

# The Beginning of Sorrows

## I. What Is the Tribulation?

### A. Known by twelve different names

1. The day of the Lord - Isaiah 13; Jeremiah 26:10
2. The day of God's vengeance - Isaiah 61:12
3. The time of Jacob's trouble - Jeremiah 30:7
4. The seventieth week in the book of Daniel - Daniel 9:25-27
5. The time of the end - Daniel 8:17
6. The great day of His wrath - Zephaniah 1:5
7. The hour of judgment - Revelation 14:7
8. The end of this world - Matthew 13:40
9. The indignation - Isaiah 34:2; 26:20
10. The overspreading of abominations - Daniel 9:27
11. The time of trouble as there never was - Daniel 12:1
12. Tribulation (best) - Matthew 24:21

The word tribulation comes from the Latin word *triblim*, which was an instrument for threshing out corn.

### B. Some passages regarding the Tribulation

1. Isaiah 13:6ff.
2. Isaiah 2:21
3. Isaiah 24:1ff.
4. Isaiah 34:1ff.
5. Matthew 24:7ff.
6. Luke 21:25ff.
7. Revelation 6-19

C. The length of the Tribulation.

We know that the length of the tribulation will be 7 years from the prophecy of the seventy weeks, or literally "sevens", found in Daniel 9:20ff. We know that the "sevens" refer to years since Daniel was contemplating the 70 years captivity of Israel due to their violation of Sabbath rest (every seven years Israel was to let the land rest, they did not do this and as a result God caused the land to rest 70 years during their captivity).

D. What is the purpose of the tribulation?

1. To harvest the crop that has been sown throughout the ages by God, Satan, and mankind. See Matthew 13:3ff. and Matthew 13:24ff.
2. To prove the falseness of the Devil's claim. It shows that Satan is not the rightful ruler of the universe.
3. To prepare a great martyred multitude for heaven. See Revelation 7 for the greatest revival ever known.
4. To prepare a great living multitude for the Millennium - Matthew 25.
5. To punish the Gentiles - 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, Jude 14-15
6. To purge Israel - Zechariah 13:9.

II. The First Half of the Tribulation

A. The formal organization of the harlot church.

1. It's Pattern

There were/will be three attempts in world history to consolidate all religions. Babel (Genesis 11), Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 3), during the Tribulation (Revelation 13, 2 Thessalonians 2). Its pattern will be that of the Babylonian religion of ancient times.

2. It's Role

This church will help the Antichrist in his rise to power - Revelation 17:13ff.

3. It's character

See 1 Timothy 4, 2 Timothy 3, and 2 Peter 1 regarding the character of religion during the last days.

4. It's destiny

It will be destroyed by the Antichrist - Revelation 17.

B. The appearance of the Antichrist and the False Prophet.

*This will be covered in more detail later in the next chapter.*

C. The formation of the ten-nation (or ten-region) confederacy.

The ten-nation confederacy may not actually be a reunited Europe, but a ten-fold division of the world. In fact, there is already plans in the work to divide the world into ten economic and political regions.

The Antichrist will control the ten-nation confederacy (or world regions) militarily, politically, religiously, and economically.

D. The signing of a seven-year treaty.

This is the event which actually signals the start of the seven-year tribulation.

This is also known as Israel's covenant with death in Isaiah 28:17.

Daniel 9:27 gives the prophecy of this event.

Antichrist will make a treaty with Israel guaranteeing them peace. In the middle of the tribulation, he will break this treaty and begin his systematic persecution of Israel.

E. The pouring out of the first six seals in Revelation 6.

1. The White Horse - Antichrist bringing peace.
2. The Red Horse - War.
3. The Black Horse - Famine.
4. The Pale Horse - Pestilence and Death.
5. The Martyrs under the alter - a time of great persecution.

Some interesting possibilites:

- a. This refutes the doctrine of soul-sleep.
- b. Evidence for the existence of an intermediate body.
6. Signs in the heavens. A desire to die but an inability to die.
  - a. The greatest earthquake in history.
  - b. The greatest cosmic disturbances in history.

F. The mass return of Jews to Palestine.

Ezekiel 37 - The valley of dry bones.

In 1882, there were only 25,000 Jews in Palestine. In New York city, there were 25,000 in one block alone.

In 1900, there were 50,000, in 1922, 84,000, in 1931, 125,000, in 1948, 650,000, in 1952, 1.5 million, and today, 3.5 million.

See also Isaiah 43:5-6, Ezekiel 36:27.

We are between verses 8 and 9 of Ezekiel 37.

Two non-negotiables in Israel today, Jerusalem and Jesus. The Jews hate Christ and all He stands for. In fact, Jews will not use B.C. or A.D. They use B.C.E (Before Common Era), and C.E. (Common Era). They hate to even use the name of Christ.

G. The conversion and call of the 144,000 Jewish Evangelists. Revelation 7

"Sealed" means saved. See Ephesians 1:13.

Several interesting things about the tribes:

- 1). This passage does not teach that only Jews will be saved during the tribulation.
- 2). The tribe of Dan is missing. Ephraim and Manasseh made up two other tribes. Sometimes Levi and Joseph are mentioned as tribes. Some think the Antichrist will come from Dan, not very well founded. However, in Ezekiel 48, Dan is mentioned.

H. The rebuilding of the Jewish Temple.

We know that there will be a temple. Note the passages of Daniel 9, 12, Matthew 24, and 2 Thessalonians 2 do not make any sense if there is no temple.

This is the fourth temple.

The first was the tabernacle.

The second was Solomon's.

The third was Herod's.

The fourth is this one.

The fifth is the Millennial temple of Ezekiel 40-48.

# Satan, Antichrist, and the False Prophet

## I. Satan

In the twelfth chapter of Revelation we are given a panoramic picture of the war of the ages. Like the holy trinity, consisting of the Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, Satan has his own hellish trinity, composed of himself, the Antichrist, and the False Prophet.

### A. The Participants in the War of the Ages

#### 1. Israel - Revelation 12:1-2

*Revelation 12:1-2 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: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.*

There is little doubt regarding the identity of this woman. In Genesis, Joseph had a dream in which the sun, moon, and eleven stars bowed down to him. This was a picture of Jacob (Israel), and eleven of his sons (the twelfth being Joseph). In this vision of John's we see all twelve stars around the head of the woman which represent the twelve tribes of Israel.

Furthermore, this woman is great with child. Comparing verse two with verses 4 and following, we find that this child is Christ. Israel, of course, was the nation through whom the Messiah came.

#### 2. Satan - Revelation 12:3

*Revelation 12:3 And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.*

The second participant in this war of the ages is the dragon. There can be little doubt that this is Satan. In Revelation 20:2 we are told that a powerful angel laid his hand "on the dragon, that old serpent, the Devil." The imagery of a dragon is used to picture the rapacious nature of Satan, who described himself in Job as a "roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

It is interesting to note that the imagery of seven heads and ten horns is also used to speak of the Antichrist in chapters 13 and 17. The commonality of the description between Satan and the Antichrist shows their similarity. Just as Christ is the full embodiment of all that the Father is, so in a similar way the Antichrist will be a full embodiment of Satan. He is seen in the spitting-image of his father.

### 3. One-third of the angels - Revelation 12:4a

*Revelation 12:4a And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth:*

When Satan fell from heaven he did not fall alone but took approximately one-third of the angels with him. These fallen angels, also known as demons, assist Satan in his program of rebellion against God. Although we cannot look at everything the Bible says about demons, we can say that they are composed of at least three groups.

#### a. Bound demons

*Jude 1:6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.*

The first group is the permanently bound demons. Comparing Jude 1:6 with 2 Peter 2:4 and Genesis 6, we are led to believe that these permanently bound demons indulged in some great sin that caused God to permanently consign them to the abyss. Many believe that this great sin was that of cohabitation with men which produced a race of unredeemable demon-men. Because of this great sin, God placed them in chains until the day of judgment, when they will be permanently consigned to the Lake of Fire.

#### b. Temporarily bound demons

*Revelation 9:1-3 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. And 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. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.*

A second group are the temporarily bound demons. We know that these are temporarily bound, because they are released from the abyss during the Tribulation in order to torment men. These demons are not the permanently bound group since the Bible clearly says that they (the permanently bound demons) are reserved in chains until judgment.

#### c. Free demons

A final group is the free demons. These are the fallen angels that currently assist Satan in his work throughout the world.

### 4. Christ - Revelation 12:4b-5

*Revelation 12:4b-5 and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And 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.*

The fourth participant in this struggle is Christ. We know that this man child is Christ by comparing the description here with the rest of Scripture. For example:

- a. Christ will rule all nations with a rod of iron - Psalm 2
- b. This child was caught up to the throne of God - Acts 1:10-11, Hebrews 7:25.
- c. This child came from Israel, which was God's chosen people through whom Christ came.

5. Michael and the elect angels - Revelation 12:7-9

*Revelation 12:7-9 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*

Now we jump the centuries to the time of the Tribulation. Prior to this war in heaven, Satan has had access to the throne of God. We know this from Job 1-2, in which Satan appears before the presence of God. Even at this time, Satan has access to heaven, and is often there to accuse believers before God. In fact, one of Satan's name, Devil, comes from *diabolo* which means slanderer.

The war mentioned in these two verses probably takes place sometime around the middle of the Tribulation. We can deduce this from verses 13 and 14 in which we are told that after Satan is cast to the earth, he has 3-1/2 years in which he persecutes the woman that brought forth the man child.

6. The Victorious Saints - Revelation 12:10-12a

*Revelation 12:10-12a And 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. And 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. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them.*

Sixthly, we are introduced to the victorious saints who have overcome Satan through the blood of the lamb. After Satan is cast out of heaven, all of heaven rejoices because the accuser of the brethren (a reference to believers) has been thrown out. No doubt all of heaven cringes when Satan strolls into the throne room of God, there to level charges against fellow believers on the earth. When the time finally comes, however, that Satan is removed, all of heaven rejoices and sings praises to God.

7. Unredeemed humanity - Revelation 12:b

*Revelation 12:12b 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*

A seventh participant in this war of the ages is unredeemed humanity. The term, “those who dwell on the earth” is used in the book of Revelation to refer to the unredeemed mass of humanity who is living in rebellion against God (Revelation 3:10, 6:10, 8:13, 11:10, 13:8). Unredeemed humanity, unfortunately, is many times the unwilling and unknowing recipients of Satan’s hatred. Think of all of the wars fought throughout the ages, many inspired by Satan himself. Think of the untold suffering experienced by humanity in the third world, and in those parts of the world where the gospel is unknown.

But all of that suffering fades into insignificance, when we observe the activities of Satan during the Tribulation that cause the death of over half of the world’s population. This suffering is based in a large part on the nature of Satan, who is known as a “murderer from the beginning” (John 8:44), but also in the fact that Satan knows he has little time. This makes his wrath all the more severe.

#### 8. Believers

*Revelation 12:17 And 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.*

A final participant in this great war is the believers during the Tribulation time. After Satan’s attempt to destroy Israel is thwarted, he turns on the remnant of her seed, which is a reference to believers who have come to faith in Christ. Although Satan has always had it in for believers, during the Tribulation this hatred will reach its all-time high as millions of believers are martyred for their faith.

### B. The Strategy

#### 1. Satan wants to destroy Christ - Revelation 12:4b

*Revelation 12:4b and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.*

From the first chapter of Matthew, all the way to the end of the New Testament, we find Satan attempting to destroy Christ at every turn. Note the following attempts:

- a. Satan tried to get Herod to murder the child - Matthew 2.
- b. Satan tried to get the people of Nazareth to kill Christ - Luke 4:29-30.
- c. Satan attempted to escalate the conflict between Christ and the religious leaders on several occasions which is why Christ spent most of his itinerant ministry outside of Judea.



- d. Satan tried to kill Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane, but was unsuccessful.
  - e. Satan finally incited the mob to kill Christ, only to find out that Christ's death was the death-blow to Satan himself.
2. Satan wants to destroy Israel.

*Revelation 12:6 And 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.*

*Revelation 12:13-16 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. 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, from the face of the serpent. And 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. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.*

These verses give us the strategy of Satan against Israel during the Tribulation. Comparing these verses with Matthew 24, we find that after the abomination of desolation the Antichrist goes after Israel in order to wipe every Jew off the face of the earth. What apparently happens is that a remnant of Israel flees into the wilderness where they are divinely protected and nourished by God for a period of 3-1/2 years, or the last half of the Tribulation. Some Bible scholars think that the area where Israel will hide is near the dead sea. Some have even gone so far as to hide Bibles in the rocks and caves of the region so that a hiding Israel would find them.

The reference to the flood out of the mouth of the dragon is most likely a reference to a great army. Satan sends the armies of the Antichrist after Israel, only to have those armies destroyed by God.

3. Satan wants to destroy Believers

*Revelation 12:17 And 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.*

## II. The Antichrist

The greatest evil person to ever live out of earth's 40 billion or so people will be the Antichrist. See Daniel 7:25ff, Daniel 11:36ff, 2 Thessalonians 2.

### A. His Personal Characteristics

- 1. He will be an intellectual genius - Daniel 8.
- 2. He will be an oratorical genius - Daniel 11:36.
- 3. He will be a political genius - Revelation 17.

4. He will be a commercial genius - Revelation 13.
5. He will be a military genius - Revelation 6.
6. He will be a religious genius - Revelation 13.

B. His Names

1. The man of sin - 2 Thessalonians 2:3.
2. The son of perdition - 2 Thessalonians 2:3.
3. The wicked king - 2 Thessalonians 2:8.
4. The willful king - Daniel 11:26.
5. The beast - Revelation 13:1-2.
6. The little horn - Daniel 7:8.

C. His Career - Revelation 13 and selected passages

1. His Ancestry - Revelation 12:18-13:1a

*Revelation 13:1 And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea...*

We are told here that the beast rises out of the sea. The sea is sometimes used to refer to the chaos of the Gentile nations. In Daniel 7:3 we find that Daniel observed the four beasts in his vision rise up out of the sea. Most likely, the same imagery is in view here.

However, many wierd interpretations have been given to this verse. Some of the representative ones follow:

- a. The beast is a reincarnation of Judas.
  - 1). Pro
    - a). Both are called "son of perdition"
    - b). Judas went "to his own place"
    - c). The beast is seen as arising out of the sea, which some take to be the bottomless pit which would be logical if he was a reincarnated Judas.
    - d). Revelation 17:8 appears to say that the beast was alive, then died, and then ascended out of the bottomless pit. However, this could just as easily refer to a fallen angel as well.
  - 2). Con

- a). Hebrews 9:27 states that it is “appointed unto man once to die”
  - b). The support for this position is highly speculative
  - c). The statement that “Judas went to his own place” can be best understood as a euphemism for “Judas went to hell”
  - d). There is no special meaning to the title “son of perdition” as it is just a descriptive term of the particularly evil nature of these men.
  - e). Revelation 17:8 can also be understood as referring to the kingdom over which the beast is the ruler. The kingdom was, is not, and will yet be when Satan gives the beast authority and rulership during the Tribulation.
- b. The Antichrist dies and his body is taken over by a fallen angel
- 1). Pro
    - a). Some think the sea is a reference to the abyss, the abode of fallen angels
    - b). It is said that he had a mortal wound that was healed (Revelation 13:3) which many take to mean a staged or actual resurrection
  - 2). Con
    - a). We are told in Revelation 19:20 that the beast is cast alive into the Lake of Fire. There is no indication there that the beast is anything other than a man.
    - b). There is no evidence elsewhere in Revelation that the beast is anything but a man.
- c. The Antichrist is a man who comes out of the Gentile nations. The origin of his power and authority is from hell and is demon-energized
- 1). Pro
    - a). This is the most reasonable interpretation of this verse.
    - b). It is consistent with the Biblical treatment of the Antichrist being spoken of as a man who is energized by Satan.

## 2. His Appearance - Revelation 13:1b-2a

*Revelation 13:1b-2a* having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion:

In verse one we are told that this beast has seven heads and ten horns, each horn having a crown. Comparing this verse with Revelation 17:8-14 gives the following interpretation:

### a. Seven Heads

In Revelation 17:9 we are told very clearly that the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman (the harlot church) sits. Many think that the seven mountains refer to Rome, since it is known as the city on seven hills. This means that the false church will be headquartered in Rome, an interpretation many anti-Catholics have subscribed to.

However, I think it may be better to understand the seven mountains as referring to seven kingdoms. Each of these kingdoms were characterized by a false religion all having their origins in ancient Babylon. The term "mountain" is often used to refer to kingdoms (Exodus 15:17, Daniel 2:35, Amos 4:1: 6:1, Joshua 11:26, Isaiah 2:2-3; 65:25; 11:9 and others).

We are further told that there are seven kings. This is a natural outcome if the seven mountains refer to seven kingdoms. Of these seven kingdoms, five were (Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece), one is (Rome), and the other is yet to come (Antichrist's first kingdom). Apparently after his deadly wound is healed, he is possessed by a fallen angel or demon and becomes the eighth, though he is of the seventh (Revelation 17:11).

### b. Ten Horns

In prophetic literature a horn is often used to refer to power or to a king. In Revelation 17:12 we are told explicitly that these ten horns give their authority to the beast. This is also stated in Daniel 7:7-8. These ten horns are said to be ten kings who reign a short time with the beast. Comparing Revelation 17:12 with Daniel 7:7-8 also leads us to understand that three of these kings do not willingly give the Antichrist his authority at first. However, the Antichrist prevails and apparently receives the reluctant support of three of these kings. This is pictured in Daniel 7:7-8 by the rooting up of the three horns.

### c. His Animal Nature

Verse 2 is highly reminiscent of Daniel 7:4-6 in which we are introduced to the first three world kingdoms each identified by an animal: Babylon the lion, Medo-Persia the bear, and Greece the leopard. John sees this beast as having the characteristics of each of these world powers all rolled into one animal.

Lion - his ferocity and ability to hunt prey

Bear - his strength and rapacious appetite

Leopard - his swiftness in conquests

As a side note, it is not unreasonable to assume that the diverse beast of Daniel 7:7-8 was a combination of these three beasts as referred to in Revelation 13:2.

### 3. His Authority - Rev 13:2b

*Revelation 13:2 ...and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.*

We are told very clearly that the source of the beast's power and authority is the dragon. We are first introduced to the dragon in chapter 12, where it is very clearly identified as being Satan. The use of the term dragon refers to the rapacious and destructive nature of Satan.

Of course this brings up the question, does Satan actually have the right to bestow this authority on the beast, an authority which we are told later on in this chapter extends to the whole world? The answer is yes. In Matthew 4:9-10 Satan offers the kingdoms of the world to Christ, if only Christ would fall down and worship him. Christ did not dispute the Devil's claim. Thus it does appear that Satan, who is also called the Prince of the Power of the Air (Ephesians 2:2), does have authority over the nations of the world and will give that authority to the Antichrist.

### 4. His Artifice - Revelation 13:3, 12-14

*Revelation 13:3 And 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.*

*Revelation 13:12-13 And 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. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And 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.*

We are exposed to a very interesting fact in these two verses. Apparently, something happens to the Antichrist of such a nature as to cause the whole earth to worship and stand in awe of the beast. Although he has apparently brought peace to the entire world, something additional happens. Many believe that these two passages give us that event, a faked resurrection.

In Revelation 13:3 we are told that one of the heads of the beast was wounded to death. This could very possibly refer to some life-threatening injury or actual mortal wound that was miraculously healed by the agency of Satan. This is particularly supported by Revelation 13:14 where we are told that

this wound was “by a sword.” Throughout the Scriptures this phrase always refers to some life-threatening or mortal wound received in combat. This apparently miraculous event causes the whole earth to stand in awe of the beast. Satan uses this event to cause the whole earth to worship and adore the beast.

There is a lot of speculation about whether this is a faked resurrection, or just some miraculous healing. Although no one can be certain about the actual interpretation of these two verses, it is probably best to say that it is not an actual resurrection, but a faked resurrection or the miraculous healing of a mortal wound of such a nature that recovery would be impossible. In any case, this has to be something very extraordinary to cause such a reaction from the world. This is no second-rate healing.

#### 5. His Adoration and Admirers - Revelation 13:4, 8, 12, 15

*Revelation 13:4 And 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?*

*Revelation 13:8 And 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.*

*Revelation 13:12 And 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.*

*Revelation 13:15 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.*

The fifth thing we learn about Antichrist in Revelation 13 is that all of the earth worships him. The phrase “who is like unto the beast” is reminiscent of many Old Testament passages that say “Who is like unto the Lord?” These passages all refer to worship and adoration.

Of course we know that the one thing that Satan desires above all else is to be worshipped. In Isaiah 14:12-14 we are introduced to the fact that Satan’s fall was caused by his desire to usurp the throne of God and be worshipped instead of worshiping. In Matthew 4 we find that one of Satan’s temptations to Christ was that Christ fall down and worship him. Satan’s desire for the world to worship him has gone unfulfilled for millennia, until the time of the Tribulation when he will be worshiped in the person of the Antichrist.

#### 6. His Audacity - Revelation 13:5-6

*Revelation 13:5-6 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.*

In these two verses we are told of the audacity of the Antichrist. The Antichrist is not merely content to rule the world, but he goes further and

speaks against God and his people. The word “blaspheme” literally means “to speak evil of.” He no doubt denies the power of God to do anything to him and maybe goes so far as to belittle God’s power, goodness, and love. This should hardly be taken as a surprise since the dragon, who gives the beast his power, is a slanderer and blasphemer from the beginning. From the first “hath God said” until he is cast into the Lake of Fire, Satan lives up to his name of “devil,” which means “slanderer.”

What exactly is it that Antichrist blasphemes? We are told of four things here in this verse. First, he blasphemes God himself, no doubt impugning the very nature and character of God. Secondly, he speaks against God’s name, which is the sum total of who God is; his character. Thirdly, he blasphemes the tabernacle of God, which in Revelation is seen as the location of God’s throne. This probably refers to God’s sovereign rule and authority (by the way, this was Satan’s downfall in Isaiah 14:12-14). Finally, he speaks against those that dwell in heaven. This could mean the angelic hordes, the redeemed, or both. Most likely, it is both in mind here.

Finally, we note that the duration of his activity will be forty-two months, or 3-1/2 years. This is most likely referring to the final half of the Tribulation. Apparently, some action occurs in the middle of the seven years to set the stage for his activity in the last 3-1/2 years. Many scholars see the Antichrist as rising to power in the first 3-1/2 years, only to use that power in the last 3-1/2 years to fulfill Satan’s agenda.

It is also interesting to compare this verse with Daniel 7:8 where we are told the little horn had “a mouth speaking great things.” The phrase is literally “pompous words” and refers to the Antichrist speaking empty words to build himself up and tear God down.

#### 7. His Agenda - Revelation 13:7, 9-10

*Revelation 13:7 And 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.*

*Revelation 13:9-10 If any man have an ear, let him hear. He 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.*

The seventh thing we observe about Antichrist in Revelation 13 is his agenda. Put succinctly, his agenda is two-fold. One, have all the world worship him (which we saw above), and two, obliterate the people of God which consist of both Jews and true believers.

From where does Antichrist receive this power? From God. Although Antichrist will be energized by Satan, we know that ultimately it is God who allows him to run amok during the last part of the Tribulation. Note further that Antichrist’s power is total. All people who dwell on the earth, who are not part of God’s elect, fall under his dominion. He will have total power, and he will use that power to “wear down the saints of the most high” (Daniel 7:25). His handiwork can be seen in Revelation 7:9-17 where John sees a great multitude of martyred believers under the altar which “no man could number of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues.”

Verses 9 and 10 are somewhat confusing. Probably the best interpretation is that these verses are given to those who are finding themselves the objects of Antichrist's reign of terror. This is the most logical understanding of the phrase, "if any man have an ear, let him hear." What is it that God wants them to hear? He wants them to understand that ultimately it is God who is in charge, and if God has ordained that a person will be killed, they will be killed, and if they will be taken captive, they will be captured. Therefore, a person is not to fight Antichrist or his emissaries, as those who kill with the sword will be killed with the sword, an obvious reference to capital punishment.

8. His Atrocity - 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, Matthew 24:15, Daniel 9:27

*2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and 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, showing himself that he is God.*

*Matthew 24:15 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:)*

*Daniel 9:27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*

To find Antichrist's atrocity, we need to look elsewhere in Scripture. By comparing 2 Thessalonians 2:4, Matthew 24:15, and Daniel 9:27, we are led to understand that sometime during the middle of the Tribulation Antichrist will break his covenant with Israel, desecrate the rebuilt temple, and set himself up as God to be worshiped. This act is known as the "abomination of desolation" and was prefigured by Antiochus Epiphanes around 165 B.C. when he sacrificed a pig on the temple altar. It is after this point that Antichrist turns on Israel and seeks to wipe them from the face of the earth (Matthew 24:15ff.)

9. His Annihilation - Daniel 7:11, 2 Thessalonians 2:8, Revelation 19:20

*Daniel 7:11 I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.*

*2 Thessalonians 2:8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:*

*Revelation 19:20 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.*



Finally, we note the end of the Antichrist. As evil as this man is, and as powerful as he is being energized by Satan, he is no match of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the end, the Antichrist and the False Prophet become the first two permanent occupants of the Lake of Fire.

Daniel first saw the end of Antichrist in Daniel 7:11. He watches as the little horn makes war with the saints until he is slain, his body destroyed, and he is given over to the burning flame. This is no doubt a reference to the Lake of Fire. Paul saw the end of Antichrist as well in 2 Thessalonians 2:8, where he states that the Wicked One will be destroyed personally by Christ at his Second Coming. John sees the battle of Armageddon, in which both the beast and the false prophet are slain and cast alive into the Lake of Fire. Theirs is an eternal punishment, as Revelation 20:10 tells us that Satan is cast into the Lake of Fire where the beast and the false prophet are.

### III. The False Prophet

#### A. His Appearance - Revelation 13:11

*Revelation 13:11 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.*

We are introduced to the third member of the Satanic Trinity in these few verses. Interestingly, these verses, and Revelation 19:20, are the only passages in the Bible where the false prophet is mentioned.

The appearance of this beast is a bit different than the Antichrist. This beast has two horns like a lamb, which many think refers to his appearance of gentle harmlessness. Unlike the Antichrist who uses force, this beast uses deceit and lying wonders to lead the world astray into their worship of the Antichrist.

#### B. His Activities - Revelation 13:12-18

##### 1. He causes the world to worship Antichrist

*Revelation 13:12 And 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.*

Just as it is the activity of the Holy Spirit to direct the attention of men to Christ, so it is the activity of the false prophet to direct the attention of the world to the Antichrist. This man is the worship leader for the beast.

##### 2. He performs wondrous miracle to deceive the world

*Revelation 13:13-14a And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And 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;*

He causes the whole world to worship the beast by performing great wonders, even to the extent of causing fire to fall from heaven. These miracles are meant to deceive the world into believing the Antichrist is divine. A couple

of OT counterparts to the false prophet is Jannes and Jambres who were able to duplicate many of the miracles of Moses before the Pharaoh.

3. He gives life to the image of the beast in order to cause the world to worship the beast.

*Revelation 13:14b-15a 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. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak,*

This is an interesting passage that has evoked endless speculation. What appears to happen is that the false prophet has an image, or statue, of the Antichrist made which he then brings to life by some demonic means. This act is so out of the extraordinary, that the entire world wonders after the beast and is caused to worship him.

4. He causes all who will not worship the beast to be killed.

*Revelation 13:15b and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.*

Religious tolerance will not be a mark of the Antichrist and false prophet. Anyone who will not submit to the worship of the beast will pay with their life.

5. He forces all the earth to take the mark of the beast in order to buy or sell.

*Revelation 13:16-18 And 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: 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 Here 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.*

Here we are told how the false prophet causes all the world to worship the beast, it is through the mark of the beast. Again, there has been endless speculation on exactly what this mark is. Some have said it is the actual number "666", other that it is a group of numbers, and others that it is something else. Whatever it really is, we do know that it will be required to buy or sell anything. Those who refuse to take the mark of the beast will not only be tracked down and martyred, but will even be unable to buy and sell food.

# The Wars of the Tribulation

## I. The Gathering Storm

We know that the first 3-1/2 years of the Tribulation are characterized by times of immense prosperity and peace (the rider on the white horse.) However, this peace is a deceptive peace, and behind the scenes God and Satan are strategizing for the battle of battles in which Satan tries one last, desperate time, to overthrow the rule of God.

In Matthew 24:6 we read, “*And 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.*” One of the signs that Christ gave his disciples regarding his second coming was that there would be wars and rumors of wars. In the context of Matthew 24, this refers to the first 3-1/2 years of the tribulation, since we see the abomination of desolation in Matthew 24:15, which is at the mid-point of the Tribulation.

The bottom line is that there is a gathering storm during the first 3-1/2 years of the Tribulation. Although there is peace, it is an unsettled peace, and when the midpoint of the Tribulation arrives, all hell will literally break loose as the earth becomes involved in global war so extensive that the very future of mankind is put in doubt.

## II. The Gog and Magog invasion into Palestine (Northern invasion).

Ezekiel 38-39 records the invasion of Gog and Magog. Many Bible scholars think that this is the event which triggers the beginning of the end. Up to this time, there has been relative peace. This is evidenced by the fact that Israel is dwelling in their land in peace, in unwalled villages. This is an obvious picture of security. It is in the midst of this security that the Northern and Southern armies invade. Daniel 11:36-45 gives the overall picture, Ezekiel 38-39 focuses on the Northern King.

### A. The Identity of the Invaders - Ezekiel 38:2-6

1. Meshech, Tubal, and Rosh<sup>1</sup> refer to the area just north of Israel, formerly parts the Soviet Union. We first find their names mentioned in Genesis 10:2 as sons of Japheth.

Meshech is thought to be an ancient name for Moschi tribe, and Tubal may be an ancient name for the the Tibarini tribe. Both of these tribes lived in the area of Phrygian and Cappadocia, modern northeastern Turkey. There is significant linguistic evidence to link these two names to the areas north of Israel near the Caspian sea.<sup>2</sup>

2. Persia refers to modern Iran.

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<sup>1</sup> There is a lot of discussion by commentators on whether the Hebrew should be translated as “chief prince” or as “prince of Rosh.” If it is translated the first way it implies that Gog is the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. If translated the other way, it implies that Gog is the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal.

<sup>2</sup> Charles L. Feinburg, *The Prophecy of Ezekiel*, (Chicago, Moody Press, 1969), pp. 219-221.

3. Cush<sup>3</sup> refers to Africa and the area of modern Ethiopia.
  4. Phut<sup>4</sup> refers to modern Libya and north Africa.
  5. Togarmah and Gomer<sup>5</sup> refer to the communist satellites of Europe, specifically eastern Germany and the area of Armenia.
- B. Why will they invade - Ezekiel 38:8-16

1. God will bring them down - Ezekiel 38:8-11

First, and foremost, God will put it into the hearts of these armies to invade Israel. They may think that the motives for invading are their own, but behind them is God putting “hooks in their jaws.” This is highly descriptive language which conveys the idea that God is almost dragging them into battle against their wills. The reason for this is that he will use the destruction of these armies to glorify his name as well as precipitate the events of the last half of the tribulation.

2. To take a spoil - Ezekiel 38:12.

The dead sea area is said to contain at least three trillion dollars worth of minerals. On top of that, is the oil fields of Israel and the accumulated wealth of all of the returning Jews.

3. To conquer the Middle East.

Interestingly enough, with the dissolution of the USSR, many of the satellites of the USSR are showing their true religious foundations, that of Islam. Additionally, every one of the nations mentioned above are Islamic in nature. Thus, it may very well be that this invasion is predicated on religious differences between Judaism and Islam. With Israel back in the land, and practicing their religion at the Temple, it may be that the Islamic nations get fed up and invade Israel in order to wipe it off the world. In any case, it is clear to anyone today that there is a great rift between Israel and the Arab nations which goes beyond mere nationalism to that of religion.

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<sup>3</sup> Cush is mentioned in Genesis 10:6 as one of the sons of Ham. Cush had Raamah who in turn had Sheba and Dedan who are mentioned in Ezekiel 38:13 as comprising part of the Southern king. Sheba and Dedan are considered to be the modern nations of Saudi Arabia and the Arab kingdoms around the Persian Gulf.

<sup>4</sup> Phut is another son of Ham who migrated to the area of modern Libya.

<sup>5</sup> Togarmah is a son of Gomer, who is in turn a son of Japheth (Genesis 10:2). Gomer settled in the area of the Rhine and Danube rivers. Togarmah later became the Armenians.

4. To challenge the authority of the Antichrist.

We can't forget that the Antichrist has vowed to assist Israel. It may be that the Islamic coalition is determined to try the mettle of the Antichrist, and see if he will really protect Israel as he has promised. If this is a valid scenario, then this invasion will precipitate the Antichrist's own invasion into Israel. This is supported in part by Daniel 11:40 in which we are told that the King of the South and North push against Antichrist by invading Israel. The idea of pushing is that of a goat pushing another goat in a display of strength and domination. It may be that the kings of the North and South are trying to goad the Antichrist into a war by invading the land he has vowed to protect.

C. The Chronology of the Invasion.

1. King of the South (Egypt and the Arab states) and the King of the North will invade at the same time.
2. God will then destroy the King of the North by a great earthquake, hailstones, and fire from heaven.
3. The Antichrist will destroy the King of the South in a decisive battle (Daniel 11:40-43).

D. The Results of the Invasion - Ezekiel 38:16-39:7

1. 5/6 of the Northern army will be destroyed by God - Ezekiel 39:2
2. The first of the gory feasts will then take place - Ezekiel 39:17-20
3. Seven months to bury the dead, and seven years to burn the instruments of war<sup>6</sup> - Ezekiel 39:12-14
4. God will be glorified - Ezekiel 39:21-23.
5. Israel will recognize that God is on their side - Ezekiel 39:21-29.

This is only speculation, but it may be that case that when Israel observes the destruction of the invading armies, they will recognize that their deliverance is from God, and not the Antichrist. In fact, they may transfer their allegiance from the Antichrist to God. This may cause Antichrist to break his treaty and invade Israel.

III. The Middle East Invasion of the Antichrist - Daniel 11:36-45

We know from Daniel 9:27 and 2 Thessalonians 2 that Antichrist is going to break his treaty with Israel at the midpoint of the Tribulation. When he does that, he is going to set himself up as God to be worshiped by the whole world. We find out about this middle eastern invasion by the Antichrist in Daniel 11.

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<sup>6</sup> Interestingly enough, the Russian army is making many of its instruments of war out of extremely compressed wood which has the strength of steel but burns like coal.

### A. The Time of the Prophecy - Daniel 11:35

*Daniel 11:35 And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed.*

Some commentators would like to place the events of verses 36-45 during the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. However, a closer examination of these verses would lead us to believe that the phrase “time of the end” refers to the last days prior to Christ’s second coming. This is strengthened by the next chapter in Daniel which is clearly a reference to Christ’s second coming.

- “The time of the end” is an eschatological reference to the last times just before the return of Christ.
- The prophecy stretches much further than just the Persian and Greek period (the first 35 verses of chapter 11). Daniel 10:14 says that the prophecy given is to give Daniel information on what will happen in the “last days.”
- We can follow in great detail the prophecy up to 11:35. After verse 35, however, there are no historical events which fulfill the remainder of this prophecy.
- “Till the indignation be accomplished” in verse 36 is a reference to the final outpouring of God’s wrath.
- The description of the ruler in this passage parallels other scriptural accounts of Antichrist.
- Daniel 12:1 equates the activities of Michael with the time of this prophecy. Also, in Daniel 12:2 we see the resurrection of the OT saints at this time as well. Clearly, this must refer to a future fulfillment.

### B. The Character of the Antichrist - Daniel 11:36

*Daniel 11:36-39 And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain.*

We find several characteristics of the Antichrist in these few verses.

1. He will do as he wills. He will be an absolute dictator answerable to no one.
2. He will magnify himself above all other gods.
3. He will blaspheme the name of God.

4. He will not regard tradition.
5. He will not regard family or women.

Some think that this refers to the fact that Antichrist is a homosexual. Others think that he is just preoccupied so much with war that he has no desire for a home or family. Still others think that this is a reference to his hatred of Christ, which is metaphorically spoken of as “the desire of women,” which means that it was the desire of every Jewish woman to be the mother of the Messiah.

6. He will not regard any other god.
7. He will honor a god of his own making, the god of forces.

C. The Beginning of War - Daniel 11:40-45

1. Phase 1 - The Southern Invasion - Daniel 11:40a

*Daniel 11:4a And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him:...*

The event that seems to start the unraveling of the Antichrist’s empire is the invasion of the southern armies which include the countries of Egypt and other southern nations. Comparing this with Ezekiel 38-39 would lead us to believe that these other nations include Libya, Ethiopia, and Iran.<sup>7</sup>

B. Phase 2 - The Northern Invasion - Daniel 11:40b

*Daniel 11:4b ...and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships;*

At the same time of the southern invasion, the northern armies invade Israel as well. Most likely, this is the same invasion as is mentioned in Ezekiel 38-39.

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<sup>7</sup> In Daniel 7:8 we are told that three of the ten horns of the diverse beast are plucked up by the Antichrist. This is understood by many Bible scholars to refer to the fact that although Antichrist’s power is derived from ten nations (or regions), apparently three of these kings do so reluctantly. It is interesting to note that three kings appear to ultimately rebel against the Antichrist, the North, the South, and the East.

C. Phase 3 - The Antichrist's Response - Daniel 11:40c-43

*Daniel 11:40c-43 ...and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.*

The result of the invasion of these two armies is the absolute victory of Antichrist. We know from Ezekiel 38-39 that the destruction of the northern army is as a result of divine intervention. It may be that God uses the Antichrist as an instrument to accomplish this destruction, but Scripture seems to indicate that it will be God himself. Undoubtedly, the Antichrist will take credit for the destruction to increase his status in the world. However, it is clear from this passage that the Antichrist is going to have complete victory over the southern kingdom. Specifically:

1. Edom and Moab will escape (some think that the remnant of Israel will be divinely protected there - see Revelation 12:14-16)
2. The southern armies will be completely devastated by the Antichrist.
3. Egypt will not escape the Antichrist's wrath.
4. The Antichrist will have complete power over the wealth of Egypt, Libya, and Ethiopia.

D. Phase 4 - The Antichrist's Establishment in Israel - Daniel 11:44-45a

*Daniel 11:44 -45a 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 seas in the glorious holy mountain;*

While the Antichrist is busy demolishing the armies of the south, he will hear about the armies of the east who appear to be making their move towards the Middle East. This will cause him to return to Jerusalem and set up his headquarters there. This is probably the time that he will set himself up as god to be worshiped. The Hebrew literally reads, "he will pitch his tent between the seas in the holy mountain." "Between the seas" refers to the land between the Mediterranean, Israel, and "the holy mountain" refers to Jerusalem.

E. Phase 5 - The Antichrist's Final End - Daniel 11:45b

*Daniel 11:45b ...yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.*

In spite of the Antichrist's apparent military domination, he will not win. His armies will be completely destroyed by the second coming of Christ.



#### IV. The Battle of Armageddon

##### A. The Picture of the Harvest - Revelation 14:14-20

In Revelation 14:14-20 we have a vision of the coming great judgment of the Battle of Armageddon. We have to look elsewhere for many details of this battle, but here we see a graphic vision of its results.

##### 1. The Harvester

*Revelation 14:14 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.*

The harvester is seen in visionary form as being like the Son of Man. Some commentators think that this is not Christ, but some other being as he is addressed by an angel from the temple. However, it is very unlikely that John would say that he is like the Son of Man if, in fact, he was not Christ. Therefore, it is better to understand this one on the cloud as being the exalted Christ. We, of course, are reminded of the passage in Matthew 13:24-30 where we are introduced to a coming harvest at the end of the age in which the wheat and tares are separated. It is interesting to see that angels are very active in this final harvest of judgment.

##### 2. The Hour of Judgment

*Revelation 14:15 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.*

The second figure in this vision is an angel who comes out of the Temple of God in heaven crying with a loud voice to the one sitting on the cloud. It is interesting to note in Revelation 8:3-5 that in the before the altar in heaven there was an angel holding a golden censer full of the prayers of the saints. What is most likely happening here is that the angel coming out of the temple declares that the time for judgment has come. In other words, he is not ordering Christ to judge as much as he is declaring the time of judgment has arrived.

The word used for “ripe” is a word which was used to refer to fruit that was so ripe it was rotting. The harvest of the earth is seen as being ripe for judgment. The cup of indignation has been filled to the brim, and is ready to be poured out.

##### 3. The Harvest

*Revelation 14:16-18 And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. 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.*

Before, the echos of the cry of the angel have died down, Christ thrusts the sickle into the earth to reap the harvest. Not only does Christ get in on the harvest, but another angel from inside the temple comes out and thrusts a second sickle into the earth. Although we see only four figures in this vision, it is likely that a great number of angels are involved in this final judgment. This is also corroborated by other passages in which we read of the final judgment, most specifically Matthew 13:24-30.

#### 4. The Horror

*Revelation 14:19-20 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. 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.*

*Isaiah 63:1-6 Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? 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. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.*

The horror of this harvesting is seen in very graphic language in these two verses. It is a picture of a great winepress, where the harvest of the world is thrown. Instead of pressing out wine, however, the winepress presses out the blood of men. It is as though all of the recipients of God's judgment are crushed together in this final judgment to the extent that all of their blood gushes out over the land.

What is in view here is the result of the battle of Armageddon, in which the armies of the Antichrist are killed with the sword proceeding out of the mouth of Christ. So great is the slaughter that the blood of men rises to a level of at least five feet for a length of nearly 186 miles. This is no small skirmish, it is total devastation.

#### B. The Preparation for Battle - Revelation 16:12-16

##### 1. The Geographical Preparation - Revelation 16:12

*Revelation 16:12 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.*

Before there can be a physical gathering of the armies, the way to the battlefield must be prepared. The sixth vial, poured out by the angel, dries up the Euphrates river so that the great armies of the kings of the East may make their way to the battle. Anyone, who looks at a map, can clearly see that before a great army can march from the east to the middle east, some way over or around the Euphrates is required. This vial performs that task.

## 2. The Political Preparation - Revelation 16:13-14

*Revelation 16:13-14 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. For 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.*

Just because the geographical way has been prepared, it does not necessarily follow that the kings of the world will be gathered together. In order for the world to be gathered together, there must be some reason. The reason is given here. From the mouths of the Antichrist, Dragon, and False Prophet three unclean spirits come which perform great signs and wonders in order to gather the world together at the final great battle. Satan appears to be gathering these kings together, although we know that behind it is the sovereign hand of God who is bringing all the armies of the world together in one place in order to destroy them in one act.

## 3. The Personal Preparation - Revelation 16:15

*Revelation 16:15 Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.*

In the midst of the description of this final great battle, God gives a warning to men. The warning is this, God is coming in judgment, and those who are unprepared will taste of his wrath. The message is this, be prepared. Christ always gives the warning that his coming is going to be unexpected. Therefore, men must be ready at all times, so that they will be ready at the right time.

## 3. The Eschatological Preparation - Revelation 16:16

*Revelation 16:16 And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.*

Although we see the designs of Satan is bringing these armies together, God is orchestrating the events in such a way as to gather all armies together for their final destruction.

Although the entire land of Israel is one big battlefield, the focal point of this final battle is Mount Megiddo, in the valley of Esdraelon. In all of Israel, this is probably the most accessible and most strategic place to have a battle. The land is flat and wide, and affords plenty of space for all of the

armies of the world to gather. It is here, that the Antichrist, False Prophet, and their armies meet the wrath of Almighty God.

C. The Participants in the Conflict - Revelation 16:12-16, 19:11-13

1. The Lamb of God - Revelation 19:11-13

*Revelation 19:11-13 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.*

This vision of Christ depicts him as the coming judge. The first time he came as the lamb of God, the next time it will be the lion. His vesture, or robe, is dipped in blood. This may be a picture of his crucifixion, or if we look at Isaiah 63 it may picture the blood of his enemies.

2. The Armies of Heaven - Revelation 19:14

*Revelation 19:14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.*

Accompanying Christ on his return is the armies of heaven. Some say that these armies are comprised of angels, but the description we see here does not hold true for angels. Most probably, these armies are comprised of the redeemed, since their description is the same as that of the bride in Revelation 19:8. Although Christ comes with the armies of heaven, he does not depend on them for the victory. The battle will be his.

3. The Armies of the World - Revelation 16:13-14

*Revelation 16:13-14 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. For 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.*

In Revelation 16 we find that the armies of heaven are arrayed against the armies of the Antichrist. All of the kings of the earth are going to be gathered together in order to fight against God. Although they think this gathering is their doing, behind the scenes is the deceit of Satan who is being used by God to effect divine judgment on unredeemed humanity.

4. The Antichrist and False Prophet - Revelation 19:19-20

*Revelation 19:19-20 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. 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.*

**D. The Penitence of Israel - Zechariah 12:10-13:1**

*Zechariah 12:10-13:1 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart. In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.*

When Christ entered the city of Jerusalem in A.D. 33, he was looking for any evidence of repentance. In the Parable of the Fig Tree (Matthew 21:19-20), Christ present the disciples with a graphic picture of this lack of repentance. Just as the fig tree did not have fruit, even so Israel did not have any fruit of repentance. This lack of repentance resulted in the postponement of the Kingdom.

However, at the end of the Tribulation Israel will turn to Christ in repentance. As Israel experiences the lowest point in their history, they will look on Christ whom they have pierced and mourn the fact that they did not accept him the first time. Their repentance will open up a fountain of blessing.

In fact, we must remember that one of the reasons for the Tribulation is to bring Israel to the point of repentance, where they see Christ for who he really is, their Messiah. It is unfortunate that this repentance will only be realized after 2/3 of Israel is destroyed by the Antichrist and the judgments of the Tribulation. Even though this repentance will require a high price, it will come to pass.

**E. The Picnic of the Birds - Revelation 19:15-18**

*Revelation 19:17-18 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.*

This is the second of the great gory feasts of the Tribulation. The carnage that results from the Battle of Armageddon is beyond our imagination. The armies of Antichrist will not only suffer defeat, they will actually be completely annihilated to the last man. There will be no survivors. The presence of millions of dead men will require the assistance of the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth to take care of. In fact, in Revelation 14:20 we find that the blood flows to a height of five feet for a distance of hundreds of miles. The devastation and carnage is unimaginable. This devastation is also pictured in Isaiah 34:1-6:

*Isaiah 34:1-6* Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it. For the indignation of the LORD is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea.

**F. The Price of Rebellion - Revelation 19:19-21**

*Revelation 19:19-21* 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. 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.

Rebellion against God always comes with a price. Men may feel that they are free to do as they please, but ultimately the time of reckoning comes. The rebellion of Satan and man comes to a head at the Battle of Armageddon with the results that the entire host arrayed against God is destroyed, without a single scratch on the victorious heavenly armies.

The Antichrist and False Prophet are personally destroyed by Christ and condemned to the Lake of Fire. They become its first, permanent participants. The armies of the Antichrist find themselves in no better shape, being destroyed by the two-edged sword that proceeds from the mouth of Christ. They find themselves in hades, awaiting the Great White Throne judgment of Revelation 20:10-20.

# The Great Tribulation

## I. The Seven Trumpets - Revelation 8:7-9:21, 11:15-19

- A. Hail and fire mingled with blood. 1/3 trees are burned, all green grass is burned - Revelation 8:7.

This is most likely a meteor shower of catastrophic proportions. As the meteors hit the atmosphere at great speeds, they ignite and cause fires wherever they hit. Blood is probably seen in its metaphorical sense as iron oxide, a major component of most meteorites.

- B. A meteor falls into the sea. 1/3 becomes blood, 1/3 of creatures in the sea die, 1/3 of the ships are destroyed - Revelation 8:8-9.

A meteor falling into the sea at 30,000 mph would cause a 600 foot high tidal wave which would wash over the continents. The resulting shock wave would kill all the fish in the area of the impact for several miles. Of course, the tidal wave would also do in any shipping unfortunate enough to be at sea. The reference to the water turning to blood could refer to the blood of the sea life, but may refer to the contamination from the meteor. Most meteors are made of iron compounds which would oxidize in sea water turning it to a dark rusty color.

- C. A meteor falls upon rivers. 1/3 of fresh water becomes bitter - Revelation 8:10-11.

What happens here is that this meteor most likely contains some kind of material that is poisonous to man. As it burns in the atmosphere its material is spread over a large area polluting the fresh water sources. Men who drink the polluted water are poisoned.

- D. 1/3 part of the sun is smitten, 1/3 of moon is darkened, and 1/3 of the stars are darkened. Probably due to the dust raised by the falling of the meteors - Revelation 8:12-13.

This does not mean that the sun will only shine 2/3 of the time, but that the light of the sun will be reduced by 1/3. This is most likely due to the tremendous amounts of dust and ash thrown into the air as the result of the first three trumpets. The reduction in solar radiation is going to have worldwide climactic results.

- E. Demonic locusts from the pit - Revelation 9:1-12.

These temporarily bound demons will come out of the pit (abyss) to torment men for five months. The sting of these demons is like that of scorpions, which secrete powerful neurotoxins which cause immense pain.

- F. A demonic army of 200,000,000 from the bottomless pit. (Some authorities take this to be China instead of demons) - Revelation 9:13-21.

Some commentators think that this refers to the army of Red China. However, it is probably best to see these as actual demons for a couple of reasons. First, the sixth

bowl judgment dries up the Euphrates river for the army of the east. The sixth bowl is poured out some time later. Secondly, the description of these creatures is hardly the description of men. Thirdly, if a human army was in view here, the Holy Spirit would have made that clear. Thus, these creatures are most likely to be identified as some temporarily bound demons loosed from the pit who take their wrath out on mankind by killing 1/3 of all men.

G. The kingdoms of the world become the kingdom of Christ - Revelation 11:15-19.

This final trumpet marks the culmination of God's judgment on the earth. Within it we find seven bowls, which will be poured out in rapid-fire succession at the very end of the Tribulation.

II. The Victory of God - Revelation 10

As in the case of the bowls and seals, there is a brief break in the description of the trumpets which takes up chapters 10 and half of 11. This break, as the others, is given to assure the people of God that they have not been forgotten in the midst of judgment. In the break between the trumpets, we are given a vision of the Victory of God, and the Ministry of the Two Witnesses.

A. A Unique Angel - Revelation 10:1

*Revelation 10:1 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:*

We are introduced to another vision of John in this verse, that of a mighty angel. Some equate this angel with Christ, however we find that this verse calls this personage an angel. If this were Christ, John would have used a different name, like the Lamb of God or one like unto the Son of Man. Most likely, this is just a unique angel.

The appearance of this angel was like the sun, with a halo around his head (Greek *iris*). This is indicative of the glory of the holy angels. His feet, as pillars of fire, refer again to the blazing glory of the unfallen angels who stand in the presence of God.

B. A Unique Book - Revelation 10:2

*Revelation 10:2 And 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,*

In the hand of this angel, is a little book. There is great debate over the identity of this book. Some want it to be another book of many mentioned in Revelation, still others think that it refers to the scroll of Chapter 5 and 6. Most likely, it is the latter. A couple of reasons for this is that this particular book, when eaten by John, is both sweet and bitter, indicative of the judgments of God. They are sweet to the redeemed, but bitter to the unredeemed. Secondly, the opening of the scroll in Revelation 5 and 6 is what triggers the events of the Tribulation which culminate in the victory of the Lamb. Although it is true that we cannot be one hundred percent sure on this issue, it is most probably the book that had seven seals that John sees here opened. Also, we are told that this book was opened. We know from



our study in Revelation 5 and 6 that the Lamb has opened the seven seals of the scroll at this time.

C. A Unique Deletion - Revelation 10:3-4

*Revelation 10:3-4 And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. And 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.*

When the angel sets his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, a symbol of God's sovereignty over the land and sea, seven thunders utter their voices. "Thunders" are probably indicative of angels who speak with a loud voice, their voices "thundering" symbolically. As John prepares to write what these thunders utter, he is told to omit what they said. It is really useless to speculate on what was said, since if God wanted us to know he certainly would have had John write it down.

D. A Unique Oath - Revelation 10:5-7

*Revelation 10:5-7 And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, And swore 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: But 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.*

The angel now takes an oath to the effect that the certainty of God's rule is about to be manifested in the earth. In fact, the angel specifically says that it will be in the day in which the seventh angel sounds the trumpet (11:15-19) thus culminating the judgment of God on the earth. The phrase "time no longer" refers to the fact that delay is over. Up till this point God had delayed his wrath in order to allow men to repent (2 Peter 3:9). However, the time of grace is at an end and the time of God's manifest kingdom has arrived.

E. A Unique Meal - Revelation 10:8-11

*Revelation 10:8-11 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. And 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. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.*

As John observes this angel, he is told by a voice from heaven to go to the angel and take the book from the angel. He does so, only to be told to eat the book. As he does, it is sweet as honey in his mouth and bitter to his stomach. This is somewhat reminiscent of Ezekiel 2:8-3:3 where Ezekiel is told to eat a scroll as well. The image of eating the scroll in both cases appears to be that the writing on the scroll

becomes part of the prophet so that he prophesies of the judgments and woes written in the scroll. The seven-sealed scroll of Revelation 5-6 is full of judgment, just like the scroll of Ezekiel 2:8 is full of judgment. Furthermore, although it is sweet to the prophet, it is bitter to the stomach in the same sense that the pronouncement of God's judgment and revenge is sweet to the one who is redeemed, but bitter to the one who is the recipient of that judgment and justice.

### III. The Ministry of the Two Witnesses - Revelation 11.

#### A. The Measurement of the Temple - Revelation 11:1-2

*Revelation 11:1-2 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. But 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.*

John is told by an angel to measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship therein. In prophetic literature, the act of measuring is often used to mark out a group of people, or an area, for God's use and purposes. Symbolically, then, God is measuring out, or setting aside, a people for his own use.

In verse two we are told that the outer court of the temple, the area accessible to the Gentiles, is to be left out of this measurement, indicating that God is not setting them aside for his own. Furthermore the outer court is going to be given over to Gentile hands for a period of forty-two months, or three and one half years. This is the length of the last half of the Tribulation.

#### B. The Ministry of the Two Witnesses - Revelation 11:3-14

##### 1. The Duration of the Ministry - Revelation 11:3

*Revelation 11:3 And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.*

The duration of the ministry of the two witnesses is given as being exactly 1,260 days, forty-two months, or three and a half years, all times measurements being equal. The real question is not as much the duration of their ministry, but the time of their ministry in relation to the Tribulation period. Some say that their ministry takes place during the first half the the tribulation, they themselves being killed at the midpoint. Others place their ministry a little later. If one examines the data regarding these two witnesses, it may be best to see their ministry as starting sometime during the first half of the tribulation, and ending sometime during the second half. Some reasons for this are:

- They are killed in Jerusalem by the Antichrist. From a study of the wars of the Tribulation, we know that Antichrist invades Israel during the midpoint time, which would mean he would be in Israel to kill these two witnesses.

- The plagues they strike the earth with seem to be during a time of relative peace and stability. This would hardly be the case if their ministry was entirely during the second half of the Tribulation.
- The placement of this vision is between the sixth and seventh trumpet, which would place it during the second half. However, we must realize that John is seeing things in vision form, and the book of Revelation is not completely chronological.
- The death of the witnesses occurs after the Antichrist has fully risen to power, which will happen during the last half of the Tribulation.

## 2. The Description of the Witnesses - Revelation 11:4

*Revelation 11:4 These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.*

There has been endless speculation as to the identity of the two witnesses. Some think that they are Moses and Elijah, others Elijah and Enoch, and still others think they are two specially empowered men.

Interestingly, these two witnesses are described as the two olive trees. In Zechariah 4:1-14 we are introduced to two olive trees and are told that “these are the anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.” It is highly likely, then, that the olive trees of Zechariah 14 and Revelation 11 are the same. Who are they? No one really knows.<sup>8</sup> All we can know is that they are two special agents which God uses to spread the message of the gospel during the Tribulation.

## 3. The Durability of the Witnesses - Revelation 11:5

*Revelation 11:5 And 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.*

Since these two witnesses are God’s emissaries, they have his divine protection for the entire duration of their ministry. They are the supermen of that time. Apparently, they are invulnerable to all of the attempts on their lives, and have the ability to defend themselves by spewing fire from their mouths. Until their time is up, Satan and all of the host of hell cannot harm them. This will probably cause no end of frustration on the part of the Antichrist, as he would desperately want these men out of the way, but cannot harm them until the time appointed by God. If these two witnesses tell us anything, they tell us that God will always insure that his message is proclaimed in spite of all of the efforts of hell to squelch the truth.

## 4. The Damage of the Witnesses - Revelation 11:6

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<sup>8</sup> Many Bible scholars think that these two olive trees represent the civil and religious rulers of Israel. These would have been Zerubbabel and Joshua during Zechariah’s time. This is a possible interpretation, although we cannot in any way be certain of it.

*Revelation 11:6* These 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.

The damage that these two witnesses do on the earth is immeasurable. Just like Elijah of the Old Testament, they have the ability to withhold the rains. Whether this just means the rain over the part of the earth where they are at, or over the whole earth, is not clear. Furthermore, they have the ability to turn the water into blood. This is one of the reasons many think that the two witnesses are Elijah and Moses. Elijah was responsible for the drought during the reign of Ahab, which lasted three and one-half years, and Moses was responsible for the ten plagues of Egypt, one of which was to turn water into blood. Undoubtedly, the damage of the witnesses coupled with the judgments of God will cause great suffering on the part of the unredeemed during that time.

5. The Death of the Witnesses - Revelation 11:7-10

*Revelation 11:7-10* 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. And 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. And 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. And 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.

Once the ministry of the witnesses has ended, Antichrist is finally able to kill them. Because of the grief that these two witnesses caused the earth, their bodies will lie unburied in the streets of Jerusalem (spiritually called Sodom) for three and one-half days. The joy that results over the death of these two witnesses will cause the entire earth to rejoice and send gifts to one another, sort of a Happy Dead Witnesses day.

6. The Dread of the Witnesses - Revelation 11:11-12

*Revelation 11:11-12* 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. 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.

Antichrist's victory is short-lived, however, because after three and one-half days the two witnesses will be resurrected and called into heaven. This event will cause great fear to fall on all of the people of the earth, as they see these two dead men come to life, probably on CNN. This event shows the power of God is greater than the power of Satan.

7. The Devastation of the Witnesses - Revelation 11:13-14

*Revelation 11:13-14 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. The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.*

Immediately after the two witnesses are called back to heaven, a great earthquake strikes the city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem is most likely the city since it is Jerusalem where the two witnesses were finally killed by the Antichrist. This earthquake is of such magnitude that seven thousand men were killed, and the rest completely terrified.

We get an indication of the time when these two witnesses are killed in verse fourteen, that being after the second woe, or sixth trumpet. This would place the killing of the two witnesses sometime after the middle of the last half of the Tribulation.

### III. The Martyrdom of the 144,000 Witnesses - Revelation 14:1-5

#### A. Their Identity - Revelation 14:1-2

*Revelation 14:1-2 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. And 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:*

In this chapter we are introduced to the 144,000 witnesses for the second time. Some dispute the identification of these witnesses with the first 144,000 mentioned in chapter seven, but the arguments for this are very tenuous. It does not make sense for John to specifically mention their number, if in fact they were a different set of people. In chapter seven we see their commissioning, in this chapter we see their reward.

The fact that the name of God was written in their forehead is to draw a contrast between the group of men in chapter thirteen who have the name of Antichrist in their forehead. The imagery of the name is that of ownership. Just as the world shows their loyalty to the Antichrist by wearing his name, so these 144,000 witnesses show their loyalty to Christ by wearing the name of God on their forehead.

By the way, some want to make this 144,000 be part of the raptured church (the Pre-Wrath rapture position). This is a highly speculative and far-out interpretation. It is best to see these as being the 144,000 of chapter seven, who having completed their work are now in the presence of God.

A good question to ask at this point is "how did they get into heaven?" There are really only two possibilities. Either they were martyred by the Antichrist, or they were translated to heaven by God. Although the former is more likely, the latter may be a possibility since they are called "the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb." Paul uses the imagery of the firstfruits and harvest in 1 Corinthians 15 to talk about the resurrection.

#### B. Their Infinite Joy- Revelation 14:3

*Revelation 14:3 And 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.*

The joy of this redeemed 144,000 is infinite. On earth they found themselves subject to the wrath of Satan and the Antichrist, probably in situations of severe physical deprivation. Not so in heaven. In heaven they find themselves before the throne of God singing a song that only they can learn. Heaven is full of music, the music of the redeemed. Their singing is accompanied by the harps of heaven in verse three, and finds as its audience God on the throne, the four beasts, and the twenty-four elders.

C. Their Integrity - Revelation 14:4-5

*Revelation 14:4-5 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. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.*

The character of these 144,000 is spotless. First, we find that they have not defiled themselves with women. The picture here is that of moral and spiritual purity. Secondly, they follow the Lamb of God wherever he goes. Their only desire in life is to be in his presence. Thirdly, they were redeemed among men as firstfruits to God. The main harvest of the redeemed is yet to come. Fourthly, they have no deceit in their mouths, in contrast to the false prophet who is full of deceit. Fifthly, they are without fault before the throne of God. This faultlessness is not of their own doing, but the redemptive power of the Lamb.

IV. The Message of Three Special Angels - Revelation 14:6-13.

John now sees a vision of three special angels, each having a special message. In redemptive history, it has always been the plan of God to use men in the proclamation and spread of the Gospel. At this time, however, there are three special messages to be proclaimed to the whole earth.

A. The Proclamation of the Everlasting Gospel - Revelation 14:6-7.

*Revelation 14:6-7 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, 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.*

The first message is the proclamation of the everlasting gospel. The message of this gospel is not the four spiritual laws, but the good news of the coming kingdom of God. Gospel means "good news," and although it is often used in the NT to refer to the gospel proper, it is also used to refer to some other special message or proclamation that is good news. This good news is proclaimed to all nations of the earth.

The good news that this angel proclaims is that the hour of God's judgment is come and that the world should worship God, not the Antichrist. This proclamation is just prior to the outpouring of God's wrath in the form of seven bowls, and even in the time of immanent judgment, God is calling men to repentance. The reference to the realm of God's authority is indicative of the content of the coming bowls of judgment, in which God will pour out his wrath and affect the earth, heaven, sea, and fountains of water.

**B. The Proclamation of the Fall of Babylon - Revelation 14:8.**

*Revelation 14:8 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.*

The second angel proclaims the fall of Babylon. In chapter seventeen and eighteen we are introduced to ecclesiastical and economic Babylon. Although it is possible that the angel has both in mind, it is more likely that this reference is to the second Babylon, that being economic Babylon. The phrase "drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication" is a reference to Revelation 18:3, in which economic Babylon is said to have a cup full of wine in which the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her. This proclamation is more a proclamation of victory than of immanent judgment. When the great economic system of the end times is destroyed by God, all of heaven rejoices.

**C. The Proclamation of Judgment of Those That Worship the Beast - Revelation 14:9-13.**

*Revelation 14:9-13 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, The 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: And 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. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. 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.*

It is important to note that whenever God moved in judgment he always preceded that judgment with warnings. We are reminded of Genesis 6 in which God warning men 120 years about the impending doom of the flood, only to have only eight humans respond. Before the destruction of Sodom, God warned Abraham and Lot about what he was to do. We find God's final call and plea to the world here in the proclamation of this angel.

God's warning to the lost is direct and to the point. If any man receives the mark of the beast or worships the Antichrist, they will find themselves the recipients of the undiluted wrath of God. This wrath will take the form of the Lake of Fire, in which those who are unredeemed will be tormented day and night forever. In fact, this is one of the most important passages in the annihilation debate, which wants to say that men are only tormented a short time in the Lake of Fire before they are

annihilated from existence. It states very clearly here that the smoke of the torment of the unredeemed ascends up forever and ever. It certainly doesn't sound temporal to me.

God's comfort to the redeemed is also given here. That being if they keep the commandments of God and persevere even to death, God will provide a place for them in heaven. In fact, God pronounces a blessing on those who die since they will be spared from the fury of Satan and the Antichrist, as well as the death throes of the earth prior to Christ's Second Coming. It is important to understand that death is not the ultimate end of life for a believer, it is only the beginning. Death is not to be feared since it is our doorway to the very presence of God.

#### V. The Pouring Out of the Seven Bowls - Revelation 15:1-16:21.

The seven bowls are most likely poured out during the last small part of the Tribulation. Some want to put some of these bowls earlier, but that is not realistic since the judgments contained in these bowls have the potential to wipe out all life on earth.

Also, it should be noted that these bowls are all contained in the seventh trumpet, which is itself contained in the seventh seal. These bowls consummate the wrath of God on unrepentant man during the time of the Tribulation.

##### A. The Preparation for Judgment - Revelation 15:1-8

###### 1. The Sign in Heaven - Revelation 15:1

*Revelation 15:1 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.*

We are introduced to a new vision of John, that being the vision of the seven trumpeting angels. We are told that these seven angels have the last seven plagues which completes the wrath of God. After these bowls are poured out, God's wrath has been completed and the kingdom of God begins.

###### 2. The Song of the Redeemed - Revelation 15:2-4

*Revelation 15:2-4 And 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. And 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. Who 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.*

As the seven angels begin to prepare for the final outpouring of God's wrath on the earth, all of those who have experienced the wrath of Satan and Antichrist sing a song to God. This song is said to be the song of Moses and Christ. We are introduced to the song of Moses in Exodus 15:1-21 which was sung after the great victory over Pharaoh at the Red Sea. The song was one of victory over the enemies of God, and the song sung by the multitude before the



throne is no different. They have been victorious over the Antichrist. Although Satan was able to kill the body, Satan could kill the soul.

3. The Seven Angels - Revelation 15:5-7

*Revelation 15:5-7 And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: And 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. And 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.*

John sees seven angels come out of the temple of the tabernacle which is in heaven. We have already noted that the picture of the temple refers to the very throne of God. These seven angels come out of the very presence of God, and are given seven final bowls of judgment. We have also noted in chapter fourteen that it appears as though it is from the temple where the final outpouring of wrath finds its source. It is here that the prayers of the saints are offered up to God, and it is under the altar that the martyred saints of the Tribulation cry out for vengeance. The time of vengeance has now arrived, and the bowls are ready to be poured out.

5. The Smoke of the Temple - Revelation 15:8

*Revelation 15:8 And 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.*

God is so intense and involved in this final judgment that the temple of God was filled with smoke and his glory so much so, that no one could enter. God may take his time to move in judgment, as far as man is concerned, but when he does move, it is decisive and final.

B. The Pouring out of Judgment - Revelation 16:1-21

1. Boils on men - Revelation 16:1-2.

*Revelation 16:1-2 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. And 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.*

The first bowl is boils on men. This reminds us of the sixth plague on Egypt in Exodus 9:8-11 in which God struck all the Egyptians with loathsome boils. It is important to note that the scope of this vial is limited to the followers and worshipers of Antichrist. When God pours out his wrath, he spares his redeemed. No doubt this causes great fury to be vented against the people of God who have escaped these boils.

2. Sea turned to blood - Revelation 16:3.

*Revelation 16:3 And 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.*

The second bowl results in the turning of the sea to blood with the result that every living thing in the sea died. Whether this is real blood, as in hemoglobin, or some pollution of the water that makes it look like blood, we cannot be sure. This certainly will freak out the “save the whales” crew.

3. Fountains of water turned to blood - Revelation 16:4-7.

*Revelation 16:4-7 And 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. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.*

The third bowl results in all fresh water being turned to blood. Not only are the oceans now undrinkable, but so are the fountains of water. No doubt many will die of thirst because of this judgment. Interestingly, one can see the justice of God in this judgment as proclaimed by the angels of the waters. Just as unredeemed men have spilled the blood of the righteous, so now God is giving them that very blood to drink.

4. Sun scorches men - Revelation 16:8-9.

*Revelation 16:8-9 And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. 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.*

The fourth bowl results in the sun going nova. Whenever a star novas, it radiates much more energy than normal. This will result in the temperature of the world going up several degrees as men are scorched by the heat of the sun. This, coupled with the first two plagues, will cause severe stress on worldwide agriculture. Not only is there a severe drought, but the heat of the sun has been turned up as well.

The unfortunate part of this whole thing, however, is that men will still refuse to give glory to God. Instead of acknowledging that God is sovereign over the earth, heavens, seas, and fountains of water, men will curse God for what he is doing in judgment. Even when God gives men the opportunity to repent, they oftentimes do not.

5. Darkness - Revelation 16:10-11.

*Revelation 16:10-11 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, And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.*

The fifth bowl is a supernatural darkness. Again, this reminds us of one of the plagues of Egypt where God caused a supernatural darkness to fall. We cannot be sure of how this is exactly done by God. Some think that God supernaturally turns off the sun, others think that this darkness is caused by atmospheric pollution and dust. Although it is mere speculation to try and figure out how this is done by God, we do know that the result is that men blaspheme God even more as they not only have to contend with their boils, but also the severe darkness of this bowl.

6. Euphrates dried up for the battle of Armageddon - Revelation 16:12-16.

*Revelation 16:12-16 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. 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. For 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. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.*

The sixth bowl is a preparatory bowl for the battle of Armageddon. It is God's design and purpose to draw all men together in the middle east for this final great battle, and to do so he must prepare the way. See the previous chapter on the *Wars of the Tribulation* for further exposition of this passage.

7. A great earthquake and the completion of God's wrath - Revelation 16:17-21.

*Revelation 16:17-21 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. And 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. And 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. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And 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.*

The final bowl is poured out, culminating the wrath of God. The result of this bowl was a great earthquake, felt worldwide, that caused mountains to fall and islands to be submerged in the ocean. The devastation of this bowl is beyond imagination. It is as though God picks up the earth and rattles it with a shaking off the Richter scale. Following this great shaking is hail falling out of heaven with the weight of about 100 pounds. What was undamaged by the earthquake now falls victim to this great hail.

As in the previous bowls, we find the hardness of men's hearts evident here. Instead of repenting of their deeds, men blaspheme the very God of heaven for what is happening around them. Even though God is being longsuffering

in allowing them to live, and thus escape the fires of hades, men still do not repent, but further harden their heart.

# The Destruction of Ecclesiastical and Economic Babylon

## I. The Destruction of Ecclesiastical Babylon - Revelation 17.

### A. The Decree of Judgment on the Great Whore - Revelation 17:1

*Revelation 17:1 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters:*

We are introduced to a new vision by John in this chapter, that of the judgment of the great whore. The angel who gives John this invitation is one of the seven angels which poured out one of the bowls of judgment. The identification of this great whore is best understood to be the false religious system of the end times. In prophetic literature the picture of a whore is often used to picture false religion. When Israel abandoned God in the OT, God likened them to a harlot. In fact, the entire book of Hosea is a picture of spiritual adultery where Hosea's relationship to his adulterous wife is equated with God's relationship with Israel.

Although it would appear that this vision occurs after the seven vials, most commentators agree that the events described here must occur sometime during the middle of the Tribulation. Several reasons for this are:

1. The establishment of the worship of the Antichrist happens around the midpoint of the Tribulation. It is unlikely that the Antichrist will be able to establish the worship of himself as God when another religious system exists.
2. We are told that the destruction of this whore is accomplished by the Antichrist and the ten kings who have given him power. It is likely, then, that this religious system is destroyed so that the Antichrist can consolidate his power. Also, this destruction must occur when the ten kings still have a great deal of power, which is most likely during the first half of the Tribulation.

### B. The Deeds of the Great Whore - Revelation 17:2

*Revelation 17:2 With 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.*

The deeds of the great whore are given in terms of adultery. We are told that the kings of the earth have committed fornication with the great whore. This is in reference to the way in which all world rulers have joined themselves with false religion in order to further their power and control. In fact, this relationship has gone to the extent that the kings are pictured as being drunk with the wine of this fornication. Throughout history false religion has always had a close relationship with political power.

### C. The Description of the Great Whore - Revelation 17:3-6

*Revelation 17:3-6 So 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. And 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: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.*

The identification of the whore with false religion is given tremendous credence in these verses. Note the following points:

1. The woman is said to sit on a scarlet colored beast. By looking at the description of this beast with that of Revelation 13 tells us that what John is seeing is the Antichrist. Thus, it appears as though this woman is riding the beast in the sense that to a point, the woman controls the beast. This pictures the fact that until the whore is destroyed, she has some form of power over the beast.
2. The woman is said to wear purple, scarlet, and costly jewelry. A quick look at false religion, particularly Catholicism, shows that false religious systems are very wealthy.
3. The woman has a cup full of abominations and fornications. This refers to licentiousness and spiritual adulteries. The woman is evil to the very core of her being.
4. We are given the name of the woman as being BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. This title is very descriptive, and gives us a lot of information as to the identity of this woman.
  - a. Babylon was the first great false religion of the world. It was founded by Semiramus, the mother of Nimrod, in Genesis 11. When God confounded the languages at the tower of Babel, the roots of this religion was taken to all parts of the world. Thus, the religion of Babylon was the mother of all false religious systems.<sup>9</sup>
  - b. The basic tenets of this religion were:<sup>10</sup>
    - 1). Semiramus claimed to have conceived a son miraculously by a sunbeam. Her son was named Tammuz.
    - 2). Tammuz was killed by a wild boar, and was claimed to have come back to life again after forty days.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> In Phoenicia, we have Ashteroth and Baal, in Babylon Ishtar and Tammuz, in Egypt it was Osiris and Horus. All over the world, the basic beliefs held by the Babylonian religion can be seen in almost every ancient religion. The names have changed, but the original entities are the same.

<sup>10</sup> See *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* by John F. Walvoord, pp. 246-248.

- 3). Tammuz was considered to be a Messiah, the fulfillment of God's promise to Eve in Genesis 3:15.
  - 4). Semiramus created a priesthood that contained a group of virgins dedicated to ritual prostitution, sprinkled holy water on worshipers, and furthered the worship of the Mother/Son imagery of Semiramus/Tammuz.
  - 5). In Jeremiah 7:18, Israel is chastized for their worship of the Queen of Heaven. According to Roman Catholicism, Mary is called the Queen of Heaven.
5. The harlot is said to be drunk with the blood of the saints and the martyrs. Throughout the centuries of the church, the greatest threat to true believers was organized religion. False religion has done more to kill believers than any other force. In fact, it has been estimated that over one million true believers were killed by the Catholic church during the middle ages in the name of Christ.

#### D. The Details of the Vision of the Great Whore - Revelation 17:7-18

##### 1. The Image of the Beast - Revelation 17:7-13

*Revelation 17:7-11 And 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. The 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. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. 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. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. 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. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.*

We are given a description of the beast on which the woman sits in these verses. These verses have caused endless debates among commentators and have resulted many different interpretations. Instead of looking at every possible interpretation, we will focus on what appears to be the correct interpretation.

##### a. His Origin

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<sup>11</sup> This is seen in the modern observation of Lent in Catholicism. The mourning for Tammuz was taken into Catholicism and made Lent. See Ezekiel 8:14 where Ezekiel sees a woman weeping for Tammuz in the apostate temple.

In Revelation 17:8 we are told that the beast was, and is not, and shall ascend out of the abyss. This is very hard to interpret, but many believe that this refers to the apparent death and resurrection of the Antichrist. This is also born out when we examine the parallel passage in Revelation 13 where we are told about the apparent resurrection of the Antichrist and the resultant awe of the world. The phrase “ascend out of the abyss” is best seen as the fact that the power of the Antichrist is energized by some demon from the abyss who was released during the Tribulation.

b. Seven Heads

In Revelation 17:9 we are told very clearly that the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman (the harlot church) sits. Many think that the seven mountains refer to Rome, since it is known as the city on seven hills. This means that the false church will be headquartered in Rome, an interpretation many anti-Catholics have subscribed to.

However, I think it may be better to understand the seven mountains as referring to seven kingdoms. Each of these kingdoms were characterized by a false religion all having their origins in ancient Babylon. The term “mountain” is often used to refer to kingdoms (Exodus 15:17, Daniel 2:35, Amos 4:1: 6:1, Joshua 11:26, Isaiah 2:2-3; 65:25; 11:9 and others).

We are further told that there are seven kings. This is a natural outcome if the seven mountains refer to seven kingdoms. Of these seven kingdoms, five were (Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece), one is (Rome), and the other is yet to come (Antichrist’s first kingdom). Apparently after his deadly wound is healed, he is possessed by a fallen angel or demon and becomes the eighth, though he is of the seventh (Revelation 17:11).<sup>12</sup> Thus, the picture of the seven heads, or seven mountains, is a picture of the history of Gentile domination from Egypt to Antichrist.

c. Ten Horns

In prophetic literature a horn is often used to refer to power or to a king. In Revelation 17:12 we are told explicitly that these ten horns give their authority to the beast. This is also stated in Daniel 7:7-8. These ten horns are said to be ten kings who reign a short time with the beast. Comparing Revelation 17:12 with Daniel 7:7-8 also leads us to understand that three of these kings do not willingly give the Antichrist his authority at first. However, the Antichrist prevails and apparently receives the reluctant support of three of these kings. This is pictured in Daniel 7:7-8 by the rooting up of the three horns.

2. The Activities of the Beast - Revelation 17:14

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<sup>12</sup> An excellent discussion of this can be found in J. A. Seiss, *The Apocalypse*, pp. 391-394.



*Revelation 17:14 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.*

This is a reiteration of the truth we saw in Revelation 13 and Daniel 7, in which we are told that one of the major activities of the Antichrist is to go after the Church and Israel. In his attempt to wipe out God's people, the Antichrist will be assisted by the ten kings who gave Antichrist his authority (at least politically speaking).

#### E. The Location of the Whore - Revelation 17:15

*Revelation 17:15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.*

The whore is said to be sitting on many waters. It is very easy to interpret this verse since we are given its interpretation right here, the waters refer to all the peoples of the earth. Whatever this whore represents, it is global in nature.

Many have identified the great whore with the Catholic church. Although it appears that there are a lot of reasons this identification can be made, it is more likely that the final world religion is going to be an amalgamation of all world religions. Somehow, all of the apostate religions of the whole world are going to find some common ground and unite to form this great whore of Revelation 17.

#### F. The Destruction of the Whore - Revelation 17:16-18

*Revelation 17:16-18 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. 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. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*

Even though the great whore controls the beast in the first few years of the Tribulation, towards the middle Antichrist rises up along with the ten kings and destroys this apostate system. This destruction is given in terms that tell us the destruction is complete and total. Throughout history God has often used the ungodly to effect his judgment. Babylon was used by God to destroy the Assyrians, the Medes and Persians were used by God to destroy the Babylonian empire, and here we are told that God uses the Antichrist to destroy apostate religion.

## II. The Identification of Babylon in Revelation 18

One of the major questions we need to ask at this point is "Is this Babylon the actual rebuilt city of Babylon or is it a figurative reference to some other city?" Although Bible scholars are divided on this, there is significant evidence to lend support to the identification of the Babylon of Revelation 18 with a rebuilt Babylon. Consider the following questions:

- A. Was the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah fulfilled in 539 B.C. when Babylon fell to Medo/Persia?

1. The prophecies say that Babylon will be destroyed instantly - Jeremiah 50:44; 51:8. Historically, Babylon did not fall suddenly but was a major city for many centuries after 539 B.C.
  2. The prophecies say that Babylon will be destroyed completely - Jeremiah 50:38, 40, Isaiah 13:19-22, 14:22. Historically, Babylon was inhabited for many centuries after the conquest by Medo-Persia.
  3. The prophecies say that Babylon will be destroyed so completely that it will not be possible to scavenge the rubble for building materials - Jeremiah 50:26. Even today, Bedouins and others use bricks from Babylon as building materials for their homes.
  4. The prophecies say that Israel will return in total - Jeremiah 50:4-5; Isaiah 14:1-2. Today, only a small fraction of Israel has returned. This did not happen historically.
  5. The prophecies say that Babylon's destruction will be accomplished in the Day of the Lord as well as the world being punished at that time - Isaiah 13:6, 9ff. Thus, Isaiah 13 appears to refer to a future Day of the Lord and hence could not have been completely fulfilled in 539 B.C.
  6. The prophecies say that Babylon will be destroyed by a multinational force - Isaiah 13:4-5. This did not occur historically in 539 B.C.
  7. The prophecies say that "in those days" there will not be any iniquity in Israel - Jeremiah 50:20. This can only occur near the end of the tribulational period. It did not happen historically in 539 B.C.
  8. The prophecies sound as if they occur during the start of the Millennium - Isaiah 14:1-7. This was not accomplished historically in 539 B.C.
- B. Will the prophecies concerning Babylon be fulfilled in the future?
1. The description by John in Revelation 18:3, and Jeremiah 51:13 of Babylon are the same.
  3. The destruction of Babylon is described the same in Jeremiah 50-51 and Revelation 18.
    - Destroyed suddenly.
    - Destroyed by fire.
    - Never to be inhabited.
    - Punished according to its deeds.
    - Destroyed like a millstone thrown into the middle of the sea.
  4. Similarity in response to Babylon
    - The Godly are to leave Babylon - Revelation 18:4 compared to Jeremiah 51:6, 45.

- The ungodly cry out - Revelation 18:11 compared to Isaiah 14:7-11.
- Heaven rejoices - Revelation 18:20.

C. Is the Babylon in Revelation 18 a real city?

1. In Revelation 18 Babylon is described in such a way that it does not make sense if it is not a city.
2. From our study of the first question, we see that the prophecies concerning the destruction of Babylon were not historically fulfilled.
3. We can only conclude that the Babylon of Revelation 18 is a real city.

D. So what about the future?

1. Babylon will be rebuilt and will become the economic capitol of the world.
2. Babylon, in its final form, exists both as an ecclesiastical and economic entity. Antichrist will destroy ecclesiastical Babylon in order to force the entire world to worship him. God will destroy economic Babylon in judgment for her wicked deeds and godlessness.
3. The future destruction of Babylon will be so complete that it will remain uninhabited throughout the Millennium.

III. The Destruction of Economic Babylon - Revelation 18.

A. The Doom of Economic Babylon - Revelation 18:1-2, 8

*Revelation 18:1-2 And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And 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.*

*Revelation 18:8 Therefore 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.*

We are introduced to a second Babylon in this chapter, an economic Babylon. Some want to equate Revelation seventeen and eighteen by saying that they are referring to the same Babylon from a different perspective. However, a little closer look shows that this is not correct. There are similarities, but also big differences.

1. The destruction is different. The Antichrist and the ten kings destroy Ecclesiastical Babylon, God appears to destroy Economic Babylon.
2. The reaction to the destruction is different. No one mourns the destruction of Ecclesiastical Babylon, the whole earth mourns the destruction of Economic Babylon.

3. Ecclesiastical Babylon is identified as a religious system, Economic Babylon is identified as a city.
4. Ecclesiastical Babylon is destroyed sometime during the middle of the Tribulation, Economic Babylon is destroyed towards the end of the Tribulation.
5. The righteous are warned to get out of Economic Babylon, there is no such warning to Ecclesiastical Babylon.

Thus, it should be pretty clear that these are two different entities. However, although there are differences, there are also similarities:

1. The kings of the earth are said to have committed fornication with both Economic and Ecclesiastical Babylon. Religiously, the kings of the earth have been used by, and used, Ecclesiastical Babylon to further their power. Economically, the kings of the earth have used Economic Babylon to enrich themselves.
2. In both Economic and Ecclesiastical Babylon are found the blood of saints. Economic Babylon will be the executioner of many believers who have refused to accept the mark of the beast.
3. In both cases, the destruction is utter and complete.
4. In both cases, Babylon is pictured as being arrayed in scarlet, purple, and wearing fine jewels.
5. In both cases, Babylon is identified with a city, although in the case of Ecclesiastical Babylon a system is pictured as well.

The angel that appears in heaven announces the falling of Economic Babylon in the past tense although it is a future event. This tense is often used in the Bible to refer to a future event that was so certain, it could be spoken of as though it had already happened. Although there is nothing in the text to prove it one way or another, it is very likely that this angel is the same angel that is found in Revelation 14:8. If so, then we can time the destruction of Economic Babylon as occurring before the outpouring of the bowls of God's wrath in Revelation 15 and 16.

The picture of Babylon becoming the habitation of devils, foul spirits, and every hateful bird is a reference to the cursing of God. The destruction of Economic Babylon, when it comes, will result in its complete and utter giving over to demonic powers. In fact, we are told in Isaiah 13:20-22 that the destruction will be so complete that no one will ever live there again and that it will be like when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. All we know about Sodom and Gomorrah is that their original location is somewhere near the southern end of the Dead Sea.

#### B. The Deeds of Economic Babylon - Revelation 18:3; 6-7

*Revelation 18:3 For 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.*

*Revelation 18:6-7 Reward 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. How 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.*

The deeds of Economic Babylon are strikingly similar to that of Ecclesiastical Babylon. This should not be a surprise since in most cases apostate religion is closely connected with economic wealth. In Zechariah 5:5-11 we are given the vision of the Woman in the Ephah. This connects false religion with an economic system. Furthermore, Zechariah is told that two storks, or unclean birds, takes the ephah to the land of Shinar to build a place for it there. The land of Shinar is nothing more than the land of Babylon.

Not only does Economic Babylon have great wealth, but she is smug in that wealth. As far as she is concerned, she has need of nothing. Additionally, there is an attitude that says she will never have need of anything. Because of her sins, and her pride, she is to be judged double according to her deeds. She has sown the wind, and will reap the whirlwind.

#### C. The Division of the Godly from Economic Babylon - Revelation 18:4-5

*Revelation 18:4-5 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.*

Just as God delivered Lot from Sodom and Noah from the flood, so he will warn and deliver his people from the destruction of this city. Peter tells us in 2 Peter 2:9 that God knows how to deliver the righteous from his judgment on the wicked.

This warning is one of the reasons to equate Economic Babylon with an actual geographic city and not some system. It is hard to come out from a system, and for a system to burn. It is not hard for a city to burn.

The comment that God has remembered her iniquities means that the time for judgment has come. God does not suffer from a mental lapse, and all of a sudden remembers something. It is that the time is come for his wrath to fall. His attention turns to this Economic system.

#### D. The Dirge for Economic Babylon

##### 1. The Mourning of the Kings - Revelation 18:9-10

*Revelation 18:9-10 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, Standing 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.*

The destruction of Economic Babylon will cause all of the kings of the earth to mourn over her. It is through this economic system that they have become

wealthy and powerful, and its destruction will threaten the economy of the world.

We also note in these two verses that the destruction of Babylon is quick and accompanied by fire. In fact, the smoke of the destruction of this city is so great that it can be viewed from great distances. It may be that this is a nuclear conflagration, although we cannot be certain of this.

## 2. The Mourning of the Merchants - Revelation 18:11-16

*Revelation 18:11-16 And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: The 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, And 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. And 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. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, 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!*

Note only do the kings of the earth mourn, but the merchants of the earth mourn as well. The very economic power that has supported them has been utterly and completely destroyed. No doubt this destruction causes a world-wide depression.

We are again given a picture of the severity of the judgment on Economic Babylon in these verses. Not only do the kings stand afar off, but the merchants of the world stand afar off for fear of her torment. The destruction occurs in such a way that no one wants to be near Babylon as it is consumed in judgment.

## 3. The Mourning of the Mariners - Revelation 18:17-19

*Revelation 18:17-19 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, And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! 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.*

Finally, the mariners of the earth mourn. With the destruction of Economic Babylon, the livelihood of those who move the goods of the world is in jeopardy. Those who made their living delivering the goods of this great Economic system will mourn her passing.

## E. The Delight of Heaven - Revelation 18:20

*Revelation 18:20 Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.*

Although the entire world mourns the destruction of Economic Babylon, heaven rejoices. That is the way it usually is. What is important on earth means nothing in heaven. What may appear to be a disaster on earth causes heaven to break out in song.

We note here as well that this economic system was responsible for the death of many of the saints of God. We can readily understand this when we note that without the mark of the beast it will not be possible to buy or sell goods in that day. If one is caught without the mark, one pays with their life. Refusal to join this economic system results in death, and as a result the system is seen as being the cause behind the death of many Tribulation saints.

F. The Desolation of Economic Babylon - Revelation 18:21-24

*Revelation 18:21-24 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. 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; 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. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.*

Finally, we note the devastation of Economic Babylon. Its destruction is so complete, and so violent, that it becomes absolutely uninhabited by man. This passage is parallel to Isaiah 13:20-22 in which we are told that when God finally destroys Babylon, no one will ever live there. The figure of the angel casting a millstone into the sea refers to the total judgment on this city. Just as a millstone sinks to the bottom of the ocean never to be used again, so Babylon will sink to the pits of hell, never again to be inhabited or visited by man.

# The Millennial Kingdom

## I. The Promise of the Kingdom

### A. The Promise to Abraham - A Nation and a Land - **The Abrahamic Covenant**

God's covenant with Abraham was unconditional and consisted of three major promises.

#### 1. The Promise of a Great Nation

*Genesis 12:1-2 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:*

*Genesis 13:16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.*

*Genesis 15:5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.*

#### 2. The Promise of Blessing to all other Nations

*Genesis 12:3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

#### 3. The Promise of a Land

*Genesis 12:7 And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.*

*Genesis 15:18 In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:*

*Genesis 17:7-8 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.*



### B. The Promise to Israel - A Possession - **The Palestinian Covenant**

The Palestinian Covenant was a conditional covenant in which Israel was promised possession of the land given to them by God in the Abrahamic Covenant, provided they obeyed God's laws.

*Deuteronomy 30:1-9 And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee, And shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee: And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. And the LORD thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments which I command thee this day. And the LORD thy God will make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the LORD will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers:*

General provisions and points of this covenant are:

1. It foresees a worldwide dispersion and regathering of Israel to their land.
2. It promises in a veiled form the New Covenant.
3. It prophesies judgment on Israel's future enemies.
4. It promises great blessings to restored Israel.

### C. The Promise to David - A Throne and a Kingdom - **The Davidic Covenant**

The Davidic covenant was given to David in answer to his great desire to build the temple. God would not allow David to be the builder of the temple because he was a bloody man. However, God gave him something better, than being an unconditional covenant which promised that David's throne and kingdom would be an everlasting kingdom.

*2 Samuel 7:12-16 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put*

*away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.*

1. David will have a child, yet to be born, who will succeed him and establish his Kingdom.
2. This son will build the temple instead of David.
3. The throne of his Kingdom will be established forever.
4. The throne will not be taken away even if the son sins.
5. David's house, throne, and kingdom will be established forever.

C. **The Promise to Israel - A New Heart - The New Covenant**

The New Covenant was given to Israel in the midst of their deportation to Babylon and the beginning of the times of the Gentiles. Israel would cease to exist as an autonomous nation for over two and a half millennia before being reborn as the modern nation of Israel. Just so Israel would know that God has not forgotten them, God gives them the New Covenant.

*Jeremiah 31:31-34 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*

General provisions and points of this covenant are:

1. It is a covenant with Israel and Judah.
2. It is contrasted with the old Mosaic covenant - Hebrews.
3. It will be fulfilled after the days of trouble (Jeremiah 30:7) and of Israel's regathering (Jeremiah 31:1-30).
4. The new covenant will supersede and be superior to the Mosaic covenant.
5. The new covenant will bring great spiritual blessing upon Israel.
6. The new covenant will be fulfilled in a period of universal knowledge about God. There will be no need for instructors.
7. The new covenant involves the forgiveness of sins which caused the judgment of God on Israel.

## II. The Presentation of the Kingdom

The reality of the Millennial Kingdom can only be realized when the Jews accept the King. When Christ first came as a child in Bethlehem, he was presented as the King of the Jews. During his triumphal entry, the cry was “Hosanna, Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.” Even over the cross was hung the inscription, THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Unfortunately, Israel rejected their king, and in doing so rejected the Kingdom.

### A. Christ the King Presented

#### 1. At His birth - Matthew 2:1-2, Luke 2:25-32.

*Matthew 2:1-2* Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

#### 2. At His triumphal entry - Matthew 21:1-11.

*Matthew 21:1-11* And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strowed them in the way. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

#### 3. At His death - Matthew 27:37.

*Matthew 27:37* And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

### B. Christ the King Rejected

#### 1. As spoken by the Jewish leaders - John 19:15.

*John 19:15* But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

#### 2. As pictured in the Parable of the Pounds - Luke 19:11-27.

### III. The Postponement of the Kingdom

#### A. As Pictured in the Parables

1. The Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-9, Mark 4:1-9, Luke 8:4-8) describing how men will respond to the Gospel.
2. The Parable of the Wheat and Tares (Matthew 13:24-30) describing the infiltration of the Kingdom of God by children of Satan.
3. The Parable of the Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:31-32, Mark 4:30-32, Luke 13:18-19) describing the growth of the Kingdom of God.
4. The Parable of the Leaven (Matthew 13:33) describing the influence of the Kingdom of God.
5. The Parable of the Hidden Treasure (Matthew 13:44) which shows the response of one who accidentally discovers the truth of the Gospel.
6. The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price (Matthew 13:45-46) which shows the response of one who is searching for God and finds him in the Gospel.
7. The Parable of the Dragnet (Matthew 13:47-50) describing the separation of the redeemed from the unredeemed at the end of the age.
8. The Parable of the Seed Growing in Secret (Mark 4:26-29) describing the mysterious growth of the Kingdom of God.
9. The Parable of the Great Supper (Luke 14:15-24) which describes the rejection of the Kingdom by the Jews and the subsequent invitation to the Gentiles.
10. The Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard (Matthew 20:1-16) which describes the fact that all will be equally blessed in the Kingdom.
11. The Parable of the Pounds (Luke 19:11-27) which describes the rewards of the Kingdom for those who are diligent in their service to God.
12. The Parable of the Marriage Feast (Matthew 22:1-14) which shows the rejection of the King by the Jews and the subsequent blessing of the Gentiles.

#### B. As Stated by Christ - Acts 1:6-7

Acts 1:6-7 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

## C. As Given by the Angels - Acts 1:9-11

Acts 1:9-11 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

## IV. The Particulars of the Kingdom

- A. It will be a time when God rules directly in the Person of Jesus Christ - Psalm 2:6, Isaiah 11:3-5.
- B. It will be a time when Israel is blessed by God.
1. Israel will be reunited as a nation - Jeremiah 3:18, 33:14, Ezekiel 20:40, 37:15-22, 39:25, Hosea 1:11.
  2. Israel will once again be related to Jehovah by marriage - Isaiah 54:1-17; 62:2-5; Hosea 2:14-23.
  3. Israel will be exalted above all other nations - Isaiah 14:1-2, 49:22-23; 60:14-17; 61:6-7.
  4. Israel will be made righteous - Isaiah 1:25; 2:4; 44:22-24; 45:17-25; 48:17; 55:7; 57:18-19; 63:16; Jeremiah 31:11; 33:8; 50:20; Ezekiel 36:25-26; Hosea 14:4; Joel 3:21; Micah 7:18-19; Zechariah 13:9; Malachi 3:2-3.
  5. Israel will be God's witnesses during the Millennium - Isaiah 44:8; 61:6; 66:21; Jeremiah 16:19-21; Micah 5:7; Zephaniah 3:20; Zechariah 4:1-7; 4:11-14; 8:23.
  6. Israel will be beautified to bring glory to Jehovah - Isaiah 62:3; Jeremiah 32:41; Hosea 14:5-6; Zephaniah 3:16-17; Zechariah 9:16-17).
- C. It will be a time of the universal knowledge of God - Isaiah 11:9.
- D. It will be a time of universal righteousness - Psalm 72:7.
- E. It will be a time of universal peace - Isaiah 2:4.
- F. It will be a time of universal joy - Isaiah 12:3-4; 61:3, 7.
- G. It will be a time when the Holy Spirit's power is manifest - Isaiah 32:15; 44:3; Ezekiel 36:29; Joel 2:28-29.
- H. It will be a time when the Temple is rebuilt and sacrifices are made as a memorial to the work of redemption done on the Cross - Ezekiel 40-48; Zechariah 14:16-21.
- I. It will be a time when the curse is removed - Isaiah 11:6-9; 35:1-2; 30:23-24.
- J. It will be a time of great prosperity - Jeremiah 31:12; Ezekiel 34:25-27; Joel 2:21-27; Amos 9:13-14.

- K. It will be a time of health and healing - Isaiah 33:24; 29:18; 65:20; 30:19-20.
- L. It will be a time when Satan is bound in the abyss - Revelation 20:3.
- M. It will be a time when the saints rule with Christ - Revelation 20:4.

# The Eternal Destiny of the Unredeemed

## I. Why Study Hell?

- A. Christ, the incarnate Son of God, taught more about hell than he did about heaven.
- B. Christ consistently warned those who rejected Him of the reality of hell.
- C. It should serve as a great inducement for sharing the Gospel to the lost.
- D. It is the eternal abode of the vast majority of mankind.
- E. It is the eternal destiny of over 98% of the people we meet.
- F. It is a recurrent theme in the Bible.
- G. Satan will do all he can to deceive people as to the unreality of hell.

## II. The Names of Hell

### A. Hebrew *sheol* (*kuta*)

- 1. Universally translated "grave".
- 2. No distinction was made between the righteous and unrighteous dead.
- 3. The righteous anticipated resurrection out of the grave. (Psalms 16:9-11)

### B. Greek *hades* ( )

- 1. Hades was the translation of the Hebrew word *sheol* in the LXX.
- 2. It referred to the abode of the dead in Greek mythology.
- 3. It occurs 11 times in the NT.

*Matt 11:23 ...shall be brought down to hell...*

*Matt 16:18 ...the gates of hell shall not prevail...*

*Luke 10:15 ...shalt be thrust down to hell...*

*Luke 16:23 ...in hell he lift up his eyes...*

*Acts 2:27 ...wilt not leave my soul in hell...*

*Acts 2:31 ...his soul was not left in hell...*

*1 Cor 15:55 ...O grave, where is thy sting... (disputed with thanatos)*

*Rev 1:18 ...have the keys of hell and of death...*

*Rev 6:8 ...was Death, and Hell followed...*

*Rev 20:13 ...death and hell delivered up the...*

*Rev 20:14 ...death and hell were cast into...*

- 4. It refers to the temporary abode of the wicked dead until judgment.
- 5. Its nature is seen in the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus in Luke 19.

C. Greek *gahenna* ( )

1. Reference to the Valley of Tophet in which the Jews burned their children as sacrifices to Molech or Chemosh.
2. Later, this valley became the garbage dump of Jerusalem in which fires were kept burning in order to consume the rubbish.
3. Our Lord used this word 11 times to refer to the eternal abode of the wicked.
4. It occurs 12 times in the NT.

*Matt 5:22 ...shall be in danger of hell fire...*  
*Matt 5:29 ...whole body should be cast into hell...*  
*Matt 5:30 ...whole body should be cast into hell...*  
*Matt 10:28...to destroy both soul and body in hell...*  
*Matt 18:9 ...two eyes to be cast into hell fire...*  
*Matt 23:15...more the child of hell than...*  
*Matt 23:33...can ye escape the damnation of hell...*  
*Mark 9:43 ...having two hands to go to hell...*  
*Mark 9:45 ...having two feet to be cast into hell...*  
*Mark 9:47 ...having two eyes to be cast into hell fire...*  
*Luke 12:5 ...hath power to cast into hell...*  
*James 3:6 ...of nature; and it is set on fire of hell...*

D. Greek *tataros* ( )

*2 Peter 2:4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;*

1. This word is used only one time in 2 Peter 2:4.
2. In secular Greek mythology it was the innermost of the nine compartments of hades.
3. It is used in the NT to refer to the abode of demons who "left their first estate".

E. Greek *abussos* ( )

1. It is used in the NT to refer to the abode of demons.
2. It occurs 9 times in the NT.

*Luke 8:31 ...command them to go out into the deep...*  
*Rom 10:7 ...who shall descend into the deep...*  
*Rev 9:1 ...the key of the bottomless pit...*  
*Rev 9:2 ...And he opened the bottomless pit...*  
*Rev 9:11 ...the angel of the bottomless pit...*  
*Rev 11:7 ...that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit...*  
*Rev 17:8 ...shall ascend out of the bottomless pit...*  
*Rev 20:1 ...having the key of the bottomless pit...*



*Rev 20:5 ...cast him into the bottomless pit...*

3. In Greek mythology, it was the deepest pit in hades.

#### F. Lake of Fire

1. This term is used to refer to the eternal abode of the wicked dead.
2. It is used 5 times exclusively in Revelations 19-20 to refer to the abode of the unrighteous dead after final judgment.

*Rev 19:20 ...cast alive into a lake of fire...*

*Rev 20:10 ...was cast into the lake of fire...*

*Rev 20:14 ...were cast into the lake of fire...*

*Rev 20:15 ...was cast into the lake of fire...*

*Rev 21:8 ...their part in the lake which burneth...*

### III. What Hell is Like

Many would like to believe that the torment of hell is only temporary. Almost all of the cults deny the existence or eternality of hell. However, the Bible teaches that hell is a real place where people suffer real pain and anguish with no hope of escape.

#### A. It is a place of unrelieved torment

##### 1. Physical pain and anguish

*Matthew 8:12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

*Luke 16:24-25 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*

*Revelation 14:11 And 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.*

*Revelation 21:8 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.*

##### 2. Remembrance of the good things in life

*Luke 16:25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*

##### 3. Physical deprivation

*Luke 16:24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.*

*Revelation 14:11 And 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.*

#### 4. Darkness

*Matthew 8:12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

*Matthew 22:13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

*Matthew 25:30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

#### B. It is eternal, there is no escape

*Matthew 25:41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:*

*Matthew 25:46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.*

*Revelation 14:11 And 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.*

#### C. It is a place of punishment in varying degrees

*Hebrews 10:29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?*

*Matthew 11:22-24 But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.*

*Luke 12:47-49 And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more. I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?*

**IV. Who Goes to Hell and Ultimately to the Lake of Fire?****A. All of the unredeemed of all the ages**

*Revelation 21:8 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.*

*1 Corinthians 6:9-10 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.*

**B. Satan and his angels**

*Matthew 25:41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:*

*Revelation 20:10 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.*

# The Eternal Destiny of the Redeemed

## I. Why Study Heaven?

### A. Heaven is where all that is eternally precious to us exists

#### 1. The Father is in Heaven

*Matthew 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

*Matthew 5:48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

*Matthew 6:9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.*

*Matthew 10:32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.*

*Matthew 10:33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.*

#### 2. The Son is in Heaven

##### **John 17**

*John 3:13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.*

#### 3. The Holy Angels are in Heaven

*Matthew 22:30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.*

*Mark 12:25 For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are [in heaven].*

*Mark 13:32 But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.*

#### 4. Our Reward is in Heaven

##### **2 Corinthians 4:16ff**

*Matthew 5:12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*

*Matthew 6:20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:*

*Matthew 19:21* Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure [in heaven]; and come and follow me.

*Hebrews 10:34* For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have [in heaven] a better and an enduring substance.

*1 Peter 1:4* To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

5. **Our Names are Written in Heaven**

**Revelation 17:8, Revelation 13:8**

*Luke 10:20* Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

6. **Our Home is in Heaven**

**John 14:1ff**  
**Hebrews 13:4, Hebrews 11:13-16**

7. **Our Eternal Family is in Heaven**

*Ephesians 3:15* Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

*Hebrews 12:23* 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,

*Revelation 19:1* 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:

*Revelation 19:14* And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

8. **Our Citizenship is in Heaven**

*Philippians 3:20* For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

9. **Our Hope is in Heaven**

*Colossians 1:5* For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;

10. **The True Temple is in Heaven**

*Revelation 14:17* And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

*Revelation 15:5* And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened:

*Revelation 11:19* And 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.

#### 11. Satan is in Heaven only Temporarily

*Revelation 12:7* And there was war [in heaven]: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

*Revelation 12:8* And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

*Revelation 12:10* And 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.

## II. What Heaven Is

Heaven is referred to over 550 times in the Bible. The Hebrew word, *shamayim*, means heights. The Greek word is *ouranos* from which we get Uranus.

### A. Heaven is a place

1. The atmospheric heavens - Isaiah 55:9; Psalm 147:8
2. The planetary heavens - Genesis 1; Psalm 14:1
3. The divine heaven - Isaiah 63:15; Psalm 33:13-14; 102:19; Revelation 3:12; Matthew 5:16

Heaven came to be so closely associated with God, that the Hebrews used the word "heaven" to refer to "God" in much the same way we use the phrase "white house" to refer to the President.

### B. Heaven is a sphere

Ephesians 1:3ff tell us we have been placed in the heavenlies. We do not occupy heaven yet, but we are in a sphere of God's rule which is referred to as the heavenlies.

Note the Kingdom Parables in Matthew 13.

## III. The Intermediate State

The Bible does not give us a lot of information regarding the intermediate state of the righteous dead before the resurrection of Christ. There are two basic views. The first states that there was an intermediate place in which the righteous dead went to await the resurrection of Christ. The other states that the righteous dead went immediately into the presence of God. I lean towards the former view. In any case, we know from Philippians 1:20ff that when a believer dies now, he is immediately taken to heaven.

**A. Arguments For an Intermediate State**

1. The sins of the righteous dead before the cross were not paid for but put on account. See Romans 3:24ff.
2. Christ told the thief on the cross that "today thou shalt be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). Note that Christ did not tell the thief he would be with him in heaven.
3. In the story of the rich man and Lazarus, the rich man could see Lazarus. How could this be if hades is "down below" and heaven is "up above?". (Note however that we are never told the exact location of hades.
4. In Ephesians 4:6ff we are told that "Christ led captivity captive". This is interpreted to refer to the Roman custom of returning from battle with the freed Romans citizens in parade. Those who were captive are now "led in captivity".

**B. Arguments Against an Intermediate State**

1. Just because the sins of the pre-cross righteous were not paid, there payment was a certainty. Hence God would have no reason to keep them out of heaven.
2. Although Christ told the thief he would be with him in paradise, the word "paradise" is also used in 2 Corinthians 12:4 to refer to heaven as well as in Revelation 2:7. Paradise does not have to refer to an intermediate state.

**IV. Where Heaven Is**

**A. Upward - 2 Corinthians 12:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 14:1**

**B. Distance**

Infinitely far away. The current known universe extends some 100,000,000 light years away, some 6,000,000,000,000,000,000 miles. However, this distance is but a short hop for God.

**V. The New Jerusalem - Revelation 21:9-22**

**A. It's Descent - Revelation 20:10**

*Revelation 21:10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,*

**B. Its Description - Revelation 20:11****1. Its Illumination - Revelation 21:11**

*Revelation 21:11* Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;

**2. Its Gates - Revelation 21:12-13**

*Revelation 21:12-13* 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.

**3. Its Foundations - Revelation 21:14**

*Revelation 21:14* And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

**4. Its Size - Revelation 21:15-17**

*Revelation 21:15-17* 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.

**In today's measurements, this city is roughly 1,400 miles long, wide, and high. Its shape could either be that of a cube, or a pyramid. The space inside this city is 2.7 billion cubic miles or some fifteen times the surface area of the earth. Every person that ever lived on the earth could easily live in the New Jerusalem on just the first floor of 1,400!**

**The wall of the city is some 216 feet high and made of jasper, which is pure diamond.**

**5. Its Construction - Revelation 21:18-21**

*Revelation 21:18-21* 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.



The foundation stones are:

- a. Jasper - a crystal clear diamond.
- b. Sapphire - a blue, opaque stone with gold specks.
- c. Chalcedony - a sky-blue stone with colored stripes.
- d. Emerald - a bright, green stone.
- e. Sardonyx - a white stone with layers of red.
- f. Sardius - a fiery, red stone.
- g. Chrysolite - A transparent, golden yellow stone.
- h. Beryl - a sea-green stone.
- i. Topaz - a transparent golden green stone.
- j. Chrysoprasus - a blue-green stone.
- k. Jacinth - a violet stone.
- l. Amethyst - a flashing, purple stone.

**6. Its Temple - Revelation 21:22**

*Revelation 21:22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.*

**7. Its Light- Revelation 21:23**

*Revelation 21:23 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.*

**8. Its Inhabitants - Revelation 21:24, 26**

*Revelation 21:24 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.*

*Revelation 21:26 And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it.*

**9. Its Openness - Revelation 21:25**

*Revelation 21:25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.*

**10. Its Purity - Revelation 21:27**

*Revelation 21:27 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.*

**VI. The New Heaven and the New Earth - Revelation 21-22****A. What is Absent?****1. The Sea - representing separation and mystery - Revelation 21:1**

*Revelation 21:1 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.*

**2. Death - Revelation 21:4b**

*Revelation 21:4b ...and there shall be no more death...*

**3. Sorrow - Revelation 21:4c**

*Revelation 21:4 c ...neither sorrow...*

**4. Crying and tears - Revelation 21:4d**

*Revelation 21:4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more...crying...*

**5. Pain - Revelation 21:4e**

*Revelation 21:4 ...neither shall there be any more pain...*

**6. Satan, Demons, and all the ungodly - 21:8.**

*Revelation 21:8 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.*

**7. A temple indicating that the way to God is unimpeded and requires no mediator - Revelation 21:22.**

*Revelation 21:22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.*

**8. The Sun and moon since the Lamb is the light - Revelation 21:23.**

*Revelation 21:23 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.*

**9. Night - Revelation 21:25; 22:5.**

*Revelation 21:25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.*

*Revelation 22:5 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.*

**10. Defilement or defiled sinners - Revelation 21:27; 22:15.**

*Revelation 21:27 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.*

**11. The curse - Revelation 22:3.**

*Revelation 22:3 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:*

**B. What is Present?****1. The New Jerusalem - Revelation 21:2**

*Revelation 21:2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

**2. The Tabernacle or dwelling place of God - Revelation 21:3**

*Revelation 21:3 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.*

**3. The Manifest Presence of God - Revelation 21:3**

*Revelation 21:3 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.*

**4. The Fountain of the Water of Life - Revelation 21:6**

*Revelation 21:6 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.*

**5. Those that have overcome - Revelation 21:7**

*Revelation 21:7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.*

**6. The Bride of Christ, the Redeemed Church - Revelation 21:9.**

*Revelation 21:9 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 show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.*

**7. The Redeemed Nations - Revelation 21:24.**

*Revelation 21:24 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.*

**8. The River of the Water of Life - Revelation 22:1.**

*Revelation 22:1 And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.*

**9. The Tree of Life - Revelation 22:2.**

*Revelation 22:2 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.*

**10. The Lamb of God - Revelation 22:3.**

*Revelation 22:3 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:*