

The Book of

REVELATION

UNVEILED

**Understanding
the
Mysteries**

Jack Tuls

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Image of the surface of the Sun, used by permission from the Transition Region and Coronal Explorer (TRACE), a mission of the Stanford-Lockheed Institute for Space Research, and part of the NASA Small Explorer program

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Revelation Unveiled

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Acknowledgment

I would like to acknowledge first of all the Holy Spirit of my Lord Jesus for His prompting to read carefully certain passages of the Word of God, and His subsequent revelation of the meaning of these in context with other scriptures concerning the “last days.” He is a true friend who is most willing to give understanding and clarity when I am willing to spend the time listening to Him.

Next, I want to acknowledge my dear wife Grace, who always gave me encouragement to write this book, saying that those things which I had taught in class should be shared with many more people through a book. She said that people are especially interested in reading things of the “last days” at the present time, since many scriptural prophecies are being fulfilled before our eyes. Although I know this is true, I was reluctant to write this book, since it contains many new and perhaps controversial ideas, some of which will invariably attract “arrows” of criticism from other Believers. In spite of this, my feeling was that it was important to give a fresh meaning to the book of **Revelation** which would enable Christians everywhere to understand it, to keep it in their hearts, and to be blessed by it as **Rev 1:3** and **22:7** promise.

Also, I want to thank the students and graduates of Spirit Life Bible College in Irvine, California for their constant prompting to write this book. They have continually asked me whether it has been published, and have requested a copy as soon as it comes off the press. This has encouraged me also, that these young people want to know the truth about what many consider to be a mysterious book, a book which is seldom used as a topic for sermons, but which should be emphasized in these days. Why should it be emphasized now? Because God’s people in the nations of the world are sensing the soon return of our Lord Jesus, need the comfort of this book, and we are constrained by love to bring it to them.

Finally, it is important for me to acknowledge the assistance of Bob and Reen Keller of Littlerock, California in proofing, editing, and printing this book. Their expertise with computers and publishing, in addition to their own time freely given in finishing this project, were a true Godsend to me.

Foreword

This book doesn't claim to be the last word in understanding the book of **Revelation**, since new insights are being given to others year by year by the Holy Spirit. This book only contains those insights given to me during personal Bible study and prayer and meditation on certain passages of scripture. I only ask that those who read this book "check out" the views given with the Holy Spirit before voicing their dissent.

As an example of the prompting of the Spirit, let me relate what happened in 1981 as I was reading **Rev 17**. I always ask for revelation before beginning to read, and as I read this chapter, the Spirit of God mentioned quietly that this chapter was the key to understanding the entire book. When I complained that I didn't understand who the harlot and the beast would be, He said, "*It's in the words, son. Read the words.*" I read the chapter again and still didn't understand the harlot and the beast, and again heard the soft voice saying, "*Read the words, the meaning is in the words.*" This took place a third time, and this time the voice grew more insistent and measured, "*Read...the...words,...son. Read...the...words.*" As I read the difficult passage a fourth time, the meaning of the words suddenly became clear, just as it had to the apostle John so many years before. At the conclusion of this key chapter, John never asked the angel who spoke to him for further explanation of the vision. He knew who the harlot and the beast were, beyond all doubt.

You might ask why I have waited 22 years to write this down. It is a good question. I have taught the book of **Revelation** in Adult Sunday School, in Youth Sunday School, in Foreign Bible Schools in many nations, in Spirit Life Bible College, and in Home Groups. During all this teaching, it was evident that the unveiling of chapter **17** was more difficult to believe than any other chapter, and in a few cases resulted in scoffing. Consequently, I have decided to spend more time in the validation of the identity of the beast than I usually spend in the teaching of this chapter.

In the last few years I have been asked to re-teach the book of **Revelation** in many of the churches and Bible schools overseas, even though I had taught it in the past year. It seems that there is a consuming hunger among Christians in second and third world nations to know about coming events in the prophetic calendar. Praise God!

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Two Keys to Understanding Revelation

There are two important keys to understanding the book of Revelation. They are:

1. Observing the past, present, and future tenses
2. Knowing the meaning of the shifting of the scenes

The **first key** may be illustrated by Jesus' words in **1:19**,

*Write the things which you have seen,
and the things which are,
and the things which will take place after this..*

The first line talks about past things, which Jesus mentions in **1:20**,

*The mystery of the seven stars
which you **saw** in My right hand...*

This covers all of Chapter 1. The next line talks about present things, which covers Chapters 2 and 3, and may be illustrated by **2:1**,

*To the angel of the church of Ephesus **write**,
'These things **says** He who **holds** the seven
stars in His right hand,
who **walks** in the midst of the
seven golden lampstands.'*

The underlined words are all in the present tense. However, after Chapter 3, the future tense is indicated by the words in **4:1**,

***After these things** I looked, and behold,
a door standing open in heaven.*

Therefore, everything written after Chapter 3 refers to something future to the apostle John at the time of the writing of Revelation, about 96 AD.

The **second key** is the meaning of the shifting of the scenes from heaven to earth, back to heaven, back to earth, etc. Since the people in heaven cannot see the earth, (cp. **2 Chron 34:28**), consider that God is showing his saints in heaven a similitude or "movie" of the coming events on the earth. After viewing the first "Act", then the scene shifts to earth where that action takes place. Then the next "Act" is shown in heaven, followed by identical events occurring on the earth. In this way, God is able to give his risen saints a "ringside seat" watching future events just before they take place. Of course we recognize that all of these events are future to our time, but we must consider the shifting of the scenes from John's viewpoint, from heaven after **Rev 4:1-2**.

1

Blessed Are Those Who Keep This Prophecy

Notice that this is the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him, not that of John, and that Jesus sent an angel to show it to John.

In **1:3** John said that the person who reads and hears the words of this prophecy, and keeps those things which are written in it, is **blessed**, for the time is near. Revelation is meant to be a blessing, not a puzzle to the Church at large. It is meant to be **understood**. How can people keep (in mind) those things that are written in it, unless they understand those things and are encouraged by them? This book is aimed at the encouragement of the saints by unveiling the meaning of the difficult passages of Revelation, and correlating them with the Old Testament prophecies found in **Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah**.

The word “Asia” which John referred to in **1:4** does not refer to the continent of Asia, nor to Asia Minor, but instead to the westernmost province of the latter, about 300 miles wide from west to east, and 220 miles long from north to south. This province contained the seven local churches mentioned in chapters 2 and 3.

Verse **7** mentions Jesus coming with clouds, and that every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and that all the tribes of the earth shall mourn because of him. This refers to the time of the Second Coming, not the “Rapture” or *Parousia* (personal presence of the Lord), at which only the resurrected saints and those living saints who are looking for Jesus to return, shall see him (**Heb 9:28**). An interesting detail is that even those who crucified him and are now tormented in hell, located in the depths of the earth (**Eze 32:18**), will see Jesus return to take up residency on planet Earth. Also, the clouds spoken of are not the fluffy, atmospheric things we see in the sky, but are instead huge groups of believers gathered behind Jesus, so many that they darken the sky, and look like clouds. The same terminology is used in **1 Thess 4:17**, where groups of believers are caught up in “clouds” to meet Jesus in the air at the *Parousia*.

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In verse **9** John says that he is our companion in tribulation (of our flesh), and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. It is important to note that the kingdom is the demonstration of the power of Jesus over that of Satan, as the captive is set free, and God's people are delivered and blessed. Patience is needed in addition to faith, in order to inherit the promises of God, **Heb 6:12**.

John said that he was "in the Spirit" on the Lord's day (Sunday), which means that he was setting his mind on things of the Spirit, when he saw the vision of the powerful, risen Jesus, whose face shined as the sun shining in its strength, and out of whose mouth went a sharp two-edged sword (The Word of God). John fell at His feet as if he were dead, and the risen Lord commanded him to write the things which he **had seen**, and the things which **are**, and the things which **will take place after this**. This is a command to write about things past, present, and future. Jesus explained that the seven stars which John saw in His right hand were the angels or messengers of the seven churches of Asia, and the seven golden lampstands were the seven churches. The writing was to be sent to the seven churches (v.11) to warn and to encourage.

Let's talk about the meaning of the seven churches of Asia: The first meaning is the literal one of seven local churches, distinguished from each other only by location. They are the local churches of the cities of Ephesus, Smyrna (modern Izmir), Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, respectively. But there is a second meaning, which is that each of these churches represents the worldwide Christian Church during a specific period of history from the death and resurrection of Jesus to His return in the *Parousia*. The Christian Church during these periods has the characteristics of one of the above seven local churches. The time period which each represents is as follows:

| | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Ephesus..... | The Apostolic Church..... | 32--100 AD |
| Smyrna..... | The Persecuted Church..... | 100--312 AD |
| Pergamos..... | The Worldly Church..... | 312--500 AD |
| Thyatira..... | The Pagan Church..... | 500-1517 AD |
| Sardis..... | The Reformation Church..... | 1517-1750 AD |
| Philadelphia..... | The Missionary Church..... | 1750--Present |
| Laodicea..... | The Apostate Church..... | 1900--Present |

2

Messages to Four Churches of Asia

Ephesus: The Apostolic Church 32–100 AD

Jesus' message to the local church at Ephesus is contained in **2:1-7**. He complimented the people on their works, labor, patience, hatred of evil, perseverance, and discernment of who stands in the office of apostle. He said that they had not grown weary in His service, but they had lost their first love for Him. The Lord looked at this loss of love so seriously that unless they repented, and did the first works of love, He would remove that church from Ephesus altogether. Evidently, the Ephesians did not have a lasting sense of the love of Christ for them, and so did not respond with love for Him. This may be inferred from Paul's words in **Eph 3:17-19**:

- 17 *That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith;
 that you, being rooted and grounded in love,*
- 18 *may be able to comprehend with all the saints
 what is the width and length and depth and height—*
- 19 *to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge;
 that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

The first works of love when we are born again into the family of God, involve taking time each day to fellowship with Him in Bible study and prayer. We look forward to this time each day, and it is most precious to the Lord, as well as to us. It is this personal relationship with the Lord that empowers all works of love, and is what the Ephesians lacked. The Apostolic Church from 32-100 AD grew rapidly, but also neglected this personal fellowship with the Lord.

Please note that in verse 7 the Lord said:

*“He who has an ear, let him hear
what the Spirit says to the churches.
To him who overcomes I will give to eat
from the tree of life,
which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”*

The first two lines were repeated to the other churches in **2:11, 2:17**,

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2:29, 3:6, 3:13, and 3:22. This is the last mention of the Church on earth until **22:16**, where Jesus said that He has sent his angel to testify these things in the churches. In **13:9** the apostle John said:

If any man has an ear, let him hear.

Why are the churches not mentioned in this passage? Because the Church Age is finished, the ready believers have been “raptured” or taken to heaven in **4:1**, and the unready believers are no longer considered to be the Church.

It is interesting to note also that the tree of life is in the midst of the Paradise of God. In **Lk 23:43**, Jesus told the thief on the cross:

“Today you will be with me in Paradise.”

We know that Jesus’ body spent three days and three nights in the grave, and that Jesus spent some time in the lower regions of the earth preaching to the evil spirits in prison (**1 Pet 3:19**). Putting these scriptures together, we can surmise that Paradise was in the lower regions of the earth, and had two compartments, as the parable of the rich man and Lazarus tells us in **Lk 16:19-31**. However, Jesus moved Paradise to heaven after His resurrection, since **Rev 22:2** points out that the tree of life is in the middle and on both sides of the river of life that flows from the throne of God. This puts Paradise in heaven, in the New Jerusalem.

Smyrna: The Persecuted Church 100–312 AD

The Lord’s message to the church at Smyrna, found in **2:8-11**, is all complimentary. He didn’t upbraid them for any sins or lack of love. He did warn the people that persecution and imprisonment were coming. They would have tribulation for ten days. There are two measures of time used in the Word of God. One is that a day is as a thousand years to God, **2 Pet 3:8**. In this case, the tribulation would last for 10,000 years, which is obviously not the meaning. The other time measure is that a day is as one year, **Num 14:34, Eze 4:5-6, and Dan 9:24-27**. This is the meaning in **Rev 2:10**. History records that the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius began a severe persecution of the church at Smyrna in 162 AD, lasting about ten years, in which Polycarp of Smyrna was martyred along with many of his friends.¹ In fact, there were many more persecutions of Christians throughout the Roman world until 312 AD and the advent of the emperor Constantine, who

legalized and even favored Christianity during his reign. The modern Turkish city of Izmir, with a population of 1.5 million, stands on the old site of Smyrna.

Pergamos: The Worldly Church 312–500 AD

The message to the church at Pergamos is contained in **2:12-17**. Jesus commended the people for holding fast to His name and to their faith in the face of deadly persecution.

In **2:13**, Jesus twice called Pergamos the place “*where Satan’s throne is*” and “*where Satan dwells.*” According to the New Unger’s Bible Dictionary, “**The city was greatly addicted to idolatry, and its grove, which was one of the wonders of the place, was filled with statues and altars.**” In 1878 AD, the German engineer Carl Human discovered the great altar of Zeus, which some believe Jesus referred to as “Satan’s throne.”

But the Lord brought the accusation against the church at Pergamos of permitting the doctrine of Balaam in the church, which taught God’s people to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual sins. He urged them to repent, or He would fight against them with the sword of His mouth. This fearsome weapon, His spoken Word, is the instrument which will destroy earth’s armies gathered against Him at Armageddon.

This church is the pattern of the Christian Church from 312-500 AD. Although many were faithful to the Lord, and gave their lives to prove it, yet the offices of apostle and prophet, so clearly marking the New Testament, were abolished during these 200 years. This loss meant the beginning of a long slide into paganism for the Church, since those filling these offices could lay a strong foundation of doctrine, and keep the Church in line with the teachings of Christ and the first apostles. These things were missing, however, and the Church began to lose its way, trusting in ritual instead of substance, and emphasizing outward appearance instead of inward faith.

Thyatira: The Pagan Church 500–1517 AD

The church at Thyatira showed love, service, faith, patience, and had a growing record of good works. But it permitted within it a woman who was teaching and seducing many men into sexual immorality and

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into eating things sacrificed to idols. The message of **2:18-29** is severe against this woman and her consorts, threatening her with sickness, and her men friends with great tribulation (of their flesh), unless they repent. Jesus implied that the time for the woman to repent was past, and she didn't do it, therefore her sickbed would come soon. Jesus also said that He would kill her children, and that all the churches would know that He searches the minds and hearts, and gives everyone according to their works. This implies that what is in the mind and heart eventually manifests itself in works. If we desire to be rewarded for good works, we must keep our hearts and minds clean and filled with godly things.

An interesting promise is the one Jesus gave to the church at Thyatira in **2:26-27**:

- 26** *And he who overcomes and keeps My works until the end,
to him will I give power over the nations----*
- 27** *'He shall rule them with a rod of iron;
They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels'---*
as I also have received from My Father;...

Jesus was quoting the promise of the Father to Himself in **Ps 2:9**, and repeated it to His people who overcome and keep His works until the end. These will rule and reign with Jesus over the nations during the Millennium, or thousand year reign of Christ on earth, seen in **20:6**.

The church at Thyatira is representative of the Christian Church which sank into paganism from 500-1517 AD. This church was characterized by dead works performed without love, rituals performed without the Spirit, cruel and severe punishments for trifling offenses, and gross immorality. These years truly were the dark ages for the Church, and consequently for western civilization also.

3

Messages to Three Churches of Asia

Sardis: The Reformation Church 1517–1750 AD

Jesus' message to the church at Sardis is found in **3:1-6**. It is mostly a message of disgust for a body that professes to be alive, but is dead. Not only were the people spiritually dead, but also the few things of God that remained, were ready to die. They were warned to remember how they have received and heard the gospel, to repent of their deadness, and to strengthen the good things that remained. The people also were not watchful of the appointed time for their influence to be spread in the province of Asia, and were careless of the time for the Lord's return, and of their part in carrying out the "Great Commission" of **Mt 28:19-20** and **Mk 16:15-18**. Therefore Jesus said that He would come upon them unexpectedly as a thief. This is a solemn warning, because a thief steals something valuable. The Lord would never take away their gifts or callings, since He promised in **Rom 11:29**:

For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

Then what would be taken away? Their appointed time to do the works which they were established to do. These works have to be done in their appointed time, or they are worthless to God. Worthless works mean no reward. So the church at Sardis would lose its reward unless it repented and did the perfect (timely) works. But there were a few individuals who were spiritually alive and who were living holy lives. Jesus said that these were worthy of walking with Him in white. This refers to the robe of righteousness that Jesus gives to those who overcome, **3:5** and **Isa 61:10**.

Jesus also said that He would not blot out from the Book of Life the names of those who overcome, but He would confess their names before the Father and before His angels. Three times the Bible mentions blotting out names from the Book of Life, **Ex 32:33**, **Ps 69:28**, and here, **Rev 3:5**, and never speaks of entering names into this book when people are born into the family of God. The inescapable conclusion is that the names of all people are written into the Book of Life when they are conceived in the womb. After they reach the age of discretion and

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consistently refuse the revelation of God through nature or through the gospel for an undetermined time period, only then are their names blotted out of the Book of Life. This answers the question of the destination of children who die in the womb, or in their early years. They are received into heaven. Jesus seemed to validate this view when he said in **Mt 18:3**:

*“Unless you are converted and become as little children,
you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”*

The church at Sardis is representative of the Christian Church at the time of the Protestant Reformation and following events from 1517-1750 AD. Although the Roman Catholic Church was largely dead, and caught up in ritual, greed, and a hunger for political power, yet there were a few such as Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Knox, and the Wesley brothers who brought revival and reformation which slowly spread throughout the Christian world.

Philadelphia: The Missionary Church 1750 AD–Present

As Jesus began to speak to the church at Philadelphia, He called Himself in **3:7**:

*“He who has the key of David,
He who opens and no one shuts,
and shuts and no one opens”*

The Lord was referring to the key to His treasury. In the analogous passage of **Isa 22:22**, Shebna the treasurer of the temple, was replaced by Eliakim, a more faithful steward. Eliakim was given the key of David to open and to shut the door to the temple treasury. Jesus is the faithful steward who opens and shuts the door of His heavenly treasury, and gives the physical and spiritual gifts and opportunities that are in it to selected people upon the earth.

The message to the church at Philadelphia is found in **3:7-13**, and is entirely one of praise. The Lord said that He had given the people an open door (of gifts and opportunity) that nobody could shut, because they had some strength, had kept His word, and had not denied His name. Because the church had persevered in spreading the gospel, Jesus promised to keep its people from the time of trial which would come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. This was a pledge to take this type of church to heaven before the time of Tribulation occurs on the earth, sparing them from even passing through

the time of the fiery trial. This is a direct reference to a Pre-Tribulation *Parousia*, and is in harmony with the Lord's method of removing His faithful ones before bringing judgment to others (see chapter 4).

Jesus also said that the one who overcomes would be made a pillar in the temple of God, and that he would not go out any more (from the presence of God). This means that he would be a "mainstay" in the body of believers who are God's temple (**Eph 2:21-22**), and that he would never leave the presence of God again, no matter where he traveled in the universe, because there would be no sin in his body. He would also have written upon him the name of God, the name of the New Jerusalem, and the new name that Jesus would give him.

The church at Philadelphia is representative of the missionary movement of the Christian Church from 1750 AD to the present time. It is a movement that began with the Moravian missionaries, and burns with desire to share the gospel of the Kingdom of Christ with those ethnic groups that have never heard or seen it before. This movement within the Church will finish the job of the "Great Commission" within the generation that saw Israel again become a nation in 1948 AD. As Jesus said in **Mt 24:14**:

*"And this gospel of the kingdom
will be preached in all the world
as a witness to all the nations (ethnay),
and then the end will come."*

Laodicea: The Apostate Church 1900 AD–Present

Jesus' message to the church at Laodicea is found in **3:14-22**. It is a message of rebuke and chastening, for this church had nothing in it to compliment, but instead had departed from the truth, and because its people had trusted in physical riches, they thought that they needed nothing else. They neither hated nor loved the Lord, but were completely indifferent to Him. He didn't matter to them, and certainly didn't reign in their lives. Jesus said that He would spew (vomit) them out of his mouth if they didn't become zealous and repent. He told them that they were poor, blind, and naked, and also warned them not to pursue physical wealth, but to seek from Him (character of) gold refined through the fire (trials), a white robe (of righteousness) to cover their nakedness, and eye salve (of revelation) that they might see.

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Jesus closed with the well-known words of **3:20**:

“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.”

Remember that Jesus was talking to Christians here. He was saying that Christians must hear His voice, and open the door of their hearts to Him. The walk with the Lord is a daily, even a moment-by-moment walk with Him, and it is up to us to keep the door open for Him continually. Many Christians have used this verse in witnessing to unbelievers, but they have twisted it out of its true context.

The church at Laodicea is representative of the modern Christian Church from 1900 AD to the present time. This Church has co-existed with the missionary movement, and has not really been interested in spreading the gospel, but rather has been interested in exploiting the nations for their wealth, and has used gospel work for this end. In the United States at the end of the 20th Century, televangelism has been used effectively by some to amass huge fortunes to build big churches and bigger empires so that they may be well known in the earth. The true churches of the missionary movement are making every effort so that Jesus may be well known in the earth.

4

Translated to Heaven!

Chapter 4 opens with the words “*After these things*” which means after the present Church Age. John saw an open door in heaven and heard a voice **like** a trumpet telling him to come up there and the voice would show him things which must take place after this. From **4:2** we can see that immediately John had a vision of God’s throne in heaven, and of many of God’s creatures surrounding the throne. This was not a physical translation of the apostle to heaven, but was a vision of the translation of the Christian Church to heaven before the judgments of the Tribulation period begin in **8:7**. It is worthwhile to note here that **most of the book of Revelation is in chronological order or sequence**. Only in two places is this pattern broken: in chapter **12:1-5** there is a “flashback” into Israel’s history, and in chapters **17** and **18** there is another “flashback” where an angel gives John the identity of mystery Babylon and the beast, and details of the destruction of Babylon mentioned in **16:19**.

Comparing **4:1** with other New Testament passages of the *Parousia* found in **1 Cor 15:51-52** and in **1 Thess 4:17-18**, it is evident that Jesus will descend into the earth’s lower atmosphere (Greek: *aer*) with the shout of an archangel and the blowing of a trumpet loudly enough literally to “awaken the dead”. These are the sounds that John heard, after which he immediately beheld the heavenly scene. His vision was symbolic of the Church’s translation to heaven.

In the Christian Church today there are three views of the timing of the Church’s translation: Pre-Tribulation, Mid-Tribulation, and Post-Tribulation. This author has an overwhelming body of evidence from both Old and New Testaments to support a Pre-Tribulation translation, but this book will not give all the arguments in its favor, since it would require too much space, and subtract from the flow of the book. Nevertheless, we should look at the Old Testament pattern of God’s dealings with His people.

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In the days of Noah, God warned the people of the judgment to come, then removed His people from the scene by shutting them in the ark, and finally brought the judgment of the Great Flood. Although they passed through the time of judgment, they rose above it and were safe.

In the days of Lot, God warned the people of Sodom and Gomorrah of pending destruction by Lot's own mouth, then removed to safety Lot and the remnant of his family that heeded the warning, and finally brought fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed the cities of the plain. It is interesting to note Jesus' words in **Lk 17:29-30**:

29 *“But on the day that Lot went out of Sodom
it rained fire and brimstone from heaven
and destroyed them all.*

30 *Even so will it be in the day
when the Son of Man is revealed.”*

This means that within 24 hours of the catching away of the Church, fire and brimstone probably from an atomic war will devastate the earth. In fact, the Greek verb for “catching away” (*harpazo*) used in **1 Thess 4:17**, means “to snatch away to prevent destruction.” Since the catching away of the Church appears to take place in **Rev 4:1**, and the Tribulation begins in **8:7** with what appears to be an atomic war, it seems that chapters **4, 5, 6, 7**, and the beginning verses of chapter **8** occur within 24 hours of time on earth.

In the first destruction of Jerusalem in 587 BC, God warned Judah for many years by the prophets that continued sin would bring death and destruction to Jerusalem and its temple. Before this happened, God removed His faithful people to Babylon by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar in 598 BC to spare them (see **Jer 24:5**). God likened these Jews to “good figs.” Then God's judgment fell on the rest of the Jews, the “rotten figs” of **Jer 24:8-10** and Jerusalem was destroyed.

In the second destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, Jesus warned the people of the coming disaster in **Lk 19:42-44**, and told His own disciples what to do in **Lk 21:20-22**. When the Roman armies led by Vespasian closed in on Jerusalem in 70 AD in response to the massacre of the Roman garrison there by the Zealots, they withdrew from the city for about a month. The cause was the death of the Emperor Nero, and the subsequent unrest in Rome, during which Vespasian was proclaimed

Emperor, and his army marched toward Rome to enforce his installation.³ During this time those people who heeded Jesus' warning fled from the city and escaped to the city of Pella in the Arabah (valley of the Jordan). Then the Roman armies returned under Vespasian's son Titus and again besieged Jerusalem, took the city, and slaughtered more than a million Jews within it.⁴

These examples show that the Lord first warned, then gave escape opportunity to His people, then brought judgment. It is a pattern to be repeated at the catching away of the Church before the Tribulation judgments begin.

The awesome picture of the throne of God is described in **4:3-5**. God himself is described as having a reddish appearance, which is consistent with his description "as the appearance of fire" in **Eze 1:27**. The rainbow around his throne is green, symbolizing eternal life. Around the throne are 24 elders sitting on their own thrones, clothed in white robes and crowned with golden crowns. It is important to note that these elders represent the entire Church taken to heaven by the *Parousia*. These represent the entire "royal priesthood" of **1 Pet 2:9**, just as the 24 offices of priests of **1 Chr 24:1-19** represented the whole people of Israel in the Old Testament. They have already received their "robes of righteousness" as mentioned in **Isa 61:10**, signifying their salvation through Jesus, and receiving God's righteousness in place of their own. They have already been rewarded with crowns for overcoming the world, the flesh, and the devil. This means that they have gone through the **Bema** (reward) judgment of Christ, according to **2 Cor 5:10**.

A little later in **Rev 5:9** these saints sing a song of gratitude:

*"For you were slain
and have redeemed us to God by your blood
out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation..."*

Since there are more than 16,000 different tongues spoken by the people of the earth, it is certain that the 24 elders represent the entire Church that was looking for Jesus to return, **Heb 9:28** and **2 Tim 4:8**. It should be mentioned here that the parable of the 10 virgins of **Mt 25:1-13** implies that one half of the Church will be left behind at the *Parousia* because they were not ready for the Lord's return, for the light of their

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witness had been extinguished. They are called Christians but they lived like the world. They will endure the Tribulation, and many will be killed for their subsequent repentance and testimony.

The seven Spirits of God, burning before his throne, represent the seven Spirits mentioned in **Isa 11:2**, the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of understanding, the Spirit of counsel, the Spirit of might, the Spirit of knowledge, and the Spirit of the fear of the Lord.

The four living creatures of verses **6-8** are doubtless the seraphim, for they have six wings and cry "*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty*" which is consistent with the picture of the seraphim in **Isa 6:2-3**. It seems that these seraphim lead the Church of the Living Christ in heavenly praise and worship to the Father who created all things for his own pleasure.

5

The One Who is Worthy

God the Father, while seated on his throne, was holding a scroll in his right hand, written on both front and back sides and sealed with seven seals of wax as was customary in Bible times. The one who would open the scroll had to break open the first seal, read a few lines until he came to the second seal. He then had to break open that seal, read more lines until he came to the third seal. This process continued until all the seals had been broken and the scroll had been entirely read. **However, this scroll is the written record of the seven years of tribulation on the earth before Jesus returns to set up his physical kingdom upon the earth.** If no person was found worthy to open this scroll and begin the events of these seven years, Satan would continue to deceive and destroy mankind forever. That is why the apostle John wept, because only mankind was qualified to open the scroll, but nobody in heaven, in hell, or on the earth was found worthy to open it. *“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Rom 3:23)*

Suddenly, one of the elders told John that the **Lion of Judah** had been found worthy to open the scroll and loose its seven seals. John saw a bloody Lamb stand forth, having seven horns and seven eyes and representing the crucified Jesus. The horns represent political power over the seven continents of the earth, and the eyes represent the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth to bring God’s plans to pass. After the Lamb took the scroll out of the hand of God, the four seraphim and the 24 elders representing the entire risen Church fell down and worshiped the Lamb of God. Notice that they had golden bowls of incense which represent the prayers of saints. Incense has represented prayer in both the Old Testament (**Ex 30:1-9**) and the New Testament (**Rev 8:3**).

In verses **9** and **10** the living creatures and 24 elders sang:
9 *“You are worthy to take the scroll,
 And to open its seals;
 For you were slain,*

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*And have redeemed us to God by Your blood
Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,
10 And have made us kings and priests to our God
And we shall reign on the earth.”*

This latter will be realized during the Millennium, the thousand-year reign of Christ on the earth during which the people of God in their glorified bodies will reign over different regions of the earth: villages, towns, cities, states, and nations. In verse **11** the number of worshipers in the angelic choir is a huge but indefinite number, very unlike that of **Rev 9:16**, where 200 million men is clearly meant.

In verse **12** this choir sang a song of praise:

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

Notice that in this song, Jesus is acclaimed worthy to receive riches, wisdom, strength, and blessing in addition to the glory, honor, and power ascribed to God the Father in **Rev 4:11**. All these will be necessary to rule the earth with righteousness through his saints during the Millennium.

In verse **13** John caught a glimpse of every creature wherever they happened to be, in heaven (the air), on earth, under the earth, or in the sea, giving praise to God and to Jesus the Lamb. The Greek word for creature in this case mostly refers to animals. Why are they praising God and Jesus? Because they are excited that the entire creation is soon to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God, **Rom 8:21**. This will take place at the advent of the Millennium.

It should be noticed that each type of creature God has made will praise the Lamb at this time. First, in heaven the seraphim, the other angels, and the risen saints will do the praising of the Lamb who was slain. Then on the earth, under the earth, in the atmosphere, and in the sea, all the animals of every sort together with the saints who were left behind at the *Parousia* will praise both God and the Lamb.

6

Snapshot of the Final Seven Years

The scene is still in heaven. In chapter 6 the Lord gave his people a “snapshot” of the entire Tribulation period of 7 years. This is clear from the fact that the Lamb of God opened 6 of the 7 seals binding the Tribulation scroll in this chapter. The 7th seal is the authorization to actually begin the Tribulation and will not be opened until chapter 8.

In this chapter each of the four seraphim spoke the word “**Come,**” in turn, thus authorizing the beginning of each of the first four events characterizing the Tribulation period.

1st Seal: The first horse was white, symbolizing a conqueror. We have all heard the expression “*like a man on a white horse,*” meaning someone who rises to conquer all opposition and is acclaimed by the people. The Spirit riding this horse was given a bow, symbolizing the swift waging of war. He was also given a crown, symbolizing rulership over the earth. This is not Jesus, but the Antichrist Spirit of the beast, who will rise to power during the first part of the Tribulation.

2nd Seal: The second horse was fiery red, symbolizing war. The rider on it is the Spirit of War, and he was authorized to take peace away from the earth. He was given a great sword with which to kill the people of all nations.

3rd Seal: The third horse was black, symbolizing famine. Its rider, the Spirit of Famine, had a pair of scales in his hand with which to measure a quart of wheat balanced against a day’s wages (denarius) and 3 quarts of barley balanced against a day’s wages. This prophesied the cost of such food during the Tribulation period. During this time grain will be very scarce. But the production of oil and wine will not be affected. Both are symbols of the Holy Spirit, who will not be taken away from the earth during the Tribulation. In addition, both olives and grapes are very drought resistant, suggesting that the famine of grains is brought on by drought, which is punishment for sin, **Deut 28:23-24.**

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4th Seal: When the fourth seal was opened, a pale green horse emerged with two riders on its back. These are the Spirit of Death and the Spirit of Hell. The latter is identified later in **9:11** as Abaddon or Apollyon. These were given power over **one fourth of the earth**, to kill its people with war, famine, death, and beasts of the earth. We have heard much talk of the “four horsemen of the Apocalypse”, but the Bible tells us there are not four but five. There are four horses but five horsemen. Also, note that these spirits were given power over one fourth of the earth, not one fourth of the earth’s population. This fact implies power over the continent of **Asia**, which is the only continent having 25% or more of the earth’s land mass. Let us look at the following table of the land mass and population of the continents:⁵

| <u>Continent</u> | <u>% of Land</u> | <u>Population</u> | <u>% Total Pop.</u> |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Asia | 30.1 | 3,688,000,000 | 60.7 |
| Africa | 20.2 | 805,000,000 | 13.2 |
| N. America | 16.2 | 481,000,000 | 7.9 |
| S. America | 11.9 | 347,000,000 | 5.7 |
| Europe | 6.6 | 729,000,000 | 12.0 |
| Australia/Oceania | 5.7 | 31,000,000 | 0.5 |
| Antarctica | <u>9.3</u> | <u>0</u> | <u>0.0</u> |
| | 100.0 | 6,080,000,000* | 100.0 |

*Figures for population don’t add exactly due to roundoff.

5th Seal: Verses **9-11** reveal that in front of the throne of God there is an altar of incense after which the altar of incense in the Tabernacle of Moses was patterned. Under this altar appeared the souls of those believers who had been slain during the Tribulation because of their testimony and the Word of God they were confessing. Since the risen saints in chapter **4** have already received their white robes and gold crowns, and these souls under the altar were just now receiving their white robes, the evidence is compelling that these are some of the Tribulation martyrs. Their number will not be complete until the Tribulation is completely finished.

6th Seal: The opening of the sixth seal takes place at the end of the 7 year Tribulation period. Verses **12-14** show that cataclysmic events take place here. The powers of earth and heaven are shaken:

Snapshot of the Final Seven Years

- A mighty earthquake displaces every mountain and island.
- A great meteor shower hits the earth.

These events are consistent with **Rev 16:17-21**, **Isa 13:10-14**, and **Isa 24:19-20** which also record that:

- The earth nutates (nods) and changes its orbit.

When the heavens depart like a rolled-up scroll, men know that these are God's judgments on them, and they hide in caves of the mountains and cry out for the rocks to fall on them and hide them from the face of God and from the wrath of the Lamb of God, for no sinner can stand guiltless before Him.

7

Sealing the Jewish Evangelists

From chapter 4 through chapter 6, the scene has been in heaven. Now just before the beginning of the Tribulation, the scene shifts to earth.

In verse 1 John wrote:

*After these things I saw four angels
standing at the four corners of the earth,
holding the four winds of the earth,
that the wind should not blow on the earth,
on the sea, or on any tree.*

If we compare this passage with **Dan 7:2** and **Zech 6:5-8**, it seems that these four angels are the drivers of the Lord's chariots who usually strive with the great "sea" of mankind in order to bring about the Lord's purposes in the earth. Verse 2 says that they have been given authority to harm the earth and the sea. See also **Isa 66:15**. They are holding back any judgment on the earth and sea until another angel with the seal of God seals the servants of God on their foreheads. This seal may be invisible to men, but prevents God's judgments from harming them. Evil men may kill them, but God's judgments will not. If we compare verse 3 with **Rev 14:1**, we can see that the nature of this seal is the name of God himself. His name is written on their foreheads.

Verses 4-8 show that these servants are 144,000 **Jewish people**, from all the 12 tribes of Israel. If we correlate this with **Isa 66:7-9,19**, we can say that these Jews are evangelists who shall go throughout the world, declaring the gospel to all nations. There are 12,000 from each tribe excluding the tribe of Dan. (The tribe of Joseph means the tribe of Ephraim.) Why is Dan excluded? The name "Dan" means **judging**. And Israel is not to be judged or to be judging at this time, but to be exalted.

In verse 9 the scene shifts to heaven. It is important to note that there appeared a **countless** multitude of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues. They were clad in white robes indicating salvation, and had

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palm branches indicating victory and peace in their hands. They were praising the Father and Jesus for giving them salvation. This is the main harvest of the earth. The 24 elders representing the Church of **5:8-10** were a smaller number, since they were not a countless host. In verses **13-17** one of these elders told the apostle John that the countless multitude had come out of “*the great tribulation*” and had washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. This refers to the 7 years of the Tribulation period. Remember that verses **9-17** are a heavenly “movie” of that which is to come, since the tribulation only begins in chapter **8**.

If we use the analogy of the harvest used in **Jam 5:7-8** to refer to the millions coming into the Kingdom of God, we can say that the Church represents the “first fruits” of the harvest, the Tribulation saints represent the main harvest, and the millennial saints represent the “gleaning”.

According to verse **17**,

*“for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne
will shepherd them and lead them
to living fountains of waters.*

And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

This refers to God removing every anguished memory of their lives on earth during the Tribulation period. The tears are those of extreme sadness and anguish for their relatives still suffering on the ravaged earth.

8

Nuclear War and Asteroid Destruction

7th Seal: The scene is still in heaven until verse 7. The opening of this seal authorizes the beginning of the Tribulation. Because of the awesomeness of this time, all heaven is silent for a half hour. It is well worth noting that the “Time of the End” in **Dan 11:35-40**, **Mt 24:13-14**, and **1 Cor 15:24** refers to the Tribulation, or the 70th 7 of **Dan 9:24-27**.

In verse **2**, the 7 angels who stand before God seem to be special angels. They are continually in God’s presence. We get an indication of who these are from the words of the angel Gabriel in **Lk 1:19**:

*“I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God,
and was sent to speak to you...”*

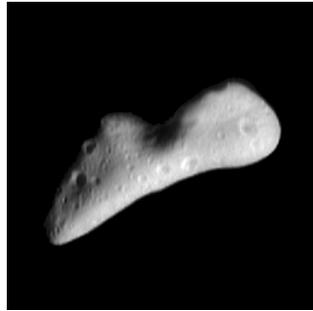
In **Jude 9**, Michael is called an archangel. This means a chief angel. In the Bible there seems to be no angel higher than archangels. The passage of **Isa 63:9** says that the angel of God’s presence saved the Israelites of old. The passage of **Dan 12:1** says that Michael is that great prince who stands watch over the people of Israel. The verse **Rev 12:7** implies that Michael is the captain of the Lord’s host of angels. The verse **Josh 5:14** indicates that the angel who spoke to Joshua and gave him the plan for conquering Jericho was the commander of the Lord’s army. Comparing **Ex 14:19** with **Ex 23:20-21** and **Dan 12:1** seems to indicate that Michael was the angel in the pillar of cloud and pillar of fire, and was also called “the angel of God” or “angel of the Lord”. So the angel of God’s presence is an archangel. So it seems likely that Gabriel is also an archangel. Verse **2** of **Rev 8** says that there are 7 of these angels who stand in the presence of God. **We may therefore conclude that these are the 7 archangels.**

Another angel having a golden censer then offered incense and the prayers of saints on the golden altar before the throne of God. This was a sweet fragrance of Christ (see **2 Cor 2:15**) in the nostrils of God. Then the angel filled the censer with fire from the altar and cast it to the earth to begin the Tribulation. These are ashes of judgment thrown upon the earth. This is God’s response to the prayers of the saints.

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1st Trumpet: The scene now shifts to the earth. With the sound of the first archangel's trumpet, verse 7 seems to indicate that nuclear war breaks out over part of the earth. Correlating this verse with the verses of **Eze 38-39**, **Dan 11:40-45**, and **Zech 12:2-9** shows that this is that invasion of Israel conducted by Russia (land of Magog) and her Muslim allies, in which most of the hosts led by Russia as well as the land of Russia itself are destroyed by fire and brimstone, and their blood rains down in a cloud of nuclear fallout. However, **Eze 39:6** also says that fire will come on those who live in security in the coastlands. I believe that this refers to most of North America, the United States and Canada, who together have more coastlands than any other nation.⁶ The United States has most of its population living in security on or near its three coasts, whereas Russia's population lives inland for the most part. There is a nuclear exchange between the U.S. and Russia.

2nd Trumpet: Verses 8 and 9 suggest that the great mountain burning with fire is a huge asteroid from space which hits one of the three oceans with devastating force. The earth orbits the sun at a speed of about 67,000 miles per hour.⁷ Even if the asteroid had no speed of its own, imagine our planet running into a mountain 10 miles wide at 67,000 miles per hour! The "mountain" seems to burn with fire as it hits the atmosphere, and the heat of friction at its edges is seen as fire. All the ships in the ocean that it strikes are destroyed by the monstrous waves generated by the impact, and all the sea creatures in that ocean are killed by the shock wave of the impact. The surface of the sea becomes red with their blood as their internal organs burst.



Asteroid Eros at 970 mile range

Nuclear War and Asteroid Destruction

The picture shows the asteroid Eros, 21 miles in length and 8 miles in width, as seen by the NEAR space probe. This is an example of an object which would cause worldwide destruction if it ever hit the earth.

3rd Trumpet: The great star of verses **10** and **11** may be a satellite of the earth containing a “dirty” H-bomb which, when de-orbited and exploded in the atmosphere, contaminates one third of the rivers and springs of water of the planet with its fallout of radiation. The “burning torch” is its re-entry trail through the atmosphere. It is interesting to note that Asia has one third of the Earth’s fresh water from its many rivers and from Lake Baikal which alone contains one fifth of Earth’s fresh water.⁸ This is another indicator of the main death toll coming from Asia. Some have said that the contamination of eastern Europe by the explosion in Chernobyl in 1986 satisfies this Third Trumpet prophecy, but the word Chernobyl does not mean “bitter” in the Russian language. Besides, it doesn’t fit the prophecy because the radiation didn’t come from a great “star” burning like a torch.

4th Trumpet: In verse **12**, one third of Earth’s natural light is smitten. This might be due to the nuclear bombs from the First Trumpet judgment stirring up huge clouds of debris which circle the earth, blotting out the sun for one third (4 hours) of the day, and the moon and stars for one third (4 hours) of the night. One of the clouds originated over Asia and another over North America. Another contributor to the clouds of debris could be volcanic eruptions set in motion by the impact of the asteroid with the earth during the Second Trumpet judgment. In verse **13**, the three woes are the curses yet to be given to the inhabitants of the earth by the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Trumpet judgments.

9

The Pit Opened–The Chinese March

5th Trumpet: The scene is still on Earth. The “star” that was fallen from heaven to earth is not a heavenly body like we see in the dark sky each night. It was instead an angel, probably Michael, who was given the key to the bottomless pit, which is the entrance to hell. In both testaments, angels are referred to as “stars” (see **Job 38:7**), and even the Lord Jesus referred to Himself as “the Bright and Morning Star” (**Rev 22:16**). Up to this time, the pit has been a one way trip downwards, being located in the “lower parts” or depths of the earth (**Eze 32:18,24**). Even Satan fears being cast into this pit at the bottom of which is torment. When he was cast out of heaven, he was cast **onto** the earth as **Isa 14:12** says:

*“How you are fallen from heaven,
O Lucifer, son of the morning!
How you are cut down to the ground,
You who weakened the nations!”*

Continuing further, **Isa 14:15** says:

*“Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol,
To the lowest depths of the Pit.”*

Since the book of **Isaiah** was written from 740-680 BC, Lucifer (Satan) had not yet been brought down into the pit, and nothing in the Bible since the prophet Isaiah mentions his casting into the pit until **Rev 20:1-3**, which is future to our time. It might be asked, “Who is in the pit at this time?” It is the abode of all unbelieving people who have died and certain evil angels according to **Eze 32:18-32** and **Jude 6**, respectively.

Verse **2** describes the bottomless pit as full of smoke like the smoke of a great furnace. This smoke darkened the sun and the air. In verses **3-6** what appeared to be locusts came out of the smoke and came upon the earth. They were given power like scorpions to sting every person not having the mark of God on their foreheads. They were told not to harm any vegetation of the earth, and were given authority to sting people for 5 months with the power of the sting of a scorpion. They were not given power to kill, but those tormented will desire to die, and

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death will not come to them. The description of the locust-like creatures in verses **7-11** show that they were demons with faces like men, hair like women, and teeth like lions. They had tails with stingers in them like scorpions, and were probably no larger than a few inches. The fact of their personality is established by their king, a like spirit, who is the angel of the bottomless pit called Abaddon or Apollyon (Destroyer). These demons understand commands, which speaks of intelligence. This is the first time that any personality from the pit has been allowed to arise to the surface of the earth. This demonic plague is the **first woe** mentioned by the angel of **8:13**.

6th Trumpet: In verses **13-14**, the sixth angel who blew the trumpet was given the command to release the 4 evil angels, bound or restrained at the great Euphrates River, who were prepared for a specific time to kill one-third (33%) of mankind. Once again, the killing field seems likely to be the continent of Asia, which contains more than 60% of humanity. The next most populous continent is Africa, containing only 13% of humanity. It is also significant to notice that the Euphrates River is entirely in Asia. **This war is for the supremacy of mainland Asia** and takes place before Armageddon.

Verse **16** depicts the killing instrument, an army of 200 million men. Back in 1962 after the Sino-Indian war over the province of Ladakh, Mao Tse Tung boasted that if necessary, China could field an army of 200 million men. This was before its population reached one billion. How much more credible is this boast today, when China's population has reached more than 1.3 billion? Today, India is the only other nation with a population around one billion, which could fulfill this prophecy. However, India's armaments are inferior to China's and historically, in marked contrast to China's belligerent character, India has rarely displayed military aggressiveness. In addition, India is a democracy, while China is a communist dictatorship ruled by military leaders. It is important to note that China, India, and Pakistan all possess nuclear weapons.

Verse **17** says that the men in the army had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow. **These colors have been China's colors for several thousand years.**⁹ The breastplates are not armor, but simply are similar to nameplates, the colors depicting the type of unit

The Pit Opened—The Chinese March

represented. When I was in Kashgar, China in June and July 2000, I saw on Chinese television officers from different units of their army being interviewed, and on their chests were rectangular pins, some red, some yellow, and some blue, referring to the different units.

The description of the “horses” in the vision, upon which the men were riding, fit exactly the description of modern tanks. Tanks were the vehicles of choice for transporting soldiers of the Russian army in WWII when they pushed the German army back to Berlin. Russian tanks were so crowded with soldiers in this campaign, that some fell off and were crushed under the treads of the following tanks. Remember that the apostle John had never seen any vehicle other than horse-drawn chariots. To him, anything upon which men were riding was a large “horse”.



Chinese Type 90 Main Battle Tank

He said that the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions. The most striking feature of lions' heads is their mane. Another is the easy rotation of the head through almost 270 degrees. The heads of the horses that John saw were tank turrets which rotate freely in all directions. I believe that he saw each turret covered with hundreds of narrow strips of dark “stealth-like” material fastened to the turret by one end to absorb radar signals from radar-controlled tank guns of the enemy. This would greatly reduce the radar “cross section” of each tank, would resemble the mane of a male African lion, and would be easy to implement. John said that out of the horses' mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone. The mouth is the tank cannon firing, letting off smoke and the smell of sulfur.

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Verse **19** says that the power of the “horses” was in their mouths and in their tails, the tails being like serpents, having heads with which they do harm. The tail of each “horse” is a towed artillery piece, the barrel of which has a bulbous flash-hider or muzzle brake at the end. All modern artillery has this characteristic.



Towed Chinese Type 66, 152 mm Gun-Howitzer

According to verse **20** :

*But the rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues,
did not repent of the works of their hands,
that they should not worship demons,
and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood,
which can neither see nor hear nor walk;*

This verse certifies the presumption of Asia as the battleground, since only in Hindu and Buddhist nations of southern and southeastern Asia do men worship idols of this type. Despite the carnage of war, those who survived still clung to their worship of idols, and did not repent of their murders, sorceries (*pharmakeia*, or drugs), sexual immorality, or thefts. These are the four main crimes in Southeast Asia today. The pressures of war and destruction will give the Asian people a good reason to exchange their gods for the true God, but most will refuse. God’s judgment is not only punitive, but redemptive also, in that it will give opportunity for mankind to call out to Jesus for salvation and deliverance.

10

The Tasty Little Scroll

The scene is still on the earth. John saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, having a rainbow on his head, his face shining like the sun and his feet resembling pillars of fire. This angel had a little scroll (booklet) open in his hand. The setting of his feet upon both land and sea meant that whatever was written in the little scroll would come upon the whole earth.

Verses **3-4** talk about 7 thunders who uttered their voices, but John was not permitted by God to write down what they had spoken. The Bible doesn't say who the thunders were or how they spoke, but if they had all spoken the same words together, John could not have discerned that there were 7. Therefore, it is fairly certain that they spoke one at a time. We may speculate that these were the voices of the 7 archangels prophesying specific events of the last 3½ years of the Tribulation upon the 7 continents of the earth, which if known, mankind would try to circumvent.

In verses **5-7** the mighty angel with the little scroll **lifted up his hand to heaven and swore by the Creator God** that there would be no more delay, but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, the mystery of God would be finished. The only other time in the Bible when an angel **lifted up his hands to heaven and swore by God** was in **Dan 12:7**, when he said that the duration of the greatest trouble that would ever afflict the nation of Israel (**Dan 12:1**) would be for a time, times, and half a time (3½ years) and when the power of the holy people would be completely shattered, all these things would be finished. Could this be the same angel in both cases, who is talking about the same thing? The passages are very similar. If so, then the mystery of God is that last 3½ years of the Tribulation period, which would be finished soon after the seventh angel sounded his trumpet.

In verses **8-11** John was commanded to take the little scroll from the hand of the angel. Then the angel told him to eat it; and it would make

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his stomach bitter, but it would be as sweet as honey in his mouth. John took the scroll, ate it, and found it to be as the angel had said. **This scroll contained the events of the last 3½ years of the Tribulation period.** The reason it tasted sweet as honey to John's mouth was that God's justice was finally being vindicated as the gross evil of that time was punished by the fitting judgments of God. These judgments are depicted in **Rev 16**. The reason that the scroll made John's belly bitter was that he realized that most of the earth's people would not repent of their deeds and as a result would spend eternity in the lake of fire.

The angel's final instruction to John was to prophesy again about peoples, nations, tongues, and kings. Now that he had swallowed the prophecies of God concerning the last 3½ years of the Tribulation, he must prophesy them verbally in order to bring them to pass. According to **Amos 3:7**:

*Surely the Lord God does nothing,
Unless he reveals His secret
to His servants the prophets.*

Also, according to **Ps 115:16**:

*The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's;
But the earth He has given to the children of men.*

These two passages show that God will do nothing unless he tells His plans to His servants the prophets, and they must speak them into the air in order to bring them to pass, since God has given dominion over the earth to the children of men. But then is God still sovereign? Yes, in every place in the universe except on the earth. He has given mankind sovereignty (dominion) over every living thing that moves on the earth, **Gen 1:28**. This sovereignty was originally given to sinless Adam and Eve, was lost after the Fall of man, and was regained by believers after the Cross and the Resurrection of Jesus. Since Jesus was given all power in heaven and earth after His resurrection (**Mt 28:18**), he gave this power to His body the Church (**Mk 13:34**), and in His name we reign with Him wherever we go.

If we believe in the sovereignty of God on this earth, as some denominations do, then God is to be blamed for wars, destructive acts of nature, and sickness. If He is in control of all things, then He is doing a pretty terrible job of controlling or restraining evil. No, this job has

been given to the Church of Jesus, and it is we who are doing the terrible job of restraining evil. But we are learning from our failures and we are gaining more revelation of how the Holy Spirit's power is expressed through us. In fact, the Holy Spirit restrains evil through the Church on earth, only if its members permit Him to lead and guide their lives. Therefore **we** are responsible to restrain evil until, as **2 Thess 2:7** says, "... *He is taken out of the way.*" Since the Holy Spirit never leaves the earth during the Tribulation (else nobody could be saved), this refers to the removal of the Holy Spirit's restraining power through the Church when it is raptured.

Insisting on the sovereignty of God on earth is quite similar to the doctrine of Muslims, which holds that anything that happens is the will of Allah. Such a belief leads to the absurd contradiction that the conversions of some Muslims from Islam to Christianity were actually Allah's will. In other words, Allah fought against himself. Let us not apply such faulty theology to the One who gave us freedom of choice in all matters, Who creates the fruit of our lips (**Isa 57:19**), and Who gave mankind sovereignty over the earth.

11

The Two Witnesses Terrify the Earth

The scene shifts to heaven. John was given a measuring reed and was told to measure the temple of God in Jerusalem, but to leave out the Court of the Gentiles, because this area has been given to the Gentiles who will have absolute power in Jerusalem for 42 months. This is exactly the period of 3½ years; the greatest trouble Israel has ever seen. It is also interesting to note that the Court of the Gentiles today contains the Muslim Dome of the Rock and some of the space to the south of it.

With verse 3, God's "movie camera" rolls again, showing John what will come upon the earth. Verses 3-4 introduce God's two witnesses. They will prophesy for 1260 days (exactly 3½ years using a 30 day month) clothed in sackcloth, denoting a call for repentance. These are the two "olive trees" standing before the God of the earth. This is the same language used in **Zech 4:11,14**:

11 *Then I answered and said to him,
 "What are these two olive trees,
 one at the right hand of the lampstand
 and the other at its left?"...*

14 *So he said, "These are the two anointed ones,
 who stand before the Lord of the whole earth."*

The fact that they were standing before the Lord in this scripture in the Old Testament, shows that they were Old Testament saints. Also, sackcloth as a sign of repentance was an Old Testament practice.

Verses 5-6 display the power (literally "authority") of these witnesses. During the time of their prophecy they can send fire from their mouths to devour their enemies, can cause a total drought of rain, can turn waters to blood, and can cause all sorts of plagues on the earth. Who are these two witnesses?

Verses 7-12 reveal that after the end of the last 3½ years of the Tribulation, the beast who has ascended out of the bottomless pit will

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overcome the two witnesses and kill them. The scene of the killing will be in Jerusalem, and many ethnic peoples will see their dead bodies lying in the street, and will not permit them to be buried, but will abuse them for 3½ days. This viewing of the bodies will not only take place in Jerusalem, but all over the world by means of television. The peoples will rejoice over the death of the two witnesses, and will celebrate and send gifts to each other, because these two men will have caused great torment for the peoples of the earth who had refused to repent of their sins. After 3½ days, the breath of life from God entered into the two men and they arose and stood up. Everyone who saw this was in great fear, since everyone knew they had been dead. Then a heavenly voice called them up to heaven, and their new glorified bodies ascended into a cloud, millions witnessing the scene through television. Again, who are these two witnesses?

They are very likely Enoch and Elijah. Both men were taken to heaven in their physical bodies without dying. Both were prophets from the Old Testament. One of them cannot be Moses since he had already died once, and **Heb 9:27** says that it is given unto men to die only once. Elijah caused fire to come down from heaven and burn up his enemies in **2 Ki 1:9-12**, and caused a 3½ year drought of rain upon Israel, according to **Jam 5:17**. These two witnesses received their glorified bodies at the end of the Tribulation. Remember that this is a picture of the events at the end of that 7 year period.

In the same hour of the resurrection of the two witnesses, there was a great earthquake in Jerusalem, and a tenth of the buildings of the city fell and 7000 people were killed. This concluded the “movie” of these events. The scene is still in heaven.

Verse **14** says:

The second woe is past.

Behold, the third woe is coming quickly.

The **second woe** refers to the killing of one third of mankind by the Chinese army, which has taken place in chapter **9**.

Then the seventh angel sounded his trumpet, finishing the mystery of God, beginning the last 3½ years of the Tribulation period, and announcing the **third woe** coming upon the earth in chapter **12**.

The Two Witnesses Terrify the Earth

Loud voices in heaven then announced the legal transferral of the kingdoms of this world to our Lord and to His Christ and that He shall reign forever and ever.

In verses **16-18**, the resurrected Church in heaven held a mighty worship service before the throne of God, thanking Him for using His great power to bring justice to the earth, both to the wicked and to the righteous. Those who destroy the earth will be destroyed, and God's servants and those who fear His name will be rewarded. Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen within it. This was followed by a great storm of thunder, lightning, hail, and an earthquake upon the earth.

12

Satan Grounded

The scene begins in heaven. The first 5 verses are a flashback in the history of Israel to the promise of Messiah and its fulfillment. Verses 1-2 say:

- 1 *Now a great sign appeared in heaven:
 a woman clothed with the sun,
 with the moon under her feet,
 and on her head a garland of twelve stars.*
- 2 *Then being with child,
 she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.*

In order to understand the first verse, we must refer to **Gen 37:9-10**, the dream of Joseph in which his father Jacob correctly identified himself as the sun, Joseph's step-mother as the moon, and his brothers as the stars. In the vision of **Rev 12**, the woman is the nation of Israel, Jacob is the sun, Leah is the moon, and Joseph and his 11 brothers are the 12 tribes which constitute the nation. Israel was pregnant with the Messiah, and was crying out to God for Him to come forth and be manifested.

Verses 3-4 speak of the appearance of a great red dragon having 7 heads and 10 horns, and 7 diadems on his heads. His tail cast a third of the stars of heaven to the earth, and the dragon stood in front of the woman, waiting to devour her child as soon as it was born. In verse 9 the dragon is identified as Satan himself. The "stars" that he cast to the earth are the angels that he enticed to follow his leadership, and as a consequence were cast out of heaven to the earth with him. I believe that the 7 heads of the dragon do not refer to earthly empires but to the characteristics of the dragon, namely; Pride (**Eze 28:17**), Lying (**Jn 8:44**), Hatred (**Jn 15:18**), Envy (**Isa 14:14**), Desire or Lust (**Jn 8:44**), Lawlessness (**2 Thess 2:7-9**), and Fear (**1 Jn 4:18**). In like manner, the 10 horns of the dragon may refer to the particular spirits that enforce Satan's will on the earth; namely, the spirits of Antichrist, war, famine, death, racism, witchcraft, sorcery (illicit drugs), false religion, perversion, and disease.

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The woman was pregnant with the Messiah even before Jacob was given the name "Israel." Since Satan is not like God who knows everything and is everywhere present, he didn't know when the Messiah would be born, but did know that He would come from the nation of Israel. Consequently, he had to remain in the atmosphere above Israel, waiting until the Messiah was born, so he could kill Him. This identifies Satan as the evil "Prince of Israel" corresponding to the Prince of Persia and Prince of Greece of **Dan 10:13, 20**. Verse **5** talks of the birth of the Messiah, but makes no mention of His earthly life, His death on the cross, or His resurrection. Only His ascension to the throne of God is mentioned. This verse concludes the flashback.

Verse **6** leaps over some 2000 years of history to the time of the last half of the Tribulation, still future to us. At that time the vision shows that Israel will flee into the wilderness for 1260 days (3½ years), where she is protected by God from the destruction that will come upon the earth and from the persecution of Satan. The place of protection appears to be the land of Edom, south of the Dead Sea, a land of rocky cliffs and canyons. This may be surmised from **Isa 63:1-4**, where the Messiah tramples the enemies of Israel, and stains His garments with their blood at His Second Coming.

In verses **7-9** at the halfway point of the Tribulation, the Word says that war broke out in heaven between Michael and his angels and Satan and his angels. Michael and his angels prevailed, and cast Satan and his angels out of all the heavens to the surface of the earth, and confined them there. Up to this time Satan and his angels have had unlimited access to the first heaven (atmosphere) and second heaven (universe), and limited access to the third heaven (God's dwelling). Think back to **Job 1:6, Job 2:1**, and **1 Ki 22:19-22** where all the angels of God, good and evil, were present before the throne of God in the third heaven. **Rev 12:10** says:

*...for the accuser of our brethren,
who accused them before our God day and night,
has been cast down.*

Evidently the devil and his followers were cast out of all 3 heavens permanently because verse **12** says:

*"Therefore rejoice, O heavens,
and you who dwell in them!*

*Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea!
For the devil has come down to you,
having great wrath,
because he knows that he has a short time.”*

This verse identifies the **third woe**, namely; that the devil has been confined to the surface of the earth and will wreak havoc upon it, knowing that his time of ruling there is only 3½ years.

Now some may say that the war in heaven of **Rev 12** refers to the time when Satan and his angels were cast down to the earth at the dawn of human history. No, this has been mentioned in verse **4**. Verse **10** says that the accuser of the brethren accused them before our God day and night. Verse **11** says that the brethren overcame the accuser by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. The blood of the Lamb was only available after His death and resurrection. Therefore the accuser (Satan) must have been accusing the saints after the resurrection, in the presence of God. This implies his access to the third heaven.

Verse 13 shifts the scene to earth. After Satan had been confined to the earth, he persecuted the woman (Israel) who had birthed the Messiah. Verses **14-17** show that Israel was given a speedy departure into the wilderness to her protected place. The figure of speech of eagle’s wings is also given in **Ex 19:4** and **Deut 32:11-12**. These are not physical wings, but signify swiftness and protection. However, Satan cast water out of his mouth like a flood, to carry away the people. It is easy to imagine the cause being the explosion of multi-megaton nuclear bombs in the Mediterranean Sea close to Israel’s shore. Since the roads from Israel to Edom run close to the shoreline, or at least down the Shephelah (coastal lowland), the huge waves from the bomb blasts would easily flood the lowland, and cut off the Israelis’ escape south. The passage of **Amos 7:4-6** seems to confirm this supposition.

4 *Thus the Lord God showed me:
Behold, the Lord God called for conflict by fire,
and it consumed the great deep
and devoured (a portion).*

5 *Then I said: “O Lord God, cease, I pray!
Oh, that Jacob may stand, for he is small!”*

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6 *So the Lord relented concerning this.*
 “This also shall not be,” said the Lord God.

Notice that Amos prayed for Israel (Jacob) to survive, and God answered his prayer by promising that Israel would not be destroyed, not that the conflict by fire wouldn't take place. In answer to Amos' prayer many centuries earlier, the earth opened its mouth with an earthquake, and swallowed up the flood, protecting the Israelis until they could reach safety in Edom. Satan was enraged that his plan was frustrated, and he went off to make war on the offspring of the woman, who are Jews who keep the commandments of God and who have the testimony of Jesus.

The above implies that at this time the Jewish people have accepted Jesus as their Messiah. Such was the case after the Russian/Muslim invasion of Israel in the first 3½ years of the Tribulation. The nation of Israel repented of their blindness and accepted Jesus as their Lord and Messiah when He preserved their national existence in the face of overwhelming odds. The national conversion of Israel may be seen in **Eze 39:22**, **Zech 12:10-14**, and **Rom 11:26**. From the context of the last reference, it may be easily seen that Paul is talking about national Israel, not spiritual Israel. Remember that after the Russian/Muslim invasion of Israel, although national Israel was converted, two-thirds of the people had been killed and the remaining third converted according to **Zech 13:8-9**:

8 *“And it shall come to pass in all the land,”*
 Says the Lord,
 “That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die,
 But one-third shall be left in it:
9 *I will bring the one-third through the fire,*
 Will refine them as silver is refined,
 And test them as gold is tested.
 They will call on My name,
 And I will answer them.
 I will say, ‘This is My people’;
 And each one will say,
 ‘The Lord is my God.’”

13

The Beast and False Prophet Arise

The scene takes place on the earth. In verse **1** the sea represents the great unorganized mass of humanity. The Bible uses this figure often; see **Isa 57:20** and **Rev 17:15**. The beast that rises out of the sea is identical to the beast of **Rev 17**, but not to the fourth beast of **Dan 7**. In the latter reference, the beast is the city of Rome, and the little horn is the man who is referred to as the beast of **Rev 13** and **17**. In **Revelation** the beast has 7 heads, each bearing a name of blasphemy, and 10 horns, each bearing a crown. The horns represent political power because they are crowned. We will explain the heads and horns further in **Rev 17**.

Verse **2** gives the characteristics of the man who is the beast. He has the same characteristics as the three empires mentioned in **Dan 7:4-6**. He has the swiftness of the leopard (Greek empire), the fearsome tenacity of the bear (Persian empire), and the voracity of the lion (Babylonian empire). Satan gave him his power, throne, and authority by possessing him and acting through him.

Verses **3-8** give us the background and description of the beast. One of his heads had been mortally wounded and restored to life again. Verse **14** says that the mortal wound had been given by a sword. The Greek language calls this a “short sword or dagger”. The people of the world marveled at this, and consequently worshiped him and said that nobody could overcome him in war. The beast had the mouth of an orator which spoke great blasphemies. He was given authority by Satan to continue for 42 months (3½ years). He spoke blasphemy against God’s name, His tabernacle, and the saints living in heaven. Satan also gave him power to war against the saints on earth, and to overcome them. He had authority over every tribe, tongue, and nation. All the unsaved people of the earth will worship him, that is, all the people whose names have been blotted out of the Book of Life of the Lamb. We shall call him the “world ruler”.

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Verse **9** is added to warn the saints living on the earth to recognize the beast by the preceding description, and the unsaved people by their worship of this man. Verse **10** is a comfort to the saints that their killers and slave makers will one day suffer the same fate to which they subjected others.

The last 8 verses of this chapter depict the rise, the power, and the works of a second beast. He arises out of the earth, has two uncrowned horns, and speaks like a dragon (Satan). His coming from the earth refers to the land of Israel. The Bible sometimes uses “earth” as a symbol of Israel (as in **Jer 22:29**). His two uncrowned horns represent religious power. I believe these horns are the apostate Christian Church and Islam. This beast is called “**the false prophet**” in **19:20**. This man operates under the authority of the world ruler, and his mission is to make everyone on earth worship this ruler. He is able to do great signs and lying wonders (**2 Thess 2:9**), even making fire come down from heaven to the earth. Perhaps this is done by a powerful laser beam from a synchronous orbit satellite which is activated by a hand-held device.

He also persuades the people of the earth to make a life-size image of this world ruler who came back from the dead. The false prophet then gives breath and the ability of speech to the image which then commands death for everyone who refuses to worship it. The image is evidently set up in the reconstructed temple in Jerusalem, in the Holy of Holies, since Jesus warned about it in **Mt 24:15**:

*“Therefore when you see the **abomination of desolation**,
spoken of by Daniel the prophet,
standing in the holy place”...*

The angel Gabriel told Daniel the prophet about this in **Dan 9:27**:

*“Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week;
But in the middle of the week
He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.
And on the wing of **abominations**
shall be one who makes **desolate**,
Even until the consummation, which is determined,
Is poured out on the **desolate**.”*

The “he” is the world ruler. One week is a week of years, or 7 years. In the middle of these 7 years he shall break his covenant with the Jews, shall cause his image to be installed in the Holy of Holies, and shall

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demand to be worshiped as God. This is the meaning of **2 Thess 2:4** which says,

*...who opposes and exalts himself
above all that is called God, or that is worshiped,
so that he sits as God in the temple of God,
showing himself that he is God.*

The false prophet also forces everybody to receive the mark of the world ruler in either their right hand or their forehead. He orders that no person can buy or sell except those who have the mark of the ruler, his name, or the number of his name. Therefore he controls the economy of the entire planet, starving those to death who will not take the mark or the name or the number of the world ruler. Verse **18** says that he that has understanding should calculate the number of the beast (world ruler), for his number is the number of a man—666.

Verse **17** speaks of the number of the name of the beast. For us today this is strange terminology, but for the ancient Greeks a person's name could be equated to a number. In The Interlinear Bible, in **13:18** the Greek number given for the beast is *chi xi stigma*.¹⁰ The *chi*, which also is the first letter of the word "Christ", represents the number 600. The *xi* represents the number 60, and the *stigma*, which is an obsolete letter coming between the fifth and sixth letters of the Greek alphabet, represents the number 6.¹¹ Checking the meaning of the word *stigma*, we find from the Greek Dictionary of the New Testament that it comes from *stizo*, "to stick or prick", and means a mark incised or punched for recognition of ownership. It was a "scar of service", or "mark."¹²

At this point it is important to consider the current technology of the implanted microchip. According to a recent Internet article:

"The simplest implanted microchip is a miniature passive transponder without any power source. It stores a permanent, unique identification number which can only be read but not modified: this is a read-only device. External readers or scanners activate the transponder by transmitting low frequency radio waves. The transponder then responds by emitting the stored number. This device is also called implanted transponder or RFID tag, RFID meaning Radio Frequency Identification.

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Other implanted microchips are read-write devices: the information stored in them can be updated from a distance. More advanced implanted microchips are not only read-write, but they can also emit an identifying radio signal which can be tracked, thus the tagged individual or animal can be constantly monitored. These devices have a built-in power supply.

The newest implanted microchips hold several microprocessors and a miniature digital transceiver. They are powered by electro-mechanical means through the movement of muscles. They may remain implanted and functional for years. These devices are tiny computers capable of receiving and sending data to remote sensors and can be continuously tracked by the Global Positioning System (GPS)."¹³

Does this sound far out? On the contrary, these newest implanted microchips are in use today, to permit tracking of animal pets,¹⁴ children, prisoners, or workers with top-security clearances. According to an Associated Press release dated April 4, 2002:

“A company plans to begin selling a computer ID chip that can be embedded beneath people’s skin, now that the Food and Drug Administration has said it will not regulate the implant as long as it contains no medical data.

Applied Digital Solutions Inc. designed the VeriChip-about the size of a grain of rice-to hold information that could be read with special electronic scanners....

For now, the VeriChip will bear only an identification number,....But that ID code could be cross-referenced with a database to detail any kind of information. The company said production would begin immediately.

VeriChip emits a radio signal and has been derided by some for its “Big Brother” implications. Applied Digital has said it could prove invaluable in emergency situations when someone is either unconscious or cannot otherwise give information.

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VeriChip is expected to sell for about \$200. A scanner used to read information contained in the chip would cost between \$1000 and \$3000. A doctor would insert the chip with a needle-like device.”¹⁵



Dime and Verichip

How does all this relate to the beast or world ruler? The false prophet will force all people to be injected with a microchip containing their identity and probably their personal and medical history. This chip will be programmable from an orbiting satellite, and not only can any particular person be located by the GPS system, but their behavior can be altered by a simple command from space. Of course, the world ruler will implement this system **to control everyone**. But he also will seek to be identified as “Christ” or the “anointed one”. I believe that he will be known by three names, the initials of which correspond to *chi*, *xi*, *stigma*. The first name may be “Christopher” (Christ bearer). The second name will begin with *xi*, and may be the word “Xenos” (alien-implying a heavenly being). The last name will begin with *stigma*, and may be the word “Stigmata”. Since several historical figures were known by their first names and physical characteristics or behavior, such as Charlemagne’s sons Charles the Bald and Louis the Fat, and an early king of England, Ethelred the Redeless (foolish), the world ruler will be popularly known as “Chris the alien pricker”, or “Chris the alien sticker”, or more simply, “Chris the sticker”. This will be a common appellation because of his forced “pricking program”.

14

Earth's Final Call to Salvation

The scene opens in heaven. In verse **1** John saw a Lamb (Jesus) standing on Mt. Zion with 144,000 people who had God's name written on their foreheads. These are the Jewish evangelists of chapter **7**, who have all been martyred. That this is actually the Mt. Zion in heaven, and not the earthly mount of the same name in Jerusalem, may be seen by the following:

- Jesus hasn't yet returned to the earth. This is done in chapter **19**.
- The 144,000 have been redeemed from the earth, as verse **3** says.
- Mt. Zion is associated with the heavenly Jerusalem in **Heb 12:22**:

*But you have come to Mount Zion
and to the city of the living God,
the heavenly Jerusalem,
to an innumerable company of angels,*

These were singing a new song before the throne of God, that nobody else could learn. What kind of a song was this? It was a Jewish song of victory over the world ruler, having given themselves to celibacy for the urgency of the gospel (verse **4**), and having been faithful to finish their task of worldwide proclamation of the gospel. Verse **4** also says that they were the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. It is understood that the time reference is from the Tribulation period. Verse **5** reports that they were found faultless before the throne of God.

In verse **6** the scene shifts to the earth. Then John saw an angel flying in the midst of heaven (atmosphere) having the eternal gospel to preach to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people. He was telling people to fear and glorify God, for the hour of His judgment had come, and to worship the God who had made all things. This is the only time recorded in the Bible that an angel preached the gospel to people. Why did an angel have to preach the gospel? Because all of the Jewish evangelists had been killed, and there were no more evangelists to preach the gospel. God is so merciful to mankind, that He sent an angel to give one more opportunity to accept Him as Lord by fearing Him, giving Him glory, and worshiping Him. Remember the words of **Prov**

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8:13, *“The fear of the Lord is to hate evil;...”* Those who hate the evil of that day may give God glory, worship Him, and be saved. These actions are a commitment to God and to His Son, Jesus, and are the essential actions for salvation.

Verse **8** records that a second angel followed the “gospel angel”, prophesying the downfall of Babylon because that city had made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. The identity of Babylon will be revealed in chapter **17**. **Her fornication was the gratification of the flesh** instead of the search for the true God. The wine of the wrath of her fornication was the consequences of the sins of the flesh, e.g. obesity, sexual diseases of all kinds, including AIDS, nicotine addiction, betel (stimulants) addiction, alcohol addiction, and all types of drug addictions, all these resulting in premature deaths. The actual destruction of Babylon doesn’t take place until **16:19**, and the details are given later in chapter **18**.

A third angel followed these first two, warning the inhabitants of the earth that if they worship the beast and his image or receive his mark in their bodies, they will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength. According to **Jer 25:15-16**, this wine of God’s wrath is a madness, brought about by war and ruin among them while they are still alive, and according to **Rev 14:10-11**, after death a tormenting with fire and brimstone **forever**, so that they would have no rest day or night. This is a graphic picture of the lake of fire, the eternal destination of wicked mankind. The so-called “Christian” cults that deny eternal punishment for the wicked, have no answer for this scripture.

Then John heard a heavenly voice commanding him to write:

13 *“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on,...
that they may rest from their labors,
and their works follow them.”*

These dead are blessed because they can rest in heaven, and their works, those whom they have won to the Lord and taught the ways of the Lord, will follow them to heaven.

In verse **14** the scene shifts to heaven. God’s “movie camera” rolls showing the events of chapters **16-19**. John saw a white cloud upon

which sat one who looked like the Son of Man. This is the same kind of language used in **Dan 7:13**:

*I was watching in the night visions,
And behold, One like the Son of Man,
Coming with the clouds of heaven!
He came to the Ancient of Days,
And they brought Him near before Him.*

In the **Daniel** passage, there is no doubt that the Son of Man is the Messiah Jesus. We can be certain that in **Rev 14:14** it is also the Messiah Jesus, especially since he has the golden crown of triumph on His head. In His hand He held a sharp sickle used for reaping.

Then an angel came out of the temple of God and cried loudly to the Messiah to reap the harvest of the earth, because now it was ripe. So it is only God who determines the readiness of the crop of Tribulation souls for harvesting, and a messenger from God gives Jesus the exact timing when to thrust in His sickle and reap them. The reaping is the conversion of people from Satan's dominion to Jesus' dominion. Then Jesus reaped the whole earth. Remember, this is a picture of what will take place in the next chapters.

In verse **17** John saw another angel come out of the temple of God, also having a sharp sickle for reaping. Then another angel came out from the altar which is in front of the temple, and he had power over fire. This is probably the same angel that saved Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego from being burned in the fiery furnace of **Dan 3:25**. He cried to the angel with the sickle to thrust in his sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes were fully ripe. This command is in response to the cry of the martyred saints under the altar in **6:9-10**, and is the reason that the angel came out from the altar. The vine of the earth represents the evil growth of anti-Semitism and anti-Christianity which we are seeing today, with tendrils reaching everywhere. In verse **19** the angel gathered the vine of the earth and threw it into the winepress of the wrath of God. Verse **20** relates:

*And the winepress was trampled outside the city,
and blood came out of the winepress,
up to the horses' bridles,
for one thousand six hundred furlongs.*

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The winepress is the battle of Armageddon, foreseen here as a bloodbath of the armies of the earth gathered against the Jews and Jerusalem. The blood flows for a distance of 182 miles with a 6 foot depth in many places. This is the distance from Bozrah in Edom to Ijon, the northernmost city in the old kingdom of Israel. Remember the prophecy from **Isa 63:1-4**:

1 *Who is this who comes from Edom,
 With dyed garments from Bozrah,
 This One who is glorious in His apparel,
 Traveling in the greatness of His strength?--*

“I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save.”

2 *Why is your apparel red,
 And Your garments like one who treads in the winepress?*
3 *“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.*
4 *For the day of vengeance is in My heart,
 And the year of My redeemed has come...”*

As the armies of the earth gather themselves together at Armageddon, many millions will be dispatched to kill the Jews gathered in the land of Edom, perhaps at Petra (Sela), and the Lord will spill the blood of these armies from Bozrah, north of Petra to Ijon, a distance of 182 miles. Since verse **20** says that the winepress was trampled outside the city, the Gentile armies will be destroyed outside of the city of Jerusalem. If all the blood of 100 million men were shed at once, it would amount to 137,500,000 gallons of blood, certainly enough to produce a river 6 feet deep and 3 feet wide for 182 miles. If the blood of 1 billion men were shed at once, it would produce a river 6 feet deep and 30 feet wide for 182 miles.

15

Archangels Receive the Bowls of Wrath

The scene is still in heaven, although the “movie camera” of God has stopped rolling. It is now live action. John saw 7 angels having the 7 last plagues, completing the wrath of God toward wicked mankind. Then John further described the details of the heavenly scene:

As verse 2 says,

*And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire,
and those who have the victory over the beast,
over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name,
standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God.*

The sea of glass of **4:6** was now mingled with fire, representing the fiery trial the people had just passed through, culminating in martyrdom. They had gained the victory over the beast by giving up their lives for their faith in Jesus. They were praising God together, singing the song of Moses in **Deut 32:3-4**, ascribing to God justice, truth, and holiness:

3 *For I proclaim the name of the Lord:
Ascribe greatness to our God.*

4 *He is the Rock, His work is perfect;
For all His ways are justice,
A God of truth and without injustice;
Righteous and upright is He.*

Then the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened, verse 5. This is the true temple after which the tabernacle of Moses was patterned (**Heb 9:23**). Inside it is the ark of the covenant (**Rev 11:19**) containing these 3 items of testimony against mankind:

1. **Tablets of the Law:** against man’s rejection of the perfect moral law
2. **Pot of manna:** against man’s rejection of God’s provision for food
3. **Aaron’s rod:** against man’s rejection of God’s anointed leadership

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From the temple came the 7 angels who stand before God (**8:2**), who are the archangels, and they were dressed in priests' clothing. They have been chosen to convey God's judgment to man. Verse 7 shows that one of the seraphim gave each archangel a golden bowl full of the wrath of God. Then the temple was filled with the smoke of God's glory and power, and none could enter until the bowls had been poured out upon the earth, and God's justice had been satisfied.

16

The Closing of the Tribulation Period

After the command of God to the archangels to pour out their bowls upon the earth, the scene shifts to the earth, verse 2.

1st Bowl: As the first bowl was poured out on the earth, a foul and loathsome sore came upon those who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image. Since no more than one injected microchip is necessary for each one having the mark of the beast, and since each microchip must be powered by a battery, probably lithium, the “popping” of these batteries releasing their lithium would cause a grievous sore upon each person. What could cause the batteries to destruct in this manner? If they are rechargeable from a satellite, an overload of voltage from a too strong signal would do the trick.

2nd Bowl: The pouring of the second bowl on the sea caused the sea to become like the blood of a dead man, and all living creatures in the sea died. The blood of a dead man contains no dissolved or molecular oxygen, and if all the dissolved oxygen in the sea were suddenly removed, all living creatures in the sea would die. The sea would still have one atom of oxygen for every two atoms of hydrogen, but this oxygen is chemically combined, and unusable for respiration. Dissolved oxygen is essential for breathing for all sea creatures. What could cause depletion of dissolved oxygen in the oceans? “Nutrient pollution, **especially nitrogen**, has been identified as a primary cause of degradation in marine waters. The extra nutrients from the organic waste stimulate the growth of marine plants and algae, which deplete dissolved oxygen when they die and decompose.”¹⁶ Human and animal wastes cause this nutrient pollution. Acid rain caused by burning chemical wastes is another factor which causes depletion of dissolved oxygen, mainly by providing an abundance of nitrogen. Perhaps the angel accelerates the oxygen depleting processes.

3rd Bowl: The third bowl was poured on the rivers and springs of water and they became blood. This means that there was no drinkable

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fresh water on the entire planet. In verses **5** and **6** the angel who poured out the third bowl praised God for His just judgments, because the inhabitants of the earth have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and now they have nothing but blood to drink. It was a fitting punishment. This praise was echoed by another angel from the altar in front of the throne of God saying in verse **7**:

*“Even so, Lord God Almighty,
true and righteous are Your judgments.”*

Remember that this was the altar of the Tribulation martyrs (**6:9-10**).

4th Bowl: The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun. Verse **9**:

*And men were scorched with great heat,
and they blasphemed the name of God
who has power over these plagues;
and they did not repent and give Him glory.*

Correlating this great heat of the sun with **Isa 13:13**, it seems that the pouring out of the angel’s bowl caused the sun’s gravitational pull to increase, thereby drawing the earth closer and changing the earth’s orbit. The great majority of mankind, knowing that this was God’s judgment on the earth for their wicked deeds, defied and cursed God instead of repenting and claiming His mercy. They refused to believe that God would still accept them if they came on His terms, in spite of the severe judgments.

5th Bowl: The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, causing his kingdom to become full of spiritual darkness. The iniquity of the revived Roman Empire has finally reached its fullness. This caused the people to gnaw their tongues because of the pain, and to blaspheme God because of their pains and their sores, and there was no repentance. It will be explained in the next chapter that Rome is the place of the throne of the beast, and according to chapter **18**, by this time it has become the illegal drug capital of the whole earth. The pains of the people in Rome were caused by “bad trips” of dope of different kinds, often taken in combinations. Their sexual excesses also resulted in painful sores breaking out on their bodies.

6th Bowl: The sixth angel poured the contents of his bowl on the Euphrates River, drying up the river so that the Chinese army, victorious after its battle with the nations of the Indian subcontinent and

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Southeast Asia, could cross easily. This army has modern weapons, a large manpower base (although depleted by the Asian war of chapter 9), and is backed by the industrial might of Japan. It is truly an army of “the kings of the east.”

What is the mechanism for drying up the deep and wide Euphrates River? Currently there are three major dams operational on the Turkish portion of the Euphrates River, the Keban, Karakaya, and the Ataturk. Two more, the Birecik and the Karakamis, are under construction.¹⁷ In addition, Syria has built a dam on the Euphrates called the Tabqa Dam. It was built at the city of Tabqa, also called Thawra (Revolution).¹⁸ It is estimated that Turkey contributes 89% of annual flow and Syria contributes 11% of the Euphrates River flow.¹⁹ If Turkey shut off its dams on the Euphrates River, very little water would enter Syria, not to mention the possibility of Syria shutting off its Tabqa Dam as well. This would completely dry up that major Asian river, which would otherwise present a formidable barrier to any large army.



Ataturk Dam on the Euphrates River

In verses **13-14**, John saw three frog-like unclean spirits coming out of the mouths of the dragon (Satan), the beast (world ruler), and the false prophet. These were demonic spirits, able to perform signs and lying wonders (cf. **2 Thess 2:9**), who were sent to the leaders of the world to persuade them to send their armies to the place in Israel called “Armageddon”. Satan’s purpose is to gather the world’s armies with all their modern weaponry, to fight against Messiah Jesus when He returns

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to the earth in the land of Israel. However, the world's leaders have no such thoughts. They do not believe in the return of Jesus. The European army with its Muslim allies marches to invade Israel in a final attempt to exterminate the Jews, all of whom are now believers. The Chinese army marches toward Israel to prevent the European army from any further invasion of Asia, which it controls. Both armies will meet in northern Israel. In our day passable roads already have been built from China across Central Asia to northern Israel.

In verse **15**, Jesus gave a final warning to His people that He is coming in an unexpected time, just like a thief comes:

“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.”*

The Lord is not speaking of physical clothing here, but of spiritual clothing. He is speaking of the garments of salvation and the robe of righteousness of **Isa 61:10**:

*I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,
My soul shall be joyful in my God;
For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
He has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments,
And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.*

Jesus' warning means His people must hold fast to the confession that He is Lord of their lives, and not renounce Him and lose their salvation, embarrassing themselves before the rest of the saints.

7th Bowl: As the seventh angel poured his bowl into the air, God's voice was heard saying *“It is done!”* This indicates the finishing of the seven years of the Tribulation. Suddenly there occurred the greatest earthquake in human history. Jerusalem is the great city referred to in verse **19**. It was called “the great city” in **11:8**, and now is broken into three parts by the earthquake. All the cities of the nations fell, every island was moved out of its place, and the mountains were moved likewise. This is that great earthquake which was foreseen in **6:12-14**. And since the angel had poured his bowl into the air, from the air came a mighty hail storm, each stone weighing 100 pounds! The wicked people blasphemed God, instead of crying out for mercy from Him,

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because the plague of hail was so great. Surely, anyone not taking refuge in a concrete or steel shelter would be killed by such a plague.

In verse **19** God also remembered “great Babylon”(Rome), and gave her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. This concludes God’s judgment upon this wicked city. The punishment is described in detail in chapter **18** as a flashback to this verse in chapter **16**.

17

The Harlot and the Beast Unveiled

This chapter is the key to the understanding of the entire book of **Revelation**. Taken together with chapter **18**, it is a flashback to **16:19** where the destruction of Babylon was accomplished. Chapter **17** identifies Babylon and the beast (world ruler), and chapter **18** gives some of the details of Babylon's destruction and the reasons for it. The scene is on the earth.

One of the seven archangels who poured out the seven bowls came to John and in verse **1** offered to show him the judgment of the great harlot (Babylon) who sits on many waters. From verse **15** it may be seen that these waters are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.

In verse **2** the angel said:

*"...the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk
with the wine of her fornication."*

This fornication was referred to in chapter **14** as the gratification of the flesh instead of the search for the true God.

Then John was carried away in the Spirit into the wilderness where he saw a woman sitting on a scarlet colored beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having 7 heads and 10 horns.

4 *The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet,
and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls,
having in her hand a golden cup
full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication.*

Her forehead carried a name:

5 *MYSTERY,
BABYLON THE GREAT,
THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE
ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH*

She was drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. John was amazed, and didn't know who she was. In verse **7** the angel offered to reveal to John the mystery of the woman

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and of the beast that carried her. His first revelation was of the beast. But let us first go to the unveiling of the woman, and later return to verses **8-11** for the unveiling of the beast.

Verse **18** says the woman is:

*“...that great city which reigns over
the kings of the earth.”*

The tense used is the present tense. She reigns (now) over the kings of the earth. There was only one city that reigned over the whole earth at the time when John wrote **Revelation**, about 96 AD, and it was **Rome**. She was that mighty city that shed the blood of the martyrs for almost 300 years after she shed the blood of Jesus. Imperial Rome was always adorned in purple and scarlet. Her officers, who commanded her legions, were clad in scarlet cloaks, which was the badge of their rank. The same was true for the Praetorian Guards. Rome executed the early Christians by a variety of cruel methods: by the cross, by the torture of burning pitch, by the wild beasts of the arena, by the rack, by having them serve as targets for arrows, spears, and swords, and by fire at the stake. On the other hand, the life of the common citizen of Rome was largely spent searching for gratification of the flesh through wine and other intoxicating drinks, through prostitutes and easy love from women of loose morals, through delicate foods, through riches and slaves, and through seeking glory from other men. The picture of Rome as a harlot, estranged from God, and drunk with blood, fit her well.

Why didn't John identify her by name in verse **18**? Remember that John was already exiled by Rome, and tradition has said that he survived being cast into a pot of boiling oil with no injury.²⁰ And yet if he had named Rome as the great harlot, the Emperor Domitian would have had him killed by the sword in hateful anger at the truth. So he had to thinly disguise Rome in a manner that everyone who read the book would know its identity.

There is further proof that mystery Babylon is Rome. In **1 Pet 5:13** the apostle Peter wrote:

*She who is in Babylon,
elect together with you, greets you;
and so does Mark my son.*

Peter, no doubt, wrote this from Rome. Mark was in Rome during

The Harlot and the Beast Unveiled

Paul's first imprisonment, 60-62 AD, and Peter wrote his first epistle shortly before persecution broke out under Nero in 64 AD.²¹ There is no tradition that Peter ever went to Babylon, but tradition indicates that he spent the last years of his life in Rome. Besides all that, the city of Babylon began to decay after its fall to the Medes and Persians under Cyrus in 539 BC. Alexander the Great thought to restore the ruined temple of Babylon, but was deterred by its great cost. During the period of the successors of Alexander, the area decayed rapidly and soon became a desert. From the time of Seleucus Nicator (312-280 BC), who built the rival city of Seleucia on the Tigris, queenly Babylon never revived.²² There were few inhabitants of Babylon in the days of the early apostles. From this information we can conclude that Peter did the same thing as John, identifying Rome as Babylon, to avoid stirring up persecution. It was a fitting figurative name for Rome, which had become a center of idolatry, just as Babylon once had been.

Now for the unveiling of the beast. It is best to print the entire text of verses **8-11** so we may study them carefully.

- 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.*
- 9** *Here is the mind which has wisdom:
The seven heads are seven mountains
on which the woman sits.*
- 10** *There are also seven kings.
Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come.
And when he comes, he must continue a short time.*
- 11** *And the beast that was, and is not,
is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven,
and is going to perdition."*

The first observation is that **the beast is a person, not a system**, since there is no record in the Bible that any system was ever cast into the bottomless pit or the lake of fire. Instead, the pit is a temporary abode for unsaved man and certain evil angels. In **Eze 32** the human

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inhabitants of the pit are identified as the nations of Assyria, Elam, Meshech, Tubal, Edom, Egypt, and the city of Sidon. The beast was, and is not now, and shall ascend out of the pit. This means that he once was alive, but is now dead, and his spirit is in the pit. Remember, only his spirit is in the pit with his soul attached to it, not his body. His body has decayed and has returned to dust. At some time after his spirit ascends out of the pit, he will go to destruction. This will occur when he is cast into the lake of fire in **19:20**.

Why will the unsaved people of the earth marvel when they see the beast who has come back from the dead? Because he will possess a body similar to his own when he was on the earth, a body which has been given over to the works of darkness, and will speak and act just as he did in his former body. He will be identified rather easily by his words, his reasoning, his knowledge, and his deeds. In the eyes of the world, no one has ever returned from the dead throughout history, and the nations will be ready to worship him as god, especially after he solves the Israeli/Arab problem referred to in **Dan 9:27** by making a covenant acceptable to both parties.

Now we must put on the mind of wisdom. The seven heads of the beast are seven mountains on which the woman sits. The woman has been identified as **Rome**. The city of Rome does sit on seven hills: the Capitoline, Palatine, Aventine, Caelian, Esquiline, Viminal, and Quirinal hills. Verse **10** says that there are also seven kings. So the seven heads are also identified with seven kings. It is significant that the seven kings are mentioned immediately after the seven hills of Rome. It seems that these kings are attached to Rome. Five of them have already died, one is currently king (emperor), and one is yet to come. When the future king comes, he will only continue a short time. The beast is the eighth king, and is of the seven. Since the beast had already died by the time **Revelation** was written, he must have been of the five who had died.

To identify the seven kings of Rome, it is necessary to go back to chapter **13**. The beast of this chapter is the same as that in chapter **17**. It had a blasphemous name on each of its seven heads. In other words, the kings of Rome each had a blasphemous name. What is the most blasphemous name that a man can have? Is it not that he claims to be

God Almighty? Which of the former kings of Rome made this claim for themselves or permitted themselves to be worshiped as God? The answer is: Julius Caesar, Augustus Caesar, Tiberius Caesar, Gaius Caesar (Caligula), and Nero Caesar. In other words, the family of Caesar. The Roman Emperor at the time of the writing of **Revelation** was Domitian. He also made the claim that he was God. The one who was to come was Julian the Apostate, who also claimed to be God. He only ruled from 361-363 AD, and tried to turn Rome away from Christianity and back to Paganism. He failed utterly, and died in battle with the Persians in 363. His 2-year reign was certainly a short one.

Now that the seven kings of Rome have been identified, which of the first five is the beast? An important clue is John's first picture of the woman seen riding on the beast, clothed with opulence and power. In other words, she came to power riding on the beast. Although Rome was already a great power before these first five kings, the Senate of Rome was unable to successfully govern the conquered territories, and there were frequent revolts. It was only after Rome became an Empire that it became great, and its first de-facto Emperor was the greatest of them all. His name was **Julius Caesar**. Let us examine the man Julius Caesar to see whether or not he fits the many characteristics of the beast or world ruler mentioned in the Bible.

First, let us refer to **Dan 7:23-25**.

23 Thus he said:

*The fourth beast shall be
A fourth kingdom on earth,
Which shall be different from all other kingdoms,
And shall devour the whole earth,
Trample it and break it in pieces.*

24

*The ten horns are ten kings
Who shall arise from this kingdom.
And another shall rise after them;
He shall be different from the first ones,
And shall subdue three kings.*

25

*He shall speak pompous words against the Most High,
Shall persecute the saints of the Most High,
And shall intend to change times and law.*

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*Then the saints shall be given into his hand
For a time and times and half a time.*

In this passage the fourth beast is the Roman Empire, the ten horns on its head are the ten future rulers to come to the revived Roman Empire as mentioned in **Rev 17:12-13**, and the horn that came up later is the world ruler or beast of **Rev 17**. This world ruler will subdue three of the ten other rulers, and the rest will give him their allegiance.

GREAT GENERAL

Julius Caesar certainly qualifies as one of the greatest military geniuses of all time. The Roman historian Plutarch said of him concerning his actions during the Gallic wars:

And the period of those wars which he now fought, and those many expeditions in which he subdued Gaul, showed him to be a soldier and general not in the least inferior to any of the greatest and most admired commanders who had ever appeared at the head of armies. For if we compare him with the Fabii, the Metelli, the Scipios, and with those who were his contemporaries, or not long before him, Sylla, Marius, the Luculli, or even Pompey himself, whose glory, it may be said, went up at that time to heaven for every excellence in war, we shall find Caesar's actions to have surpassed them all.²³

In the last half of **Dan 7:8**, the Bible says about the little horn that came up later:

*And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man,
and a mouth speaking pompous words.*

GREAT ORATOR

Julius Caesar was well known for his oratorical gift. The Roman poet and orator Cicero was said to have written about him:

Do you know any man who, even if he has concentrated on the art of oratory to the exclusion of all else, can speak better than Caesar? Or anyone who makes so many witty remarks? Or whose vocabulary is so varied and yet so exact?²⁴

SOLAR CALENDAR

As to Julius Caesar's ability to change the times and the law, history records that he has already done both.

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Caesar consulted Egyptian and other astronomers (including the Greek scholar, Sosigenes) with the towering end-result of institution of the Julian calendar. Acting as Pontifex Maximus, Caesar introduced as of January 1, 45 BC, a solar year of 365 1/4 days; to do so, he had to insert an additional 67 days between November and December of 46 BC, which thus had 445 days. The efficacy of the Julian calendar has endured almost unchanged to this day.²⁵ The month of July, the midpoint of the year, was named after Julius Caesar.

ROMAN LAW

As Suetonius notes, Caesar also tackled the almost intractable problem of Roman law. Rather like the English common law until codified, Rome was a mass of unwieldy, contradictory statutes deriving over centuries of jurisprudence. Caesar set himself to reduce the Civil Code to manageable proportions, by selecting the most essential statutes and having them published. In this he was the precursor to great jurisprudential administrators like Justinian, many centuries later.²⁶ These Roman laws, with modifications, are used by western European and western hemisphere nations today.

MORTAL WOUND

According to **Rev 13:3,14** the world ruler was given a mortal wound by a sword. The word used for sword in the Greek language is “machaira”. This means a “short sword or dagger”, possibly a knife.²⁷ History records that Julius Caesar was killed on March 15, 44 BC in the Roman senate by daggers wielded by the senators. It seems that the fatal blow was struck by Caesar’s friend Brutus. This fits the description of the mortal wound of the beast.

REGARDED AS A GOD

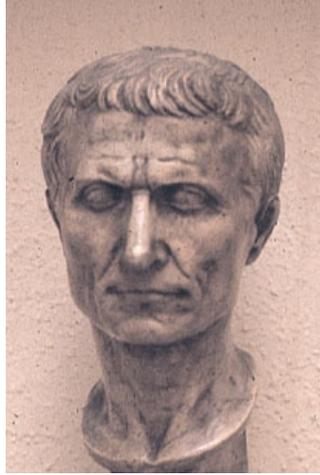
By 44 BC Caesar’s countrymen had begun to regard him as semi-divine. In the provinces he was already being worshiped as a god. After his death, he was referred to as the divine Julius, and as the “greatest Roman of them all.”

Plantagenet Somerset Fry, author of “Great Caesar,” extols the virtues of the greatest man of all time:

Caesar was a general, a statesman, a lawgiver, an orator, an historian, and a mathematician. His government (with modifications)

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*endured for centuries. He never lost a war. He fixed the calendar. He created the first news sheet, Acta Diurna, which was posted on the forum to let everyone who cared to read it know what the Assembly and Senate were up to. He also instigated an enduring law against extortion.*²⁸



Bust of Julius Caesar



Caesar as general

FAMOUS

It should also be mentioned here that the name Caesar has endured throughout history as a title for the supreme ruler of a country. Such titles as Kaiser (Germany), Tsar (Russia), and Shah (Iran) have their origins in the name Caesar. It may be said that Julius Caesar is the most famous and enduring name of the last two millennia, with the exception of Jesus, the Christ. It is easy to understand the astonishment of the unsaved world as mentioned in **Rev 17:8** when the people see an apparent reincarnation of this very well-known man.

Verse **14** of this chapter says that the armies of the ten kings of the revived Roman Empire will wage war against the Lamb (Jesus), but he will overcome them. This will take place at the battle of Armageddon in chapter **19**. Those who are with the Lamb in this battle are the raptured saints from chapter **4**, the saints killed during the Tribulation, and the Old Testament saints who were given their new bodies after Jesus' resurrection, **Mt 27:52-53**. They are called, chosen, and faithful.

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Verses **16-17** reveal that the ten kings of the revived Roman Empire will hate the harlot (Rome), will make her desolate and naked, will eat her flesh and will burn her with fire. What is the reason that these rulers turn against Rome? The reason is revealed in the next chapter.

18

The Destruction of Mystery Babylon

This chapter is a flashback to the real event occurring in **16:19**, namely the destruction of Babylon. It has been shown in the last chapter that the apostle John used the word “Babylon” for the city of Rome. We must not forget to bear this in mind throughout chapter **18** as the details of its destruction are described. The timing of the beginning of this chapter is just before God administers the cup of His wrath to the city.

In verses **1** and **2** John saw a mighty angel coming down from heaven, and the earth was made bright with his glory. He prophesied loudly that great Babylon had fallen and had become a habitation of demons and a cage for every unclean and hateful bird. Why are the birds unclean and hateful? Because when they swooped into Rome to eat the singed flesh of its dead inhabitants, they became the new “houses” for the demons that possessed the people before Rome was destroyed. All of this is being forecast by the angel before it happens.

Verse **3** says that all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of Babylon’s fornication. This wine was explained in chapter **14** to refer to the consequences of the sins of the flesh, which result in untimely deaths for the people who engage in these sins.

Verse **4** brings the Lord’s voice from heaven, calling to His people to leave Babylon (Rome) lest they share in the city’s sins and be destroyed by God’s punishment upon her. In verse **6** and throughout the rest of the chapter the voice of the mighty angel continues, asking God to repay the city double according to her works, and to give her torment and sorrow in the same measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously. Note that in verse **8** the city’s judgment will come in **one day**, and will be death, mourning, famine, and fire.

That the judgment of fire is a physical fire is made clear in verses **9** and **10**, for earth’s **leaders** will stand at a distance from the city as they watch the smoke of her burning, and will weep and wail for her,

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being amazed at the severity of her punishment. They marvel that in **one hour** the city's judgment has come.

Verses **11** through **16** show the weeping and wailing of the merchants of the earth over the city's destruction because the source of their great wealth was gone. They mention all the merchandise that made Rome great, including the bodies and souls of men.

Verses **17** through **19** show the lament of the ship captains and sailors watching the smoke of Rome's burning from their ships on the sea, standing out to sea a good distance from the city because they feared her judgment would fall on them too. They lament that in **one hour** the source of their riches had been destroyed.

Then another mighty angel took up a great stone and threw it into the sea, prophesying that just like that violent heave, the city of Rome would be thrown down and wouldn't be found anymore. This is a picture of instant destruction, not slow death. The only instrument capable of such instant death for an entire city is a **nuclear bomb**.

During WWII, when the allies bombed Hamburg, Germany, the city burned for several days. This is not the judgment of **Rev 18**. Why would anyone want to nuke the city of Rome? The answer is found in **17:16** and in **18:23**. The former verse says that the 10 nations of the revived Roman Empire will hate the city, make her desolate and naked, and burn her with fire. Why? The latter verse says that by her sorcery (pharmakeia) all the nations were deceived. Pharmakeia is another word for illegal drugs. Rome has become the drug capital of the world!

By this time the original Mafia has moved their headquarters from Sicily to Rome, and controls all the other organized crime syndicates on the earth, enriching itself with the fabulous profits from the drug trade. Cocaine from Colombia and Bolivia, opium from Burma and Laos, and hashish from Turkey and the Middle East all combine to make the city of Rome rich beyond measure. The world ruler (beast) will persuade the leaders of the revived Roman Empire that the drug capital of the earth must be destroyed. This will win him fame and approval by the whole world, whose common people hate seeing their sons and daughters destroyed by their drug habits. Since the drug traffic

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couldn't be stopped, the decision will be made to destroy the distribution control center. This is the reason given by the world leader to justify the nuclear destruction of Rome.

However, the real reason for the destruction of Rome is kept secret by the world leader. It is that he can never be recognized as Messiah if his support base is Rome. Jerusalem must be the seat of his power if this is to happen. He will transfer his government to Jerusalem from Rome before destroying Rome with a nuclear bomb. This will also remove the doubts of the people that he is the promised Messiah. He will be worshiped as the man who "stopped the drug trade once for all."

Verse 24 points out that in Rome was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth (by Rome's direction).

Now let us verify the choice of Rome as the harlot Babylon. First, the Bible talks about "mystery Babylon," not physical Babylon. If it were physical Babylon, the name would not be a mystery.

Second, many Christians today believe that the modern rebuilding of the ancient city of Babylon by the former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein is the city referred to in **Revelation** as Babylon. If this were true, then when this city will be destroyed according to chapter 18, sailors and ship captains should be able to see the smoke of its burning from the sea, as the Bible says. But Babylon is 300 miles from the nearest sea, the Persian Gulf, and even a column of smoke 40,000 feet high couldn't be seen from the Gulf. However, the city of Rome is only 30 miles from the Mediterranean Sea, and its smoke column could easily be seen from many ships offshore.

Finally, the ancient Babylonians didn't seek to kill the Jewish people it had captured and brought back to Babylon in their two campaigns ending in 598 BC and 587 BC respectively. But the Romans tried to kill all the Christians within the city of Rome several times during the first 250 years of Christian history, treating them as disloyal subjects of the Empire, because they refused to worship the emperor. This is rather compelling evidence for Rome being "mystery Babylon."

19

Jesus' Second Coming and Armageddon

The scene opens in heaven. In verses **1-3** the redeemed people in heaven praised God for His righteous judgment against Rome and for avenging the blood of the martyrs shed in Rome. The smoke of Rome rising up forever and ever doesn't refer to the physical location of Rome but to the torment of its former inhabitants in the lake of fire, the smoke of which ascends forever and ever (see **14:11**). Then the 24 elders, representing the entire translated Church, together with the 4 living creatures fell down and worshiped God, giving their assent to the praises of the multitude and saying, "*Amen! Alleluia!*"

After this there was a great cheer coming from the multitude, louder than in any football stadium on earth, and sounding like many waters let loose and like peals of thunder. It glorified God and said,
6 *"Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!*
7 *Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory,*
 for the marriage of the Lamb has come,
 and His wife has made herself ready."

This is the announcement of the marriage supper of Jesus and His bride, **the people living in the New Jerusalem**. These consist of the translated Church, the Tribulation saints who were martyred for their faith, and the Old Testament saints whose bodies were raised from the grave after Jesus' resurrection and followed Him to heaven with His ascension.

Many Christians today believe that the bride of Christ is only the Church, because of the language of **Eph 5:25**, which says:

*Husbands, love your wives,
just as Christ also loved the church
and gave Himself for it*

But this only **compares** the love of Christ for the Church to the love of a husband for his wife. It does not say that the Church is the wife of Christ. Instead, according to **21:2**, the New Jerusalem is the bride of Christ.

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*Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem,
coming down out of heaven from God,
prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

In **19:7** it is said that the Lamb's wife has made herself ready. This means that all the people mentioned earlier as being in the New Jerusalem have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. They have all received Jesus as Messiah and Lord by faith, have exchanged His righteousness for their own unrighteousness, and many have looked forward to the marriage supper of the Lamb in heaven. Verse **8** speaks of a new covering permitted to be worn by the redeemed: fine linen, clean and bright, representing the righteous acts of the saints.

In verse **9** John was commanded to write: "*Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!*" At this point the marriage supper took place, which formalized the relationship between the Lamb and His people. The only other things we know about this supper are found in **Dan 7:13-14** and in **Lk 12:37**. In the former passage, the Son of Man (Messiah) came with the clouds of heaven (believers), was made king of the Kingdom of God, and was given dominion over all peoples, nations and languages. This was His investiture and seems to have taken place before the supper. In the latter passage, when the Master returned to His house (His people), He rewarded those whom He found eagerly waiting for Him by serving them the marriage meal.

John fell down to worship the one who commanded him to write. But the angel told John not to worship him, but to worship only God. He said that he was John's fellow servant and the servant of his brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. He said that the testimony of Jesus was the spirit of prophecy.

In verse **11** the scene shifts from heaven to earth. The rest of the verses of this chapter describe the Second Coming of Jesus to the earth. From this verse forward, the name Jesus is not used to describe the coming of the Lord, but other names are used. It is because Jesus is His earthly name, and the other names are His heavenly names. He is called Faithful and True, which are His characteristics. He is also called the

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Word of God. His eyes resembled a flame of fire and on His head were many diadems. These are not crowns, but are bands wrapped around the head which signify kingly authority and power.²⁹ He also had a name written which no one knew except Himself. His robe had been dipped in the blood of His enemies gathered in the land of Edom south of Israel (**Isa 63:1-4**). This was explained in chapter **14**.

Now He is approaching the armies gathered at Armageddon in northern Israel. In verse **14** the armies in heaven clothed in white linen surely refer to the saints from the New Jerusalem in their glorified bodies. They were following the Word of God on white horses. Note the presence of horses in heaven. If there are horses, why not other animals also? Out of Jesus' mouth went a sharp sword (His Word) with which to strike the nations. He will tread the winepress of God's wrath alone. This is a fulfillment of **Rom 12:19**, "*Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,*" says the Lord. The Lord alone will repay the armies gathered against Him with their just reward. Verse **16** says that on His robe and on His thigh there was a name written: *KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS*. This was given Him at His investiture.

In verses **17** and **18** an angel standing with the sun behind him summoned all the flesh-eating birds of the heavens to gather at Armageddon to eat the flesh of the leaders of the earth's armies and of their hordes, since they will all be killed. Verse **19** verifies that the world ruler (beast) and his armies have gathered together to make war against the Word of God and against His army. Since they have gathered to exterminate the Jewish believers, they are counted as having gathered against God's Son because He is identified with His people. In verses **20** and **21** the beast and the false prophet were captured and were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone (sulfur). They were still alive there 1000 years later as seen in **20:10**. Their armies were all killed by the Word of God speaking their destruction. The carnivorous birds feasted on their flesh, as their spirits went down to the pit of hell.

The passage of **Zech 14:1-5** sheds more light on this battle, only from the perspective of Jerusalem, the Jewish capital city:

1 *Behold, the day of the Lord is coming,
And your spoil will be divided in your midst.*

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- 2** *For I will gather all the nations
to battle against Jerusalem;
The city shall be taken,
The houses rifled,
And the women ravished.
Half of the city shall go into captivity,
But the remnant of the people
shall not be cut off from the city.*
- 3** *Then the Lord will go forth
And fight against those nations,
As He fights in the day of battle.*
- 4** *And in that day His feet will stand
on the Mount of Olives,
Which faces Jerusalem on the east.
And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two,
From east to west,
Making a very large valley;
Half of the mountain shall move toward the north
And half of it toward the south.*
- 5** *Then you shall flee through my mountain valley,
For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal.
Yes, you shall flee
As you fled from the earthquake
In the days of Uzziah king of Judah.
Thus the Lord my God will come,
And all the saints with You.*

This chapter also gives some insight into the mechanism with which the Lord will strike the armies surrounding Jerusalem:

- 12** *And this shall be the plague with which
the Lord will strike all the people
who fought against Jerusalem:
Their flesh shall dissolve
while they stand on their feet,
Their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets,
And their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths.*
- 13** *It shall come to pass in that day
That a great panic from the Lord will be among them.
Everyone will seize the hand of his neighbor,*

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And raise his hand against his neighbor's hand.

14 *Judah also will fight at Jerusalem.....*

The dissolving of flesh and eyeballs while men are standing on their feet, sounds very much like the effects of a neutron bomb, which destroys flesh but leaves bones, buildings, and streets unharmed. In the 1970s both the United States and Israel developed the technology to build a neutron bomb. It is surmised that today Israel possesses several neutron bombs that are untested, but nevertheless fearsome weapons. Verse **13** also says that Israel's enemies will fight against each other. Both the European and the Asian armies will fight each other for dominion over the earth, and both will be destroyed.

Evidently the families of those who fought against Israel and Jerusalem are not destroyed, since **Zech 14:16** says:

*And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left
of all the nations which came against Jerusalem
shall go up from year to year to worship the King,
the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.*

It seems that many millions of families of different faiths will survive into the Millennium. Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Shintoists, Jains, Baha'is, and followers of traditional religions (Animists) will be present on the earth during the Millennium, and will constitute the peoples over whom the redeemed saints will rule, **Rev 2:26-27**. The presence of unbelievers on earth during the 1000 year reign of Jesus is confirmed by **Mic 4:5**, the context of which addresses this time period:

*For all people walk each in the name of his god,
But we will walk in the name of the Lord our God
Forever and ever.*

From these peoples will come forth the last crop of the redeemed, which may be referred to as “**the gleanings**”, in contrast to the Church as “**the first fruits**” and the Tribulation saints as “**the main harvest**”.

20

The Millennium, Final War, and Judgment

The scene opens on the earth. In verse **1** John saw an angel coming down from heaven holding the key to the bottomless pit and also holding a great chain in his hand. This is the same angel who had the key to the pit in **9:1**, and is probably Michael. He bound the dragon, that serpent called the Devil and Satan, for a time period of 1000 years. Then he cast him into the bottomless pit, located in the depths of the earth, closed the lid, and sealed it.

This is the first time that the devil has been cast into the pit of hell, where he will suffer torment until he is released. He has feared this time since being cast out from God's presence at the dawn of history.

Not only is Satan thrown into the pit, but his entire hierarchy of fallen angels and demonic spirits are cast in also. This is made clear by **Isa 24:21-22**:

21 *It shall come to pass in that day
That the Lord will punish on high the host of exalted ones,
And on the earth the kings of the earth.*

22 *They will be gathered together,
As prisoners are gathered in the pit,
And will be shut up in the prison;
After many days they will be punished (visited-KJV).*

According to the Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Bible scholars are equally divided on whether the word meaning *visited* refers to visitation for punishment or for release.³⁰ In the context of **Rev 20:3** I believe that the meaning is visitation for release.

When the devil and his hosts are thrown into the pit, he will be humiliated as the wicked dead look at him according to **Isa 14:16-17**:

16 *Those who see you will gaze at you,
and consider you, saying:
"Is this the man who made the earth tremble,*

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that “*the heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked*” (**Jer 17:9**), and that no person can claim that circumstances of poverty, war, discrimination, or lack of opportunity made him commit evil acts, because these things will not be present during the Millennium. God wants to show that all people need a new heart (spirit) in order to live in harmony with one another, which is only to be gained by commitment to Jesus as personal Savior and Lord. During the Millennium law and order will be enforced by Jesus and His saints ruling on the earth in their glorified bodies. After the Millennium this enforcement will be withdrawn, and the devil and his hordes will be able to successfully tempt men and women with thoughts of personal gain, fame, glory, and power over others. Such is the heart of man that it is easily turned aside from righteousness.

After the huge army surrounding the saints and Jerusalem was destroyed, Satan and his demonic hosts finally were cast into the lake of fire where they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

In verses **11-15** the final judgment of the wicked dead is recorded. John saw a great white throne and God Almighty seated upon it. The earth and its atmosphere (heaven) were utterly burned to nothingness by the face of God, whose visible face destroys sin and everything contaminated by it by burning it up (**Heb 12:29**).

The dead bodies of the wicked were resurrected out of the sea and out of the grave, and their spirits came out of hell to be reunited with their bodies. Although the Bible doesn't name it, this can be called the second resurrection. Then the wicked stood before God and the books were opened whereby they were judged. These were the books of the works of each person's life. Since the wicked had refused to accept the exchange of Jesus' righteousness for their sins, they were judged by the only other measure, the works of their lives. Even the best of these works were like “*filthy rags*” according to **Isa 64:6**.

The Book of Life was also opened and was searched in vain for the names of the wicked. Anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire which is the second death. The Spirit of Death and the Spirit of Hell (Abaddon) were also cast into the lake of fire. Although this lake was made for the devil and his angels (**Mt 25:41**),

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unbelieving mankind is also cast into it as a result of their unbelief in the saving power of Jesus, their willful ignorance of their need for a Savior, and the consequent lack of commitment of their lives to Him. This awesome judgment is called the “Great White Throne” judgment, and is held to demonstrate the reason that the wicked are condemned (**Jn 3:18**) and that God is blameless for their condemnation. We can be grateful that no believer in Jesus will be judged at this judgment seat, for their sins already were laid on Jesus who bore their punishment by His death on the cross and descent into hell. Glory to God!

21

The Exterior of New Jerusalem

The scene is above the new earth. The old earth and its atmosphere (heaven) were destroyed in **20:11**. The Day of the Lord was concluded with the destruction of the old earth and its heaven, and the Day of God began with the judgment of the wicked dead and the creation of a new earth and heaven. John saw the new earth and new atmosphere. The new earth didn't have any sea. This indicates that there will be no more separation between people on the new earth, which was a characteristic of the former sea.

Then John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God's heaven toward the new earth, shining and radiant like a bride adorned for her husband, and containing the many mansions of **Jn 14:2-3**. There came a loud voice from the third heaven proclaiming that from now onward God would dwell with men and be their God, and that He would wipe away every tear from their eyes. There also would be no more death, sorrow, crying, or pain, for all these things had passed away. The tears are those of joy in being in the presence of God and experiencing His love.

In verses **5-8** God proclaimed that He had made all things new, and He ordered John to write His words because they are true and faithful. He said that He was the Beginning and the End, that He would give the water of life freely to anyone who is thirsty, and that he who overcomes (world, flesh, and devil) shall inherit all things. God also listed those whose inheritance would be the lake of fire. They are the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable (**Lev 18:22, Deut 18:12, Prov 6:16-19**), murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars.

Then one of the archangels who had poured out one of the 7 bowl judgments offered to show John the bride, Jesus' wife. He carried John away in the Spirit to a high mountain where he saw the New Jerusalem descending toward the earth, lit up with the glory of God.

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Verses **12-14** mention the gates and the wall of the city. The 12 gates, each guarded by an angel, represent the 12 tribes of Israel, each gate being made of a single pearl, v.**21**. The wall had 12 foundations which represent the 12 apostles of the Lamb of God.

Verse **16** describes the layout and size of the city. It was laid out as a square, and its length, width, and height were equal to **1364 miles** in extent! Perhaps the city has the shape of a cube or a pyramid.

Verses **17-20** speak further about the wall and its foundations. The wall was 216 feet high (for an 18 inch cubit) and was made of jasper and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. The identification of jasper is not certain. New Unger's Bible Dictionary says that: *Doubtless we should translate the phraseology of John in **Rev 21:11,18** not as a specific assertion of certain optical properties belonging to the stone named, but rather as an attempt to illustrate from various combined sources conceptions too glorious for description.*³¹ The same comment applies to most of the precious stones mentioned as adornments for the foundations of the wall, since the names of many have been changed from the time of John to today.

Verse **21** also describes the street of the city as pure gold, like transparent glass. There was no temple in the city because God Almighty and the Lamb **are** the temple of it. This speaks of a more intimate fellowship of the Father and the Son with the inhabitants of the city than they enjoyed when New Jerusalem was in the third heaven, because according to chapters **7, 11, 14, 15, and 16**, God's throne was in the heavenly temple, and access to it was limited, see **8:2** and **15:8**. The city had no need of the light of the sun or moon because the glory of the Father and the Son illuminated it and the city will never be darkened. Note that the sun and moon are still there, but their light is unnecessary.

Verses **24-27** mention the people who will have access to the New Jerusalem. Only the redeemed shall walk there, those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Its gates shall never be shut, but anything that defiles or causes an abomination or a lie shall not enter it. Those kings of the former earth who were redeemed by the blood of the

The Exterior of New Jerusalem

Lamb, shall bring their glory and honor into the New Jerusalem, and the redeemed masses of people shall also bring the glory and honor of the nations into the city.

Since there is no mention of the gigantic city landing on the earth, it is possible that it will remain in orbit around the new earth like a huge space station. The redeemed will be able to transport themselves back and forth between New Jerusalem and the new earth at will because of their new bodies. These, like Jesus' body, can translate through the universe because they can move into the spiritual dimension, translate to their destination at the speed of thought, and then step back into the natural dimensions.

22

The Interior of New Jerusalem and Farewell

The scene is inside the New Jerusalem. The archangel of the last chapter is still showing John the wonders of the New Jerusalem. He showed him the river of life, bright as crystal, flowing out of the throne of the Father and of the Lamb. In the middle of the river and on both banks was the tree of life producing 12 kinds of fruits; a different fruit each month. The description of this great spreading tree reminds one of the banyan tree with its aerial roots, spreading itself over a large area. Not only is the life springing from the throne of God fruitful, but also diverse and beneficial to man. The leaves of the tree of life were used for the healing of the nations. Healing of the physical body is not meant here, because the new bodies of the saints are never sick. What is meant is the healing of the memory, part of man's soul, from the sad and painful experiences of the old earth that have scarred it.

Verses 3-5 describe the environment of the saints. There shall be no curse in the New Jerusalem, but there shall be service to God. We can call this "work". It will bear little resemblance to the work we currently do, because it will be done without tiring the one who does it. Also, there will be no forgetfulness, confusion, or frustration, but all service will be done with excellence and with a sense of purpose, and will be performed willingly and with great desire.

The saints will always be able to see God's face, and His name will be on their foreheads. They will be identified with Him throughout eternity. Not only does the glory of God light up the whole city, but the Lord gives light to His people in that their faces and bodies will shine like the sun wherever they go in the universe. This is what happened to Jesus at the Mount of Transfiguration in **Mt 17:2**:

...and was transfigured before them.

His face shone like the sun, and

His clothes became as white as the light.

The saints also shall reign forever and ever. The Bible doesn't say how

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this will be done, but man is the highest creation of God and already has His image, so he will rule over the rest of the creation of God, including the angels, animals, and all living things.

In verse 7 the angel reminded John of the words of Jesus that He would come quickly. Quickly does not mean soon. It means that once He begins to come it will be quick, as it says in **1 Cor 15:52**:

*“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye
at the last trumpet...”*

The Lord also had said that those who keep the words of the prophecy of the book of **Revelation** would be blessed.

John was so overwhelmed with what he had seen and heard that he fell down to worship the angel who had shown him these things. The angel immediately stopped him and forbade him to worship him. He said that he was the fellow servant of John, the servant of his brethren the prophets, and the servant of all who keep the words of the book of **Revelation**. John was told to worship God only. He also was told not to seal up the words of this book, but to reveal them to the Church.

In verse 12 the angel also reminded John of Jesus' words that when He comes, His reward would be with Him, to give every one according to his work. This is the promise of the **Bema** judgment of believers right after the *Parousia* occurs. This is also called the “judgment seat of Christ” in **Rom 14:10** and **2 Cor 5:10**. This is a reward or crown judgment for believers where they will be rewarded for their service to Jesus during their time on the earth. In this judgment, works that endure will be rewarded, according to **1 Cor 3:13-15**, and each person's praise will come from God, according to **1 Cor 4:5**.

John then wrote a very important statement for all of us. He said that only those who **do** the commandments of God have the right to enter the New Jerusalem and to eat of the tree of life. The commandments he is referring to he has written in **1 Jn 3:23**:

*And this is His commandment:
that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ
and love one another, as He gave us commandment.*

The Interior of New Jerusalem and Farewell

In verse **15** John listed those who are excluded from entering into the New Jerusalem. Dogs are mentioned among these. Lest anyone think that God is against the canine dogs, the context here is a type of human being, not an animal. The term “dog” was used in Israel to describe a catamite or male prostitute, and is so used in **Deut 23:18**.

Then the angel recounted the words of Jesus that He has sent His angel to testify these things in the churches, and that He is the Root and Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star. (Here is another case of the term star used in reference to a heavenly being.)

In verse **17** John gave an open invitation to the readers of the book that both the Holy Spirit and the bride of Jesus are inviting them to come and take the water of life freely. It does not cost money, but costs the commitment of one’s life to Jesus, not only to be Savior, but also to be Lord, to let Him direct one’s life forever. It is both the most costly and the most rewarding commitment one can make in life.

Verses **18-19** proclaim a warning testimony to anyone who would add to or take away from the words of prophecy of the book of **Revelation**. To the former God will add the plagues that are written in this book; from the latter God will take away his part from the Book of Life, from the New Jerusalem, and from the things (rewards) which are written in this book.

Finally, the angel gave John the assurance that Jesus Himself had testified to the solemn warning just given, and had said:

“Surely, I am coming quickly.”

And we who are eagerly watching and waiting for the return of the King of kings, the living Word of God, may echo the next words of the apostle John:

Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

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QUICK GUIDE CHART

| <u>REV</u> | <u>PICTURE</u> | <u>MEANING</u> |
|------------|---|--|
| 1 | 7 Lampstands 7 Stars | 7 Churches of province of Asia Angels of these 7 churches |
| 2 | Synagogue of Satan 10 Days Second death Hidden manna Rod of iron Morning star | Jewish unbelievers persecuting the church 10 Years The lake of fire Hidden meanings in the Word of God Unquestionable authority and power of God Jesus Himself |
| 3 | Open door Hour of trial Pillar in God's temple Gold tried in the fire White garments Eye salve Door | Opportunity in place and time The 7 year Tribulation An upholder of truth in the church The Word of God experienced in trials Righteous deeds done for love of Jesus Revelation through meditation on the Word Entrance to the heart or spirit of a person |
| 4 | Emerald rainbow 24 Elders White robes Crowns of gold 7 Lamps of fire Sea of glass 4 Living creatures | Eternal life The entire raptured Church from all nations Robes of Jesus' righteousness Rewards for their lives on earth 7 Spirits of God Absolute and infinite peace and tranquility Seraphim symbolizing the 4 gospels |
| 5 | The sealed scroll The Lamb, as if slain Incense | Events and character of 7 year Tribulation Jesus the Messiah The prayers of saints |
| 6 | Rider on a white horse Rider on a red horse Rider on a black horse Riders on a pale horse Souls under the altar | Spirit of the Antichrist Spirit of war Spirit of famine Spirits of Death and Hell Tribulation martyrs |
| 7 | 4 Corners of the earth 144,000 Sealed ones Uncounted multitude | N, S, E, W hemispheres Jewish evangelists during the Tribulation Those born again during the Tribulation |

| <u>REV</u> | <u>PICTURE</u> | <u>MEANING</u> |
|------------|---|---|
| 8 | Fire from the altar Hail, fire, and blood Burning mountain Burning star 1/3 of heavenly lights dark | God's wrath Nuclear war during invasion of Israel Asteroid from space entering atmosphere Re-entry of satellite carrying dirty A-bomb Cloud of debris over 1/3 of the earth |
| 9 | Star fallen to earth Bottomless pit Locusts King of bottomless pit First woe 4 Released angels 200 Million horsemen Horses Breastplates Horses' heads Horses' mouths Horses' tails | A heavenly angel, perhaps Michael Entrance to hell Demons in bodies looking like locusts The fallen angel Abaddon, not Satan The plague of the demonic locusts 4 Demons who begin the Asian War The Chinese army Modern tanks Name plates, also identifying the unit Tank turrets with radar-absorbing strips Tank cannons Towed howitzers with bulbous flash-hider |
| 10 | The little book 7 Thunders Eating the little book As honey in the mouth Bitter stomach | Events of last half of the Tribulation 7 Prophetic revelations about these years Absorbing its words to prophesy them Evil is given its just punishment Those who are punished go to lake of fire |
| 11 | The temple of God The outer court 2 Witnesses Beast from the pit The great city The second woe The third woe | The third temple, not yet built in Israel The Muslim area of the Dome of the Rock Perhaps Enoch and Elijah, both prophets Spirit of the Antichrist Jerusalem, capital of Israel The Asian War for supremacy in Asia Satan and demons confined to earth surface |
| 12 | The woman The sun The moon 12 Stars Fiery red dragon 7 Heads 10 Horns 1/3 of the stars The woman's Child The wilderness Wings of a great eagle Water from Satan's mouth | The nation of Israel Jacob Leah The 12 sons of Jacob Satan Pride, Lying, Hatred, Envy, Lust, Fear, Lawlessness Antichrist, War, Famine, Death, Disease, Racism, Sorcery, Witchcraft, Perversion False religion, The angels who revolted and fell with Satan Messiah Jesus The land of Edom, south of the Dead Sea Swift transportation into the land of Edom Tidal waves from nuclear bombs in Med. sea |

| <u>REV</u> | <u>PICTURE</u> | <u>MEANING</u> |
|------------|---|---|
| 13 | Beast from the sea 7 Heads 10 Horns Leopard Bear's feet Lion's mouth Mortal wound by sword Beast from the earth 2 Horns like a lamb Deadly wound healed Fire from heaven Image of the beast Mark of the beast Number of the beast | Antichrist spirit from pit takes human body from sea of people and becomes world ruler 7 Hills of Rome/7 kings of ancient Rome 10 Leaders of revived Roman Empire Swiftiness Tenacity, keeps holding what it grasps Voracity, always wanting more Killing of one of 7 kings of ancient Rome The false prophet from the land of Israel Apostate Christianity and Islam Slain king of ancient Rome "resurrected" Lying wonder, maybe done by technology Life-size animated image of the world ruler Injected microchip, programmed from orbit Greek letters Chi=600, Xi=60, Stigma=6 |
| 14 | Lamb Mt. Zion 144,000 People The new song First-fruits to God Flying angel preaching Babylon Wrath of her fornication Wine of God's wrath One like the Son of Man Golden crown Sharp sickles Vine of the earth Winepress of God's wrath 1600 Furlongs | Jesus Heavenly mountain where God's throne is Martyred evangelists, killed by the beast Song of martyrdom during the Tribulation First ones martyred by the Antichrist First time an angel preaches the gospel Spiritual name for Rome Consequences of gratifying the flesh Torment in the lake of fire Messiah Jesus Crown of victory over death, hell, and grave Instruments bringing redemption, judgment Anti-Semitism and Anti-Christianity Battle of Armageddon, N. Israel to N. Edom 182 Miles |
| 15 | 7 Angels with 7 plagues Sea of glass and fire Temple of the tabernacle Wrath of God | The 7 archangels who stand before God Absolute peace after the fire of martyrdom The heavenly tabernacle with the real ark The 7 last judgments of the Tribulation |
| 16 | Foul and loathsome sore Blood of a dead man Men scorched with heat Throne of the beast Darkness Euphrates River dried up Kings of the east Battle of great day of God Garments It is done Weight of a talent | From microchip's exploded lithium battery No dissolved oxygen in it Sun's gravity increased, moves earth closer City of Rome Spiritual darkness and pain, result of sins Turkey shuts off water at Ataturk Dam Asian confederation led by China Battle of Armageddon, N. Israel to N. Edom Clothing of salvation, robe of righteousness The Tribulation period is finished About 100 lbs |

| <u>REV</u> | <u>PICTURE</u> | <u>MEANING</u> |
|------------|---|---|
| 17 | Great harlot Many waters Wine of fornication Scarlet beast Names of blasphemy 7 Heads 10 Horns 10 Horns burn the harlot | City of Rome Many different peoples and nations Search for gratification of the flesh Sinful Antichrist spirit from the pit who has taken a human body and become world ruler "I am God" 7 Hills of Rome: Capitoline, Palatine, Caelian, Aventine, Esquiline, Viminal, Quirinal / 7 Kings of Rome: Julius Caesar, Augustus Caesar, Tiberius Caesar, Gaius Caesar, Nero Caesar, Domitian, Julian the Apostate 10 Leaders of revived Roman Empire 10 Leaders destroy Rome with fire |
| 18 | Cage for unclean birds Smoke of her burning Judgment in one hour Fruit longed for Traders weeping Sorcery that deceived | Birds possessed by demons from destroyed Rome Visible from the sea by many sailors Intense heat from nuclear explosion Fame, recognition, beauty, reputation Mourning for lost business opportunities Illegal drugs, distributed freely by Rome |
| 19 | Marriage of the Lamb Lamb's wife Clean, white linen Marriage supper Fellow servant Faithful and True One Many crowns Robe dipped in blood Armies in heaven White horses A sharp sword Winepress of God's wrath King of Kings Lord of Lords | Ceremony where Jesus weds the saints Those in the New Jerusalem, in heaven Righteous acts of the saints in heaven Celebration of Lord's Supper in heaven This angel serves the earthly saints Jesus Himself Diadems; circlets of cloth indicating victory Jesus first destroyed enemy armies in Edom Risen saints in their new bodies Indicating conquering victors The Word of God spoken with faith Battle of Armageddon, N. Israel to N. Edom Saints are the kings, Jesus is king of kings Saints are the lords, Jesus is Lord of lords |
| 20 | Angel from heaven Bottomless pit Thrones First resurrection Satan's prison Gog and Magog Camp of the saints The beloved city Great white throne Books Book of Life | The angel from Rev 9:1, probably Michael Pit of entrance to hell Seats of authority of risen saints All the saints participating in the judgment The bottomless pit Symbolic of all gentile nations Wherever the earthly saints are gathered Jerusalem God's judgment throne Books of deeds of the wicked of all ages Book of the names of the saints of all ages |

| <u>REV</u> | <u>PICTURE</u> | <u>MEANING</u> |
|------------|--|---|
| 21 | New heaven and new earth No more sea The tabernacle of God Fountain of water of life He who overcomes 12,000 Furlongs 144 Cubits | New atmosphere and re-created earth No more turbulence or separation of people The New Jerusalem The Holy Spirit He who overcomes world, flesh, and devil 1364 Miles 216 Feet |
| 22 | The tree of life Leaves of that tree The saints reign forever “I am coming quickly” “My reward is with Me” This book | In Paradise, moved to heaven after the Resurrection of Jesus For healing the memories of the saints Reign over God’s whole universe Jesus will come in the twinkling of an eye once He receives the command to come Jesus will reward His Church at the Parousia (Rapture) Book of Revelation |

Picture Credits

Chapter 8: Asteroid Eros

Taken from the Near Earth Asteroid Rendezvous (NEAR) image of the day for 2000 Feb 14 (F), and used by permission of the John Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory

Chapter 9: Chinese Type 90 Main Battle Tank

Retrieved from web site <http://www.sinodefence.com> on April 8, 2002 and used by permission of Chinese Defence Today, 2002-2003

Towed Chinese Type 66, 152mm Gun-Howitzer
Retrieved from web site <http://www.sinodefence.com> on April 8, 2002 and used by permission of Chinese Defence Today, 2002-2003

Chapter 13: Dime and Verichip

Retrieved from web site <http://www.adsx.com/prodservpart/verichip.html> on April 4, 2002

Chapter 16: Ataturk Dam on the Euphrates River

Retrieved from web site <http://www.adiyamanli.org> on April 9, 2002

Chapter 17: Bust of Julius Caesar

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Caesar as general
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Dr. Jack and Grace Tuls have taken 45 short term mission trips to Europe, Africa and Asia, often living in the jungle of Southeast Asia for almost 6 months of the year. In 1989 they founded REMOTE AREA MINISTRIES, a non-profit corporation, to implement their outreach to remote corners of the earth. As a result, they have established 12 Bible schools in six foreign nations and one in the **USA**. Jack and Grace have ministered in the nations of **Burma, Thailand, South Africa, Nigeria, Mongolia, Malaysia, Ukraine, Central African Republic, China, Nepal, Russia, and India.**

Jack and Grace have been teaching the Word of God for about 37 years. Both were brought up in Christian homes and matriculated in the Christian school system from elementary school through college. Grace was trained in Medical Technology, and Jack in Aerospace Engineering, a career which he pursued for 25 years. God called them in 1973 to be missionaries, and trained them for 11 years before activating their call in 1984.

Jack and Grace have had a wide variety of Christian service in leadership roles, including teaching all kinds of Bible studies, jail ministry, children's ministry, food ministry, counseling, deliverance, evangelism outreach, crusade management, and administration on church elder and deacon boards and pastoral staff.

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