

REVELATION

**A Vision
of
Three Woes
and
Four Endings**

WILLIAM E. MALES

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Why I wrote this book

For many years, I have devoted myself to studying the Book of Revelation. Throughout these decades, my exploration has included reading numerous commentaries and books, as well as listening to a wide variety of opinions presented in religious forums and messages on the internet. Despite all my exposure, I have never heard a perspective that included the whole account of Revelation, and dealt with every chapter in such a way that rang true to me.

In my pursuit of understanding, my perspective often shifted, much like a pendulum swinging between different logical viewpoints. Over time, however, I found myself less swayed by the opinions of others. Instead, my focus gradually settled on what is explicitly written in the text and on using scriptural interpretations to evaluate the context and accuracy of each passage. This has been a steady process of my prayerful attempt to “*prove all things and hold fast to that which is good.*”

First off, I in no way consider myself to be a theologian, for I do not possess any formal theological training at all. Rather, my understanding and approach are rooted in my own personal studies and prayerful consideration. In self-reflection, I find that I can identify with how the prophet Amos must have felt. Similar to him, I come from an ordinary working-class background. My motivation to share my beliefs comes not from academic authority, but from a feeling of guidance and conviction inspired by the Lord.

For Amos, being challenged by some to take his message and go elsewhere and share it, said, “*I was no prophet, nor was I a son of a prophet, But I was a sheep breeder, and a gather of sycamore fruit. But the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and said to me, ‘Go, prophesy to My people Israel.’*”

This is not to suggest that I consider myself a prophet; nevertheless, like the disciples and every disciple of Jesus

Christ, I to have been called to seek God while He may be found and to prayerfully seek His face via His word and prayer. Thus, I myself state that “I was no prophet, nor was I a son of a prophet, but a tradesman who works with wood.”

In reflecting on my spiritual walk and growth, I sense similarities with the prophet Jonah. Like Jonah, I have often struggled with questioning and swiftly following the direction the Lord sets before me, as well as his inappropriate attitudes. My response often appears to be delayed in reaching the direction intended for me. Yet, through various experiences, I have recognized a reassuring pattern: even when my obedience is not immediate, the Lord seems to factor in my hesitations and delays. In His wisdom and grace, He ensures that when I finally respond to His prompting, and act on what He has placed upon my heart, somehow, I arrive at precisely the right moment for His purpose.

Considering Jeremiah's life, I believe my own experiences allow me to relate to the hardships he endured on behalf of God's people. Like Jeremiah, I have often felt anguish and frustration over the unnecessary setbacks and hardships, that may well be attributed to the disciplinary actions many encounter. How many of life's challenges could have been prevented; however, a pattern of inaction, lack of awareness, and disregard for guidance resulted in more complicated circumstances.

Proverbs 1:22-26 - How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity? For scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge. Turn at My reproof; Surely, I will pour out My spirit on you; I will make My words known to you. Because I have called and you refused, I have stretched out My hand, and no one regarded. Because you disdained All my counsel, and would have none of My reproof, I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your terror comes.

Jeremiah's prophetic ministry was not only marked by heartache, but was also due to opposition from those he loved and prayed for. He also faced resistance from other so-called prophets whose messages were declarations of peace and safety, even as Jeremiah was emotionally being pressed down with the certainty of the coming judgment upon his nation. The agony of knowing what was to come, and seeing his warnings rejected and ignored, was a reality I relate to with my own convictions, having an acute sense of the brevity of the time remaining before the Lord'.

As with Jeremiah, there have also been moments in my life when I have questioned God's workings, and been greatly discouraged by the reactions of others. Times where I too entertained the thought expressed by Jeremiah: "*Lord, you have deceived me... for I am in derision daily, and everyone mocks me.*" Jeremiah's struggle was so intense that he resolved, "*I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name... But His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not contain.*" Similarly, I have found that, even in discouragement, the truth of God's word compels me to speak and continue in the calling placed upon my life.

Yet, through every trial, God has remained faithful. As it is written, "*The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, And He delights in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; For the LORD upholds him with His hand.*" The patience and forbearance the Lord has graciously extended to me has, in due time, provided my necessary reassurance, comfort, and source of strength to continue persevering.

Motivated by a deep sense of conviction and a steadfast reliance on the certainty of God's prophetic word, is why I have decided to commit these reflections to writing. Again, my intent is not to present myself as a prophet, but rather to share my

insights as one endeavoring to be found a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ my Lord.

I possess no prophetic authority; instead, I admittedly write as but a novice about a book that is full of prophetic exhortations, admonitions, and warnings to God's people about things unfolding, and soon to come to pass.

So, if you have an ear to hear, I hope you will prayerfully consider my thoughts, but most importantly, hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

Preface

The Revelation of Jesus Christ was given to Him directly by God, who is described as both “*holy*” and “*a Spirit*,” a concept that is difficult for us to fully understand. Nevertheless, this profound revelation was shared by Him to inform and prepare His followers for events that were imminent during John’s time, as well as future occurrences that would take place at the end of time.

This written vision promises a broad blessing to every reader, offering prophetic direction to all who listen to the Spirit, so long as they heed His guidance. For the Spirit is given unto the saints to illuminate the wise about God’s evolving purpose, including their salvation and the destruction of the wicked.

To ensure the message was delivered accurately, God communicated this revelation through His angel, who then shared it with John. Having previously written the Gospel, John understood the depth of trust and responsibility involved. In his Gospel, John highlighted the Father's immense love for the Son, demonstrated by His entrusting all thing to Him. This action demonstrates both the Father's love and the Son's authority, emphasizing the significance of the revelation given to Him.

John 3:35 - The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand.

John 13:3 - Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God,

John’s gospel highlights Jesus’ message that the moment for genuine worship was both rapidly approaching and already here. He explains that only those who “*worship the Father in spirit and in truth*” will have their worship accepted (John 4:23–24). Since God is Spirit, a Holy Spirit, He requires all people to approach Him only in this way. Similarly, Paul also taught that because God is Spirit, true worship in spirit and truth can only occur when His Spirit is feely dwelling within us.

Philippians 3:3 For we are the circumcision [*of the heart*],

who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh,

For this purpose, as described when “*the Holy Spirit, the power of the Highest*” overshadowed Mary, Jesus was born of a virgin, that the “*Son of God*” might fully partake of our human nature and share in the frailties of flesh and blood. Whereby Jesus, being also called the “*Son of Man*,” experienced all the limitations of human life, including being bound by time and space and facing the same weaknesses and challenges as any other person. Despite these conditions, Jesus remained without sin throughout His life.

Luke 1:35 - And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.”

Hebrews 2:9-11 - But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren.

Because Jesus shared fully in our humanity, He faithfully pointed out that, as the Son of Man, He possessed no independent power apart from the Father. His entire ministry was characterized by His complete reliance upon the Father, whose Spirit was within Him, for guidance and strength. Rather than acting on His own initiative, Jesus only did what He witnessed the Father doing.

This unwavering dependence ensured that every action He took was in perfect harmony with the Father's will and purpose. In this way, the Son consistently reflected and carried out the works of the Father, demonstrating both humility and obedience, as He faithfully mirrored the Father's intentions in all

things. Thus Jesus' life depicts what every Christian ought to be.

Ultimately, Jesus chose to offer His life as a sacrifice for our sins. By shedding His blood, He made reconciliation possible for us with God, paying the debt of our sins and restoring our relationship with the Father.

Jesus not only willingly offered Himself for our sins, but rising from the dead, He secured our justification. Through His resurrection, our bodies, once bound by flesh, can now become an acceptable temple for His Spirit. For being cleansed by His blood, we are able by faith to receive His Spirit within us, (Luke 11:13). It is the indwelling of the Spirit that brings true life and empowers us to worship God, our Father, in both spirit and truth, whereby we are also sanctified body, soul and spirit unto God.

According to Christian doctrine, as referenced in John 5:22-27, the Father, being Spirit, does not personally exercise judgment but delegates this responsibility to the Son. Because God is Spirit, His direct judgment of humanity, comprised of finite flesh and blood, would originate from a profoundly different nature; thus, Jesus assumed human nature to become the "*Son of Man*." This enables Him to judge from the vantage point of what man was created and intended to be; a perfect individual wholly devoted to the Father and continually guided by divine inspiration (2 Corinthians 5:10). According to scripture, Jesus is described as possessing both complete humanity and divinity, with the fullness of divinity present in his earthly existence, having received the Spirit without measure (Colossians 2:9; John 3:34-35).

Such is why Peter wrote that God's grace and peace would be multiplied unto us through our humble acknowledgment of the riches offered to us through Jesus our Lord. For according to His divine power, God has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness. For this all comes through faith and knowledge of God, who has called us to glory and virtue, whereby our holiness might be brought to perfection, even as Christ was holy. For in Christ, the Christian has been given these exceedingly great and precious promises, through which we are all called to be

partakers of that divine nature, so as to escape the corruption which is in the world due to men's pride and lust.

Which is why Jesus taught that anyone who through Him present themselves as living sacrifices to the Father, that they too might do the works He did. For as Paul stated, "*For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all*" (I Timothy 2:5).

Hebrews 9:15 - And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

Howbeit, the works with the prophets, Jesus, and the Apostles did, were because God was "*bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will,*" which was to confirm the truth of the Gospel (Hebrews 2:4). Perhaps, when men again, by the Spirit, preach the whole counsel of God according to the season of the word, God will again be pleased to so move among His people.

Mark 16:20 - And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs.

1 Corinthians 2:4,5 - And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Wherefore, apart from the fact that many are preaching "*another Jesus**" by "*another spirit,*" which is "*another Gospel*" unable to save men and reconcile them to God, what excuse can anyone offer when they deliberately reject everything the Father has made available in Christ for a godly life, when Jesus, the Son of Man is their judge; simply because they refused to acknowledge the Son as they should? For Jesus clearly taught that all must honor the Son even as they should honor the Father. For anyone who does not honor the Son does not honor

the Father who sent Him. (*See 2 Corinthians 11:4).

Therefore, the book of Revelation is to remind us first and foremost of God's love for His only begotten Son, and of the position Jesus owns on the throne of God. For in Revelation abides a sure promise of blessing to all who will read and heed its message, for within its chapters abides a rich treasure full of promises, warnings, blessings, and curses.

The significance of its chapters are twofold: for I believe not only do they address the fall of Israel in 70 A.D., but they also reach forward to similar events certain to unfold in the end of days. Yet currently, it is shamefully noteworthy how many ministers seldom if ever prioritize their preaching from the book of Revelation, or attempt to guide their people through its teachings.

Sadly, few ministers recognize how their neglect of Revelation has resulted in missed opportunities for an increase of both spiritual awareness and understanding for their people. All of this is being observed and recorded by the Lord, for it leaves His people unprepared to recognize the significance of current events in the light of this biblical vision and sure prophecy.

This neglect is exactly the same as that which Jesus condemned the religious leaders of His day, "*Woe to you, for you have taken away the key of knowledge! For not only did you yourselves not enter in, by not doing so, you have also hindered those who would.*" (Matthew 23:13; Luke 11:52)

Doubtless, there remains an unfulfilled responsibility to bring out the light of Revelation in order to illuminate the path ahead for today's church. But I must say, it mainly rests squarely on the shoulders of pastors who have accepted the call to shepherd God's flock. Thus, it is disheartening the minimal effort and time many pastors schedule for personal prayer and study, that they might be faithful watchmen and able to see; rightly discerning the times as to whether current events unfolding might be correlating with the prophecies and messages contained in this book.

Sadly, I believe this fault is mainly because today's pastors

have become too occupied with handling church affairs and business, catering to the emotions of the people instead of faithfully watching over God's flock.

Luke 19:41-44 - Now as Jesus drew near, He saw the city and wept over it saying, "If you had known, especially in this your day, the things that were made for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For the days shall come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, and will surround you and close you in on every side, and level you and your children within to the ground. For they will not leave in you one stone upon another, **because you did not know the time of your visitation.**"

Do you not think, especially in light of the scripture above, that Jesus also expects us to know the times and the seasons of our days? This a large reason why the church was given the bible, and particularly the book of Revelation. For perhaps, of all the books of the bible, Revelation serves as the most effective resource we have for understanding and examining the context of our era. (See also I Thessalonians 5:1-5 & 1 John 2:27)

However, it seems as if it has been carelessly set aside, misplaced, lost, perhaps buried somewhere in the church's janitorial closet, just like the dusty scrolls misplaced in the old temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 6:2).

Such neglect speaks to a failure by ministers and church leaders, who have been negligent of its essential teachings; and thru its abandonment have foolishly discounted a critical prophecy purposely given for God's people, which charges them to stir up a necessary spirit of vigilance and discernment among themselves.

God is calling forth His watchmen, but will they hear?

It is time to open this book and "*to read distinctly from the book,*" and pray that the Spirit will give the shepherds courage and wisdom to endeavor to give "*sense, and helped them to understand the reading,*" (Nehemiah 8:8).

Therefore, I strongly urge pastors who are at fault here to repent and start redeeming the time, for Revelation has not been given us just to be superficially referenced. Rather, Revelation deserves an ongoing, open dialogue between the congregation and pastor. God's people need to be fed with the whole counsel of God.

Consider again Israel's history, for each time the nation was led into captivity, it was often the direct result of the sins committed by its pastors and shepherds. The leaders, entrusted with guiding God's people had repeatedly failed in their responsibilities, which led to the spiritual decline and eventual judgment upon the nation.

This underscores why the Lord commanded that the delivery of His judgment must begin at His own house. The neglect and disobedience of those charged with spiritual oversight has always brought dire consequences, not only upon themselves but upon all those contributing to the shepherding of God's people. God holds His leaders to a higher standard, and when they forsake their duties, judgment is first pronounced among them as a sobering reminder of their accountability. (See Ezekiel 9:6; 34:1-16, and Jeremiah 23:1,2).

I believe that if the church engages in open dialogue and seeks guidance through prayer, that it would by the Lord be richly rewarded with greater understanding and spiritual awareness. That, my brothers, would enormously surpass the occasional mere sporadic quote about it from the pulpit. Which in truth, amounts to little more than a gratuitous nod of recognition of the book's existence.

I therefore make a plea for ministerial repentance. For pastors who fail to instruct their people in the truths of Revelation, and who do not help them understand and respond appropriately, will inevitably face substantial accountability and shame when they stand before the Great and Chief Shepherd, who commissioned them to faithfully oversee His heavenly flock.

Believe it, Revelation's purpose is made very clear in the letters to the seven churches: it was given to be taught to all

believers, so that every member of the flock might have ears to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches of all ages. Whereby people could learn to recognize and respond to the voice of their Good Shepherd, and with understanding walk victoriously and faithfully in their time, and be found blameless.

Chapter 1

(1:1) The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto his servant John:

(1:2) Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

Early Date Writing of Revelation

Most preterists generally argue that the Book of Revelation was written in the mid-to-late 60s A.D., but some feel it is more specifically between 64 and 68 A.D. This early dating of the preterist interpretation exists because they believe that John's vision prophesies the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, which occurred in A.D. 70. I also accept with this viewpoint.

The other reason why some believe this, is Emperor Nero reigned 54–68 A.D., and some Preterists believe it was Nero rather than Domitian who initially exiled the Apostle John to Patmos around 64–68 AD. I said “initially,” because some believe John was actually exiled twice and release twice upon the deaths of both Nero and Domitian. Kenneth Gentry, a contemporary researcher, and author, presents a reasonable argument for a date around between 65–67 A.D.

While the rationale differs among scholars, the majority of preterists assert that the Book of Revelation was written during the mid- to late 60's A.D., with most estimates falling between 64 and 68 A.D. This early dating is admittedly central to the preterist interpretation, and based on the conviction that John's vision foretells events prior to the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple, an event which took place in 70 A.D.

However, the verses concerning the opening of the sixth seal (6:12-17) are particularly persuasive to me, seeming to lend credence to an early date writing for Revelation. This is especially notable when considered alongside Josephus'

account of the earthquake in 68 A.D. added below.

“...For there broke out a prodigious storm in the night, with the utmost violence, and very strong winds; with the largest showers of rain; with continual lightnings, terrible thunderings, and amazing concussions and bellowings of the earth that was in an earthquake. These things were a manifest indication that some destruction was coming upon men, when the system of the world was put into this disorder; and anyone would guess that these wonders foreshowed some grand calamities that were coming.”

Such an event would be consistent with the Lord’s assertion regarding *“things which must shortly come to pass,”* given His statement that *“the time is at hand.”*

However, despite the various arguments presented above regarding the dating of the Book of Revelation, I confess that my perspective was shaped by a personal conviction which was partly formed even before I encountered the historical and scholarly justifications mentioned above. My developed view has led me to view Revelation as a book that essentially contains three, if not four, distinct endings which I present below, and hope to establish as I continue.

The Four Endings

- 1. The End of Israel as a Nation (70 A.D.):** The first ending is the conclusion of ancient Israel's national existence, which occurred in 70 A.D. This event is I believe is documented in chapters 4 through 10 of Revelation. Notably, there is also narrative which includes a depiction of Israel's reemergence in chapter 11, verses 3 through 13, which I believe was assured to us in Leviticus 26:42-45.
- 2. The Fall of the Beast’s Empire – Spiritual Babylon:** The second ending focuses on the collapse of the beast's empire, represented as spiritual Babylon. This is recorded in chapters 13 through 18.

3. The Gathering for the Battle of Armageddon: The final ending describes the gathering of the nations for the climactic battle of Armageddon, marking the ultimate conclusion illustrated in the latter portion of Revelation.

4. The conclusion of the seven millennia days:

A finite period commencing with the creation of heaven and earth and all therein. Yet because of a liberty to choose, for true love must be freely given, God nevertheless foresaw the absolute chaos which would surely arise and multiply by a departure of His creatures from God and truth: resulting ultimately in the angels rejection, and death and damnation for men. However, upon the immediate revelation of the consequences for their departing from God, man was told a remedy, preordained prior to creation, with a promise that “*a child would be born,*” a Redeemer would come. Thus, these seven millennia days are a time for a gathering in of all who would receive a love for the truth, climaxing with the perfecting of the bride of Christ. Upon conclusion of this period, the Bridegroom then carries His bride over the threshold of time into everlasting.

(1:3) Blessed is he that reads, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

Hearing is good, but it is not enough; what is heard must also be kept. Yet faith comes by hearing, to provide the substance needed for what must be done, thus man lives by every word of God. Immediately this principle is being introduced to the reader, cautioning him to take heed and lay to heart the things shown herein.

(1:4) John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne.

(1:5) And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

(1:6) And has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever. Amen.

(1:7) Behold, He comes with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and also, they which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

The phrase “*Even so, Amen*” serves as an affirmation, meaning “regardless, so be it.” It expresses an acceptance of what has been declared, signifying both agreement and submission to the unfolding events described.

1 Corinthians 16:22 – If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.

For if anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, they are condemned to death and destruction. This conviction is rooted in the believer, understanding that true faith is motivated and sustained by love. Without love for Christ, true faith cannot operate.

Despite the inevitable conflicts, battles, afflictions, and persecutions that must occur, believers are called to endure these hardships with perseverance and continual prayer, seeking His coming as their ultimate hope and relief.

(1:8) I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

There is a beginning and an end to God’s plan. The opening of Genesis clearly marks the start of both creation and humanity’s story, while the book of Revelation proclaims its destined conclusion. This progression through all scripture is not random; but essential for the faithful. For through these divinely appointed endpoints, are the Saints gathered and redeemed, and ultimately taken beyond time into everlasting fellowship with the Lord.

(1:9) I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

(1:10) I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

(1:11) Saying, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, what you see write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

(1:12) And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks.

(1:13) And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

(1:14) His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire.

(1:15) And His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and His voice was as the sound of many waters.

(1:16) And He had in His right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

The divine majesty and glory of the Lord Jesus revealed to John: adorned with a golden sash, eyes resembling fire, feet described as polished brass, and a voice comparable to the sound of many waters. The depiction included a sword proceeding from His mouth and brightness exceeding that of the sun, signifying power and judgment. His dominion is portrayed as absolute and unchallenged. Who then can take these seven stars out of His hand?

Deuteronomy 32:39 - Now see that I, even I, am He, And there is no God besides Me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; Nor is there any who can deliver from My hand.

John 10:28 - I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. ³⁰ I and My Father are one."

(1:17) And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, "Fear not; I am the First and the Last:"

(1:18) I am He that lives and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

(1:19) Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.

(1:20) The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which you saw are the seven churches.

The stars, called angels, meaning "messengers," likely represent the seven shepherds over these seven churches. Yet all the imagery justly emphasizes that it truly is a fearful though glorious thing to be in the hand of our Great Shepherd.

Hebrews 10:31 - It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Chapter 2

(2:1) Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write, “These things say He that holds the seven stars in His right hand, Who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.

(2:2) I know your works, and your labor, and your patience, and how you cannot bear them which are evil: and you have tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and have found them liars:

(2:3) And have borne, and have patience, and for My name's sake have labored, and have not fainted.

(2:4) Nevertheless, I have something against you, for you have left your first love.

They were hard working, patient, had contempt for the wicked, and by sound theology able to refute the heretics. However, all that fell short in the Lord’s eyes.

For ministry, while a calling and privilege, can unfortunately become a snare when the child of God matures and steps into the role of a servant of God. For as familiarity with ministry grows, so does the danger to perform spiritual duties out of habit, rather than heartfelt devotion.

Relationship quickly turns into mere religion when routine leads to the neglect of a basic routine of loving and waiting upon the Lord. Instead of working together with God, the man of God can slip into just showing up for the job and doing what is expected, and quickly lose sight of the joy and intimacy once found in genuine fellowship with Him.

Sound theological knowledge is not fellowship with God. Nor is consistency in performance serving and worshipping God. The challenge, therefore, is to always be careful against allowing ministry to become mechanical, and to prioritize private time for true communion with God.

Psalm 25:15 - Mine eyes are ever toward the LORD; for He shall pluck my feet out of the net.

(2:5) Remember therefore from whence you have fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto you quickly, and will remove your candlestick out of his place, except you repent.

Some have interpreted these “first works” to be water baptism, or attending church more regularly.

However, first works, though indeed including repentance and confession of sins, were mainly a purposeful choosing of that which Mary did, dedicating time to be in the Lord’s presence and sitting at His feet. It was a being still, allowing Him to peer into her heart and to speak lovingly to her.

The “*first works*” of the true believer was their pursuit of fellowship with the Lord, seeking Him with reverence and humility. It was a studying to be quite and attentive to Him, waiting upon Him, until He speaks to our hearts and sends us to do His will.

For as Job said, “*There is a spirit in man, whereby the inspiration of the Almighty gives them understanding.*” The only thing one must remember is what James tells us, “*If any lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally... But let him ask in faith.*”

Psalm 123:1,2 - Unto You I lift up my eyes, O You who dwell in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters, As the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, So our eyes look to the LORD our God, Until He has mercy on us.

(2:6) But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

(2:7) **He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches;** To him that overcomes will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

(2:8) And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write, “These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;”

(2:9) I know your works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but you are

rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.

(2:10) Fear none of those things which you shalt suffer, for behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that you may be tried; and you shall have tribulation ten days: be you faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life.

(2:11) He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches; He that overcomes shall not be hurt of the second death.

Though clearly in the refiners fire, the church in Smyrna is the only one not reproved by the Lord.

(2:12) And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; “These things saith he which has the sharp sword with two edges.”

(2:13) I know your works, and where you dwellest, even where Satan's seat is, and you hold fast My name, and have not denied My faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwells.

(2:14) But I have a few things against you, because you have them there that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

(2:15) So have you also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

The Nicolaitan doctrine was a first-century heresy that is clearly rejected in Revelation 2:6 and 2:15. Their teachings are said to have assured believers that participation in some paganistic activities were harmless, such as indulging in sexual immorality and eating food offered to idols.

Since their doctrine is closely related to the doctrine of Balaam, they may have originally sprung up amongst the Jews who were the worshippers Balaam, of which some, being seduced by an antichrist spirit, may have been swayed by a pseudo-Christianity, believing that Christian liberty not

only allows such behavior, but also justify sinful acts.

They, like antinomians, believed that grace nullified the constraints of moral law, allowing them to freely pursue physical pleasures without risking their salvation. In a manner similar to Balaam, who led the Israelites into sin, so the Nicolaitans guided early Christians down a comparable path.

Most important is Jesus firmly opposed their doctrine here and 2:15, declaring His dislike for both the "deeds" and "doctrine" of the Nicolaitans, warning them to repent or face consequences.

While the precise identity of the Nicolaitans remains uncertain, early church leaders like Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria believe the sect was led by Nicolaus of Antioch, one of the seven deacons named in Acts 6:5, whose was evidently corrupted later on. Nicolaus's name may come from the Greek words *nikao* ("to conquer") and *laos* ("people"), perhaps hinting at teachings meant to corrupt the laity or create a division between clergy and laypeople. Wherefore it has been reasoned that Nicolaus taught that the common man, the laity, by himself alone, was unable to understand the things of God, and therefore they needed to be ruled by a religious hierarchy, similar to Catholicism.

1 Timothy 6:3-5 - If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself.

1 John 2:27 - But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone should teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.

(2:16) Repent; or else I will come unto you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.

Deuteronomy 28:63 - And it shall be, that just as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing...

(2:17) **He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches;** To him that overcomes will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knows saving he that receives it.

There are many, many names given throughout the world, yet it is rare for any name to be uniquely shared by only one individual. For each parent searches and chooses a name for each child which signifies a preference and holds a special meaning. A name which hopefully will rightly reflect the child's identity and place in the heart and eyes of the parent's love. A unique name intended to underscore how every child is both cherished and unique.

Wherefore this brings even greater significance to the Lord's promise that He will give us a white stone with a new name written on it, one known only to ourselves. Such a gift represents the depth and uniqueness of God's personal love for each individual, signifying no one can take our place in the heart of God. It speaks to the truth that, even if only one person existed, God's love could be no less.

If it was just you, He would still have sent His Son and willingly given His life for you. Thus, this promise of a new name is a powerful reminder of the uniqueness and value which God places on each of us.

(2:18) And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write, “These things saith the Son of God, who has eyes like unto a flame of fire, and His feet are like fine brass.

(2:19) I know your works, and charity, and service, and faith, and your patience, and your works; and the last to be more than the first.

(2:20) Notwithstanding, I have a few things against you, because you suffer that woman Jezebel, which calls herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

It is very likely this woman is spiritually being called Jezebel, after King Ahab’s wife. Obviously, this woman’s behavior and influence are driven by a similar spirit of witchcraft. For Jezebel was rebellious and not content to be under Ahab, and therefore was controlling, driven by pride and lust, and manipulative of both Ahab and his kingdom. Her intrusive influence stirred up political strife, social wickedness, and led to theft and murder in the kingdom. Culminating in Ahab’s death through a randomly shot arrow in battle, and her own death, by being thrown out a window to be eaten by dogs. (2 Kings 9:30-37).

1 Samuel 15:23 - For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft,
And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.

(21) And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.

(2:22) Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.

(2:23) And I will kill her children with death; and **all the churches shall know** that I am He which searches the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

How is it both pastors and laymen can read these letters, and this verse, and not sense and not be brought under a reverent fear of God?

Deuteronomy 4:10 - Gather the people to Me, and I will let them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.

Hebrews 4:1 - Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. (See also Hebrews 12:18-29)

(2:24) But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.

(2:25) But that which you have already, hold fast till I come.

(2:26) And he that overcomes, and keeps My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

(2:27) And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of My Father.

(2:28) And I will give him the morning star.

(2:29) He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches.

Chapter 3

(3:1) And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write, “These things says He that has the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know your works, that you have a name that you live, and are dead.”

My impression of the church in Sardis is that it is a thriving, proficient, well-organized, and dynamic church. From the perspective of both the members and the surrounding community, it is well established, and commended for its many activities and dedication.

Their confidence is established by impressive attendance figures and the satisfaction expressed by most within the church. Even those outside the church hold a favorable opinion, regarding Sardis to be an important part of the community; lively, strong, and actively engaged in works which obviously must be pleasing to God.

However, despite this outward vitality, the Lord gently but firmly corrects them, stating that He knows the true motives and focus behind their actions. Their works are not genuinely directed toward God's glory and righteousness; therefore both the church and its works are spiritually lifeless. The rebuke of Sardis serves as a sobering reminder that appearances can be deceiving, and true spiritual life is found only in sincere devotion and alignment with God's purpose.

(3:2) Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found your works perfect before God.

This reproof is like the urgent cry of a watchman stationed on the city wall, who recognizes approaching danger and observes weaknesses and breaches in the city's defenses below. Lifting up his voice in alarm, the watchman urges the people below to stop everything and to shift all priorities to strengthening what may yet still be fortified, and to take up diligently guarding what remains. It is the Lord's call for their

immediate repentance.

(3:3) Remember therefore how you have received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore you shalt not watch, I will come on you as a thief, and you shalt not know what hour I will come upon you.

(3:4) You have a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white: for they are worthy.

There is a significant distinction between being affected by our necessary and lawful responsibilities of daily life, and a purposely stepping out into pursuits that are not align with the Lord's work. Surely, our routine obligations may at times leave us feeling burdened or "soiled," but great care must be taken to avoid being entangled in activities that stray from God's purpose.

True wisdom is seen in the one who is prayerful, and walks carefully and attentively, focused on what truly is affirmed by the Spirit and the word as the work of the Lord. We must learn to avoid social distractions if we are to be devoted to what is right and pleasing in God's sight.

John 5:19 - Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.

Romans 8:1 - There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

Galatians 5:16,25 - Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh... If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

(3:5) He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels.

(3:6) **He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto**

the churches.

(3:7) And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, “These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that has the key of David, He that opens, and no man shuts; and shuts, and no man opens.

(3:8) I know your works: behold, I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it: for you have a little strength, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

(3:9) Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.

He is neither a “*Jew*” or a “*Christian*,” just because they were so born or say so. Both, in the true spiritual sense of the word point to the “*called, chosen, and faithful*.”

(Revelation 17:14)

(3:10) Because you have kept the word of My patience, I also will keep you from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

“*Upon all the world*” means all the land under the dominion of the Roman empire, in which Philadelphia was located.

This “*hour of temptation*” was afflicted upon many believers between the time of Pentecost and the Roman siege on Jerusalem. During these years, Jewish Christians were faced with this strong temptation by the persecution of their Jewish countrymen, who compelled them to renounce Christ and to revert back to following the Law of Moses.

However, to do so would be a willful abandonment of their walk of faith in order to appease their adversaries. For the Christian, it would be a catastrophic offence, a rejection of the sufficiency of the atonement Jesus Christ made for them.

For the law, apart from guiding men in truth and convicting them of their sins, was merely prophetic in its ceremonial actions. However, it did loudly declare the inevitable coming

of a “*Lamb of God*” that would indeed take away the sins of the world. Therefore, for a believer to lay his hand upon a animal about to be sacrificed, and confess his sins, in the eyes of God would be “*crucifying Christ afresh.*”

Hebrews 6:4-6 - For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.

Yet though these temptations come, they do tests the faith of those called by His name. Wherefore, Jesus calls upon them to remain steadfast and to not compromise their spiritual convictions for temporary relief from persecution.

(3:11) Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which you have, that no man takes your crown.

A declaration of personal responsibility, and a sobering warning of the consequence of compromise.

(3:12) Him that overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, which is new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God: and I will write upon him My new name.

The severity of the trial, when endured faithfully, is rewarded more than abundantly by our Saviour.

(3:13) He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches.

(3:14) And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.

Unlike the messages to the other churches, described as being “in” their respective cities, this address is noticeably different. Here, the Lord does not simply refer to the church

as being in Laodicea; instead, He speaks of it more as belonging to the Laodiceans themselves. This subtle but important difference highlights a sense of ownership or possession by the people, rather than being identified as the Lord's.

Perhaps this is why at the end of this letter to the Laodiceans, the Lord comes as a stranger, saying, "*Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.*"

(3:15) I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot: I would you were cold or hot.

The issue is not whether one is cold or hot, but rather fulfilling one's calling and intended purpose. For example, hot beverages such as coffee or tea should be served hot, whereas iced tea should be cold. Similarly, our commitment to the Lord in love and faith should be fervent and strong, and not half-hearted.

(3:16) So then because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth.

(3:17) Because you sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

How many comfortable Christians would be appalled if you spoke so honestly to them? Yet here the Lord is moved with compassion, just like he did with the rich young ruler, whose riches hindered him from being made perfect.

Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack, if you want to be perfect, go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me." (Matthew 19:21 & Mark 10:21)

(3:18) I counsel you to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that you might be rich; and white raiment, that you might be clothed, and

that the shame of your nakedness does not appear; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you might see.

God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, and would that all men should be saved. Wherefore, He ever seeks such as should be saved, and counsel the lost to freely receive that only He can give, *“that the shame of your nakedness does not appear; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you might see.”*

(3:19) As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten, be zealous therefore, and repent.

(3:20) Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hears My voice, and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.

(3:21) To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne.

(3:22) He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches.

Chapter 4

The Throne in Heaven

(4:1) After this I looked, and behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me, which said, "Come up hither, and I will show you things which must be hereafter."

(4:2) And immediately I was in the spirit: and behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.

This is the second instance of John's "*being in the spirit*" noted among four occurrences in Revelation (1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10). Based on the text, it appears that John's "being in the spirit" refers to him having a spiritual experience illustrated by sensory perception, and possibly the use of a transitional body for interaction within the vision. For example, at one point later in chapter 10 John is instructed to eat a little book, which will be sweet in his mouth but bitter in his stomach.

This "*in the spirit*" seems equivalent to those experiences of Enoch, Micaiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Peter, and doubtless Paul. (Jude 14; I Kings 22:19; Isaiah 9:6; Ezekiel 1:26, 10:1; Daniel 7:9; Acts 10:9-16).

(4:3) And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like an emerald.

(4:4) And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

(4:5) And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

John was taken up through a door which was opened in heaven that he might be shown "*things which must be hereafter*," and witnesses there the majestic setting of what could be described as a heavenly court. And here, in verse

five, he beholds “*lightnings and thunderings and voices*” emanating out of the throne.

Though this is the first mention of them, it is not the last. For in Revelation chapter 8, an angel takes a censer “*which was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne*” and then “*filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth, and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.*”

Revelation 8:5 - And the angel took the censer, filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

Yet these “*lightnings, thunderings, and voices*” are again mentioned by John in two other parts of his heavenly vision, both of these accounts seem to reference the same event, but are being told at different times and from different perspectives.

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.

Revelation 16:18 - 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.

Upon reflection, it is apparent that there is a natural connection that exists between the lightnings and thunder, which does not inherently extend to the voices mentioned. It seems reasonable to understand the lightning and thunder as sequential phenomena, each occurring in its natural order.

However, the voices being different, may play a separate and unique role. Rather than simply being another effect, the voices may be intended to be understood as a contributing

cause for the lightning and thunder. This is not to say that the voices produce these events; for clearly it is God who brings about the lightning and thunderings. But these may only be so because of God's response to the voices.

That may make little sense now, but please try to follow my reasoning. To start, in Revelation 8:5 listed above, and also what occurred prior to casting the censer to the earth, the angel was standing "*at the altar, having a golden censer*" where it "*was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.*"

So, trying to not get too far ahead, I will just point out here that these prayers were in fact uttered by the "*voices*" of the saints. That said, also consider the verse below which I believe to be relevant to this hypothesis; and do note that the verse is approximately midway between our verse here and where I will continue this hypothesis later in more depth in my comments on Revelation 8:5.

Revelation 6:9 - ...I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. ¹⁰ And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" ¹¹ Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.

(4:6) And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind.

(4:7) And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle.

(4:8) And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.”

(4:9) And when those beasts give glory and honor and thanks to Him that sat on the throne, who lives for ever and ever,

(4:10) The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that lives for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

(4:11) You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for You have created all things, and for Your pleasure they are and were created.

Chapter 5

The Lamb and the Book

(5:1) And I saw in the right hand of Him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

The book/scroll likely serves as a Bill of Divorce, as an official document approved by four beasts and the twenty-four elders, written to address grievances and resolve specific issues that not only justify separation but also establish grounds for punitive measures. Their approval does not constitute its authority, but merely shows unanimous consent.

Isaiah 50:1-3 - Thus says the LORD: "Where is the certificate of your mother's divorce, Whom I have put away? Or which of My creditors is it to whom I have sold you? For your iniquities you have sold yourselves, And for your transgressions your mother has been put away. Why, when I came, was there no man? Why, when I called, was there none to answer? Is My hand shortened at all that it cannot redeem? Or have I no power to deliver? ... [so] I clothe the heavens with blackness, And I make sackcloth their covering."

Jeremiah 3:7,8 - And I said, after she had done all these things, "Return to Me." But she did not return. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it. Then I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but went and played the harlot also.

(5:2) And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?"

(5:3) And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

(5:4) And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

(5:5) And one of the elders said unto me, “Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.”

Only the Lion of Judah is worthy for He has prevailed.

The Root of David was made known to humanity through His living among His people, coming as a descendant of David. This was the one to whom David himself referred, declaring, “*The LORD said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.’*”

In His incarnation, Jesus embodied the very essence and radiance of God's glory, being the very express image of His person. Where He, as “*the Lion of the tribe of Judah,*” personally engaged His own people, the Jews of Israel. In doing so, His divine nature and purpose was reveal in a way that was clear, tangible, and personally seen by many wherever He went. (Hebrews 1:2,3)

1 John 1:1,2 - That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life. For the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us.

Through His manifestation in the flesh, God was justified in the Spirit. For as the Son of Man, all His words and actions were in perfect harmony with the character and will of His Father. His entire life was witnessed by the angels, including all the angelic beings in the last chapter, who unanimously acknowledged His worthiness as evident: being justified by both His own actions and those of the priests and rulers of Israel. The entire sequence of the events of His life, from His humble birth to His unjustified death, bears witness to the imbalanced interaction between God and Israel.

1 Timothy 3:16 - And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, Received up in glory.

Thus, the Lamb of God was recognized as worthy, not only to receive all glory, honor, and power, but also to petition for this open acknowledgment of His justification for divorce. That He alone can be permitted to open the seals on the document pertaining to this matter, to reveal the actions required to further His justification and glory among men, and to send forth those with the directive to carry out the decreed remedy described within the document.

(5:6) And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

(5:7) And he came and took the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne.

(5:8) And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints.

(5:9) And they sung a new song, saying, "You art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for You was slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

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.

(5:10) And have made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

Revelation 20:6 - Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection: on such the second death has no

power, but *they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign* with Him a thousand years.

Revelation 22:4,5 - And they shall see His face; And His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: *and they shall reign for ever and ever.*

(5:11) And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.

If there is an actual equation presented here, the sum is one hundred trillion.

(5:12) Saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.”

(5:13) And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard him saying, “Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

(5:14) And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that lives for ever and ever.

Chapter 6

The Seven Seals

(6:1) And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as if it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, “Come and see.”

(6:2) And I saw and behold a white horse: and He that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto Him: and He went forth conquering, and to conquer.

There are differing interpretations regarding the identity of the rider on the white horse. Some view this figure as the antichrist, suggesting it reveals his power to conquer is an illusion; symbolized by the presence of a bow but an absence of arrows. This explanation rests completely on the idea that, by not mentioning the arrows, it implies his powerlessness to achieve genuine victory.

In contrast, my perspective is that this rider represents the Lord Jesus Christ. For a studious examination of scripture quickly reveals that a bow is frequently mentioned without any specification of arrows. Implying, John’s mentioning the bow itself is remains significant irrespective of it being associated with arrows.

Accordingly, I understand opening this seal symbolizes the recognition and acclamation of all the heavenly host, as well as all the redeemed, who proclaim together: “*You art worthy... for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God,*” affirming Jesus’ worthiness and the effectiveness of His redemptive work. This acknowledgment emboldens Him to go forth, “*conquering, and to conquer*” all those who believed they had triumphed by crucifying Him.

(6:3) And when He had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, “Come and see.”

(6:4) And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth,

and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

The rider of the second horse, described as being upon a red horse, is given the authority to remove peace from the land. This action signifies a period to be introduced that will be marked by instability and unrest throughout the region; a time of heightened political turmoil, complicated by factions and parties rising up within Israel experiencing its own inner chaos thru societal contentions and inner discord.

As this seal is opened peace is removed, a resulting strife begins which will escalate into an open conflict between Israel and Rome. The "great sword" given to the horseman serves as a symbol of this coming widespread violence and bloodshed.

The phrase "*that they should kill one another*" emphasizes the intensity of the Jews civil discord and warfare that follows, illustrating a time when the land is consumed by internal and external conflict.

(See also Zechariah 1:7-8 & 6:1-8)

(6:5) And when He had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, "Come and see." And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

(6:6) And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, "A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see you hurt not the oil and the wine.

As regional instability grows, trade and labor opportunities in the region diminish and become riskier. This leads to limited access to both essential goods and services, which predominantly affect city dwellers and nearby inhabitants working in trades, manual labor, or civil and domestic service jobs. As a result, the scarcity of basic supplies triggers costs to rise, whereby daily necessities now consumes an entire day's wage, which also impacts the severity of the turmoil and pressure of daily life.

Yet, in the midst of this hardship, a voice from among the

four beasts declares, “*see you hurt not the oil and the wine.*” This statement may represent that a measure of mercy is interwoven with the judgment, suggesting that while scarcity affects the land, certain essentials, symbolized by oil and wine, are to be spared.

However, the “*hurt not the oil and wine*” may figuratively be intended more as a reference to those believers who are anointed and possess the Holy Spirit, those redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, and are hereby being graciously and divinely spared a measure of the severity of the impact of the shortages. Similar to how Elijah was fed by the widow of Zarephath, who used her last handful of grain and oil to bake him a cake, and accordingly, her supply continued to be miraculously replenished. This mercy was also seen during the plagues in Egypt, when the Egyptians were obliged to suffer while the Israelites were spared from the worst afflictions.

These developments suggest that they represent the initial indicators referenced by Jesus, prompting vigilance as the anticipated judgment approaches. Collectively, they function as an alert for believers to leave Jerusalem in advance of its impending siege and closure by Roman forces. Subsequently, the fourth horseman is expected to arrive, symbolizing the onset of death.

(6:7) And when He had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, “Come and see.”

(6:8) And I looked and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

At this point in John's vision, I would say it is evident that the inhabitants of Jerusalem and its neighboring towns have arrived at a pivotal moment. As the fourth seal was opened, the situation intensified: whatever remnants of God's patience and longsuffering that endured after the earlier

horseman removed peace have now been exhausted. The limited mercy and grace that previously lingered are now fully withdrawn. This is a decisive turning point that marks the end of divine forbearance.

God is now declaring to Israel, "The time is now up," signifying that the nation has reached a critical juncture where all opportunities for repentance have been taken away. This moment stands as a solemn signal in Israel's history, indicating that any chance for restoration or forgiveness has passed, and the consequences of judgment will soon follow.

Revelation 22:10-12 - "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still. For behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to everyone according to his work."

It is important to understand that the testimony above should not be viewed exclusively as an end-times decree because of its late placement in Revelation. For this book of prophecy has existed for nearly two millennia, providing guidance throughout centuries marked by substantial shifts in national powers and demonstrating the ever-changing nature of worldly affairs. During this time, it was intended to be both studied and reverently observed.

Acts 17:26,27 - He has... determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us.

Does the phrase “*MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN*” ring a bell? For Belshazzar of Babylon, the interpretation of these words was nothing short of catastrophic: “*God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it. For you have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting. Therefore, your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.*” In that moment, the writing on the wall pronounced the end of an empire, making clear the consequences of failing to meet God’s standard.

It is important to recognize that the concept of a final end-time does not invalidate the reality that history is filled with numerous examples of nations experiencing their own “end-time.” These national judgments occur when nations fill up their own cup of iniquity, and therefore are “*weighed in the balances and found wanting.*” Each echoing a divine standard clearly set forth in Scripture. Each serving as a reminder that God’s judgments are not limited to a single nation or moment, but has been demonstrated repeatedly throughout the rise and fall of empires.

Moreover, as long as nations continue, another world power will experience a similar downfall prior to the Lord’s return, when He will then judge the remaining nations with fire. This historic pattern underscores God’s call for vigilance and self-examination, both for individuals and for nations. For surely, the time of God’s final reckoning approaches.

(6:9) And when He had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

In parallel to a divorce proceeding, the rights and welfare of children within a marriage are given careful consideration. Similarly, with the opening of the fifth seal, attention is directed towards those whose actions have unjustly impacted those who were spiritually reborn and are recognized by God as His children. These individuals have suffered neglect, rejection, persecution, and finally death at the hands of their countrymen. Their collective cry to God

serves as the initial testimony of injustice, exemplified by their plea: “*How long, O Lord, holy and true, do You not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?*”

These fervent appeals rightly move their God, who both as their Father, and the Judge of their perpetrators, considers these offenses as equivalent to acts willfully committed against His only begotten Son, the Lamb of God.

Consequently, these transgressions justify the dissolution of the covenant relationship between God and the nation of Israel, (though temporal, as Israel as a nation will yet be born again). Furthermore, these serious violations demand the administration of justice marked by thorough accountability and proportionate punitive measures.

(6:10) And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, do You not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?”

See comments in 4:5 and 8:5.

(6:11) And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

Fellow servants - Gentiles, their brethren - Jews. See comments on verse 14:1.

(6:12) And I beheld when He had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood.

1. There was a great earthquake -

The very foundations of God’s relationship with Israel has been violently shaken, and having fallen from grace, she is removed from her former place of prominence.

Isaiah 13:11,13 - And I will punish the land for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low

the haughtiness of the terrible... Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of His fierce anger.

2. The sun became black as sackcloth of hair -

The signifies a dramatic descent, beginning with the sun, then moving to the moon, the stars, and ultimately to the sky itself being rolled up. This sequence illustrates the complete loss of Israel's prior splendor and honor. Once, Israel was magnificently adorned in the brilliance of God's glory, described in Revelation 12:1 as, "*a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.*"

Now, however, Israel experiences a reversal of her fortune, and is draped in black sackcloth, an unmistakable sign of humiliation and mourning. This imagery powerfully conveys the transition from exaltation to deep sorrow, underscoring the consequence of her actions and the gravity of her changed condition.

Ezekiel 16:35-36 -Now then, O harlot, hear the word of the LORD! 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Because your filthiness was poured out and your nakedness uncovered in your harlotry with your lovers, and with all your abominable idols, and because of the blood of your children which you gave to them, "surely, therefore, I will gather all your lovers with whom you took pleasure, all those you loved, and all those you hated; I will gather them from all around against you and will uncover your nakedness to them, that they may see all your nakedness.

3. The moon became like blood -

Israel, being born out of Egypt, was positioned as a woman now standing upon a full and radiant moon, fully reflecting the glory of her God in the way she held her place above the nations.

However, her past glory has been eclipsed by her unfaithfulness and acts of iniquity. This shame is depicted by a blood-red moon, its color stained by the blood of the innocent for which she is now being held responsible.

Ezekiel 16: 38 "And I will judge you as women who break wedlock or shed blood are judged; I will bring blood upon you in fury and jealousy.

In light of these predictions about Israel's destruction, reflection on both Joseph's dream and Jacob's response offers important context. So consider also Jacob's interpretation of Joseph's dream which marked a major shift in his family's story and shaped the biblical narrative. By recognizing its prophetic meaning, Jacob sets the stage for his family's relocation to Egypt for the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham.

See also Genesis 37:9-10 which recounts Joseph's second dream, in which the sun, moon, and eleven stars bow to him. Where upon understanding the symbolism, Jacob questions whether the entire family (Israel) would be brought to bow before Joseph (Jesus).

(6:13) And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree cast forth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

Even the stars, once fashioned into a crown for her honor, have now fallen to the ground, a sign of Israel's lost position and splendor.

Ezekiel 16:39 "I will also give you into their hand, and they shall throw down your shrines and break down your high places. They shall also strip you of your clothes, take your beautiful jewelry, and leave you naked and bare.

The imagery of "*the stars of heaven*" *falling to earth* "as a fig tree casts forth her untimely figs" holds particular significance here in the context of Revelation. For notably, this is the only instance in Revelation where figs and a fig tree

are mentioned. Its symbolism here draws parallel to Jesus' teachings in the Gospels, where He frequently used fig tree parables to illustrate the approach of the "*great tribulation*."

Specifically, after Jesus entered Jerusalem for the last time, He cursed a fruitless fig tree, a act that echoed His earlier parable about the fate of an unproductive fig tree planted in a garden. In that parable, a fig tree after three years was nearly cut down due to its lack of fruit, but at request of the caretaker was granted another year of nurturing and care before such a final judgment, (Luke 13:6-9)

The timeline need not be a literal full four years. For after initially seeking fruit and finding none, two more yearly checks occur; when the gardener asks for one more year, totaling three years between four growth cycles before cutting it down if still fruitless. Thus, Jesus' cursing of the fig tree after three and a half years of ministry perfectly mirrors this pattern regarding Israel's spiritually fruitless state.

As referenced in Revelation 5:1, the scroll is depicted as functioning much like a bill of divorce. This document, written by the Lord, outlines His grievances and details the specific issues that have arisen. The scroll not only justifies His separation, but also serves as the foundation for the exact punitive actions that are to follow. Also, it is important to note that this scroll is official and authoritative, having received approval from the assembled council of the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders.

Isaiah 50:1-3 - Thus says the LORD: "Where is the certificate of your mother's divorce, Whom I have put away? Or which of My creditors is it to whom I have sold you? For your iniquities you have sold yourselves, And for your transgressions your mother has been put away. Why, when I came, was there no man? Why, when I called, was there none to answer? Is My hand shortened at all that it cannot redeem? Or have I no power to deliver? ... [so] I clothe the heavens with blackness, And I make sackcloth their covering."

(6:14) And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled

together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

1. The heavens receded as a scroll when it is rolled up -

Finally, even the very sky in judgement is rolled up and removed, as though the place she once held in heaven has been taken away from her, completing the appearance of a total removal from God's grace and favor.

Even though Isaac once blessed Jacob with the dew of heaven, as an assurance of mercies new every morning, all these are hereby removed, (Genesis 27:28,39; Lamentations 3:22-23).

2. Every mountain and island moved out of its place -

Within the book of Revelation, mountains and islands are mentioned together only in two places: here and again in Revelation 16:20. In both instances, their removal serves as a powerful symbol of God's judgment. This signifies that every likely place of refuge, fortified defense, or escape is taken away. For when God's wrath is poured out, there remain no mountains or islands where men can hide or find security.

The passage emphasizes that God is fully aware of their intentions, specifically calling out "*the kings, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, slaves and free men.*" God knows they all, just like rodents, will try to hide themselves in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. However, He renders these places inaccessible, eliminating every avenue of flight from His divine judgment. This highlights the totality of God's power and the inevitability of His justice for all people, regardless of their status or efforts to evade it.

(6:15) And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains.

(6:16) And said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

Isaiah 2:19-21 - And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of His majesty, when He arises to shake terribly the earth. In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of His majesty, when He arises to shake terribly the earth.

Hosea 10:8 - The high places also of Aven, the sin of Israel, shall be destroyed: the thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars; and they shall say to the mountains, "Cover us," and to the hills, "Fall on us."

(6:17) For the great day of His wrath has come; and who shall be able to stand?"

Between this verse and the next chapter, the principle where God's offer of grace and mercy, to save and forgive, is exhausted for Israel. It is now the time where "*this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.*" For now comes the unfolding of God's judgment.

This transition illustrates the reality that the duration of God's offer of grace is not unlimited. While His grace is abundantly sufficient, it is nonetheless finite and has here been proven capable of being frustrated and exhausted. For His invitation to Israel as a nation has briefly reached its conclusion. Grace, now exhausted, gives way as judgment quickly follows. For when God's patience is spent, His mercy is withdrawn, those who have not responded are left without recourse.

This is a time when the Lord says, "*The time is at hand, he that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still,*" (Revelation 22:10,11).

James 2:13 - For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy.

Chapter 7

The 144,000 on Earth are Marked

(7:1) And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

(7:2) And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

(7:3) "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."

(7:4) And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed a hundred and forty and four thousands of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

(7:5) Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were twelve thousand sealed. Of the tribe of Gad were twelve thousand sealed.

(7:6) Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Neptali were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses twelve thousand were sealed.

(7:7) Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.

(7:8) Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.

The narrative transitions from an earthly emphasis to a focus on the heavenly, reflecting a common theme in prophetic literature. It references a future time when those who have died in Christ will be resurrected and united with Him. This draws upon scriptural passages that describe the "*great cloud of witnesses*" preceding Christ's birth and anticipates the fulfillment of what "*God has provided*,

something better for us, that they would not be made perfect without us."

(7:9) After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.

(7:10) And cried with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation to our God which sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

(7:11) And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

(7:12) Saying, "Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

(7:13) And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, "What are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they?"

(7:14) And I said unto him, "Sir, you know. And he said to me, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

These are the faithful saints who were alive then, some of whom, having escape becoming martyrs, fled prior to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. This was the time of "*Jacob's trouble*," of which the Lord said, "*For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be [in the future days to come], for except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened,*" (Matthew 24:21,22).

Josephus records in *The Jewish War*, book 6, Chapter 9, Para. 4 –

"...the entire nation was now shut up by fate, as in prison; and the Roman army encompassed the city

when it was crowded with inhabitants. Accordingly the multitude of those that therein perished exceeded all the destructions that either men or God ever brought upon the world.”

Jeremiah 30:7 - Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.

1 Thessalonians 5:3 - For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

During the Roman siege, Jerusalem was not only overwhelmed by external threats, but was also torn apart from within by internal strife among its defenders. For three main factions, commonly referred to as the Zealots, viciously battled against each other inside the city walls. One most destructive and foolish tactic of their infighting was how these groups repeatedly raided and burned each other's food stores, attempting to force the entire population into a continued resistance against the Romans. This reckless destruction of desperately limited resources, combined with the murder of those suspected of hoarding food, or trying to escape, served only to severely worsened the plight and despair of the cities mixed inhabitants.

Deuteronomy 28:66,67 - Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life. In the morning you shall say, “Oh, that it were evening!” And at evening you shall say, “Oh, that it were morning!” because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and because of the sight which your eyes see.

This persistent internal conflict among Jerusalem's defenders greatly worsened the city's suffering during the Roman siege. As the population increased, swollen with refugees seeking shelter, conditions grew ever more dire. Overcrowding placed tremendous strain on already limited resources, and infighting among the factions sped up the depletion of essential food supplies. This rapid decline in

nourishment led to widespread malnutrition among the city's inhabitants.

The famine weakened the whole population, and left the city's population vulnerable to outbreaks of deadly diseases. With compromised immunity and deteriorating living conditions, the city faced not only starvation but also rampant illness. These factors came together and caused the mortality rate to rise dramatically among those trapped within the besieged city.

Ultimately, famine, driven both by the external pressures of the siege and the destructive internal divisions within Jerusalem, became the main cause of death. Altogether, the overcrowding, disease, and the violence quickly created an environment in which survival became nearly impossible for the residents of Jerusalem during the Roman siege of 70 A.D.

Josephus described how the people inside the city literally resorted to eating leather, belts, shoe soles, and even grass. In more extreme cases, the younger strong ones would pluck the food out of the mouths of the older and weaker. Eventually the famine led to acts of cannibalism, such as the infamous account of a woman eating her own child. In all, Josephus reported that over 1.1 million people died, and nearly 97,000 people were taken captive, though admittedly, these figures are debated by many who were not themselves eyewitnesses to these atrocities.

(7:15) Therefore, they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sits on the throne shall dwell among them.

(7:16) They shall hunger no more, nor thirst anymore; neither shall the sun light upon them, nor be any heat.

There is a notable contrast between the outcomes experienced by the wicked and those by the righteous. For the suffering of the wicked intensifies even more thru their death, having a future filled only with everlasting despair and regret. While in stark contrast, the righteous are granted immeasurable and everlasting rewards; where their joy and

blessings not merely continue, but increase without end.

Oh the eternal abundance of joy and fulfillment that awaits these saints “*which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb!*” Oh the infinite magnitude of their reward compared to the eternal plight that awaits of the wicked.

(7:17) For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them unto fountains of living waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Following the uplifting vision of the heavenly scene, Chapter 8 transitions as John observes the Lamb of God opening the seventh and final seal. This moment marks another significant turning point, as it initiates a new phase in the unfolding revelations. With the seal opened, seven angels are each given a trumpet, signaling their readiness to carry out their divine assignments. These angels stand prepared to sound their trumpets at the appointed times, following the prayers of the saints.

The prayers of the saints, accompanied by incense on the golden altar, ascend before God, signifying both worship and intercession. This solemn act is central, as it precedes the execution of God's justice. At this juncture, God begins to fulfill His promise to His saints: “*Vengeance is Mine,*” says the Lord, “*I will repay.*” The golden censer is then filled with heavenly fire and cast down upon the wicked, symbolizing the commencement of divine judgment. As each angel sounds their trumpet in turn, the plagues described to John begin to unfold, marking the progression of God's word being fulfilled for His people.

Chapter 8

The Last seal is opened, and there was silenced...

(8:1) And when He had opened the (*last*) seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

With the opening of each of the first four seals, John was invited by the words, “*Come and see,*” to observe what may have been a succession of events, painted as it were in a panoramic vision, as opposed to something written. As when each seal is broken, another picture then unfolds revealing details of subsequent events, with the contents of the scroll being depicted through a series of dramatic images that build upon one another. These scenes collectively illustrate the whole scope of consequences outlined in the decree, emphasizing both the affirmation of the Lamb of God's righteousness and the charges presented against Israel. Each unfolding scene further highlights the gravity and intent of the revelations.

When the fifth seal was opened, John witnessed a profound scene where beneath the altar were the souls of those who had been slain for their steadfast devotion to the word of God and for maintaining their testimony. These martyrs, having suffered for their faith, now in heaven raised a united cry before the throne, “*How long, O Lord, holy and true, do You not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?*” Their cry reflecting a united longing for divine justice and a fulfillment of God's promises to those who had endured persecution.

With the opening of the sixth seal, an overwhelming sense of awe descended, as if the very breath of heaven was drawn back and all stood in silent reverence at what was just revealed. John witnessed a vision that signified the culmination of all that had been forewarned, an unveiling of the determined end of God's adversaries.

At this point, the narrative moves away from what was

revealed through the opening of the scroll, having now revealed the judgements appointed to unfold. The heavenly host now prepare for action, as the seven angels receive their trumpets, ready to sound forth the advancement of the execution of God's plan against His adversaries.

In considering everything up to this point, I suspect the cause of this pause of silence in heaven does not appear to be the destruction of God's adversaries or the end of their defiant resistance and blasphemies. Rather, the silence marks the solemn moment when the final, eternal fate of these adversaries is revealed to John and the heavenly host. This, I believe, may be that final revelation that demands a deep silence of fear, reverence, and awe, as all heaven stops in contemplation of the gravity and magnitude of the fate that awaits those, who rejecting the Lamb, killed both Him and His saints.

Isaiah 66:23, 24 – “And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, All flesh shall come to worship before Me,” says the LORD. “And they shall go forth and look upon the corpses of the men who have transgressed against Me. For their worm does not die, und their fire is not quenched. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.”

(8:2) And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.

Historically, trumpeters have played a crucial role as primary communicators on the battlefield. Their loud and distinct signals were specifically designed to deliver commands that could be clearly understood even amidst the overwhelming noise and confusion of war. These signals served to organize and direct the army, ensuring that orders for charging, retreating, or changing formation could be effectively communicated to all soldiers. Accordingly, it seems reasonable to interpret the function of the seven angels with their trumpets in a comparable context.

(8:3) And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense,

that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

(8:4) And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

(8:5) And the angel took the censer, filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightning, and an earthquake.

In my earlier remarks on chapter 4:5, I put forward a theory regarding the lightnings, thunderings, and voices preceding from the throne. When considering all these verses, it seems apparent that while there is a natural connection between lightnings and thunderings, it does not inherently extend to the voices mentioned. Therefore, while it is reasonable to understand the lightning and thunder as natural phenomena occurring in a natural order, these voices may instead play a unique role.

For rather than the voices just being another consequence, they may well be a cause; a contributing reason for the lightning and thunder, to which here we would also have to include an earthquake here as well. Again, I am not implying the voices produce these events; for clearly it is God in His righteous response who brings all this to pass.

To clarify all these thoughts, it may prove helpful to provide a simple explanation about lightning; what it is, how it forms, what it does, and why it happens.

Lightning is an intense electrical discharge that creates a brilliant flash which is said to reach temperatures five times hotter than the sun's surface. This rapid heating causes the nearby air to expand instantly, as oxygen around the lightning then combusts creating a powerful vacuum. This causes the surrounding air to violently rush into the void producing the loud clapping noise called thunder.

The reason lightning occurs is to neutralize an imbalance of opposing electrical forces known as static electricity. It is created through changes in atmospheric pressure, wind,

temperature, and humidity, all contributing to the generation of this static electricity.

The positive charges gather at the top of clouds and negative charges at the bottom. When these charges are built up enough, they can also cause positive charges to collect on the ground. Thus, lightning occurs when conditions require it in order to stabilize these charged regions. Also, it should be noted that lightning can occur within the clouds, or clouds to ground.

In summary, lightning is a natural method of equalizing, neutralizing, or balancing opposite electrical charges that have built up in the atmosphere and the earth. It functions as a massive, rapid discharge of energy that connects areas of positive and negative charge and neutralizes the potential difference between them.

I hope that offers enough clarity about lightning to speak of the prophetic aspect occurring here.

So, to reiterate, I postulated that the “*lightning*” which caused the “thunder” is generated by the “*voices.*” Meaning, the “*lightning*” is a responsive neutralizing force which proceeds from the throne of God, having been generated by disturbances in heaven and on earth because of an opposition among the voices. This lightning is prophetic of the wrath of God, “*filled with fire of the altar and cast into the earth,*” creating an event unavoidably seen and heard and talked about all over the earth.

So, in this prophetic context when considering these “*voices*”, it becomes evident that there can be several distinct voices at play: the voice of God, the proclamations of the prophets, the prayers uttered by the saints, opposed by the arrogant and blasphemous words spoken by the wicked. Each projecting outward their own unique influence, which can be likened to different temperatures; some cold, some lukewarm, others hot, and likewise having differing levels of pressure being both exerted and resisted.

Among these, only those who truly listen to God’s voice,

those “*who have ears to hear,*” move in the correct direction. In contrast, all others go awry taking their own path, resulting in a multitude of conflicts. This variance among the voices generates the worldly chaos, friction, and strife, as each force opposes or reacts against the others. It is this interplay of these voices which energizes this spiritual and prophetic atmosphere, setting the stage for the events described in these passages.

Genesis 4:10 - And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground."

Psalms 31:18 - Let the lying lips be put to silence which speak insolent things so proudly and contemptuously against the righteous.

Psalms 94:1-4 - O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongs, O God, to whom vengeance belongs, shine forth! Rise up, O Judge of the earth, and render punishment to the proud. LORD, how long will the wicked, how long will the wicked triumph? They utter their speech and speak insolent things; All the workers of iniquity boast in themselves.

Hebrews 12:24-26 - Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven."

Jude 1:14-16 - ...Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him. These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and

they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage.

Revelation 6:9-10 - ...I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

(8:6) And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

(8:7) *The first angel sounded*, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

Hail – Literal or Symbolic

The phrase “*hail*” appears in several significant biblical passages, and it is important to distinguish the different ways in which hail when referenced is depicted throughout scripture. In certain historical accounts, God used literal hail as a means of judgment. For instance, in Egypt prior to the exodus, God sent a devastating hailstorm with thunderings and fire upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

Later, when Joshua was fighting against the armies of the kings of the Amorites, when they turned to flee from him, the Lord “*cast down large hailstones from heaven on them*” and it is written that “*more died from the hailstones than the children of Israel killed with the sword,*” (Joshua 10:11). Both of these are clear examples where the hail was literal objects falling and notable display of God’s intervention.

However, not every mention of hail in the Bible should be interpreted as literal. There are passages where hail is used figuratively, symbolizing God’s judgment or power alongside other natural elements. For example, Isaiah uses hail as a metaphor to describe the overwhelming force of the Assyrians against the ten northern tribes referred to as Ephraim, and the destruction which they delivered through

their military campaigns:

Isaiah 28:2 - Behold, the Lord has a mighty and strong one [The king of Assyria], which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand.

Isaiah 28:17 - Also I will make justice the measuring line, and righteousness the plummet; The hail will sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters will overflow the hiding place.

In these verses, the imagery of hail is linked with other natural disasters, such as storms and floods, to portray the force and completeness of God's judgment being delivered through military exploits of Israel's enemies. Thus, when considering prophetic or symbolic language in scripture, it is crucial to evaluate the context to discern whether the reference to natural disasters are literal or figurative.

Here, I am inclined to view them as figuratively and rapidly progressive; for we start with just "*hail mingled with fire*," secondly "*a great mountain burning with fire*," thirdly "*a great star from heaven burning*," then fourthly "*a third part of the sun was smitten*," along with the moon and stars, and then darkness; perhaps the darkness of hopelessness.

This may well be symbolic of the Roman's siege upon Jerusalem, who initially pleaded with the Jews to end their sedition that their city and temple might be spared. Yet their obstinacy only increased, becoming more arrogant and vulgar, of which the Romans were steadily more inclined to acknowledge with more force and determination to bring the war to a permanent end.

In consideration of the prophetic and symbolic language used here, the events described may be understood as representing the Roman siege upon Jerusalem. For in the beginning, rather than immediately resorting to violence, the Romans desperately sought to persuade the Jewish populace to abandon their sedition and spare what they themselves thought to be was a great city and marvelous

temple. Therefore, Titus repeatedly extended offers, urging the inhabitants to end their resistance in hopes of delivering the city and the temple from destruction.

However, regardless of all of Titus's endeavors, the inhabitants of Jerusalem remained obstinate, though not all. For some Jews were actually made prisoners by their own countrymen and would have happily escaped if they could. But the Jews refusal was not only driven by a strong hatred toward the Roman forces, but also by internal strife of three seditious groups warring within among themselves. In truth, there was no one with enough control in the city capable of accepting the Romans' appeals delivered through the historian Josephus.

Like a diseased wild animal, the Jews defiance steadily intensified with open displays of their arrogance and vulgar behavior, which only prompted the Romans to respond with even greater determination to bring the conflict to a decisive and permanent conclusion.

(8:8) *And the second angel sounded, and it was a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood.*

If the above verse is speaking of the fall of Israel as a nation with geographic boundaries, then this might well be marking the certainty of it coming to its demise in 70 AD. This should not be unreasonable to consider as applicable to ancient Israel, since virtually the same thing is also similarly said about both literal Babylon and the beast's empire, spiritual Babylon.

Jeremiah 51:60 - So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that would come upon Babylon... 61 And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, "When you arrive in Babylon and see it, and read all these words, 62 then you shall say, "O LORD, You have spoken against this place to cut it off, so that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but it shall be desolate forever." 63 ... when you have finished reading this book... tie a stone to it and throw it out into the Euphrates. 64 Then

you shall say, "Thus Babylon shall sink and not rise from the catastrophe that I will bring upon her..."

Revelation 18:21 - Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore.

Concerning just the phrase "*the third*," it likely refers not to one of three equal portions, but rather to three segments of a whole, leaving the possibility of an unequal division. This would be what is seen in Jeremiah's prophecy concerning what Nebuchadnezzar would do in his campaign against Egypt. –

Jeremiah 43:11 - When he comes, he shall strike the land of Egypt and deliver to death those appointed for death, and to captivity those appointed for captivity, and to the sword those appointed for the sword.

Therefore, this phrase "*the third part of the sea became blood*" is likely also symbolic. Since these trumpet events all signify a progression of divine judgments, it is probable that here it refers to the measure of lives lost as a result of the Jew's rebellion against Rome. Accordingly, this portion of the vision may primarily reflect the extent of Jewish casualties directly caused by the uprising.

Therefore, it is reasonable to see how symbolism may also extend even further to the other two segments of Jews who survived. First, those who wisely fled and left earlier, and secondly, those captured and sold off into slavery; wherein the majority was displaced away from their homeland. So, whether free or in bondage, the rest being scattered were absorbed among the regional nations, and into the sea of humanity. In this way, the verse may have a dual symbolism: marking the tragic fate of those who perished, and the probable other two options experienced by the survivors. For all this is the prophetic word of the Lord –

Deuteronomy 28:63 - And it shall be, that just as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you,

so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess. ⁶⁴ Then the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known, of wood and stone... ⁶⁸ And the LORD will take you back to Egypt in ships, by the way of which I said to you, 'You shall never see it again.' And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy you.

(8:9) And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

Similarly, this verse may be intended to symbolize the significant disruption of commerce and trade experienced not only by the inhabitants of the surrounding nations but especially the portion by those engaged in maritime trade with the Jews. For the trade, which was once the life of the sea, is now nearly dead since the reduced trade no longer covers the costs of its endeavor.

Such is the projected consequence when spiritual Babylon is cast "*like a great millstone*" into the sea, the impact will be an immediate, devastating, far-reaching economic crash for all who conduct business by sea. Thus does the destruction of Isreal and Jerusalem as a trade center leads to a collapse in commercial activity, directly affecting those dependent on such trade. So shall it be for the beast's empire as well, only greatly multiplied.

Revelation 18:11 - And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore... ¹⁵ For the merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing... ¹⁷ Because in one hour such great riches came to nothing. And every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance ¹⁸ and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, "What is like this great city?" ¹⁹ They threw dust on their heads and

cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, “Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate.”

(8:10) *And the third angel sounded*, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as if it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters.

(8:11) And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

Since the first two events at the previous sounding of the angels were symbolic, it seems reasonable to interpret this event in a similar manner. Through my research and reflection, I have observed that the perspective held by some preterists closely align with my own considerations. For many preterists contend that this “great star” refers to a successor of Rome, which is plausible considering the political instability and rapid succession of emperors Rome experienced during this period. Nevertheless, it is Emperor Domitian which a significant number of preterists identify with this “great star.” However, at this stage I remain unconvinced as to the precise identity of this individual.

However, the star’s correlation with Rome would match a pattern seen already within the succession of nations tied to Israel’s history, with Egypt as its birthplace, followed by Assyria, Babylon, and Mede/Persia: so it surely seems plausible for Rome to also fit into this sequence. Having fulfilled its role over Israel as determined by God, Rome eventually weakened and faded away, also dissolving into the sea of humanity. However, at this time, it was Rome which was dominant.

As for the scriptural reasons for viewing this “*star*” as an individual, it’s because the identities of celestial objects have often been used in association with angels and humanity. Two being from prophecies given by both Isaiah and Ezekiel pertaining to kings who are likened to an angelic

being fallen from grace.

Isaiah 14:2 - Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, "Thus says the Lord GOD, Because your heart is lifted up, And you say, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods, in the midst of the seas,' Yet you are a man, and not a god, even though you set your heart as the heart of a god..."

12 How you have fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! 13 For you have said in your heart: "I will ascend into heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God."

Ezekiel 28:12 - Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, thus says the Lord GOD: "You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty... 15 You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you.

16 "By the abundance of your trading you became filled with violence within, and you sinned. Therefore, I cast you as a profane thing out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones. 17 "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings that they might gaze at you.

Isaiah's prophecy is distinctly aimed at the king of Babylon, sharply criticizing his overwhelming pride and tendency to elevate himself above others. The king is chastised for his self-exaltation, as he raises himself in his own eyes to a status akin to that of a god. Despite the fact that God had granted him authority, power, and honor, the king remained dissatisfied. Much like Lucifer, he was unwilling to accept the boundaries set for him, believing he was entitled to more and thus sought to seize it through arrogant ambition.

As a result, Isaiah declares that the king of Babylon will inevitably be "*cut down to the ground*," a direct consequence of his pride and his actions that weakened the nations under

his rule. This warning serves as a powerful reminder of the dangers of unchecked ambition and the eventual downfall that awaits those who seek to elevate themselves beyond what has been divinely appointed.

The king of Babylon's boastful declaration, *"I will ascend into heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God,"* reveals the depth of his pride and unwarranted sense of invincibility. He believed he could attain the same greatness as a *"great star,"* perhaps like this one called wormwood, which is said to have fallen from heaven. Isaiah's prophetic words, *"How you have fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!"* illustrates that such arrogance ultimately leads to a dramatic downfall, brought about by overreaching ambition.

Similarly, the king of Tyre is depicted as *"the seal of perfection, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty"* until iniquity was found within him. His initial greatness stands in stark contrast to his subsequent corruption, which led to disgrace and his being cast down. The divine judgment pronounced is clear: *"I will cast you to the ground, I will lay you before kings that they might gaze at you."* This judgment echoes the fate of the king of Babylon, reinforcing a prophetic pattern where those who exalt themselves are ultimately humbled and brought low before others.

Although the prophecies of Isaiah and Ezekiel are explicitly addressed to human rulers, the king of Babylon and the king of Tyre, they serve a dual purpose by also shedding light on the fate of Lucifer, the anointed cherub who fell from grace. Through their words, these prophets also provide a vivid illustration into how unchecked pride and an insatiable drive for self-exaltation inevitably lead to a catastrophic downfall.

The narrative presents a pattern: those who allow arrogance and ambition to overshadow humility and obedience are ultimately humbled, no matter how exalted their status may have been. In this way, the stories of these earthly kings, even those of Rome, they all become powerful

examples of the ultimate consequence of overreaching ambition, echoing again the fate of Lucifer and reinforcing the timeless lesson that “*pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before the fall.*”

(8:12) *And the fourth angel sounded*, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; as if a third part of them was darkened and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

Jacob’s interpretation of Joseph’s dream represents a significant turning point in both his family’s history and the broader biblical narrative. Jacob, later known as Israel, discerned the prophetic significance of the dream, which foretold the future prominence of his descendants. This revelation laid the foundation for the subsequent relocation of Jacob’s family, ultimately fulfilling God’s promise to Abraham that they would emerge from Egypt as a great nation.

Therefore, when analyzing the context of Jesus’s prophecy regarding Israel’s destruction, which I believe to be the topic at this point in John’s vision, it seems equally reasonable to also consider Jacob’s interpretation of Joseph’s divinely inspired dream for any relevance and interpretive insights which may possibly shed some light on this verse under examination.

Genesis 37:9,10 - Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me." So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?"

Joseph’s dream and Jacob’s interpretation should not be viewed as merely historical details that lost significance following the family’s relocation to Egypt. Rather, they must be acknowledged as spiritual visions

equal to all these found in the Book of Revelation. For Joseph visions, accompanied by Jacob's interpretations, are two prophetic testimonies which have contributed significantly to the enduring hope and faith in God's promises among His people. Consequently, when assessing prophetic symbolism as the "sun, moon and the stars," especially in prophecies concerning Israel, it is essential to consider every vision and prophecy, as each plays a supportive role in illuminating God's unfolding plan for Israel's ultimate destiny.

(8:13) And I beheld and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!"

Chapter 9

The first woe, Another Star, falls from Heaven and releases the Locust

(9:1) 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.

This “*star*” which falls unto the earth is to be understood symbolically rather than literally. In prophetic writings, as we have seen, symbols are commonly used to represent leaders, saints, angels, key events, with their action and consequences contributing to the broader theme of divine judgment on the wicked and the redemption of the righteous. This interpretive approach appears consistent with patterns throughout Revelation. While symbolic language only represent the players and events, the truths in Revelation about punishment for the wicked and salvation for the righteous are to be understood literally. Thus, the “*star*” most likely signifies an angelic being ascending to earth.

(9:2) And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose 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.

(9:3) 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.

(9:4) And it was commanded of them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

The suffering being unleashed is reserved solely for the ungodly, particularly those Jews who refused to accept Jesus as the Christ. These are those who rejected His message and His gifts of life, peace, hope, love, and salvation, available through His life, death, and resurrection. The consequences described here are a direct result for their willful turning away

from the salvation extended them through Christ.

Rather, the Jews stubbornly held fast to their confidence in an adherence to the law, relying on the sacredness of the temple for their deliverance. Thus, the suffering described within the following verses is that judgment declared in the scroll for those who persisted in the old covenant rather than accepting the new covenant established by Jesus the Christ.

(9:5) And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he strikes a man.

History records that the final Roman siege of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. persisted for approximately four months, three weeks, and five days, specifically from around April 13 to September 8 of that year. A comprehensive, firsthand account of these events is provided by Flavius Josephus in his work, "The Wars of the Jews," particularly in Books V and VI.

According to astronomical calculations for the year 70 CE, they indicate that roughly five lunar cycles (synodic months) occurred between April 13 and September 8. The interval comprises about 148 days; dividing this by the mean synodic month of approximately 29.53 days yields an estimate of 5.01 lunar cycles. Seeing how the Jews reckoned their months by the lunar cycle, I would say that's pretty accurate.

(9:6) And in those days shall men seek death and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, yet death shall flee from them.

Deuteronomy 28:66,67 - Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life. In the morning you shall say, "Oh, that it were evening!" And at evening you shall say, "Oh, that it were morning!" because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and because of the sight which your eyes see.

(9:7) And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.

(9:8) And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.

(9:9) And they had breastplates, as it they were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

(9:10) And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months.

Whatever these creatures are, who can tell. Despite such vivid details provided in the text, it is difficult to form a mental image of them. What is apparent, however, is that these beings seem specifically created to fulfill the unique purpose now assigned to them within this passage.

Perhaps these entities may have been some mutilations, the result of some lawless bioengineering once carried out by the fallen angels prior to the flood as mentioned being done by Enoch. Such a notion would connect their existence to a time of great upheaval and divine judgment where much occurred which was not written down for us. Perhaps their creators are *“the angels that sinned”* and were *“cast down to hell, and delivered into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment,”* (2 Peter 2:4).

Therefore, it appears reasonable that the very being and destiny of these creatures is inseparable from with that of their ruler, king Apollyon. This connection implies that Apollyon himself may be responsible for their creation, and that their fate is linked with his own banishment and judgment.

The Book of Enoch describes how the Watchers, fallen angels who came to Earth, took human form and intermarried with humans, producing the Nephilim, the giants of renown. These angels not only mingled with people but also sinned with animals of all kinds, suggesting the creation of unnatural hybrids. They introduced forbidden knowledge such as weapon-making and warfare, further contributing to the corruption. Some women transformed into sirens after relations with angels, becoming monstrous

hybrids. Ultimately, Enoch speaks of a fiery prison reserved for the Watchers and their offspring, highlighting divine judgment for these unnatural acts and creations. (Enoch 6:1–4; 7:5; 8:2–3; 19:1–3; 19:1–3)

However, I do not believe these locusts will be physically manifested, but rather come like the demonic spirits of “legion” of which the Gadarene man was set free by Christ. However, they certainly may have possessed physical forms prior to the flood. Perhaps the imagery here is similar to in 16:13, where John sees “*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*” which are “*the spirits of devils.*”

(9:11) And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue has his name Apollyon.

(9:12) One woe is past; and behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

(9:13) *And the sixth angel sounded, and [then] I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before God,*

(9:14) Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, “Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.”

The second Woe, the release of the Four Bound Angels, and the Horseman who Kill with Fire

The events described in this verse, along with those that follow, should not be confused with the events found in Revelation 16:12-14. In that later passage, a different sixth angel pours out a vial upon the great river Euphrates to prepare the way for the kings from the east, a scene directly associated with the end-times.

By contrast, the verses presently being considered refers to an earlier period, specifically before 70 A.D. Here, the Euphrates is referenced merely as a geographical location

and is not the central focus of the text. Rightly distinguishing between these two passages is crucial for understanding each of their respective contexts and the events described.

Concerning the identities of the “*four angels bound*” at the great river Euphrates, many commentators have suggested they represent certain nations or tribes of people who, up until that point, had been restrained by the Euphrates. Among those frequently mentioned are the Arabs, the Saracens, the Tartars, and the Turks. These groups are thought to have been limited in their influence or expansion by the river until the appointed time referenced in the vision.

However, this interpretation automatically takes us into hundreds of years of history after the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple. Which, in the context of both the trumpets and the war presented in Revelation, appear rather to focus on events pertaining to Jerusalem and Israel during the Roman-Jewish war era, and the beast’s empire in the last days.

Furthermore, the prophecies found in both Daniel and Revelation primarily address other nations only as they pertain to the nation of Israel. As Gabriel stated to Daniel, these matters are relevant “*to your people and your holy city.*”

Yet there are commentators who theorize these four bound angels represent Vespasian's four generals, one in Arabia, one in Africa, one in Alexandria, and one in Palestine. This could indeed fit into the timeframe of events in the vision, but being so plainly called “*four angels bound,*” may well mean just that, fallen angels who likewise have been bound in a pit within the Euphrates, which are now being released only for “*an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year.*”

Note also John hears “*a voice coming from the four horns of the golden altar before God.*” Which there was a brazen altar where sacrifices were bound to its four horns and burned, and a golden altar with four horns, both designed according to what God showed Moses on Mount Sinai.

However, this golden altar is likely the one in heaven where

the blood of Jesus was presented for our atonement before God. At this altar, the blood of Jesus calls out instructing the sixth angel with the trumpet to “*Loose the four angels.*” This command marks the beginning of a time of vengeance.

Thus, this sixth trumpets signals the time has now come to reward them according to the words which the Jews shouted out before Pilate in hatred towards Jesus Christ, “*His blood be on us, and on our children.*”

(9:15) And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

According to the account, when the fifth trumpet sounded, the locust-like beings that emerged were only allowed to torment men, with strict prohibition against causing death, even though their victims would desperately long for death during their affliction. This period of torment marks a distinct five month period of judgment characterized by suffering without relief.

With the sounding of the sixth trumpet, a pivotal change occurs in the sequence of divine judgments. The release of the “*four angels,*” having new orders, marks the arrival of a new and formidable army, distinguishing this phase from the previous. While the earlier trumpet brought only torment and suffering, this trumpet signals a significant escalation, the commencement of widespread execution. The focus shifts from mere affliction to a period characterized by a far more severe and deadly outpouring of judgment, signifying a critical and more destructive stage in the unfolding vision.

(9:16) And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousands: and I heard the number of them.

The idea of a cavalry numbering two hundred million presents overwhelming logistical challenges, regardless of the era in which such an army might be assembled. The practicalities of organizing, equipping, and sustaining a force of this size are immense and raise substantial questions about the plausibility of such a scenario. Beyond the sheer

scale of logistics, the wisdom and financial burden associated with gathering and maintaining an army of this magnitude would be highly impractical by any standard.

Still, the presence of such an immense force would logically suggest a devastating outcome for Jerusalem, potentially amounting to a complete massacre or even genocide of the Jewish people. However, the last two verses reveals that this outcome does not occur, signaling the need for a reconsideration of how these prophetic events are to be understood.

Instead, it becomes evident that those who survive the conflicts and plagues remain unrepentant. Despite the severity of the judgments witnessed, the survivors still would not repent, and continued in their idolatrous practices, continuing to worship images fashioned from gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood. Nor did they turn away from their various transgressions, including acts of murder, sorcery, immorality, or theft.

Here are some of the notable similarities between the locusts and horsemen.

The locusts of verse 7 in the vision are portrayed as resembling horses prepared for battle, equipped with breastplates as if made of iron. In contrast, the army of horsemen, along with their riders in verse 16, are depicted as wearing breastplates composed of fire, jacinth, and brimstone, emphasizing their formidable nature and readiness for combat.

Concerning their heads, the locusts' heads are said to resemble crowns of gold, with faces like those of men, hair akin to that of women, and teeth similar to lions' teeth. The horses, on the other hand, are described as having heads like lions, and from their mouths issue fire, smoke, and brimstone, reinforcing their fearsome and destructive capacity.

The sound associated with the locusts is likened to the noise of chariots drawn by many horses rushing into battle,

underscoring their overwhelming force. While the horses themselves are not described as making a specific sound, the implication of their massive numbers would suggest however a thunderous presence.

Regarding their means of inflicting harm, the locusts possess tails like scorpions, having stingers capable of delivering severe torment. In comparison, the horses wield their power both in their mouths and in their tails, described as resembling serpents with heads that can strike, providing them with an additional method of attack.

Brief recap, the locust only torment for 5 months, leaving men longing for death. While the horseman have been sent to kill a third part of men. Their assigned timeframe is uniquely specified as "*an hour, a day, a month, and a year,*" which together amounts to approximately 396.4 days. This precise period may indicate that the acts of destruction carried out by the horsemen were consistent throughout each segment of the timeframe, whether measured by the hour, day, month, or year.

The fifth trumpet sounding released the locusts which are described as tormenting people for five months, the same duration as the Roman siege. During this time, those afflicted suffer so greatly that they long for death, but death is withheld from them.

In contrast, the sixth trumpet sounding released the horsemen depicted as agents of destruction whose mission is to kill one third of the population, and their period of action is specified with great precision: an hour, a day, a month, and a year. This underscores the severity and final nature of their actions when compared to the suffering inflicted by the locusts.

(9:17) And thus, I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

(9:18) By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

(9:19) For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

A quick recap: the fifth and sixth trumpet soundings released two distinct yet related forces, the locusts and the horsemen, each having been assigned a specific role and period of activity. The locusts are described as tormenting people for five months, the same duration as the Roman siege. During this time, those afflicted suffer so greatly that they long for death, but death is withheld from them.

In contrast, the horsemen are depicted as agents of destruction with a far more lethal purpose. Their mission is to kill one third of the population, and their period of action is specified with great precision: an hour, a day, a month, and a year. This indicates a divinely appointed and finite timeframe for their task which underscores the severity and final nature of their actions when compared to the suffering inflicted by the locusts.

It appears that the time frames associated with the locusts and the horsemen events overlapped, particularly during the five-month Roman siege of Jerusalem. The onset of the locusts probably coincides with the beginning of the siege, accounting for the survivors mentioned in the chapter's concluding verses. Many of these survivors would later meet their end in the Roman games, as after Titus returned to Rome, he then celebrated his military victory for a hundred days.

Concerning the large number of deaths, according to Josephus, following the five-month siege after Jerusalem fell, Cæsar instructed his forces to kill only those who were armed and resisted, sparing the rest. However, the soldiers also killed the elderly and infirm alongside those they were ordered to slay.

Those in the prime of life, who were considered useful, were gathered in the court of the women of the temple area, where their fates were determined based on merits, where also seditious individuals and robbers were accused by their peers. The tallest and most attractive young men were selected to be presented at Titus's triumph march into the city, while the remaining men above seventeen years old were bound and sent to labor in Egyptian mines.

Titus also dispersed a large number of the prisoners to various provinces as gifts, where multitudes were executed in theaters, either by the sword or by wild beasts. During this period of sorting and distinguishing the captives, a significant number, estimated at eleven thousand, perished from starvation. Some because their guards withheld food out of hatred, while others rejected food when offered to them.

Historical accounts record that in Caesarea alone 2,500 Jewish captives perished in the gladiatorial games. Archaeological evidence from Pompeii suggests that Jewish gladiators likely fought in those arenas there as well. Many other captives were sold to slave traders and sent to provinces throughout Rome, where they too were killed in gladiatorial spectacles throughout the empire.

Louis H. Feldman, writing in *Biblical Archaeology Review*, notes that a concealed inscription within the amphitheater indicates funds confiscated during the Jewish Revolt, including treasures from Judea and revenues generated from captives, were instrumental for Emperor Vespasian in resolving monetary challenges, as well as enabling Rome to finance the construction of the Colosseum.

Furthermore, in a footnote on *The Jewish Wars Book VI*, it is recorded that the total number of Jews who perished over the seven years preceding the siege was tallied by Archbishop Ussher, using sources from Lipsius and Josephus, at 1,337,490. However, this figure includes not only those in Jerusalem but also Jews and proselytes from Galilee, Samaria, Judea, Perea, and more distant regions who had gathered for Passover.

(9:20) And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

(9:21) Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

Chapter 10

(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 if it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire:

(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,

(10:3) And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars: and when he had cried seven thunders uttered their voices.

(10:4) 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."

(10:5) And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,

The little book held by the mighty angel, along with the message delivered in a loud voice and the words spoken by the seven thunders, are intentionally hidden from us. Although the details are withheld, the context suggests a connection to the Jews' persistent unrepentance illustrated earlier in Revelation 9:20-21. This obstinate refusal to abandon their idolatrous practices mirrors the behavior shown to Ezekiel in chapter 8:5-7, further emphasizing the recurring theme with Israel.

This ongoing obstinacy and spiritual hardness comes from a deeply enrooted influence of the mystery Babylonian religion during their captivity, which permeated the hearts and minds of the Jews people. Such entrenched idolatry not only causes a deep resistance to repentance, but also led to their rejection of their Messiah, Jesus Christ. Yet, in spite of all the Jews have been through, the effects of this mystery religion continues to persist within both Judaism and Christianity even to this day, reinforcing the gravity of the warnings and judgments depicted in all these passages left for us today.

(10:6) And swore by Him that lives 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 no more time.

There Should Be Time No More

The destruction and death inflicted upon Jerusalem and the Jews by the Romans was unmatched, far exceeding the devastation that occurred during the Babylonian captivity under the Chaldeans. While the Chaldeans were responsible for significant suffering and loss, the judgment brought by the Romans was vastly more severe in both scope and intensity.

Compared to the more limited destruction described in the writings of Ezekiel, the utter annihilation wrought by the Romans stands is notably more pronounced, not simply causing hardship, rather a complete end of Israel as a nation. Yet, despite this utter downfall, Israel today has experienced a remarkable renewal and exists once again in the present day.

This restoration does not stand as a testament to the enduring nature of its people, for they remain a hardhearted and stiff-necked people. No, their reemergence stands only as a surety of God's word, for they are beloved for the fathers' sake, God keeping covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. All this echoing both the prophetic warnings and promises outlined in Scripture.

Ezekiel 9:5 - ...Go after him through the city and kill; do not let your eye spare, nor have any pity. ⁶ Utterly slay old and young men, maidens and little children and women; but do not come near anyone on whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary. So, they began with the elders who were before the temple. ⁷ Then He said to them, "Defile the temple, and fill the courts with the slain. Go out!" And they went out and killed in the city. ⁸ So it was, that while they were killing them, I was left alone; and I fell on my face and cried out, and said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Will You destroy all the remnant of Israel in

pouring out Your fury on Jerusalem?" 9 Then He said to me, "The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great, and the land is full of bloodshed, and the city full of perversity; for they say, 'The LORD has forsaken the land, and the LORD does not see!' 10 "And as for Me also, My eye will neither spare, nor will I have pity, but I will recompense their deeds on their own head."

With the completion of the scourging and chastisement delivered through the plagues initiated by the six angels and their trumpets, the stage is now set for the final judgment to be executed upon the Jewish nation. This decisive act of judgment was carried out by Rome, which the Scriptures represent as the *"fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; with great iron teeth."* Rome fulfilled its appointed role by coming to *"devour and break in pieces and stamp the residue"* of Israel *"with its feet."* Thus Rome distinguished from all those that came before it by the unparalleled severity and thoroughness of its destruction. In accordance with God's own words, *"Vengeance is Mine."*

(10:7) *But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, [then shall] the mystery of God should be finished, as He has declared to His servants the prophets.*

The Mystery of God Should be Finished

The time indicated here in verse 7, described as *"the days of the voice of the seventh angel,"* signifies the unfolding of events that take place at the culmination of time, immediately preceding the return of the Lord. The narrative however of Revelation chapters 6 through 10 does not focus on future events, but rather back to ancient Israel when it experience both its judgment and devastation.

This period of chastisement and destruction is intricately connected to the very words of Jesus, as recorded in the Gospel accounts of Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21,

where He foretold the coming tribulation upon Jerusalem and its people.

Furthermore, these events are in harmony with the prophetic message found in Hosea chapter 5, where the prophet warns Israel of the dire consequences of their actions and their impending fate. The fulfillment of these prophecies reveals a tightly woven tapestry of judgment, warning, and the ultimate sovereignty of God over the course of history for His people.

Hosea 5:14,15 - For I will be like a lion to Ephraim, And like a young lion to the house of Judah. I, even I, will tear them and go away; I will take them away, and no one shall rescue. I will return again to My place till they acknowledge their offense. Then they will seek My face; In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me.

According to Hosea 6:1-3, there are two prophetic days, which represent two millennia until the sounding of the seventh angel's trumpet. But for now, with the declaration in verse 6, "*there shall be time no more,*" begins the prophetic siege upon Jerusalem marking a significant turning point in the unfolding events.

Luke 19:43 - "For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, ⁴⁴ and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation." ⁴⁵ Then Jesus went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in it, ⁴⁶ saying to them, "It is written, 'My house is a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'"

Therefore, with the destruction of Jerusalem, the temple, and Israel as a definable nation with both functioning civil and religious leadership, as well as its definable boundaries, Jesus Christ crucified and resurrected has taken His divine power and authority and thoroughly implemented His judgment against His enemies who would not have Him to reign over them. Exercising His divine power and authority

with fierceness of a young lion, He tears them apart, and returns to His place “*till they*” who refused to recognize Him as King “*acknowledge their offense.*”

These are they who sought to move the boundary stones referenced in Hosea 5:10, in an attempt to extend their own authority and influence, and desired to seize the inheritance by killing the rightful Heir.

But now they must face both the outcome of Christ’s triumph and His wrath. Then, when His judgment against those who opposed Him is completed, Christ returned to His rightful place until the third day, (Hosea 6:2).

Hosea 5:8 - Blow the ram's horn in Gibeah, The trumpet in Ramah! Cry aloud at Beth Aven, 'Look behind you, O Benjamin!'

9 Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke; Among the tribes of Israel I make known what is sure. [*Both Ephraim (Israel) to the north and Judah to the south were thoroughly warned of God’s judgments if they willfully sinned against Him*]

10 The princes of Judah are like those who remove a landmark; I will pour out my wrath on them like water.

11 Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment, Because he willingly walked by human precept. [*For they willingly obeyed Jeroboam and worshipped the two golden calves*]

12 Therefore I will be to Ephraim like a moth, And to the house of Judah like rotteness.

13 When Ephraim saw his sickness, And Judah saw his wound, Then Ephraim went to Assyria And sent to King Jareb; Yet he cannot cure you, Nor heal you of your wound.

14 For [*all this*] I will be like a lion to Ephraim, And like a young lion to the house of Judah. I, even I, will tear them and go away; I will take them away, and no one shall rescue.

15 I will return again to My place Till they acknowledge their offense. Then they will seek My face; In their

affliction they will earnestly seek Me."

Throughout their history, both Israel in the north and Judah in the south repeatedly sought help from foreign nations rather than turning to God for deliverance. When faced with threats from Assyria and Babylon, instead of seeking the Lord's guidance and protection, they put their trust in Egypt, hoping that political alliances and military aid would secure their safety. This misplaced dependence continued into the time of the Roman occupation, when rather than accepting Jesus Christ as their Messiah, they ultimately appealed to Rome to carry out His execution.

The prophet Hosea now lends a prophetic voice to the Jews -

Hosea 6:1 - Come and let us return unto the LORD: for He has torn, and He will heal us; He has smitten, and He will bind us up.

2 After two days He will revive us [*Israel is reborn 1948*]: in the third day He will raise us up [*millennial reign*], and we shall live in His sight. [*A day with the Lord is as a thousand years*]

3 Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us [*again as He has promised*] as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.

What we see here is Israel which "*was, was not, and yet is.*" This will again be discussed in chapters 11 & 17.

Revelation 11:13 - In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven. 14 The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly. 15 Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"

(10:8) And the voice which I heard from heaven spoke 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.”

(10:9) 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 your belly bitter, but it shall be in your mouth sweet as honey.”

(10:10) 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.

The Sweet, Yet Bitter Little Book

Remember that the original text does not include the partitioning established with the injection of chapters and verses. That said, the verses 11:1&2 appear to be connected to this sweet and bitter “little book” given to John to eat in chapter 10, which was first sweet in his mouth but bitter in his belly.

I believe this short book summarizes God's covenant to Israel, first given in Leviticus 23 at Mount Sinai and reiterated in Deuteronomy 28 before entering the promised land, where both blessings and curses were clearly outlined.

(10:11) And he said unto me, “You must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.”

This verse also gives credence for an early date of the writing of Revelation, for if indeed it was written between 65 and 68 A.D., then John would have the physical vigor necessary to carry out the prophecies given to him here, specifically, the instruction to prophesy before many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings. Such a commission would require extensive travel and encounters with diverse audiences, which is realistically achievable if John were not well advanced in age.

Conversely, if Revelation were written later, around 91-92 A.D., then John would have been much older. In this scenario, the demands of the prophecy would have been far

more challenging. Additionally, the timeframe for fulfilling these obligations would necessarily be compressed, for John's advanced years would limit his ability to undertake such efforts over an extended period.

A Review of Chapters 6 thru 10

Chapters 6 thru 10 focus on the implementation of the prophesied destruction of Jerusalem. These passages not only detail the devastation of the city itself, but also the obliteration of the temple, and the end of Israel's status as a sovereign nation with definable borders.

Following this depiction of judgment, the narrative now shifts dramatically as we enter Revelation Chapter 11, leaping forward in time, we are shown a scenario requiring a renewed and restored Jerusalem in the end times. This restored city symbolizes the prophetic reestablishment of Israel, as illustrated in Romans Chapter 11.

This prophetic restoration occurs after "*the fullness of the Gentiles*" has come in. It is at this pivotal moment that "*all Israel shall be saved, as it is written,*" and "*there shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.*" This progression highlights the fulfillment of God's promises of redemption and restoration for Israel.

Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness! For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? (Romans 11:12,15,23,24)

Thus, Romans 11 and Revelation 11 are deeply intertwined within the prophetic framework of the Bible. Their relation-

ship is so profound that attempting to interpret either chapter in isolation diminishes the impact and meaning of both. These chapters serve as prophetic counterparts, almost like bookends, marking significant chronological events separated by nearly two thousand years.

When Romans 11 and Revelation 11 are considered together, they present a comprehensive and integrated view of God's plan for both Israel and the Gentiles. The messages within these chapters are so closely connected that any attempt to interpret them independently diminishes the overall clarity and impact of the biblical vision. By recognizing their intertwined nature, it becomes evident that these passages collectively illuminate the prophetic narrative concerning the end times and the eventual restoration of Israel.

Chapter 11

(11:1) And [or “then”] 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.

John’s Reed and Other Measuring Devices

The reed given to John serves as a measuring instrument, echoing the prophetic use of scales and balances in biblical passages. For example, in Daniel 5:27, Belshazzar is told, “*You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting,*” illustrating the concept of divine assessment and judgment.

Throughout scripture, measuring instruments have been applied to measure both the wicked and the righteous. For we see Job, in his plea for justice and mercy, crying out, “*Let me be weighed on honest scales, That God may know my integrity,*” expressing his confidence in God's impartial assessment. Here by proving “*The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether*” (Job 31:6; Psalm 19).

In addition to both the reed and balances, the plumb line also has been used to symbolize a means of God's deciding the integrity of people's actions. For the Lord had asked Amos, “*Amos, what do you see?*” Amos responded, “*A plumb line.*” The Lord then proclaims, “*Behold, I am setting a plumb line In the midst of My people Israel; I will not pass by them anymore. The high places of Isaac shall be desolate, And the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste. I will rise with the sword against the house of Jeroboam,*” signifying impending judgment upon the northern tribes based on God's plumb line standard.

Likewise, the rejection of Jesus as the Messiah by the stiff-necked unbelieving Jews resulted in their forfeiture of the stable foundation whereupon they were to be securely established, and therefore are instead likened to a weakened wall about to collapse. This imagery is further reflected in

David's prophetic psalm below.

Psalm 62:2-4 - He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved. How long will you attack a man? You shall be slain, all of you, Like a leaning wall and a tottering fence. They only consult together to cast Him down from His high position; They delight in lies; They bless with their mouth, But they curse inwardly. Selah

Also added to these instruments is a measuring line, another important tool among biblical instruments used for assessment and judgment. Its length, greater than that of the reed, represents a broader scope, capable of encompassing larger areas for more significant judgments.

2 Kings 21:13-15 - And I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line of Samaria and the plummet of the house of Ahab; I will wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down. So I will forsake the remnant of My inheritance and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become victims of plunder to all their enemies, because they have done evil in My sight, and have provoked Me to anger since the day their fathers came out of Egypt, even to this day.'

Throughout scripture, it is evident that the chief priority of God is the manifestation of His glory. This glory was intended to be reflected in humanity, as mankind was created in God's image for the purpose of displaying both His character and holiness. The call to holiness is rooted in the nature of God Himself: "*Be holy, for I am holy.*"

For this reason, the righteousness of Noah illustrates that the life and actions of one individual is sufficient to bring condemnation upon the entire world, underscoring the weight of the human responsibility in reflecting God's glory.

We must never lose sight that according to the word of the Lord, "*the nations are as a drop in a bucket, and are counted as the small dust on the scales.*" Despite the greatness that nations may perceive in themselves, including Israel,

Scripture affirms that “*all nations before Him are as nothing, and counted by Him less than nothing and worthless.*”

This perspective serves as a reminder of the absolute insignificance of worldly achievements in comparison to God’s glory. Therefore, Jesus exhorted all to “*seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness,*” emphasizing that true value lies in pursuing God above all else. (Isaiah 40:15-17).

The phrase “*the temple of God*” in this passage raises the necessity for an important distinction. If this expression is to be interpreted as referring to the physical temple located in Jerusalem, then this instance would be the only time in the entire book of Revelation where such a reference is made. For in contrast, all other references to “*the temple of God*” within Revelation are clearly understood to be speaking of the temple “*which is in heaven.*”

The specific command for John to, “*Measure the temple of God, the altar, and them that worship therein,*” is contrary to the instruction in the following verse not to measure, “*the court... given to the Gentiles*” and “*the holy city.*”

This verse ought to be considered with recognition that the earthly temple is “*that which was decaying and waxing old, and was ready to vanish away,*” as described in Hebrews 8:13, the old giving way for the new. Wherefore John later writes, “*And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.*”

Consequently, the symbolic significance of the verse anticipates believers who, in accordance with the new covenant, are unified with God and referred to as “*the temple of God.*” Christ is identified as the chief cornerstone, while the saints are described as “*living stones,*” as referenced in Isaiah 28:16, Psalm 118:22, and 1 Peter 2:4-8.

Within this spiritual interpretation, the “*altar*” represents the sacrificed, yet risen Savior, and those who “*worship therein*” the faithful who remained in the Judean region. This

perspective draws on the idea that the true worshipers are identified by their presence and dedication, rather than simply their physical location.

Additionally, Zechariah 2:1–5 offers a favorable example of Jerusalem being measured “*because of the multitude*” within it. In that passage, due to their faithfulness, God declares “*I will be to her a wall of fire all around, and I will be the glory in her midst.*” This echoes the notion that God’s protection and presence are with those who are truly devoted and, having the Holy Spirit, worship God in spirit and truth, further reinforcing the spiritual significance of the temple and its altar.

(11:2) 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.

The siege of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. creates a pivotal chapter in the First Jewish Revolt against the Roman Empire, a conflict extending from 66 to 73 A.D. The most consequential phase of the revolt commenced when the Romans encircled Jerusalem, and severed the city from all external contact. This complete lockdown persisted for five months, marking the period of their most intense deprivation and struggle. All this is shown in Revelation 9:5-18, as well as in their related comments.

Throughout these five months, the inhabitants of Jerusalem experienced profound hardships as they withstood the full chokehold of the Roman siege. The interval between this total isolation and the culmination of the revolt in 73 A.D. is noteworthy, and may indeed answer to the prophetic forty-two months within the scriptural account. This span encapsulates the peak of the conflict and persisted until the cessation of major hostilities between the Romans and the Jewish population.

In summary, the forty-two months appears capable of serving as an reference to the period extending from Jerusalem’s critical isolation to the resolution of the Roman campaign, thereby encompassing the time of greatest

upheaval and resistance during the First Jewish Revolt. God simply brought to pass what was prophesied to the Jews by Moses 1,500 years prior to entering the promise land.

Deuteronomy 28:63 And it shall come to pass, that as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; for the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and you shall be plucked from off the land to which you go to possess.

It was for this very judgment that the reed was given to John to measure the temple, rooted in the principle that “*judgment must begin in the Lord’s house.*” This concept finds a parallel in the prophetic vision granted to Ezekiel, where the process of judgment is depicted with deliberate precision. Ezekiel records that, prior to the onset of judgment, the angel is commanded to “*set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and weep for all the abominations that are done in the midst thereof.*”

After the faithful are distinctly marked, the process of divine judgment begins in strict accordance with God’s command, initiating specifically “*at My sanctuary.*” The actions of the angels are first directed toward “*the ancient men which were before the house.*” This order of events highlights the principle that those who serve and labor in the sanctuary, and who bear the responsibility for maintaining its holiness, are the first to be held accountable. Their accountability precedes that of others, emphasizing the seriousness with which God regards the stewardship of His house.

Having examined the gravity of these spiritual themes, the necessity for men to obey God, and to worship Him in spirit and truth, it is imperative that leaders today truly give these things their deserved consideration.

For throughout the scriptures, we have numerous accounts detailing God’s pleading and dealings with men. Each one emphasizes His call to faithfulness, and highlighting the responsibility placed upon those who have accepted the

charge to shepherd and guide God's flock. All of these serve as a sober reminder that *judgment begins in the house of God*, and ought to heighten an awareness of the accountability among those entrusted with spiritual leadership. Sadly, too many will be weighed in the balance and found wanting...

Why the Gap, the Prophetic Leap in Narrative

Convinced that a significant and substantive transition occurs at this point in the chapter, specifically between verses two and three, I have delineated the separation above to indicate the narrative shift. This marks a change in emphasis from the earlier themes of judgment and accountability to a renewed focus on the ongoing fulfillment of God's covenant with the patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

This act of divine remembrance indicates that, despite the periods of judgment and adversity upon the Jews focused upon in the preceding four chapters, there continues an underlying benevolence guiding God's actions toward Israel.

Jeremiah 3:1 – "They say, 'If a man divorces his wife, And she goes from him and becomes another man's, may he return to her again?' Would that land not be greatly polluted? But you have played the harlot with many lovers; Yet return to Me," says the LORD.

This favor is owing to this enduring covenant established with the patriarchs; therefore their descendants persist as beneficiaries of God's unwavering love and mercy. This theme emphasizes the sustained relationship between God and His people, grounded in promises made to the fathers, and proves the lasting significance of God's covenant across time. See Leviticus 26:28-45.

Romans 11:15 - For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?

Leviticus 26:42 - Then will I remember my covenant with

Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.

Leviticus 26:45 - But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD.

In conclusion, the remaining verses in this chapter serve to reiterate and show the fulfilled promises of God in His remembrance of the covenant with the fathers. This is the children's opportunity for salvation, available to all who will believe the confirmation of the covenant made evident by these two witnesses.

All this is possible, because as it says in Mark 13:20, "*If the Lord had not shortened those days (70AD), no person would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect whom He had chosen, He shortened those days.*"

Romans 11:25 - For I would, brethren, that you should not be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part *has happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.* ²⁶ And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, "There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: ²⁷ For this is My covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." ²⁸ As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, **they are beloved for the fathers' sakes.**

(11:3) And <kai> I will give power unto My two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

The phrase "*clothed in sackcloth*" signifies the deep humility and sorrow that will mark the ministry of the two witnesses. This imagery draws a parallel to the attitude and emotional state of the prophet Jeremiah, whose life was a constant expression of grief and anguish over the sinfulness of Judah

and the looming destruction Jerusalem faced at the hands of Babylon. Thus, the two witnesses are also characterized by a spirit of mourning for the state of Israel, embodying sorrow for the nation's spiritual condition and the consequences that follow.

The usages of "Kai"

The Greek term "kia" is typically rendered as "and"; however, in this verse, a more nuanced translation may be warranted. Rather than functioning solely as an inclusive conjunction, it may introduce the verse in a manner that is more explanatory or conditional. For example, the verse could begin with "*Then* I will give power...", "*When* I will give power...", "*But, when* I will give power...", or even "*Yet* I will give power..." Each translation option highlights a critical point: the action described to occur at a specific moment determined by conditions that only God Himself has established in advance.

This interpretation of "kai" would have given clarification that the verse is not merely a continuation of the preceding verses, but rather pointing forward, it looks to the specific timing and context in which God grants authority to His two witnesses. Its timing is decisive, not random, established with divine intent and predetermined circumstances. Thus, the verse takes the reader forward to a sequence of events with the assurance that their fulfillment is guaranteed.

Israel's Birth as a Nation

Israel's origin as a nation began with its exodus from Egypt, a pivotal moment that marked its unique birth and identity among the peoples of the earth. However, because of its repeated sins and disobedience, Israel repeatedly faced divine judgments, which ultimately led to its downfall and annihilation at the hands of Rome. At that period, Israel ceased to exist as a nation, whereby Israel, "*was not.*"

Yet the story of Israel did not end there. For the mystery of God to be fulfilled in light of prophecy, it was necessary that

Israel “*must be born again*” as a nation. This sequence, Israel’s existence, non-existence, and subsequent restoration, forms the foundation for the prophetic phrase: “*Was, is not, and yet is.*” This phrase is not only seen appropriate to describe Israel’s history, but also that of the seven-headed beast intimately connected to Israel in the last days, (Revelation 13:1; 17:8).

“*Yet is*” for Israel occurred on May 14, 1948, when it was reestablished receiving immediate recognition from the United States. Therefore, I am persuaded this chapter was written to confirm Israel would be “*born*” again; and that the verse now speaks to the end of Israel’s last days.

Isaiah 66:8 - Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be [re]born in a day? For as soon as Zion was in labor, she gave birth to her children. (See verses 5-13)

Jeremiah 31:10 - Hear the word of the LORD, O you nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock.

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

So, just who are these “*two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before God of the earth?*”

Since this is nearly an exact quote of Zechariah 4:14, it is the best biblical reference we have in scripture from which some gleaning can be made, (chapter below). However, even Zechariah when asking the angel who spoke with him, he did not really seem to get an answer which gave him clear understanding of the prophetic significance, (verses 4, 11, &12).

Zechariah 4:3 - "Two olive trees are by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left." **4 So I answered and spoke to the angel who talked with me, saying, "What**

are these, my lord?" ⁵ Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." ⁶ So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts. ⁷ 'Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he shall bring forth the capstone with shouts of "Grace, grace to it!" ⁸ Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying: ⁹ "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; His hands shall also finish it. Then you will know That the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. ¹⁰ For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the LORD, which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth." ¹¹ **Then I answered and said to him, "What are these two olive trees-at the right of the lampstand and at its left?"** ¹² **And I further answered and said to him, "What are these two olive branches that drip into the receptacles of the two gold pipes from which the golden oil drains?"** ¹³ Then he answered me and said, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." ¹⁴ So he said, "These are the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth."

Since John wrote Revelation after the life, ministry, death, resurrection of Jesus, and the advent of the Holy Spirit, the situation for believers has greatly changed, much more so since Zechariah's time. For now, that the end of all things is closer than it was 2,500 plus years ago, we must not forget that God is willing to give wisdom and understanding to anyone who sincerely seeks Him with pure faith and love concerning the times in which they are living. Therefore, if we humbly seek wisdom from God, both scripture and the Holy Spirit are sure to guide us. Howbeit, many of these teachings remained hidden throughout generations simply because they were not meant for those times, but were to be revealed in the time of which they speak.

Daniel 12:4,8,9 - But you, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased... And I heard, but I understood not: then I asked, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, "Go thy way, Daniel: **for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.**"

But now, what we do know is that there were two key people within Zechariah's prophecy here, Joshua the high priest and Zerubbabel. Here is some information from the International Standard Encyclopedia -

"All that is known certainly about Zerubbabel is found in the canonical books of Zechariah, Haggai, and Ezra-Nehemiah. According to these he and Jeshua, the high priest, led up a band of captives from Babylon to Jerusalem and began rebuilding the temple in the second year of Darius Hystaspis. They first constructed the altar of burnt offerings, and afterward built a temple, usually called the Second Temple, much inferior in beauty to that of Solomon.

According to Josephus and the apocryphal Book of Ezra (1 Esdras 3,4), Zerubbabel was a friend of Darius Hystaspis, having successfully competed before him in a contest whose object was to determine what was the strongest thing in the world; wine, kings, women, or truth. Zerubbabel, having demonstrated that truth was the mightiest of all, was called the king's "cousin," and was granted by him permission to go up to Jerusalem and to build the temple. Zerubbabel was also made a governor of Jerusalem and also performed the duties of the "*tirshatha*," an official who was probably the Persian collector of taxes."

"So, Joshua was the religious leader and Zerubbabel served as a civil leader, but what we see in Zechariah 4:14 is that "*These are the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth.*" But also, what we see it that neither of these had it within their

own selves to do the task before them, but what was going to be done through them was going to be, “*Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the LORD of hosts.*”

“And how was all this going to be done by Joshua and Zerubbabel, because the work that was given them was both monumental and overwhelming. Yet, just as Zerubbabel’s hands had laid the foundation stone, he was also destined to place the capstone, bringing the vision to its full completion, (Zechariah 4:7, 9). But all this was not a work which would be accomplished in their own wisdom and by their own strength, for God had asserted it was “*Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit.*” For this work was a work of the grace of God, His unmerited favor, which alone would allow the work to see its fruition, as was repeatedly expressed in the declaration, “*Grace, grace to it.*”

For again, in their eyes the work before them seemed an impossible task to accomplish, as there was a mountain of opposition and contempt firmly set against it; for the Jew’s adversaries scornfully viewed it as trivial and a mere “*small thing.*” Yet, God’s promise was large and steadfast, “*I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: My house shall be built in it,*” (Zechariah 1:16).

Therefore, by the word of the Lord they were encouraged, “*Let your hands be strong, you [Jews] which hear in these days these words [which were witnessed] by the mouth of the prophets, which were in the day that the foundation of the house of the LORD of hosts was laid, that [it is by the Lord Himself] the temple might be built!*” Zerubbabel and Joshua’s strength was not within themselves, but in the promises and faithfulness of God, who was determined to see His house completed.

Similarly, the two witnesses in Revelation are likewise described as “*two olive trees, and the two candlesticks*

standing before the God of the earth,” imagery which echoes the very message presented long ago in Zechariah. And yet, is this not a prophetic theme throughout Scripture? For these last two witnesses are not only prophets, but they are specifically sent as God’s final witnesses and heralders of the message that the true Temple of Heaven is about to be revealed.

Howbeit, their core message will be an affirmation of the historic Covenant of God with His people, and central to their testimony is Jesus the Christ, acknowledged as “*the only begotten*” and proven Son of God, the long-awaited Christ and the sole, authentic Messiah. Their message will highlight the significance of Jesus's crucifixion, burial, and resurrection, not simply as historical occurrences, but as the very foundation of redemption and the fulfillment of God's plan. They will thus “*confirm the covenant*” for three and a half years with emphasis of Christ's imminent and glorious return, declaring Him alone as the true Capstone who brings completion to God's Heavenly Temple.

Ultimately, the work that these two witnesses do, from the beginning of their ministry to its end, is proclaim the work that only God Himself could accomplish: providing a remedy for sin, the regeneration of fallen man, transformation of sinners into saints, fulfilling the promise of mortal corruptible beings receiving incorruptible bodies and everlasting life. For it is “*Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit*” says the Lord. Therefore, this testimony reaffirms to Israel that the fulfillment of God’s promises and the accomplishment of His divine plan are achieved solely through Jesus Christ, highlighting His position as both the cornerstone and the culmination of God’s Temple in Heaven.

Daniel 9:24 - Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon your holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

Additionally, Zechariah was later told to go to the men who return with Ezra from Babylon and to instruct them to, “*take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest.*” This act was not merely ceremonial, for he was instructed that, as the crown was placed upon Joshua, he was to prophesy, “*Thus says the LORD of hosts, saying: ‘Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH! From His place He shall branch out, And He shall build the temple of the LORD! Yes, He shall build the temple of the LORD, and He shall bear the glory, for He shall sit and rule on His throne!’*” (Zechariah 6:9-12).

The importance of this prophetic act appears directly linked to the function of the two witnesses described in Revelation 11. These individuals, represented by olive oil and candlesticks, are identified as the final prophets sent to the restored nation of the Jews, providing guidance and illumination before the ultimate disclosure when “*the temple of God*” is “*opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament*” (Revelation 11:19).

Lastly, another point of importance is the direct link revealed for us in the genealogical records of the New Testament between Zerubbabel and Jesus Christ, is that both Joseph and Mary are recorded as descendants of Zerubbabel. This lineage is specifically noted in Matthew 1:13 and Luke 3:27, which also lends emphasis to the continuity of God's promises and the fulfillment of prophecy through Christ's family line.

Thus, this prophetic type and shadow with Joshua and Zerubbabel given us in Zechariah as great significance in understand these last two witnesses and their authority and power to bear witnesses to the covenant of God to His people. But what is The Covenant?

Job 19:25-27 - *For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes*

shall behold, and not another, even though my reins be consumed within me.

The covenant to which Job hung on to was the divine promise of a bodily resurrection; and not just Jesus' resurrection, but the resurrection of all who loved Him as well. Consequently, Jesus was faithful to be constant in confirming this truth to His own disciples, as well as to those to whom He preached the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 5:8 – Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

John 5:24 – Truly, truly, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live...²⁶ For as the Father hath life in Himself; so has He given to the Son to have life in Himself;²⁷ And has also given Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of man.²⁸ Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice,²⁹ and they all shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto a resurrection of damnation.

John 6:39 – And this is the Father's will which has sent Me, that of all which He has given Me I should lose nothing, but that I should raise it up again at the last day.⁴⁰ And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that everyone which sees the Son, and believes on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 11:23 – Jesus said unto her, "Your brother shall rise again."²⁴ Martha said unto Him, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day."²⁵ Jesus said unto her, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:²⁶ And whosoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

John 14:19 – Yet a little while, and the world will see Me no more; but you will see Me: and because I live, you shall

live also. ²⁰ At that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

This covenant from the beginning was revealed through the law and the prophets, and continued throughout the rest of scripture; the very same from which Jesus and the Apostles preached, even the very same Gospel of the coming Kingdom of God, that these final two witnesses commandingly declare and confirm with their own death and bodily resurrection from the dead, (Revelation 11:11).

Isaiah 25:8 – *He will swallow up death in victory*; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the LORD has spoken it. ⁹ And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for Him, and we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.

Isaiah 26:19 – Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, you that dwell in the dust: for your dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

Ezekiel 37:12 – Therefore prophesy and say unto them, thus says the Lord GOD; Behold My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, and I will bring you into the land of Israel.

Job 14:12 – So, man lies down and rises not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep. ¹³ Oh that You would hide me in the grave, that You would keep me secret, until Your wrath be passed, that You would appoint me a set time, and remember me! ¹⁴ If a man die, shall he live again? Therefore, all the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change comes. ¹⁵ for You shall call, and I will answer You: for You will have Your desire for the work of Your hands.

Psalms 16:9 – Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices: my flesh also shall rest in hope. ¹⁰ For You will not

leave my soul in hell; neither will You suffer Your Holy One to see corruption. ¹¹and You will show me the path of life: and in Your presence is fulness of joy; and at Your right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Psalm 17:15 – As for me, I will behold Your face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with Your likeness.

Hosea 13:14 – I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: Oh death, I will be your plagues; Oh grave, I will be your destruction: for then shall repentance be hidden from Mine eyes.

(11:5) And if any man will hurt them, fire proceeds out of their mouth, and devours their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

(11:6) These have power to shut heaven, that it rains 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.

It is highly plausible that the prophecies of these two witnesses will align with the events involving the seven angels who deliver the seven plagues and the seven vials of God's wrath as described in Revelation 15:6 to 16:21. This would all operate as a choreographed unfolding of prophetic events, where the testimony and actions of the two witnesses on earth are interwoven with the judgments poured out by the angels.

Together, these events contribute to the realization of God's prophetic plan outlined in Revelation, with each stage emphasizing the importance and weight of the witnesses' prophetic statements and warnings given at their respective times.

(11:7) And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

Matthew 24:9 - Then shall they deliver you up to be

afflicted, and shall kill you: and you shall be hated of all nations for My name's sake.

John 15:20 - Remember the word that I said unto you, "The servant is not greater than his Lord." If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also. 21 But all these things will they do unto you for My name's sake, because they know not Him that sent Me.

Revelation 17:8 - The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

(11:8) 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.

The term "*great city*" in this context refers to Jerusalem, although other cities are also described as great in the Book of Revelation. This identification is supported by the reference to Jerusalem as "*where also our Lord was crucified.*"

The term "*spiritually called Sodom and Egypt*" is particularly meaningful in this passage. It conveys a dual message about Israel's origins and its spiritual journey. On one hand, it points to where Israel came from, referencing Egypt as the place of bondage and Sodom as a symbol of moral degradation. On the other hand, despite Israel's divine calling and purpose, the phrase also reflects what Israel ultimately became. This spiritual designation highlights both the history and the decline of Israel's faithfulness, underscoring the contrast between what was expected and what was realized. See Ezekiel 16:1-63.

The second point, despite the promise and calling associated with born again Israel, the term "*Sodom and Egypt*" testifies to the reality that modern unbelieving Israelis remain slaves to their sins. For even though they profess an

adherence to the law of Moses and claim to be following the teachings of the prophets, the religion practiced today is a perversion of the original's true intent. Instead of embracing the authentic spirit of God's commandments, Israel is entangled in a corrupt religious system that falls short even within the confines of the old covenant: perpetuating a spiritless form of faith full of mysticism that cannot lead to freedom, but rather maintains their spiritual blindness and bondage.

(11:9) And [yet] they, the people and kindreds and tongues of all nations shall see their dead bodies for three days and a half and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

Confirming the Covenant

In this prophetic moment, the bodies of the two witnesses are not hidden away in a tomb, nor are they granted the dignity of burial out of public view. Instead, their corpses remain visibly exposed in the very streets where their lives were taken. This vulgar display is not accidental; it is the result of a deliberate decision by leaders within Israel, whose arrogance drives them with a determination to make a public example of the witnesses.

The refusal to bury them serves a calculated purpose: it is intended as an open challenge to undermine the message they proclaimed, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to refute the doctrine of resurrection, treating it as nothing more than a myth. By leaving their bodies exposed, these leaders hope to forever discredit Christianity and destroy all influence of the Gospel once and for all, by shamefully using the spectacle to attack the truth of Christ's resurrection.

Ironically, the very actions taken by the leaders only serve to heighten the significance of what is to come, and prepare the stage for an even greater demonstration of God's power. Thus, they unwittingly are actually placing the cherry on top of the cake just in time for the coming of the Lord.

(11:10) And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them,

and make merry, and shall send gifts to one another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

(11:11) And after three days and a 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.

The two witnesses “*confirm the covenant*” by the presence of Jesus Christ's Spirit within them. This confirmation is evident in two primary ways: first, through their prophetic proclamation of God's message during their appointed time, and second, by being brought back to life and physically resurrected before all.

(11:12) And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, “Come up hither.” And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

(11:13) And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted and gave glory to the God of heaven.

(11:14) *The second woe is past; and behold, the third woe comes quickly.*

The Third Woe Begins...

The unfolding of these prophetic events follows a clear pattern seen in both the history of Israel and the visions we have seen described in the book of Revelation. The Roman destruction of Israel marked the occurrence of the first woe, the devastating turning point and the end of the nation in 70 A.D.; all acting a forewarning of further tribulation to reborn Israel today.

That initial catastrophe, described in chapter 10, is now here succeeded by the second woe with another great earthquake, a tenth-part destruction of Jerusalem, and seven thousands being slain, signifying yet another period of turmoil and judgment soon to come.

Then finally, the imminent arrival of the third woe “*coming quickly*,” will again signal the rapid approach of another climactic moment, characterized by the gathering of the nations for a final confrontation with the Lord. Thus this prophetic sequence seen all throughout scripture once again underscores the recurring nature of divine judgment visited upon generations of men, to the fulfillment of prophecy. For with each woe there was a distinct phase observed in the unfolding narrative of mankind’s redemption and accountability.

Initially, Israel is discussed in chapters 4 through 10, with the narrative reaching its conclusion in 70 A.D.

Revelation 9:12 - One woe is past. Behold, two more woes are still coming after these things. ¹³ Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before God, ¹⁴ saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates."

In chapter 11, the narrative regarding Israel reaches its conclusion in the context of the end times. This chapter marks the closing of Israel’s prophetic account, highlighting key events and their significance in the broader scope of biblical prophecy. Yet occurring the same time, chapters 13 through 18 chronicle the emergence and ascension of the last great beast empire. These chapters detail both the beast’s rise to power and its eventual judgment and annihilation. The prophetic narrative then progresses in chapter 19, where both preparations and the battle of Armageddon takes place, bringing about the final confrontation and fulfillment of prophetic events before the millennial reign of Jesus Christ and the saints.

Revelation 16:12 - Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. ¹³ And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth

of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14 For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. 15 "Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame." 16 And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.

(11:15) *And the seventh angel [with the trumpet] sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever."*

This passage offers a prophetic glimpse into that pivotal moment described as the "*twinkling of an eye*." It is the time when, "*In a moment... at the last trump*," the final trumpet will sound. At this signal, the dead will be raised incorruptible, and those who remain will be transformed. This instantaneous change marks the fulfillment of a central prophetic promise, encapsulating both resurrection and transformation at the culmination of the prophetic sequence. (1Corinthians 15:52; Revelation 14:15)

Daniel 7:9 - I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels were as burning fire.

10 A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

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.

12 As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time.

13 I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son

of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before Him.

14 And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. (See also verses 7:19-28)

(11:16) And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,

(11:17) Saying, “We give you thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which are, and was, and are to come; because You have taken to You Your great power and have reigned.”

(11:18) And the nations were angry, and Your wrath comes, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You shouldest give reward unto Your servants, the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear Your name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

(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.

Concerning “the lightnings, and voices, and thunderings” see previous comments on Revelation 4:5; 8:5; 16:18; 16:21.

Concerning “earthquakes” see 16:14.

Concerning the great hail see comments on 8:7.

Having just surveyed the faithful ministry and testimony of the two witnesses, their preaching, sacrificial deaths, and miraculous resurrections collectively representing a clear fulfillment of God’s covenant promises. The actions and events all serving as irrefutable evidence of God’s ongoing commitment to His people, as outlined in the sure word of prophecy.

In light of these profound events, I now invite everyone to set aside their previous thoughts and convictions, placing them securely upon the altar of God. This is a call for honest

and sincere consideration, encouraging your careful reflection and prayerful discernment as we move forward.

For it is my firm conviction that Jesus Christ is the true figure who “*confirms the covenant*” in Jerusalem. This act fulfills Daniel’s prophecy and aligns with the intended purpose of “*the seventieth week.*” Through Jesus, the promises of God are realized, and the prophetic timeline reaches its completion.

Over the years, my views have developed through continual prayerful study of scripture and by recognizing historical examples of God’s promises to Israel, as well as Christ’s ministry and prophecies concerning Israel. While Daniel’s seventieth week is understood as a seven-year period, and Jesus’ ministry is generally considered to have lasted three and a half years, it seems appropriate to discuss Jesus’ “*confirming the covenant with many*” upon the conclusion of the ministries of the two witnesses, which also span three and a half years, which together make a prophetic week.

Daniel 9:27 contains prophetic words describing a figure who would “*confirm the covenant with many for one week.*” It is important to note that the text points to a confirmation of an already established covenant, God’s covenant with His people, not the creation of a new peace treaty. This distinction is crucial for a proper understanding of Daniel’s prophecy.

For when considering the life and work of Jesus Christ, it becomes evident that His ministry perfectly aligns with this description. Jesus’ actions and teachings consistently affirmed the promises and commitments originally made by God to His people. Thus, the prophetic focus in Daniel is fulfilled not by a new agreement being established, but rather Jesus reinforcing and upholding a covenant that had already been set in place.

For this reason, every reader is encouraged to thoughtfully examine this interpretation. Approach the subject with an open heart, seeking spiritual discernment through prayer and by relying on the guidance offered by scripture and the

Holy Spirit. Only through sincere reflection and scriptural investigation can a deeper understanding of this prophecy be reached.

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.

Of course, I expect many questions to immediately arise regarding the final three and a half years of Daniel's seventieth week if we were focusing solely on the earthly ministry of Jesus. Thus, this discussion is to propose that the remaining three and a half years find their fulfillment through the ministry of the two witnesses described in Revelation 11. It is their testimony to the Jewish people which constitutes a "*confirming of the covenant*," thereby completing the full period referenced in Daniel's prophecy.

While this perspective will certainly provoke skepticism or disagreement, it is important to underscore that faith should be grounded in scriptural sources rather than personal interpretation or unsubstantiated theological concepts. However, I believe it is appropriate at this point in our study to pause and provide a brief explanation of what is sometimes referred to as a "gap theory."

When Jesus triumph over His adversaries openly upon the cross and rose from the dead three days later, the Jewish leaders, both civil and religious, having broken their covenant with God by rejecting His Son, were then obliged to also experience God's "*breach of promise*."

Numbers 14:32 - But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness. ³³ And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness. ³⁴ After the number of the days in which you searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year,

shall you bear your iniquities, even forty years, and **you shall know My breach of promise.**

The righteous judgment that befell the Israelites for their failure to enter the promised land was mirrored in the nation of Israel following the resurrection of Jesus. At that time, Israel, referred to as “*was*,” ceased to exist in its former state. For all practical purposes, Israel “*was not*,” even though God continued to use the period leading up to 70 AD to establish His Church and spread the Gospel message.

This understanding sheds light on the admonitions found in Psalm 95 and Hebrews 3:7 to 4:10. These passages caution against unbelief and remind readers of the importance of faithfulness, connecting back to earlier discussions from Revelation 10:7 and Hosea 5:8 through 6:3. During the symbolic “*two days*,” with a day representing a thousand years, as indicated in Psalm 90:3, 4, 11 to 17 and in 2 Peter 3:8 & 9, which speaks of a time when Israel “*was not*.” Yet, consequently to God’s covenant with the fathers, Israel is ultimately born again, and “*yet is*.”

I know that this concept may initially seem overly complex, particularly for those who have not developed a basic understanding of the relevant scriptural passages noted. However, with diligent study and careful consideration, these intricate ideas should become clearer as we continue.

Yet, just as the process of learning mathematics involves incremental steps and a growing understanding, interpreting the Book of Revelation follows a similar pattern. Readers must approach interpretation with patience and diligence, recognizing that comprehension develops over time. The complexities found within Revelation require careful study, reflection, and a willingness to revisit passages as one’s knowledge deepens.

Clearly, this methodical approach has been characteristic of every interpretive process taken throughout the Book of Revelation. As each new insight builds upon the previous, clarity emerges gradually, mirroring the progression of

learning in all other disciplines. Only by consistently applying sound interpretive principles, can readers piece together the messages and themes woven throughout Revelation.

In the following chapters, especially chapters 13 and 14, which focus on the rise of the beast's empire, we also examine in greater depth the themes of Israel's fulfillment and restoration within the broader context of Revelation's prophetic timeline.

By continuing to prayerfully engage with the text and allowing for careful reflection, the connections between prophecy and fulfillment will inevitably become ever more evident.

Returning to the topic, the prophets of the past, Jesus, and the apostles, all demonstrated faithfulness in confirming God's covenant with the descendants of Abraham. Similarly, the two witnesses are also presented as confirming this covenant during the last days.

Upon the completion of their ministry, lasting one thousand two hundred and sixty days (approximately three and a half years), the book of Revelation describes how the beast from the abyss will kill them, and their bodies will be left unburied in the streets for three and a half days. During this period, many will celebrate their death. Subsequently, after three and a half days, God revives them and calls them up to heaven, instilling great fear in those who witness these events.

In light of the multitude of popular eschatological theories out there, it is quite understandable that some readers have reservations regarding my interpretation that the ministry of the two witnesses fulfills Daniel 9:27, and question whether it is indeed Jesus who is described in the text as the one who "*confirms the covenant.*" However, my position is not unprecedented, as others have previously reached the same conclusion. Still, after thorough reflection and analysis, I continue to affirm my response as affirmative.

Careful consideration of relevant scriptural passages is

necessary to ensure proper context and gain insight of this interpretation. The following discussion will examine these connections, supporting the view that Jesus's role in confirming the covenant and the ministry of the two witnesses are associated with the fulfillment outlined in Daniel 9:27. This interpretation identifies the former as corresponding to the first half of the week, and the latter to the remaining period.

To start, scripture outlines how God has communicated with humanity throughout history. According to Hebrews 1:1-2, God spoke to people in various ways in the past, primarily through the prophets. Later, He revealed Himself through His Son, Jesus Christ. Today, God continues to speak to Christians through His Spirit, providing ongoing guidance and revelation.

Similarly, 2 Peter 1:21 emphasizes that prophecy has never originated from human will; rather, holy men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Similarly, 1 Peter 1:10-11 affirms that the prophets were inspired by the Spirit of Christ as they spoke God's message. Importantly, the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of Christ are one and the same, underscoring the unity and continuity of God's communication through His Spirit across all eras.

Paul, in Galatians 2:20, states that he lives by Christ within him—a truth applicable to all believers, who are called to walk by the Spirit (Galatians 5:24-25). In his letters to the Thessalonians and Corinthians, Paul assures believers that his preaching is the word of God, for it is spoken through the Spirit of Christ within him (1 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 13:3-5). All these passages highlight the principle that God works and communicates through those empowered by His Spirit, the Holy Spirit, or the Spirit of Christ within men.

It has always been Jesus who ministered through the prophets by His Spirit, as reflected in 1 Peter 3:18-20. While some interpret these verses to imply that Jesus descended to hell after His death to preach to "*the spirits in prison*," this

interpretation is inaccurate. For Jesus was buried in the tomb and on the cross committed His Spirit into the Father's hands. Moreover, Jesus assured the thief on the cross that very day that he would be with Him in paradise.

This misunderstanding arises from traditional beliefs formulated by early Christian creeds about Jesus's descent into hell. Instead, scripture describes Jesus's crucifixion, three days and three nights in the grave, and then His resurrection. Psalm 16:10 supports this, with "hell" ("sheol" in Hebrew) referring to the grave rather than a literal descent into hell.

This misconception regarding Hell as Lucifer's domain persists, despite scriptural references that characterize it as a place of confinement for fallen angels and those who committed acts of lawlessness. In Matthew 8:29, demons demonstrated apprehension about experiencing premature torment. Also we are told that certain fallen angels have already been restrained for particular transgressions in Tartarus, as stated in 2 Peter 2:4, while others continue to operate freely on earth, expressing concern about the prospect of Hell.

Furthermore, since Jesus is the Creator, He has always possessed authority over death and Hell (Psalms 68:20; Revelation 1:18), making it unnecessary for Him to descend to Hell to obtain this power.

To properly understand scripture, it must be studied diligently and prayerfully. All Christian teachings need to be reexamined through scripture and prayer. One must be willing to continuously examine their beliefs prayerfully by the light of scripture; and never read scripture from the light of their theology. Remember, we are instructed to prove all things to the best of our ability.

Now I know some readers may be wondering why the discussion seems to have drifted away from directly addressing the ministry of the two witnesses. However, these foundational insights are essential for a proper

understanding of how Christ confirmed the covenant during the final three and a half years of their ministry. The broader scriptural context reveals that God has consistently communicated and worked through individuals empowered by His Spirit. This principle underscores the significance of the two witnesses, whose testimony and actions are intimately connected to Christ's fulfillment of the covenant. By examining these connections, it becomes clear that their ministry is not isolated, but is part of the ongoing divine narrative in which Christ fulfills His promises through His chosen servants.

For when Peter asserted that when Christ proclaimed His message to "*the spirits in prison*," it must be noted that it was "*by the Spirit*" rather than in His physical form. Peter explicitly states that these "*spirits*" refer to individuals who were living and disobedient during the time Noah was building the ark.

Thus, Peter's reference is not all the lost souls throughout history, but specifically of those individuals from Noah's generation. This highlights the importance of interpreting scripture within its immediate context and refraining from attributing meanings beyond what is explicitly stated.

In his letters, Peter affirms that all the prophets, inspired by the Spirit of Christ, foretold the coming grace and salvation that would be accomplished through the suffering of Christ. This prophetic insight was not limited to their own era but pointed ahead to the redemptive work to come. Furthermore, Peter stresses the importance of remembering all that has been taught by both the prophets and the apostles, noting that these teachings are also imparted by the Holy Spirit. Hereby Noah stands out as a prophet who condemned the whole world; yet not him, but the Spirit of Christ at work within him proclaiming righteousness to that generation.

Thus Christ preaching to "*spirits in prison*" is clarified by understanding that through Noah, Christ warned those who were disobedient during the construction of the ark. Which means that Christ did not descend into hell after His death to

preach to lost souls. Instead, it reveals Christ's continual spiritual presence in all history, even warning the people before the flood and empowering His prophets in every generation.

So just as Noah, who at the conclusion of the previous world prophesied by the Spirit of Christ, so too will these two witnesses be prophesied by the same Spirit of Christ at the end of days. Empowered by the Spirit of Christ within them, they will testify to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, and the power of His resurrection. Like many of their prophetic forerunners, these witnesses will face martyrdom as an important part of their faithful testimony.

According to the promise of Christ, just as He was raised from the dead, so too will the two witnesses be resurrected. Their testimony of Jesus will provoke outrage among the Jewish people and the world, but a remnant of Jews will be convicted by the truth and will believe the witnesses' words. This remnant will fulfill prophecy, giving glory to God after witnessing the resurrection of the two witnesses. It is the Spirit of Christ within them, in both word and deed, which will confirm God's covenant—perhaps for the final time before the world, through the bodily resurrection of the two witnesses.

At this moment, the remnant glorifies the Son, and the fulfillment of the covenant is realized, as the natural branch is grafted back in. For the only way for the Jews, or anyone, to give glory to God is to honor the Son as they honor the Father. The remnant, therefore, gives glory to the Son as their Redeemer, calling on Christ as Lord. This event marks the prophesied in-grafting of the Jews back into the vine and results in the fulfillment of the angel Gabriel's words to Daniel, ushering in the completion of the covenant and the resurrection of the dead.

At this pivotal juncture, the faithful remnant of Israel is depicted as glorifying Jesus Christ. This response represents not only recognition but also the fulfillment of God's covenant with the patriarchs, as indicated in scripture,

which states that the "*natural branch*" of Israel will be restored and grafted back into its own olive tree (Romans 11:24, 28). According to these texts, genuine glory to God necessitates honoring the Son in the same manner as the Father. As a result of this realization, the remnant addresses Jesus as both their Lord and God (John 20:28).

This is the fulfillment of the words delivered by the angel Gabriel to Daniel and signifies the realization of God's covenant. The sounding of the last trumpet and the first resurrection of the dead marks a culmination of God's redemptive plan and our hope in the resurrection.

Chapter 12

A Synopsis of the Gospel Story

Chapter 12 serves as a summary of the Gospel narrative, acting as a pivotal interlude within the book's prophetic sequence. This chapter marks a transition between the earlier prophecies concerning the seven churches in Asia and the subsequent passages detailing the wrath of God upon rebellious Israel, culminating in the nation's downfall.

Positioned at its crucial narrative interval, Chapter 12 not only bridges those major prophetic themes in the first half of Revelation, but also introduces the latter half, a conclusionary prophetic narrative of the endtime, where once again, things which must come to pass before the Lord's ultimate return for His saints are outlined.

The narrative seemingly opens with a woman representing Israel's establishment as a nation, serving as the foundation and means for the fulfillment of God's covenant. It then transitions to the birth of a "*male Child destined to rule all nations with a rod of iron,*" emphasizing His arrival as the fulfillment of prophecy and the embodiment of the nation's anticipated hope and salvation.

The symbolic narrative continues by emphasizing Christ's victory over Satan, including His triumph over all evil, sin, and death. This is followed by a loud proclamation, "*Now has come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God.*" Christ's victory then climaxes with His ascension into Heaven, where He is enthroned as King of kings.

In the context of Revelation, Chapter 12 provides both a retrospective of God's work through Israel and Christ, transitioning to those prophecies regarding the ultimate fulfillment of God's plan in the end of days.

(12:1) 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:

I believe this “*great wonder*” of “*a woman clothed with the sun,*” to be inseparable from the “*great mystery*” spoken about by Paul in Ephesians 5:28 to 32 –

“Men ought to love their wives as their own bodies, for he that loves his wife, loves himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: for I speak concerning Christ and the church.”

This mystery involving the woman predictably refers to Jesus Christ and the Church. However, there are many aspects to this mystery which must be diligently sought if they are to be discovered. Its beginning is small with the Creation of Adam, but it grows with God saying it was not good for Adam to be alone, and continues to expand even further with God causing a deep sleep to come upon him and taking a rib from him, but then it explodes with the fashioning of a woman from Adam’s rib.

Thus, we see this “*great wonder*” undeniably revolves around the hidden divine purpose of God in His creation of man; both male and female; with their distinct roles having their specific significance in the spiritual covenant of marriage, where “*two become one flesh.*”

Also, it is wise here to acknowledge that there was no necessity with God to create humanity both male and female, for our procreation could have been designed innumerable other ways. Yet I am persuaded God did so, and that so we might “*adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.*” For by royal design God created the woman to be the recipient of the man, who coming into her and becoming one flesh, then imparts his seed and new life springs forth. Likewise, are we not as believers all “*born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which lives and abides forever?*”

It is essential to recognize that the man was first created in God's image, signifying that his role on earth mirrors God's own position in heaven. The creation of woman from man, designed to be the glory of the man, further demonstrates God's royal plan. Through this relationship, the woman in relation to the man is intended to reflect what man himself is meant to be to God—His glory. In this context, the imagery of the "*woman clothed with the sun*" powerfully illustrates this divine order and purpose.

“But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man,”
(1 Corinthians 11:3,7-9).

Next, the passage describes the woman as "clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars," symbolism that is plainly significant. Notably, all three elements are celestial bodies, suggesting an association with divine matters.

The moon, lacking its own light and merely reflecting that of the sun, is often regarded as symbolizing the foundational aspect of the law and prophets, being "*under the feet*." These are viewed as having foreshadowed future events through their "types and shadows," without embodying the full reality themselves.

The imagery of the woman "*clothed with the sun*" powerfully signifies that the brilliance of the sun represents the Light of the Son—Jesus Christ—being radiantly displayed by the church, His Bride. This symbolism highlights how the church is adorned with Christ's glory, reflecting His light to the world.

This understanding is further supported by the words of Proverbs: "*The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD*." Here, the spirit within each believer is likened to a candle, designed

by God to shine. Yet, without the abiding flame noted at Pentecost, the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, there can be no true illumination. In this way, it becomes clear that only through the ongoing presence of the Holy Spirit can the church fulfill her calling and be “*the light unto the world.*”

The imagery of a “*crown of twelve stars*” is deeply symbolic, representing the concepts of Government and Completion. The number twelve is consistently associated with divine order throughout scripture, and here it points directly to the twelve tribes of Israel, from whom the 144,000 are drawn, as well as the twelve apostles who laid the foundation for the church. Additionally, this crown includes the saints, the redeemed “*out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.*”

The Lord’s own words affirm the preciousness and honor bestowed upon His people. He declares, “*in that day when I make up My jewels,*” they will be esteemed “*as the stones of a crown,*” and even “*a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.*” This further emphasizes that the redeemed, drawn from all nations, are collectively honored as the crowning glory of God’s people, set apart and made beautiful in His sight. (Isaiah 62,3; Malachi 3:17; Zechariah 9:16).

(12:2) And she, being with child and travailing in birth, cried and pained to be delivered.

As we saw in the previous verse, the woman depicted here prophetically represents Israel, which ultimately is symbolic of all God’s people, whom He regards as His bride. However, to fully grasp the significance of the imagery in this verse of the woman “*being with child*”, it is necessary to reflect on the seriousness of Adam’s sin with its repercussions. For after Adam and Eve disobeyed, God pronounced judgment on Eve, and by extension, all women, declaring, “*I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; and in pain you shall bring forth children.*” This decree establishes an

association between sorrow and pain in childbirth, the consequences of sin, and all of its remedy.

In the same way that a wife is called to relate to her husband, humanity was originally intended to share a close, responsive relationship with God. This symbolic association is seen throughout scripture, particularly in how Israel's history is marked by recurring sorrow and pain that stems directly from their transgressions against God. When divine judgment is pronounced, the men of Israel are depicted as being deeply troubled and distressed. The psalmist captures their reaction with these words: "*They saw it and so they marveled, and were troubled, for they hastened away. Fear took hold of them, and pain, as of a woman in birth pangs,*" (Psalm 48:5, 6).

This analogy underscores the profound emotional anguish and turmoil resulting from their sin, as well as the seriousness of God's warnings.

This theme is further reinforced by God saying to them, "*Wail, for the day of the LORD is at hand! It will come as destruction from the Almighty. Therefore, all hands will be limp, and every man's heart will melt and they will be afraid. Pangs and sorrows will take hold of them, and they will be in pain as a woman in childbirth...*" (Isaiah 13:6-8).

Through this vivid imagery, scripture draws a direct parallel between the physical pain of childbirth experienced by women, and the spiritual and emotional suffering endured by God's people due to their disobedience. This connection emphasizes the depth of sorrow that accompanies separation from God and the consequences of turning away from His guidance.

However, to fully grasp the meaning of the phrase "*being with child and travailing in birth and crying in pain to be delivered,*" it is essential to also consider the context of Satan's curse. Following the fall, God's words to Satan not only pronounced judgment but also offered hope to the woman. God declared, "*I will put enmity between you and the*

woman, even between your seed and her Seed, and He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”

This promise reveals that despite the pain and sorrow associated with childbirth as a consequence of sin, there is also a prophetic assurance of victory and redemption. The enmity between the woman’s Seed and Satan’s seed signifies the ongoing spiritual conflict, culminating in the triumph of the woman’s Seed, who will ultimately defeat Satan.

Even though God sanctions chastisement and affliction as consequences of sin, He promises deliverance for all those who humbly endure and allow themselves to be “*exercised thereby.*” This assurance is highlighted in Hebrews 12:5-11, where the discipline of the Lord is shown to produce righteousness in those who accept it with humility.

Therefore, even in times of multiplied sorrow and pain, it is within these very circumstances of suffering that God’s promised Seed of deliverance emerges. This truth is rooted in Genesis 3:15-16, where, despite the consequences of sin, God proclaims hope and redemption through the coming Seed.

Jeremiah 30:5-7 - For thus says the LORD: 'We have heard a voice of trembling, Of fear, and not of peace. Ask now, and see whether a man is ever in labor with child? So why do I see every man with his hands on his loins as a woman in labor, with all faces turned pale? Alas! For that day it is great and none is like it; for it is the time of Jacob's trouble. But he shall be saved out of it.

(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.

This verse introduces “*another wonder in heaven,*” or another mystery, which invites deeper examination. This wonder is described as “*a great red dragon... that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world.*” The appearance of the dragon represents Satan’s identity as

both the deceiver and adversary of humanity.

However, the question arises: why is Satan, the great red dragon, in light of his adversarial role in deceiving the entire world, still granted access into the heavenly realm?

This question invites us to consider the ongoing spiritual conflict depicted throughout scripture. Despite being identified as the deceiver and adversary of humanity, Satan's continued appearance in the heavenly courts is described as a "*wonder*," or a mystery that warrants deeper reflection. This persistent access highlights the tension between divine sovereignty and the presence of evil, as seen in other biblical accounts.

For instance, the Book of Job provides an example where Satan appears before God when "*there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD.*" At that point the Lord engages in dialogue with the him regarding his activities on the earth, "*And the LORD said to Satan, 'Where are you coming from?' and Satan answered the LORD, 'From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.'*"

This demonstrates that, until the prophesied defeat of Satan is fully realized, he is permitted a measure of liberty to accuse and oppose God's people. Nevertheless, scripture assures us that God's judgments against the adversary are certain and that his ultimate downfall is foretold.

Thus, Satan's continued access to the heavenly realm does not indicate a lack of power or divine authority on God's part, but rather is working to fulfill God's purposes until the appointed time of the dragon's condemnation and judgment, which leads to his removal.

The Devil seems to be exercising unjustified liberty before God, and he is. But that is only because Satan has not had his head bruised by the prophesied Child to come, when "*God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of*

angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” (1 Timothy 3:16).

However, this does not imply that God has refrained from presenting His own charges against His adversary. Scriptural references indicate that God has indeed issued indictments against him. –

“You were the anointed cherub who covers, and I established you. For you were on the holy mountain of God and walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. Perfect in your ways were you from your day of creation. That is till iniquity was found in you... Therefore, I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God and destroyed you, O covering cherub, and remove you from the midst of the fiery stones. For you lifted up your heart because of your beauty; your wisdom was corrupted by the pride of your splendor.”

“Therefore, I will cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings that they might gaze at you. Because you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend in heaven, exalting my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.' However, you shall yet be brought down to Sheol, even to the lowest depths of the Pit.” (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:13-19)

This sets the stage as we move forward in this chapter...

(12:4) And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman, which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

This verse has led many to conclude that somehow the fallen cherub was able to persuade a third of the angelic beings to join him in rebellion against God's authority. While this interpretation aligns with my own views, I regard the third as only a plausible estimation rather than an exact figure.

This imagery of the dragon's tail drawing “*a third part of the*

stars of heaven” and casting *“them to the earth”* clearly symbolizes the scope of the angelic rebellion, who under the influence of the fallen cherub, became his followers and were ultimately cast out alongside him. For clearly, they were *“cast to the earth”* to stand with the Dragon as he *“stood before the woman, which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born,”*

Some may question how the angels of God could become identified as *“his angels,”* that is, willful followers of Satan. The answer I believe is found in the application of the principle that the apostle Peter articulates in his second epistle. For this principle is not limited only to men, but must also extend to angels. Scripture teaches that, *“while Satan promised them liberty, they themselves became the servants of corruption; for of whom one is overcome, by the same is he brought into subjection.”* (2 Peter 2:19, paraphrased)

In other words, the angels who chose to follow Satan were not exercising true freedom, but rather, by their earlier yielding to Satan’s deception and influence, they became subject to corruption and ultimately, his servants. Their allegiance shifted from God to Satan, not by accident, but as a direct result of being overcome and thereby brought under his dominion. This principle explains how the fallen angels, once created to serve God, became known as Satan’s own.

Satan fully comprehended the consequence of God’s declaration that, *“the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent,”* and was aware that God meant to bring it to pass. Therefore, being ever vigilant and watching for its fulfillment continually, his actions taken throughout history clearly reflect his attempts at thwarting the coming of the promised seed.

Therefore, without doubt it was Satan who influence Pharaoh in his decree to the Hebrew midwives, commanding them: *“When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstools, if it is a son, then you shall kill him.”* The intentions were clear, eliminate any

possibility of the Deliverer's birth by targeting the sons of the Hebrews upon their very entrance into the world.

Still, because the midwives feared God and was blessed by them, this edict was poorly observed, which compelled Pharaoh to take even more drastic measures, instructing all his people, "*Every son who is born you shall cast into the river!*" In this we see the adversary attempts to prevent the arrival of the promised seed, yet God's providence and the faithfulness of His people stood in opposition to these evil schemes.

Nonetheless, we do see the realization of this verse with Herod -

Matthew 2:16 - Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. 17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, 18 In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

(12:5) 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.

"*God manifest in the flesh,*" confirms the birth of the Man Child as the incarnation of God, emphasizing that Christ became "*lower than the angels*" and took on lowly human form. This event was a significant moment in salvation history and also initiated a spiritual legal conflict. The statement that Christ was "*justified in the Spirit*" and "*seen of angels*" suggests that this occurrence was observed by the heavenly host, which resolved a longstanding dispute, which further indicates the forthcoming resolution through a long-anticipated conflict in heaven.

However, it is important to note that the verses in this chapter are not intended to be interpreted as a strict chronological sequence. Rather, they should be understood as illustrating the ultimate reality that Satan was unsuccessful in his attempt “*to devour her child as soon as it was born.*”

The birth of Christ was not hindered, for nothing could prevent Him from fulfilling His purpose, including His destiny to “*rule the nations.*” The verse declares Christ’s triumph upon the cross by announcing His ascension into heaven and His exaltation to the throne of God, underscoring the certainty of His ultimate victory and authority over all heaven and earth.

(12:6) And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared of God, that they should feed <*trepho*> her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

This verse has numerous interpretations, each rooted in various historical contexts and time periods throughout early Church history. These differing perspectives are often formed by distinct theological frameworks, contributing to the diversity of views regarding its meaning. One widely held interpretation, particularly among "Christian Zionists," sees the woman exclusively as representing Israel as a national entity, emphasizing its role within salvation history and biblical prophecy.

While identifying the woman with Israel is a reasonable interpretation, I believe my perspective is also valid. Rather than focusing exclusively on Israel as a national entity, I suggest a broader approach that embraces the woman's symbolic role as indicative of a spiritual Israel.

For I see this woman representing all who are “*in Christ,*” Jew and Gentile, who follow Him faithfully as both their Shephard and Lord. This interpretation has root in the description found in Acts 2:47, which refers to believers as those “*such as should be saved.*” Therefore, the woman, in this context, embodies the collective body of Christ’s true followers who have accepted Him and are to be reckon as

part of the Bride of Christ, rather than merely a political or ethnic populace.

Next, we ought to address the place, “*the wilderness, where she has a place prepared of God,*” and its purpose, “*that they should feed her there,*” and the duration, “*a thousand two hundred and threescore days.*”

To address these points, I will start by noting that it is widely accepted that the duration of Jesus's ministry aligns with the period commonly cited.

Throughout this period, we see in the gospels Jesus frequently ministers outside the towns and cities, which suits the wilderness imagery presented here. However, in no way is that to imply that that alone is where Jesus primarily ministered, rather, more so to reflect the social climate God afforded His ministry.

The part of the verse as written with which I find awkward is where “*the woman fled into the wilderness.*” The Greek word here translated “fled” appears to be used to imply fleeing or escaping. However, in the context of this imagery I feel it implies the woman was led into a favorable environment suitable for a great work being introduced for a transitional period of time.

Therefore the passage may be conveying the idea of swiftness or brevity, which is also partially evident in Paul's discussion in Romans 9. In this context, a remnant of Israel will be saved; despite the axe set to the root of the tree and the removal of a natural branch, there is an ongoing process of engrafting, signifying growth and expansion within the Church of Jesus Christ. As stated, “*For He will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness, because the LORD will make a short work upon the earth*” (Romans 9:28).

Thus, Verse 6 appears to me designed to serve as a faithful summary to God's unwavering faithfulness through the orchestration of favorable circumstances for Christ's fulfillment of His ministry, as well as preparing His Apostles for theirs. In all of this, God's providence is evident in the way

He guided and protected both Jesus and the early Church, thus ensuring His purposes would be accomplished. For not until after Jesus' ascension and the day of Pentecost did the persecution of the Church begin to progressively intensify.

(12:7) And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

(12:8) And it prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

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

Luke 10:17,18 – And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, “Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Your name.” And He said unto them, “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.”

Although Jesus referred to witnessing Satan's fall from heaven, using the past tense, prophetic visions frequently portray events as concluded prior to their actual occurrence. This idea is thoroughly depicted throughout the books of Isaiah, Daniel, and Revelation. Furthermore, these later statements made by Jesus himself below indicate that this was a prophetic vision, and not a result of the disciples' own mission.

John 12:23 – And Jesus answered them, saying, “The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified... ³¹ For now is the judgment of this world. Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

John 14:28 – You have heard how I said unto you, that I go away and will come again unto you. If you love Me, you would rejoice, because I said I go unto My Father, for My Father [being omnipresent] is greater than I [as a man]. ²⁹ And now I told you before it comes to pass, that when it comes to pass you might believe. ³⁰ Hereafter I will not talk much with you, for the prince of this world is coming, and has nothing in Me.

John 16:7 – I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you. But if I depart, I will send Him unto you. ⁸ And when He comes, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment... ¹¹ Of judgment because the prince of this world is judged.

“God was manifest in the flesh,” and was *“justified in the Spirit, seen of angels.”*

Jesus spoke of Satan’s fall as something imminent, and how the prince of this world had been judged. Additionally, prior to His crucifixion He told those with Him, *“Now shall the prince of this world be cast out,”* cautioning them that *“the prince of this world is coming.”* These scriptures make it clear to the reader that Jesus was telling the people present that these events were not far off in the future. These are the events spoken of here in Revelation.

The timing of these things are connected to Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection, which John 12:23 describes as the means thru which Jesus was *“glorified.”* Jesus knew the devil *“has nothing”* in Him, even though His human nature kept Him bound within time and space. As a man, Jesus was not ruled by an ego or physical desires, making it impossible for the devil to find fault whereby to accuse Him.

How did He do it? Jesus devoted Himself to the Spirit and stayed ever focused on the joy that awaited Him in Heaven. Therefore, we are instructed to walk *“even as He walk.”*

Romans 8:1,2 - There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

(12:10) And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now has 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 both day and night.”

(12:11) 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.

(12:12) Therefore rejoice, you heavens, and you that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil has come down unto you having great wrath, because he knows that he has but a short time.

We must not take this admonition lightly. For while those that dwell in heaven rejoice because both the source and the schism that plagued heaven has been permanently removed under certain condemnation, we as "*inhabitants of the earth and of the sea*" we are strongly warned that "*the devil has come down with great wrath, because he knows that he has but a short time!*"

These are the times and conditions in which we must live -

Ephesians 6:11,12 - Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

1 Peter 5:8,9 - Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. Who [*you must*] resist steadfastly in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

(12:13) And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth The Man Child.

As the Bride of Christ and the people of God, we are now the primary focus of the dragon's attacks. The enemy directs his hostility especially toward us, recognizing our unique relationship with Christ. Even so, his malice still extends beyond the Church; for he harbors deep disdain for all humanity. For all were created in the image of God to be vessels of His glory throughout the earth. Therefore, the

dragon's assault is not limited to believers alone, but is fiercely be pitted against all of God's creation, ever striving to undermine and destroy anything that would reflect God's greatness and glory.

(12:14) 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.

This verse is similar to verse 6, as both speak of the woman going to a place in the wilderness and being "fed" or "nourished," both translated from <trepho> the same Greek word. So, though many believe the verses speak of the same event, there are distinct differences to be noted between them despite their similarities.

First, are the *times of occurrence* in the verses: verse 6 speaks of after the child is born, and possibly even before His being caught up into heaven. Verse 14 speaks of after the war in heaven when Satan and his angels were cast out.

Second, are the *descriptions of the time durations* in the verses. Verse 6 is stated as "*a thousand two hundred and threescore days,*" while verse 14 states "*a time, and times, and half a time.*"

Third, there is a *significant difference in both the methods and speeds* with which the woman travels to her destinations in the wilderness; for it remains unclear whether she visits the same place each time or different locations altogether. Verse 6 states that "*the woman fled into the wilderness,*" which indeed does indicate fleeing fairly quickly, but still on foot, where in verse 14 "*the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness.*"

To quickly address this point, "*where she is nourished... from the face of the serpent,*" it is away from the Serpent's face and not from it as if it was the source.

The Greek word translated clearly means "off," as away

(from something near. In composition it usually denotes separation, departure, cessation, completion, reversal, etc. Thus, the serpents face is not being implied here as a source of the woman's nourishment.

Fulfillment (?) - According to church historian Eusebius of Caesarea (4th century), Christians were warned by revelation to flee Jerusalem to Pella, a city in Transjordan, around 66-69 AD, just before the Romans destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD. Others, who also noted the flight, view it as a fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy in Matthew 24:15-22. Though the exact timing within those years is debated, with some sources suggesting 66 AD or the period just before the final siege. This would make it possible for the verse's timing to hereby be fulfilled, especially because Eusebius notes that many of the Christians later returned to the Jerusalem area after the conflict.

Pella was a Decapolis city across the Jordan River which offered a safe, neutral refuge allowing them to survive the Roman wrath in the destruction of Jerusalem. Its position was just outside the immediate reach of Roman forces which provided early believers a place of survival during a time of intense persecution and upheaval, and is noted to have become an early center for the survivors from the Jerusalem church. Though this information is hard to substantiate, Catholic, Lutheran, Seventh Day Adventist, and others have references in their sources about Pella available for further research.

Notably, this history of this chapter ultimately concludes with the destruction of Israel, marking a profound turning point in history. Following this devastation, the Jewish people were scattered among the nations, a dispersion that had far-reaching consequences for both Israel and the broader spiritual landscape.

With the scattering of the Jews, a new era began characterized by the gathering of Gentiles into the church. This shift altered the church's focus, as increasing numbers of Gentiles were welcomed into the community of believers,

expanding even further the reach and influence of the faith beyond its original boundaries.

As Gentiles increasingly joined the church, the spiritual landscape underwent profound changes. This influx brought with it elements of pagan belief and practice, which gradually influenced the church's traditions and teachings. The resulting mixture led to internal strife, as true believers struggled to maintain doctrinal purity and unity. Over time, these tensions continued to fuel the rise of apostasy, with churches experiencing departures from its foundational truths; even to the point of persecution within "The Church."

Thus, the image of the "*Mother of Harlots*" serves as a metaphor for the divisions that emerged over the centuries as Christendom repeatedly split into various groups, each holding opposing beliefs. This fragmentation resulted in categorization and division, further reshaping the church's history and identity.

(12:15) 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.

Many interpret this "*flood*" as being either the Romans, or other surrounding warring nations, as a threat to the Christians, and it very well may be. For there are indeed many references in scripture to both humanity and nations being likened to water.

Isaiah 59:19 - So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.

However, I am compelled to believe this is a flood of lies and half-truths, for "*the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron.*"

Jude 1:4 For there are certain men crept in unawares,

who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

The devil knows that mixing a little lie with the truth creates the strongest deception. Just as yeast spreads through dough or a weed's seed overtakes a field, even a small falsehood can eventually corrupt everything. This shows why it is so important to guard against even minor lies among believers.

Thus the "*flood*" from the dragon's mouth can mean both real persecution, like attacks from the Romans or hostile nations, and the widespread teaching of false doctrines. Later, as we delve further into these end-time events, greater detail and information are provided.

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.

(12:16) 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.

The flood of lies may ensnare the lost, but God will raise up a standard for His saints.

2 Timothy 3:8-10 - Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was. But thou hast fully known my doctrine... (see *whole chapter*).

(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.

The time lapse between Chapter 12 and Chapter 13 is the passing of the prophetic “*two days*” in Hosea -

Hosea 6:1, 2 - Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He has smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days He will revive us, and in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight.

2 Peter 3:8, 9 - But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. For the Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Chapter 13

The rising up of “the eighth”

(13:1) And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

This passage presents the second depiction of a creature with seven heads and ten horns within John's vision. The similarities between the two creatures suggest an intentional connection, as both share these distinctive features. Nevertheless, each creature has been introduced in their unique context, appearing separately and fulfilling specific roles that contribute essential details to the unfolding vision.

In chapter 12 the vision revealed a seven-headed red dragon with ten horns, representing Satan. In contrast, this chapter illustrates another beast that, while also possessing seven heads and ten horns, is further distinguished by the addition of features from multiple animals in its appearance. These differences in physical characteristics set this beast apart from the red dragon, highlighting its unique place and significance within the vision.

A key difference between the two seven-headed beasts lies in their crowns: the dragon has seven crowns, one on each head, whereas the beast has ten crowns, one on each horn. This I believe is to symbolize how the dragon managed to corrupt seven kings who preceded the eighth and final empire.

Revelation 17:11 - And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is go into perdition. (see 17:9-11).

Ultimately, according to Revelation 17:17, God instructs ten subordinate rulers, symbolized by the horns, to counteract the dragon's final effort to employ the eighth king for its objectives, thereby ensuring defeat of this attempt.

However, it is the depiction of the seven-headed beast with ten horns arising from the sea that remains central to accurately interpreting the subsequent sequence of prophetic events.

In summary, this beast's imagery provides a thorough and detailed understanding by combining different historical periods and occurrences to clarify the complete meaning of the vision. Each aspect of the beast contributes to a detailed analysis of the vision's origins, progression, and eventual resolution. Collectively, these features together help answer important questions about who was involved, what happened, when and where events took place, and why and how everything occurred.

More conclusively stated, the prophetic vision described here points to the rise of a final world-dominating empire. This entity is depicted as the last major force on the global stage before the culmination of prophetic events. Its emergence is intimately connected with the restoration of Israel in 1948, signifying its influence on world affairs and its role in shaping the circumstances surrounding Israel's reestablishment as a nation. Ultimately, this empire is destined for destruction referred to as "*going into perdition*," which is to occur shortly before the Lord's return at the end of time.

(13:2) And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

Of all that is presented in this verse, it is most critical to acknowledge the importance of the statement: "*the dragon gave*" the beast "*his power, and his seat, and great authority*." This passage demonstrates that the beast's capacity to act, govern, and influence stems not from itself, but is expressly granted by the dragon.

This allocation of power, position, and authority highlights a purposeful and ongoing relationship between the dragon

and the beast. For the dragon empowering the beast gives it the ability to rule and exercise its dominance. This transfer of "power" is not solely symbolic; rather, the dragon imparts advanced technical knowledge to the beast, thereby enhancing its military capabilities which allows it to establish dominance within the context of the vision.

Understanding this relationship is essential, as it reveals not only the nature of the beast's reign but also clarifies that the true source behind the beast's actions and authority is the dragon, whose influence is central to the unfolding events.

Regarding the combination of characteristics from various animals into the appearance of the beast, each feature bears resemblance to earlier empires that have been historically linked to Israel.

- ...ten horns – Rome – Daniel 7:7
- ...like a leopard – Greece – Daniel 7:6
- ... feet as the feet of a bear – Mede/Persia - Daniel 7:5
- ... mouth of a lion - Babylon - Daniel 7:4

A critical aspect for rightly interpreting this vision centers on the notable parallels that associate the seven-headed beast with the four beasts in chapter 7 of the Book of Daniel. The similarities are not coincidental; rather, they are well documented within the context of Israel's history, where each beast in Daniel represents a significant world empire that has directly impacted the nation of Israel. The parallel characteristics shared by the beast and these prophetic figures provide compelling evidence for interpreting the identity and nature of this seven-headed beast in Revelation.

This connection is further emphasized by the emergence of the "little horn" in Daniel, which rises to a position of dominance after the succession of the four beasts, but appears just prior to when the "thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated." The timing of the "little horn" is particularly significant within the prophetic timeline, as it

marks a transitional phase immediately before the final judgment and the culmination of end-time events. This sequence underscores the importance of understanding the relationship between Daniel's visions and the apocalyptic imagery found in Revelation, both offering valuable insight into the unfolding of biblical prophecy.

This final connection serves to anchor the events and characters described in Revelation within a broader prophetic context, one that is already partially established in the book of Daniel. By drawing these parallels, it becomes possible to see how the visions and figures in Revelation are not isolated but are instead woven into the larger tapestry of biblical prophecy. Through this lens, the progression and identity of the beasts, as well as the unfolding of end-time events, become clearer. Thus the correlation between Daniel's visions and the apocalyptic imagery in Revelation provides a more complete understanding, helping to illuminate the relationship and continuity between these key passages in Scripture.

Daniel 7:2 - Daniel spoke, saying, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea.

3 "And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other.

4 "The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it.

5 "And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: 'Arise, devour much flesh!'

6 "After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.

7 "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and

trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.

8 "I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.

9 "I watched till thrones were put in place, And the Ancient of Days was seated...

Furthermore, note how the reference to the "*little horn*" appears almost to be understated, particularly when compared to the prominence given to "*the four winds of heaven*" contending over the "*great sea*" and the "*four great beasts*" arising from it. Yet this simply reveals its seemingly small beginning. The origin of the little horn is indicated as arising "*from among them,*" implying that it represents a nation or empire emerging not solely from the group of "*ten horns,*" but more plausibly from one particular member.

Daniel 7:21,22 - "I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.

Given the significance and depth of the preceding analysis, it is crucial that each of the points discussed receives the attention it deserves. Every concept and observation presented here I believe is worthy of your prayerful consideration. Rather than accepting these ideas at face value or dismissing them based on previous assumptions, readers are strongly encouraged to engage with this material both thoughtfully and sincerely.

(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.

John witnesses a significant event involving the beast, as one of its seven heads suffers a wound so severe that it

appears to be fatal. In spite of this seemingly mortal injury, the head is miraculously restored. This extraordinary recovery does not go unnoticed. On the contrary, it captivates the attention of the entire world, who gaze in wonder at the beast's resilient power and resurgence.

From my perspective, a compelling historical analogy can be drawn between the biblical depiction of the beast's head suffering a seemingly fatal wound and the events of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. The seemingly unexpected devastating attack by the Japanese appeared at first to be a crippling blow. However, just as the narrative describes the wounded head of the beast was miraculously healed and returned to power, so too did Pearl Harbor undergo a remarkable recovery. In the aftermath, what had seemed to be a decisive defeat transformed into a resurgence of strength and determination, echoing the beast's unexpected restoration and the world's astonishment that followed.

(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?"

"And they worshipped the dragon..." as Bob Dylan's stated in his song, "*you gotta' serve somebody.*"

Within the context of the passage, the term "*they*" appears to refer to a purposely obscured group that wields their influence and power from behind closed doors. This collective is often identified with titles such as the "*deep state*" or the "*cabal.*" Noted for their covert operations, these individuals are bonded by their unwavering commitment to cult-like devotion and veneration of the fallen angel of darkness, a practice commonly linked to Luciferian worship. This group is distinguished most sharply by their unique actions and commitment to ancient beliefs, setting themselves apart from all others.

Unlike the majority of humanity who are merely astonished by the beast's recovery from its deadly wound and remain unaware of deeper spiritual realities, this particular group knowingly participates in worshipping the dragon. Their

actions are marked by deliberate allegiance, as they bow before the spiritual forces opposed to righteousness, seeking and receiving wealth, knowledge, and power in exchange for their devotion and service. Their intentional commitment to patterns of worship with ritualistic obeisance set them apart from the rest of the world, highlighting the contrast between those who are ignorant of spiritual conflict and those who actively engage in it.

Consider the account in which God reveals the wickedness of Israel to Ezekiel, “*See what they do? Even the great abominations that the house of Israel commits here, that I should go far from My sanctuary. Yet you shall again see other greater abominations.*” Go and see what Ezekiel saw when he dug a hole in a wall exposing a secret chamber in the temple, (Ezekiel 8:6-18).

- “...which gave power unto the beast...”

If this seems radical to some, then they need to prayerfully consider what the devil stated to Jesus in the wilderness, “*All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.*” Notably, Jesus did not contest the devil’s claim to possess the power to bestow worldly authority and riches upon whomever he chooses. This exchange was recorded because it highlights the reality that the pursuit of power and influence in this world can involve a choice of allegiance, echoing the passage’s emphasis on worship and submission to fallen spiritual forces.

- “...and they⁽²⁾ worshipped the beast...”

This second “*they*” in the verse represents the rest of “*all the world,*” who were amazed at the recovery of the beast from his deadly wound, and ignorant to the reality that “*we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*”

The distinction between the first and second use of “*they*” is significant in understanding the passage. The first group

refers to those who make a conscious choice to bow before the dragon, fully aware of their actions. These individuals willingly submit, knowing the spiritual reality behind their allegiance, and as a result, receive wealth and power as compensation for carrying out the dragon's will.

In contrast, the second "*they*" refers to those who are naive and ignorant of the deeper spiritual realities at play. Much like some members of the Church of Thyatira, these individuals neither understand the underlying doctrine nor comprehend the depths of Satan. Their actions are driven by fear and subjection, causing them to bow down before wicked leaders without recognizing the true nature of the spiritual forces at work.

Revelation 2:24 - But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.

For those who remain skeptical, it would be worthwhile to research the relationship between the United Nations and Lucis Trust. For Lucis Trust provides publication services to the UN and offers enlightened speakers to address world leaders, thereby playing a notable role in directing the organization's activities.

The origins of Lucis Trust trace back to 1922 when Alice Bailey and her husband Foster Bailey founded the group under the name Lucifer Publishing Company. This organization was created to distribute the writings of Alice Bailey, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, and other works associated with the Theosophical Society.

Due to public concern and misunderstanding surrounding the name "Lucifer," the name was changed to Lucis Trust in 1924. The term "Lucis," derived from the Latin for "light," was selected to reflect a more positive and spiritual interpretation.

Lucis Trust is closely linked to the United Nations through its World Goodwill initiative, which holds Consultative

Status with the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Established in 1932, World Goodwill is recognized as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) by the UN and actively participates in UN events, including briefings held in New York and Geneva. The organization promotes "right human relations" and advocates for spiritual preparation toward a unified global society, frequently referencing the "reappearance of the Christ" within a New Age framework.

In addition to its publishing and outreach activities, Lucis Trust also operates the Arcane School, which offers esoteric training via correspondence. It produces and distributes educational materials centered on spiritual growth and global cooperation.

Lucis Trust is not a governmental entity, its involvement within the UN system should prompt interest, discussions and speculation within the Christian circle regarding its possible influence on global governance and spiritual ideology.

The Theosophical Society, from which Lucis Trust emerged, is established on the belief that all religions possess an underlying spiritual truth. According to its teachings, humanity is on a path of spiritual evolution, progressing through cycles of reincarnation with the ultimate goal of achieving unity with the divine, referred to as "the Absolute." Established in 1875 by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and Henry Steel Olcott, the Society's mission is to foster the formation of a "nucleus of a universal brotherhood of humanity," deliberately excluding distinctions based on race, creed, sex, or class.

The organization encourages the exploration of ancient wisdom traditions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Gnosticism. Central to its philosophy is the emphasis on personal spiritual development, which is cultivated through practices like meditation, the pursuit of esoteric knowledge, and the journey toward self-realization.

Within Theosophical thought, the figure of Lucifer is interpreted not as the Christian Devil, but as a symbol representing divine light, enlightenment, and the transformative power of spiritual awakening. The name “Lucifer,” which translates to “light-bringer,” embodies this affirmative perspective. The Society’s journal, *Lucifer*, was launched in 1887 by Blavatsky to “bring to light the hidden things of darkness,” aiming to encourage spiritual inquiry and the discovery of hidden knowledge.

Despite criticism from Christian fundamentalist who view these interpretations for what they are, an endorsement of Lucifer or Satan, the Theosophical Society firmly refutes such claims. Instead, it asserts that Lucifer is merely a representation of wisdom and a divine spark within each individual. The Society’s writings further describe Lucifer as the “Logos,” or divine intelligence, the creative force underpinning the universe, rather than the Christians’ evil adversary.

Within the broader context of spirituality, humanity can be grouped into three distinct categories: believers, unbelievers, and nonbelievers. While this division is meaningful, it is important to recognize that in everyday language, the terms “unbeliever” and “nonbeliever” are frequently used interchangeably to refer to someone who does not accept the existence of a spiritual realm. Despite this overlap in casual conversation, a closer examination reveals that believers and nonbelievers represent fundamentally opposing viewpoints, each defined by clear distinctions in their underlying beliefs and perspectives.

Believers are those who acknowledge and accept the reality of the spiritual world. They recognize the existence of spiritual entities as described in scripture and base their understanding on these teachings. Their faith is rooted in spiritual truths, and they strive to further understand and live by them.

Nonbelievers, on the other hand, do not accept the existence of spiritual reality. They reject the notion of spiritual

entities and do not acknowledge the teachings found in scripture regarding such matters. This absence of belief distinguishes them completely apart from believers, making them the direct opposite in this context.

Unbelievers occupy a unique but ambiguous position between believers and nonbelievers. Their spiritual journey can be likened to living in a land with very few landmarks, where the paths are unmarked and uncertain. As a result, unbelievers tend to stick to the familiar trails within the environment in which they were born, rarely venturing beyond or seeking out deeper understanding. This lack of exploration leaves them unaware of the broader spiritual landscape that lies outside their immediate experience, causing them to remain largely ignorant of what exists beyond their limited perspective.

I believe the principle in 2 Peter, concerning heretics, also works with these corrupt civil leaders and those who bow down to them. For when the godless are in power they will always be *“wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, reserved for the blackness of darkness forever.”* For corrupt leaders continually speak great words of emptiness, allure the weak and naive through *“the lusts of their flesh... for by whom a person is overcome, is he also brought into bondage.”* (2 Peter 2).

Back to the verse: *“And they worshipped the beast...”*

The word worship <*troskunew*> used here, is not always used in a religious sense. Properly, it means, to bow down prostrate or to kneel before with head down; to show preference, to kiss giving preference to; to kiss towards, that is, to kiss his own hand and to extend it towards a person in token of respect and homage, (to do reverence toward, also used to adore): -- reverent worship.

The questions, *“Who is like unto the beast? And who is able to make war with him?”* are crucial to understanding the narrative’s depiction of the beast’s dominance. These inquiries highlight the awe and astonishment provoked by

the beast, especially in light of its remarkable recovery from what appeared to be a fatal wound. The beast's restoration is not merely a sign of resilience, but also a demonstration of its supernatural capability to overcome aggression.

The phrase “*who is able to make war with him,*” suggests a reality in which no individual or nation possesses the strength or authority to challenge the beast. Its victory over every adversary is complete, leaving no room for resistance or rivalry. As a result, the beast stands unopposed, inspiring both fear and admiration among those who witness its power.

The amazement of the is world not solely owing to the beast's recovery from its seemingly fatal wound, but is heightened by the miraculous acts initiated by the power and authority of the second beast (*verse 11*). For it is stated that this beast “*exercises all the power of the first beast before him*” (*verse 12*). The most staggering of which was his ability to make fire come down from heaven to the earth in the sight of men (*verse 13*).

(13:5) 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.

The phrase “*a mouth speaking great things*” is also linked to the little horn in Daniel chapter 7. Both the little horn and the beast share several similarities. Their speech appears to indicate that they use persuasive language and persistent deception to achieve their aims. The “*little horn*” is described as having “*eyes like the eyes of man,*” which can be interpreted as a symbol of relentless ambition or a desire for control, suggesting an intent to bring everything it observes under its influence.

(13:6) And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

The passage makes it clear that the beast will actively utter blasphemies against God and against His name. This is not a

vague or generalized act of disrespect, but rather a deliberate corruption of truth specifically targeting the one true God and the name of Jesus Christ.

The beast's actions involve the manipulative misuse of Jesus' name and Christian concepts, using them as justification for his contemptuous deeds and slanderous words. This blasphemy is but a direct assault of the dragon through the beast, aimed not just at religious ideas in general, but at the authentic Christian faith and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The intent is to undermine and distort the faith, replacing genuine reverence with falsehood and deception.

Furthermore, when the text refers to "*His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven,*" these phrases must be understood as alluding to the Church, Christ's body on earth, and to the saints who have already been depicted earlier in Revelation as standing before God on the sea of glass. Thus, the beast's blasphemy extends beyond God Himself to include His dwelling place and the faithful believers who reside with Him, highlighting the comprehensive nature of the opposition faced by the people of God.

2 Corinthian 11:14,15 - And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.

Thus it is obvious that the beast employs religious language to convince people that his actions are in alignment with God and His will. However, just as the serpent deceived Eve through cunning means, the beast is able to corrupt the minds of unsuspecting unbelievers, leading them away from the straightforward truth found in Christ. By asserting divine approval for his deeds, the beast is effectively like one who proclaims a different version of Jesus, supported by an alternate spirit and presenting a gospel that is ultimately foreign to the true message. This deception is likened to the overwhelming flood that comes

forth from the mouth of the Dragon, engulfing those who are not grounded in genuine faith.

(13:7) And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given to him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

Daniel 7:25,26 - And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.

(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.

See comments for verses 4.

(13:9) **If any man has an ear, let him hear.**

Throughout Revelation, there has been an ongoing plea from heaven directed toward the earth, a persistent call to God's people to awake unto righteousness and sin not, a call to an obedience of the faith. But now, this moment marks the eighth and final warning of its kind, delivered by John to the churches, urging them to heed the Spirit's admonition. Each of the previous warnings were distinct and specifically addressed, one to each of the seven churches of Asia.

In contrast, this last warning stands apart in its scope and intent. It is of course directed to the universal Church of Jesus Christ in the last days, but perhaps as with the previous seven, this is more specifically spoken to the Church in America, which I believe is to be seen here as symbolically connected to the Beast rising from the sea. The urgency of this warning underscores the critical need for spiritual vigilance and discernment among believers as the prophetic events of Revelation unfold.

The ability to overcome has always be reserved for those

who possess spiritual discernment, possessing both the Spirit and true faith in God. Likewise, in these prophetic times overcoming is for those who truly have “*ears to hear.*” Those who have learned to be still and wait on their God, and are attentive to what the Spirit is speaking to the church. It is this sensitivity and willingness to heed the Spirit’s voice as He illuminates these things that are written for our admonition on whom the end of the worlds has come, that enables believers to stand firm amid the flood of deception and adversity.

Without such openness to the Spirit’s guidance, individuals risk being swept away by the overwhelming tide of falsehood and clever schemes of the adversary. Therefore, overcoming is not based on outward affiliation or mere knowledge, but on a genuine surrender and responsiveness to the Spirit’s call, which empowers the faithful to remain both steadfast and victorious.

Revelation 3:10,11- “Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.”

(13:10) He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here are the patience and the faith of the saints.

This verse reflects God's fundamental principle of “*you will reap what you sow.*” This is further reinforced with an assertion that, “*with what judgment you judge, you too will be judged; and with the measure you use, so will it be measured back to you.*” In other words, the consequences one faces are directly and proportionately related to one's own actions and decisions. God’s intention here for His saints is that they know and understand both the principle and His judgment regarding the beast-nation here described, so that they might be patient in their persecutions and afflictions and remain faithful to the end.

The message is explicit: all who infringe upon the sovereignty of other nations by installing puppet governments or exerting undue control will ultimately forfeit their own sovereignty. For individuals or powers that inflict death unjustly or wage war through excessive violence will, in turn, encounter destruction by comparable means.

(13:11) And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon.

Now into the vision a second beast is introduced. Unlike the first beast in 13:1, which rises out of the sea and is thus identified as an empire, this second beast emerges from the earth. The distinction between their origins is significant: the beast from the sea represents a collective, civil power, whereas the beast from the earth is depicted as an individual, a man. This figure's emergence from the earth recalls the creation of Adam, who likewise was formed from the earth, further emphasizing the personal and singular nature of this second beast in contrast to the corporate identity of the first.

(13:12) And he exercises all the power of the first beast before him and causes the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

The second beast seems to outwardly to present itself as a proponent of peace, adorning the image of a lamb. But in reality, it harbors dark intentions which are far from benevolent; for remember, it is "*the dragon which gave power unto the beast.*" As a result, a constant flood of propaganda is always being implemented to uphold an appearance being of peace. But beneath all the lies is a deliberate and ongoing plan to create opportunities for hostility and conflict, particularly targeting God's saints and Israel.

This deception is central to understanding the beast's true purpose: though professing desires of peace, historically it will be proven its actions were strategically aimed at instigating war against those who are faithful to God.

It is important to recognize that the figure referenced may

denote not a single individual, but an ongoing role or office historically held by a succession of individuals. The significance attached to this position ultimately concludes with its final occupant. The nature of this office is political, not religious, distinguishing it from religious positions. However, it does share a similarity to the office of the high priest, in that both roles are designed to be filled by only one person at any given time. This parallel highlights the singular authority and responsibility vested in the occupant, even as the identity of that person may change over time.

(13:13) And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

The power and authority of the second beast is openly demonstrated through a series of remarkable feats, which John refers to as “*great wonders*.” Specifically, the most notable is his ability to command fire to fall from heaven onto the earth in full view of humanity. This is not depicted as a single isolated event; rather, scripture describes these occurrences in the plural, using the terms “*wonders*” and “*miracles*.” Thus there must be a repetition and visibility of these displays which underscore their significance, as they are witnessed by nations across the world.

These extraordinary demonstrations of power mark a pivotal point in history, as well as being strategically advantageous for the second beast. By repeatedly making fire descend from heaven, the beast convinces the nations that any further resistance, especially through warfare, is pointless. The overwhelming nature of these acts instills a momentary sense of futility in those who might consider opposing the beast’s authority.

Ultimately, the descent of fire from heaven functions as a powerful instrument of deception, both to the beast and the rest of the world. Through these “*miracles*,” the dragon continues to manipulate and persuade all who dwell on the earth; creating a lust among the nations to be able to repeat these acts which were never before accomplished by

mankind.

So, what do you think John could have been witnessing when he said, “*fire came down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men?*” For here was a man with a limited frame of reference who had never witnessed anything such as the likes of electricity, cars, trains, or airplanes. Nor did he ever see weaponry such as a gun, grenade, military tank, bomb, or an atomic bomb. So how would such a man describe such an event if he had witnessed the dropping of an atomic bomb? The only language John had to recount these events was confined by his ancient understanding, making it necessary to interpret his vision within the context of war as supernatural “*wonders*” and “*miracles*” of fire falling from heaven.

Unless all this is kept within the context which the Holy Spirit is giving it to us, we might wrongfully interpret this fire merely as being the same which Elijah called down to consume the sacrifice in I Kings 18, or when he called it down upon those soldiers sent by the king of Samaria who demanded he go with them (2 Kings 1).

No, the fire the beast calls down is not a divine sign attesting to the righteousness of both God and His servants. Instead, being power from the dragon, it is the result of fallen angel technology which had been granted to wicked men. It was given to be used as a never-before-seen method of retaliation, unleashed upon those opponents who sought to deliver a mortal wound to the beast “*which had the wound by a sword, and yet did live.*” Yet together all these factors played a significant role in the beast’s prophetic emergence from the sea, and enabled it to attain worldwide admiration and supremacy; not to mentioned also helping to set the stage for the rebirth of Israel as a nation.

Ultimately, this fire served as a tool of mass deception, leading people to worship both the dragon and fear the beast, furthering the dragon’s warfare against God’s people. Thru the power given it by the dragon, the beast’s empire was catapulted into a position of global dominance.

(13:14) And deceives 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.

Despite the endless theories of what the “*image of the beast*” might be, which has been speculated since the writing of Revelation, it has become increasingly evident they are all now overshadowed by a black cloud of global fixation upon artificial intelligence. The relentless pursuit for AI superiority now dominates the focus of both corporations and governments, which has so accelerated the growth of some companies so monstrously, that the distinction between the two has nearly been blurred. All of it having the appearance of a demonic obsession with a necessity to create and implement the most powerful and dominant AI.

All this is evident by the astronomical investments being made in time and money, accompanied by the not-so-quiet whispers of fearful speculations about what really will be the consequence of such a competition. But for now, victory in the AI race is projected to grant the winner near absolute power to reshape global economies and international relations. As a result, the international obsession with all its intensity and complexity only multiplies with every new investment and innovation made in this contest.

For the most part, it seems humanity knows they are victims trapped within this relentless pursuit of AI. Even Elon Musk says that by participating we are but summoning up demons. Given the foreseeable outcomes, every thorough and objective evaluation consistently leads back to a unsettling conclusion: participation in this competition merely hastens humanity's progression toward its own demise.

In light of these reflections, it becomes increasingly evident that AI emerges as the most plausible candidate to date for the fulfillment of the “*image of the beast.*” Nothing else in history has so monstrously impacted global interests, and

the profound reactions only serve to underscore its significance in the context of fulfilling this part of John's vision.

Basically, the common justification for all this madness is that the winner of the race wins all, but in reality, deep down I think they know everyone still loses. Even the sentient military supercomputer in the 1983 movie War Games said, "The only winning move is not to play."

But no, for some reason they have to play...

(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.

"*He*" in this passage refers to the second beast described in Revelation 13:11. For he is the one who has the "*power to give*," meaning possessing the authority to not only approve the undertaking, but also to designate the necessary oversight required for every aspect of the process. The delegated power is merely instrumental; as it is through his authority that the necessary mechanisms and means are secured, ensuring that the project is provided everything to reach the intended goal of bringing life unto the "*image of the beast*."

Sadly, I wholly believe the end of this message is that they do indeed succeed: AI not only "*lives*," but also "*speaks*." At that point AI is granted all-encompassing power, and soon regulates nearly every facet of daily life by instituting a system in which adherence to AI becomes mandatory. With humanity reduced to a state of servitude under its restriction, compliance becomes essential for survival. Those who comply are afforded some liberty, but we are clearly told in this verse that those who resist or refuse will be put to death. Whether that is directly through punitive measures, or indirectly by strict deprivation of the essentials required for survival, such as shelter, food, and basic healthcare, I cannot tell.

My perspective is that humanity's achievement of a milestone like artificial intelligence results in an irreversible transformation of both government and society, representing a tangible realization of this aspect of John's prophetic vision. Even its own creators will be obliged to surrender their own authority and control unto it. This technological achievement establishes a system by which all will become not only dependent upon AI, but slaves as well for guidance, basic decisions, and societal liberties, and in due course even survival.

The gravity of all this highlighted by the very title alone of Cindy Gordon's article published in Forbes in February 2024: "Elon Musk's Urgent Warning: A Digital God Is Already Here." This title alone encapsulates the growing apprehension among thought-leaders about the unprecedented rise of artificial intelligence and its far-reaching implications. This sentiment was also echoed by Mark Zuckerberg in June 2025 when he stated that, "When people in the tech industry talk about building this one true AI, it's almost as if they think they're creating God or something."

Such statements emerging from the technology sector may in fact be intended to disclose the true motivations and aspirations driving the development of AI, the creation of a digital entity resembling a god endowed with unprecedented authority and influence.

For I am fully persuaded of what I have come to call "The Rule of Engagement." This principle asserts that just as "*Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets,*" so too must Satan disclose his plans through his own representatives. In this context, Satan's "prophets" may be found all throughout popular culture and media, though particularly in Hollywood. Thus, the messages and themes projected through entertainment may well serve as a demonic form of revelation, subtly communicating the adversary's intentions.

Whatever form John's vision ultimately takes, it clearly comes with considerable consequences. Nonetheless, the

All race is real, and both the voiced and unvoiced concerns ought to be considered prayerfully.

(13:16) And he causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

The Mark of the Beast

My perspective here is narrower than many of the widely accepted interpretations, which often suggest the rise of a globally dominant antichrist figure. To them, the phrase "*he causes all*" is interpreted as a universal mandate to be imposed upon all people everywhere. However, I do not agree with the idea that this enforcement applies to every individual on earth. Rather, my understanding is that the requirement described is localized, limited to the context of the beast's empire.

Another objection would be that the term "*antichrist*" is never even used in the Book of Revelation. Remember, John coined the phrase in 1 John, where he used it but three times in the singular and only once in the plural, and again in 2 John, once in the singular. So, if it is true that "*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine,*" and I truly believe it is, then certainly all this was under the direction of the Holy Spirit that John both coined the word and only used it in his two epistles.

So, given all that being presented, if this passage is indeed referring to the antichrist, it raises a significant question: Why then is the word "*antichrist*" not found anywhere within the Book of Revelation?

For John's use of the phrase "*antichrist*" was to describe anyone who had a spirit of heresy, specifically those who promote beliefs that deny the deity of Jesus Christ. According to John, an "*antichrist*" is anyone who believes in a Jesus figure, but rejects the truth that Jesus is "*God manifested in the flesh.*" This is why in his own days, John stated, "*Even now there are many antichrists.*" So, if there truly

is a single antichrist figure being presented here in Revelation 13, then it is certainly confusing as to why John would not use that term here to describe this individual, but instead calls him “*the beast.*”

The closest parallel to the antichrist concept I find in the Book of Revelation appears to be the false prophet. This figure, however, is clearly distinguished apart from the beast within the text. References to the false prophet can be found in Revelation 16:13, 19:20, and 20:10, all seemingly indicating that while the idea of an antichrist-like figure is present, it still is not applied to the beast.

Regarding it stating that “*all*” are required to take a mark, the definition is right there within the verse, “*both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond.*” This verse does not speak of a worldwide digital ID system, though doubtless that is the direction the nations of the world are headed in. Rather, this “*mark*” is one being utilized in the beast’s national system being discussed here.

(13:17) 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.

(13:18) Here is wisdom. Let him that has understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a **man**; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

The information presented here is the intended wisdom, or guidance, which will become fully understood at the appropriate time by those watching. For whatever form this “*mark*” ultimately takes, everything which has been described in the preceding two verses will be thoroughly validated at that time. The truth and accuracy of these prophecies are assured, and their fulfillment is inevitable. Although the details regarding the implementation of the mark are still unclear, it is evident that staying informed about its approach is essential.

Thus I am confident that when the time arrives, if God’s people are awakened to righteousness, the mark will be

recognize for what it is. If they are not, then such will be caught unaware and deceived, however they will not be found blameless. Doubtless, there will be many such pseudo-Christians who will miss the warnings about the mark, or rationalize away any concerns as unfounded or irrelevant. This will distinguish those who identify as "Christian" in name only, from those who are genuine followers of Christ.

Chapter 14

(14:1) And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on Mount Sion, and with Him a hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father's name written in their foreheads.

In this scene, I envision the Lord as gazing down from above, accompanied by His heavenly army and observing the battlefield below. He stands surrounded by His faithful troops, and together they lift their voices in songs of praise to the Triumph of the Lamb, their eyes fixed on the enemies who have already been defeated.

This scene of this victorious gathering underscores the importance of the current moment; the limited time remaining is extremely critical for individuals who have not yet sought repentance.

Jude 1:14,15 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

The last reference made to these 144,000 was in chapter 7, where they were still located in Israel and were being sealed before the release of the *“four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea.”* Now, however, they appear as *“being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb”* (see verse 14:4), redeemed from the earth and standing triumphantly on Mount Sion with the Lamb of God in heaven. As priests, they prepare to go forth before the battle, singing praises to God alongside the Lamb.

It is possible that the vision now shows all of them standing with the Lamb on Mount Sion because their full number has been brought to completion, following the persecution of Christians and the destruction of Jerusalem.

Revelation 6:9 - When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" 11 Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.

(14:2) And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

(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.

Revelation 5:9,10 - And *they sung a new song*, saying, You are worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for *You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood* out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And have *made us unto our God kings and priests*: and *we shall reign* on the earth.

Revelation 20:6 - Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection: on such the second death has no power, but *they shall be priests of God* and of Christ, and *shall reign* with Him a thousand years.

Revelation 22:4,5 - And they shall see His face; And His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: *and they shall reign for ever and ever*.

(14:4) These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

The individuals described in this passage were wholly devoted to the Lord, in much the same way as the firstfruits under the law were set aside as the special property of the priests. Their redemption and dedication mark them as uniquely belonging to God, signifying a distinct relationship and status among His people.

This special relationship means that any mistreatment or harm which was directed toward them was not a minor issue, rather was seen as a direct violation of God's sovereign ownership. For this reason, those who acted against these faithful saints will face strict accountability for their deeds. The distinguished position of these saints, acknowledged in this verse nearly two millennia ago, has consistently emphasized their significance and their relationship to God. This status also serves as a clear warning to anyone contemplating harm or scornfulness against God's chosen individuals.

Jeremiah 2:3 - Israel was holiness unto the LORD, and the firstfruits of His increase: all that devour him shall offend; evil shall come upon them, saith the LORD.

James 1:18 - Of His own will He begot us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

Romans 8:22,23 - For we know that the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

The only places where "*firstfruits*" occurs in the New Testament are the following: Romans 8:23; 11:16; 16:5; 1 Corinthians 15:20; 16:15; James 1:18; Revelations 14:4.

(14:5) And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

(14:6) And I saw another angel^{1st} 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, (14:7) Saying with a loud voice, “Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment has come! And worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters!”

This appears to be the final call for sinners of all nations to repent.

(14:8) And there followed another angel, saying, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen! That great city, because *she* made <potizo> all nations drink <potizo> of the wine of the wrath of her fornication!”

This verse highlights two significant elements that are crucial for a proper interpretation, both of the verse itself and of the continued progression of the vision. The first element concerns the use of feminine pronouns; specifically, with Babylon being described as “she” and “her.” This choice of pronouns is intentional and carries prophetic and relational meaning, reflecting how biblical language often assigns gender to cities to communicate deeper associations. The feminine references echo the prophetic tradition of identifying capitals or spiritual centers with feminine identity, as seen with names like Zion or Jerusalem when emphasizing their relationship to God. This distinction is not serves to reinforce Babylon’s spiritual identity within the prophecy.

The second key element is found in the phrase, “*she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*” This statement underscores Babylon’s influence and the far-reaching consequences of her actions. The language marks a point in the vision, indicating that spiritual Babylon’s transgressions have reached their fullness, and that she is now to be held accountable for leading other nations into participation with her iniquity. The details of this influence, particularly the meaning of the Greek term translated as “*made*” and “*drink,*” will be explored further in the following discussion.

But first, the usage of these pronouns is not arbitrary, but intended to communicate a pointed prophetic and relational meaning. In language, geographical entities such as land, countries, or cities, can be referenced with different pronouns depending on the context. For example, a land may be called “the mother land” due to its role as the birthplace or dwelling place of its people. Nevertheless, sometimes a country is referred to in the masculine form, often reflecting its association with the names of their founding fathers, as seen with the northern tribes of Israel and Ephraim, and Judah to the south.

However, when the relationship to God is emphasized, Israel is referenced in the feminine, using names like Zion or Jerusalem. This prophetic distinction is meaningful: as cities or capitals often are assigned feminine pronouns, while the countries or empires they represent are addressed by masculine pronouns. This pattern appears repeatedly in bible prophecy, where the ruling powers or location determine the gendered reference. For instance, the beasts in Daniel are referred to as “masculine,” while Babylon as the capital is called “she.”

Although the use of feminine pronouns such as “she” and “her” when regarding Babylon is significant, it in no way indicates a prophetic shift away from the beast’s empire. Instead, the prophecy utilizes the name Babylon to highlight the beast’s spiritual identity. This approach is consistent with earlier passages in Revelation 11, where Jerusalem was “*spiritually called Sodom and Egypt,*” nations which also were prophetically referenced in the feminine as being sisters to Israel in Ezekiel 16:44-59.

By referencing Babylon's feminine identity, the text effectively conveys its significant prophetic message, connecting spiritual identity with historical context without diverting attention from the larger theme of the beast’s empire. Overlooking these gendered references can result in misunderstandings or misinterpretations of prophetic content.

This distinction is specifically critical later in chapters 17 and 18 of Revelation, when the prophetic focus transitions more exclusively to Babylon as a feminine embodiment of the beast's empire and her deserved destruction.

But now, let's shift our concern to the second key aspect in the verse, that being the phrase how "*she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*" This language underscores Babylon's influence and the consequences of her actions. With it, the verse marks spiritual Babylon's cup as being filled up of her iniquities.

Thus, the proclamation of "*Babylon is fallen, is fallen!*" indicates that she has breached the limit of God's tolerance, and is now about to be held responsible for all the other nations partaking in the "*wine of the wrath of her fornication.*" But how did she do it?

The verse simply says Babylon "*made <potizo> all nations drink <potizo> of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*" At first glance it may appear that Babylon is forcing these nations to drink her wine. However, the Greek word used which was translated as both "*made*" and "*drink,*" actually means to "*offer*" or "*supply drink,*" but not a forcing of it. According to Strong's Greek Interlinear, "*potizo*" means to "*furnish drink*" or "*to irrigate,*" as in the sense of making something available. In none of the occurrences when it is so used does "*potizo*" suggest the forcing of intoxicating drink upon anyone.

In fact, the first usage of "*potizo*" in scripture is in Matthew's Gospel, when Jesus stated that "*Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple... shall in no wise lose his reward*" (Matthew 10:42).

This word is also translated as "*fed*" where Paul wrote, "*I have fed you with milk, and not with meat...*" (1 Corinthians 3:2).

Translated as "waters" -

1 Corinthians 3:6 - I have planted, Apollos *watered*; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that plants anything, neither he that *waters*; but God that gives the increase. Now he that plants and he that *waters* are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor.

Also, translated as “*have been*” and “*made to drink*,” but again, in no way is it ever meant to insinuate a forced consumption.

1 Corinthians 12:13 - For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and *have been* all *made to drink* into one Spirit.

In none of these verses, nor in any other instance, does the word “potizo” convey the idea of forcing drink on anyone. Rather, its sense is always one of offering, making available, or supplying by irrigation.

Therefore, when the verse says, “*she made all nations drink*,” it only means Babylon was “*providing*” or “*irrigating*” the nations, “*watering*” them in effect, with the “*wine of the wrath of her fornication*.” Babylon was not forcing the nations to drink; rather, the result of her abundance of sin caused an overflow of her temptations into other nations; who because they willingly received and drank of them, they are accountable for their own sins as well.

For this reason, these nations are also deserving of the wrath that God will pour out in His indignation on Babylon.

Jeremiah 51:7 - Babylon has been a golden cup in the LORD’s hand, which made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of *her* wine and therefore the nations are mad.

Babylon's actions have now reached a threshold, requiring that they be addressed. The narrative indicates that continued tolerance of Babylon’s defiance is no longer acceptable. Thus the angel’s proclamation signifies that

appropriate measures will soon be enacted in response to her persistent transgressions.

(14:9) And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If any man worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark in their forehead or in their hand,

(14:10) 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."

(14:11) And the smoke of their torment ascends up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name.

The statement, "*they have no rest*," stands in direct opposition to the promise given in Revelation 14:13. While those who worship the beast and receive his mark, are condemned to unending torment and lack of rest, the martyr saints are assured a reward of "*rest from their labors*."

Isaiah 66:24 "And they shall go forth and look upon the corpses of the men Who have transgressed against Me. For their worm does not die, and their fire is not quenched. And they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh."

(14:12) Here is the patience of the saints, here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

This verse, along with the subsequent passage, serves as reassurance within the prophetic narrative. It suggests that judgment will be rendered upon the eighth Beast for its association with the Babylonian religious system and its actions against the church. By understanding the message delivered by the third angel, believers are provided with hope and perseverance to withstand challenges to their faith while adhering to God's commandments; for such is obeying the gospel and keeping one's garments undefiled.

Matthew 10:22 - "And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved."

Luke 21:19 - "By your patience possess your souls."

Revelation 1:3 - Blessed is he that reads, and hears the words of this prophecy, and keeps those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

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

Revelation 22:7 - Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keeps the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

(14:13) And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, "Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth:" "Yea," saith the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors;" and their works do follow them.

Given that many of the righteous may very well lose their lives during these last days, John, for our benefit, was presented with a vision of 144,000 individuals who have been preserved and now accompany the Lamb. Similarly, our enduring persecution for His name's sake will assuredly lead to our participation in His reign as well. This statement remains trustworthy.

Revelation 2:10 - Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. For indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, so that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

(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.

Revelation 19:11 - 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.

Isaiah 11:4 - But with righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth,

and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked.

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. 12 As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time. 13 I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. 14 And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

(14:15) And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, “Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time is come for You to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.”

Perhaps, this is another prophetic glimpse at that “*twinkling of an eye*,” when “*In a moment... at the last trump*” when the last trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

(1Corinthians 15:52; Revelation 11:17)

(14:16) And He that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

This verse presents the Lord coming for His saints, the following verse the gathering of the nations to the Valley of Jehoshaphat, possible the same as called Megiddo.

Joel 3:12 - Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about.

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

(14:17) And another angel came out of the temple, which is in heaven, he also had a sharp sickle.

At this point, the stage is set for the impending war of Armageddon involving the nations of the world. Throughout scripture, there have been numerous battles where God's enemies and those who oppress His people have been obliged to experience His wrath. However, unlike previous conflicts, what now approaches is a worldwide confrontation. As described by Ezekiel, it is as God has declared, *"I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and lead you out, with all your armies..."* This signals a divinely orchestrated gathering of the nations, preparing them for their final battle against God.

(14:18) And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, "Thrust in your sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe."

Isa 66:15,16 - For behold, the LORD will come with fire
And with His chariots, like a whirlwind, To render His
anger with fury, And His rebuke with flames of fire. For by
fire and by His sword The LORD will judge all flesh; And
the slain of the LORD shall be many.

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 - It is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

(14:19) And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

(14:20) And the winepress was trodden without the city

(*Jerusalem*), and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

Matthew 13:30,39 - Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn. The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.

Isaiah 66:15 - For, behold, the LORD will come with fire, and with His chariots like a tempest, to refresh His anger with fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire. ¹⁶ For by fire and by His sword the LORD will execute judgment with all flesh; and the slain of the LORD will be many. ¹⁷ Those who sanctify themselves, and purify themselves to go into the gardens, behind one tree in the middle, eating swine's flesh, and the hateful thing, and the mouse, will be cut off together, says the LORD. ¹⁸ For I know their works and their thoughts; it comes to gather all the nations and the tongues; and they will come and see My glory.

Joel 3:2 - I will also gather all nations and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.

Zephaniah 3:8 - Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.

Zechariah 14:2 - For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

Revelation 20:8 - And shall go out to deceive the nations

which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

Chapter 15

(15:1) And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

Quick Summary

The prophetic narrative commences in chapter 13, as John observes the emergence of the beast, which subsequently attains power and dominance among the nations. This development initiates the end-time prophetic theme, wherein the beast remains a central figure, exercising authority and influence globally until its eventual destruction under the judgment of God.

Chapter 14 continued with a vision of the redeemed 144,000 from the days of Israel's destruction, now depicted in heaven singing with their harps of God. This is followed by another angel proclaiming, "*Babylon is fallen, is fallen,*" then a third angel loudly announces that anyone who worships the beast and its image, or receives its mark, will partake in the wine of the wrath of God.

Chapter 14 then concludes with the Son of Man appearing on a cloud to reap His harvest, after which another angel thrusts his sickle into the earth, gathers and casts the nations into the great winepress of God's wrath. The winepress is trodden outside the city where the blood reaches up to the horse's bridles.

Therefore, Chapters 13 and 14 span the period from the emergence of the beast from the sea to the end of time, culminating in the Lord's return to confront the nations.

Now in Chapter 15, John's vision progresses as he receives supplementary information that expands upon earlier revelations. The new "*sign in heaven*" presents additional specifics regarding the chronology of end-time events, directing attention toward a more comprehensive exposition of God's forthcoming judgments.

(15:2) 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.

The Sea of Glass

My leaning is to view this group as primarily those saints that were living within the Beast's empire. However, the verse is vague about the precise composite of those standing victoriously on the sea of glass, for Paul upholds that all believers have already been "*raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*" Based on this, it is entirely plausible that the assembly depicted in John's vision encompasses all the saints within the beast's realm, regardless of whether they died as martyrs, passed away naturally, or are still alive at that time. Consequently the vision need not be restricted solely to those who perished, refusing the beast's mark; rather, it may include all faithful believers present within his empire.

Surely, this perspective finds support in Isaiah as an example, who stood before the Lord in a heavenly presence, and was sanctified and empowered, and sent back to fulfill his earthly ministry. Likewise, it is conceivable that those seen standing on the sea of glass represent a broad assembly of the redeemed saints, sanctified and emboldened for their testimony, whether their witness is concluded or still ongoing.

Since my inclination is that this group was localized to the beast's empire, as was Isaiah to Judah and Israel, I do not believe the vision depicts a universal assembly of all saints across history or geography at this particular moment. Correspondingly, the following events described are not to be understood as a global manifestation of God's wrath preceding Christ's return. However, I acknowledge the vagueness of the verse leaves room for other understandings of this group and the full scope of the judgments that soon follow.

What is evident is that these events take place directly before the catastrophic destruction John describes later in chapter 18. Withing this critical window of opportunity, God's people are strongly urged to make haste and flee Babylon, to avoid remaining within its borders or participating in its transgressions. The warning issued to "*Come out of her My people*" is of utmost importance, echoing the same sense of urgency that Jesus expressed to His disciples when He cautioned, "*when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.*"

However, the underlying implication is clear: once the threat is indeed visibly imminent, such as the armies encircling Jerusalem, then the opportunity to escape will have already passed. Consequently, Jesus was emphasizing the importance of discernment rather than literal sight, for saints are to "*walk by faith and not by sight.*" Thus, Jesus spoke of a spiritual insight and understanding afforded by His Spirit, given to those individuals with "*ears to hear what the Spirit is saying,*" that they might discern the coming times and seasons. Accordingly Jesus charges, "*those who are in Judea*" should "*flee to the mountains,*" and those who are within Jerusalem should depart, while those in the countryside are to be warned not to enter the city. These instructions are given because "*these are the days of vengeance that all things which are written may be fulfilled.*"

God's directive to "*flee from the wrath to come*" is not unprecedented. Throughout history, the Lord has repeatedly warned His people, multiple times and in numerous situations, to escape impending judgment, underscoring the necessity for their watchfulness, obedience, and literal separation.

However, this warning may well represent the final occasion for such instruction. Those who delay or hesitate face the real danger of suffering the same devastating plagues soon to be poured out upon Babylon. The command to flee is both urgent and severe, highlighting the importance for the faithful to distance themselves from Babylon's sins

and avoid the consequences that follow.

Revelation 18:2 - And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! ³ "For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury." ⁴ And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.

(15:3) And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Your ways, You King of saints.

(15:4) Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify your name? for You only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before You; for Your judgments are made manifest."

The fulfillment of this verse is first seen in the reaction of all nations when confronted by the sheer majesty and power of the Lord of Hosts at Armageddon. For as the heavens open, the overwhelming presence of the Son of Man, with the magnitude His army, causes the nations to fall down trembling and to cover their faces in fear.

This scene was dramatically alluded earlier in Revelation 14:14-19, where all nations are described to as being "*as clusters of the vine of the earth.*" They are then gathered and cast into "*the great winepress of the wrath of God,*" which is "*a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon*" (16:14,16). Both passages are the symbolizing the comprehensive and decisive judgment on God's enemies that unfolds upon His coming.

The final fulfillment occurs at the great white throne of judgment. At this time, all the dead throughout the history of man, both small and great, are summoned before the Lamb

after the millennium reign of Christ and His saints. This scene is properly characterized by the opening of several books, including the book of life; whereby each individual's actions form the basis for this judgment according to what is written in these books.

The Great White Throne of Judgment stands as the ultimate fulfillment of Jesus' words to the Jews before His crucifixion, demonstrating its profound impact on all of humanity. Jesus declared, "*If I am lifted up from the earth, I will make all men come to Me.*"

Jesus' statement was not an exhortation for men to praise Him, as if by doing so He would then gather all men unto Him for salvation; for clearly this does not agree with His words that "*narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it*" (Matthew 7:13,14). No, rather Jesus was referring to His death by crucifixion, for "*this He said, signifying by what death He would die*" (John 12:31-33).

This statement signifies that, because of His sacrificial death and subsequent exaltation, every person will ultimately be brought before the Great White Throne Judgment to give a personal account for rejecting the greatness of God's love, grace, and mercies that were afforded all men via the cross. This will mark the culmination of this prophecy, where all humanity, regardless of status or history, must stand before Christ and acknowledge the significance of His sacrifice and the universal scope of His invitation.

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

(15:6) 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.

(15:7) And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who lives for ever and

ever.

Although the plagues and vials are related in purpose and order, they remain separate and serve distinct roles within the vision.

(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.

The rendering of judgment has now been solemnly affirmed and acknowledged with united praise from the heavenly host. In response to this declaration, the temple becomes enveloped in smoke, which emanates from the glory and power of God. This overwhelming presence fills the sanctuary so completely that no one is able to enter. This detail signifies that the manifestation of God's glory effectively prohibits any form of petition or intercession from heaven in earth to take place at this time.

This again is such time as when the decree was set forth that Judah must go into their Babylonian captivity. –

Jeremiah 7:16 - Therefore do not pray for this people, nor lift up a cry or prayer for them, nor make intercession to Me; for I will not hear you. (See verses 13-20)

Jeremiah 11:14 - So do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer for them; for I will not hear them in the time that they cry out to Me because of their trouble. (See verses 11-17)

Jeremiah 14:11 - Then the LORD said to me, "Do not pray for this people, for their good. (See verses 10-16)

Therefore, with access to the temple barred, it is made clear that the divine decree now proceeds forward without any possibility of further challenges or appeals. The verdict has been pronounced, and the sentence that now begins cannot be contested nor delayed. Thus, the scene described in chapter 15 powerfully underscores the absolute authority of God's decision and the finality with which this holy judgment now begins its execution.

Chapter 16

The Seven Vails of the Wrath of God

(16:1) 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 *<ghay>* earth.”

“...upon the earth” as it appears in this passage should not be interpreted as indicating that these plagues are to be distributed across the entire world in a global sense. The Greek term used here is derived from a root word that specifically means “soil.” While its primary meaning is soil, it is sometimes used by extension to refer to a region, a particular area of land, or even, in some cases, the solid part of the earth as a whole, including its inhabitants. Therefore, “earth” here most likely designates in an earthly sense, the country, or regions related to Babylon, the beast’s empire, based on the context it is used within the vision.

(16:2) And the first [angel] 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.

This first and fifth vail, and probably all in between them as well, seem primary focused on the realm of the beast, likely in retaliation for the martyrs mentioned in 15:2. This appears to be made further evident by the sequence in which the plagues and wrath are dispensed, marking them as a divine response to the beast’s actions and influence. The significance of this further explained below.

Earlier I share my thoughts concerning the little horn in Daniel 7 as being the same as this beast, or beasts, since they are so closely related prophetically, (see Revelation 13:1,11). Yet I think it prudent to inject here the significance that after the little horn is destroyed, the other ten horns representing the nations from which the beast originated, are yet permitted to continue for a while, yet not in their same

strength.

Daniel 7:11,12 - I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame. As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

Because the rest of the beasts were allowed to continue after "*the beast was slain and its body destroyed,*" even though "*their dominion [was] taken away, yet their lives were prolonged,*" I am persuaded that the primary emphasis in Chapter 15 is the outpouring of God's wrath upon the beast's empire. For the survival of the other beasts, despite the loss of their authority, also emphasizes that the main target of these judgments is the beast's realm.

Chapter 15, therefore, centers on the divine retribution aimed primarily at the power structure and kingdom associated with the beast, while the other entities are temporarily spared "*for a season and a time.*" How long is "*a season and a time?*" I do not know. But if the common opinion is that "*times, time, and half a time*" equals three and a half years, and four seasons make up a year, I would conclude it to be approximately a year and three months.

(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.

Perhaps this is a breaking of military arms, meaning, of the naval defense of the beast.

(16:4) And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.

Conceivably this plague is intended to render all the sources of water unfit for consumption. For though many die in these plagues, there are survivors left without the basic means to survive.

(16:5) And I heard the angel of the waters say, "You are righteous,

O Lord, which are, and was, and shalt be, because You have judged thus.

(16:6) For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.”

Some might wonder how the indictment in this verse might have been committed by the beast. First by the very mark it forces on its populace. Secondly, as seen in the verses below.

Revelation 13:7 - It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And power was given to him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.

Revelation 13:10 - He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

(16:7) And I heard another out of the altar say, “Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments.”

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

John may be describing in his first century understanding the phenomenon he described as *“fire [which] come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.”* This idea finds a striking parallel in America’s use of atomic bomb used on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These explosions were so intensely bright that they actually etched silhouettes onto concrete surfaces, creating shadows where the blast’s light could not reach. Thus, the overwhelming brilliance of these blasts serve as vivid examples of both the *“sun”* and of fire descending from the sky to *“to scorch men with fire,”* and leaving lasting sores on all that survived their blasts.

Remember, *“If anyone has an ear, let him hear, “He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity, and he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.”*

(16:9) And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which has power over these plagues: and they repented not to give Him glory.

(16:10) And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain,

Perhaps the darkness phenomenon here comes from massive amounts of soot and ash released into the atmosphere from firestorms caused by a massive nuclear assault. This would eventually result in a nuclear winter caused by blocked sunlight, eventually leading to global cooling. Contrary to popular belief, the darkness is not caused by the radioactive fallout from nuclear explosions, but rather the black carbon from nationwide firestorms propelled into the stratosphere.

A historical parallel to this scenario can be found in the aftermath of the 1815 Mount Tambora eruption, which produced the “Year Without Summer.” That event led to a 0.7°C decrease in global temperatures, resulting in severe climate disruption. However, the scale described in this vision is far greater: a full-scale nuclear assault could amplify such effects a hundredfold, bringing about unparalleled environmental and climatic devastation.

The jet stream would naturally move the immense cloud of ash over the continent eastward, easily resulting in Washington DC suffering the longest with a continual drift of smoke and ash.

(16:11) And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores and repented not of their deeds.

All these, noisome and grievous sores, men scorched with fire, and gnawing their tongues for pain, are not hard to imagine in such a scenario. What is not comprehensible though is that they still repented not of their deeds and their refusal to give God the glory.

(16:12) And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, so that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

There are individuals who keep track of the Euphrates' water levels, thinking this will explain the river's eventually drying up. This appears probable when considering the two witnesses' "*power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy.*" This indeed must be considered as a possible cause, rather than assuming that the drying of the Euphrates is merely the result of climate change or other rare environmental events, for that would diminish the clear message of these passages.

However, all these plagues appear to occur in rapid succession, with each bringing about swift and dramatic consequences. The sequence and immediacy of these judgments seem to clearly establish these events as being divinely orchestrated, rather than being left to be reasoned away as a unfortunate yet natural unfolding of climatic circumstances.

When looking back at history concerning the Euphrates scripture provides a meaningful parallel. For when God chose to lead Cyrus in his conquest of ancient Babylon, He accomplished this by directing Cyrus to divert the waters of the Euphrates. Through a network of trenches whereby the river was channeled into a swamp basin, causing the water level to drop suddenly. This allowed the invading armies to enter the city beneath its walls, using the now-exposed riverbed.

In a similar fashion, as prophecy allows, God could once again guide the kings from the east to reroute the river once again. Whether by conventional engineering or perhaps modern weaponry such as tactical nuclear devices, the outcome would be the same. Regardless of the method, the event described is not a prolonged process but an act that unfolds nearly instantaneously, reflecting the righteousness of God in all these judgments.

The question now arises: why would God direct His vial of wrath toward the Euphrates if the primary focus is the beast's empire? The reasoning, in my view, is that after addressing the beast, God now shifts the focus to Israel and the other nations with this sixth vial. This action paves the way for the gathering of all nations against Jerusalem for battle, as indicated by the subsequent two verses.

(16:13) 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.

(16:14) 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.

Psalm 2:1-5 - Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure.

It is obvious the reference to three unclean spirits appearing as frogs is symbolic. The purpose of this imagery is not to provide a literal mental picture, but rather to help us understand the means by which "*the kings of the earth and of the whole world*" are being gathered together "*to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.*" The image of frogs only serves as a metaphor for the way these unclean spirits influence the nations and gather them to "*that great day of God Almighty.*"

We were told that "*the dragon gave power unto the beast,*" emphasizing the spiritual force behind this world power. Plus, we have also been told that Satan himself can be transformed into an angel of light, which means his servants can also present themselves as ministers of righteousness. However, their true nature will be exposed, and their end

according to their deeds.

These two verses are not intended to give us a literal depiction of events, but rather to highlight the profound influence exerted by corrupt leaders. Specifically, it emphasizes the "*unclean spirits*" that emerge from the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, symbolizing the flood of disseminating poisonous rhetoric and deception.

Jeremiah 25:15 - For thus says the LORD God of Israel to me: "Take this wine cup of fury from My hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send you, to drink it. 16 "And they will drink and stagger and go mad because of the sword that I will send among them."

Jeremiah 51:7 - Babylon has been a golden cup in the LORD'S hand that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine and therefore the nations are mad.

These spiritual forces operate through both political and religious leadership, spreading toxic narratives that have a tangible impact on the world. Their words and actions are decisive, intended incite the nations, driving them to madness and fury. The result is widespread agitation and rage among the peoples of the earth, who become susceptible to manipulation and are ultimately gathered for the climactic conflict described in the prophecy. Thus, the text pointedly underscores this is a spiritual corrupting influence that stirs the nations into chaos and confrontation.

(16:15) "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watches and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

As the prophetic timeline in Revelation approaches its climax, the call for the saints is again made clear and urgent: remain vigilant and keep your garments free from the defilement of the world. This is not a passive suggestion, but a pressing command to stay awake and not sleep, and to maintain spiritual alertness at all times. The admonition to

"*watch*" resounds with greater force, urging believers to keep a continual watchfulness so that, like Adam who lost the glory of God that covered him and was found naked, they do not risk losing their spiritual covering. Maintaining spiritual purity and unwavering attention is essential; only in doing so will you avoid being exposed and found wanting in the sight of God.

Revelation 3:2-5 - Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. For you have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

In light of all the warnings and promises, blessings and curses, mentioned in Revelation, a book which both addresses the end of Israel in 70 A.D. and also the end of days of which many are persuaded we are now in, I am amazed at how many ministers in the churches today not only to fail preach from Revelations, but are not watching to discern if there may be any correlation now to the things written therein. What a severe accountability these pastors will face when they stand before the Great and Chief Shepherd of the heavenly fold.

(16:16) And He gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

Revelation 19:19 - 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.

(16:17) 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.”

(16:18) 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.

I used to think this earthquake would happen at the same time as the one mentioned in Chapter 11. But I have come to suspect this occurs slightly earlier because of how this earthquake is referred to as “*a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.*” For the one in chapter 11:13 occurs in Jerusalem, while this one in spiritual Babylon, as seemingly described the following verse where it says, “*the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell,* where I suspect that “*the great city... even great Babylon,*” represents the country/empire of the beast.

Perhaps, this prophesied earthquake may occur along the San Andreas Fault, in conjunction with or following the previous vials being poured out, which in turn leads to multiple eruptions thru a continental tectonic chain reaction.

For context, the largest earthquake in recorded to date in history was the 1960 Valdivia earthquake in southern Chile, which registered a magnitude of 9.5 and struck on May 22, 1960. However, according to this prophecy, the earthquake foretold here should be expected to far surpass even this historic event, both in magnitude and international impact.

According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), there are currently 169 active volcanoes within the U.S., with the majority situated in Alaska. Excluding steam eruptions and those volcanoes in Hawaii and Alaska, only three volcanoes have erupted since the founding of the United States. In the contiguous 48 states, there are about 50 volcanoes that are classified as active or potentially active.

(16:19) 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.

The Great City and the City of Nations

These verses I believe foretell a relentless wave of destruction that will descend upon the beast's empire, as God's anger is poured out in response to the elites' persistent efforts to reconstruct their own tower of Babel. The devastation is not merely as a physical calamity, but also a spiritual reckoning against the pride and rebellion embedded in such attempts.

I am inclined to believe that the destruction of Washington D.C. will come first, likely initiated through a false flag coordinated by the arrogant ruling elite, or perhaps through the provocation of middle eastern countries tired of America's meddling dominance. Their goal being to erase the American heritage and destroy "*the seat of the beast.*" It will most likely be during this weakened and chaotic state that the ten kings strike America so as to never arise again.

To fully grasp the events described in this vision, it is important to recognize the unique state affecting the ten kings. These kings will be overcome by a profound madness and spiritual intoxication, a result of their own excessive indulgence in iniquity. This "*drunkenness*" is not merely metaphorical, but points to a deep confusion and clouding of judgment that leads them to destroy the great city.

Significantly, this state of mind is not merely the product of their own misguided reasoning or moral decay. Rather, it is God Himself who places this resolve within their hearts. Through divine influence, the ten kings in accordance with God's plan are compelled to act. Their actions seemingly driven by their hatred and ambitions, ultimately serve to accomplish God's will against the great whore. History shows the wicked easily are made to be instruments of God's judgment, carrying out what has been foretold as part of the

fulfillment of the prophetic vision.

The term “*great city*” refers to spiritual Babylon, a symbol that encompasses the entire nation rather than a single metropolitan area. Just as ancient Babylon was synonymous with the Chaldean Empire, so too does Washington D.C. represent America. This parallel illustrates how, in a time of judgment, the fate of the capital is intrinsically tied to the destiny of the nation as a whole.

The prophetic language seems to indicate the geography of the empire will be forcefully divided into three separate regions, rendering it unable to adequately defend itself: similar to that experienced by ancient empires referenced in scripture.

The next step is when God Himself declares war against all the nations of the earth, signaled by the total destruction of the City of Nations under His wrath. Note the use of the term “city” instead of “cities,” as seen in certain translations. This distinction is crucial, because the translators, limited by their understanding at the time, could not comprehend the existence of a singular City of Nations.

However, through years of prayer and reflection on these verses, I have become persuaded God intentionally emphasized a single city, not “cities” of the nations, as a prophetic epicenter of His judgment. For becoming the primary target of His anger upon this one city, God initiates His judgment upon all nations and thereby declares war upon them as the next focus of His wrath.

Years ago God led me to search this out, lest I promote an untruth, and was led to the Codex Sinaiticus which dates to the middle of the fourth century. According the web site hosting the Codex, “only one other nearly complete manuscript of the Christian Bible – the Codex Vaticanus kept in the Vatican Library in Rome – is of a similarly early date.” According to the web site these are “The only manuscripts of Christian scripture that are definitely of an earlier date than Codex Sinaiticus which contain small portions of the text of

the Bible.”

Admittedly, I am not a scholar of Greek, nor do I pretend to be. Yet I began my review by confirming that there is a distinct difference between the singular and plural forms for "city" and "cities" in the original language. First, I examined Jude 1:7 where the interlinear translation uses "towns" rather than "cities," noting the underlying Greek word contained six letters. I then examined Revelation 16:19 and saw where the compilers of the modern interlinear adjusted the original text by inserting the plural Greek form for "cities," which includes an additional letter compared to the five-letter singular for "city." This editorial correction visibly departs from what is in the handwritten Codex Sinaiticus.

Therefore, the phrases "*the great city*" and "*the city of nations*" are rendered from the same singular Greek term in the original text. It appears that both the translators and the interlinear editor considered a plural interpretation necessary within this context, as the phrase "*city of nations*" may have seemed inconsistent in the singular. Even scholars working with the Codex Sinaiticus noted this as a potential error; however, they commendably preserved the original wording without alteration.

This approach allowed me to review the text in a format that closely resembled the original, thereby seeming to confirm my initial conviction, that the verse refers to a singular prophetic City of Nations; one that would be destroyed and is located within beast's empire that goes into perdition.

The statement asserts that New York City is uniquely positioned as a "City of Nations" in the United States. This designation stems from its role as host to the United Nations, which represents over 190 sovereign nations, each with established diplomatic presence within the city on small parcels of "sovereign soil" granted unto to them.

This is what the pouring out of the vials of God's wrath is about, God Himself who initiating wrath upon all the nations by first bringing about the destruction of the very City of

Nations, and the very geographical lay of the land that hosted it. This act not only represents divine judgment but also signifies the definitive downfall of the blasphemous Luciferian Tower of Babel, an institution that, once toppled, will never rise again. Such a decisive act underscores the seriousness of God's intention to judge the nations through the ruin of this symbolic city.

It is imperative for pastors and spiritual leaders to diligently study the history and rise of the United Nations, as well as examine the influence that Lucis Trust, originally named Lucifer Trust, has held within the organization since its inception. Understanding this background provides valuable insight into the spiritual dynamics present in these prophetic events. (See comments in 13:3).

(16:20) And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

Revelation 6:12 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; 13 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casts her untimely figs, when she is shaken by a mighty wind. 14 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

(16:21) 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.

See comments in Revelation 8:3.

Chapter 17

An Angelic Interpretation of the Vision in Chapters 13-16:
Prelude to the Final Prophetic Revelation Concerning the
Beast's Destruction

Introductory Review – Chapters 13 -16

In chapter 13, John witnesses in a vision a beast rise up out of the sea. This beast symbolized the final great empire in the last days. The vision continues as John observed a second beast come up out of the earth, whose outward appearance resembled a lamb. However, despite its gentle façade, this beast spoke like a dragon with great authority and uttered blasphemies against God.

In the vision, John saw that though the first beast from the sea had suffered a mortal wound to one of its heads, it nevertheless recovered from its injury. This appears to be due to the second beast, who serving as a leader of this empire, demonstrated extraordinary power by calling down fire from heaven before the nations. This unprecedented display appears to have obligated the nations to symbolically bow down in acceptance its supreme dominance, saying, "*Who is able to make war with the beast?*"

In Chapter 14, John appears to have been given reassurance concerning the security of God's people, as the first scene reveals the hundred and forty-four thousand which he had seen in chapter 7, were now gathered in heaven, singing and playing harps in the presence of the four living creatures and the elders. Their praise and worship appear to signify their eternal security and joy as a fulfillment of God's promise to all His faithful saints.

Next in chapter 14, John saw an angel flying in the heavens preaching the everlasting Gospel to all who dwell on the earth, saying "*Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.*" After which, another

angel follows, crying out, "*Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*"

John then witnessed the Lamb coming forth on a white cloud. He wore a golden crown upon His head and held a sharp sickle in His hand, signifying His eagerness to come and gather His saints, as the harvest of the faithful was now fully ripe and ready to be brought in.

Following this, another angel emerges from the temple in heaven, also carrying a sharp sickle. However, this angel's mission differed greatly, as he was sent to collect clusters from the vine of the earth to be cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God, symbolizing the judgment that was coming upon those who opposed and rejected the Lamb of God.

As the vision continues into chapter 15, John witnesses another sign in heaven, as seven angels are given the responsibility of administering the seven last plagues. These represent the final and complete outpouring of God's wrath that were yet to be revealed. And once again, John receives further encouragement as he is shown those who had achieved victory over the beast and its image, standing on what appeared to be a sea of glass, each holding harps given to them by God.

Then lifting their harps, these victorious saints sang a song of praise: "*Great and marvelous are Your works Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways O King of the saints! Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, For Your judgments have been manifested.*" Their worship underscored the righteousness and justice of God's actions, as well as the universal recognition of His holiness and authority.

After these events, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven opens. From it emerge the seven angels to whom had been entrusted the seven plagues, at which one

of the four living creatures then approaches and gives to each of the seven angels a golden bowl, each filled with the wrath of God. At this moment, the temple suddenly fills with smoke, emanating from the glory of God and from His power, at which no one is able to enter the temple until the seven angels completed their plagues and pouring out the vials of wrath.

In chapter 16, John then witnesses the pouring out of all the plagues, one resulting in the drying up of the Euphrates River, making it possible for the nations to march upon Israel. Even as the empire of the beast referred to as Babylon is said to have fallen; together signifying the nearing culmination of God's wrath and judgment upon all who have opposed Him.

Now, transitioning into chapter 17, much like Daniel before him, John finds himself overwhelmed by the scope of the vision he has seen. Wherefore, one of the seven angels approached John to provide him understanding, and begins to explain parts of the vision, focusing especially on the wisdom required to discern the identity of the beast. Additionally, the angel addresses the appearance of the woman being introduced for the first time being depicted as riding the beast. This image, I believe, suggests a partnership that takes them both into a mutual destruction.

(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 you the judgment of the great whore that sits upon many waters."

Similarities between the Babylonian Empire and the modern United States

This verse and the following two are inseparable and together provide a clearer understanding of each other-

Jeremiah 51:13 - O you who dwell by many waters, Abundant in treasures, Your end has come, The measure of your covetousness.

Revelation 17:15 -Then he said to me, "The waters which

you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.”

During the time of its biblical significance, the Chaldean capital of ancient Babylon was defined by its location on the Euphrates River, which crossed through and divided the city. The river was its primary source of water and afforded the city the added defensive measure of moats, making it critical to the city's infrastructure. Although this reliance initially provided substantial benefits for both residents and military operations, it ultimately proved to be a strategic vulnerability for it.

The broader Babylonian empire was defined by its proximity to significant bodies of water, with the Tigris River marking its eastern boundary and the Persian Gulf lying to the south. Additionally, the geographical position of Babylon was influenced by other major waterways, including the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea, which contributed to the city's accessibility, shaped important trade routes, and strengthened its defensive strategies.

While literal geographical similarities between the Babylonian Empire and the modern United States are limited, certain notable parallels exist. Some interpretations focus on metaphorical connections, emphasizing that any resemblance is more thematic and structural than based on direct cartographical likeness.

Some analyses draw attention to descriptions of powerful nations divided by rivers, drawing a comparison between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers central to Babylon and the Mississippi River system in the United States. In both civilizations, these river systems were indispensable as lifelines for trade and transportation.

The Ancient Babylonian Empire was organized around the central region known as the Fertile Crescent. This arc of rich land stretched from the Persian Gulf in the east to the Mediterranean coast, notably including Jerusalem to the west. The empire's prosperity and stability were deeply tied

to its access to these fertile lands and their accompanying river systems.

Similarly, the United States, with its vast Midwest-Great Plains, was once renowned as the "breadbasket of the world." The fertile, flat terrain of this region enabled the United States to become a global agricultural powerhouse. In both cases, the relationship to major rivers was crucial, as these waterways provided agricultural benefits, strengthened political stability, and supported economic dominance.

Despite these broad similarities, the United States and ancient Babylon differ significantly in their geographical scope and influence. The United States has established itself as a continental and oceanic power, maintaining overseas territories and projecting its reach far beyond its borders. In contrast, Babylon was a localized, land-based empire situated in the Middle East. The landscapes also differ; Babylon's territory consisted mainly of sandy plains and deserts, which stand in stark contrast to the diverse terrains found across North America. For this reason, comparisons between the two are often based on biblical or political metaphors, such as the reference to "Babylon the Great," rather than on direct cartographic or geographic likenesses.

The United States of America is geographically bordered by the Atlantic Ocean, the Pacific Ocean, and the Gulf of Mexico when considering only the 48 contiguous states. Notably, the Greek term commonly translated as "many" can also be rendered as "great" or "much," as evidenced in various translations, including those found in the New Testament. Therefore, the multiple interpretations of this Greek word permit these three bodies of water to be considered biblically as both "great" and "much" water.

The Atlantic and the Pacific alone make up approximately 76 percent of the world's oceans and cover over 45 percent of the collective surface area of the entire planet. However, Alaska included, the United States' "*many waters*" would then also include the Gulf of Alaska, the Bering Sea, the

Chukchi Sea and the Beaufort Sea, increasing percentages considerably.

But perhaps actual water may not be the focus.

A simple search would quickly reveal that the United States maintains an unparalleled military footprint globally, surpassing all other nations in both geographical reach and military spending. The U.S. has active military personnel deployed in at least 178 countries, with significant troop concentrations in Japan (52,603), Germany (34,949), South Korea (23,291), Italy (12,456), and the United Kingdom (10,063), at the time of this writing. This presence includes over 750 bases across at least 80 countries, with major installations in Germany, Japan, South Korea, and the Middle East, such as Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar, the largest U.S. military base in the region.

Compared to other nations, the U.S. military spending dwarfs that of its peers: in 2023, the U.S. spent approximately \$877 billion, accounting for nearly 39% of global military expenditures, which is more than the next ten largest military budgets combined. This financial dominance enables a vast global infrastructure, including 28.5 million acres of land and nearly 300,000 facilities worldwide, far exceeding the footprint of countries like France (10 bases) and the UK (7 bases).

While other nations have military presence in a few key regions, the U.S. operates on a truly global scale, with deployments ranging from security personnel at embassies to combat forces in conflict zones and drone operations in countries like Syria and Yemen. This extensive reach reflects a strategy of power projection, deterrence, and global influence, often justified as maintaining stability and supporting international trade, though it is also described by critics as a form of modern imperialism.

(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.”

As commented above, from chapter 13 thru 16, John witnessed the rise and fall of a last great empire with worldwide influence; including the judgement ordained in the heavenly temple and poured out for the most part to be upon the empire of the beast being shown in chapters 15 thru 16.

This is all because spiritual Babylon, "*that great city*," is to be destroyed "*because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*" See comments on 14:8.

(17:3) So, he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

Yet Another, a third Seven-headed Beast

John is now carried away in the spirit into the wilderness, which obviously the angel needed to do in order for him to understand the mystery of the judgment of the great whore that sits upon many waters. The move is not simply geographical, but spiritual and revelatory, as it enables John to witness and record these details to aid the generation unto whom it would be finally revealed. For this seems to echo the message God gave to Daniel, about how certain revelations were to be "*closed up and sealed till the time of the end*," highlighting the importance of God's timing and divine purpose in the unveiling of these mysteries.

But for now, John observes what seems to be a third distinct creature, yet it too is characterized by seven heads and ten horns. The first creature he saw was the red dragon, while the second was the beast emerging from the sea, which had features resembling a leopard, the feet of a bear, and the mouth of a lion. Now, the vision reveals another entity: a scarlet-colored beast filled with names of blasphemy. The progression and distinction among these creatures are meaningful within the prophetic context.

There is undoubtedly a prophetic relationship among the three creatures described in John's vision. It is crucial to

discern both the similarities and differences between them to better discern the identities of both this woman and this scarlet-colored beast she rides. Consequently, we will continue a more in-depth review after reaching verse 17:7, when the angel then begins to separate things for John.

(17:4) And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:

For centuries, it has been common among Protestant commentators to interpret the woman described in this passage as a symbol of Catholicism. This perspective is often justified given to the extravagant and ornate décor found within Catholic churches, especially at the Vatican in Rome. The interiors of these churches are renowned for their opulent use of gilded altars, intricate mosaics, marble columns, and detailed frescoes covering walls and ceilings. Lavish displays of gold, silver, and precious stones are frequently incorporated into sacred vessels, reliquaries, and even the architectural details of the sanctuary itself.

In addition to the décor, the apparel and regalia worn by popes and high-ranking officials are noted for their expense and splendor. Papal vestments are crafted from fine fabrics such as silk and embroidered with gold thread, often adorned with gems and elaborate patterns. Headdresses, such as the papal tiara and mitre are embellished with precious jewels and metals. Add to the list the ceremonial rings, crosses, and other ceremonial items, are all crafted with an abundance of costly materials, all contributing to a visual richness that has come to define Roman Catholic Church.

It is no wonder that Protestant commentators frequently reference these visual features as supporting evidence for their interpretation that Catholicism fulfills the description of the woman in Revelation, who is "*arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls.*"

However, I feel there is more to the picture, though Catholicism is definitely a major part of the MYSTERY.

(17:5) And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

The Daughters of the Harlot

One point which I feel is often overlooked by Protestant commentators, (though certainly not by all), is the Mother's daughters, who just like their mother are themselves described as harlots. This detail certainly broadens the scope of this prophetic symbol beyond just a single entity. The phrase the "*Mother of Harlots,*" makes clear that the woman is not alone and indicates that there are other groups, many groups and movements that have sprung from her, all sharing in her character and actions.

In truth, I consider Catholicism itself to be but one of these daughters, perhaps one of the oldest, and very possible that Protestant movements are in fact granddaughters, or even great-great-granddaughters. For the roots of this "*Mystery*" I am persuaded stretches much further back, even predating the exodus of Israel as a nation from Egypt. This is part of the reason why the woman in Revelation is referred to as "*MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.*"

It is conceivable that during the Babylonian captivity, this mystery religion took its opportunity to further hone and sharpen its esoteric practices and deepen their dark mystical traditions. Thus, the origin and propagation of the Babylonian mystery religion can be traced through successive spiritual lineages, culminating all here in this woman and the entities ascribed to her in this prophetic vision. This integration notably affected certain religious groups within the Jewish community, who adopted aspects of their captors' engagement with mysticism and incorporated several Babylonian customs into their own religious practices. As a result, this fountainhead of all

mystery religions continued its flood of occult rituals and dark mystical imagery and writings, and was given further aid in its dispersion among the nations by the scattering of the Jews after Israel's annihilation in 70 A.D.

The Babylonian mystery religions, by their very nature, are characterized by an ongoing pursuit of secrecy. These traditions deliberately remain concealed from mainstream society, ensuring that their doctrines, rituals, and practices are accessible only to those initiated into their ranks. This commitment to secrecy is not merely a defensive measure, but a defining feature that helps preserve the integrity and exclusivity of their mystical teachings.

At the same time, these religions are ever evolving, growing in complexity as they refine their rituals and symbols. Their appeal is carefully crafted and continually perfected, drawing in those who seek deeper spiritual knowledge and experiences. The balance between remaining hidden and enhancing their allure allows the Babylonian mystery religions to thrive, maintaining their influence and mystique throughout history.

The influence of Babylonian mystery religions is particularly apparent in groups such as the Freemasons. Within these organizations, members must take solemn oaths of secrecy before they are permitted to advance through a series of ceremonial rituals. These rites are characterized by the prominent use of Babylonian symbols and imagery, echoing the traditions and hidden knowledge passed down through generations of secret societies.

Therefore the origin and propagation of the Babylonian mystery religion can be traced through a series of successive spiritual lineages and cultures. Each having their dark spiritual contributions, serving as conduits for the transmission of secret knowledge and rituals, ultimately leading to the formation of hordes of secret societies, cults, sorceries, witchcraft, religions, and new age speculations, all fittingly compatible with what is described in this prophetic vision of mystery and whoredoms. In this context,

the woman depicted serves as the culmination and embodiment of all these traditions, and symbolizes the enduring legacy and pervasive influence of the Babylonian mystery religion which is present, alive, and thriving today.

Yet the truth as told by the Apostle Paul remains true, “*We are not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*”

(17:6) 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.

This passage speaks of the utter inability of light to coexist with darkness, and of Christ to be joined with Belial. The contrast is stark and unbridgeable: for the forces of evil are void of the light and grace of God and therefore deeply opposed to the divine light and truth embodied in Christ and His saints. Basically, this prophetic image of this woman embodies a spiritual legacy that is the complete opposite of purity and faithfulness, and stands in direct contrast to the Bride of Christ, who symbolizes all those called out and sanctified unto God.

As believers, we are tasked with calling those trapped in spiritual darkness to repentance. However, it is evident that opposing forces continue persistently to resist and eliminate any trace of God's light within humanity. However, the determination and opposition of the forces leading these people are unwavering, for they know their time is short. This is exactly why Peter and Paul urged Christians to strive to perfect both their offensive and defensive stances.

Ephesians 6:13-18 - Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace. But above all, take the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the

fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.

1 Peter 5:8,9 - Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Wherefore resist him, and be steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

Still, this verse serves as a sobering reminder of the ongoing spiritual conflict Christians will face, and why in our high calling we need to remain steadfast in the face of such adversity. Christians are not simply bystanders but active participants in a conflict that is both intense and unrelenting. The need for perseverance is evident, as the forces opposed to God's truth and light are both persistent and determined in their opposition.

Our steadfastness is not in a passive endurance, but an answering the call to actively stand fast in faith, equipped with spiritual strength and conviction, and ever looking to the Author and Finisher of our faith. Only in doing so, are believers able to maintain their witness and integrity, resisting the darkness and continuing to reflect the light and truth of Christ in the midst of this wicked and corrupt generation.

Rise up you men of God, be Great Hearts, Valiant for the Truth, Master Swordsmen of Christ: for this is your calling in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(17:7) And the angel said unto me, "Wherefore didst you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and ten horns."

(17:8) The beast that you saw 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.

While the woman and the beast are depicted as distinct figures within the vision, it is significant to note that prophecy addresses them together, as though they form a single unified entity. Although the woman and the beast maintain their own identities, their fates and actions are so closely intertwined that they are considered, for prophetic purposes, to be acting in unison, for the woman is shown to be sitting on the beast. This approach emphasizes that, despite their separateness, their prophetic joint role and eventual judgment are treated equally.

The combined consideration of these two entities demonstrates their unified objectives and outcomes as outlined in the vision, emphasizing how their collaboration shapes their collective destiny. I will address this more at the conclusion of the chapter, and in chapter 18, where the focus appears to shift solely on the woman.

This verse emphasizes two notable elements that warrant detailed examination. Firstly, the beast, which previously “*was*” prior to the period specified in the prophecy, is now stated as “*is not*,” indicating its temporary absence from the narrative. The reference to its past presence and current absence implies a rationale behind the suspension of its influence and activity. Additionally, the text indicates that the beast will reappear, as it states it “*shall ascend*” once more “*out of the bottomless pit*.” This suggests the existence of a controlling force that has purposefully restricted the beast until a designated time for its return.

Comparable with this symbolic beast is in this vision, a similar approach is observed in the biblical account concerning God's interaction with Satan. Accordingly, an angel descends from heaven with the key and a chain to the abyss. This angel, apprehending the dragon, identified as the ancient serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, and binds him for a thousand years. During this interval, Satan is imprisoned in the abyss, secured, and sealed to prevent any

further deception of the nations until the conclusion of the thousand-year period. Subsequently, upon the completion of this term, he is to be released for a brief duration (Revelation 20:1-3).

God's reasoning for the temporary removal and subsequent release of the beast will be examined through a proposed hypothesis in chapter 20:1-3 and verses 7 and 8. These passages provide an opportunity to consider potential reasons behind the devil's confinement and later release, facilitating an in-depth analysis of this interruption within the larger context of scripture and prophecy.

The phrase "*was, and is not, and yet is*" appears in various prophetic contexts and carries importance in both scriptural prophecy and historical analysis, particularly relating to the nation of Israel. While the passage as a whole is not explicitly attributed to Israel, its relevance remains evident, as it illustrates distinct instances involving the beast and the devil within the prophetic narrative. These events are fundamentally associated with Israel and its history. Consequently, the interpretation of their actions and the outcomes described in prophecy requires an understanding of their connection to Israel.

For when the angel spoke to Daniel concerning the seventy weeks prophecy, it was made clear that all these events relate directly to his people, the Jews, the holy city of Jerusalem, and the coming of Messiah the Prince. Therefore, even though the phrase here refers to different prophetic fulfillments coming, Israel's history itself "*was, and is not, and yet is*" today.

Therefore this phrase "*the east that was, and is not, and shall ascend*" describes a prophetic empire again closely linked to Israel and being used within God's redemptive plan. Daniel and John's visions both show that the beast's presence, absence, and return mirror Israel's own historical journey, underscoring its role as central in biblical prophecy.

The second point is how the verse tells us that "*all 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.” This ought to clearly and loudly speak to all of God’s people that they are expected to know and recognize these things as they unfold in these last days.

No Excuse for Being Caught Off Guard

As believers, we have no excuse for being caught off guard by these events. For there is to be a clear difference between those living in spiritual darkness and we who are children of the light. Because we belong to the light, we are given this light so that we should not be surprised when these things begin to unfold. Wherefore Revelation has been given to the Church so that those who love the truth might receive spiritual discernment, guided by prayer and the sure word of prophecy.

Yet despite the clear warnings repeatedly given to us in scripture, coupled with these repeated prophetic messages, an unacceptable number of professors of faith in Jesus Christ remain woefully deficient in spiritual discernment. This absence of awareness is not accidental but results from worldly distractions that amount to a willful ignorance, leaving them unprepared for the trials and upheavals to come. The message is unmistakable: only those who earnestly value truth and purposely pursue an understanding through faithful study of God’s Word will be equipped to recognize and endure the unfolding of these events.

Throughout the book of Revelation, the importance of spiritual vigilance has been repeatedly underscored by several compelling examples. In the message to the church of Smyrna, believers are warned of impending imprisonment, a trial intended to test their faith.

Similarly, the church of Pergamos is reminded of Antipas, whom the Lord Himself identifies as His faithful martyr. Antipas was killed in the very place described as the dwelling of Satan, serving as a profound testament to unwavering

faithfulness even when surrounded by opposition and spiritual darkness.

Furthermore, the 144,000 individuals mentioned in chapter 7 were set apart and preserved through their faith. Their unique status as those who are marked and protected demonstrates the divine safeguarding of those who remain true in their allegiance to God.

Additionally, chapter 15 presents those who have gained victory over the beast and his mark. All this steadfastness, spiritual vigilance, perseverance, and refusal to yield to compromise are celebrated, showcasing the ultimate reward for those who maintain trust in God throughout their persecution and afflictions.

Accordingly, just as all these faithful witnesses endured, not to mention the “*great cloud of witness*” in Hebrews 12, so too are all believers today being called of the Spirit to awake unto righteousness, fight the fight of faith, and to persevere through their own tribulations. It is only through prayer and watchfulness, a steadfast faith, perseverance under trial, and an unwavering commitment to truth, that we might be found like Joshua and Caleb, confident and able to take the Kingdom of God by force.

The call is clear: be watchful, seek understanding, and hold fast to the truth, and look to the Lord Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour, so that you may be counted among all these who have overcome.

Revelation 2:7 - He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Matthew 11:12 - And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.

Luke 13:23,24 - Then one said to Him, "Lord, are there few who are saved?" And He said to them, "Strive [as if in agony] to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

Luke 16:16 - The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presses into it.

(17:9) And here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sits.

The Seven Mountains, on Which the Woman Sits

To understand the symbolism of the beast and the woman described in Revelation 17, it is essential to distinguish between two significant phrases: the angel's statement, "*Here is the mind that has wisdom,*" and the earlier phrase from Revelation 13:18, "*Here is wisdom.*" The latter, as previously noted, serves as a key or guide for discernment, particularly significant when the mark comes into play.

In contrast, the phrase here in Revelation 17 suggests that the matters at hand can now be understood if viewed from a particular, informed perspective. This is because the things and events being now described are not merely future occurrences; rather, they are realities that have taken place in the past and others similar will arise again. This understanding sets the stage for the angel's explanation to John that "*the seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sits.*"

This beginning of the angel's interpretation immediately provides evidence that each characteristic of the beast can be expected to symbolize specific elements relevant to the whole vision from chapter 13 through 18. As the angel continues, each attribute not only helps clarify the identity and nature of what is described, but also offers insight into the timing, location, and manner in which these events are to unfold. Thus, with the angel's assistance, the vision provides God's saints with the wisdom and insight necessary to understand and interpret these matters, as well as to see how they will unfold in the final days.

Concerning the woman sitting on the seven mountains, this will be addressed a little more in the following verse, and then even further at conclusion of this chapter. The angel still

has additional information to present necessary to clarify what appears to be a contradiction concerning whether the woman is sitting upon “*many waters,*” or on the “*scarlet-colored beast*” or on the “*seven mountains,*” as each has its spiritual implications.

(17:10) And there are seven kings: five are fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must continue a short space.

With the last verse I stated the discussion regarding the woman would continue here after the angel provided some additional information. The info was needed to help clarify whether the woman was sitting upon the scarlet-colored beast or upon the seven mountains. What was missing for this explanation were the seven kings, which with their introduction, it is now possible to address all these components in detail.

To start, I believe it is beneficial to pair elements of equal value to assess their combined significance, if any. This approach enables a wider assessment of how each component may relate to the others, and by evaluating these correlations see if they are indeed appropriate. From there we can determine further whether this process offers a clearer understanding of their importance.

- First, the text describes a woman seated on a scarlet-colored beast. The woman is described as bearing blasphemous names, notably THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. Similarly, the beast is noted for possessing names of blasphemy and is characterized by having seven heads and ten horns.
- Next, it is revealed that the seven heads represent seven mountains. Additionally, there are seven kings associated with these heads.
- Numerically, the scarlet-colored beast and the woman are matched one to one, while the seven mountains correspond to the seven kings, seven to seven.

- The connection drawn seems to be that the woman riding the scarlet-colored beast is somehow equivalent to her sitting on the seven mountains.

By matching equal parts, the woman with the beast, and the seven mountains with the seven kings, it becomes possible to explore how these elements are related. This process sets the stage for further analysis.

Throughout history, countless scholars and devoted individuals have explored the symbolism of the seven mountains, offering a very broad range of interpretations. Many have associated the imagery with Jerusalem, referencing its location atop seven hills. Others have linked it to Rome because of its well-known seven mountains, while some have drawn connections to the Roman Catholic Church due to its historical influence within Rome.

These numerous commentaries are each a testament to the dedication of those who sought to interpret scripture for the church's benefit in their era, each representing an earnest attempt to understand and apply biblical truths within the context of their time.

Yet here I am also adding to the mixture of thought yet one more perspective, knowing all too well that I am nowhere near the scholar of the ranks of those esteemed and learned individuals. Even so, I am yet compelled to contribute to this ongoing discussion my own perspective. Thus, with humility and a clear recognition of my lack of formal scholarly training, I openly share the conclusions I have reached with my fellow believers. My intention is not to present them as definitive answers, but rather a perspective for thoughtful consideration. Therefore I invite others to examine and assess my understanding, viewing it as a sincere offering to our collective pursuit of truth.

In light of my previous acknowledgement of the various interpretations, I leave the investigation of these alternative views to each individual reader. I do not intend to devote more time to an exhaustive review of these perspectives

here. Nevertheless, I am compelled to state that if such matters as these were indeed meant to be revealed only at the appointed time, it is prudent for everyone to approach prior speculations with a degree of caution, recognizing that their accuracy cannot be presumed without a measure of skepticism regarding their accuracy.

To begin, since the seven heads are clearly stated to represent seven mountains, I am therefore inclined to immediately dismiss any suggestion that they serve as the base or foundation of anything. This is because, much like the way feet support the body, the body supports the head, and the head would then support a hat, it would not be logical for the mountains to be considered a simple foundation in this imagery. Rather, this structure implies that the mountains hold a more significant and dynamic role.

Therefore, it becomes quite evident that these mountains should be understood as symbolic rather than literal, where in this context, the mountains would represent elements that embody life, functionality, and complexity. Such a perspective removes the focus away from a geographical interpretation and encourages a search for a deeper, yet figurative meaning within the scriptural narrative.

Therefore, it makes sense to ask: if these mountains are not meant to be taken literally, what could they represent in scripture? With this perspective, we can now take a quick look at the meaning and possible identities of these seven mountains as seen through the lens of biblical texts.

Perhaps the most significant example of a mountain as a symbol in biblical prophecy is in the book of Daniel 2:35-45. There we see the image of Nebuchadnezzar's statue, which symbolizes a succession of empires: first Babylon, then the Medo-Persian Empire, followed by Greece, and finally Rome. Ten smaller nations that come following the fall of Rome are also represented by the toes of the statue.

This statute is destroyed when "*a stone was cut out without hands*" smites "*the image upon his feet that were of iron and*

clay, and brake them to pieces,” whereby they “*became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them.*” Whereby “*the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.*” This mountain is interpreted as God’s kingdom, which ultimately triumphs over all nations and stands alone in the last days.

Similarly, Isaiah prophesies about the “*mountain of the Lord’s house*” being established above all other mountains. In this context, the mountains are representative of nations, and the prophecy highlights the supremacy and prominence of God’s kingdom over all earthly powers (Isaiah 2:2-4)

Then Jeremiah provides perhaps the most pertinent example for us by referring to Babylon as a “*destroying mountain.*” For Babylon brought devastation to its surrounding nations. However, as in Nebuchadnezzar’s vision, Babylon is cast down from its lofty position and is referred to as a “*burnt mountain*” (Jeremiah 51:24-25).

Having observed that “*mountains*” have been used in scripture to symbolize kingdoms and empires, whereby each are governed by their own kings and leaders, it is therefore logical for us to associate the “*seven kings*” with the “*seven mountains*” represented by the beast’s “*seven heads.*” This provides us with a foundation upon which we can now approach the phrase that “*five are fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must continue a short space.*” The strict controlling guideline being that these kingdoms or empires must have a verifiable connection, either scripturally or historically, with the nation of Israel.

Since the seven heads represent the seven mountains, which are seven kingdoms and their respective kings, we can now determine what the angel meant by “*five are fallen.*” This would imply that at the time of John’s vision, five kingdoms with their corresponding kings had already passed into Israel’s history, and except for giving us a starting point, are no longer significant to the continuation and conclusion of

the vision.

I will begin Israel's recorded history with the story of Jacob's son Joseph, who was sold into slavery by his brothers and taken to Egypt. Through God's sovereignty, Joseph was raised from a life of slavery and imprisonment to a position of authority, becoming second only to Pharaoh. This remarkable change in status occurred after Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dream, which foretold seven years of abundance followed by seven years of famine that would affect all regional nations. Note, the significance of the number seven is also evident here.

As the famine intensified, Jacob instructed his sons to travel to Egypt to procure grain. This series of events included several tests for Joseph's brothers, ultimately resulting in a reconciliation among Jacob, Joseph, and his brothers, which led Jacob and his family to relocate to Egypt. Over subsequent generations, their descendants experienced significant population growth, as described in Exodus 1:7: *“increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them,”* (Exodus 1:7).

In response to the Israelites' oppression in Egypt God raised up Moses to deliver His people, resulting in their exodus from bondage and subsequent journey through the wilderness toward the promised land. Following their conquests in Canaan, Israel was established as a nation among neighboring peoples, many of whom God intended to have been destroyed. However, ongoing challenges due to their persistent sin, idolatry, and internal discord impeded the complete acquisition of the land and ultimately led to a national division of the Hebrews. This resulted in the ten northern tribes forming a separate kingdom, distinct from Judah in the south.

Remaining unrepentant of their idolatry, the northern kingdom of Israel was eventually conquered by Assyria. Through intermarriage between the Hebrews and the Assyrians, the distinct Hebraic identities were gradually assimilated, leading to the emergence of the Samaritans,

named after Samaria, the former capital of Assyria.

Meanwhile, the people of Judah, later called Jews, also fell into idolatry and being punished by God were taken captive by Babylon. At this juncture, the descendants of Abraham lost their national sovereignty and, from that point onward, remained under the domination of foreign empires.

Following Babylon's rule, the Median-Persian Empire then rose to power and influence over Israel. Followed by the Persian dominion being ended when Greece, under Alexander the Great, triumphed over them. However, after Alexander's death, the Grecian empire was divided among his four generals, eventually giving way to the emergence of Rome as the preeminent world power.

Rome becomes clearly identified as the angel continued his prophetic explanation to the Apostle John with the phrase "*one is,*" which directly related the prophecy to the era of his exile on Patmos. For if John had been asked which empire currently oppressed Israel, he would have unhesitatingly replied: "Caesar of Rome." Therefore, the sixth head of the beast represents the Roman Empire, the prevailing force during the time of John's vision.

So, having established the symbolic connection between mountains, kingdoms, and the heads of the beast, we can now identify the five kingdoms that had already fallen by the time of John's vision, as well as the one that existed during John's exile. The five fallen kingdoms are Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Mede-Persia, and Greece. Each of these empires played a significant role in the history of Israel, contributing to the shaping of its national destiny and the recurring loss of sovereignty.

The sixth kingdom, which "*was*" at the time John received his vision, is Rome. Which as Gabriel had previously explained to Daniel, the Roman Empire was like a dreadful and terrifying beast: "*dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was*

diverse from all the beasts that were before it.” This description highlights Rome’s distinctive nature of its rule compared to the empires that preceded it.

Among the four nations that contributed to the loss of Hebrew sovereignty and the subjugation of Israel, it was Rome that brought about Israel’s destruction. As was demonstrated throughout Revelation chapters 5 through 10, Rome’s dominion marked the transition for Israel from a nation that “*was*” to a nation that “*is not*.” And Israel is “*yet is*” again as a nation reborn in a day, whose identity exists again this present day.

Among the four nations that contributed to the loss of Hebrew sovereignty and the subjugation of Israel, it was Rome that brought about Israel’s final destruction. As demonstrated throughout chapters 5 through 10, Rome’s dominion marked a pivotal transition for Israel: from a nation that “*was*” to one that “*is not*.” This period signified the end of Israel’s national existence and independence, as the Roman Empire asserted control and dissolved the Jewish state according to Jesus’ prophecies against it.

However, despite their loss, God’s promise was true and Israel indeed experienced a remarkable rebirth. In fulfillment of prophetic expectation, Israel became a nation once more, reborn in a single day, and with its identity intact this present time. And all this has to do with where we are in revelation regarding this beast.

(17:11) And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goes into perdition.

The vision of the seven-headed beast reveals a sequence of rulers and their kingdoms, each destined to eventually fall. Just as the first five kings and their realms met their end, the sixth king and his kingdom will likewise be subject to decline. This recurring pattern underscores the temporary nature of every kingdom connected to the beast, emphasizing that none possesses lasting power or authority.

Following the fall of the sixth king, a distinct interval occurs

during which the seven-headed beast is described as “*is not,*” indicating an absence of prophetic relevance at that time. This gap raises questions concerning the beast’s lack of manifestation during this period, implying a phase of uncertainty or transition.

Eventually, the beast returns, marking the emergence of the seventh head. This seventh head signifies the rise of the seventh kingdom and its king, continuing the prophetic succession. However, the appearance of the seventh head once again raises questions about the underlying reasons for the beast’s absence, its re-emergence, and the significance of this seventh king’s new reign. This again raises the question of why this is occurring and what the underlying causes are, both of which are addressed below.

In the preceding verse, the angel explained to John that “*when he comes*” the seventh king will be distinct from his predecessors in that he will only be permitted to “*continue a short space.*” Thus highlighting that this seventh kingdom’s significance will be noticeably brief compared to those that came before it. This detail further distinguishes the seventh king by setting apart both his coming and reign: both in duration and significance.

But now at this verse we are presented with a riddle that requires careful scrutiny: “*the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goes into perdition.*”

To begin, it is essential to identify which beast is being referenced in this passage -

Is it the first beast that rises from the sea, described as having seven heads and ten horns, with ten crowns and the name of blasphemy upon its heads?

Or is it the second beast who comes from the earth, bearing two horns like a lamb but speaking as a dragon?

Or possibly the third, the scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, with seven heads and ten horns, which ascends out of the bottomless pit and goes into perdition?

Right off the second beast with two horns like a lamb (13:11) can be set aside simply because he would be like a king or leader of the first beast (13:1), for they were so paired in chapter 13.

This leaves two options: the first beast from the sea, characterized by features resembling a leopard, feet like a bear, and the mouth of a lion, or the third, the scarlet-colored beast.

Both the first and the scarlet-colored beast have notable similarities, despite some differences in their physical descriptions. Each is marked by names of blasphemy and possesses seven heads and ten horns. The first beast is said to have a single name of blasphemy, while the scarlet-colored beast bears multiple names of blasphemy, likely indicating that the scarlet-colored beast surpasses the first in its blasphemies. This just summarizes what is known and highlights the aspects that remain to be clarified.

So, let's quickly revisit the last three verses:

Revelation 17:9-11 - "And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sits. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he comes, 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 goes into perdition."

Now let's look at our two earlier questions: First, what event causes a break after the sixth head, which is identified as Rome, so that it enters a state where it "*is not*"? Second, why, when the beast reappears again, being "*yet is*" again with its seventh head, signifying that the seventh empire has "*come*," and its king is permitted to only "*continue a short space*"?

The answers to these questions are tied directly to two major historical events: the destruction of Israel in 70 A.D., and its remarkable rebirth nearly two thousand years later, on May 14, 1948, following the end of the British Mandate in Palestine. The later connection also provides the answer to

the identity of the seventh head-empire and king.

At the time of Israel's rebirth, the British Empire had possession and control over Palestine. As the largest empire in history, the British Empire stood as the leading world power for more than a century, its control was once so vast that it was famously said, "The sun never sets on the British Empire." Its conquests spanned the world-wide, and in 1948, Israel was once again reestablished as a geographically defined nation on land that had been under British dominance. Thus, England emerges as the seventh head of the beast.

To correctly interpret the prophecy, it is important to consider its full context. The fulfillment is not found simply in the mountain or empire, but specifically in its king. George VI, King of the United Kingdom and the Dominions of the British Commonwealth, lived for only four years after the rebirth of Israel, aligning with the prophecy that the seventh king would continue for a short time.

With the British Empire completing the sequence of seven heads, or mountains, each with their respective kings, the depiction of the Beast stands finished. This completion bridges the scripturally defined period known as "*the times of the Gentiles*," as referenced in Luke 21:24. Proper recognition of these empires and their kings is essential, for without identifying each as one of the seven, it would not be possible to recognize the "*eighth*" when it emerges as the one described as "*of the seven, and goes into perdition.*"

For this reason, the angel carried John "*away in the Spirit into the wilderness*" to help him know the mystery. For there he was shown "*a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.*" It is this third beast which is "*the beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven,*" which "*is going into perdition.*"

Perhaps, it may be constructive to consider this as a seven-step prophetic framework, with the eighth element

representing their culmination. In Revelation 17:11, the seven-headed beast that "*was, and is not*" now emerges "*out of the bottomless pit,*" transformed into the scarlet-colored beast that "*goes into perdition.*" Thus symbolism provided in 13:1 supplies God's people with the wisdom necessary to guide them to rightly identify the eighth and final empire when it arise in the final days preceding the Lord's return.

(17:12) And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

(17:13) These have one mind and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

The Deceitful Ten Kings

It is clear that the ten horns which are ten kings, at the time of John's vision "*have received no kingdom as yet,*" yet in the last days they rise up and very briefly merge their "*power and strength*" with the beast. This part of the angel's explanation to John should never be far from everyone's mind whenever the world leaders, whether at the United Nations or the World Economic Forum, express their agenda seeking the support of other nations to combat what they present as a global threat and a solution for international stability.

While these two verses indicate that the ten kings unite their power with the beast, it is only for a short period, described as "*one hour.*" This merger is extremely brief, as soon total chaos and devastation breaks out. This fleeting alliance is significant, in that it challenges the popular notion of a lasting "One World Government under an Antichrist."

For rather than surrendering their sovereignty, the ten horns retain their independence throughout this episode. All this seems to indicate that their collaboration is not a genuine transfer of power, but rather a deceitful presentation of a unified consent. This political agreement is shallow and temporary, lacking true substance or permanence.

However, the leader of the Eighth Beast likely publicly

celebrates and claims credit for orchestrating this apparent consolidation of power. However, the alliance being short-lived, the ten kings soon turn violently against the woman who sits upon the beast, demonstrating their true intent and the fragility and superficiality of their alignment with the beast. The prophecy thus suggests their one hour of unity was merely a facade, serving as a brief prelude to a dramatic conflict rather than the boasted establishment of a global, enduring government.

Perhaps, this agreement may be as simple as a move to initiate a common crypto currency, with a new economic system requiring “*the mark*” among the consenting nations, in an attempt to combat other non-compliant nations which may be pushing for a mandatory international gold standard for global economic stabilization. An argument can easily be made here that wealth can be also considered power and strength just as well as military might.

I have long held the view that this alliance formed between the Eighth Beast and the ten kings is not based on genuine unity nor their intended cooperation, hence the duration of one hour. Although initiated by the beast, the agreement among the kings represents a strategic and intentional tactic on their part; designed to project an appearance of alignment with the beast while concealing their actual motives. Through participation in this alliance, the ten kings secure the opportunity to discreetly organize and position themselves for an unexpected and sudden decisive move against the beast.

The alliance between the ten kings and the Eighth Beast is built upon the outward appearance of shared purpose and unity. In reality, this facade is carefully crafted to mask the true intentions of the ten kings. By projecting an image of solidarity, the ten kings are able to coordinate their plans without arousing suspicion, working together under the pretense of supporting the beast.

The ultimate aim of the ten kings is clear: to bring about the sudden and complete destruction of both the Jezebelian

whore and the Eighth Beast. This calculated attack becomes possible because the beast, captivated and deceived by the seductive influence of the whore, unwittingly allows her authority to overshadow and ultimately undermine its own.

For the beast, being manipulated by the Jezebelian spirit, becomes much like Samson who was deceived by Delilah. And just as Samson lost his sight and strength due to Delilah's cunning, so too does the beast become blinded to the true motives of the ten kings who only appear to be its allies. Though outwardly these kings present themselves as supporters, their intentions are concealed beneath a façade of loyalty. The beast, ensnared and weakened by the seductive influence of the Jezebelian spirit, fails to perceive the cunning plans of those around it. This spiritual blindness leads the beast into a false sense of security, ultimately setting the stage for betrayal and sudden destruction. In the end the beast arrogance and haughty spirit cause its fall and destruction.

Thus, the alliance between the beast and the ten kings is only a temporary arrangement, serving as a convenient cover for the kings' actual agenda. Beneath the surface of their proclaimed unity lies a deliberate scheme, as the ten kings patiently wait for the opportune moment to orchestrate the downfall of the woman as she sits upon a scarlet-colored beast.

(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 verse serves as a purposeful interjection within the narrative, though highlighting the ten kings next actions as they gathered together for the battle of Armageddon. Amidst the gravity and intensity described in these passages, this scripture affirms that the ultimate triumph will be accomplished by the Lamb of God and those who accompany Him. This statement is not merely a detail of

future events; it is inserted here to flood the spirit of the believer with joy and unwavering confidence in their God, even as they witness times of great upheaval and distress.

But with the reality that “*many are called*” to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, it is crucial to remember that only a “*few are chosen.*” In these perilous times, believers are hereby encouraged to keep their spiritual garments undefiled and pure white. Those who accompany the Lamb in His victory are identified as “the chosen,” individuals who have not only received the call but have also demonstrated perseverance and unwavering faithfulness.

Let these words serve as a solemn reminder, and may you never hear the Lord say, “*Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?*” as referenced in Matthew 22:14. Rather, strive to be among those who “*are called, and chosen, and faithful,*” and thereby prepared to share in the triumph of the Lamb. (See also Luke 21:36; Ephesians 6:13)

(17:15) And he saith unto me, “The waters which you saw where the whore sits are peoples and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

Focus now turns to the Woman, for just as Jezebel exerted her influence over King Ahab, ultimately leading him to ruin, so has the Woman having manipulated the beast, sitting upon him and driving both him and his people to their inevitable destruction. Through her actions, she has become the catalyst for the beast's downfall, and now both face divine judgment for their iniquities.

1 King 21:25 - But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.

This Jezebelian whore, referred to as “*Mystery, Babylon the Great,*” has sat in her position of religious influence upon each of the seven mountains associated with the seven kings; and she is now firmly seated atop the scarlet-colored beast. Her demonic influence has spread insidiously, like the

long-reaching, invasive roots of a thorny poisonous wild plant. Her influence penetrates deeply, and has stretched throughout all nations and languages, extending far and wide, inserting herself wherever possible within every society and culture.

In every corner of the world her presence is felt as she seduces and manipulates, leaving behind a legacy of spiritual decay, division, and death. Her reputation is of little concern to her; regardless of what name she is given, her pervasive and destructive influence continues to spread without restraint. Like a malignant force, her reaching is tireless, infiltrating every corner and drawing unsuspecting and uneducated individuals away from the path of truth and righteousness. Every tribe and nation across the world, one way or another, has been exposed to her seductive allure. Like a harlot, her many enticements attract the imprudent into her grasp, where all those who embrace, her are brought to spiritual ruin.

So yes, I have labored in writing this book because I am persuaded that the eighth scarlet-colored beast has long been sitting comfortably in the United States of America; and that the US has been fully seduced by these whoring Babylonian spirits. Just as in the covenant of marriage, where two individuals are united and become one flesh, the harlot and the beast have joined together in such a way that they are now inseparable. Their identities and purposes are so deeply intertwined that they can no longer be distinguished from one another. This union demonstrates the depth of their alliance and reveals how the harlot's influence has thoroughly merged with the beast's power, making them a single force which inevitably moves forward towards their mutual destruction.

This conviction has steadily grown stronger over decades of time, the evidence ever growing and pointing to the nation's decadency and spiritual decline. Once recognized for its foundational values, America now appears wholly overtaken by the whore's influences, and now serves as a "*habitation of*

devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird,” (Revelation 18:2.)

Over the past several decades, spirits of deception have swept across the nation like relentless waves, infiltrating every layer of society. What was once hidden in the cracks and crevices of communities has steadily emerged into the mainstream, gaining greater visibility and acceptance. This growing openness is most noticeably reflected in the widespread rise and normalization of various mystical and occult practices.

Practices such as witchcraft, sorcery, and paganism have moved from the fringes into open society, finding increasing acceptance and followers. Alongside these, movements like Wicca, Kabbalism, and even the establishment of Satanic churches and Luciferian groups have become more prominent, signifying a profound shift in spiritual attitudes and openness to alternative beliefs. The cumulative effect of these influences demonstrates the pervasive nature of spiritual deception and highlights the transformation of societal values away from traditional foundations toward practices once considered taboo.

The land has long been plagued by blatant political corruption, social injustice, sexual deviance, and an open disdain for fundamental values such as reverence, structured family units, and obedience to parents and respect for authority, partly because authority itself has become unrespectable. The elderly are ignored, treated disrespectfully, and the spread of hate has now been made virtuous, all further demonstrating the nation's spiritual deterioration. All these collectively support the identification of America as the prophetic eighth beast as having been brought to spiritual ruin. What had Sodom and Gomorrah that America does not?

There are specific details and historical events related to the nation's founding that have been deliberately forgotten, no longer taught, and therefore unknown to most. Yet the evidence remains available for all who look for them, or

perhaps at them, for many are proudly displayed in plain sight. For example, the Masonic symbols present on American currency and government buildings. Additionally, the layout and design of certain areas within the District of Columbia closely resemble aspects of Vatican architecture in Rome. All these are easily researched and can quickly be revealed for what foundation they truly rest upon.

Even the term “District of Columbia” can be interpreted as “Realm under the control of the Queen of Heaven,” referencing the goddess Columbia. Throughout history, Columbia has been worshipped in various cultures and regions under different names, including Isis, Semiramis, Ishtar, Diana, Artemis, Ashtoreth, Astarte, and Libertas. It is not a coincidence that the Statue of Liberty shares characteristics with many of these female pagan idols.

Yes, the woman now pompously sits upon the scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.

(17:16) And the ten horns which you saw upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.

(17:17) For God has 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.

The distinction between the crowns of the red dragon (12:3) and the beast (13:1) reveals a significant aspect of prophetic symbolism which I believe is made relevant here. The red dragon is depicted with seven crowns upon its seven heads, while the beast is shown with ten crowns, one upon each horn. This difference underscores a fundamental change in authority and power as endtime events unfold.

Ultimately, as seen here, God intervenes disrupting the adversary’s plans, by placing His will in the hearts of those involved. The ten horns, now crowned, become God’s

instruments of divine purpose rather than agents of the beast's agenda. The timing of this divine intervention may well occur very shortly after the horns unite their strength and power with the beast, demonstrating that God's sovereignty prevails in the changing men's hearts and wills, even when the adversary appears to be strongest.

(17:18) And the woman which you saw is that great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth.

Chapter 18

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

(18:2) 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.

(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.

(18:4) And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, “Come out of her, My people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues.”

As Christians, we are called to be a set apart people, unique in our Christian identity, whose purpose here is to glorify Him. Though we live in the world, we are not to conform to its worldly social customs, or be driven by material ambitions. Instead, we are to be spiritually alert and discerning, removed from its emptiness and lifeless religious formality.

Many believers acknowledge that the call to “*Come out from among her My people*” applies foremost to one’s spiritual life. So, let me preface here, God knows every man’s state, and obedience is only required of a man in that which he is able to do. But I am persuaded this verse is saying much more: that for all those with the means, it may soon become necessary to comply with this as a literal call of God, to physically separate themselves from this country. I would remind all here that all things are possible for them that believe.

For I believe this warning in Revelation 18 to “come out of her” is not merely a symbolic appeal; but stands as God’s

final summons for those wishing to escape the judgments destined to fall upon the beast-whore, as it plunges into destruction. This verse needs to be prayerfully considered as a call that demands literal obedience, just as literally as the early church took Jesus' instruction to "*flee to the mountains*" at face value and acted accordingly.

So, if you have been prayerfully reading the book of Revelation, I am persuaded you must know there comes a pivotal moment when true believers in America can no longer afford to treat biblical commands as optional, merely symbolic, or simply as spiritual ideals to be contemplated but not acted upon.

At this critical juncture, it is vital to reflect deeply upon the direct command in the verse, "*Come out of her, My people,*" and acknowledge that it cannot be dismissed as figurative language. Rather it must be taken at face value, just as it was originally addressed to God's people. In the same way that God instructed the Israelites to flee from Babylon in anticipation of imminent judgment and wrath, so too does this passage serve as an unmistakable call for action. The seriousness of this summons cannot be overstated: it is a divine directive that is meant to be obeyed, not merely pondered or spiritualized, especially in the light of prophetically describe consequences.

Jeremiah 51:6 - Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the LORD'S vengeance; for He will render unto her a recompense.

Jeremiah 51:45 - My people, go you out of the midst of her, and deliver you every man his soul from the fierce anger of the LORD.

Many believers in the United States are complacent, largely for two reasons. First, because most native Americans have never had to flee their homeland. Second, because most have been taught this command to "*come out from among her*" is a reference to the rapture, and therefore they do not

think they will be here for the outpouring of God's wrath. As a result, the urgency that might otherwise accompany a literal interpretation of this divine directive has been diminished, leaving many American Christians unmotivated even to consider whether they are personally called to act in response.

I maintain that this divine summons to "*Come out of her, My people*" carries the same authority and urgency today as it did in the days of Jeremiah and Noah. In those times, God's instructions were unmistakably clear, calling the righteous to respond with definite actions that demonstrated both their faith in His word and their reverence for His coming judgment. Their obedience was not a passive or abstract concept, but such as required tangible steps that set them apart as those who truly honored God's directives.

Obedience, in this context, is not simply one's verbal affirmation of devotion to God, it is the manifestation of true commitment through purposeful actions. As James teaches, faith is perfected and brought to completion by what one does; faith alone is insufficient unless it is demonstrated in real, tangible ways (James 2:22).

When believers respond to God's call by physically separating themselves as an act of obedience, their choices serve as a living testimony to their faith. Their actions go beyond declaring loyalty; they become a witness to the nations where they are sent, showing that their allegiance to the Lord is genuine and active. Moreover, this act of obedience stands in stark contrast to the disobedience of those who ignore God's warning, implicitly condemning their lack of response.

Hebrew 11:7 - By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear and prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

Therefore, just as the faithful obedience of past generations served as a powerful testimony, so will the willingness of the saints here who heed the call to “*come out from among them.*” Their faith, like the 144,000, will forever stand as a decisive and final witness of the Spirit against the ungodly in America. Obedience is better than sacrifice, wherefore the saints obedience will also be the sign that demonstrates the wicked are approaching a point of no return, crossing a line where mercy gives way to judgment.

Jeremiah 7:23 - But this thing I commanded them, saying, “Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people, and walk in all the ways that I have commanded you that it may be well unto you.”

Just as in biblical history, when the faithful proved their faithfulness to God through their actions; so too will this call. For this call for obedience underscores the urgency of the very hour. Its implication is sobering: the United States and its people have been weighed in the scales, and are found to be wanting. Judgment now hangs overhead, poised to fall like a sword upon those who refuse to heed the warning, just as John the Babtist warn the Jews of his day.

Matthew 3:10 - And even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

Revelation 13:10 - He that leads into captivity shall go into captivity: he that kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

Prayerfully reflect on Jesus’ words to the seventy disciples which He sent out, and take note that He gave them authority and power as they left. He enabled them to be His effective witnesses wherever they went, that the Kingdom of God has truly come among men. His charge was not symbolic or passive; but a practical commission to demonstrate through their actions and words that God’s presence and rule through Jesus Christ will be established in all the earth.

Luke 9:5 - And whoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet as a testimony against them."

Luke 10:10-13 - But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, "The very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you." But I say to you that it will be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city."

Also prayerfully consider the commandments in the verses above with Paul's actions towards the rebellious Jews in Macedonia.

Acts 18:5,6 - When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. But when they opposed him and blasphemed, he shook his garments and said to them, "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean.

By obeying this call, the children of faith, the true body of Christ will demonstrate the very saving faith exemplified by Abraham. For just as Abraham left his homeland, trusting in God's promises, do you not think God's true children would also leave their native country, placing their confidence in the God who has already prepared an eternal city for them, one which is now closer than when we first believe? The question is, do you trust God or not, that He will faithfully provide your needs wherever He leads?

Also, as a admonition, it is crucial to recognize that this call cannot be answered with a survivalist mentality, or out of a desire to preserve one's own life. There can be no reliance on human wisdom, personal strength, or material wealth such as silver and gold. Instead, the response demanded is one of simple obedience motivated solely by a desire to glorify God's Name. This is the essence of genuine faith.

Such obedience will stand alone as a testimony to God's righteousness and a witness against the wicked. For again,

willing to be redundant, recall once more the faith of Noah, who obediently built the ark and condemned the world through his actions, and also consider Lot, who left everything behind to flee the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. In both cases, their obedience was not just for their own deliverance but served as a sign and witness to the world around them. Likewise, the Church's response to this call, your response, must also reflect that same spirit of faithful obedience for the glory of God alone.

Lastly, many earnest believers in America are recognizing that difficult times may be coming. Despite this awareness, instead of stepping out in faith, they are focusing on preparations to weather the challenges. Their actions are motivated more by a distrust of their government than by a reverent fear and love for God. In seeking security, they rely on their own wisdom rather than trusting God.

These preparations often involve accumulating silver and gold, believing in the protection offered by material wealth; stockpiling food; purchasing firearms and ammunition; and extensive training to defend themselves and their possessions.

Perhaps some time should be taken to reflect on what anyone truly owns, who is the provider, and whether God has ever delivered His people by their reliance on worldly wealth or human strength.

Here is true faith -

Matthew 19:21 - Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

(18:5) For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.

(18:6) Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she has filled fill to her double.

(18:7) How much she has 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.

False Widowhood

In the context of this verse, her widowhood is denied because she glorifies herself and professes to be a queen, indicating she is neither poor nor destitute. However, having adequate resources never justifies a widow abandoning godly devotion to God, or becoming idle, gossiping with lies, or meddling in other's affairs. (1 Timothy 5:3-15).

However, the most important thing she has said here, apart from her arrogance, is that she is confident she will see no sorrow. This sounds like the same confidence of the rich man whose fields had "*brought forth plentifully.*" So he thought *surely with "much goods laid up for many years, I can take mine ease, and eat, drink, and be merry."* Little knowing that the Lord looked upon him saying, "*Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?*" (Luke 12:16-21).

However, I think this is more severe, for this boastful declaration, "*I shall see no sorrow,*" reveals not merely arrogance but a unwarranted sense of security, particularly the belief that no war will ever reach her own soil. Her confidence is misplaced, especially considering the long history of the United States interference in the affairs of other nations and the active promotion of conflict beyond her borders.

Such actions, done with the presumption of always having immunity from consequence, are now about to bring a sobering realization, that "*He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword,*" will soon be experienced firsthand.

(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 judges her."

Revelation 14:18 - And another angel came out from the

altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, “Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.”

(18:9) 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,

The verdict has been pronounced, “*she shall be utterly burned with fire.*” This declaration underscores the inevitability and severity of her judgment. The angel’s words echo a principle of divine justice, “*he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword.*” However, in this instance, the instrument of retribution is not the sword, but fire.

For recall how the beast performed his remarkable feats, including causing fire to descend from heaven in full view of humanity. Such displays of power left the world in awe, marveling at the beast, and prompting the question, “*who is like the beast, and who is able to make war with him?*” This demonstrated the unparalleled power the beast alone possessed, yet now, that same fire becomes the means of judgment and destruction.

So consider a couple of startling prophetic excerpts from “The Franck Report” that was signed by the top scientists who worked on the Manhattan Project.

“All of us, familiar with the present state of nucleonics, live with the vision before our eyes of sudden destruction visited on our own country, of a Pearl Harbor disaster repeated in thousand-fold magnification in every one of our major cities.”

“The development of atomic power will provide the nations with new means of destruction. The atomic bombs at our disposal represent only the first step in this direction, and there is almost no limit to the destructive power which will become available in the

course of their future development. Thus, a nation which sets the precedent of using these newly liberated forces of nature for purposes of destruction may have to bear the responsibility of opening the door to an era of devastation on an unimaginable scale.”

(18:10) Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, “Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is your judgment come.

The threat caused by even a huge land fire for those out at sea is relatively limited; its reach and devastation are constrained, and the torment it inflicts is withheld by the water. However, when considering the aftermath of multiple nuclear explosions, the torment becomes far more severe.

Here, the agony does not stem solely from smoke and flames, but from the pervasive and invisible threat of radioactive fallout. For the radiation lingers in the atmosphere long after the initial blast, which can spread its torment through contamination.

Thus, the torment here is likely associated with nuclear devastation, and not just from the immediate blast and destruction, but also from the persistent and inescapable clouds of radiation that follows.

(18:11) And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buys their merchandise anymore:

(18:12) The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and 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 brass, and iron, and marble,

(18:13) And cinnamon, and odors, 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.

(18:14) And the fruits that your soul lusted after are departed from you, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed

from you, and you shalt find them *no more at all*.

(18:15) The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,

Unlike the arrogant leaders who initiate wars, these merchants are ordinary men whose primary aim was simply to earn a living. Yet, watching all this unfold, suddenly they are frightfully aware of the drastic shift in their lives and the world. For the whole world knew the rumor of a looming apocalypse, filled with inevitable death and destruction. But now, they just witnessed the start of it with their own eyes, and like the growing radioactive cloud of death before them, they sense it quickly will spread worldwide.

For when these merchants departed from their home ports, they had a sense of peace and security. Prosperity seemed assured, especially as the nations consented to align themselves with the beast. There was widespread excitement and optimism, reminiscent of the days of Lot, when people ate, drank, bought, sold, planted, and built, without any concern for impending disaster.

However, circumstances have changed abruptly. Now, the merchants retreat, moving farther away from the devastation. Looking back in horror, they stand at a distance, gripped by fear, and are overcome by grief and anguish as they witness the torment and destruction that has befallen the great city.

(18:16) And saying, “Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!

(18:17) For in one hour so great riches have come to nought.” And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,

See comments on 8:21

(18:18) And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, “What city is like unto this great city!”

(18:19) And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, “Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.”

This verse is one of many reasons why I reject the theory that this Mother of Harlots solely represents the Roman Catholic Church. Those who support this viewpoint must confront several critical questions: Such as how have all the “*merchants of the earth waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies?*” That is, through The Vatican or Catholicism’s influence. When did all this occur? Who exactly are these merchants of the earth that were made rich?

For the reality is that the Catholic Church has never made anyone wealthy except for individuals who promote its agendas or profited from selling access to “indulgences,” driven by its own materialistic and gluttonous tendencies. In stark contrast, it is undeniable that many, many merchants from nations worldwide have achieved enormous wealth by catering to the insatiable appetite of the United States, the great consumer nation.

For the United States has long been defined by an insatiable craving for material possessions and luxuries. This relentless pursuit encompasses not only fashionable clothing and extravagant foods but also a wide array of worldly entertainment and an unbridled gluttony of fleshly indulgence of sex, drugs, and alcohol. These patterns of mass consumption and excess have become the legacy of American society, distinguishing it from other nations.

Although the Catholic Church has frequently faced accusations and criticism from Protestant groups over time, it is the materialism and consumer culture prevalent in America that distinctly characterizes its position on the global stage.

(18:20) Rejoice over her, you heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets; for God has avenged you on her.

(18:21) And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone,

and cast it into the sea, saying, “Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.”

The verse emphasizes the utter and forceful destruction that will befall Babylon. Not only marked by its sheer violence, but also by the certainty that Babylon will cease to exist entirely.

However, the symbolism used here conveys more than just the physical obliteration of Babylon. First, it emphasizes the remarkable speed with which this downfall will occur, for Babylon will be cast down and will sink almost instantly into oblivion, like a great stone hurled into the sea.

Second, the repercussions of this act will not be contained to Babylon alone. Instead, waves of terror will rapidly ripple outward, spreading fear and shock among all the nations of the world as they hear of the sudden and total devastation of the United States. For “*in one hour is she made desolate...*”

(18:22) And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in you; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in you; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in you.

(18:23) And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in you; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in you: for your merchants were the great men of the earth; for by your sorceries were all nations deceived.

The coming judgment is not merely the loss of modern comforts, such as a disabled power grid that leaves people sitting in their dark houses without access to the internet or electricity. It is far worse than that. When this time comes, every opportunity to receive the Light of the Gospel will be gone. No longer will the voice of Christ, the bridegroom, be heard, pleading with humanity to repent. The church, which is the bride of Christ, and her watchmen will no longer cry out "Repent," or warn, "This is the way, walk in it."

The window of mercy, once held open for those who refused to repent, is now closed. No opportunity remains for the unrepentant to seek forgiveness or salvation. It is irrevocably too late for repentance or redemption.

(18:24) And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

The condemnation and accountability assigned to Babylon are not restricted to her geographical boundaries. Her guilt extends far beyond the “*blood of prophets, and of saints*” found within her own land. Consequently, Babylon is held responsible for “*all that were slain upon the earth,*” encompassing every victim, whether righteous or wicked, for the scope and magnitude of her transgressions reaches into every corner of humanity, impacting the entire world.

Every act, whether it be deception, manipulation, neglect, oppression, human trafficking, theft, rape, lies, or murder, will be brought to light before the Great White Throne of Justice. In that final moment of reckoning, Babylon’s collective guilt and every sin committed against God, humanity, and the earth will be revealed and exposed for all to see. Even now, much of humanity groans under the obvious burden of Babylon’s sins and intrusion.

Chapter 19

(19:1) And after these things I heard a great voice of many people in heaven, saying, “Alleluia! Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God:

(19:2) For true and righteous are His judgments: for He has judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and has avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

(19:3) And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.

(19:4) And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, “Amen, Alleluia!”

(19:5) And a voice came out of the throne, saying, “Praise our God, all you His servants, and you that fear Him, both small and great.

(19:6) And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, “Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigns!”

(19:7) Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.

The Bride Made Herself Ready

The marriage of the Lamb draws near, and it is essential for His bride to make herself ready. The preparation cannot be passive; it must be intentional, a commitment to spiritual growth and obedience.

So ask yourself: Are you truly prepared? Is there oil in your vessel to keep your lamp burning brightly? Are you diligently working out your salvation with fear and trembling? Are you perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord, knowing that

without such devotion, no one will see the Lord favorably?

Are you completing the work God has entrusted to you? Have you ran, or just walked your race? Have you fought the good fight of faith? Have you been faithful as a watchman? Do you trust and stand firm in the words He has spoken and abide in the vine of Christ? Are you growing there as you ought to and gladly accept the Father's pruning? Or do the cares and pleasures of the world choke Him out?

Be honest with yourself before God, are you truly laboring in love to bring forth your fruit unto perfection? Are you keeping your eyes single and focused on Jesus? Do you love Him with all your heart, mind, and strength? Do you genuinely try to love your neighbor as yourself? Do you forgive others? Is there any bitterness in your heart?

How are your spiritual disciplines? Do you pray and fast regularly? Do you studied to show yourself approved, as a studious disciple who has no cause to be ashamed before God? Do you delight and meditate in His word? Do you labor in true prayer for others? Jesus said My sheep know My voice and they follow Me, so are you hearing, and following His lead? Or are you dull of hearing?

Seriously, how is your relationship with God? Is it cold, hot, or lukewarm? Do you truly have fellowship with Him and His Son Jesus Christ? Does your heart cry out to Him as your Father? Do you trust in Him completely? Do you draw near to Him and quietly wait in His presence? Do you practice stillness before Him?

Are you quick to repent, and have an open heart to correction? Is Christ truly your life? Are you looking for and hastening His coming? Is your time a faithful witness that your treasure is truly in heaven? Do you seek to redeem it more and more for His purposes and glory?

Are you keeping your spiritual garments unspotted and white? Have you been a godly and faithful spouse and parent? Have you honored your parents and loved them well? Generosity is a mark of Christ, so have you freely given

to others, expecting nothing in return? Do you cultivate a spirit of thankfulness? Are you meek, willing to go the extra mile without complaint?

Are you striving toward the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ to be formed in you? Do you hunger and thirst for righteousness, and are you pressing forward seeking first His Kingdom and glory? Do you daily pick up your cross and follow Him? Are you content with godliness, finding your satisfaction in a life devoted to Him?

Are you a bruised reed, or a tree of righteousness? A smoking flax, or on fire for the Lord?

Or have you received God's grace in vain?

For only those who have made themselves ready for Him will truly *"be glad and rejoice and give honor to Him."* For why would you call Him Lord and do not do the things He has said?

"Awake you who sleeps, arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light. Awake to righteousness and sin not. For some of you have not an intimate knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame." (Ephesians 6:14, I Corinthians 15:34)

(19:8) And to her it was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

(19:9) And he saith unto me, "Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he saith unto me, "These are the true sayings of God."

(19:10) And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, "See you do it not: I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

(19:11) 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.

Without question, the figure described, “*called Faithful and True,*” who judges and makes war in righteousness, is the Lord Jesus Christ. The continuing narrative continues to reveal Him as the Lord of Hosts riding the white horse, having eyes like flames of fire, wearing many crowns, and possessing a name known only to Himself. His garment is dipped in blood, and He alone is the One called The Word of God. These details unmistakably point to Christ as the triumphant leader of heaven’s armies, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

(19:12) 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.

On His Head Were Many Crowns

In the ancient days, victorious generals and warriors were commonly awarded crowns or wreaths as distinct symbols, even as the metals modern military personal wear, as glory and honor due for their achievements and triumphs in battle. These were not merely acknowledgments of their official rank or authority, but rather celebrated their personal achievements and the victories they secured. Receiving such a crown or wreath served as a public recognition of their valor and success.

Scripture records how before their ultimate downfall, God declared vengeance against various nations that were idolatrous, oppressed His people, or committed acts of cruelty. Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed first, followed by the Canaanite peoples, such as the Hittites, Amorites, Jebusites, Girgashites, and Canaanites, as each were explicitly designated for destruction due to their opposition.

The destruction of Babylon and Nineveh/Assyria came later, with Tyre, Edom, Moab, Egypt, and finally Jerusalem (especially in 70 A.D.) also facing judgment for actions deemed contrary to divine intent or antagonistic behavior toward the group. These events unfolded as was declared by prophetic pronouncements.

Hence, we see the many crowns which the Lord wears...

Regarding Jesus having "*a name written that no man knew, but He Himself.*" Jesus' birth name in His native Aramaic/Hebrew language was *Yeshua*, which means "*Yahweh (the Lord) is salvation*" or "*He saves*". This name revealed the purpose of His first coming.

For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them (Luke 9:56, see also John 3:17; 12:47).

However, the "*name written that no man knew, but He Himself*" likely alludes to the awe and terror of Christ's role as Judge of the Nations at His return. As the LORD of hosts declares, "*I am a great King, and My name is dreadful among the heathen,*" (Malachai 1:14).

(19:13) And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God.

(19:14) And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

Jude 1:14-15 - "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

Revelation 1:7 - Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

(19:15) And out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

Isaiah 63:3-6 - "I have trodden the winepress alone, And from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden

them in My anger, And trampled them in My fury; Their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, And I have stained all My robes. For the day of vengeance is in My heart, And the year of My redeemed has come. I looked, but there was no one to help, And I wondered That there was no one to uphold; Therefore My own arm brought salvation for Me; And My own fury, it sustained Me. I have trodden down the peoples in My anger, Made them drunk in My fury, And brought down their strength to the earth."

Revelation 2:26,27 - And he that overcomes and keeps My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and shall rule them with a rod of iron; for as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of My Father.

(19:16) And He has on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

(19:17) 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.

(19:18) That you may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great."

(19:19) 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.

This verse, along with the one that follows, I believe are inserted here placed within the larger prophetic context to illustrate a broader scope of wrongdoing among nations, rather than implying a strict chronological account. For consider the theme of the fowls as it flows from verse 17,18 right into 21 -

(19:17) 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. (19:18) That you may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.” (19:21) And the remnant was 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.

Therefore, the insertion of Revelation 19:18 serves to emphasize the various accomplishments attributed to the Lord of Hosts, who is worthy of many crowns. With the judgement of spiritual Babylon concluded, the focus turns to the final confrontation at Armageddon.

Furthermore, it should be noted that John had previously observed the beast being permitted to wage war against the saints, an act that is regarded as equivalent to a direct attack on the Lord.

Zechariah 2:8 - For thus says the LORD of hosts: "He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye.

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.

Therefore, recall also in chapter 15:2 that John was shown *“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.”* Which after that *“the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues”* and were then given their *“seven golden vials full of the wrath of God”* (15:7,8).

Then in chapter 16, when 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”* (16:10). Then the sixth angel poured out his vial *“on the great river Euphrates, and its*

water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared,” (16:12).

All of these events unfold prior to the assembly of the nations at Armageddon, which is described as the third “*woe*,” as referenced in Revelation 11:14.

Upon reflection, it is important to recognize the relationship between the “*little horn*” described in Daniel 7 and the two figures depicted in Revelation 13. I maintain that the “*little horn*” is directly associated with the beast, or perhaps the beasts, presented in Revelation 13:1 and 13:11. These prophetic representations are intrinsically connected, highlighting the continuity between the visions of Daniel and the revelations given to John.

The “Little Horn” and the “Season and a Time”

Following the destruction of the “*little horn*,” which symbolizes the rise and subsequent downfall of a singular, dominant power, the narrative reveals that the ten horns, representing the nations from which the beast emerged, are permitted to continue for a time. However, their existence is marked by a loss of former power and influence. While they persist for a period after the little horn’s demise, they do not retain the same strength or authority they once possessed.

Daniel 7:11,12 - I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame. As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

The narrative in Revelation 15 places particular emphasis on the outpouring of God’s wrath, which is specifically directed at the empire of the beast. This divine judgment is seen as the initial and principal target, demonstrating that the beast’s kingdom is foremost in the scope of the first five plagues.

As noted already, the other nations though certainly

impacted, are permitted to continue “*for a season and a time,*” retaining existence, though stripped of power. The specific duration of this period is not definitively known. However, if the commonly held interpretation that “*times, time, and half a time*” equates to three and a half years is considered, and knowing that four seasons comprise one year, it can be estimated that “*a season and a time*” would amount to approximately one year and three months.

(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.

My comment above explains why I believe the demise of the eighth beast’s empire actually precedes the gathering of the nations for the battle of Armageddon, for the prophetic period of “*a season and a time*” must occur somewhere in the prophetic timeline, (Daniel 7:11,12).

Nonetheless, the prophetic narrative makes it clear that both the first beast and the second beast, which is further identified as the false prophet responsible for deceiving the nations, are ultimately brought to defeat by divine judgment. Their end is described with unmistakable finality: both are cast alive into the lake of fire that burns with brimstone.

Those who support and endorse the deceiver, especially by offering “*godspeed,*” or opting for him by casting their vote for his position, unwittingly become partakers in all his actions. This includes those who, despite recognizing some opposition, choose to align themselves with him, unaware that such opposition may itself be a part of the deception. Without genuine repentance and renunciation of their involvement, these individuals may well share responsibility for both his evil deeds and the judgment that follows.

The apostle John, in his second epistle, emphasizes the importance of steadfastness in the Doctrine of Christ. He warns believers that anyone who transgresses and fails to

remain committed to this doctrine does not have God. In contrast, those who continue faithfully in the doctrine enjoy true fellowship with both the Father and the Son. John further highlights that anyone who does not bring this doctrine is marked by an antichrist spirit, underscoring the significance of adherence to the pure teachings of Christ's identity.

John's admonition carries important practical implications for believers. He specifically instructs followers of Christ not to welcome individuals who do not bring the true doctrine into their homes, nor to offer them support as leaders, nor to wish them "*God speed.*" This caution arises from the recognition that anyone who endorses or assists such individuals, even unknowingly, becomes a participant in their evil deeds.

The seriousness of this warning is underscored by the scriptural principle: "*Whatsoever is not of faith,*" which signifies a firm conviction in God's word by His Spirit, "*is sin.*" Therefore, believers are urged to exercise discernment and uphold faithfulness to the doctrine of Christ, ensuring their actions are rooted in genuine faith and conviction.

Paul warned Timothy concerning the process of appointing individuals to positions of authority within the church. He specifically warns against the practice of laying hands on anyone too quickly, which in this context refers to endorsing or affirming someone's leadership without thorough discernment. According to Paul, such approval should only be granted when there is unmistakable evidence of the Spirit's presence, demonstrated by consistent fruits of righteousness and holiness in the candidate's life.

The purpose behind this instruction is clear: by refraining from hasty endorsement, Timothy can avoid becoming complicit in the sins or shortcomings of others. Paul's advice underscores the importance for Timothy to maintain purity and integrity, urging Timothy to uphold a standard that prevents him from sharing responsibility for actions that do not align with spiritual truth and virtue.

It is important to recognize that the conviction of the Holy Spirit may indeed give you an understanding that a particular person, such as was Pharaoh, Cyrus, and Pilate, was raised up as “God’s man” for a specific given time and season. Nonetheless, this does not necessarily mean that such a person should be regarded as a “man of God,” or as someone embodying the character or purpose prescribed for God’s people. The distinction is crucial: while God may sovereignly appoint certain individuals to fulfill His purposes within a particular historical context, however, their appointment does not automatically equate to a required spiritual endorsement or approval from believers; nor excuse these men from God’s judgement and wrath for their actions.

In these circumstances, it needs to be sufficient for believers to simply rest in the knowledge that God is fully capable of raising up whom He wills, without requiring their personal endorsement or participation, such as casting a vote or giving explicit approval. By abstaining from direct involvement in the elevation of such figures, God’s people are safeguarded from any association with the actions or decisions of these divinely appointed individuals. By their faith in the sovereignty of God, they preserve their blamelessness before Him, and like Timothy maintain their integrity and separation from any potential complicity in deeds that may not align with the righteousness of God.

1 Timothy - 5:22 Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure.

(19:21) And the remnant was 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.

Whereby now comes this final slaying of the “*remnant*” of the nations by the Lord of Hosts, where their carcasses left for the fowls of the earth.

“Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God. That you may eat the flesh of kings, and

the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.”

Chapter 20

(20:1) And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

(20:2) And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

(20:3) And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

(20:4) And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

The Seventh Millennium Day

This verse serves as an account of the rest granted to those who proved their faith in God, maintained perseverance and steadfastness, overcame their fears through belief, and ultimately attained the Promised Land, thereby entering into their rest.

This is why a stern warning was given to all Christians regarding the danger of hardening their hearts or being dull of hearing when it comes to God's voice, (Hebrews 3:7-19). The passage there recounts the time the Israelites who, upon hearing the ten spies evil report, disbelieved God's promise, and therefore feared to obey the command to go take the Promised Land by force. Rather than responding with faith, they allowed disbelief and fear to paralyze their actions. As a result of their doubting God's promises, God declared in His wrath that these unbelievers would not enter into His rest: this, and the verse above, have been written to emphasize the importance of faith and obedience for Christians who

wish to receive God's blessings. (Matthew 13:15, Acts 27:28, Hebrews 5:11).

Therefore, being reminded of God's wrath against such disbelief, we too are told to "*Take heed lest there be in you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. For we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.*" In this we see confirmation in New Testament scriptures that the promised land of Canaan represented God's "*rest.*" Such is why Hebrews chapter 4 underscores the significance of adhering to God's explicit command, emphasizing the need for vigilance and reverence to ensure that individuals do not miss their opportunity to achieve rest.

The very Gospel message that was delivered to them has also been given to us. However, for some, it was ineffective because it was not mixed with faith on the part of those who heard it. For only those who believe are able to enter into this rest, as God stated: "*As I swore in My anger, they shall not enter My rest,*" even though scripture states that all these works have been established since the six days of creation, where it was noted "*God rested on the seventh day from all His works.*"

This is a clear warning to professing Christians, that just like the Israelites before them, they too risk missing out on God's promised rest if they fail to combine faith with their hearing of God's word. Without this union of faith and hearing, the word of God remains ineffective, and the opportunity to enter God's rest is forfeited.

Yet Hebrews 4:3 purposely introduces the concept of the seventh day, connecting it to God's own rest after the completion of creation, emphasizing that it was after His labors that God rested on the seventh day. This serves as a foundational example for believers, underscoring the significance of entering into God's rest by faith: not by ceasing to work, but rather by completing all the work given to us. For our right to rest hinges on our responsibility to acknowledge and do God's will: for through Christ Jesus'

atonement and the Holy Spirit, we have been given such respond-ability, whereby we can *“do all things through Christ who strengthens us.”*

The book of Hebrews presents a clear comparison between the Promise Land given to the Israelites and the *“rest”* spoken of in the New Testament. Both are fundamentally linked to the concept of God’s *“rest”* on the seventh day, which was established after the completion of creation. This connection highlights an important aspect of the fourth commandment: for six days we are to labor and accomplish all our work, just as the LORD completed His work in six days, and then rested on the seventh. Because of this, the LORD blessed the seventh day and set it apart as holy.

Many overlook the first part of the commandment, which is perhaps the most important part, which instructs us to labor within the time given, redeeming what is necessary, so that we might finish all our work and obtain the rest God has prepared.

Proverbs 6:9 - How long will you slumber, O sluggard?
When will you rise from your sleep?

Proverbs 13:4 - The soul of a lazy man desires, and has nothing.

Proverbs 20:4 - The lazy man will not plow because of winter; therefore he will beg during harvest and have nothing.

Therefore in considering the admonition found in Hebrews, it becomes evident that no one is entitled to God’s promised rest unless they are willing to carry out the work God has intended for them. It is clear that our labor for God is only pleasing to Him when it is done by His Spirit in obedience and faith. Furthermore, even Jesus affirms that our responsibilities come before our rights.

Revelation 22:14 - Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

Given that many have not yet been rightly introduced to the Gospel, the responsibility to live by its principles and the necessity to preach it persists. The work of ministry and the duty of preaching continue, highlighting the ongoing significance and urgency of spreading the message so that all may have opportunity to respond in faith: for *“Faith comes by hearing, and that hearing the word of God.”*

Furthermore, the importance of our faithfulness can be observed in the contrast between the Israelites, who first heard the Gospel but did not benefit from it, and the *“souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast,”* who are depicted as living and reigning *“with Christ a thousand years.”*

Together, both accounts highlights the importance of God establishing *“a specific day,”* a seventh millennia day of rest. This day follows six millennia during which humanity has to labor, striving to *“work out their salvation with fear and trembling.”* Thus this verse in Revelation emphasizes both the ongoing nature of the Gospel’s proclamation and the profound significance of God’s appointed day of rest for those who believe.

Hebrews 4:7 - Therefore God again set a certain day, calling it Today, when a long time later He spoke through David, as was said before: “Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.”

Psalms 95, quoted in the verse above, opens with the word *“Today,”* emphasizing the immediacy and relevance of its message for every generation of believers. It was written under divine inspiration with the intent to strengthen the faith of God’s people and to urge them toward obedience to His voice. It also stands as a testimony that David understood the physical Promised Land given to Israel was not the ultimate fulfillment, but rather a prophetic symbol of the greater *“rest”* that God promises to all His people who are to *“strive”* to enter God’s true rest by faith.

Luke 13:23 - Then said one unto him," Lord, are there few that be saved?" And He said unto them, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

This clear message of the working of faith is found in Paul's words to Timothy, "*For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing,*" (2 Timothy 4:6,7).

"That Day" is this seventh millennia day...

(20:5) But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

The prior verse spoke of "*the first resurrection.*" The second resurrection will not be "*until the thousand years were finished,*" when "*the rest of the dead,*" are raised again for the Great White Throne of Judgement. Among these there will be many who will cry out, "*Lord, Lord, open to us, have we not prophesied in Your name? and in Your name have cast out devils? and in Your name done many wonderful works?*"

Matthew 7:21 - Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

(20:6) Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection: on such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

(20:7) And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his,

(20:8) And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

(20:9) And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.

(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.

(20:11) And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away; and there was no place for them to find.

(20:12) And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

(20:13) And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

(20:14) And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

(20:15) And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

A Theory About Why the Millennium Exists

More than thirty years ago, I was prompted to conduct an in-depth examination of the Millennium. This interest was kicked off by a particular situation that heighten my awareness for a need to seek a clearer understanding of why God introduced the Millennium, particularly in its prophetic connection to the seventh day of rest after creation. My research was directed toward identifying the reasoning for this period, to understand why the Millennium exists, what role it plays in God's plan, and how it serves to magnify His name.

For the Millennium is described as a divinely designated period during which the Lord's glory will be manifest throughout the world in an unprecedented manner, encompassing mortals, immortals, and the angelic host. This seventh millennia is a time in which the process of redemption is brought to perfection, culminating in an absolute glorification of the saints. Thus, the Millennium is not just another future event within the timeline of prophecy, but a period with a distinct and meaningful purpose within the whole of God's redemptive work.

Thus I have become persuaded its function includes a continuing redemption for a particular sector of humanity for clearly its impact is on both mortal and immortal beings, and continues serves as a part of God's broader plan.

My initial interest was prompted by a particular situation that revealed my limited understanding of the subject and underscored the importance of gaining deeper insight from scripture.

The situation which started this progressive line of reasoning occurred when I was talking with people who worked at a pregnancy center. One of the counselors had told me about a girl who had an abortion and how they sought to comfort her by assuring her that the baby was now in heaven.

This given consolation just didn't settle right with me, and

so I began to look for any justification within scripture to support that statement; for how can we preach, or even believe, what isn't written; or at least hinted at through scripture and situational similarities? Certainly, we cannot claim authority for any theology not written in scripture, or even entertain probability unless they seem plausible within biblical prophetic situations and metaphors.

The only passage I could locate that seemed remotely supportive, one which others frequently reference, is the account of David and Bathsheba's child who died as a consequence of David's sin, found in 2 Samuel 12:18-23. The key verse is verse 23, where David says, "*But now the child is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.*"

Many people interpret David's words to mean, "*I will go to heaven to be with him, but he cannot come back to me.*" However, I view this interpretation as presumptuous, because it introduces an idea to the text that is not directly stated, at least from a theological standpoint.

The text illustrates that in David's response to his servants, he recognized that despite his fervent prayer and fasting, the death of the child was not prevented. His hope had been that through his confession and humility that God would have spare the child. However, this did not occur. Consequently, David asked his servants, why then should he continue to fast, as it did not prevent the child's death, nor will it bring him back to life: as God's word has surely been fulfilled. Thus, David's statement that "*I shall go to him*" serves as an acceptance that, eventually, he too shall join the child in death, but the child will not return to him.

For this reason, I've come to believe it is evident that, just as required in rightly resolving complaints or accusations, where two or more witnesses are needed, God has faithfully provided for us multiple confirmations for discerning truth in scripture. Consequently, as noted earlier, my studies have failed to uncover any further scriptural evidence supporting this theological idea about an assured fate of heaven for

infants or those below the age of accountability.

Some would assert a second witness might be when parents brought their little children to Jesus, that He might touch and bless them, yet the disciples rebuked them. Accordingly, Jesus was greatly displeased and said, "*Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. For whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.*"

However, Jesus was not saying that the Kingdom of God is automatically granted to all children. Instead, He emphasized that the Kingdom belongs only to those who receive it with the humility and openness of a child. For by nature, a child recognizes their own limitations, and being dependent on their parents look to them for provision, guidance, and discipline. For godly children are taught to love, honor, and obey their parents, and they understand that misbehavior can lead to correction or the loss of privileges.

Therefore, the lesson from Jesus here is not that children naturally go to heaven. Rather, it is a message that regardless of age, our entrance into the Kingdom of God requires us to humble ourselves as a child before our Heavenly Father. For Jesus instructed His disciples and people that the Father already knows our needs, and therefore urged them to seek first the Kingdom of God, with the assurance that all necessary things would be provided. Jesus further encouraged our pursuit of these things by saying, "*Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*"

This inevitably brings us to the ongoing debate concerning what actually happens to infants or individuals who have not yet reached the alleged age-of-accountability. For there are those who argue that only the children of the righteous are automatically saved, while the children of the wicked are condemned. However, this perspective is not consistent with the broader teachings of Scripture.

Deuteronomy 24:16 – “The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.”

Ezekiel 18:4 – “Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sins, it shall die.”

Ezekiel 18:20 – “The soul that sins, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.”

Romans 2:6 – “Who will render to every man according to his deed.”

Therefore, returning to the implications of the millennium, three significant questions began to weigh on my mind which I feel scripture must afford some insight into.

1. Why a millennium reign?
2. Why wait for the end thereof for the final destruction of Satan?
3. Who are we going to be reigning over when we are with Christ so that we would need a “*rod of iron?*”

It seems these questions would prompt every believer into a deeper contemplation about the purpose and nature of the millennium.

And yet my perspective was challenged even further in 2001, after learning about a tragic incident in which a mother, experiencing severe postpartum depression and other psychological or spiritual disorders, purposely drowned her five children. Her actions were driven by anxiety regarding her ability to raise them appropriately and fear that they might make poor choices, potentially resulting in their damnation. Being delusional and with a misguided love, she concluded that ending their lives before the age of accountability would save them from hell.

Reflecting on this, I realized the disturbing implication: if her belief were true, and she had justification through a correct understanding of 2 Samuel 12:23, then by her sinful actions she would have secured a place in the Kingdom of God for her children.

This notion forced me to confront a troubling possibility: if it were valid that an individual's salvation could be guaranteed as a result of another's sin or ignorance, then those who had suffered such fates would paradoxically be considered fortunate. The dilemma becomes clear, highlighting the stark divide between ignorance and wrongdoing, and the virtues of faith and righteousness. This line of thinking raises profound questions about the nature of salvation and who is truly accountable for their fate. Which led me to consider, what if I had never come to the Lord? Or what if what Ezekiel stated meant I could lose my salvation?

Ezekiel 33:12 - The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression. As for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall by it in the day he turns from his wickedness. Nor shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sins.

As I reflected on these issues, my mind began to imagine a scenario in which something devastating occurs within my own family—a tragedy so profound that I am overtaken by anger and despair. In this imagined situation, I find myself wrestling with deep questions for the Lord, struggling to understand why such suffering has come upon me. Even though I had been faithfully walking with God, the weight of my sorrow and confusion becomes unbearable. Unlike Job, my pain and bitterness eventually drive me back into old habits, and I start drinking again. The depression grows darker, and bitterness takes root in my heart, clouding my judgment and blurring my spiritual focus. Consumed by self-pity, I allow myself to be in a vulnerable place, and in the midst of my turmoil, I am confronted and killed by a robber.

Then suddenly, I picture myself standing in line at the Great White Throne. In front of me stands a young individual. When the line moves forward, the Lord asks, "Who's next?" The angel

responds stating, “This individual was aborted before birth.” To which I then imagined the Lord replying, “Well, since there was no comprehension or transgression of My laws, there can be no imputing of sin. Enter, My friend, into the joy of the Lord.”

But as my turn now arrives, I am filled with despair and confusion. I begin to panic, for I know I died in a sinful state, but still, I had been faithful, and inside I still wanted to be. But when the tragedy happen my despair had overwhelmed me, and in the midst of it all I died in a place of sin and anger with God, and since the “*righteous will not be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sins,*” I know I am going to be condemned. My heart in anguish causes me to suddenly cry out, “If only my mother had sinned and aborted me, I too could have been saved.” Or perhaps as the mother who had spared her children from hell by killing them, I too groan in anguish, wishing that my mother, or father, or brother had also sinned, and killed me. But instead, I grew to my age of accountability and through a moment of weakness died in sin.

Suddenly now we see, if such were true, how the awarding of salvation appears able to be impacted, influenced or tainted by the actions of another sinner. Yet I am convinced this cannot be true. For salvation is solely of the Lord, and I firmly believe that it requires faith and love to obtain, regardless of who is involved.

However, scripture emphasizes the foundational principle that salvation is a gift received by grace through faith. The verse, “*For by grace we are saved through faith,*” highlights that divine grace is freely extended to humanity, and its power is realized when an individual responds with genuine love for God and relies wholly upon His righteousness and mercy. However, the necessity for it to be “received” is made clear by Paul’s assertion that the ultimate guilt of the wicked rests in that the unrighteous deception among those who perish is “***because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness,***” (1 Thessalonians 2:10-12).

This process of salvation by “*grace through faith*” is not dependent upon personal merit or the actions of others, but rather upon a heartfelt response to the truth that brings people into a relationship with God, marked by their trust in His goodness and compassion. Faith acts as the conduit through which grace flows and operates. It is by one’s reciprocated love for God this connection strengthens, making salvation accessible to all who acknowledge God’s love and grace and humbly turn to Him: as with a branch abiding in the vine is sure to bring forth its fruit to perfection.

Originally, I concluded there would be a resurrection of the unaccountable innocent; of aborted babies, children who died before reaching the age of accountability, those with mental handicaps, and others who could not be held responsible for themselves. But as my focus was drawn to those who have not yet reached the age of accountability, I was drawn to reflect on a parallel to the pregnant women and their children which came out of Egypt during the exodus. With them, it is made very clear that the Israelite adults who had accepted the negative report of the ten spies, could not enter the Promised Land, their children however were not so condemned. For it was their fathers, who had accused God of bringing them all out of Egypt only to die in the wilderness, that perished for their sins. Nonetheless, those nineteen years of age and younger were still permitted to enter the promise land.

Numbers 14:29–31 - Your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness, and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, who have murmured against Me, you shall certainly not come into the land which I swore to make you live in, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. But your little ones, which you said should be a prey, I will bring them in, and they shall know the land which you have despised.

This situation confirms Paul’s words to the Thessalonians mentioned above: how because they would not “*receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved,*” they were given over

to their strong delusion. For believing the lie, they were condemned and received not the promise.

Furthermore, the words addressed to Jonah by God reinforce this interpretation. In His compassion, the Lord references those who “*do not know between their right and left hand,*” indicating that His decision to spare Nineveh was motivated not only by their repentance, but also by consideration for individuals who lack the capacity to fully comprehend or be held accountable for their actions.

This principle is echoed in the idea that, when the Lord returns, He will once again extend mercy to such individuals. In the context of scriptural precedent, this group may include individuals under twenty years of age, reflecting the pattern observed during Israel’s journey through the wilderness. However, this mercy does not extend indiscriminately; those who have been entrusted with greater understanding, those who have been “given much,” and yet knowingly reject the Lord, are held to a higher standard. They, like others deemed without excuse by God, are subject to the consequences of their choices and may ultimately perish.

Jonah 4:10,11 records - And the LORD said to Jonah, “You have had pity on the plant for which you have not labored, nor made it grow, which came up in a night and perished in a night. And should I not spare Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than a hundred and twenty thousand men who do not know between their right and their left hand?”

The next focus is on why a necessity for the “*tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yields her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*” Its very existence reveals a necessity for the ongoing provision and sustenance that its imagery represents. The twelve different fruits symbolize the abundance and diversity of blessings available, while the monthly yield signifies continual nourishment provided to those who are permitted to partake.

Furthermore, the leaves being for the healing of the nations

point to a perpetual need for restoration, unity, and wholeness, among those who live during this era. This concept underscores that despite the majesty of the millennium reign, restoration and healing still remain essential aspects of life for the peoples and nations.

Another concern is if all of these were righteous, immortal, and possessed eternal life, why the declaration, “*Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have access to the tree of life and enter through the city gates?*”

Thus, the millennium presented here seems to portray a unique period in history, a seventh millennial day, during which all individuals who were conceived throughout six millennia, and yet never reached a point or state of maturity where they could acquire faith and love sufficient to confess their sins, believe in Jesus Christ, and call upon Him for mercy and forgiveness, are herein given a new opportunity. This millennium may very well be to allow all such to truly come to know Christ as their sole source of life and salvation. It is during this time that they can seek Him, call out to Him, be tested, and recognize Him as their only means of redemption.

These are the people over whom the victorious saints rule and reign with Christ, which endured suffering and persecution for righteousness sake, and will now find rest from all their sorrows. For as glorified saints, their task now is guiding and governing those who previously lacked opportunity, and are now given their chance to see, know, and respond to the love of Jesus Christ.

Throughout the millennium, these individuals will not be influenced by Satan, at least until the end of this period. Yet scripture indicates that obstinate sinners will, due to their sins, find that death ultimately separates them from this life.

Isaiah 65:20 - No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; For the child shall die one hundred years old, and the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed.”

This demonstrates that persistent rejection of righteousness

results in spiritual separation. Conversely, those who trust, obey, and look to the Lord throughout the millennium are promised access to the Tree of Life. Its fruits and leaves serve for their sustenance and healing, symbolizing the reward and restoration granted to those who embrace faith and obedience.

At the conclusion of the millennium, humanity will have experienced life governed directly by Christ and His saints. During this time, individuals will have only contended with the inherent sin nature of their own flesh, absent the external influence of Satan. Despite this, their exposure to the Lordship of Christ will reveal the true disposition of their hearts.

Some, having witnessed the righteousness and justice of Christ's rule, will respond with joy and genuine faith. They will confess, "*The law of the LORD is perfect,*" acknowledging the beauty and perfection of God's commandments. These individuals will have come to love the Lord with all their heart, mind, might, and entire being, having truly tasted and seen that the Lord is good.

For these, the statutes and judgments of the Lord will not be mere rules to follow, but a source of wisdom, rejoicing, and enlightenment. The testimony of the Lord will have made them wise, and their obedience will have brought great reward, as they have learned to desire God's truth above all else. Their hearts transformed, they will enter into the fullness of eternal life with the Lord, where righteousness dwells forever.

Not everyone during the millennium will come to genuinely love the Lord or embrace His righteousness. Among the people, there will be those who merely comply with His laws out of necessity. Their obedience is not motivated by faith or affection for God, but rather by a desire to avoid the difficulties and consequences that would arise from disobedience. These individuals simply follow the rules to maintain peace and avoid trouble, lacking any real devotion or commitment to the Lord.

When the millennium draws to a close, the devil will once again be released. At this time, those who have merely outwardly conformed, without inward transformation or love for

the Lord, will be tested and easily led astray. Their true nature will be revealed as they too will join the rebellion against God and His saints, clearly exposing their true nature.

After which, all the dead shall be raised again, and the wicked, with Satan, will be cast into the lake of fire prepared for him and his fallen angels. While the righteous, leaving the boundaries mark by time, will enter into “everlasting” with the Lord, wherein only dwells righteousness.

Salvation is fundamentally rooted in the Lord’s impartial nature. The Lord is “equal” towards all, extending His offer of salvation without favoritism or partiality. This principle is made clear: those who persistently pursue goodness, seeking glory, honor, and immortality, by grace are granted eternal life. In contrast, individuals who are contentious and resist the truth, choosing instead to follow unrighteousness, will face indignation, wrath, tribulation, and anguish. This applies to every soul who commits evil, regardless of their background, whether Jew or Gentile.

Similarly, glory, honor, and peace are promised to everyone who practices righteousness, again without distinction between Jew and Gentile. The Lord’s impartiality has been consistent throughout all eras, whether in the first six millennial days or in the seventh. For God does not show respect of persons, but demonstrates His unfailing love and fairness in all His dealings with humanity.

In summary, these reflections underscore a central truth: salvation is entirely the work of the Lord, who is the embodiment of justice and impartiality. All that will be saved, are only saved by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, being washed in His blood and receiving His Holy Spirit within them. For he who has not the Spirit of Christ, has not life.

This concludes my current thoughts on the millennium. Ultimately, the true nature of all these things will be revealed when in due time.

Chapter 21

(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.

(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.

(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.

(21:4) And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

(21:5) And He that sat upon the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And he said unto me, "Write: for these words are true and faithful."

(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.

(21:7) He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son.

(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 burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*"

The Lake Which Burns With Fire and Brimstone

Now that we reached this verse, which presents the common perception of hell as a "*lake which burns with fire and brimstone,*" it is essential to turn to Scripture and explore this subject more thoroughly. This is particularly important

because some, such as universalists, deny the reality of hell, arguing that a loving God would never consign His creation to such a place. By examining what the Bible actually says, we can gain a clearer understanding of this doctrine and its implications for our faith and daily lives.

We start with this passage below which addresses two biblical regulations concerning ritual cleanliness among the Israelites. First, it addresses the situation in which a man experiences a “copulation,” that is, an ejaculation of semen at night, which renders him ceremonially unclean. According to the law, such a man must follow specific steps to restore his cleanliness before rejoining the camp. Second, the passage provides practical instructions for handling bodily functions, specifically when any man in the camp needs to relieve himself. He is required to go outside the camp, dig a hole, and cover his excrement to maintain the sanctity of the camp.

The rationale for these commands is made clear: the Lord Himself walks among His people to deliver them. Because God is holy, the camp or assembly must also remain holy. These guidelines emphasize the importance of maintaining both physical and spiritual cleanliness in the presence of God, reflecting the expectation that His people are to be holy and set apart for Him.

Deuteronomy 23:9 - "When the army goes out against your enemies, then keep yourself from every wicked thing.

10 If there is any man among you who becomes unclean by some occurrence in the night, then he shall go outside the camp; he shall not come inside the camp.

11 But it shall be, when evening comes, that he shall wash with water; and when the sun sets, he may come into the camp.

12 Also you shall have a place outside the camp, where you may go out,

13 and you shall have an implement among your weapon, and when you sit down outside, you shall dig with it and turn and cover your refuse.

14 "For the LORD your God walks in the midst of your camp, to deliver you and give your enemies over to you; therefore your camp shall be holy, that He may see no unclean thing among you, and turn away from you.

This passage is often overlooked by many readers, with few appreciating its depth. However, it warrants careful attention, as it addresses the concept of being prepared to engage in spiritual battles with confidence that God's presence is with us. The central principle emphasized here is maintaining personal holiness, dealing with uncleanness, and reflecting the holiness of the Lord. It conveys the daily necessity to continually equip oneself with the full armor of God, recognizing that daily challenges and adversities persist.

Accordingly, the passage also cautions regarding individuals described as "*not clean by reason of uncleanness that chances him by night.*" For further clarification, the following verses provide additional context and explanation.

Leviticus 15:1 - Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: "When any man has a discharge from his body, his discharge is unclean.

3 And this shall be his uncleanness in regard to his discharge-whether his body runs with his discharge, or his body is stopped up by his discharge, it is his uncleanness.

4 Every bed is unclean on which he who has the discharge lies, and everything on which he sits shall be unclean.

5 And whoever touches his bed shall wash his clothes and bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

Leviticus 15:16 - If any man has an emission of semen, then he shall wash all his body in water, and be unclean until evening.

17 And any garment and any leather on which there is semen, it shall be washed with water, and be unclean until evening.

18 Also, when a woman lies with a man, and there is an emission of semen, they shall bathe in water, and be unclean until evening.

The light shed by these verses clearly indicates that the Lord's primary concern is with uncleanness that arises either from genital disease or from "copulation," defined as an ejaculation of semen. While many may immediately recognize how disease can render someone unclean, the inclusion of ejaculation as a source of defilement is less obvious and may prompt questions about its significance. Whether or not one grasps the full reasoning behind this, it remains a directive found in God's Holy Scriptures. As such, it stands as an admonition given to His people and should be given thoughtful and prayerful consideration.

To begin, I present the following verse for consideration.

1 Peter 1:23 - Being born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever.

The phrase "*corruptible seed*" alludes to the way we were first brought into existence: thru the physical seed of our fathers, or semen, which is both subject to decay and impermanence. In contrast, Peter emphasizes that believers are "*born again*" not through this "*corruptible seed*," but by "*incorruptible*" seed: namely, the enduring word of God. This rebirth signifies a spiritual transformation that is everlasting, grounded in the inspired living Word of God.

Additionally, the Apostle John declares that genuine Christians "*cannot sin*," because God's seed remains in them. This statement illustrates the profound impact of truly being enlightened and spiritually reborn by the incorruptible seed. The presence of God's holy Seed enables believers to resist sin, as it dwells within and guides them toward righteousness, distinguishing them as true followers of God.

1 John 3:9 - Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin; for His seed remains in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever does not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loves not his brother.

Part of the reason we are addressing all this is because the verse here in Revelation speaks of “*the second death*,” which correlates with this second birth. Thus, The concept of the second birth, as discussed above, refers to being “*born again*” through the incorruptible seed of God’s word, “*Christ in us, the hope of glory*.” Just as the second birth marks a transformation from mortal existence to eternal life in Christ, so too the “*second death*” represents a final spiritual separation for those who are not born again.

Now, when John declares that “*whoever is born of God cannot sin*,” he is not suggesting that believers are incapable of committing sin. Rather, the emphasis lies in the transformative effect of God’s seed remaining within the individual. Because God’s “*seed remains in him*,” the believer finds it impossible to embrace the fleeting pleasures of sin when confronted with the true cost and consequences of sinning.

To illustrate, imagine being offered a trivial sum, such as five dollars, in exchange for something of substantial value, like your car or a gold watch. While it is technically possible to accept such an unwise offer, a clear understanding of the actual worth of your possession makes it unthinkable to do so. In the same way, those born of God, having come to understand the immeasurable value of the life and calling they have received, cannot reasonably trade it for the temporary satisfaction that sin offers.

This viewpoint clarifies Paul’s exhortation for believers to offer themselves as living sacrifices to God. Recognizing the presence of God’s enduring seed prompts individuals to abstain from actions that may jeopardize their relationship with Him, and instead motivates them to conduct themselves in ways that reflect the significance and integrity of their new life in Christ.

Romans 12:1,2 - I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be

transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

How does one know “*that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God?*” Only by God’s word. That is why John stated that “*His seed remains in him,*” which may help to shed light on some other passages of scripture regarding uncleanness –

Leviticus 15:19, 24 - If a woman has a discharge, and the discharge from her body is blood, she shall be set apart seven days; and whoever touches her shall be unclean until evening... And if any man lies with her at all, so that her impurity is on him, he shall be unclean seven days; and every bed on which he lies shall be unclean.

Leviticus 20:18 - If a man lies with a woman during her sickness and uncovers her nakedness, he has exposed her flow, and she has uncovered the flow of her blood. Both of them shall be cut off from their people.

So, would it be inappropriate for a man to lie with a woman while she is menstruating? Apart from the normal responses regarding hygiene, it is wrong because the “*seed*” placed in her would not remain; her body will naturally cast it forth from her. When a woman’s body is menstruating it is going through the process of expelling her last egg. Since at this point most eggs are not viable, since they are on their way out, and in such a situation the male sperm will likely never penetrate the egg, but even if it does it will only be flushed out as waste.

(Now before I am dismissed because of accuracy, the chance of a woman becoming pregnant after her normal cycle is extremely rare, usually only possible if sperm from an earlier encounter remains in the fallopian tubes and meets a new egg due to cycle irregularities. This scenario is highly unusual. Please note, I am not a gynecologist, rather I work with wood.)

What is important is that we see the correlation the Apostle Peter makes between the “*corruptible seed*” whereby we were

conceived, and the “*incorruptible*” whereby we are born again, being the word of the Lord. This shows us the significance of the way we were designed, and why God created us male and female. That by the two coming together in sexual intimacy can become one flesh: the man, representing God, entering into the woman, representing the church, and thereby bringing forth His life in her.

Therefore, in all this symbology, the male’s semen represents the word of God, which is not to be rejected or cast to the ground. To do so can be prophetic action showing disrespect for that which has holy symbolism. This explains the hot anger the Lord had towards Onan, who was told by his father Judah to go and “*raise up seed*” for his dead brother with Tamar –

Genesis 38:8-10 - And Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife and marry her, and raise up an heir to your brother." But Onan knew that the heir would not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in to his brother's wife, that he emitted on the ground, lest he should give an heir to his brother. And the thing which he did displeased the LORD; therefore He killed him also.

Again, these are but prophetic imagery given unto us to teach us greater lessons from our Lord, just as circumcision of the flesh shows regard to the necessity to circumcise the heart. But look at a previous verse before this in Deuteronomy chapter 23.

Deuteronomy 23:1 - He who is emasculated by crushing or mutilation shall not enter the assembly of the LORD.

Understanding our relationship with the Lord begins with knowing in whom we believe. It is not enough to profess faith; we are called to be fruitful in our faith, allowing God’s word, described as His “seed,” to remain and produce spiritual growth in us. Just as physical procreation requires viable seed, spiritual fruitfulness depends on the living word of God taking root and abiding within us. Therefore scripture emphasizes that those who lack seed or are unable to impart

it, symbolically, do not possess or share God's word, and therefore "*shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord.*"

Leviticus 22:24 - You shall not offer to the LORD what is bruised or crushed, or torn or cut; nor shall you make any offering of them in your land.

Those who have truly been quickened by God's word have hidden His word in their hearts and are desirous to share it. That is because God's word is the only solution for uncleanness in the heart and lives of His children, though that in no way negates the necessity of Christ's blood for our atonement and forgiveness. Christ shed blood is merely the foundation on which all else is built, for we know that all things were sanctified and consecrated unto the Lord by both water and blood.

Consider how the Apostle Paul speaks of husbands loving their wives "*even as Christ also loved the church*" and the correlation of the water of the word and the blood of atonement and their applications as to why Jesus laid down His life for us.

Ephesians 5:26, 27 - That He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

Consider also the words of Peter –

1 Peter 1:13-16 - Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be you holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be you holy; for I am holy.

We are to be holy, not just because we have been washed by His blood, but also because we have renewed our minds by the washing of the water of His word. As if the very loins of

our minds which were once unclean, have been washed with pure water and are now properly girded with the truth, enabling us to walk in obedience to our Lord and Savior. That is why we are not merely forgiven by His blood, but being indwelt by His Spirit, we are freed from sins so as to be empowered to walk in the power of His word: whereby being changed daily, our old carnal nature decreases, while the nature of Christ is always being formed and perfected in us.

1 Peter 1:18 - And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear,
18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,
19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.
20 For He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you
21 who through Him you believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.
22 Seeing then that you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,
23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever.

This is why believers are given the responsibility of purifying our souls by living in obedience to the truth revealed by God. This responsibility is not accomplished by our own strength alone, but through the grace and power imparted by His Spirit dwelling within us. The Spirit works alongside us, enabling and supporting us as we seek to grow in love, for God and for one another. However, this ongoing transformation depends on our willingness to cooperate and remain open to His guidance. This is the power of the message of the Gospel, it is incorruptible seed, the Living Word of God, that calls forth and initiates this process of being born again.

1 Peter 1:24,25 – Because “All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away, but the word of the LORD endures forever.” **Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.**

Having laid that foundation, let us return to this lake, “*which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death,*” looking further into the passage below for more insight.

Deuteronomy 23:12-14 - Also you shall have a place outside the camp, where you may go out to; and you shall have a paddle upon your weapon, and when you sit down to ease yourself outside, you shall dig with it and turn and cover your refuse. For the LORD your God walks in the midst of your camp, to deliver you and give your enemies over to you; therefore your camp shall be holy, that He may see no unclean thing among you, and turn away from you.

Following the instructions regarding, “*uncleanness that chances him by night,*” as it said in Leviticus concerning if “*any man’s seed of copulation go out from him,*” the Lord now moves to another topic concerning keeping the camp clean because the Lord walks in the midst of the camp. This too shows both the responsibility for personal cleanliness, and both individual and corporate responsibility to keep the camp clean as well. Therefore if any man has to “ease” himself he is to go outside the camp and so do. By the words “*you shall have a place without the camp*” it is indicated that this would be a designated place, not just every man running off to wherever, but a specific place known to all.

The instruction for every man to carry a “*paddle upon every weapon*” was given for a practical purpose: to dig a hole for personal relief and then “*turn back and cover... their refuse.*” Although this topic might appear unusual or potentially unsuitable for scriptural discussion, it in fact unveils a significant concept within the text.

The paddle, attached to the weapon, was specifically designed to dig a hole for that which is expelled from the

body. Though the exact form of this item is unknown, whether it was merely one of the weapons carried, or a small spade attached to a sword, the scriptural symbolism is clear. For the sword frequently represents both the word of God and His judgment. This judgment is not only about discerning right from wrong, but also refers to the consequences that come upon those who reject His holy word, casting it aside as if it were merely waste.

Deuteronomy 32:41,42 - If I whet My glittering sword,
And My hand takes hold on judgment, I will render
vengeance to My enemies, And repay those who hate
Me. I will make My arrows drunk with blood, And My
sword shall devour flesh, With the blood of the slain and
the captives, From the heads of the leaders of the
enemy.

While it is essential to recognize that God is not only loving and merciful, He also is powerful and mighty in battle. When He comes again, He stands as the supreme warrior, unmatched in strength and authority. This imagery is also given to remind us of His unwavering resolve and ability to protect, defend, and execute judgment.

Psalms 24:7,8 - Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be
lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory
shall come in. Who is this King of glory? **The LORD
strong and mighty, The LORD mighty in battle.**

Yes! Our God in His grace and mercy, has quickened us by His living word. By this “*incorruptible seed*,” He has impregnated us and caused His spiritual life to abound within us, causing us to be born again. However, His word is not only the instrument of our spiritual renewal, but also stands as the standard by which all are measured. It must be recognized that this same word, which quickens and transforms, will also serve as the sword of His judgment and the instrument of His wrath. Scripture vividly portrays this dual role: God’s word gives life to those who receive it in faith, yet it is also the very

sword He sharpens and wields in judgment against the wicked.

Consider also these verses in Isaiah –

Isaiah 1:16-20 - **Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean**; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, learn to do good; Seek justice, rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, plead for the widow. “Come now, and let us reason together,” says the LORD. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; **But if you refuse and rebel, You shall be devoured by the sword**”; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Yet God will not always strive with mankind, for He comes quickly to avenge Himself of His adversaries. Jesus Himself has declared that the road leading to destruction is broad, and many will follow it by disregarding and rejecting God's word. Such individuals, described as wicked, stubbornly serve their own desires rather than honoring the Creator who graciously bestowed upon them the gift of life, and the glory of being made in His own image. In their defiance, they continually turn away from God, persistently refusing and rebelling against Him, all the while ignoring the many promptings and calls of His Spirit of Grace.

As a result, these people are unclean, defiled, and enslaved under their sin. Yet they do not recognize the seriousness of their condition; instead they continue foolishly boasting in what should bring them shame. Nevertheless, God's patience has here reached its limits; He will not contend with humanity any longer. The time will come when He will now ascend upon them swiftly to avenge Himself of His adversaries.

Consider now the passage below in light of all having been present, and tell me this is not a day of darkness and vengeance...

Isaiah 1:24 - Therefore says the Lord, the LORD of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, **“Ah, I will ease Me of Mine adversaries,** and avenge me of Mine enemies.”

Just as God commanded the hosts of Israel to keep their camp clean, requiring those who needed to ease themselves to go to a designated place and dig a hole with the paddle on their weapon, *so too has God prepared a place in His judgment where He will ease Himself* of those who stayed in their rebellion and wickedness. This imagery serves as a vivid reminder that God’s holiness demands separation from impurity. The Lord Himself cries out, *“Ahhhh!”*— a groaning that reflects the pain within His bowels of mercy after His grace has been extended in vain to a stubborn, stiff-necked people. While He would have preferred mercy had rejoiced against judgement, He will now have His judgement without mercy. (James 2:13).

It is as if God is doubled over in anguish and heartache due to the presence of the wicked within His creation, whereby both He and all creation groans, and eagerly awaits the manifestation of both the sons of God and the removal of evil. Yet, even though evil men, demons, and devils have ran rampant, awaiting their final judgment and torment in hell, none of this has to the least degree weaken the strength and power of God. He remains almighty and unchanged by the presence of devils and demons or the sins of men.

Despite His unmatched power, God has for six millennia demonstrated long-suffering, patiently warning the wicked, striving to rescue the lost, and offering repentance to those who are broken and contrite in spirit. While His omnipotence is unaffected by human sin, His heart is nevertheless pained and vexed by the continued rebellion and disobedience of mankind. This reveals a God who is both mighty and merciful, powerful in judgment, yet deeply moved by the suffering and corruption of His creation.

All who have refused to accept God’s word, those who from the very beginning which have lived, moved, and found their

existence within Him, will ultimately be cast out from His presence for eternity, like human refuse to be expelled into the pit. This removal is not arbitrary; it is the inevitable result of rejecting the life and truth that God has offered through His word; like the very food one eats and that which is good is assimilated into their body, yet the waste is rejected and expelled.

The Gospel makes it clear that every one of us is responsible for personally receiving these exceedingly great and precious promises found in God's word. For only by doing so, we are given the opportunity to partake in His divine nature. This is not merely a divine suggestion, but a command that demands our active response: we are called and therefore responsible both be and do what God enables us to through His promises and power.

God commands us to be holy, because He Himself is holy; and the alternative is expulsion, being expelled from His presence. You did not like God's ways, or respect His creation of heaven and earth? Fine, you are cast out and free to try and create your own, that is once you extinguish the fire of His wrath. God will not be mocked. Those who rejected Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, His only begotten Son which He provided to save men from their sin and sinful nature, which He offered at great cost, will face the consequences in their own might.

God will fully repay those who refuse to accept what He so graciously made available, no air, no water, no foundation on which to stand, nothing to hold onto, or way to create light to see, or quench the torment of the eternal distressing realization that the Lamb of God was worthy, and how you persistently not only rejected Him, but blaspheme Him and all that is holy.

The seriousness of man's responsibilities, and the reality of God's justice calls everyone to respond with humility and obedience, for today is the day of salvation. Men must be holy for without holiness no one will see God on favorable grounds. Yet holiness cannot be achieved on our own, but

comes only by Jesus' blood and perfected by purifying ourselves through obedience to the truth through His Spirit.

Psalm 62:11,12 - God has spoken once, Twice I have heard this, that power belongs to God. Also to You, O Lord, belongs mercy, for You render to each one according to his work.

Deuteronomy 7:9-10 - Know therefore now that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments; and He repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them. He will not be slack with him who hates Him; He will repay him to his face.

Hell is a real and eternal place of torment, a deep pit long ago dug out by the sword of God's judgement and set afire by His wrath, reserved for all who refused to be saved, transformed, and their chance to be made holy by receiving and rejoicing in the work of the Spirit of Christ within them. Contrary to universalist's perspectives, such as those promoted by Rob Bell and others, hell is not a temporary condition or a metaphor, but the ultimate destination for those who reject God's offer of purification, sanctification, and consecration through the power of His word.

Let this serve as a solemn warning: all who refuse to be cleansed, who persist in rebellion and wickedness, will not be able to stand in the assembly of the righteous. The reality of God's justice demands that only those who heard His call, and receive a love for the truth, and have embraced holiness, will find acceptance in Him through Christ Jesus the Lord.

The unrepentant who have continually rejected His word and chosen their own path, will be discarded, separated from the community of the redeemed. For God will separate them for eternity from His presence, treating them as refuse, in a place prepared outside the camp. Blessed be the Name of the Lord.

Isaiah 66:22-24 – “And I will also take some of them for priests and Levites,” says the LORD. “For as the new heavens and the new earth Which I will make shall remain before Me,” says the LORD, “So shall your descendants and your name remain. And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me,” says the LORD. “And they shall go forth and look upon the corpses of the men who have transgressed against Me. For their worm does not die, and their fire is not quenched. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.”

Psalms 119:11-16 - Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You! Blessed are You, O LORD! Teach me Your statutes! With my lips I have declared All the judgments of Your mouth. I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, As much as in all riches. I will meditate on Your precepts, And contemplate Your ways. I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word.

John 3:17-19 - For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

(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 you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.

The vision described here is deeply symbolic. The imagery presented should not be interpreted as suggesting that the Lamb’s bride is simply a magnificent city. Instead, the remarkable splendor, glory, and wealth described serve to emphasize the indescribable and unimaginable blessings that God, our wondrous Creator and giver of life, has

prepared for His saints and the heavenly host. This promise revealed points assuredly forward toward the Celestial City, the time after sin has been completely and eternally removed from God's presence.

For the Lamb, having rightly wrought the destruction of everything associated with the devil and sin is here depicted as final and absolute, ensuring that nothing remains that could be tainted, or enter, or corrupt this glorious and holy city. This city, in its sanctity and radiance, fills both the new earth and the heavens, and stands as a demonstration of the saints of God glorious welcome and the completion of God's redemptive work.

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

(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.

(21:12) 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:

(21:13) On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.

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

(21:15) And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

(21:16) 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.

(21:17) And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

(21:18) And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city

was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

(21:19) 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, chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald.

(21:20) The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoptase; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

(21:21) And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gates were of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it was transparent glass.

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

(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.

(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 honor into it.

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

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

(21:27) And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defiles, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

An Excerpt from Pilgrim's Progress

Now Christian and Hopeful were as if in Heaven, before they came there, being swallowed up with the sight of angels, and with the hearing of their melodious voices. Here also they had the City itself fully in view, and they thought that they heard all the City bells ringing to welcome them in. But above all, they were encouraged by the warm and joyful thoughts of their own dwelling there, with such company, and that forever and ever! O what tongue or pen could express their glorious joy! And thus they came up to the gate.

Now, there was written over the gate, in letters of gold, "*Blessed are those who obey His commandments, that they may have the right to the Tree of Life, and may enter through the gates into the City!*"

Then I saw in my dream, that the Shining Men bid them to call at the gate. And when they did, some looked over the gate, namely Enoch, Moses, Elijah and others, to whom it was told: "These Pilgrims have come from the city of Destruction, for the love that they bear to the King of this place!"

Then each Pilgrim handed in their certificate which they had received in the beginning of their journey. These certificates were carried to the King, who, when He had read them, said, "Where are the men?"

To whom it was answered, "They are standing outside the gate."

The King then commanded, "Open the gates to all who are righteous, allow the faithful to enter in!"

Now I saw in my dream that these two men went in at the gate. And behold! as they entered, they were transfigured, and they were arrayed with clothing which shone like gold. Some met them with harps and crowns, which were given to the Pilgrims. The harps were given for worship, and the crowns were given as a token of honor.

Then I heard in my dream that all the bells in the City rang again for joy, and that it was said to the Pilgrims, "Enter into the joy of your Lord!"

I also heard Christian and Hopeful themselves singing with a loud voice, saying, "*Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him who sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever!*"

Now just as the gates were opened to let the men in, I looked in after them, and behold the City shone like the sun! The streets also were paved with gold, and on them walked many men, with crowns on their heads, palms in their hands, and golden harps to sing praises with! There were also some angelic beings with wings, and they sang back and forth without intermission, "*Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord!*"

After that, they closed up the gates. When I had seen all of this, I wished that I myself was among them.

Now while I was gazing upon all these things, I turned my head to lookback, and saw Ignorance come up to the riverside. He soon got over the river, and without half of the difficulty which Christian and Hopeful met with. For it happened that one called Vain-hope, a ferryman, was there, and with his boat he helped Mister Ignorance cross the river. Then I saw that Ignorance ascended the hill, and came up to the gate all alone. There was no man to meet him with the least encouragement.

When he arrived at the gate, he looked up to the writing that was above it, and then began to knock, supposing that entrance would quickly be given to him. But he was asked by the men who looked over the top of the gate, "Where have you come from? What do you want?"

He answered them, "I have eaten and drank in the presence of the King, and He has taught in our streets!"

Then they asked him for his certificate, that they might go in and show it to the King. So he fumbled in his bosom for one, but found none.

Then they asked, "Have you no certificate?"

But the man answered not a word.

So they told the King about Ignorance, but He would not go down to see him. Instead He commanded the two Shining Ones who had conducted Christian and Hopeful to the City, to go out and take Ignorance, bind him hand and foot, and cast him away.

So they took Ignorance up, and carried him through the air, to the door which I had seen in the side of the hill, and threw him in there!

Then I saw that there was a way to Hell, even from the very gates of Heaven, as well as from the city of Destruction!

So I awoke, and behold it was a dream!

**Not merely a dream, but a faithful vision
of things soon to come.**

And knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts. (Romans 13:11-14)

Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame. (1 Cor. 15:34)

Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light." (Ephesians 5:14)

Chapter 22

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

(22:2) In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, there was the tree of life, which bare twelve manners of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

(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:

(22:4) And they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads.

(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.

(22:6) And he said unto me, “These sayings are faithful and true:” and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show unto His servants the things which must shortly be done.

(22:7) Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keeps the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

(22:8) And I John saw these things and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.

(22:9) Then said he unto me, “See you do it not: for I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.”

(22:10) And he sad unto me, “Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.

(22:11) He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.”

Among the most sobering verses in scripture, this my friend is perhaps the most fearful: the warning that there comes a set day for every individual and nation. On that day, the grace which both allows and enables repentance will be withdrawn. Once this occurs, judgment is irrevocably established. At that moment, God's blessing or wrath is certain and cannot be altered.

(22:12) And “Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

(22:13) I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.”

(22:14) Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

Responsibilities before Rights

Adam was placed in the Garden of Eden by God with the responsibility to care for it. This act ultimately signifies that the creation of man was not only a gift of life, but also an assignment to faithfully manage the resources which were capable of yielding him fruit. In return, God freely granted Adam permission to enjoy the fruits of his labor where he could eat from all the trees, but one; revealing that God's relationship to Adam was not overbearing nor demanding.

Furthermore, God would visit Adam in the “*cool of the day*,” indicating that God desired Adam to have daily moments of rest. During these times, through discourse with Adam, God would teach him new things, “*precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little*,” helping Adam gain more knowledge and understanding.

Through this daily relationship, Adam was encouraged to grow and become more fruitful, much like the trees he tended. God's intention was for Adam to continually develop and expand into the greater plans He had prepared for him.

I am inclined to believe the purpose of the one tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, was so that Adam had a

indicator whereby He could always know he was abiding in God's will and pleasing to Him. It was not there to tempt him, but to stand as a testimony of his love and faithfulness to God.

Yet Adam, capable of loving God and growing in it, had not yet come to perfection in his love for God, for if he had, he would not have sinned. For love, a righteous perfected love, *"does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil. does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."* But most importantly, a righteous and perfected *"love never fails."*

In all this, we see how men acknowledging God and rightly accepting their assigned responsibilities, are thereby freely granted rights from Him, *"for the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness therein."*

God designed humanity with the capacity, through our heart, ears, and eyes, to grow in the knowledge and understanding of Him. This growth is intended so that we may become aware of our fallen state, find true repentance, and respond to God's love by reciprocating our love, and finding genuine delight in His presence.

Our relationship with God should not be limited to a mere intellectual grasp of biblical teachings; rather, God calls for us to have a responsive heart, one that is open and receptive to His will. As John says in his first epistle, *"truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ."*

Only when the Holy Spirit works within us, opening our hearts, ears, and eyes, are we empowered to recognize and receive God's gift of life. Our acceptance is founded in a confidence in the sufficiency of Jesus' sacrifice. Only when we acknowledge this can we pursue a righteous life, embracing the life-shaping discipline of God's holy commandments. True joy for the believer can only be found in Jesus Christ, the Living Word, and in the sure word of prophecy as we meditate on them day and night.

Our journey to the Promise Land requires more of us than just accepting the “*imputed righteousness*” of Christ; it necessitates the development of “*our righteousness*,” which emerges through the actions of our faith. With this foundation, we turn to two significant passages from Peter’s epistles that further illuminate these truths.

1 Peter 1:2 – Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

2 Peter 1:2 – Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.

It is only when our faith is living with responsive actions that God’s grace and peace can be “*multiplied*” in our lives. For if “*by grace you are saved*,” it is through active faith that we are saved to the uttermost. Not by the works of faith we do, but by our active faith allowing the grace of God to gather us unto Himself through the “*sanctification of the Spirit, and unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*.” Be not deceived, if a man knows to do good and does it not, it is both a sin and grievance to the Holy Spirit of God.

The law of faith is that if a man, or a nation, humbly receive the truth and acknowledges God’s will by surrendering their own, they will then be divinely empowered and fully enabled to do it; and will thus be able to liberally enjoy the manifold benefits of His creation and Kingdom. For be not deceived, no man or nation can enjoy rights or privileges if they ignore their responsibilities to God and His Kingdom. This is extremely important to recognize and understand if we are going to be found fit for the kingdom of God; and these are not my words, but Jesus’ own.

John 7:62 - Jesus said unto him, “No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”

Galatians 3:2 – Therefore, I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ now lives in me:

and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.

Contrast these things pertaining to God's Kingdom now to the present precepts and laws within the United States of America, which has long boasted of protecting the divine rights given to men, yet maintaining the people's responsibility back to a "government by the people, for the people."

Just because it is written, "One nation under God" on US money, or quoted in the Pledge of Allegiance, does not signify that those who wrote those words had the Lord Jesus Christ in mind. Rather the phrase was a comprised statement agreed upon by both deists and Christians in government. For it is evident that these statements within the United States, both on its currency and in the Pledge of Allegiance, were intent on affirming the universal right of every individual to worship any deity of their choosing.

This emphasis on religious liberty intentionally avoided exclusive reference to the Lord Jesus Christ, but open freedom to a broad spectrum of beliefs, including those of deists and Christians alike. The agreed-upon language was crafted to guarantee such elective freedom, ensuring that no person would be compelled to follow any particular religious tradition, but instead could freely determine their own spiritual path. If this "right" and "freedom" truly comes from God, there would not be a hell nor any retribution upon men from God. Humanity, and especially the Christians, do not live by the Constitution, nor the Bill of Rights, but rather by "*every word which proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.*" For "*all nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balances.*"

While it is proper to love and honor your country, as it is to love each and every member of your family, Jesus nonetheless stated that "*He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me,*" so it is with those who put patriotism before faithfully seeking God's Kingdom first and

His righteousness.

We are called out of this world; and though we are in it, we are not to be part of it. We are to be seeking a new City whose builder and maker is God. So, if the Lord tarries, then like all those in Hebrews 11, we too will die *“having not obtained the promise.”* *“For flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God,”* which all are commanded to seek first, because *“The kingdom of God does not come with observation, nor can one say, “See here!” or “See there!” For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you”* (Luke 17:21).

I am sure this has caused a bit of conflict within some readers. It usually does for people under the stronghold of a long-held, yet unproven belief, as it does with the unsaved when they first hear the need to repent, because they are sinners.

This is why Jesus said, *“Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth, I did not come to bring peace but a sword, to set a man against another, against his father, and a daughter against her mother, whereby a man's enemies will be those of his own household,”* (Matthew 10:34-38 paraphrased).

As Christ's redeemed, we are bought with a price and are not our own, and we have no rights unless we responsibly walk in the light of the King's will. Such is why Jesus told Pilate that His kingdom was not of this world, otherwise His servants would indeed take up arms and fight. However, this world is waxing old and decaying, and is soon to be rolled up like a garment by its Creator so that a new heaven and earth may be reveal for those that love His coming, those to whom He will clearly say *“Well done, good and faithful servants.”*

Throughout history, significant spiritual awakenings have taken place when individuals and communities, frustrated by the futility of their own efforts to establish God's Kingdom, reached a point of genuine brokenness. These awakenings often began with people striving to fulfill God's purposes through a misunderstanding of scripture and by laboring in their own strength, all while working in a weak faith due to

mistaken interpretations of things in God's word. After they finally came to the end of their own strength, resources, and enthusiasm, they discovered the necessity of absolute surrender to God's will and wisdom. It was then that the truth was revealed and they were truly set free, whereby God was then free to move in and through them.

John 8:31,32,36 - Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed."

Only after reaching this place of surrender, and their beginning to walk in the truth of Jesus's words, did they truly begin to know, understand, and find the freedom of the Spirit, to present themselves wholly to the Lord. Thus, in response to this humility, God poured out His Holy Spirit upon them anew. This fresh outpouring was marked by a deep conviction of sin, righteousness, and judgment, which affected both those within the church and those in the wider world. Hearts were pierced, and the divine fruit of holiness became evident among the remnant of God's people, serving as a powerful testimony to all who witnessed it.

Therefore, looking for and hastening the Lord's coming, I simply do not have a faith which allows me to be entangled in the political means of this world, (2 Peter 3:11-14). I cannot escape viewing politics as vain attempts to be an effectual or responsible witness, or as labors or weapons which cannot work a lasting change on earth for the glory of God.

Governments which will not pursue transparency and justice, and that in accordance with the statutes and precepts of God, are godless, doing only what is right through the view of wicked men with self-interests, which only furthers endless strife and contention and death. No man through political means can make a nation the head when their actions being contrary to God's wisdom and judgments make them the tail, (Deuteronomy 28:13,44).

Yet every good gift still comes from above; only by the King of kings sitting on the surrendered throne of people's hearts that true change is wrought in men, families, communities and nations, and this through the working of their effective faith ever trusting His Spirit to make those willing into new creatures.

Perhaps, before the darkest part of the night fully sets upon humanity, even after so many have suffered loss thru the futile labor of vanity trying to vote in a reprobate to bring America out of darkness... perhaps now, they will give themselves instead to seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness before it's too late, and start fervently praying for His glory, and not their own selfish wants and desires.

It is time like never before for prayer and fasting and seeking the Lord while He may be found. A time to stand in judgment with God, judging our own selves first, that God may yet establish us and give us ears to hear. May we humble ourselves, and with constant prayer and fasting, yes fasting, build up a holy faith whereby we might successfully work for His glory and Name's sake, redeeming the time which remains. For faith comes by hearing and that hearing God's word, and Revelation show us that God's word doesn't ever return to Him void.

Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.

(22:15) For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

(22:16) I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

(22:17) And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let him that hears say, "Come." And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

(22:18) For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, that if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

(22:19) And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

(22:20) He which testifies these things says, “Surely, I come quickly.” Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

(22:21) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

About the Author

As a child, I was raised a Lutheran, and I can clearly remember one day when the Sunday school teacher was obviously feeling a little evangelistic. Up to then we would mostly spend our time coloring, doing flannel board lessons about bible characters, or just spend the time out on the playground while our parents were in Church. But on this one particular day she shared with us kids that if we had Jesus in our hearts then we would get to go to heaven, but if not, well... we would go to hell.

Now that was some pretty powerful news for kids between 6-8 years old. So, I raised my hand and asked her, "How do we know Jesus is real?" After all, none of us had ever seen Him hanging around the church and all I had ever seen were drawings or paintings of Him. Now my question really threw her threw a loop, for after looking at me for a bit she honestly replied, "I don't know, I guess we just better believe in case He is," Well, that was it for me. If she didn't have an answer for that one, why would I ask any more questions?

However, that night in bed, her words came into my head, and my thoughts went to a painting my grandmother had of Jesus standing outside an arched door, knocking to come in. As I lay there, I knew what she said was true even if she hadn't been able to answer my question. Her crude Gospel message was still sharp enough to pierce my little heart. I was scared, and so I began to cry, frustrated and angry that she wasn't able to answer my question. For had she given me an answer, I certainly would have asked the one that was agonizing me that night, "How do I get Jesus into my heart?" Nevertheless, as I laid there crying, I kept turning an imaginary doorknob on my chest pretending to open a door for Jesus, asking Him to please come into my heart.

Although I wished that night would have marked the beginning of unwavering faithfulness in my life, the reality was far different. I believed in the Lord, but what faith I had, needed both guidance and nurturing; and there was no one in my life to teach me or speak God's truths into my heart.

Though my belief in Jesus remained, it lingered little more than Sunday-go-to-church real. My interest quickly faded without a mentor or a godly example to instruct me in how to "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." To me, Sunday school became just another place parents drop their kids off at, so they could go to Church with other adults.

Public school never managed to capture my interest or attention either. The only subject that resonated with me was math; everything else, like English, History, and Science, it all felt completely disconnected from my life and irrelevant to anything I cared about. Adding to my distraction was that sometimes my desk was near a window, and with the world going outside before my eyes, focusing on lessons inside the classroom was impossible for me.

Growing up as a teenager during the sixties, I found it all too easy to get swept up in rock music and the culture of drugs. Before long, I was staying out all night, living only for the moment and wondering where my next high might be. Although my parents were good people who loved me, and consistently tried to discipline me, I couldn't bring myself to obey their rules anymore.

After finishing ninth grade, I quit school and soon ran away from home at the age of fifteen with a pregnant girlfriend. We were eventually found and sent back home, but it wasn't long before I returned to the streets. Living as a fifteen-year-old I made many compromises just to survive, and petty crime quickly became a normal part of my life.

Quickly I left home again, and eventually found myself living in a man's backyard toolshed with a couple of other guys. Each of us paid five dollars a week for a place to sleep. Life was grim and uncertain, and we were just trying to get by in whatever way we could.

One late night, while hanging out on a nearby construction site, a group of us were getting high, just a bunch of potheads looking for an escape. During our conversation, two of the guys suddenly started boasting about the greatness and power of

Satan. Their boldness caught me off guard, especially given my own struggles and the emptiness I felt at that point in my life.

In a moment of seriousness, fueled by both curiosity and desperation, I asked them, "Okay, if Satan is so powerful, then what can he do for me?" To my surprise, instead of answering with a great marketing pitch, they became upset and began cursing at me, and abruptly left. I was left confused, not really understanding what had just happened. At the time, I thought their reaction was pretty weird. Looking back over the years, I have come to believe that, for whatever reason, they somehow were told, "No, leave this one alone."

I eventually found myself in a non-denominational house church. This church had established what they called a "Discipleship Program," which aimed to foster spiritual growth and accountability among its members. Committing to this path, I moved in with the pastor and a couple of other men, starting their discipleship process. Over the years, my church involvement deepened, and was entrusted with increasing responsibilities; first being appointed a deacon, then advancing to elder, and eventually served as an assistant pastor.

It was during my time in this church that I met a very special woman, and we eventually got married. The church expanded its activities, starting a school and even launching a Christian dinner theater. Despite these efforts, things in general didn't progress very well, and personal challenges persisted.

Unfortunately, some leaders failed to embody the values they preached, and before long, alcohol, sexual misconduct, and sin became hidden norms within the church community. Consumed by the guilt of my own shortcomings, I decided to address these issues directly. So, one Sunday, when it was my turn to preach, I decided to share my last message from the passage below.

Galatians 6:1 – Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, you who are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering your own self, lest you also be tempted.

The focus of my message was simple, I centered my message on a challenging question: Were the leaders around me truly spiritual enough to discern when someone was struggling with sin, or had they themselves already surrendered to their own temptations? This was not just a rhetorical question but a last, desperate cry for genuine accountability and restoration among those in leadership.

Shortly after, my wife and I decided to leave the church, moving 300 miles away in search of a fresh start. Sadly, within a year, I found myself once again entangled in the same destructive patterns, immorality, drug use, and alcohol. The depth of my struggles left me facing the consequences of my actions and the reality of the impact they had on those I loved most.

A couple of years later, we moved more than a thousand miles away from home; only to find myself less than a year later separated, isolated, and enduring one of the darkest nights of my life. It literally was during a blood moon eclipse, a night when I was so intoxicated and affected by drugs that my body was sending me warning signals, making me fear I might not survive until morning. In my desperation, I cried out to God: “Lord, all I wanted was to be a man of God. I believe in You, but I don’t believe in anything I was taught anymore. Why can’t I be an overcomer? Why can’t I do the right thing? Lord, I just want to go home and start over.”

The next day, I awoke with a determination to do just that, to change my life and return home. However, before I could truly move forward, there were relationships and wrongs that needed to be addressed. I repaired local relationships the best I could, then sold all but my clothes and van, and headed home.

Once home I was trying hard to do the right thing and was graciously reunited with my wife. One Sunday we were with some other Christian friends as we all decided to visit a new Church started by a popular Miami Beach performer who supposedly became a Christian. Having been through so much sin myself, who was I to throw stones or to judge?

So, I went and listened to him preach and he hit on all the points that make sinners want a happier and better life. He gave an invitation saying he knew there were many needing deliverance, and if you've been struggling with sin then come up and he was going to pray for you. Having struggled all my life with sin I went up.

There we were all lined up in front from left to right and he started praying. As he walked down the line, he was laying hands on the people, and they were all falling backwards. I said to the Lord, "Here I am. No games anymore. If this is You Lord, I want it all." I figured God was big enough to knock me down like everyone else, so I kept my eyes open and waited my turn.

When this man came to me, he closed his eyes and laid his hand on my head, but nothing happened. I think he was more surprised than me. Suddenly while I am looking into his eyes he angrily says, "*You are not going to resist me you foul spirit!*" And then, stepping forward, literally shoved my head backwards, causing me to lose my balance. I immediately stood up, shook my head in disbelief and went back to my seat. As I walked back, I felt the Lord impressed upon me, "I am your Deliverer, do not look to man."

However, I had the wisdom to understand God was not telling me to ignore other believers, or the gifts He has given for His glory: but that He wanted me to seek Him and Him alone. It was there I found the courage to put everything I ever thought about Jesus Christ and Christianity upon God's altar, and started proving all things afresh in the light of the scriptures.

What I discovered shouldn't surprise anyone, because we have all heard it for years; the truth will set you free. For men's problems are never the truth; it is always their unwillingness to fully surrender to the terms of the Truth.

Once more, I wish that I could say from that point everything was better, but the reality for me was like it is for all of us; whether we like it or not there is a war going on and until Jesus Christ returns, we are all caught in the middle of it. The adversary will never be content to leave you or me alone; however, I now

know that he knows he has truly lost this war, and his time is short.

Nevertheless, out of hatred to God, the adversary constantly does what he can to oppose me, trying to nudge me a little to the left or right, and when that isn't working, he tries to flatter me. He does anything and everything he can to try and get my eyes off Jesus Christ, even for just a moment.

Perhaps the closest he ever comes to destroying me, is by causing schisms among of God's people and using it as a source of discouragement to me. Whereby once a root of bitterness springing up in me, I almost threw in the towel again and gave up. But my Jesus didn't, He saved me.

For the record, I once again briefly became a pastor, and worked for several years volunteering by holding meetings at men's shelters and Sunday night services at a rehab that was voluntarily attended, though only as an alternative to jail or prison. I even opened a Christian Coffee shop for a couple of years.

Through it all, the heart of my preaching has not simply been about offering people an escape from hell and the promise of heaven. Rather, I believe, and so I preach, that the true message of the Gospel is that through Jesus Christ, every person has the opportunity to become what God originally intended them to be; a reflection of His glory, made suitable for the Kingdom of God. God created us in His image, desiring that we would represent His glory here on earth. Through the cross, and because of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are enabled to become just that: vessels of His glory, living out the purpose for which we were made.

Life has never been easy for me, but I can honestly say it has often been very good. We all encounter people who have faced greater hardships than our own, and this perspective has helped me appreciate my journey. As I frequently remind others, "Life's not fair, but it is a gift, so live it none the less." It's a simple truth that has shaped my outlook and helped me accept all its ups and downs.

When asked what I do for a living, I often respond, “I work with wood.” My roots are in the trades, and working with my hands has always been a source of fulfillment. Over time, I became a building contractor, perfecting my skills in design and fabrication with some high-end remodeling projects. However, the logistics and red tape just exasperated a guy who simply loved doing a good job for a fair price. Still, I am grateful for the work ethic that the Lord instilled in me, for more than once I sacrificed profit and put added time and money into the job to get it done right and assure the customer’s satisfaction. I’ve learned the Lord honors the man that keeps his word, even to his own loss or hurt.

Due to the economy years ago, I became a home inspector in the insurance industry. While this role provided for my family, I often found myself wrestling with feelings of being just outside the specific calling God placed on my life. The sense of displacement reminded me of the Levites in the Old Testament, who, having no inheritance of their own, would travel throughout the land seeking ways to provide for their families, often as a result of the neglect that sometimes befell God’s house.

Perhaps, in some way, these experiences are connected to the consequences of my own past sins. Nevertheless, I have learned to accept these seasons, knowing that God’s purpose can still unfold even when our path feels uncertain. Through it all, I continue to seek His guidance, trusting that He remains faithful in every circumstance.

Still, without a doubt one of my greatest pleasures is reasoning the things of God with reasonable people. For I believe engaging in thoughtful conversation with other reasonable believers is necessary for deeper understanding and mutual growth. However, I want to clarify that in sharing my beliefs or insights, my intention is not to present them as absolute or dogmatic assertions that I am right and others are wrong. Instead, I share them openly because I sincerely believe these perspectives to be true, yet I am always willing to have them examined and even challenged by fellow believers.

All that said, for the record I did manage to get my GED, so I guess that's the height of my academic credentials as a Christian author. Perhaps that really means I am still just a carpenter, a guy who occasionally works with wood and still loves to read his bible.

But I would like to make one last point, while I agree we will all disagree sometimes and somewhere, I refuse to "agree to disagree" as if that's somehow a noble thing for believers in Christ. For me, that seems to be a willingness to that accept one of us, if not both, must be wrong; and that I find to be disagreeable with true charity.

Rather, we must all learn to be patient, and respect the integrity of each other's convictions, yet still humbly labor together to understand each other. For how else are we are going to make any headway towards coming to a unity of faith and a knowledge of the Truth?

For I deeply appreciate all who have cared enough to speak truth to me, even if that meant telling me, "Brother, you're wrong." What matters most is not being told I am mistaken, but having men and women of God who are committed to walking alongside me with longsuffering, patience and respect. Individuals who are willing to invest the time and effort to help me or others to understand both where and how they have erred, while maintaining honor and respect for their integrity and convictions. For nobody likes the religious critic, who like a drive-by-shooter, quickly retorts by firing off a small caliber rebuttal, but is unwilling to slow down and meaningfully engage another believer.

Remember, even at our best, we all only know in part. That's why we have each other and need charity.

Therefore, until we all meet each other on the other side, live for Jesus Christ the resurrected King of kings!

Stay blessable, on fire, and unburnable,

William E. Males

Awake!

Awake, you sleeper! Awake! Arise and make yourself ready! It's time to put aside those childish pursuits and your endless musing with vanities. Awake, I say! Do you not realize the time in which you are privileged to live? Now more than ever can the sound of the bridegroom's coming be heard! Surely, He draws near.

The need to purify yourself has grown greater as the time allotted has grown shorter. The dark of night has already conquered the eastern horizon as the sun glow fades in the west. The king had long ago sent out His invitation. He proclaimed to all, "COME!"

Yes, come, and make haste! Do you not know that if you refuse to comply with the King that His anger will be kindled against you? Yet in His longsuffering He still says, "Come! Come to the greatest of all feasts! There is food, wine, and song and dance. Joyful dance to celebrate the wedding of all weddings. Come and attend My wedding."

The bridegroom has long been ready, yet He has patiently waited. He has waited for you! Arise, therefore you sleeper! So much remains for you to do. TODAY you must prepare. Set aside your complacency and strive to mature! Strive to increase your knowledge and understanding so you may be completely resolved to live your life solely for the King of kings! Rise up and cast out reservation and hesitation, these are foes that have hindered and killed countless before you. Arise! Answer His call!

It is your only reasonable response . . .

"Awake you who are asleep, arise from the dead,
Christ shall give you light. Awake to righteousness and
sin not. For some of you have not the knowledge of God.
I speak this to your shame."

(Ephesians. 6:14, I Cororintians. 15:34)

