw a new heaven
- II. And *I saw* a new earth
 - A. For the first heaven *was passed away*
 - B. And the first earth (*they*) were passed away
 - C. And there was no more sea
- III. And I John saw the *city*
 - A. *The holy city*
 - B. *The new Jerusalem*
 - 1. Coming down from God
 - 2. *Coming down* out of heaven
 - 3. Prepared as a bride
 - a. *As a bride is adorned*
 - b. *As a bride is adorned* for her husband
- IV. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying
 - A. Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men
 - B. And he will dwell with them
 - C. And they shall be his people
- V. *And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying*
 - A. And God himself shall be with them
 - B. And *God himself shall* be their God
 - C. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes
- VI. *And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying*
 - A. And there shall be
 - 1. No more death
 - a. *For the things are passed away*
 - b. *For the former things are passed away*
 - 2. Neither sorrow
 - a. *For the things are passed away*
 - b. *For the former things are passed away*
 - 3. Nor crying
 - a. *For the things are passed away*
 - b. *For the former things are passed away*
 - B. Neither shall there be any more pain
 - 1. *For the things are passed away*
 - 2. *For the former things are passed away*

Revelation 21:1-4 COMMENTARY

A New Heaven and a New Earth

The Apostle Paul testifies as “knowing a man caught up to the third heaven” [2 Cor. 12:2]. In the new creation, God’s presence will be with man. His throne will be in the New Jerusalem. Night will be a thing of the past. The stars, the sun and the moon, having been altered during the tribulation and then rolled away as a scroll at the close of the millennial reign, will give way to a new heaven. There will be no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in that new city [Rev. 21:23], though “from one new moon to another and from one Sabbath to another shall all flesh come to worship before the Lord” in that new earth [Is. 66:23]. This earth will be changed, for the first earth will pass away; and there shall be no more sea.

God showed us the stages in which he created the world we now inhabit when he gave us Genesis: how that the earth started void and without form, darkness being upon the face of the deep. Then the Spirit of God moved on the face of the deep; and, as God spoke, what he said was brought to pass until God himself declared that everything he had made was “very good” [Gen. 1:31]. That world, which knew no rainfall, was destroyed by water [Gen. 6:7; 2 Peter 3:6]. This present world, which knows rain and flood, is reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men [2 Peter 3:7]: the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up [2 Peter 3:10; Rev. 20:9; Rev. 6:14].

Consider the following sequence of events...

For a thousand years the saints of all ages, including the tribulation saints, have ruled and reigned with Christ [Rev. 20:4]. At the close of that reign, as Satan deceives Gog and Magog one last time, the saints are gathered together, “camping” in Judea [Rev. 20:9]. They see the armies compass them about, but have no fear in their glorified state. From their vantage point, they watch as the Father destroys the armies of Gog and Magog. They watch as the earth changes beneath them: every mountain and every island is moved from its place [Rev. 6:14]. They hear the noise of the heavens as it rolls together like a scroll. They watch the reaction of the sheep nations who have refused to rebel. They see the White Throne appear, as the wicked dead are called forth in the resurrection of damnation [John 5:29].

The earth will give up the bodied of the dead from their graves. The sea will give up the bodies which were in it. Dust clouds from cremation will gather to reform their shape. Death will give up the dead from the battlefield. Hell will deliver the souls and spirits of men. They shall be gathered before the Lord Jesus Christ, where every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Those that pierced him will be called to stand before him, and the wicked shall be judged from the books, according to their works.

As the judgment ends and the angels cast the last of the wicked into the furnace of fire, where there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth [Matt. 13:41,42], a new heaven unfolds and a new earth appears. Then, the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, will descend from heaven. God the Father himself will dwell

with men. He will wipe away their tears. There will be no more death; there will be no more pain. Oh, what glory!

His “tabernacle” with men will be so intimate that he declares by Isaiah the prophet: “Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear” [Isaiah 65:24]. The sheep nations from the millennial reign will populate the new earth. God will put his law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts, and they shall be his people [Jer. 31:33,34].

Revelation 21:5-8

WATER OF LIFE; FIRE OF DEATH

The following outline is based on the compounded subjects found in v. 8.

TEXT: *And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and 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 overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the **fearful**, and **unbelieving**, and the **abominable**, and **murderers**, and **whoremongers**, and **sorcerers**, and **idolaters**, and all **liars**, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*

NOTE: The Lord Jesus Christ himself assures John that the words of the Revelation are “true and faithful” [v. 5]. As fantastic as they are to believe, they are true. They are not only true, they are faithful to the promises of God since the beginning. The city John is shown descending from God out of heaven is that same city God promised Abraham [Heb. 11:10]; and, God’s judgment upon Satan is the fulfillment of what the Lord promised Adam and Eve in the garden.

I. *From the White Throne*

- A. And he that sat upon the throne said
 - 1. Behold
 - 2. I make all things new
- B. And he said unto me
 - 1. Write
 - 2. *Write these words [the book of the Revelation]*
 - a. For these words are true
 - b. And *these words are faithful*
- C. And he said unto me
 - 1. It is done
 - 2. I am Alpha and Omega
 - 3. *I am the beginning and the end*

II. *Regarding man*

- A. *Those who come for salvation*
 - 1. Unto him that is athirst [*during the Church Age?* (John 4:14)]
 - a. I will give of the fountain of the water of life
 - b. *I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely*
 - 2. He that overcometh [*during the Tribulation period?* (Matt. 24:25-27)]
 - a. *He shall inherit all things*
 - b. And I will be his God
 - c. And he shall be my son
- B. *Those who do not come for salvation*
 - 1. But the fearful
 - 2. And *the* unbelieving
 - 3. And the abominable
 - 4. And murderers
 - 5. And whoremongers
 - 6. And sorcerers
 - 7. And idolaters
 - 8. And all liars
 - a. *They shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone*
 - b. *They shall have their part in the lake which is the second death*

Revelation 21:5-8 COMMENTARY

A Future Rejoicing for the Righteous

There have been great moments of jubilation, as when the Lamb took the book from the hand of the Father midst the voice of ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, crying, “Worthy is the Lamb.” [Rev. 5]. And there have been times of great sorrow, as the judgment of the wicked dead [Rev. 20]. But the time of weeping will pass, as God himself shall be with his people. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes, for he will change what has caused those tears when he makes all things new.

Since the church saints will be in their glorified bodies from the time of the rapture, the pain that shall pass away is not for their benefit. Because of this, all four items primarily apply to the sheep of the millennial reign. The former things will have passed away: death, sorrow, tears and pain. These will be a thing of the past. During the millennial reign, “there shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not fulfilled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old” [Is. 65:20]. But in the eternal kingdom there is no death, no sorrow, no tears, and no pain [Rev. 21:4].

A Final Warning for the Wicked

Eight categories are given, listing those who will not defile the New Jerusalem. They will not defile the city because they will spend eternity in the lake of fire. Their future is the second death.

Those who shall have their part in the lake of fire are as follows:

- **The fearful**—this is not a reverential fear as Jesus feared, and was heard in that he prayed [Heb. 5:7]; but this is a restraining fear, such as the fear of the blind man’s parents [John 9:22]: a fear that gives heed to fables and commandments of men [Titus 1:14], resulting in the testimony like that of the man with one talent [Matt. 25:24,25].
- **The unbelieving**—Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness [Rom. 4:3]; but the defiled refuse the gospel and the grace of God extended therein [Rom. 10:8-13].
- **The abominable**—Peter reveals that the saved no longer walk in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings and abominable idolatries [I Peter 4:3,4]; but the unsaved make themselves abominable with sacrifices to idols [II Chron. 15:8].
- **Murderers**—Paul reminds Timothy that the law was made for the lawless and disobedient, among whom are the murderers of fathers and the murderers of mothers and manslayers [I Tim. 1:9]; yea, among the seven things that are an abomination to the Lord, the Bible lists hands that shed innocent blood [Prov. 6:17].
- **Whoremongers**—marriage is honorable in all things, and the bed is undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge [Heb. 13:4]. And we know that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God [Eph. 5:5].
- **Sorcerers**—the Lord will be a swift witness against the sorcerers [Mal. 3:5], who, like Simon, use their sorcery to give off that they are some great one [Acts 8:9].

- **Idolaters**—the command is not to covet thy neighbor's house, nor thy neighbor's wife, nor anything that is thy neighbor's [Ex. 20:17]. The reason? A covetous man is an idolater [Eph. 5:5].
- **All liars**—Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son [I John 2:22].

Revelation 21:9-14

THE HOLY JERUSALEM

The following outline is based on the present participles used to modify Jerusalem in v. 10.

TEXT: *And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, **descending** out of heaven from God, **having** the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; and had a wall great and high, and had 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 three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.*

NOTE: God joins both the Old Testament and the New Testament in the names used in his city.

- I. And there, one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues
 - A. He came unto me
 - B. And *he* talked with me, saying
 - 1. Come hither
 - 2. I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife
 - C. And he carried me away
 - 1. In the spirit
 - 2. To a great *mountain*
 - 3. And *to a* high mountain
 - D. And *he* shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem
 - 1. Descending out of heaven
 - 2. *Descending* from God
 - 3. Having the glory of God
- II. And *about that city*
 - A. Her light was like unto a stone most precious
 - B. *Her light* was even like a jasper stone
 - 1. Clear
 - 2. *Clear* as crystal
 - C. And *the city* had a wall great and high
 - D. And *the city* had twelve gates
 - 1. And at the gates twelve angels
 - 2. And *at the gates* names written thereon
 - a. Which are the names of the twelve tribes
 - b. *Which are the names of the twelve tribes* of the children of Israel
 - E. *And the city* had twelve gates
 - 1. On the east three gates
 - 2. On the north three gates
 - 3. On the south three gates
 - 4. And on the west three gates
 - F. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations
 - 1. And in them the names of the twelve apostles
 - 2. *The names of the twelve apostles* of the Lamb

Revelation 21:15-21

THE MEASURE OF THAT CITY

The following outline is based on the elliptical expressions found in verses 19 and 20.

TEXT: *And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; **the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.** And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.*

- I. And he that talked with me had a golden reed
 - A. To measure the city
 - 1. And the city lieth foursquare
 - 2. And the length is as large as the breadth
 - B. And *to measure* the gates thereof
 - C. And *to measure* the wall thereof
- II. And he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs
 - A. The length *of it*
 - B. And the breadth *of it*
 - C. And the height of it are equal
- III. And he measured the wall thereof
 - A. An hundred and forty and four cubits
 - 1. According to the measure of a man
 - 2. That is, *according to the measure* of the angel
 - B. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper
 - 1. And the city was pure gold
 - 2. Like unto clear glass
 - C. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished
 - 1. With *precious stones*
 - 2. *With* all manner of precious stones
 - a. The first foundation was *garnished with* jasper
 - b. The second *foundation was garnished with* sapphire
 - c. The third *foundation was garnished with* a chalcedony
 - d. The fourth *foundation was garnished with* an emerald;
 - e. The fifth *foundation was garnished with* sardonyx
 - f. The sixth *foundation was garnished with* sardius
 - g. The seventh *foundation was garnished with* chrysolite
 - h. The eighth *foundation was garnished with* beryl
 - i. The ninth *foundation was garnished with* a topaz
 - j. The tenth *foundation was garnished with* a chrysoprasus
 - k. The eleventh *foundation was garnished with* a jacinth
 - l. The twelfth *foundation was garnished with* an amethyst
 - D. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl
 - E. And the street of the city
 - 1. *It* was pure gold
 - 2. *It* was as it were transparent glass

Revelation 21:22-27

THE CITY'S TEMPLE

The following outline is based on the compound verbs of the clause introduced by *whatsoever* in v. 21.

TEXT: *And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

NOTE: "The nations of them which are saved" shall walk in the light of the New Jerusalem [v. 24]. This is a reference to the judgment of the nations: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations" [Matt. 25:31,32]. Christ has ascended his White Throne, and the holy angels have come with him to cast the wicked into the furnace of fire. The nations have separated themselves by their action: Gog and Magog, as the goat nations, have revolted [Rev. 20:8]. The sheep nations have demonstrated this basic characteristic: they have been a friend to God's people [Matt. 25:40]. They are the ones who shall enter into the kingdom prepared for them "from the foundation of the world" [Matt. 25:34], along with the rest of the redeemed.

- I. And I saw
 - A. No temple therein
 - 1. For the Lord God Almighty
 - 2. And the Lamb are the temple of it.
 - B. And the city had
 - 1. No need of the sun *to shine in it*
 - 2. Neither of the moon to shine in it
 - a. For the glory of God did lighten it
 - b. And the Lamb is the light thereof
 - 1.) And the nations shall *walk in the light of it*
 - 2.) *The nations* of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it
 - C. And the kings of the earth do bring into it
 - 1. Their glory
 - 2. And *their* honour
 - D. And the gates of it shall not be shut
 - 1. *Not* at all by day
 - 2. (*Nor by night*) for there shall be no night there
 - E. And they shall bring into it
 - 1. The glory *of the nations*
 - 2. And honour of the nations
- II. And *regarding that city*
 - A. There shall in no wise enter into it
 - 1. Any thing that defileth
 - 2. Neither whatsoever worketh abomination
 - 3. Or maketh a lie
 - B. But they *shall enter into it*
 - 1. Which are written
 - 2. *Which are written* in the Lamb's book of life

Revelation 21:9-27

COMMENTARY

Abraham searched for a city

Among the amazing declarations of the Bible is this: that the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached, before such was ever accomplished, the gospel unto Abraham, saying: "In thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" [Gal. 3:8]. From the New Testament we learn that Abraham left the Ur of the Chaldees seeking a city which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God [Heb. 11:10].

That city is now described as "the bride, the Lamb's wife" [Rev. 21:9]. It is not that God is marrying walls and gates and streets, even if they are of gold: God is marrying those who will be adorned by the city, as a bride is adorned for her husband [Rev. 21:2]. This is the Father's house, in which there are many mansions; this is where Jesus himself has gone to prepare for us a place [John 14:2,3]. This "prepared place" makes its debut at the start of the eternal kingdom.

Twelve foundations support the city of twelve thousand furlongs, foursquare [approximately 1500 miles]. The city is as tall as it is wide, and as wide as it is long: a perfect cube. Each of the twelve foundations bear a name, given after the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ: Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Lebbaeus, Simon the Canaanite and Paul, who is in type Israel restored after their rejection of Jesus. [Judas is a type of Israel in blindness, rejecting the Lord at his first appearing.]

The twelve gates, each of which is a single, irregular pearl, bear the names of the twelve sons of Jacob: on the east side are the names of Judah, Issachar and Zebulun; on the south side the names of Reuben, Simeon and Gad; on the west side the names of Ephraim, Manassah and Benjamin; and on the north side the names of Dan, Asher and Naphtali, if the pattern follows the Old Testament encampment [Num. 2]. Levi would then "rest in the midst" [Num. 2:17].

The foundations are garnished with precious stones, reflecting the colors of the rainbow through the transparency of the streets of pure gold and the walls of clear jasper. There will be no need for the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in that city; for, the glory of God that lightens it will outshine the sun and the moon: the Lamb is the light of that city.

The kings of the new earth will bring their own glory and honor into it as gifts to the Lord, and they will bring the glory and honor of their nations: the best that they have will be the Lord's. They will present it down the main street thereof, in the midst of which flows the river of life. That main street may extend out of the center of the city in all four directions of the compass, suggesting ascension as one makes his approach to the Lord. On each side of the river of life is the tree of life. On each side of the river of life will be wide groves of trees and large boulevards of one-way traffic on either side of the groves, along the river of life. As they exit the city, they will divert toward the gates on each side of the city. With 1500 miles square, an area roughly stretching from the Mississippi River to the Atlantic Ocean and from the Gulf of Mexico to the Hudson Bay, each layer of the city could house an entire generation.

No need of the Moon to shine

The prophet Isaiah foretold of the new heavens and the new earth: “And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another and from one Sabbath to another shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord” [Is. 66:22,23].

Time shall be no more [Rev. 10:6], at least, not as we know time. The tree of life will bear twelve manner of fruits and shall yield her fruit every month [Rev. 22:2]. There will be a new moon that will call us to worship, as well as days that will culminate each week with a sabbath [Is. 66:23]. Perhaps it will be along the line of a thousand years being as a day [2 Peter 3:8]. One week as being 7,000 years gives some concept of eternity: our current lifespan of 70 years would equal more then 32 million, and we would not have aged at all.

Revelation 22:1-5

NO MORE CURSE

The following outline is based on the verbs of the adjective clause beginning with *which* in v. 21.

TEXT: *And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, **which bare** twelve manner of fruits, **and yielded** her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.*

NOTE: When the Bible declares that old things are passed away, it is the removal of the curse and the results of the curse that are the primary changes. The reason there can be no more curse [v. 3] is found in the very presence of the Lord God himself: he will dwell with his people and be their God [Rev. 21:3]. The new earth will bring forth abundantly; in joy shall a man eat of it all the days of his life. There will be no more thorns or thistles. It will not take the sweat of a man's brow to bring forth bread from the field, and man will no longer return to the dust. Regarding Eve, she will bring forth in joy, with a desire for the Lord to rule over her heart [the opposite of Genesis 3:16-19].

- I. And he shewed me a river of water of life
 - A. *A pure river*
 - B. *A river, clear as crystal*
 - C. *A river proceeding*
 - 1. Out of the throne of God
 - 2. And *out of the throne* of the Lamb
- II. There was the tree
 - A. *The tree of life*
 - 1. In the midst of the street of it
 - 2. And on either side of the river
 - B. *The tree of life*
 - 1. Which bare twelve manner of fruits
 - 2. And yielded her fruit every month
 - 3. And the leaves of the tree
 - a. *They* were for the healing
 - b. *They were for the healing* of the nations.
- III. And *regarding the nations and their new earth*
 - A. There shall be no more curse
 - 1. But the throne of God *shall be in it*
 - 2. And *the throne* of the Lamb shall be in it
 - B. And his servants shall serve him
 - 1. And they shall see his face
 - 2. And his name shall be in their foreheads
 - C. And there shall be no night there
 - 1. And they need no candle
 - 2. Neither *need they the* light of the sun
 - a. For the Lord God
 - b. *The Lord God* giveth them light
 - D. And they shall reign
 - 1. For ever
 - 2. And ever

Revelation 22:6,7
THE PROPHECY OF THIS BOOK

The following outline is based on the compound adjectives found in v. 6.

TEXT: *And he said unto me, These sayings are **faithful** and **true**: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.*

NOTE: Twice in its closing chapters the Revelation assures us that the words of this prophecy are not only faithful words, but also true words [Rev. 21:5; Rev. 22:6]. The spectacular declarations of the seals, the trumpets and the vials are true. They will come to pass, and their passing will come shortly. The coming anti-christ and false prophet, the two witnesses with their death and resurrection, the destruction of the seas and fresh water supplies, the devastation upon the sun, the moon and the stars – it is all true, and it is all coming. The rapture of the church, the sealing of the 144,000 “witnesses,” the coming of Christ in power and great glory, the judgment upon Satan and the creation of new heavens and a new earth – all of these events are true. They are not only true, they are faithful to the promises made in Scripture since the day God made a covering for Adam and Eve [Gen. 3:21] at the foundation of the world [Matt. 25:34; Rev. 21:24].

God made a promise to Abraham, that in him all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. Abraham understood that the blessing would be the gospel: the death, burial and resurrection of the coming, promised Messiah [Gal. 3:8]. Abraham saw enough in his day to declare to Isaac that God would provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering [Gen. 22:8].

- I. And he said unto me
 - A. These sayings are faithful
 - B. And *these sayings* are true
- II. And the Lord God of the holy prophets
 - A. *He* sent his angel
 - B. *He sent his angel* to shew unto his servants the things
 - 1. Which must *be done*
 - 2. Which must shortly be done
- III. *And the Lord God of the holy prophets saith*
 - A. Behold, I come quickly
 - B. Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book

NOTE: Jesus has declared “Behold, I come quickly” three times in the last chapter of the Revelation [verses 7, 12, and 20]. The scoffers, reasoning that all things continue as they have been since the foundation of the world, chide the saints of God by boasting, “Where is the promise of his coming?” Yet, Christ’s coming is eminent. Peter assures the saints, reminding them that a thousand years with the Lord is as a day. Though man dates his past in excess of millions of years, recorded history still limits us to approximately 4000 years before Christ.

How will we view the past when Christ appears? As a vapor that appears for a little while before vanishing away. When final judgment comes, it will be viewed as swift, amidst a brief additional time. The prophecies of the Revelation will unfold as they have been foretold.

Regarding keeping the prophecies of this book, it is a matter of remembrance and proclamation. Those who keep the message fresh by reading it and listening to it being read keep their spiritual eyesight looking for the second coming of Jesus Christ. By so doing, they will fulfill Paul’s admonition to remain steadfast, always abounding in the work of the Lord [1 Cor. 15:58]. They will demonstrate their love for Christ’s appearing, and reserve for themselves a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to all them that love his appearing [2 Tim. 4:8].

Revelation 22:8-11
THE TIME IS AT HAND

The following outline is based on the elliptical verbs used in v.9.

TEXT: *And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for **I am** thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God. And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.*

NOTE: The angel to whom John speaks is one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues [Rev. 21:9]. This is the “he” [Rev. 22:1] who showed John the crystal river and who recites the final recorded declarations of the Lord Jesus Christ, which are found in verse 7, verses 12 and 13, and in verse 16 and verse 20 of this closing chapter. He is the same angel through whom Christ originally “sent and signified” this prophecy unto his servant John [Rev. 1:1].

I. *Regarding John*

A. And I John saw these things

B. And *I* heard them

1. And when I had heard *them*

2. And *when I had* seen *them*

a. I fell down

b. *I fell down* to worship

1.) Before the feet of the angel

2.) *Before the feet of the angel* which shewed me these things

II. *Regarding the angel*

A. Then saith he unto me

1. See thou do it not

a. For I am thy fellowservant

b. And *I am* of thy brethren the prophets

c. And *I am* of them which keep the sayings of this book

2. Worship God

B. And he saith unto me

1. Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book

2. For the time is at hand

C. *And he saith unto me*

1. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still

2. And he which is filthy, let him be filthy still

3. And he that is righteous, let him be righteous still

4. And he that is holy, let him be holy still.

Revelation 22:12-16

THE MILLENNIAL REIGN

The following outline is based on various compounds as those used in v. 13.

TEXT: *And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.*

NOTE: In both the judgment of God's people [1 Cor. 3:13] and the judgment of the wicked [Rev. 20:12], their works will be tried. Hence, there are degrees of reward in heaven and degrees of punishment in the lake of fire. And, just as a life in heaven is everlasting [John 3:16], so one's torment in the lake of fire is eternal [Heb. 6:2].

All judgment has been placed in the hands of God the Son [John 5:22]. He who was used by the Father to create all current things [Col. 1:16] will be used by the Father to close out all things, thus the beautiful analogies of verse 13: Jesus, who is the "I am," is Alpha and Omega: the beginning and the end: the first and the last. God the Father has done these things through Jesus so "that in all things Christ might have the preeminence" [Col. 1:18].

As Jesus is all things to creation, he is all things to his people Israel. The "I am" is the root of David and the offspring of David. Jesus has the right to sit on the throne of his "father" David and reign forever [Luke 1:32].

- I. *Christ's declaration*
 - A. And, behold, I come quickly
 - B. And my reward is with me
 - 1. To give every man
 - 2. *To give to every man* according as his work shall be
 - C. I am
 - 1. Alpha and Omega
 - 2. The beginning and the end
 - 3. The first and the last
- II. *The angel's admonition*
 - A. Blessed are they that do his commandments
 - 1. That they may have right to the tree of life
 - 2. And *that they* may enter in through the gates into the city
 - B. For without (*the city*) are (*those who did not do his commandments*)
 - 1. Dogs
 - 2. And sorcerers
 - 3. And whoremongers
 - 4. And murderers
 - 5. And idolaters
 - 6. And whosoever loveth *a lie*
 - 7. And *whosoever* maketh a lie
- III. *Christ's verification of his angel*
 - A. I Jesus have sent mine angel
 - 1. To testify unto you these things
 - 2. *To testify unto you these things* in the churches
 - B. I am
 - 1. The root *of David*
 - 2. And the offspring of David
 - 3. And the bright and morning star

Revelation 22:17-19

THE MILLENNIAL REIGN

The following outline is based on the parallel adverbial prepositional phrases used to modify the verb and particle *take away* in v. 19.

TEXT: *And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that 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 **out of** the book of life, and **out of** the holy city, **and from** the things which are written in this book*

NOTE: John the Baptist pointed to Jesus the day after baptizing him and told two of his disciples, “Behold the Lamb of God” [John 1:35]. They took his admonition and followed Jesus, spending that night with the Lord at his own invitation. Upon leaving the next day, Andrew first found his brother Peter and told him: “We have found the Messiah.”

When Philip settled the question of Jesus as the Christ, the next day he found Nathanael. Philip testified of Jesus to Nathanael with these words: “We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” When Nathanael responded with the question, “Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?”, Philip said unto him what the Spirit of God has been saying from the first, “Come and see.”

The Spirit says, Come.” The bride, who has the Spirit of God within them, says: “Come.” He that is athirst can come. Whosoever will come can come. Take of the water of life freely.

- I. *The invitation to believe on Christ Jesus and be saved*
 - A. *The “they” who say, “Come”*
 - 1. And the Spirit
 - 2. And the bride say, Come
 - 3. And *him* that heareth, let him say, Come
 - B. *The “they” who may come*
 - 1. *Him that heareth* [v. 17]
 - 2. And *him* that is athirst, let him come
 - 3. And whosoever will
 - a. Let him take the water of life
 - b. *Let him take the water of life* freely
- II. *The warning to those who would alter this prophecy*
 - A. For I testify
 - 1. Unto every man
 - 2. *Unto every man* that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book
 - B. *I testify that*
 - 1. If any man shall add unto these things
 - a. God shall add unto him the plagues
 - b. *God shall add unto him the plagues* that are written in this book
 - 2. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy
 - a. God shall take away
 - b. *God shall take away* his part
 - 1.) Out of the book of life
 - 2.) And out of the holy city
 - 3.) And from the things which are written in this book

Revelation 22:20,21
EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS

The following outline is based on the response [in v.20] that echoes John's response to the first outline of the coming of Christ in judgment mentioned in the book [Rev. 1:7].

TEXT: *He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*

NOTE: John shouts "Amen" in response to the declaration that Jesus has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father in the introductory remarks about the Trinity [1:6]. And he immediately follows that exclamation with a declaration tempered with the words "even so," as he concedes that what God will do is right. This includes his coming with the clouds of an army of saints, clothed in white apparel, to deliver Israel at Armageddon, though the blood of his enemies will flow through the valley to the height of a horse's bridle.

And John says "amen" to the resurrection of the dead that will allow every eye to see him as the wicked stand before him in judgment on the day of the White Throne. John solemnly says, "Amen," to the sight of those standing before the Lord who pierced the hands of Jesus. And John confess with an "amen" that the judgment of all the kindreds of the earth, though they will be cast into the lake of fire and wail for all eternity, is just. Their wail shall be great for their torment shall be great. They did not believe the witness of God's Word, God's Spirit or God's people. "Even so, Amen" to all the Lord Jesus Christ will do!

- I. He which testifieth these things saith
 - A. Surely I come
 - B. *Surely I come quickly*
- II. *The saint's response to the promise of Christ's coming*
 - A. Amen
 - B. Even so
 - 1. Come
 - 2. *Come, Lord Jesus*
- III. *John's closing admonition*
 - A. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you
 - B. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all*

Amen

NOTE: John closes the Revelation with the same admonition he used to introduce it: the admonition of "grace" – "John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you" [Rev. 1:4]. That grace (and peace) was sent from the Trinity: from God the Father and from God the Holy Spirit [1:4] and from God the Son [1:5]. At the end of the Revelation, John again desires that "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."

Regardless of how the message of the Revelation awes and amazes us, God's grace is the source of our strength in the face of what lies ahead. The Lord revealed this to the Apostle Paul, whose life as a child of God knew both abasement and abounding; hunger and satisfaction; need and abundance – "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in your weakness" [2 Cor. 12:9].

We are to stand in that grace. We are to proclaim, as we stand at the threshold of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, that most gladly would we rather glory in our infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon us. When we are weak, then are we strong [2 Cor. 12:9b,10].

Revelation 22 COMMENTARY

The Tree of Life [v.2]

Following the seven thunders, a mighty angel stood upon the sea and upon the earth; and he lifted up his hand to heaven and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever that time should be no longer [Rev. 10:6]. Yet, there will be a kind of “time” as heaven knows time. The tree of life in the New Jerusalem will yield fruit every month. Twelve manners of fruit in all, at one month intervals, will record a year.

The tree of life will also provide healing for the nations of the new earth through the use of its leaves, causing speculation as to what needs healing in an earth that is free from the curse. Potentially, there is medicinal powers in the leaves, though death itself is passed away, for use by the populace of the sheep nations upon the earth.

God’s Servants of the Ages [v.9]

When John falls at the feet of the angel to worship him, he reveals to us the majesty of the appearance of that angel; yet, the angel is quick to correct John and to direct John’s worship to God alone. In so doing, he clarifies the “camps” of God’s servants: (1) angels are our fellow servants, (2) the prophets of the Old Testament are, along with angels, called our fellow brethren, and (3) the angels and the prophets are linked to those who keep the sayings of this book, both the church age saints and the tribulation period saints.

Although a third of the angels kept not their first estate, but chose rather to leave their own habitation [Jude 1:6; Rev. 12:4], two-thirds chose to remain faithful to God. They are the ministering spirits, whose desire to look into the things of God’s word and work [1 Peter 1:12] is partially motivated by the question of how their enemy would finally be defeated [Rev. 12:12a].

Both the saints of the Old Testament and the saints of the New Testament will inhabit the New Jerusalem. That will probably be by area or section, though no ghetto exists in a city that is made by God and indwelt by a sinless society. There are three camps that will keep the sayings of the prophecy of this book: the Church to whom this prophecy is now given, the tribulation saints who will have access to the word of this prophecy during those seven years, and the millennial “sheep” nations. The tribulation saints will read this prophecy and find opportunity to refuse the mark of the beast based on the promises contained therein [Rev. 20:4]. The millennial faithful will reflect the Spirit of God in coming to Christ for deliverance during the rebellion of God and Magog. Such action alone reflects faith in the prophecy of this book.

The Purpose of this Message [v. 11]

One of the strangest declarations of this prophecy comes after John is told not to seal the sayings of this book. It gives insight as to the purpose of the Revelation: “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.”

That the filthy and the unjust are not to be changed by this prophecy and that the righteous and the holy are, as well, to be unaffected by this prophecy, reveals the intent of the book: the Revelation is not meant as either an evangelistic message to the lost or nurturing material for the saint. The gospel is the message of evangelism: it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, whether they are Jew or Greek [Rom. 1:16]. The Apostle Paul understood this: “I am determined,” Paul writes, “not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified.” It pleases God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that are lost.

The growth of a child of God, in learning the mind of Christ and letting that mind transform his thinking, is primarily found in the writings of Paul: the epistles. Yet, there is great value in knowledge. In the Revelation, the saint is shown what will come to pass and given the assurance that the victory has already been won.

Regarding the saints of God, notice the distinctions between the righteous and the holy. All of God's people are righteous, that is, they have the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ [Rom. 3:22]. They are saved [Gal. 3:26]. Paul writes to the church at Colossi and distinguishes between "saints" and "faithful brethren" [Col. 1:2]. He clarifies this distinction when he writes, "We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints" [Col. 1:3,4]. The "saints" are made righteous by faith in Christ. They become faithful brethren as they grow in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: they come to demonstrate the love of God unto all the brethren. These "faithful brethren" are termed "holy" in the Revelation. This "growth" is first shown in Antioch [Acts 11:26]. It is still evident in the Revelation.

As shown in the contrast of the terms "babe" and "teacher" [Heb. 5:12,13] and the terms "carnal" (which is synonymous with "babes") and "Christian," there is a spiritual growth. That same "growth" distinguishes between the "righteous" and the "holy." They are stages in the life of a child of God. The way to advance in maturity for the Lord is through the knowledge and exercise of all Scripture [2 Tim. 3:16,17], and not the responsibility of the Revelation itself.

Likewise, for the lost, there are "stages": the "unjust" and the "filthy." Every lost man is unjust before God. The only claim a saved man has for justification before God is found in Jesus Christ: God is righteous to justify all them which believe on Jesus [Rom. 3:26]. There is a state to which wickedness can so advance a man as to totally corrupt him. Men can "move" from being simply lost or unjust to being filthy in the eyes of God and men.

The moral man who obeys the laws of the land and respects his neighbor is a lost man: he is unjust before God. Though he is most often religious in the wisdom of this world, his life is one of works or philosophy. He is unjust before God because he has not believed on the only begotten Son of God.

In contrast to the moral man, the filthy have given themselves over to all manner of wickedness. Because they changed the truth of God into a lie, God has given them up unto vile affections: "for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet" [Rom. 1:26,27].

Is there hope for the filthy? Yes! Just as there is hope for the unjust: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God [1 Cor. 6:9-11].

The hope of any lost man is to come to Christ and be washed in the blood that takes away all sin [1 John 1:7]. Repentance from dead works and faith toward God is the answer [Heb. 6:1]. The lost (unjust or filthy) must "hear" the gospel of Jesus Christ and receive it.

Doing His Commandments [v. 14]

Since John was chosen to write the Revelation, consider John's other writings regarding the commandments of the Lord: "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." [Question: Do you love Jesus?] "And he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him" [John 14:21]. Jesus also declared, "This is my commandment" (summarizing his teaching into one great truth): "that ye love one another as I have loved you" [John 15:12].

Jesus declared that "on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind; and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" [Matt. 22:37-40].

"Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him [I John 2:5]. "This," John writes, "is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ and that we should love one another, as he gave us commandment" [I John 3:23].

Do you love Jesus? If you love and have believed on him and love them also who are his by faith, you are "doing" his commandments.

Those Who are Without [v.15]

The last listing of those lost and burning in the lake of fire is as follows: dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters, whosoever loveth a lie, and whosoever maketh a lie.

The Syrophenician woman compared herself to a dog that would eat the crumbs from the Master's table and be satisfied, and Jesus said of her that she had great faith [Matt. 15:27]. Mephibosheth called himself a dead dog, but he sat at meat in the king's palace [II Sam. 9:13]. The "dogs" referred to in Revelation 22 are the dogs that have set themselves about the Lord to compass him at his crucifixion [Ps. 22:16]. They are the assembly of the wicked [Ps. 22:16], the ignorant [Is. 56:10], the evil speakers who corrupt themselves as brute beasts [Judge 1:10].

Sorcerers are those, like Simon, who bewitch the people, giving out that they are some great one [Acts 8:11]. Opposing the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Word of God as Bar-Jesus opposed Saul, they are the false prophets of a false way [Acts 13:6-8].

The spiritual whoredoms of the followers of Molech who caused their children to pass through his flames to their death [Lev. 20:2-5] will be repaid in the lake of fire. Those who have gone a whoring after idols [Ez. 6:9] and after the heathen [Ez. 23:30] and with their own inventions [Ps. 106:39], they will be outside that city.

And the physical whoremonger, who lives for and follows after such wickedness, shall not have any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God [Eph 5:5]. We are warned not to be deceived by their words, lest we be partakers with them of the wrath of God, for it comes upon these children of disobedience even in this lifetime [Eph. 5:6,7].

When the Pharisees who withstood Jesus accused him of being born of fornication, Jesus revealed that they were of their father the devil, and the lusts of their father they would do. The devil was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, Jesus said, he speaketh of this own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because Jesus told them the truth and they believed him not, they demonstrated that they were not of God [John 8:44-47]. No murderer will have a part in the city: Pharaoh, who slew the children of Moses' young years, and Herod, who slew the children of Jesus' young years, and those like them will not defile that city.

Idolaters will not defile that city: those who worship anyone or anything other than the Lord Jesus Christ. For they have refused to repent of their dead works and believe on the one name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved. For at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is

Lord. And only those that call upon the name of the Lord in this life shall be saved, for whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Whosoever loveth and maketh a lie is without that city. It sounds so simple: “Every one that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God” [I John 4:2]; yet, it is not as simple as it seems. It is not so simple because there are those who would say that flesh is not flesh.

Christ came in a physical body. And in that physical body he suffered once for our sins [Heb. 10:10]. Yet some would have us look at a wafer and call it the body of Christ in the flesh. Now, a wafer is a wafer, and a fleshly body is a fleshly body. Yet, some would have us deny our senses and receive this life. And those who love such a lie and who make such a lie have pronounced against them that they will be without that city.

Then, there are those who will be deceived by one who comes after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders: the anti-christ [II Thess. 2:9]. God will give them a strong delusion to believe his lies, that they who believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness might be damned [II Thess. 2:11,12].

Beware the Warning [vv. 18,19]

Two warnings are given: they can be considered the opposite sides of the same coin, for they both change what the Word of God has said. The first warning is to those who would add to the things of the prophecy of this book. Whether that addition is by tradition, philosophy, later-day revelation or words of knowledge—the warning is the same: to alter God’s Word is to seal one’s fate. If those who do so die before the Revelation’s tribulation period begins, they will find themselves without Christ and will end up in a devil’s hell, awaiting the lake of fire as prophesied in this book. If they live into and through the tribulation period, they will suffer as the followers of the anti-Christ will suffer, according to the judgment of this book.

The second warning is to those who take from God’s Word, denying certain elements of it as if they were not so, or deeming that certain portions have no rightful place among its pages. They have the characteristic of omitting things that offend them or seem too spectacular for them to believe. They often seek outside sources to vindicate the Scriptures, rather than accepting the Word of God by faith. They do so because they indeed lack faith in the Word of God. They, too, (should they live to the time of the rapture), will find themselves believing the lie of the devil, and following the anti-Christ. They will receive his mark and worship his image, sealing their doom, for the walk by sight and not by faith.

A Personal Plea

Remember Christ’s final words: “Surely I come quickly.” Jesus will return in the air to rapture his church; and the Revelation will continue to unfold as it has been prophesied. The only ones who will be safe from this great day will be those who have faith in Jesus Christ.

Be prepared. Believe on the name of the only begotten Son of God, that you name may be found written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.