

THE REVELATION of JESUS THE ANOINTED

LAST GENERATION VERSION

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Chapter 1

Prologue

The revelation of Jesus the Anointed¹ which God gave to Him to show² His servants the things which must occur suddenly,³ and [God] communicated it, having sent it by His Messenger⁴ to His servant John 2 who witnessed the Logos of God⁵ and the testimony of Jesus the Anointed as much as he perceived.⁶ 3 The reader and the listeners to the sayings of this prophecy are privileged, also those who heed the things written in it; because the appointed time is ready.⁷

Greeting

4 John, to the seven assemblies – those in Asia: Grace to you and peace from the One who is,⁸ who was, and who is to come, and from the seven Breaths⁹ which are before

¹ The “revelation of Jesus the Anointed one” is more than just the second coming. This book fully reveals who Jesus is. It includes the whole end-time sequence of events as the rest of the sentence indicates. The judgments contained in this book reveal Jesus the Anointed taking control of the nations, beginning with the opening of the seven seals. The Lamb is the only one worthy to open the seven-sealed scroll of God’s judgments.

² The Father gave the Son the things contained within this book to personally reveal to the assemblies through John.

³ This prepositional phrase literally means, “within a very short space of time.” Nothing in this phrase necessarily requires that the beginning of this short timeframe is close, only that the events themselves will occur within a short block of time – rapidly or suddenly. (See: Rev. 22:6,7,12,20).

⁴ “The Messenger of God” who first appeared to Hagar (Gen. 21:17), then to Abraham (Gen. 22:11-12,15-18), to Moses (Ex. 3:2-6), who led Israel out of Egypt (Ex. 23:20-23; Judges 2:1-4) is identified here as Jesus the Anointed, the one who testified to John (v. 18). He is also identified as Jesus in the Old Testament, being called “the Messenger of the Covenant” (Mal. 3:1), and “the Messenger of Great Council” (Isa. 9:6 LXX). Paul told the Galatians, “you ... received me as the Messenger of God, as Anointed Jesus [Himself]!” (Gal. 4:14).

See also Rev. 22:6.

⁵ John previously bore witness to the Logos of God in John 1:1-14 and 1 John 1:1-3. (cf. Rev. 19:13).

⁶ John expressed the limitations of his own understanding of this prophetic revelation, yet reported it faithfully what he saw and heard.

⁷ The sense is that the end time events are “ready” or “prepared.” This term does not necessarily mean “near” in time. The Greek word was commonly used in reference to the Day of the Lord in the LXX (Isa. 13:6; Ezek. 30:3; Joel 1:15; Joel 2:1; Joel 3:14; Obadiah 1:15; Zeph. 1:7,14). These prophets were much farther removed in time from the Day of the Lord than the book of Revelation. Here the sense is that the specific time has been prepared or appointed. Thus the events are certain to occur. (See: Rev. 22:10). When Jesus was on the land He did not know the appointed time (Mark 13:32; Acts 1:7). This statement implies that the time was now known to Him.

⁸ This is the essential meaning of God’s name in Hebrew YHVH – ‘the Existing One.’

⁹ cf. Isaiah 11:1-5; Zech. 3:9; 4:10 LXX & Rev. 5:6. Notice that there is no Trinity represented here. Paul began all of his Epistles (except Hebrews) with a similar statement of grace and peace to the assemblies from the Father and the Son, but never from a third person. John follows Paul’s pattern, but adds the “seven Breaths,” one for each of the “seven assemblies.” This is because the holy Breath of God is not a distinct person, but is a limited manifestation of God’s presence and power. In this case the holy Breath is the catalyst for each local assembly in worship to “enter the

REVELATION

His throne,¹⁰ 5 and from Jesus the Anointed – the Faithful Witness,¹¹ the first-produced¹² out from among the dead,¹³ and the ruler of the kings of the land.¹⁴ To the one loving¹⁵ us and washing¹⁶ us from our sins in His own blood, 6 and made us Kingdom priests¹⁷ to His¹⁸ God and Father – to Him be the glory and the power unto the ages of the ages,¹⁹ Amen! 7 Look! He is coming with the clouds!²⁰ And every eye will see Him, even of those who pierced Him.²¹ And all the tribes of the land will wail²² because of Him! Truly, Amen!

8 “I am the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end,”²³ says the Master, the God²⁴ who is,²⁵ and who was, and who is to come, **THE SOVEREIGN OVER ALL**.²⁶

holiest” in the celestial Temple (Heb. 10:19). This is why the seven assemblies in Asia Minor are represented as “seven lampstands” (Rev. 1:20), but the “seven lamps” that correspond to them are said to be before the throne of God and are identified as the “seven Breaths” (Rev. 4:5). The “seven Breaths” are also the “seven eyes” on the Lamb (Rev. 5:6). It is through the holy Breath of God – the seven eyes – that Jesus can be present and observing all seven of these assemblies (the 7 letters indicate that He had been observing them), that He is able to observe all of His assemblies (Matt. 18:20), and also remains with His people to the end of the age (Matt. 28:20). The holy Breath of God is the link between the local assemblies and the presence of Father and Son in the celestial Temple of God. For this reason we are commanded to “*come with boldness to the throne of grace...*” (Heb. 4:16).

¹⁰ Rev. 4:5

¹¹ Isaiah 55:3-4 refers to the Son as follows: “*Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you – The sure mercies of David. Indeed I have given him as a witness to the people, A leader and commander for the people.*”

¹² “First-produced” likely refers to Jesus’ words in John 12:24 and Paul’s amplification of it in 1 Cor. 15:35-38,42-44.

¹³ Jesus is the prototype of the resurrection to immortality. John borrowed this title from Paul (Col. 1:18).

¹⁴ Psalm 2:7-12; Rev. 11:15; Rev. 19:16

¹⁵ The Textus Receptus follows a minority reading in this case which has the aorist indicative (past) form of the verb “love.” The majority of manuscripts, as well as the oldest manuscripts, have the present tense.

¹⁶ Several manuscripts read “loosed.”

¹⁷ The Textus Receptus reads “kings and priests.” This Kingdom priesthood of believers will commence in the Millennium. (See Rev. 20:6).

¹⁸ That the Father is Jesus’ own “God” (supreme Sovereign and Authority) is stated many times in the New Testament. (John 20:17; Rom. 15:6; 2 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 11:31; Eph. 1:3; Col. 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:3). It is also implied by the reference to the Father as “SOVEREIGN OVER ALL” (vs. 8), which includes His only-begotten Son.

¹⁹ That John expressed worship of Jesus proves His divine origin out of God. If He had been merely a man, worship of this nature would have been absolutely forbidden. See Jesus’ own words in Luke 4:8. (See also Phil. 2:5-11).

²⁰ “Coming with the clouds” is quoted directly from Daniel 7:13, showing that the whole book of Revelation is an expansion of the celestial court of the Ancient of Days described in Daniel 7:9-14, 21-22, 26-27.

²¹ Psalm 22:16; Zech. 12:10; John 19:37

²² Matthew 24:30

²³ Here the Father referred to Himself as “the alpha and the omega” (cf. Rev. 21:6,13)

²⁴ The Textus Receptus omits “God.”

²⁵ The God who “is” or who “exists” is the sense of the Hebrew name, YHWH, and the name “I AM” (Ex. 3:14).

²⁶ The titles, “Master” and “God” are applied in Scripture to both the Father and the Son. However, the title “SOVEREIGN OVER ALL” (παντοκράτωρ) is exclusive to the Father in the LXX and the NT. It is usually translated “Almighty” and “Lord of hosts.” But both English terms are inadequate in expressing the full meaning. The real sense is the One who holds total and sole sovereignty and power over everything and everyone, the ultimate authority. That it refers to the Father alone is clear from Jer. 3:19 LXX, “... I will appoint you as children. And I will give you the choice land of the Gentiles, the inheritance of God, **SOVEREIGN OVER ALL**, and I said, ‘You will call me **Father**; and you shall not turn away from Me.’” Paul paraphrased this passage in 2 Cor. 6:18, “‘I will be unto you a **Father**, and you will

REVELATION

The Vision of the Glorified Son of God

9 I, John, (your brother and companion in the tribulation,²⁷ and Kingdom,²⁸ and resolve in the Anointed Jesus), arrived on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and because of the witness of Jesus the Anointed. 10 I began to be in the Breath²⁹ on the Chief Day³⁰ and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, 11 saying: ³¹*“What you see, write in a scroll and send to the seven assemblies which are in Asia:³² to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.”* 12 And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And upon turning, I saw seven golden lampstands.³³ 13 And in the middle of the seven lampstands [I saw] one like the Son of Man, having been clothed with a foot length³⁴ robe and fastened about the chest with a golden band. 14 His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes

be unto Me sons and daughters,’ says the Master, SOVEREIGN OVER ALL.” All other references to this title in the NT are exclusively in Revelation (1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7,14; 19:6,15; 21:22). Also in the LXX, the “SOVEREIGN OVER ALL” is distinguished from His “Anointed.” *“For, behold, I am He that strengthens the thunder, and creates the wind, and proclaims to men His Anointed, forming the morning and the darkness, and mounting on the high places of the land. The Master, God, SOVEREIGN OVER ALL is his name”* [κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ ὄνομα αὐτῶ] (Amos 4:13 LXX). Zechariah far exceeded all other writers in using this title (55 times). He also portrayed “the Messenger of YHWH” (the preincarnate Son of God) as addressing God using this title, showing His subordinate role to the Father (Zech. 1:12 LXX). The title, “SOVEREIGN OVER ALL,” expresses the core of biblical monotheism and explains why the Father is referred to as the “God” of the Son of God (vs. 6). This fact makes the Trinitarian idea of three co-equal and co-eternal Persons impossible to reconcile with Scripture. The Son of God has always been under the supreme authority of His Father.

²⁷ “The tribulation” (with the definite article) refers specifically to the time just prior to Jesus’ second coming (Matt. 24:29; Rev. 7:14). That John here indicates that he is a fellow participant in “the tribulation” may be explained in chapter 10. John was given further prophecy through “seven thunders” and a “little scroll,” the contents of which were not revealed in this book. He was then told that He must prophesy again. John will prophesy again as one of the two witnesses, and will actually be present in “the tribulation.” (See also Rom. 12:12 – Greek)

²⁸ The Textus Receptus has “in the Kingdom,” but both the Alexandrian and Majority Text do not.

²⁹ Engulfed in the Breath of God (the “Helper” as portrayed by Jesus in John 14:16-18, 23). Being “in the Breath” was generally something that occurred in the assembly (Rom. 8:9; Eph. 2:22; Phil. 3:3), as the Breath of God came to dwell in the local gathering. See also Rev. 4:2, 17:3, 21:10.

³⁰ τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ – “the Chief Day” (often incorrectly translated “the Lord’s Day”). The term κυριακῇ is an adjective derived from the noun, κύριος (master, chief, superior, lord). “The Chief Day” was the anniversary of Jesus’ resurrection, also known as “μὴ τῶν σαββάτων” (the first [day] of the Sabbaths – referring to Firstfruits, which began the 50-day, 7 Sabbath countdown to Pentecost, Lev. 23:10-12, 15-16). Ignatius, disciple of John, used the term “the Chief Day” (τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ) for both the actual day of Jesus’ resurrection, “at the dawning of the Chief Day He arose from the dead” (Epistle to the Trallians, ch. ix), and again of the anniversary of the resurrection, “living in the observance of the Chief Day on which also our life has sprung up again by Him and by His death” (Epistle to the Magnesians, ch. ix). The longer version reads: “And after the observance of the Sabbath, let every friend of Christ keep the Chief Day (τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ) as a festival, the resurrection-day, the queen and chief of all the days.” The Sabbath was the weekly observance of Christians, but “the Chief Day” was the annual festival of the resurrection. Thus, John’s vision of Jesus occurred on the anniversary of His resurrection.

³¹ The Textus Receptus adds, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,’ and,” but these words only appear in a few late copies. They do not appear in either the Majority Text or the Alexandrian Text.

³² Asia Minor, today’s Turkey.

³³ Cf. Zech. 4:2

³⁴ Cf. Zech. 3:4

like a flame of fire.³⁵ 15 His feet were like white brass as if having been molten in a furnace and His voice as the sound of many waters. 16 And He had in His right hand seven stars. Out of His mouth projected a sharp double-edged sword. And His appearance was like the sun shining in its power.³⁶ 17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He placed His right hand on me, saying to me: *“Do not be afraid. I am the first and the last.”*³⁷ 18 And I am He who lives, and became dead, and look, I am alive unto the ages of the ages! Amen. And I hold the keys³⁸ of the grave³⁹ and death.⁴⁰ 19 Write what you saw, and what is, and what is to come afterwards.⁴¹ 20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands [are this]: The seven stars are the messengers⁴² of the seven assemblies. And the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven assemblies.”⁴³

Chapter 2

Jesus' Message to the Assembly at Ephesus

“To the messenger for the assembly in Ephesus write: ‘The One holding the seven stars in His right hand, the One walking in the midst of the seven golden lampstands, says this: 2 “I have observed your deeds, the toil, your endurance, and that you cannot bear

³⁵ Daniel 10:4-6

³⁶ When Moses was in the presence of YHVH on Mt. Sinai he began to glow to the point that he had to veil his face from the Israelites (Ex. 34:28-35; 2 Cor. 3:13). The Son of Man seated at the Father's side seems to have experienced something similar to Moses, but to a much greater extent.

³⁷ Jesus applied the descriptive phrase – “the first and the last” – to Himself, drawn from Isaiah 44:6 & 48:12. In Isaiah 48, it was the Messenger of YHVH speaking for YHVH who used this title. *“Listen to Me, O Jacob, And Israel, My called: I am He, I am the first, I am also the last. Indeed My hand has laid the foundation of the earth, And My right hand has stretched out the heavens; When I call to them, They stand up together. ... Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was [the LXX has “from the beginning” – cf. 1 Jn. 2:13-14], I was there. And now the Lord GOD and His Spirit Have sent Me”* (Isa. 48:12-13,16 NKJ). The LXX has “and now the Lord has sent Me, even His Breath.” This is the “Breath of Christ” which spoke through Isaiah (1 Pet. 1:10-11). Cf. Rev. 2:8 & 22:12-13.

³⁸ By virtue of the fact that Jesus conquered death, having died and risen again immortal, He alone possesses the authority over death and the grave. The resurrection unto life is through Him alone. See John 5:21, 25-26; John 11:23-26. The Jews had a tradition that God had the sole custody of four keys which He entrusted to no one, not man nor angel: the Key of Rain, the Key of Provision, the Key of the Barren Womb, and the Key of Death and the Grave. (Sanhedrin, fol. 113, 1)

³⁹ Greek: ᾗδης (hades) refers to the common grave of all mankind (“the grave” as an abstract concept) as opposed to an individual grave (cf. 1 Cor. 15:55). The twin terms “death and the grave” (ὁ θάνατος καὶ ὁ ᾗδης) are parallel abstract concepts in Revelation (20:13,14). In Greek mythology, ὁ ᾗδης (Hades) was in the underworld, a place of departed ghosts. But this concept is not found in the Bible.

⁴⁰ John 5:25-26

⁴¹ This statement provides a three-part division to the book, past, present, and future. “What you saw” refers to the vision of Jesus. “What is” refers to the current situation among the seven assemblies described in the seven letters that Jesus was about to dictate. “What is to come” is the prophecy of the future beginning in Rev. 4:1.

⁴² These were members of the respective assemblies who traveled between each assembly and Patmos to communicate with John.

⁴³ Notice that the seven assemblies are portrayed as individual single lampstands. The lamps corresponding to these are before God's throne (Rev. 4:5). In Zech. 4:2, the single lampstand had seven lamps, symbolizing the nation of Israel.

REVELATION

those who are evil. And you tested those calling themselves ‘Emissaries’ and are not, and found them false;⁴⁴ 3 and you have patience and endured, and through My name have labored.⁴⁵ 4 But I have [something] against you, that you abandoned your original love. 5 Remember then from where you have fallen and repent, and do the original deeds. Otherwise, I am coming to you suddenly and will remove your lampstand⁴⁶ from its place — unless you repent. 6 But you have this: that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans⁴⁷ which I also hate. 7 The one having an ear,⁴⁸ listen to what the Breath⁴⁹ is saying to the assemblies: ‘To the one being victorious, I will give to him to eat from the Tree of Life,⁵⁰ which is in the midst of the Garden⁵¹ of God.’”

Jesus’ Message to the Assembly at Smyrna

8 “And to the messenger for the assembly in Smyrna write, ‘The first and the last, who died, and came to life, says this: 9 “I have observed your deeds, and the trials and the poverty. But you are rich.”⁵² And [I have seen] the blasphemy of those claiming to be Jews, and they are nothing but the synagogue of the Adversary.⁵³ 10 Fear nothing that you are about to suffer. Understand, the Slanderer intends to throw some of you into prison so that you may be tested, and you will have trouble ten days.⁵⁴ Be faithful until

⁴⁴ These were self-appointed “emissaries” (apostles) not commissioned or sent by Jesus (2 Cor. 11:13), claiming authority to speak on His behalf. But Jesus only commissioned twelve Emissaries including Paul (Rev. 21:14). The Roman Catholic Church continues this heresy to the present day (with their doctrine of “Apostolic Succession”). Several cults and the modern Charismatic movement also continue this heresy.

⁴⁵ A few manuscripts, and the Textus Receptus, add, “and have not fainted.”

⁴⁶ The Breath of God would no longer reside among that assembly.

⁴⁷ The Nicolaitans were followers of Nicolas of Antioch, the sole Greek among the seven deacons in the Jerusalem assembly (Acts 6:3-5). Nicolas apostatized from the Apostolic Faith by embracing the teachings of Plato and blending this with Christianity. According to Irenaeus (Against Heresies, Bk. I, ch. xxvi:3), John’s Gospel was written in part to counter the teachings of the Nicolaitans who denied that Logos became flesh. His Platonic dualism also removed the necessity and possibility of the resurrection of the flesh. Paul first encountered this aspect in the Corinthian assembly (1 Cor. 15:12-18). For a further description of the Nicolaitans, see: Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Bk. III, ch. xi.

⁴⁸ This was a common expression of Jesus’ referring to those inclined to heed His voice. (cf. Matt. 11:15; 13:9; 13:43).

⁴⁹ In each of the seven letters, Jesus plainly identified Himself as the one issuing the commands. He was doing so through the Breath of God – the “Helper” (John 14:16-18). The Breath (Spirit) is clearly not a distinct Person, otherwise it would create a severe problem in each of the seven letters as to the source of the command. That the following words attributed to the “Breath” in each letter cannot be a message from a third Person is proven in Rev. 2:26-29.

⁵⁰ Ezekiel 47:12; Rev. 22:2,14

⁵¹ Eden will be restored (Isaiah 51:3 LXX). Its location was where Jerusalem is now located. The Tree of Life will grow on both sides of the River of Life flowing from the Temple (Ezek. 47:12; Rev. 22:1-2).

⁵² Cf. Rev. 3:17

⁵³ This area of Asia Minor, Phrygia, was known for Jewish mysticism which had blended Greek mythology and philosophy with Judaism, including an elaborate and fanciful theology concerning angels. The Essenes were of this type. The Letter to the Colossians (also in Phrygia) was written by Paul in part to counter the same Jewish – Greek mysticism (of the kind found in the Book of Enoch) which Jesus Himself hated, calling them “the synagogue of the Adversary.” See: 1 Tim. 1:3-4; Titus 1:14-16. Cabala is the contemporary counterpart.

⁵⁴ Some commentators have understood this to refer to ten periods of persecution from Nero to Diocletian, or specific to the Diocletian persecution which lasted ten years exactly after which Constantine ended the official Roman persecution of Christians. However, it may have a more enigmatic reference directly to the end times, as there are ten

death⁵⁵ and I will give you the wreath⁵⁶ of life.⁵⁷ 11 The one having an ear, listen to what the Breath says to the assemblies: 'The one being victorious shall not be injured by the second death.'⁵⁸

Jesus' Message to the Assembly at Pergamos

12 "And to the messenger for the assembly in Pergamos write, 'The One having the sharp two edged sword says this: 13 "I have observed your deeds, and where you live, where the Adversary's throne⁵⁹ is. And you retain My name, and did not deny My faith in the days of Antipas⁶⁰ My faithful witness who was killed among you where the Adversary lives. 14 But I have a few things against you: that you have there [some] holding the teaching of Balaam who taught Balak to place an obstacle before the sons of Israel, to eat idol's sacrifices⁶¹ and to fornicate.⁶² 15 Likewise you also have some embracing the teaching of the Nicolaitans⁶³ which I hate. 16 Repent then, otherwise I am coming to you suddenly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth. 17 The one having an ear, listen to what the Breath is saying to the assemblies: 'To the one being victorious, I will give some of the manna to eat that has been hidden.⁶⁴ And I will

literal days from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur, which is the Day of Jesus' return. The darkening of the sun and moon that accompany His return may begin on Rosh Hashanah and last for ten days. Also, ten days was the period of testing for Daniel and his three friends (Dan. 1:12-15).

⁵⁵ Polycarp, who was appointed to the place of bishop by John in Smyrna prior to his imprisonment on Patmos, was "faithful until death," suffering martyrdom at Rome shortly after Revelation was written.

⁵⁶ Wreaths were given to victors of a struggle.

⁵⁷ James 1:12 – the "wreath of life" is given to those who successfully endure testing.

⁵⁸ Rev. 20:14, 21:8. In the first death there remains hope of resurrection to life again. Not so in the second death, which is permanent annihilation (See Matt. 10:28 & note on Jude 1:7).

⁵⁹ The city of Pergamos was noted for an enormous pagan altar. It contained a 371 foot long sculpture of the war of the gods against the Gigantes, a mythological race of giants. This myth was also circulated among some mystical Jewish sects such as the Essenes, as taught in the Book of Enoch (with the pagan gods replaced by angels, and connected to the fall of the sons of God {Sethites} in Gen. 6). The pagan altar was moved, and is currently housed in the Pergamon Museum in Berlin.

⁶⁰ Antipas was bishop of Pergamos during the reign of Domitian (Catholic Encyclopedia, Article "Oil of Saints"). This requires that Revelation was written during Domitian's reign, who began to persecute Christians towards the end of his reign. He was assassinated in AD 92.

⁶¹ In reference to eating food sacrificed to idols, Paul said, "You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons" (1Cor. 10:21-22 NKJV).

⁶² See Num. 25. The "Incident of Peor" was instigated by Balaam, whereby after being prevented by the Messenger of YHVH from cursing Israel, he instead counseled the Moabites to invite the Israelites to join with them and to intermarry with their women. This led to gross idolatry, including participating in pagan rituals for Baal Peor (eating idol's sacrifices). Because God forbid Israel from marrying pagan women, idolatry was often spoken of metaphorically as "fornication" and "adultery" in the Scriptures. Thus the crime of some of the members of this assembly was in tolerating and excusing forms of idolatry.

⁶³ See note for vs. 6.

⁶⁴ A portion of manna was hidden in the Ark of the Covenant, along with the stone tablets and Aaron's rod. These three items hidden away in the Ark symbolize God's work in the end times: The stone tablets represent the restoring of the Law of Moses for Israel's repentance (Dan. 9:27); Aaron's rod represents the anointing of the restored Levitical priesthood by Elijah (Mal. 4:4-6); The hidden manna represents supernatural provision for God's covenant people (Micah 7:15; Rev. 12:6, 14). The promise in this instance for those being victorious is supernatural provision.

REVELATION

give him a white pebble,⁶⁵ and on the pebble a new name inscribed which no one has perceived except the one receiving it’.”

Jesus' Message to the Assembly at Thyatira

18 “And to the messenger for the assembly in Thyatira write, ‘The Son of God, His eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like white brass, says this: 19 “I have observed your deeds, love, service, faith, and your endurance; and your works, that the latter are greater than the former. 20 But I have [something] against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel⁶⁶ who calls herself a prophetess.⁶⁷ And she is teaching⁶⁸ and seducing My servants to fornicate and to eat sacrifices of idols.⁶⁹ 21 And I gave her time so that she might repent, and she is not willing to repent out of her fornication. 22 Look! I am throwing her into a bed and those committing adultery with her into great tribulation⁷⁰ unless they repent from her⁷¹ deeds. 23 And I will kill her children in death, and all the assemblies will know that I am the one searching the minds and hearts.⁷² And I will give to each of you according to your works. 24 Yet to you I am saying (to the rest in Thyatira who do not have this teaching, who did not ‘know the depths of the Adversary,’ as they say) I will lay on you no other burden 25 except [that you] keep holding what you have until I may come. 26 And the one being victorious, and keeping My works⁷³ until the end, I will give him authority over the nations — 27 ‘*He shall shepherd them with a rod of iron; As the vessels of pottery are crushed*’⁷⁴ — as I also have received from My Father. 28 And I will give him the morning star.⁷⁵ 29 The one having an ear, listen to what the Breath is saying⁷⁶ to the assemblies.”

⁶⁵ In the ancient courts, the accused was condemned by judges giving him black pebbles, and acquitted by receiving white pebbles. Here, the sense seems to be not only acquittal, but a new beginning (new name).

⁶⁶ 1 Kings 18 – 21. Jezebel is used metaphorically because of her devotion to idolatry.

⁶⁷ Self-appointed prophets and prophetesses are abundant today in the Charismatic movement. See note on v. 2.

⁶⁸ Paul forbade women teaching in the assemblies (1 Tim. 2:12-14). The Charismatic movement not only encourages self-appointed “prophets” and “prophetesses” but also women teachers and pastors.

⁶⁹ See notes on vs. 14.

⁷⁰ See: Matt. 24:21 & Rev. 7:14

⁷¹ The Textus Receptus has “their deeds.”

⁷² Heb. 4:12-13 identifies the one searching the minds and hearts as “Logos of God.”

⁷³ “My works” refers to doing the works of Jesus the Anointed, obeying His commandments and carrying on His mission (Matt. 5:14-16; John 9:5).

⁷⁴ Psalm 2:9. God’s Son was promised the inheritance of all the nations, that He would “*shepherd them with a rod of iron.*” Here Jesus quoted the LXX, (the Hebrew has “break them,” while the LXX has “shepherd them”). In this verse Jesus promised to share His power and reign with His faithful followers. This Psalm is referenced again in Rev. 12:5 & Rev. 19:15, and this Psalm is fulfilled in Rev. 20:1-4.

⁷⁵ 2 Pet. 1:19; Rev. 22:16

⁷⁶ That “the Breath” is not a third divine Person is clear from these verses. The words are clearly those of Jesus Himself, since He used the first-person pronouns, yet He was speaking to the assemblies by means of the holy Breath.

REVELATION

Chapter 3

Jesus' Message to the Assembly at Sardis

"And to the messenger for the assembly in Sardis write, 'The One possessing the seven Breaths⁷⁷ of God and the seven stars says this: "I have observed your deeds, that you have a reputation for being alive yet you are dead. 2 Wake up! And reinforce what remains, which have been on the verge of dying. For I have not found your deeds complete before My God. 3 Remember therefore the way you have received and heard; be attentive and repent. If, therefore, you should not awaken, I will arrive above you like a thief,⁷⁸ and you may not know what hour I will arrive⁷⁹ above you. 4 You have a few names even in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. And they shall walk with Me in white because they are worthy. 5 The one being victorious shall be dressed in white clothing. And I will not erase his name from the Book of Life, but I will acknowledge his name before My Father and before His messengers. 6 The one having an ear, listen to what the Breath is saying to the assemblies.'"

Jesus' Message to the Assembly at Philadelphia

7 "And to the messenger for the assembly in Philadelphia write, 'The Holy One, The True One, The one with the key of David, who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens,⁸⁰ says this: 8 "I have observed your deeds. Look! I have placed before you a door that has been opened, which no one is able to lock, because you have a little strength, have been attentive to My Word and have not denied My name. 9 Look! I am arranging [things].⁸¹ Those of the synagogue of the Adversary (those claiming to be Jews, who are not, but lie⁸²), look, I will prepare them that they may come before you and may bow at your feet and may know that I have loved you. 10 Because you have guarded the word of My endurance,⁸³ I also will guard you out from⁸⁴ the hour of trial,⁸⁵ the one about to appear over the whole world⁸⁶ to test those who live on the land.⁸⁷ 11 Look! I am coming suddenly! Hold what you have so that no one may take your wreath. 12 The one being victorious I will make him a column in the Temple⁸⁸ of My God, which he should not leave thereafter. And I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, (the New Jerusalem, the one descending out

⁷⁷ Rev. 5:6

⁷⁸ Matt. 24:43-44; 1 Thess. 5:2,4; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 16:15

⁷⁹ Luke 12:45-46

⁸⁰ Isaiah 22:22

⁸¹ The verb describes present continuous action, not future action as in most translations.

⁸² See notes on Rev. 2:9

⁸³ They remained faithful to the teaching of Jesus the Anointed despite severe opposition.

⁸⁴ ἐκ – out from among/within, implying presence within the hour of trial and safely emerging from it. See John 17:15.

⁸⁵ The Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:21; Rev. 7:14).

⁸⁶ "The whole world" (πασαν τὴν οἰκουμένην / ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην / τῆς οἰκουμένης ὅλης) does not necessarily refer to all nations (Luke 2:1; Acts 11:28), although usually it does (Rev. 12:9; Rev. 16:14).

⁸⁷ cf. Matt. 24:21; Daniel 12:1-2. Note the "deliverance" of God's people in the latter passage.

⁸⁸ The Temple will exist in the Kingdom (Ezek. 40-48). Cf. Rev. 21:22.

REVELATION

of the sky from My God), and My new name. 13 The one having an ear, listen to what the Breath is saying to the assemblies.'"

Jesus' Message to the Assembly at Laodicea

14 "And to the messenger for the assembly in Laodicea write, 'The Amen,⁸⁹ The Faithful and True Witness,⁹⁰ The Beginning⁹¹ of God's creation, says this: 15 "I have observed your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I hoped you might be cold or hot. 16 Since you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of My mouth, 17 because you say, "I am rich, have become wealthy, and need nothing." And you have not perceived that you are the miserable one, and pitiful, poor, blind, and naked. 18 I advise you to purchase from Me gold having been refined in the fire so that you may be rich; and white clothes, so that you may be clothed and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen. And rub some lotion on your eyes so that you may see. 19 As many as I love, I admonish and discipline. Therefore, be zealous and repent. 20 Look! I have stood at the door and I am knocking. If anyone should hear my knock⁹² and open the door, I will come in to him and dine with him and he with Me. 21 The one being victorious, I will permit him to sit with Me on My throne as I also was victorious⁹³ and sat down with My Father on His throne. 22 The one having an ear, listen to what the Breath is saying to the assemblies'."

Chapter 4

The Celestial Court Seated⁹⁴

After these things I observed, and look, a door having been opened in the sky. And the first voice I heard was like a trumpet⁹⁵ speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you what is required to take place after these things." 2 Immediately I came

⁸⁹ "Amen" is a Jewish idiom, meaning, "certainty."

⁹⁰ Rev. 1:1

⁹¹ ἀρχὴ (fem., abstract) usually "beginning," occasionally "rulership." It does not mean "ruler," which is the masculine concrete noun ἄρχων (cf. Rev. 1:5). In Col. 1:18, Jesus is called ἀρχὴ, "Beginning," a further amplification of the statement in vs. 15, "first-produced of all creation" both terms (as here) referring to "Wisdom" in Prov. 8:22-31 whom God "begat" v. 24-25 and made "the Beginning" v. 22. The begetting of God's Son was the beginning of Day one of creation (Ps. 2:7). That the Son is "The Beginning of God's creation" does not mean He was Himself a creation. Rather, He was "begotten" as "the only-begotten Son of God" (John 3:18) who was "from the beginning" (1 John 2:14). His production marks the Beginning of measured time, Day one of creation week (cf. John 1:1, John 8:25).

⁹² φωνῆς – a noise, sound, or voice of any kind. In this context it appears to refer to Jesus' knocking.

⁹³ Phil. 2:5-10; Heb. 5:7-9

⁹⁴ John described in detail the celestial court that Daniel only glimpsed – the "Ancient of Days" seated on His throne surrounded by other thrones (24 elders) and "thousands, thousands" attending Him (Dan. 7:9-10). The purpose of the celestial court is to transfer the kingdoms of the world to the "Son of Man" and the "holy ones of the Most High" (Dan. 7:9-14, 22, 27).

⁹⁵ Jesus has the voice like a trumpet according to Rev. 1:10.

REVELATION

to be in the Breath,⁹⁶ and look, a throne was sitting and someone was seated on the throne. 3 The one seated had an appearance similar to a jasper and sardine stone.⁹⁷ And a rainbow encircled the throne, similar in appearance to an emerald. 4 And encircling the throne were twenty-four thrones. And on the thrones I saw twenty-four⁹⁸ elders⁹⁹ sitting, having been clothed in white robes,¹⁰⁰ and on their heads golden wreaths.¹⁰¹ 5 And lightening discharged from the throne, and thunders, and voices. And seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Breaths of God.¹⁰² 6 Before the throne was a glassy sea similar to crystal.¹⁰³ And in the center of the throne, and around the throne,¹⁰⁴ were four creatures¹⁰⁵ covered with eyes front and back. 7 The first creature was like a lion,¹⁰⁶ the second creature like an ox,¹⁰⁷ the third creature had a face

⁹⁶ John was not bodily caught up into the sky as is often supposed (John 3:13; Acts 2:34). Rather, “in the Breath” he was allowed to see the spiritual realm as Steven did while remaining bodily on the land (Acts 7:55-56). This is the same mechanism Jesus uses to observe the local assemblies (Rev. 5:6). See also Rev. 1:10; 17:3, 21:10.

⁹⁷ Both stones are red in color.

⁹⁸ These twenty-four elders are the celestial angelic counterpart to the twenty-four divisions of the priesthood as established by David (1 Chron. 24:1-19). They function in priestly service (along with Jesus the Anointed High Priest) in the celestial Temple, of which the terrestrial Temple is merely a copy (Heb. 8:5). This is shown by their offering incense (the prayers of the holy ones in the tribulation) before the Throne of God (Rev. 5:8), a priestly function.

⁹⁹ The term “elder” literally refers to age, but metaphorically to high rank.

¹⁰⁰ Messengers are clothed in white robes (Rev. 15:6; Rev. 19:14).

¹⁰¹ That the 24 elders wore wreaths shows that they were victorious over an opponent. Victory is not only true of men, but also of messengers (Dan. 10:13, 21; Dan. 12:1; Rev. 12:7).

¹⁰² These seven lamps of fire (the seven Breaths) are before the throne of God, yet correspond to the seven lampstands (assemblies) which were in Asia Minor at the time (Rev. 1:20). Obviously, each of the seven Breaths of God was present in each corresponding assembly on the land, providing the mechanism for the Lamb to observe what was occurring in each assembly, as stated in the seven letters.

¹⁰³ See Rev. 22:1 – the River of Life flowing from the New Jerusalem is also glassy like crystal. No doubt this sea before God’s throne represents the endless supply of the water of life. Its ‘glassy’ character represents perfect calm and peace for God’s people, even during times of persecution and tribulation (cf. Gen. 49:9-10; Rev. 15:2).

¹⁰⁴ That is, in the center of each of the four sides

¹⁰⁵ In Ezekiel 1:5-21, the four faces of the four creatures are oriented towards the four points of the compass, and they do not change their orientation when they move. Ezekiel saw the four creatures coming towards him out of the north. The face of each creature that he saw towards him (south) was the Man; the face of the Ox on each creature was towards the left (west); the face of the Lion was towards the right (east); the face of the eagle towards the rear (north).

¹⁰⁶ The Lion of Judah is a representation of Jesus as the Anointed King (Rev. 5:5). The Lion faces east because the arrival of His Kingdom is likened to the dawn (Mal. 4:1-3). In Zech 6:11-12 LXX, a prophecy of the name of the Messiah is found. Zechariah was instructed to fashion crowns of silver and gold and place them on the head of Jesus (Joshua) the High Priest. Then he prophesied saying: ἰδοὺ ἀνὴρ Ἀνατολὴ ὄνομα αὐτῷ (“Behold the Man, the Dayspring, the name is in Him”). In Luke 1:78, Jesus was called “the Dayspring [Ἀνατολή] from on high.” When Jesus returns, He will appear out of the east and streak across the sky as lightening (Matt. 24:27).

¹⁰⁷ The ox symbolizes Jesus’ mission extended through His Emissaries, bringing the Good News of the Kingdom to all nations (1 Cor. 9:1-27). The Breath of God moved the Gospel steadily west from Jerusalem through Turkey. Paul was forbidden by the Breath from going east (Acts 16:6-12). Instead, the Breath of God swept the Gospel across the Roman Empire all the way to Great Britain. From there the Breath moved the Gospel westward to America, and from America across the Pacific westward to the Far East. From China it is now marching west as the Breath moves through Muslim countries, and will eventually reach Jerusalem again when the Jewish remnant embraces Christ at His coming.

like a man,¹⁰⁸ and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle.¹⁰⁹ 8 Each of the four creatures had six wings¹¹⁰ covered with eyes outside and inside. And they take no rest day or night, saying: “Holy, holy, holy, Master God, **SOVEREIGN OVER ALL**, who was, and is, and who is to come.”¹¹¹ 9 And whenever the creatures will¹¹² give glory and honor and thanks to One sitting on the throne, the One living to the ages of the ages, 10 the twenty-four elders will fall down before the One sitting on the throne and will worship the One who lives to the ages of the ages. And they throw their wreaths before the throne, saying: 11 “Master, You are worthy to receive the glory and the honor and the power, because You created everything, because of Your will they were originating and were created.”¹¹³

Chapter 5

The Seven-Sealed Scroll of Judgment

And, in the right hand of the One sitting on the throne I saw a scroll having been engraved inside and outside,¹¹⁴ sealed with seven seals. 2 Then I saw a strong messenger proclaiming in a loud voice: “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?” 3 And no one¹¹⁵ in the sky, or on the land, or below the land¹¹⁶ was able to open the scroll or to examine it. 4 And I wept much because no one was found worthy to open¹¹⁷ the scroll or to examine it. 5 And one of the elders said to me: “Don’t weep. Look! The Lion of the tribe of Judah,¹¹⁸ the Root of David,¹¹⁹ has been victorious¹²⁰ to

¹⁰⁸ The face of a Man symbolizes the full humanity of Jesus, who will reign over the creation as “Man” (Gen. 1:26, 28; Psalm 8:4-9; Heb. 2:5-9). He faces south because He comes to the land from the sky.

¹⁰⁹ The Eagle symbolizes the pre-human Son of God as the Messenger of the LORD (Judges 2:1-4) who has repeatedly “ascended and descended” (Judges 13:20; Prov. 30:4; John 3:13; Eph. 4:8-10). He faces north (the direction of God’s throne – cf. Isa. 14:13) from where He descended (John 6:38; John 16:28) and to where He ascended.

¹¹⁰ According to Isaiah 6:2,6, the six-winged creatures are “Seraphim,” plural of “Seraph,” which means “burning.”

¹¹¹ Isaiah 6:1-3

¹¹² The switch to future tense here indicates that John expected this kind of worship to continue on. This is apparently the same kind of worship that Isaiah observed also in his day (Isa. 6:3). The Majority Text reads “may give.”

¹¹³ This is an interesting statement because “were originating” (imperfect tense) indicates a past process over a period of time, the six days of creation, followed by “were created” (aorist tense), viewed as a single event. While the previous statement, “You created everything” makes God the direct cause of creation, the following statement, “because of Your will they were originating and were created,” implies a secondary source or Agent carrying out the will of God. (John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16-17, Heb. 1:1-3).

¹¹⁴ Ezekiel 2:9-10, Zech. 5:1-4

¹¹⁵ Note that this statement excludes a third divine Person. The same problem exists for the “Third Person” doctrine in Matt. 11:27 & Luke 10:22.

¹¹⁶ Some suppose that “below the land” refers to ghosts in an alleged conscious abode of the dead (Hades). But, the Old Testament uses the same expression repeatedly of the creatures of the deep sea (Ex. 20:4; Deut. 5:8). See vs. 13 which indicates that the sea was meant.

¹¹⁷ Textus Receptus adds, “and read.” The majority and oldest manuscripts omit it.

¹¹⁸ Gen. 49:9-10

¹¹⁹ Isaiah 11:1-10; see note on Rev. 22:16. That the Lamb is the “Root of David” implies that He existed before David, and caused David to exist.

¹²⁰ Rev. 3:21 (cf. Phil. 2:8 & Heb. 5:7-9)

REVELATION

open the scroll and to break its seven seals.” 6 And I observed¹²¹ in the middle of the throne¹²² and four creatures, and in the middle of the elders, a Lamb, as if having been killed, was standing.¹²³ He had seven horns and seven eyes which are the seven Breaths of God¹²⁴ sent out to all the land. 7 Then He approached and took [the scroll] from the right hand of the One sitting on the throne. 8 And when He took the scroll, the four creatures and the twenty-four elders bowed down before the Lamb, each having a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the holy ones. 9 And they sing a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals, because You were slain, and have redeemed some¹²⁵ to God with Your blood from every tribe, and language, and people, and nation, 10 and made them¹²⁶ kings and priests¹²⁷ to our God. And they¹²⁸ shall reign on the land.” 11 And I looked and heard the voice of many messengers around the throne, the creatures, and the elders.¹²⁹ And the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,¹³⁰ 12 saying with a loud voice: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!” 13 And I heard every creature, those in the sky, and on land, and below the land¹³¹ (even upon the sea and all that are in them), saying: “To the One sitting on the throne and to the Lamb¹³² [be] blessing and honor and glory and power unto the ages of the ages!” 14 And the four creatures said: “Amen!” And the twenty-four elders bowed down and worshiped.¹³³

¹²¹ Textus Receptus adds, “and look!”

¹²² The Lamb is now seated at the right hand of His Father (Psalm 110:1) on the Father’s throne (Rev. 3:21).

¹²³ “having stood up.” The perfect tense emphasizes the result of standing after having stood up from being seated.

¹²⁴ Isaiah 11:1-4; Zech. 3:8-9; 4:10; Rev. 1:4; Rev. 4:5

¹²⁵ There are a variety of readings of this verse in the manuscript evidence as follows: “and have redeemed to God us,” “and have redeemed us to God,” “and have redeemed us,” “and have redeemed to God [some]” (omitting the first person pronoun). I have followed the last reading for two reasons: (a) it is the only reading that agrees grammatically with the third person statement in verse 10, and (b) the four creatures (who sing along with the 24 elders) are obviously not human, thus cannot claim to be “redeemed from among men” of all nations. This would require their singing in the third person, not first person. (See following note).

¹²⁶ The majority and oldest manuscripts have “they/them” (third person plural). See previous note.

¹²⁷ Rev. 20:4-6

¹²⁸ Same as previous note.

¹²⁹ Note the complete absence of humans.

¹³⁰ This language is borrowed from Dan. 7:10.

¹³¹ Some suppose that those “below the land” refers to ghosts of the dead in Hades. But, the Old Testament uses the same expression repeatedly of the creatures of the sea (cf. Ex. 20:4; Deut. 5:8; etc.).

¹³² God decreed that all conscious beings are to worship His Son even as they owe Him worship (Eph. 1:20-23; Phil. 2:5-10; 1 Pet. 3:22).

¹³³ The Textus Receptus adds, “the One who lives unto the ages of the ages.”

Chapter 6

*The Seven Seals Opened*¹³⁴

And I observed when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four creatures, like the sound of thunder, saying: "Come and see." 2 And I observed, and look, a white horse, and the one sitting on it had a bow. And a wreath was given to him, and he came out conquering, and that he may conquer.¹³⁵ 3 And when He opened the second seal, I heard the second creature saying: "Come and see." 4 Another horse [that was] red went out. And it was granted to the one sitting on it to take peace from the land, and that they will kill one another. And there was given to him a great sword.¹³⁶ 5 And when He opened the third seal, I heard the third creature say, "Come and see." And I observed, and look, a black horse, and the one sitting on it had a yoke¹³⁷ in his hand. 6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of grain for a denarius¹³⁸ and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not harm the oil and the wine."¹³⁹ 7 And when He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth creature saying, "Come and see." 8 So I observed, and look, a pale horse. And the name of the one sitting on it was Death. And the grave accompanied him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the land, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the wild beasts¹⁴⁰ of the land.¹⁴¹ 9 And when He opened the fifth seal, I saw beneath the altar¹⁴² the souls¹⁴³ of those slain for the word of God and the witness

¹³⁴ There can be no question that this chapter parallels the Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24). The four horsemen are similar to Zech. 1:8-17 & 6:1-8 which represent God's judgment on the Gentile nations as He was about to restore Jerusalem. See also Ezek. 14:21.

¹³⁵ The rider on the white horse may be the initial rise to prominence of the "little horn" (Antichrist) as described in (Dan. 7:24-25; Dan. 11:40-45; Rev. 13:1-3). It also likely indicates the mass deception that will accompany his rise (cf. Matt. 24:4-5). This may be what Paul called the "strong delusion" and "the lie" (2 Thess. 2:1-12) sent by God upon those who have already refused the truth. It will include a mass apostasy from the true Christian Faith (Matt. 24:9-13). It is probable that the deception will include a merging of apostate Judaism, apostate Christianity, and so-called moderate Islam.

¹³⁶ The second horseman is war, (cf. Matt. 24:6-8).

¹³⁷ The Greek word means a "yoke," a device that attaches an animal to a heavy burden.

¹³⁸ The usual salary for a day's labor.

¹³⁹ Oil and wine were the commodities of the wealthy. Taken together the third seal seems to suggest famine that will strike the poor particularly hard, (cf. Matt. 24:7).

¹⁴⁰ Ezek. 14:21

¹⁴¹ The fourth horseman seems to sum up the plagues listed by Jesus, war, famine, disease (perhaps animal borne), & natural disasters, (Matt. 24:6-8).

¹⁴² The altar mentioned here is the bronze altar of sacrifice which was outside the Temple. In Heb. 9:11-15, 23-28, Jesus is portrayed as the once-for-all sacrifice, shedding His blood on the land but afterwards entering the celestial Temple with His own blood, just as the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur. In Temple imagery, the martyrs follow in Jesus' footsteps, shedding their blood on the bronze altar (on the land). The blood both man and beast is called their "souls" (Gen. 9:4-5; Lev. 17:11-14). Jesus offered His own "soul" as a sacrifice for our sins (Isa. 53:10,11,12). Animal sacrifices were killed in the Temple courtyard by having their throats cut, and the ψυχή (soul/blood) was caught and poured out at the base of the altar (Lev. 4:7,18,34; Lev. 5:9). Thus, the "soul/blood" belonging to the martyrs is portrayed as "under the altar."

¹⁴³ The Greek word is ψυχή which according to Genesis 9:4-5 & Lev. 17:11,14 is the blood of both man and beast.

they were having. 10 And they called with a loud voice,¹⁴⁴ saying: “How much longer, Master, holy and true, before You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the land?”¹⁴⁵ 11 And a white robe was granted for each of them. And they were told that they will rest¹⁴⁶ a little longer until their fellow servants and their brothers, those about to be killed like them, may be completed.¹⁴⁷ 12 And I observed when He opened the sixth seal, and look, there was a great shaking, and the sun became black like mohair, and the whole moon became like blood.¹⁴⁸ 13 And the stars of the sky fell to the ground like a fig tree dropping its figs when shaken by a strong wind. 14 Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up,¹⁴⁹ and every mountain and island was stirred from its place. 15 And the kings of the land, the great ones, the commanders, the rich men, the strong, every slave and free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains¹⁵⁰ 16 and said to the mountains and rocks: “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb, 17 because the great day of His¹⁵¹ wrath¹⁵² has arrived, and who is able to stand?”

Chapter 7

*Interlude: The Remnant of Israel Preserved from Death*¹⁵³

And after this I observed four messengers standing at the four corners of the land, holding the four winds¹⁵⁴ of the land, that the wind should not blow on the land, or on the sea, or on any tree. 2 And I saw another messenger ascending from the rising of the sun having the seal of the living God. And he called with a loud voice to the four

¹⁴⁴ Jesus portrayed Abel as the prototype martyr (Luke 11:50-51). The soul/blood of Abel – the prototype martyr – called out to God from the ground to be avenged (Gen. 4:10). This same symbolic imagery is being applied to all of the martyrs. The sense is the same as with Abel’s blood crying out to God, that God remembers the injustice and will avenge His holy ones, and will restore them to life through resurrection.

¹⁴⁵ Not only does Scripture symbolically portray the blood of Abel calling out to be avenged, but also in Ezekiel 37:11 the dry bones of the patriarchs and the whole house of Israel cry out from their graves for the fulfillment of the promise of resurrection and eternal inheritance. “Then He said to me, ‘Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say, “Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!” Therefore prophesy and say to them, “Thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.’” (Ezek. 37:11-12). Such allegorical language does not mean that blood or bones actually speak. Rather, these things reinforce the idea that God will never forget to avenge the blood of His servants or forget His promises of the inheritance to His people.

¹⁴⁶ Death for the righteous is portrayed as “sleep” both in the Old Testament (Dan. 12:2) and the New Testament (Luke 8:52; John 11:11-14; 1 Cor. 15:51; 1 Thess. 4:14).

¹⁴⁷ Persecution and martyrdom of Jesus’ followers was also described by Jesus in the Olivet Discourse, (Matt. 24:9-13).

¹⁴⁸ Matthew 24:29; Joel 2:30-31; Acts 2:20.

¹⁴⁹ Isaiah 34:4

¹⁵⁰ Isaiah 2:10,19,21

¹⁵¹ The Alexandrian Text has “their wrath.”

¹⁵² Psalm 2

¹⁵³ Verses 1-8 are parenthetical. These are sealed for protection before any of the calamities of chapter 6 take place. Parenthetical sections like this are common in Revelation. This chapter is structured to follow the structure of Isaiah 49 (quoted in vss. 16-17), and cannot be rightly understood apart from that chapter.

¹⁵⁴ The “four winds” are equivalent to the “four horsemen” (cf. Zech. 6:5 LXX).

REVELATION

messengers to whom it was granted to harm the land and the sea, 3 saying: "Do not harm the land, the sea, or the trees till we should seal the servants of our God on their foreheads."¹⁵⁵ 4 And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand were sealed, from every tribe¹⁵⁶ of the sons of Israel: 5 from the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed; 6 from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed; 7 from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed; 8 from the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed.

*The Holy Ones of the Most High Inherit the Kingdom*¹⁵⁷

9 After these things I observed, and look, a crowd of many [people] which no one could count, from every nation, tribes and peoples and languages, having [come to] stand before the throne¹⁵⁸ and before the Lamb, having been dressed¹⁵⁹ in white robes, with palm branches¹⁶⁰ in their hands. 10 And they shout with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation [belongs] to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" 11 And all the messengers had [come to] stand around the throne and the elders and the four creatures. And they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying: "Amen! The blessing, and the glory, and the wisdom, and the thanksgiving, and the honor, and the power, and the strength be to our God, unto the ages of the ages! Amen!" 13 Then one of the elders responded, saying to me: "Who are these dressed in white robes, and where did they come from?" 14 And I said to him: "My master, you have observed." And he said to me: "These are the ones who emerge¹⁶¹ out from¹⁶² the

¹⁵⁵ In Ezekiel 9 the same metaphor was used regarding the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the Divine preservation of the faithful Jewish remnant.

¹⁵⁶ It is significant that "every tribe" does not include the tribe of Dan. Instead, the tribe of Joseph takes two places. When Israel blessed Joseph's two sons, Ephraim (the younger) was given the blessing of the firstborn (Gen. 48:8-21), and his descendants became the "tribe of Joseph." Manasseh was Joseph's oldest son, and is viewed here as a separate tribe. Some of the early Christian writers believed that Dan was omitted because of that tribes' consistent idolatry, and that the Antichrist would come from that tribe. (Hippolytus, Treatise on Christ & Antichrist, 6-15). However, it is doubtful that Antichrist will be a Jew, since he is called "the Assyrian" (Isa. 14:25). However, Dan is included among the 12 tribes whose names appear on the gates of restored Jerusalem (cf. Ezek. 48:31-34 & Rev. 21:12).

¹⁵⁷ Daniel 7:27

¹⁵⁸ The resurrected holy ones stand in view of the throne in the sky which Daniel saw (Dan. 7:9-10).

¹⁵⁹ While white robes were appointed for each of the martyrs who are resting in sleep (Rev. 6:11), being "clothed" implies the resurrection of the body (1 Cor. 15:51-57; 2 Cor. 5:4).

¹⁶⁰ This is a distinct feature of the Feast of Tabernacles celebration (Lev. 23:39-43). It is prophetic of the Kingdom of the Anointed one, and will be celebrated after He returns as King (Zech. 14:16-20).

great tribulation,¹⁶³ and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His Temple.¹⁶⁴ And He who sits on the throne will tabernacle over them.¹⁶⁵ 16 *“They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; 17 (for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them) “and lead¹⁶⁶ them to living fountains of waters.”¹⁶⁷ “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”¹⁶⁸ 8:1 And when He opened the seventh seal, it became silent in the sky for about half an hour.¹⁶⁹*

Chapter 8

*The Seven Trumpets*¹⁷⁰

2 And I observed the seven messengers who have stood before God and seven trumpets were given to them. 3 And another messenger came and stood before the altar having a golden censer. And much incense was given him that he should offer it with the prayers of all the holy ones upon the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense with the prayers of the holy ones ascended before God from the hand of the messenger. 5 And the messenger took the censer, and filled it from the fire of the altar, and threw it onto the land.¹⁷¹ And there were thunderings, noises, lightnings, and a shaking. 6 And the seven messengers having the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. 7 And the first messenger sounded, and there came hail and fire,¹⁷² mixed with blood, and it was thrown upon the land. And a third of the land burned,¹⁷³ and a third of the trees burned, and all green vegetation burned. 8 And the second messenger sounded, and [something] like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood.¹⁷⁴ 9 And a third of the creatures in the sea

¹⁶¹ Present tense verbs in Greek often refer to the future. In such cases, the present tense stresses certainty, just as in English.

¹⁶² This passage unquestionably shows the outcome of the promise made in Rev. 3:10.

¹⁶³ The same term θλίψις μεγάλη (great tribulation) is used in Matthew 24:21. Also in 1 Maccabees 9:27, the same term appears in reference to the persecution under Antiochus Epiphanies, and a similar statement follows: *“So was there a great tribulation in Israel, the like whereof was not since the time that a prophet was not seen among them.”*

¹⁶⁴ The Throne of God will be in His Temple in Jerusalem (cf. Jer. 3:16-17 & Ezek. 43:1-7). This is also the “Temple” in which Jesus promised the Philadelphians to make the faithful permanent pillars (Rev. 3:12).

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Psalm 5:11 LXX & Rev. 21:3. God’s tent is spread over His holy ones in the Kingdom; He dwells with men (rather than men going to heaven to dwell with God).

¹⁶⁶ See: Micah ; John 10:1-5

¹⁶⁷ Isaiah 49:10. The Shepherd leads His faithful sheep out of the protection of the sheepfold into the pastures of His Kingdom. See also: Micah 2:12-13; 5:3-4; 7:14-15.

¹⁶⁸ Isaiah 25:8

¹⁶⁹ The silence represents ceasing of activity in the sky. The Kingdom has descended to the land, (Isa. 2:2-4; Jer. 3:16-17, Ezek. 43:1-7, Zech. 14:9, 16).

¹⁷⁰ The seven trumpets begin a new sequence of events, going back and overlapping the previous events of the seals (which culminated in the second coming and establishing of the Kingdom on the land).

¹⁷¹ A sign of God’s wrath upon the land (cf. Ezekiel 10:2,6-7).

¹⁷² The same plague occurred in Egypt on a smaller scale (Exodus 9:23-26; Psalm 18:12-13)

¹⁷³ The Textus Receptus omits this clause.

¹⁷⁴ Exodus 7:17-21

having life died. And a third of the ships were destroyed. 10 And the third messenger sounded and a great star fell from the sky burning like a torch. And it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. 11 And the name of the star is called Wormwood.¹⁷⁵ And a third of the waters became wormwood and many men died from the water that was made toxic. 12 And the fourth messenger sounded and a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them should be obscured and a third of the day should not be illuminated, and the night likewise. 13 And I saw and heard an eagle¹⁷⁶ flying in mid-air,¹⁷⁷ saying with a great voice, "Woe, woe, woe,¹⁷⁸ land dwellers, from the remaining trumpet blasts of the three messengers about to sound!"

Chapter 9

Trumpets Five through Seven are "Three Woes"

And the fifth messenger sounded and I saw a star, having fallen from the sky to the ground,¹⁷⁹ and he was given the key to the well of the deep.¹⁸⁰ 2 And he opened the well of the deep, and smoke ascended from the well, like the smoke of a great furnace.¹⁸¹ And the sun and the air were obscured from the smoke of the well. 3 And out of the smoke came locusts¹⁸² upon the land. And they were given power as the scorpions of the land have power. 4 They were commanded not to harm the grass of the land, or any green thing, or any tree, but only the men not having the seal of God on their foreheads. 5 And they were not permitted to kill them, but to torment them for five months. And their torment is like the torment of a scorpion if it should strike a man. 6 In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will be yearning to die, and death will flee from them. 7 And the appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. And on their heads were something like wreaths of gold. And their faces were like the faces of men. 8 They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. 9 And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron. And the sound of their wings was like

¹⁷⁵ "Wormwood" is a highly toxic plant from which the ancients made insecticides. It derives its name from the practice of brewing the leaves in a tea, for people and animals as a worming medicine.

¹⁷⁶ The Textus Receptus follows a minority of manuscripts that have "angel" (messenger). But the majority of manuscripts and the oldest manuscripts have "eagle."

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Rev. 12:14

¹⁷⁸ The three "woes" are the 5th – 7th trumpets. The first four trumpets deal with man's environment. The three woes affect man directly.

¹⁷⁹ Jesus used the same terminology prophetically regarding the Adversary in Luke 10:18. This is also referenced in Rev. 12:7-9, which occurs at the mid-point of the 70th week. This places the 5th trumpet (which is also the first woe)

¹⁸⁰ In the Old Testament, the "abyss" refers to the unknown depths of the waters (cf. LXX Gen. 1:2; 7:11; 8:2).

¹⁸¹ Where water should be coming forth from the "abyss" (cf. LXX Deut. 8:7; 33:13; Psalm 33:7, etc.), there is smoke.

¹⁸² The locusts represent demonic breaths. There is no question that this passage was meant to reference Luke 10:18-19. "And He said to them, 'I saw the Adversary fall like lightning from the sky. Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.'" There are three clear connections to this passage, a) the messenger of the abyss who falls from the sky; b) the locusts; c) God's people are off limits.

REVELATION

the sound of chariots with many horses running to battle. 10 And they have tails like scorpions, and stingers also in their tails. And their power was to injure men five months. 11 And they have a king over them, the messenger of the deep. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek his name is Apollyon.¹⁸³ 12 One woe has come, look, two woes are still coming after these things. 13 And the sixth messenger sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, the one before God, 14 saying to the sixth messenger having the trumpet: "Release the four messengers, the ones having been restrained¹⁸⁴ at the great river Euphrates." 15 And the four messengers were released, having been prepared unto the hour, and day, and month, and year, that they may kill a third of men. 16 And the number of the soldiers of the cavalry was two hundred million. I heard the number of them. 17 And this is how I saw the horses in the vision: those sitting on them had breastplates like fire,¹⁸⁵ hyacinth,¹⁸⁶ and sulfur.¹⁸⁷ And the horses' heads were like the heads of lions. And out of their mouths goes fire, smoke, and sulfur. 18 From these three plagues a third of men were killed — from the fire, and the smoke, and the sulfur coming out of their mouths. 19 For the power of the horses is in their mouth and in their tails, for their tails are like serpents, having heads, and with them they injure. 20 But the rest of men, who were not killed by these blows, 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 are not able to see, nor to hear, nor to walk. 21 And they did not repent from their murders, nor from their drugs,¹⁸⁸ nor from their fornication,¹⁸⁹ nor from their stealing.

Chapter 10

*Interlude: John will Testify Again in the End Times*¹⁹⁰

And I observed another¹⁹¹ Messenger,¹⁹² powerful, coming down from the sky, having been clothed with a cloud.¹⁹³ And a rainbow¹⁹⁴ was above his head. His face was like the

¹⁸³ The meaning in both Hebrew and Greek is "The Destroyer."

¹⁸⁴ Compare Daniel 10:13,20-21. After the fall of Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon, four great empires have battled for control of the area of the Euphrates River. There have been demonic forces seeking to control these empires, which have been restrained by Michael and his messengers. Jude 1:6 specifically mentions "messengers" who have been bound which may refer to these.

¹⁸⁵ Fiery red

¹⁸⁶ Deep blue

¹⁸⁷ Yellow

¹⁸⁸ The Greek word literally means "drugs." It is sometimes used figuratively of sorcery, since drugs were often employed by sorcerers.

¹⁸⁹ "Fornication" refers to sexual immorality, but is also frequently used in the LXX for idolatry.

¹⁹⁰ This entire chapter has a direct connection to the Mt. of Transfiguration experience, which was itself a preview of the arrival of the Kingdom (cf. Mark 9:1-9; 2 Pet. 1:16-19). That experience was directly dependent on Psalm 2.

¹⁹¹ Apart from the seven messengers with the seven trumpets

¹⁹² See note on Rev. 11:3. This "Messenger" is Jesus, as the following descriptions prove.

¹⁹³ Matt. 17:5

¹⁹⁴ Ezek. 1:26-28; Rev. 4:3

REVELATION

sun,¹⁹⁵ and His feet like pillars of fire.¹⁹⁶ 2 And in His hand was a little scroll having been opened.¹⁹⁷ And He set his right foot on the sea and His left foot on the land, 3 and called out with a loud voice, as a lion roars.¹⁹⁸ And when He called out, seven thunders proclaimed their sayings. 4 And when the seven thunders spoke, I was about to write. But I heard a voice from the sky saying: “Seal up¹⁹⁹ the sayings of the seven thunders,” and, “you should not write them.”²⁰⁰ 5 And the Messenger whom I saw, having stood on the sea and on the land, raised His right²⁰¹ hand to the sky 6 and swore by the One living unto the ages of the ages, (who created the sky and the things in it, and the land and the things in it, and the sea and the things in it),²⁰² that there shall be time no longer.²⁰³ 7 (But in the days of the sounding of the seventh messenger, when he should be about to sound, the mystery of God²⁰⁴ would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets). 8 And the voice which I heard from the sky spoke to me again saying, “Go, take the little scroll open in the hand of the Messenger standing on the sea and on the land.” 9 And I went to the Messenger, asking Him to give me the little scroll. And He says to me: **“Take and eat it. It will make your stomach bitter. But in your mouth it will be sweet as honey.”**²⁰⁵ 10 And I took the little scroll from the hand of the Messenger and ate it. And it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. And when I had eaten

¹⁹⁵ Matt. 17:2; Rev. 1:16

¹⁹⁶ Rev. 1:15

¹⁹⁷ Rev. 5:5 – the seven-sealed scroll

¹⁹⁸ Hos. 5:14; Hos. 11:10; Hos. 13:7-8

¹⁹⁹ Or conceal

²⁰⁰ John was given revelation that was private because it is to be proclaimed by him during the Tribulation.

²⁰¹ The Textus Receptus omits “right.”

²⁰² The three part division of our world – sky, land, and sea, are all defined in Gen. 1:8-10. For this reason we have consistently translated the Greek terms as “the sky, land, and sea,” rather than “heaven, earth, sea” as in most English translations.

²⁰³ This statement does not mean that time itself ceases to exist, since it is clear that a thousand years remains (Rev. 20). Rather, it refers to the end of a specific length of time, the six-millennia punishment upon Adam and his race by the curse upon all creation (Rom. 8:19-25; Heb. 4:3-9; Rev. 22:3). Note the reference to the creation in verse 6, which was six days in duration.

²⁰⁴ Col. 2:2-3 The “Mystery of God” is the revelation of Jesus the Anointed to all the world, revealing who He really is (Ps. 2).

²⁰⁵ Ezekiel had the same experience. He was given the little scroll to eat by the Son of God, who appeared to Him as a Man (Ezek. 1:26-3:11). The purpose of Ezekiel’s eating the scroll was to make him God’s prophet and mouthpiece to Israel to announce God’s final words of warning, and also to announce God’s judgement on Israel and the surrounding Gentile nations. Here John ate the little scroll given to him by the Son of God, the Messenger of YHWH. The words of the scroll and the seven thunders will be announced by John himself during Daniel’s 70th week as one of the two witnesses.

REVELATION

it, my stomach was bitter. 11 And they²⁰⁶ said to me: "It is necessary for you to prophesy again²⁰⁷ against²⁰⁸ many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings."²⁰⁹

Chapter 11

And a reed like a measuring rod was given to me and I was told: "Arise and measure the Temple of God,²¹⁰ the altar, and those worshipping in it.²¹¹ 2 And exclude the court outside the Temple. You should not measure it because it was given to the Gentiles²¹² (they will also trample the holy city forty-two months).²¹³ 3 And I will give²¹⁴ to My²¹⁵ two witnesses,²¹⁶ and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days²¹⁷ clothed in mohair." 4 These are the two olive trees²¹⁸ and the two lampstands²¹⁹ having

²⁰⁶ The Textus Receptus has "he." The plural apparently refers to the Messenger and the voice from the sky.

²⁰⁷ παλιν - once more, at another time. Since John died shortly after Revelation was written, this refers to his role as one of the two witnesses.

²⁰⁸ The preposition "ἐπὶ" with a dative case object means "against," implying an adversarial relationship. (See: LXX Ezek. 6:2; 11:4; 25:2; 28:21; 29:2 35:2; 38:2. See also: Matt 10:18-19; Mark 13:9).

²⁰⁹ Early Christian writers understood from this passage that John would be raised from the dead in the last days to proclaim the message of the seven thunders and the contents of the little scroll. (See: Hippolytus, App. xxi). To "prophesy again against..." implies John's once again standing in opposition to these peoples, just as Ezekiel did.

²¹⁰ Ezekiel was given the same task of measuring the Temple (Ezek. 40), in order to provide hope for the faithful remnant of Israel concerning the coming restoration of God's house. When Ezekiel was told to measure God's house, Nebuchadnezzar had already destroyed the Temple. Ezekiel's measuring was in vision of the future rebuilt Temple. Likewise, when John was told to measure the Temple, Rome had already destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple more than two decades earlier. Like Ezekiel, John was measuring a future Temple in his vision.

²¹¹ Those worshipping and offering sacrifices on the altar in the Temple are the 144,000 Israelites mentioned in Rev. 7. This 1260-day period occurs prior to the abomination of desolation (within the first half of the 70th week of Daniel 9:27) because the abomination of desolation will stop these sacrifices, and render the Temple "desolate" (cf. Dan. 9:27; Dan. 12:11; Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:1-12). This passage provides proof that the Temple will be rebuilt prior to the beginning of the 70th week. Sacrifices will be offered in worship during the first 3.5 years. This is why the Mosaic Covenant is "renewed" at this time for one week (Dan. 9:27), to provide Israel an open path to repentance according to Deut. 30 & Mal. 4.

²¹² It is clear from this statement that the Temple John was to measure was not the Kingdom Temple described by Ezekiel, since only a small portion of the Temple grounds will be under the control of Israel and worship allowed. This Temple is a prelude to the Kingdom Temple. It is the rebuilt "Temple of God" which Antichrist will defile (Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:3-4).

²¹³ The 42 months refers to the reign of the Beast during the last 3.5 years (Rev. 13:5). In Hebrew understanding, the word מִן־חֹדֶשׁ refers specifically to new moons and by extension the period of time between them (lunar months). 42 lunar months is about 1239 days. The time period mentioned here for the "trampling" of Jerusalem is counting from the abomination of desolation when the worship mentioned here will be abolished by the Antichrist. Jesus spoke of the "trampling of Jerusalem" starting from AD 70 "until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled" (Luke 21:24), which is the beginning of the 70th week of Daniel. This will be followed by 1260 days of prophesying by the two witnesses during Temple worship of the 144,000. After the 1260 days, the two Prophets will be killed, the sacrifices will be halted and the abomination of desolation set up. Thereafter Jerusalem will be trampled again by the Gentiles 42 lunar months.

²¹⁴ The Son of God, the Messenger of YHVH, will give His two witnesses the words to prophesy at the proper time.

²¹⁵ The same "Messenger" who gave John the little scroll to eat, and told him that he must prophesy again, also referred to the two prophets as HIS witnesses. This indicates that the Messenger in ch. 10 is Jesus.

²¹⁶ The two witnesses are Elijah and John.

²¹⁷ The two witnesses prophesy during the period that the Jews are worshipping at the Temple.

²¹⁸ Zech. 4:3, 11

REVELATION

come to stand before the Master²²⁰ of the Land.²²¹ 5 And if anyone is willing to harm them, fire goes out from their mouth²²² and consumes their enemies.²²³ And if anyone should be willing to harm them he must be killed in this manner. 6 These have authority to lock the sky, so that no rain may fall in the days of their prophecy.²²⁴ And they have authority over the waters to turn them to blood,²²⁵ and to strike the land with every blow, as often as they should be willing.²²⁶ 7 When they should finish their witness, the beast, ascending²²⁷ out of the deep, will do battle with them, will conquer them, and will kill them. 8 And their corpses will lie upon the street of the great city which is spiritually called Sodom²²⁸ and Egypt,²²⁹ where also their²³⁰ Master was crucified. 9 And those from the peoples, and tribes, and languages, and nations watch their corpses three-and-a-half days.²³¹ They do not permit their corpses to be put in graves. 10 And the dwellers on the land cheer over them, and rejoice, and will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those dwelling on the land. 11 And after the three-and-a-half days, the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet. And great fear fell on those watching them. 12 And they heard a loud voice from the sky saying to them, "Come up here."²³² And they ascended into the sky in the cloud and their enemies watched them. 13 In that hour there was a great

²¹⁹ Cf. Zech. 4:11 which has a single lampstand, representing the nation of Israel. The two lampstands refer to Israel and Christians.

²²⁰ The Textus Receptus has "God."

²²¹ Zech. 4:14 – the two prophets then were Zechariah and Haggai (Ezra 5:1-2; Ezra 6:14) who provided the Breath of God to inspire the completion of the second Temple (Hag. 1:12-15). These two witnesses will provide a similar function concerning the Temple in vss. 1-2.

²²² They command fire to come down from the sky with their words just as Elijah did (2 Kings 1:10).

²²³ In Luke 9:54, John (and James) wanted to imitate Elijah. "*Master, do You want us to call fire to descend from heaven and consume them, as also Elijah did?*" (NKJV)

²²⁴ Elijah shut the sky for the same period – 3.5 years (Luke 4:25).

²²⁵ cf. Rev. 8:8-11

²²⁶ The first four trumpets are plagues of this type. Here we learn that they are called down by the two Prophets who prophesy during the first half of the 70th week, while sacrifices are being offered in the Temple (v. 1-3).

²²⁷ If John meant that the Beast had previously ascended from the abyss but will kill them afterwards we would expect him to use the aorist or perfect participle here. His use of the present participle (in conjunction with the word "when") indicates that the Beast will kill the witnesses at the time he ascends from the deep. This will occur at the mid-point of the 70th week (cf. Rev. 17:7-11). Therefore, the testimony of the two witnesses must be before the middle of the tribulation, at the time of the abomination of desolation.

²²⁸ Isaiah 1:9-10; Ezek. 16:46

²²⁹ Gal. 4:25 Paul referred to "Jerusalem which now is, and is enslaved with her children." The term "enslaved" is the word used repeatedly for Israel in Egypt.

²³⁰ The Textus Receptus has "our."

²³¹ The resurrection of the two witnesses would seem to coincide with the woman fleeing into the wilderness (Rev. 12:14). The two witnesses will likely be caught up and relocated there. This would explain the statement in Rev. 12:6, "*so that they may be nourishing her there a thousand two hundred sixty days.*" The third person active voice verb "*they may be nourishing*" has no antecedent in the immediate passage unless it refers back to the two witnesses.

²³² The two witnesses, Elijah and John, will be transported to a different location, just as Elijah was caught up in the fiery chariot and relocated to an undisclosed location (2 Kings 2:11-18). See notes on Rev. 12:6.

REVELATION

shaking, and a tenth of the city²³³ fell, and seven thousand people were killed, and the rest became terrified and gave credit to the God of the sky.

The Third Woe – The Seventh Trumpet

14 The second woe has come. Look! The third woe is coming quickly. 15 Then the seventh messenger sounded, and there were great voices in the sky, saying: “The kingdom²³⁴ of the world has become [the Kingdom] of our Master and of His Anointed, and He shall reign unto the ages of the ages!” 16 And the twenty-four elders who are sitting before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying: “We give You thanks, Master God, **THE SOVEREIGN OVER ALL**, the One who is, who was, and who is to come because You have taken hold of Your great authority and begun to rule! 18 And the nations were made angry and Your wrath has arrived, also the time for the dead to be judged²³⁵ and to give reward to Your servants the prophets, and to the holy ones, and to those fearing Your name, small and great, and to destroy those destroying the Land.” 19 And the Temple of God was opened in the sky, and the Ark of His Covenant²³⁶ was seen in His Temple.²³⁷ And there were lightnings, voices, thunderings, a shaking, and a great hail.²³⁸

Chapter 12

The Assemblies in Judea Flee to the Prepared Place²³⁹

And a great sign appeared in the sky – a woman, having been clothed with the sun, and the moon beneath her feet, and on her head a wreath of twelve stars.²⁴⁰ 2 And being with child, she cried out, travailing and laboring to give birth.²⁴¹ 3 And another sign appeared in the sky, and look, a great red dragon,²⁴² having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven crowns.²⁴³ 4 And his tail drags a third of the stars of the sky,²⁴⁴ and threw them to the ground. And the dragon was standing before the woman who was about to give birth, that when she should bear her child he might devour [it]. 5 And she gave birth to a male Son who is about to²⁴⁵ shepherd all the nations with a rod of iron.²⁴⁶ And her child was taken up to God and His throne.²⁴⁷ 6 And the woman escaped into the wilderness where she has a place there having been prepared²⁴⁸ from God (so that they²⁴⁹ may be nourishing her there) a thousand two hundred sixty days.²⁵⁰ 7 And there was war in the sky. Michael and his messengers fought the dragon,²⁵¹ and the dragon fought and his messengers. 8 And they did not prevail, nor was any more room found for them in the sky. 9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the original snake²⁵² called the Slanderer and the Adversary, the one deceiving the whole world.²⁵³ He was cast down to the ground, and his messengers were cast down with him. 10 And I heard a great voice in the sky saying; “Finally! Salvation and power and the Kingdom

²³³ Jerusalem (vs. 8)

²³⁴ The Textus Receptus has “kingdoms” (plural)

²³⁵ Judgment of the dead necessitates the resurrection of the just

REVELATION

of our God and the authority of His Anointed has come because the accuser of our brothers, the one accusing them before our God day and night, has been thrown down, 11 and they were victorious over him through the blood of the Lamb, and through the word of their witness, and they did not love their lives until death.²⁵⁴ 12 Through this rejoice, skies, and those dwelling in them.²⁵⁵ Alas! to the inhabitants of the land and the sea, because the Slanderer has come down to you having great anger, having known that he has a brief time.”²⁵⁶ 13 And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the ground, he pursued the woman who gave birth to the male [child]. 14 And two

²³⁶ The Ark of the Mt. Sinai Covenant is to be removed from the Temple in Jerusalem just before the abomination of desolation, immediately after the 1,260-day period of worship in the Temple at the completion of the testimony of the two witnesses. Worship according to the Mt. Sinai Covenant (renewed only for seven years – Dan. 9:27) requires the high priest visiting the Ark on Yom Kippur. The Ark of the Mt. Sinai Covenant will not be visited anymore by the high priest after those 1,260 days (Jer. 3:16-17), showing that the Mt. Sinai Covenant will not extend into the Kingdom.

²³⁷ The celestial Temple was the pattern for the terrestrial Temple (Heb. 9:24-28).

²³⁸ This sign marks God’s taking over possession of the land throughout Revelation. It occurs at the end of the 7 seals (Rev. 8:5), the end of the 7 trumpets (Rev. 11:19), at the end of chapter 14, and at the end of the 7 bowls (Rev. 16:18). These passages are parallel in time, describing the final events of the 70th week in different ways.

²³⁹ Matt. 24:15-28; Luke 21:36

²⁴⁰ Isaiah repeatedly referred to Jerusalem and the redeemed as a single entity – a woman whom he called “the daughter of Zion” (Isaiah 52:1-2; 62:11-12) and “the wife” of the Master (Isaiah 54:5). He described her as giving birth to a “male child” – Jesus, and to all the redeemed (Isaiah 66:5-13). He described her troubled past and her glorious restoration in the coming Kingdom (Isaiah 54:1-17). She will be called by a new name, the New Jerusalem (Isaiah 62:1-2; Isaiah 65:17-19). Paul developed Isaiah’s imagery further in Gal. 4:21-31. He likened this restored (“elevated Jerusalem”) to Sarah, the mother of Abraham’s seed of promise, which includes Gentile believers (Gal. 3:26-29). In doing so, he quoted Isaiah’s prophecy concerning the “Daughter of Zion” (cf. Gal. 4:27 & Isaiah 54:1). In Hebrews 12, Paul again identified faithful believers with the Daughter of Zion. “*But you have approached toward Mount Zion, the city of the living God, Jerusalem of celestial dominion, and tens of thousands of messengers, toward the universal congregation and assembly of the firstborn ones having been pre-registered in the skies*” (Heb. 12:22-23). The Greek word translated “universal congregation” appears only in one other place in the Bible, Isaiah 66:10 LXX. “*Rejoice, O Jerusalem, and all you who love her, hold in her the universal congregation. Rejoice greatly with her, all that now mourn over her, that you may suck, and be satisfied with the breast of her consolation, that you may be weaned, and delight yourselves with the influx of her glory. For thus says the Lord, Look! I turn toward them as a river of peace, and as a torrent [of rain] bringing upon them in a flood the glory of the Gentiles. Their children shall be borne upon the shoulders, and comforted on the knees. As a mother comforts one, so will I also comfort you. And you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.*” This is what Paul was referring to in Hebrews 12:22-23. In Revelation, a celestial messenger told John he was going to show him “the Bride, the Lamb’s wife.” He then immediately showed Him the “New Jerusalem” – the Lamb’s wife, (Rev. 21:9-10). Scripture is very consistent in representing both the redeemed and the restored Jerusalem as a single entity – a woman. It is obvious that the “*woman clothed with the sun*” in Rev. 12 refers to the redeemed, those who are the rightful citizens of Jerusalem which is about to be restored and revealed. They are about to be gathered as “*the universal congregation and assembly of the firstborn ones having been pre-registered in the skies.*” For 2,000 years, true Christian assemblies have been rejected by the present Jerusalem and her inhabitants, remaining “*outside the camp, bearing His reproach, for here we have no permanent city, but we seek one to come,*” (Heb. 13:13-14). Jerusalem will be ours! The most ancient Christian writers also understood the “woman” of Revelation 12 to represent the faithful Christian assembly (See: Hippolytus, Treatise on Christ and Antichrist, 61).

²⁴¹ This sign in “the sky” is also an astronomical sign which gives us the date of Jesus’ birth – on Rosh Hashanah. Virgo is “clothed with the sun” in September. And the moon is beneath her feet on Rosh Hashanah. Jesus’ birthday is Tishri 1, on Rosh Hashanah, which is also the anniversary of the first day of creation and His begetting out of God

REVELATION

wings of a great eagle²⁵⁷ were given to the woman, so that she might fly to the wilderness²⁵⁸ to her place, where she is nourished there a time, times, and half a time²⁵⁹ from before the snake. 15 And the snake projected a current of water²⁶⁰ from his mouth after the woman that he might sweep her away with the current. 16 And the land rescued the woman. And the land opened its mouth and swallowed the current the dragon projected from its mouth. 17 And the dragon was enraged against the woman, and departed to battle with the remnants²⁶¹ of her seed,²⁶² of those who are keeping the commandments of God and holding the testimony²⁶³ about Jesus.²⁶⁴

(Prov. 8:22-31). On the Gregorian calendar Rosh Hashanah begins with the new moon between Sept. 5 & Oct. 5.

²⁴² Just below Virgo is the constellation Hydra, which is represented in Greek mythology as a multi-headed sea serpent. This is also the “serpent” that Jesus will defeat at His coming (Isaiah 27:1-2). Note that the “dragon” is called a “serpent” in vss. 9&14.

²⁴³ The heads represent the former empires the Adversary has ruled. The ten horns represent the 10 kings who will reign with Antichrist for the last 3.5 years, (cf. Daniel 2:41-44; 7:7-8; Rev. 17:9-12).

²⁴⁴ This likely refers to the number of heavenly messengers who followed the Adversary in his rebellion (v. 7).

²⁴⁵ The Greek word is “μελλει.” Strong’s defines it as “to intend, i.e. be about to be.” The Son’s reign over the nations in fulfillment of Psalm 2 was still future from John’s perspective. (See: Rev. 19:15)

²⁴⁶ This is a reference to Psalm 2. Here, John follows the Greek LXX reading of “shepherd” instead of the Hebrew “break.” He does the same in two other passages that refer to this Psalm, Rev. 2:26-27 & 19:15.

²⁴⁷ See: Psalm 110:1, Hebrews 10:12-13.

²⁴⁸ The perfect tense indicates that this place is prepared for this purpose entirely before her flight.

²⁴⁹ In the clause τρέφουσιν αὐτήν (“they may be nourishing her”), the verb τρέφουσιν is present, active, subjunctive, third person, plural. It refers to specific persons who will actively nourish the woman. These are the two witnesses who were caught up into the sky and relocated following their resurrection (Rev. 11:11-12; cf. Isaiah 26:20-21). After Elijah’s and John’s initial 1,260 days (while this place is being prepared), they will then fill the role that Moses and Aaron did during the first exodus for the time of the Beast’s reign of a “time, times, and half a time” (vs. 14, cf. Dan. 12:7), which is 42 months (Rev. 11:2; Rev. 13:5).

²⁵⁰ This number refers to the duration of the prophesying of the two witnesses the only other time it occurs (Rev. 11:3). Here, it refers to the time the place of safety is being prepared by God during the ministry of the 2 prophets, not to the time that the woman will be nourished there afterwards, which is for “a time, times, and half-a-time” (v. 14).

²⁵¹ See: Daniel 10:13, 21 & 12:1

²⁵² Gen. 3:1-15

²⁵³ 2 Cor. 4:4; 2 Cor. 11:14; 1 John 5:19

²⁵⁴ Many suppose that being a martyr is the destiny of all true believers in the tribulation, and that martyrdom is the only way to “overcome.” However, notice that the martyrdom spoken of is in the past at the time The Adversary is thrown down to the ground. The voice from the sky is therefore speaking of past faithfulness unto death by believers before the time of tribulation. This distinction between past martyrs and those killed in the tribulation is also seen in Rev. 6:9-11 & Rev. 20:4. Many living believers will flee to safety and survive the onslaught of The Adversary because of their past faithfulness (Luke 21:36; Rev. 3:10).

²⁵⁵ The angelic hosts

²⁵⁶ 3.5 years. See Revelation 13:5.

²⁵⁷ Early Christian interpreters believed the two eagle’s wings represent the two witnesses (prophets) in chapter 11. (Victorinus, Commentary on the Apocalypse, 12). They apparently give aide to the woman in her flight to safety.

²⁵⁸ This is an obvious reference to the Exodus. “You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to Myself” (Exodus 19:4-5), referring to Israel’s flight out of Egypt to the wilderness. In the Exodus, the Israelites also had “two witnesses” (Moses and Aaron). The two prophets of God will have a major role to play in the preparation of the place of safety during their 1,260-day public ministry and then nourishing the woman in the wilderness for the 42 months of the reign of the Beast.

Chapter 13

The Beast from the Sea – the Adversary’s Substitute for God’s Anointed

And I stood on the sand of the sea. And I observed a beast rising out of the sea,²⁶⁵ having seven heads²⁶⁶ and ten horns,²⁶⁷ and on its horns ten crowns, and on its heads blasphemous names. 2 And the beast I observed was like a leopard,²⁶⁸ and its feet like the feet of a bear,²⁶⁹ and its mouth like the mouth of a lion.²⁷⁰ And the dragon gave his power to it, his throne, and his great authority.²⁷¹ 3 And I saw one of its heads,²⁷² as having been wounded unto death, and its blow of death was healed. And the whole land marveled after the beast.²⁷³ 4 And they worshipped the dragon that gave authority to the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying: “Who is like the beast? Who is able to battle with it?” 5 And a mouth was given to it, speaking great things and blasphemies.²⁷⁴ And it was given authority to act for forty-two months.²⁷⁵ 6 And it

²⁵⁹ 3.5 years. cf. Daniel 12:7 where the same expression refers to the time after the Abomination of Desolation.

²⁶⁰ A flood of water is often used as a metaphor for a large army (cf. Isaiah 59:19, Jeremiah 46:7-8, Daniel 9:26, 11:22). Just as the Egyptians pursued the Israelites into the wilderness, and were destroyed by God in the Red Sea, so too will the Antichrist send his army in pursuit of the righteous who flee into the wilderness. Like Pharaoh’s army, they too will be destroyed by God’s intervention.

²⁶¹ Not all Christians will flee to the places of safety. Many will abandon the Faith thinking that they are saving their lives and maintaining their lifestyle. Jesus warned of this when He said, “Remember Lot’s wife. Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it,” (Luke 17:32-33). Others may remain behind and stand boldly against the Antichrist, following the example of the two prophets (v. 11). However, the majority of those left behind will be those who are “offended” and fall away from the Faith when the pressure is on. Jesus said that the love of most of His followers will grow cold during this time, and that they will succumb to false prophets and bondage to sin. Only those who “endure to the end shall be saved” (Matt. 24:9-13). Paul called this the “apostasy” which he linked to the revealing of the “Man of Sin,” (2 Thess. 2:1-4).

²⁶² John’s second epistle was addressed to “the chosen mistress and her children” (ἐκλεκτῇ κυρίᾳ καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις), identifying Christians as the real subject of this prophecy about the woman and her offspring. The word “κυρία” (mistress) was first used of Sarah (Gen. 16:4,8,9 LXX). Collectively all of the redeemed are the “woman,” the “Daughter of Zion,” but individually they are children of Sarah.

²⁶³ The dragon will only pursue those remnants that continue to obey God’s commands and hold firmly to the Gospel message proclaimed by Jesus’ Emissaries (See: 1 John 1:1-5).

²⁶⁴ The Textus Receptus adds “Anointed.”

²⁶⁵ The Mediterranean Sea, represents the Gentile nations (Dan. 7:2-3; Rev. 17:15).

²⁶⁶ Rev. 12:3; Rev. 17:9-11

²⁶⁷ Dan. 7:7,20,24

²⁶⁸ The seven-headed beast having features of a leopard indicates that the final kingdom will possess some features of the kingdom of Alexander the Great (Dan. 7:6).

²⁶⁹ The Persian empire was likened to a bear (Dan. 7:5).

²⁷⁰ Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylonian kingdom was likened to a lion (Dan. 7:4).

²⁷¹ The dragon gives his power, throne, and authority to the beast. This parallels the Father’s giving His authority to the Son. (cf. Matt. 26:18; John 6:26-27; John 17:1-2).

²⁷² Since the seven heads represent seven former kings/kingdoms (Rev. 17:9-11), the healing of the deadly wound of one of these heads (former king/kingdom) must refer to the renewal of one of the ancient kings/kingdoms.

²⁷³ The beast is the eighth, but is also one of the seven former kings (Rev. 17:11). Thus, the Antichrist is a resurrected king from one of the seven former kingdoms.

²⁷⁴ Dan. 7:8,20

²⁷⁵ This is the period of Jerusalem’s trampling underfoot following the testimony of the two witnesses (Rev. 11:2).

opened its mouth with blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His Tent,²⁷⁶ and those who dwell in the sky.²⁷⁷ 7 And to it was granted to battle with the holy ones and to conquer them.²⁷⁸ And authority was granted to it over every tribe, people, language, and nation. 8 And all those dwelling²⁷⁹ on the land²⁸⁰ shall worship him²⁸¹ whose name²⁸² has not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb – the one having been slain because of the casting down of the world.²⁸³

A Warning from Jesus to the Christian Assemblies

9 “If anyone has an ear, let him listen:²⁸⁴ 10 If anyone must go into captivity,²⁸⁵ he goes to captivity. [But] if anyone kills²⁸⁶ with the sword, he must be killed with the sword.²⁸⁷ In this is [tested] the endurance and the faith of the holy ones.”²⁸⁸

²⁷⁶ Thayer – “Tent, tabernacle, of that well known movable temple of God after the pattern of which the temple at Jerusalem was built.” Even the restored New Jerusalem in all its glory is called God’s “Tent” (Rev. 21:3).

²⁷⁷ Michael and his messengers continued to dwell in the sky while The Adversary and his messengers had just been cast out of the sky (Rev. 12:7-9).

²⁷⁸ cf. Rev. 12:11

²⁷⁹ This word implies taking up a permanent residence.

²⁸⁰ The term, “on the land” could refer to a particular country – Israel, or to all of the inhabited land.

²⁸¹ The neuter pronoun (it) has been previously used because “beast” is neuter in Greek and a pronoun must agree with its antecedent in gender. It is therefore significant that John switched here to the masculine pronoun (him) when giving the interpretation of the vision. This indicates that “the beast” definitely represents a man. (cf. verse 18). Paul described him as “the Man of Sin, the Son of Destruction, the one opposing and self-exalting above every named god or worshipped thing, so also as a god to appoint himself into the Temple of God, portraying himself that he is a god ... whose arrival is in accord with the energy of The Adversary with all power, and signs, and false miracles, and with every deception of injustice ...” (2 Thess. 2:3-4,9)

²⁸² The latest revisions of the Critical Texts (Nestle-Aland 26th edition & United Bible Society 3rd edition) have οὗ (“whose” singular) γέγραπται (“has [not] been written” singular) τὸ ὄνομα (“the name” singular). While this is a minority reading, it is very old and solves a grammatical problem because the singular verb “is [not] written” agrees with the singular “whose.” Most manuscripts have the plural “whose” with the singular verb “has been written,” which is grammatically incorrect in Greek. The LGV follows the Critical Text here which solves the grammatical problem following a very old but rare reading. The effect is this: The text says that Antichrist’s name has not been written in the Book of Life rather than the people who worship him.

²⁸³ The clause, “casting down of the world” refers to the overthrow of the original Divine order by the entrance of sin, and the subsequent curse put upon God’s creation.

²⁸⁴ This was a common expression that Jesus used in the Gospels (Matt. 11:15; Matt. 13:9,43) as a play on Isaiah’s statement (Matt. 13:15-16) and in the seven letters (Rev. 2:7,11,17,29; Rev. 3:6,13,22), indicating that this message is from Jesus Himself. For this reason it is in red type here.

²⁸⁵ See: Jer. 15:2. The TR/KJV/NKJV adds the word συνάγει (“if anyone leads into captivity”) but this has no support from the majority and the oldest manuscripts. Some early mss. have “If anyone holds captivity, he departs.”

²⁸⁶ The majority and TR have ἀποκτενεῖ “kills” (active voice) but a few manuscripts have “is killed” (passive voice).

²⁸⁷ This passage apparently was meant to remind Christians of Jesus’ words to Peter in Matthew 26:52. Just as it was wrong for Peter to resist Jesus’ arrest because He was destined for the cross, so also it will be wrong for Christians to use force to resist the persecution of the Antichrist. Those who use force or violence to resist capture will be killed. This is a warning to the foolish or ignorant “remnants” of the woman’s descendants who do not flee to the places of safety, and now find themselves facing the mark of the Beast.

²⁸⁸ Being passive in the face of capture and captivity will require great endurance and faith by those who did not heed the warnings to flee to safety, (Rev. 12:11).

REVELATION

*The Beast from the Land: Israel's Pseudo-Elijah*²⁸⁹

11 And I observed another beast rising out of the land.²⁹⁰ And it had two horns like a lamb and was speaking like a dragon. 12 And it exercises all the authority of the first beast before it. And it compels the land and those dwelling in it so that they will worship the first beast whose blow of death was healed. 13 And it does great signs so that it may also make fire come down from the sky²⁹¹ onto the land before men. 14 And it deceives my own people²⁹² who dwell on the land by the signs which were given to it to do before the beast, saying to those dwelling on the land to make an image to the beast²⁹³ which has the blow of the sword and lives. 15 And to it was granted to give breath to the image of the beast so that the image of the beast should speak and should require as many as may not worship the image of the beast should be killed. 16 And it requires all, small and great, rich and poor, free and bond that they should receive a mark²⁹⁴ on their right hand or on their foreheads, 17 and that no one may buy or sell without having the mark, the name of the beast, or the number of its name.²⁹⁵ 18 Here is wisdom: Let him that has understanding decode²⁹⁶ the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. His number is six-hundred-sixty-six.²⁹⁷

²⁸⁹ The history of Israel under Antiochus Epiphanies repeats itself. Antiochus replaced the faithful high priest Onias with his brother Yeshua who was eager to transform Jerusalem into a pagan Greek city. In his apostasy, Yeshua changed his Hebrew name to the Greek name, Jason. He is the one who Hellenized the priesthood and received Antiochus into Jerusalem with great pomp. It was the resistance by some of the remaining faithful priests against the Hellenization of Judea that led to the first "abomination of desolation" by Antiochus.

²⁹⁰ This appears to be a reference to the land of Israel.

²⁹¹ This reenacts the showdown between Elijah and the false prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:20-38; 2 Kings 1:10-14), with the opposite outcome. Elijah will herald the coming of the Messiah for the Jews (Mal. 4:5-6) as one of the two witnesses (Rev. 11). After the 2 Witnesses are relocated to the prepared place of safety, the "False Prophet" attempts to outdo Elijah in order to deceive Israel. (See also Moses' contest with Pharaoh's magicians in Ex. 7).

²⁹² The Majority Text reads, "And it deceives my own people who dwell on the land," but the Alexandrian Text and Textus Receptus have "those who dwell on the land." This refers specifically to Israelites.

²⁹³ Placing this speaking image of the Beast within the Holy of Holies in the Temple is the "Abomination of Desolation." According to Daniel, the "abomination of desolation" will be "set up" in the Temple (Dan. 12:11). The Greek word rendered "abomination" almost always refers to idolatry in Scripture. Jesus said the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, will be "standing where it ought not," (Mark 13:14). Note the use of the neuter pronoun, "it," referring to an object, not a man. Jesus indicated that this is the signal for the faithful to flee immediately – the speaking image of the Antichrist being placed in the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem.

²⁹⁴ The Greek word "χάραγμα" (mark) means an "engraving." Seals were typically "engraved" in metal, and then used to stamp their image onto something. "Deissmann (*Bible Studies*, pp. 240ff) shows that in the papyri official business documents often have the name and image of the emperor, with the date as the official stamp or seal, and with "χάραγμα" as the name of this seal." (A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures*). The "mark" may be a logo impression, not unlike a registered trademark logo used by many corporations.

²⁹⁵ "The number of its name" may either imply a number associated with the beast's name, or that the name itself has the numerical value of six-hundred, sixty, six (since all Greek letters also corresponded to numbers).

²⁹⁶ ψηφίζω – Friburg Greek Lexicon: "(1) strictly reckon or calculate with pebbles, hence count up, reckon, add up; (2) figure out, interpret, come to understand the significance of a number."

²⁹⁷ The Bible records only one other man associated with the number 666 (Ezra 2:13) – Adonikam – which in Hebrew means "risen master." This could indicate a pledge of loyalty to the resurrected Antiochus Epiphanies, whose title "Epiphanies" means "God manifested" (See: 2 Thess. 2:3-4).

Chapter 14

The 144,000 Sethites, King Jesus' choral entourage in the Kingdom

And I observed, and look, a Lamb having stood up²⁹⁸ on Mount Zion,²⁹⁹ and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name³⁰⁰ and His Father's name³⁰¹ written on their foreheads.³⁰² 2 And I heard a sound [coming] from the sky,³⁰³ like the voice of many waters, like the sound of loud thunder. And the voice I heard was like lyre singers playing their lyres. 3 They³⁰⁴ sing a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders. And no one was able to learn the song except the hundred and forty-four thousand,³⁰⁵ those having been redeemed from the land. 4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women,³⁰⁶ for they are virgins.³⁰⁷ These are the ones following the Lamb wherever He may lead.³⁰⁸ These were redeemed from beside³⁰⁹ men – firstfruits³¹⁰ to God and to the Lamb. 5 And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are flawless.³¹¹

²⁹⁸ The Greek word rendered “having stood up” frequently refers to someone taking a bold authoritative stance or position of power, (see: 2 Kings 10:4 LXX; Psalm 94:16 LXX; Isa. 44:11 LXX; Isa. 47:13 LXX; Dan. 12:1 LXX). The perfect tense implies that the Lamb has taken the power and authority on Mt. Zion (Jerusalem), just as His Father promised Him in Psalm 2. This implies a Kingdom setting for this passage.

²⁹⁹ Mt. Zion is Jerusalem in Israel (Isaiah 5:3-6). This takes place after Jerusalem’s restoration in the Kingdom.

³⁰⁰ The Textus Receptus omits “Its (His) name.”

³⁰¹ According to the Septuagint, the sons of Seth “*hoped* [in the coming Savior], *taking to themselves the name of the Master God.*” (Gen. 4:26 LXX). This shows a covenant relationship with God, and explains why both the Father’s name and the name of the Lamb are written on their foreheads.

³⁰² Rev. 3:12

³⁰³ The music is coming from the sky, but the Lamb and these 144,000 are on Mt. Zion, in Jerusalem.

³⁰⁴ Celestial “lyre singers” implies voice and string accompaniment. This is an angelic choir & orchestra.

³⁰⁵ The celestial choir teaches the “new song” to the 144,000 who are with the Lamb in Jerusalem. This scene obviously takes place after the return of Jesus. This is obviously after the pattern David established, arranging choirs and instrumentalists to offer continual praise outside the “Tabernacle of David” which temporarily housed the Ark of the Covenant (1 Chron. 15–16). See also: Isa. 16:5; Amos 9:11; Acts 15:16.

³⁰⁶ Those “defiled with women” were the sons of Seth who were in a covenant relationship with God but intermarried with the “daughters of men” (the line of Cain). See Gen. 6:1-3 LXX where they are clearly called “men.” The Septuagint reads, “*My Breath shall surely not remain among these men forever.*”

³⁰⁷ Scripture frequently uses sexual purity (virginity) or the lack thereof (fornication / adultery) as metaphors for faithfulness or unfaithfulness to God’s covenants. That “*παρθενοί*” (virgins) is used here as a metaphor for faithfulness to God is apparent because the noun is feminine in gender. This feminine term was never applied literally to males in koine Greek or in Scripture when referring to sexuality. The term “virgin” here literally means a pure young woman of marriageable age, (see: Strong’s #3933). Since the literal interpretation is impossible, it is clearly a metaphor for covenantal purity.

³⁰⁸ These 144,000 will be the Anointed King’s entourage of singers wherever He goes in the coming Kingdom.

³⁰⁹ The Greek preposition is “*απο*” which means “from beside,” while “*εκ*” means “from among.” Here it refers to the Sethites’ separation from the rest of Adam’s children, to remain unpolluted in their covenantal relationship with God, (see: Gen. 4:26 LXX).

³¹⁰ These are the very first covenant people, seven generations from Adam through Seth to Enoch. The generations of Seth after Enoch were polluted by their intermarriage with pagan women (1 Pet. 3:18-20; Josephus, Antiquities, Bk. I, ch. 2-3), the exceptions being Noah, his father Lamech, and grandfather Methuselah. Only Noah and his family were spared the destruction that occurred because of the apostasy of the Sethites.

³¹¹ The Textus Receptus adds, “before the throne of God.”

REVELATION

*The Declarations of the Five Messengers*³¹²

6 And I observed another messenger³¹³ flying in mid-sky, having the permanent Good-message³¹⁴ to proclaim over those settled on the land, and over every nation, tribe, tongue, and people, 7 saying with a loud voice: "Fear God and give glory to Him, because the hour of His judgment has arrived; and worship the One having made the sky and land, the sea, and the springs of waters."³¹⁵ 8 And another, a second messenger³¹⁶ followed, saying: "Fallen, fallen, is Babylon the great! She has made all nations drink from the wine of the wrath of her fornication."³¹⁷ 9 And another messenger,³¹⁸ a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice: "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives the mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God which is mixed undiluted in the cup of His wrath.³¹⁹ And he shall be tormented in fire and sulfur³²⁰ in view of the holy messengers and in view of the Lamb. 11 And the smoke of their torment ascends unto ages of ages,³²¹ and they have no relief day or night – those who are worshipping³²² the beast and its image – and if anyone receives the mark of its name." 12 Here is the endurance of the holy ones, the ones keeping the commands of God and the faith of Jesus.³²³ 13 And I heard a voice from the sky saying to me: "Write: 'Blessed are the dead, those

³¹² The order of the following five "messengers" provides a complete overview of the sequence of major events in Revelation.

³¹³ The first messenger (vss. 6-7) announces the permanent Good-message, and describes the judgments that will be unleashed during the first half of the 70th Week, as indicated in the first four Trumpets, corresponding to the 1260-day preaching of the two Witnesses who call down these judgments (Rev. 11:1-13).

³¹⁴ The "permanent Good-message" is what was proclaimed to Abraham (Gal. 3:8), the permanent inheritance of the Land (Gen. 13:15 LXX; Gen. 17:8 LXX; Gen. 28:4,13 LXX; Gen. 35:12 LXX; Gen. 48:4 LXX; Gal. 3:16,18,26-29).

³¹⁵ The sky, land, sea, and springs are mentioned here because this refers to the first four Trumpet judgments which are upon these four aspects of man's environment (Rev. 8:7-13).

³¹⁶ The second "messenger" (vs. 8) comes in the middle of the 70th week, when the two prophets are killed. The ten kings will then immediately give their power to the beast and destroy Babylon the Great, which is Rome, (Rev. 17).

³¹⁷ See chapter 17-18 where the fall of Babylon is described in detail.

³¹⁸ The third messenger (vss. 9-13) describes the beast system, its mark, and the worship of the image described in chapter 13. This occurs throughout the last half of the 70th week.

³¹⁹ This is a reference to the bowls of wrath which are to be poured out just before Jesus returns (Rev. 15:1).

³²⁰ At the 6th trumpet (which overlaps the bowls of wrath), a third of mankind is tormented and killed by fire and brimstone (Rev. 9:13-21).

³²¹ Smoke ascending "unto the ages of ages" is meant to point back to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. "Then he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain; and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land which went up like the smoke of a furnace" (Gen 19:28). The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah was "an example of eternal fire" (Jude 1:7). Yet Sodom did not burn perpetually, but rather permanently. Exactly the same expression is used of the destruction of Mystery Babylon (Rev. 19:3), "Her smoke goes up unto the ages of the ages!" Yet her total destruction is also said to be "in one hour" (Rev. 18:10,17,19), with nothing being left at all. "With this kind of violence Babylon the great city shall be thrown down and shall not be found, not anymore" (Rev. 18:21). There is no reason to suppose that this passage teaches eternal torment based on this expression alone. That question must be decided on other grounds.

³²² The use of the present participle here (those who are worshipping) in conjunction with the present indicative verb "have" shows that the torment coincides in time with their worshipping the beast. In other words, the "torment" is while they are alive and worshipping the beast.

³²³ Objective genitive, meaning the faith concerning Jesus, not Jesus' own faith. See also Rom. 3:22; Gal. 2:16; Gal. 3:22; Phil. 3:9.

REVELATION

dying in the Master from this time. Yes,' says the Breath, 'so that they may be refreshed³²⁴ from their toils and their deeds are following with them."

The Harvest of the Righteous

14 And I observed, and look, a white cloud and on the cloud was sitting One like the Son of Man,³²⁵ having on His head a golden wreath, and in His hand a sharp sickle. 15 And another messenger³²⁶ came out of the Temple, calling with a loud voice to the One sitting on the cloud: "Swing³²⁷ Your sickle and reap, because the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the land has dried up." 16 So the One sitting on the cloud swung His sickle over³²⁸ the land, and the land was harvested.

The Harvest of the Wicked

17 And another messenger³²⁹ came out of the Temple which is in the sky, he also having a sharp sickle. 18 And another messenger came out from the altar, having authority over fire, and he called with a loud voice to the one having the sharp sickle, saying: "Swing your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the land, for her grapes have ripened." 19 So the messenger swung his sickle into the land and gathered the grape vine³³⁰ of the land, and threw it into the great vat of the wrath of God.³³¹ 20 And the vat was trampled³³² outside the city. And blood came out of the vat up to the horses' bridles³³³ for one thousand six hundred measures.³³⁴

³²⁴ They are refreshed in the resurrection when their deeds follow them into the Kingdom inheritance.

³²⁵ Matt. 24:29-31, 1 Thess. 4:15-18

³²⁶ The fourth "messenger" (vss. 14-16) corresponds to Jesus' gathering His elect "immediately after the tribulation" (Matt. 24:29-31).

³²⁷ Lit. "send"

³²⁸ Compare verse 19

³²⁹ The fifth "messenger" (vss. 17-20) announces the Battle of Armageddon which immediately follows the 70th week (Rev. 19).

³³⁰ Not only the grapes, but the whole vine is cut down.

³³¹ The "vat of the wrath of God" is in the "Valley of Jehoshaphat" according to Joel. 3:2,9-15 (cf. Rev. 19:15), which is the Kidron Valley between the Temple Mount and the Mount of Olives.

³³² Isa. 34:1-8; Isa. 63:1-4

³³³ This would be blood about 5 feet deep blood.

³³⁴ The Greek word (σταδίον – neuter, not σταδίου – masculine) simply refers to a fixed unit of measurement. In Rev. 21:16 the length of a σταδίον (unit of measure) is deduced by comparing the dimensions of the New Jerusalem (also given in σταδίον) to the dimensions provided by Ezekiel. (See notes on that passage). The "measure" in Rev. 21:16 was 18 feet in length. Therefore, 1,600 σταδίον would be 28,800 feet, about 5.5 miles. Some translations incorrectly have 1,600 "furlongs" or calculated out as "two hundred miles." This is from confusing the neuter σταδίον (a fixed measure) with the masculine σταδίου which refers to the Greek race course of about 600 ft, since both terms are spelled the same when in the genitive case and plural number – σταδίων. A river of blood five feet deep for nearly 200 miles is utterly impossible, since the Kidron Valley slowly descends from the east side of Jerusalem south and east, down to the Dead Sea about 12 miles away. Note that this river of blood is "outside the city" of Jerusalem.

Chapter 15

The Victorious Holy Ones Singing in the Great Tribulation

And I saw another sign in the sky, great and marvelous: seven messengers having the seven last blows, because in them the wrath of God was finished. 2 And I saw a sea as glass,³³⁵ having been mixed with fire.³³⁶ And the ones who are conquering³³⁷ from the Beast, and from his image, and from the number of his name, having come to stand³³⁸ on the glassy sea, having lyres of God.³³⁹ 3 And they are singing the song of Moses,³⁴⁰ the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: "Great and marvelous are Your works, Master, God, **THE SOVEREIGN OVER ALL!** Just and true are Your ways, King of the nations!³⁴¹ 4 Who would not fear [You], Master, and glorify Your name? Because, You alone are holy. Because, all the nations shall come and worship before You.³⁴² Because, Your righteous judgments have been manifested."³⁴³

The Seven Bowls of Wrath

5 And after these things I observed, and the Temple³⁴⁴ of the tabernacle of witness in the sky³⁴⁵ was opened. 6 And the seven messengers, having the seven blows, came out of the Temple,³⁴⁶ having been dressed in pure bright linen, and having been girded about their chests with golden belts. 7 And one of the four creatures³⁴⁷ gave to the seven messengers seven golden bowls having been filled with the wrath of the God who lives unto the ages of the ages. 8 And the Temple was filled with the smoke from the glory of God and from His power. And no one was able to enter into the Temple until the seven blows of the seven messengers should be finished.

³³⁵ A sea as glass is a metaphor for a perfectly calm sea, no doubt pointing to Jesus' calming the sea of Galilee when the disciples were in fear of the ship sinking in the storm. "Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm." (Matt 8:26)

³³⁶ The calm sea mixed with fire represents perfect peace and calm in the midst of intense tribulation.

³³⁷ Present continuous tense – they are in the process of conquering these things, thus still in persecution.

³³⁸ Perfect tense, "having come to stand," pointing back to Jesus' walking on the sea and Peter's attempt to do so.

³³⁹ Musical instruments dedicated to the worship of God (1 Chron. 25:6).

³⁴⁰ There are two songs by this title. One is in Deut. 32, which Moses taught the Israelites at the end of the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. The other is in Exodus 15:1-21 which spoke of God's supernatural deliverance through the plagues of Egypt, as well as defeating Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea. This is the one referenced here since the deliverance of God's people in the last days is portrayed as a second exodus (Rev. 12).

³⁴¹ The Textus Receptus has "holy ones."

³⁴² Psalm 86:9; Isaiah 66:18-23; Zech. 14:16-21

³⁴³ The holy ones in tribulation welcome God's judgments upon their persecutors.

³⁴⁴ "Temple" here appears to refer to the Holy of Holies only, which housed only the Ark of the Covenant.

³⁴⁵ The "tent of witness" refers to the Tabernacle that Moses built. The "Temple of the tent of witness in the sky" refers to the celestial Temple which was the pattern for the Tabernacle that Moses built. (Heb. 8:5; Heb. 9:11-12,23-24).

³⁴⁶ It is significant that the final wrath of God proceeds from the very place where the atoning sacrifice of Jesus' blood was offered.

³⁴⁷ Rev. 4:6-9

Chapter 16

And I heard a loud voice from the Temple saying to the seven messengers: "Depart and pour the seven bowls of the wrath of God upon the land." 2 And the first went and poured his bowl upon the land and a vicious and malignant ulcer came upon men – those having the mark of the beast and those worshipping its image.³⁴⁸ 3 And the second messenger poured his bowl into the sea and it became as blood of a dead man. And every living creature in the sea died.³⁴⁹ 4 And the third messenger poured his bowl into the rivers and into the springs of water, and they became blood. 5 And I heard the messenger of the waters saying: "You are just, the One who is and who was, the Holy One, in that You judged these things. 6 Because they shed the blood of holy ones and prophets. And You gave them blood to drink,³⁵⁰ as they deserve." 7 And I heard [a voice] from the altar saying: "Yes, Master God, **SOVEREIGN OVER ALL**, true and just are Your verdicts."³⁵¹ 8 Then the fourth messenger poured his bowl upon the sun, and it was granted to him to burn men with fire. 9 And men were burned with severe burns, and men cursed the name of God, the One having authority over these blows. And they did not repent, to give Him glory.³⁵² 10 And the fifth messenger poured his bowl upon the throne of the Beast, and its kingdom became darkened³⁵³ and they gnawed their tongues out of misery. 11 And they cursed the God of the sky because of their miseries and their ulcers,³⁵⁴ and they did not repent of their deeds.³⁵⁵ 12 And the sixth messenger poured his bowl upon the great river, the Euphrates, and its water dried up, so the way of the kings from the rising sun³⁵⁶ might be prepared. 13 And I observed [coming] out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the Beast, and out of the mouth of the false

³⁴⁸ It is significant that the bowls of wrath, which are the most severe blows of all, are specifically targeted at those who worship the Beast and take his mark. The obvious intent is to show that God's wrath is selective and that He distinguishes between the wicked and righteous when He pours out His judgments. Psalm 91 predicts these same judgments with precisely the same message.

³⁴⁹ While the trumpet judgments called down earlier by the two Prophets are similar in nature, they are different in magnitude. During the second trumpet judgment only a third of the creatures in the sea die (Rev. 8:8-9), but during the second bowl judgment, all creatures of the sea die. The other trumpet judgments also reflect a third, while the bowl judgments are universal. The trumpet judgments, therefore, are a warning and prelude of what is to come if people refuse to repent at the preaching of the two Prophets.

³⁵⁰ This is another parallel to the plagues of Egypt.

³⁵¹ In all these judgments, the just character of God is vindicated, and the evil character of mankind is exposed.

³⁵² At this point, repentance is impossible, once they have taken the mark of the Beast, (Rev. 14:9-10). All that remains for those whom God no longer grants repentance is to curse God and await His damnation, (Rom. 1:18-32; Heb. 10:26-29).

³⁵³ The same plague occurred in Egypt just before the Israelites' deliverance, and lasted three days. Yet the Israelites in Goshen had light (Exodus 10:21-23). Here, the darkness is limited to the Kingdom of the Beast. Those in the places of safety will have light.

³⁵⁴ These blows are compounding rather than sequential. During the 5th bowl judgment (vs. 11), people are still suffering from the first bowl judgment (vs. 2).

³⁵⁵ Rev. 9:20-21

³⁵⁶ Referring to the east

REVELATION

prophet, three unclean breaths like frogs. 14 For they are breaths of demons performing signs, which spread out over the kings of the whole world, to collect them unto the battle of the great Day of God,³⁵⁷ **THE SOVEREIGN OVER ALL.**

Another Warning from Jesus to the Assemblies

15 (“Look! I am coming like a thief.”³⁵⁸ Blessed is the one watching³⁵⁹ and guarding his garments³⁶⁰ so that he should not walk naked and his shame be seen.”³⁶¹) 16 And He³⁶² assembled them into the place called in Hebrew, “Armageddon.”³⁶³

The Seventh Bowl of Wrath

17 And the seventh messenger poured his bowl upon the air, and a loud voice came from the Temple of the sky, from the throne, saying: “It has been done!” 18 And there were lightnings and thunders, and noises. And there was a great earthquake, unlike any that have occurred since men came to be upon the land, such a great earthquake of this magnitude!³⁶⁴ 19 And the great city³⁶⁵ was divided into three parts,³⁶⁶ and the cities of the nations collapsed.³⁶⁷ (And Babylon the great was recalled before God, to give to her

³⁵⁷ 2 Pet. 3:10-12

³⁵⁸ These words of Jesus are one final warning to His own, that His coming is now imminent (cf. Matt. 24:43-44; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10). It is not imminent until the armies begin to gather for the battle of Armageddon after the first six bowl judgments.

³⁵⁹ Mark 13:32-37; Luke 21:36

³⁶⁰ Guarding one’s garments means to keep from soiling them with sin, (Rev. 3:4; Rev. 7:14).

³⁶¹ Here Jesus reminds the reader of His warning to Laodicea, (Rev. 3:18).

³⁶² While the unclean breaths deceive the kings of the land to come with their armies to Jerusalem, it is the Son who spoke the words in vs. 15 who ultimately gathers them for judgment and destruction (Joel 3:9-18 & Zech. 14:2).

³⁶³ Literally, “Mountain of Megiddo.” Megiddo is a very large plain about 50 miles north of Jerusalem. It is the place where the armies of the nations will assemble prior to their attack on Jerusalem. It is not the location of the final battle itself, which will be around Jerusalem (Zech. 14:1-9). Megiddo is overlooked from the south-east by Mt. Carmel, which was Elijah’s place of hiding and will be the primary place of refuge for Christians who flee from Judea (Micah 7:14-15; Matt. 24:15-21). These faithful believers will be able to watch the gathering of the armies from their vantage point in the caves of Carmel. This is probably why the text refers to “Armageddon” (Mountain of Megiddo) rather than merely “Megiddo” which is a valley. This is also why the exhortation to the believers in hiding was placed here in the text as a parenthetical statement. They will literally see the armies assemble as the sign to get ready for Jesus’ imminent arrival.

³⁶⁴ Isaiah 24:19-23; Ezekiel 38:19-23; Zech. 14:4-5; Rev. 6:12.

³⁶⁵ Jerusalem is the “great city.”

³⁶⁶ This three-part division of Jerusalem is interesting in light of the fact that it has a designated section for Catholic and Orthodox Christians, another section designated as Jewish, and a third section designated as Muslim. Compare Zechariah 13:7-9 which may refer to the Jewish remnant being refined and ultimately saved at Jesus’ return. This is also the 144,000 orthodox Jews, 12,000 from each tribe, mentioned in Revelation 7, sealed for protection until Jesus returns. They will apparently remain in Jerusalem’s Jewish section and the Antichrist, whom they will reject, will not be able to touch them. These are the ones who will flee to the valley caused by the great earthquake splitting the Mount of Olives when the feet of Jesus the Anointed touch it, (Zech. 14:4-5).

³⁶⁷ This is probably a reference to the capitol cities of every nation as a signal that the dominion of the nations has come to an end, and Jesus the Anointed is about to rule from Jerusalem.

REVELATION

the cup of the wine of the fury of His wrath.³⁶⁸) 20 And every island disappeared, and the mountains were not found. 21 And great hail, as a talent weight,³⁶⁹ fell from the sky upon men.³⁷⁰ And men cursed God because of the blow of hail, because this blow was extremely severe.

Chapter 17

Interlude: The Destruction of Mystery Babylon³⁷¹

And one of the seven messengers having the seven bowls³⁷² came and spoke with me, saying: "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute, the one sitting on many waters, 2 with whom the kings of the land fornicated, and those dwelling on the land became drunk from the wine of her fornication." 3 And he carried me in the Breath³⁷³ into a wilderness. And I saw a woman³⁷⁴ sitting on a red³⁷⁵ beast being full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.³⁷⁶ 4 And the woman was dressed in purple and red, adorned with gold and valuable gems and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, being full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. 5 And on her forehead a name had been written: "Mystery, Babylon³⁷⁷ the Great, The Mother of Prostitutes³⁷⁸ and of the Abominations of the Land." 6 I observed the woman

³⁶⁸ Babylon is not to be destroyed here, but 3.5 years earlier when the Beast comes to power (Rev. 14:8-9; Rev. 17:16-18). While John was observing in vision the future destruction of all these cities through symbolic representations, God was being urged to carry out the same judgment upon Babylon the Great (Rome), the one persecuting God's people at the time Revelation was written. Babylon the Great was "recalled before God" (by celestial messengers) at the time of John's vision, not at the time that the prophesied events were appointed to occur.

³⁶⁹ A talent was a measurement of weight, about 120 lbs.

³⁷⁰ Comets consist of rock and ice. This final bowl of wrath very likely corresponds to Jesus' statement in the Olivet Discourse about the stars of the sky falling to the ground, (cf. Matt. 24:29-30 & Rev. 6:12-13).

³⁷¹ Mystery Babylon is destroyed when Antichrist comes to power (Rev. 14:8). It is carried out by God through the 10 kings at the time they abdicate their authority to the Antichrist (Dan. 7:7-8,11,23; Rev. 17:12-18).

³⁷² This is the seventh messenger who announced the seventh bowl judgement. This same messenger accompanies John throughout the remainder Revelation, providing explanatory information and the closing message from Jesus Himself (cf. Rev. 19:9; Rev. 21:9; Rev. 22:6-)

³⁷³ Rev. 1:10; Rev. 4:2

³⁷⁴ This second woman in Revelation is the antithesis of the woman in Revelation 12. They represent two cities. The woman in Revelation 12 represents what Isaiah calls "the daughter of Zion," the New Jerusalem and her children, destined for restoration and beautification, and Rome destined for utter destruction. These also represent the two bodies of "Christians" associated with those two cities: (1) the persecuted yet faithful holy ones who look for the "elevated," and "free," and restored ["New"] Jerusalem (Isa. 2:1-5; Isa. 66:5-16; Gal. 4:26-27; Heb. 12:22-23; Heb. 13:14; Rev. 21-22), vs. (b) the whore calls herself "Christian" but kills and persecutes the faithful.

³⁷⁵ That this beast with seven heads and ten horns is "red" in color seems to link it with the "red" beast of the same description in Rev. 12:3, identified as The Adversary himself in Rev. 12:9.

³⁷⁶ The "beast" with seven heads and ten horns in Rev. 13 represents the final stage of the Adversary's dominion – Antichrist.

³⁷⁷ "Babylon" was a code word for Rome among the early Christians (See: Tertullian, An Answer to the Jews, ch. 9; Against Marcion, Bk. III, ch. 13). Peter used this code in his first epistle written from Rome (1 Pet. 5:13).

³⁷⁸ The assembly in Rome became a "prostitute" when the "Christian" emperor Constantine seduced the local assemblies, who married the pagan Roman government to Christianity in AD325. Many of the local assemblies within the Roman Empire united themselves with the state for political power. They were seduced away from Jesus the Anointed and began to persecute other Christian assemblies which would not align themselves with Rome. Rome

REVELATION

being drunk from the blood of the holy ones and from the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.³⁷⁹ And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement. 7 And the messenger said to me: “Why did you marvel? I will explain to you the mystery of the woman and of the beast carrying her³⁸⁰ – the one having the seven heads and the ten horns. 8 The beast which you observed was, and is not, and is about to ascend out of the deep³⁸¹ and is going to destruction.³⁸² And those dwelling on the land shall marvel, (the ones whose names have not been written in the Book of Life since the casting down of the world³⁸³), observing the beast that was, and is not, and shall be again.³⁸⁴

9 Here is the mind having wisdom: The seven heads are seven hills. There the woman is seated on them.³⁸⁵ 10 There are also seven kings.³⁸⁶ Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come.³⁸⁷ And whenever he should come, he must continue briefly. 11 And

became a pseudo-Christian empire. After the fall of imperial Rome, religious Rome, the spouse of the emperor, continued and remains to this day centered in the Vatican.

³⁷⁹ Pagan Rome slaughtered the Apostles and many true Christians, but the Roman Church, having merged with the state and become a prostitute, has slaughtered many more in the name of maintaining her political power over nations and kings.

³⁸⁰ While the Adversary himself is restrained by Michael (2 Thess. 2:6-7, cf. Dan. 10:

³⁸¹ Note the contrast here to the Man Child being caught up to the sky – Jesus’ ascension to the right hand of God in fulfillment of Psalm 110:1. The “beast” who was, but will ascend out of the abyss (Rev. 11:7), has been concealed and restrained, but will come forth to kill the two witnesses.

³⁸² v. 11

³⁸³ See footnote for Rev. 13:8. Names have been recorded in the Book of Life since “the casting down of the world” (when the Adversary took the dominion from Adam). The names recorded in the book since that time belong to those who will be spared the final judgment – the second death (Rev. 20:14-15).

³⁸⁴ Certain kings in the past have been literally possessed by the Adversary himself. However, he is restrained from this kind of activity during this Christian age (2 Thess. 2:6-7), which is why John wrote that currently he “is not.” The last human being he took full possession of was Judas Iscariot – “the Adversary entered him” (Luke 22:3; John 13:27). His next full possession of a human will be Antichrist. Thus John used the same term for Judas (“the son of perdition” – John 17:12) that Paul previously used for Antichrist (2 Thess. 2:3). While restrained now, the Adversary operates in a limited way through “Mystery Babylon,” which is why she is portrayed as riding the beast who was, is not, but will be again.

³⁸⁵ Rome is the city on seven hills. She was seated there when John wrote Revelation.

³⁸⁶ There is no consensus among biblical scholars concerning the identity of these seven kings. Exegetes from different eschatological camps attempt to identify them in concert with their overall eschatology. But none seem to fit well.

³⁸⁷ The “seven kings” are likely the kings and their dominions the Adversary has used in his attempt to overthrow God. Of these, five had already “fallen” in John’s day by God’s direct intervention. These seven are likely as follows:

1. Adam’s dominion was stolen by the trickery of the serpent (Luke 4:6), then ruled through Cain and his progeny (Gen. 4:17; 1 Jn. 3:12). This Satanic kingdom fell with the great flood.
2. Nimrod’s Babel, replacing God with false deities/demons and pagan mythologies (Gen. 10:8-12; 11:1-9). This Satanic kingdom fell when God confounded the languages.
3. Egypt under Pharaoh who attempted to kill all of the Hebrew boys and thwart God’s covenant (Ex. 1:8-22). This Satanic kingdom fell by God’s ten plagues and the destruction of Pharaoh’s army in the Red Sea.
4. Tyre in Ezekiel’s day whose “king” sinned formerly in the Garden of Eden (Ezek. 28:12-19). This Satanic kingdom fell when God’s sent Nebuchadnezzar to overthrow it (Ezek. 26:1-9).
5. The Seleucid Empire of Antiochus IV who forced Israel to abandon God and His Covenant (Dan. 8:9-12; 11:21-39). This Satanic kingdom fell when the Maccabees defeated the Syrians & Antiochus died by a plague.
6. Rome in John’s day, seeking to exterminate Christians, by which John was currently imprisoned. The Roman emperors who attempted to destroy Christianity were: Nero, Domitian, Trajan, Marcus Aurelius,

REVELATION

the beast that used to be, and is not, also is the eighth, and is from the seven,³⁸⁸ and is going to destruction.³⁸⁹ 12 And the ten horns which you observed are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom,³⁹⁰ but they receive authority as kings for one hour with the beast. 13 These have one mind, and give their power and authority to the beast.³⁹¹ 14 These will do battle with the Lamb, and the Lamb will defeat them, because He is Master of masters and King of kings. And those who are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful.” 15 And he says to me: “The waters which you saw, where the prostitute is sitting, are peoples and throngs and nations and languages.³⁹² 16 Also, the ten horns which you observed, and the Beast, these will hate the prostitute, and having plundered [her], will strip her naked, and will eat her flesh, and will burn her down with fire.³⁹³ 17 For God implanted into their hearts to do His purpose, and to be of one purpose, and to give their kingdom to the beast until the words of God shall be

Severus, Maximus, Decius, Valerian, Aurelian, Diocletian.

7. Nazi Germany under Hitler sought to exterminate the Jews and bring in the Millennium (the Third Reich, a revival of the Holy Roman Empire). He was to “continue briefly” (12 years, 1933-1945)

³⁸⁸ The 8th king is **the second coming** of one of the seven previous kings – most likely Antiochus Epiphanies resurrected. He is also the one head among the seven that was wounded to death but his deadly wound healed (Rev. 13:3). This satanic beast will be revived when Antichrist, who was previously the fifth king, becomes the eighth king. His chosen name “Epiphanes” meant “God manifest” (cf. 2 Thess. 2:4). However, he was called “Epimanes” (meaning “mad one”) by some of his contemporaries. Daniel 8:9-14 & 23-26 prophesies of Antiochus Epiphanies IV as though he will be the Antichrist at the time of Jesus’ return. Daniel 11:21-45 does the same thing, describing the reign of Antiochus as continuing or existing when the “time of trouble” occurs (Dan. 12:1-2). That the Antichrist is Antiochus Epiphanies IV resurrected is made virtually certain by the fact that the 2,300 days that Antiochus would cause the Temple to be desolate (Dan. 8:14) is the sum total of the days it was made desolate by him in 168BC – 165BC plus the 42 months of its desolation in Revelation. The desolation by Antiochus in 168 BC was said to last exactly 3 years. Judah Maccabee cleansed the Temple on the 3rd-year anniversary of its defilement according to Josephus. 36 lunar months minus one day (on which the Temple was cleansed) leaves 1061 days of defilement. Add to this the 42 lunar months of Rev. 13:5 (1239 days) that the Temple will be desolate under Antichrist and you have exactly 2300 days, the total number of days that Daniel 8 states that Antiochus would cause the Temple to be desolate. Thus Antichrist is Antiochus whose deadly wound is healed. He was struck down by God in 164 BC, but will be resurrected in the end times to become the Antichrist. This is also likely why Jesus said, “*When you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, let the reader understand*” (Matt. 24:15). According to Daniel 11:31, the “abomination of desolation” was committed by Antiochus Epiphanies, yet Jesus’ statement means that this act will be repeated again in the end times.

³⁸⁹ vs. 8

³⁹⁰ These ten kings are the 10 toes of Nebuchadnezzar’s image, (Dan. 2:42-44). Daniel writes, “*In the days of these [10] kings the God of heaven will set up a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed*” (NKJV). They are also the ten horns on the fourth beast (Rome) in Dan. 7:7,20,24.

³⁹¹ In Daniel 7:11-12, the ten kings have their dominion taken away (transferred to the “little horn” – Antichrist) but they continue for the brief time of the reign of the “little horn” after they together destroy the 4th Beast (Rome) by fire.

³⁹² Since waters (seas) represent the Gentile nations, and since the beast of Rev. 13 comes up out of the sea, the Antichrist must be a Gentile.

³⁹³ While Satanic power carries the prostitute, and props her up for a while, when the Adversary is finished with her, he will use his minions to destroy Rome. God puts it in their hearts because He is also judging her for her prostitution.

REVELATION

fulfilled.³⁹⁴ 18 And the woman whom you observed is the city, the great one, the one having dominion over the kings of the land.”³⁹⁵

Chapter 18

After these things I observed another messenger descending from the sky, having great authority, and the land was illuminated from his glory.³⁹⁶ 2 And he called with a strong voice, saying: “Babylon the Great fell! fell!³⁹⁷ and became the home of demons, and the cage for every unclean breath, and the cage for every filthy and detestable bird, 3 because all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and [because] the kings of the land fornicated with her,³⁹⁸ and [because] the merchants of the land were enriched through her capacity for indulgence.” 4 (And I heard another voice from the sky saying: “Flee from her, My³⁹⁹ people,⁴⁰⁰ so that you may have no fellowship with her sins, and so that you may not receive her blows, 5 because her sins have piled up to the sky, and God has recalled her iniquities”). 6 “Pay back to her as also she paid. And double to her twice, also according to her deeds. In the cup that she mixed, mix for her double. 7 As much as she glorified herself and indulged, give to her that much torment and sorrow. Because in her heart she says, ‘I shall not see sorrow, because I sit as queen. I am no widow!’⁴⁰¹ 8 For this, her blows will come in one day, death, sorrow, and famine. And she shall be burned down with fire, because the Master God, the One judging her, is powerful. 9 Also, the kings of the land, who fornicated and indulged with her, shall lament and mourn over her when they see the smoke of her burning. 10 Having stood far off for fear of her torment, they exclaim, ‘Alas! Alas! the great city, Babylon, the mighty city, that your judgment came in one hour!’ 11 Also, the merchants of the land weep and mourn over her, (because no one buys their cargo anymore: 12 cargo of gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linen, purple, silk, scarlet, every citron wood,⁴⁰² every ivory instrument, and every instrument of precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble, 13 also cinnamon, incense, perfume, frankincense, wine, oil, fine flour,

³⁹⁴ The 10 kings will destroy Mystery Babylon (Rome) at the time they give their power to the Beast (Antichrist). Since he will reign for 42 months (Rev. 13:5), Babylon will be destroyed at the mid-point of the final 7 years. See also the declaration of the three messengers in chapter 14 which confirm this timing.

³⁹⁵ Here, all doubt is removed. The prostitute is Rome, the only city that was reigning (present tense) over the kings of the land when John wrote the book.

³⁹⁶ Rev. 14:8

³⁹⁷ The verb is in the active voice, implying that her fall is the result of her own doings, the result of her being drunk, (Rev. 17:6).

³⁹⁸ Rome, which claims to be the spouse of Jesus, has “fornicated” with all the kings of the land.

³⁹⁹ Jesus calls out to His own to flee from Rome, referring to God in the third person.

⁴⁰⁰ Despite the magnitude of her sins, Rome still has some who belong to Jesus the Anointed.

⁴⁰¹ When the assembly in Rome married Imperial Rome and the emperor Constantine in AD. 325, she became a whore. When political Rome fell a century later, she became a widow. Yet, she lives like a queen. The language here was borrowed from Isaiah 54 where the plundering of Jerusalem is compared to widowhood. Here Rome claims that she will not see the same fate that she brought upon Jerusalem in AD 70.

REVELATION

wheat, cattle, sheep, horses, chariots, and the bodies and souls⁴⁰³ of men.) 14 The satisfaction of your yearning soul has left you, and all the elegant and gaudy things have perished from you, and they shall not be found, not anymore. 15 And the merchants of these things who were enriched from her shall stand far off from fear of her torment, lamenting and mourning, 16 and saying, 'Alas! Alas! The great city, the one having been clothed in linen, purple and scarlet, and having been gilded with gold, precious stones, and pearls, 17 that in one hour so much wealth was destroyed.' And every helmsman, and the whole [class] sailing by that location,⁴⁰⁴ and sailors, and as many as work on the sea, stood far off 18 and cried out, seeing the smoke of her burning, saying, 'Is there any [other] like this great city?' 19 And they threw dirt on their heads, and cried, weeping and mourning, exclaiming, 'Alas! Alas! the great city, in which were enriched through her wealth all those having ships on the sea, that she was destroyed in one hour!' 20 Sky, rejoice over her, also the holy ones and the Emissaries⁴⁰⁵ and the prophets, because God carried out your sentence on her!"⁴⁰⁶ 21 And a mighty messenger picked up a boulder, like a great millstone, and threw it into the sea, saying: "With this kind of violence Babylon the great city shall be thrown down and shall not be found, not anymore."⁴⁰⁷ 22 And the sound of lyre-singers, of musicians, of flutists, and of trumpeters shall not be heard in you, not anymore. And no craftsman of any trade shall be found in you, not anymore. And the sound of a mill shall not be heard in you, not anymore. 23 And the light of a lamp shall not shine in you, not anymore. And the voice of a bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you, not anymore; because your merchants were the greatest of the land, because by your witchcraft all the nations were deceived, 24 and [because] in her was found the blood of prophets and holy ones,⁴⁰⁸ and of all those who had been slain on the land."⁴⁰⁹

Chapter 19

After these things I heard [what sounded] like a loud voice of a great multitude in the sky, saying: "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power is of our God, 2 because true and righteous are His verdicts, because He judged the great prostitute who was

⁴⁰² The citrus, an odoriferous North African tree used as incense, prized by the ancient Greeks and Romans on account of the beauty of its wood for various ornamental purposes – Thayer.

⁴⁰³ Rome most definitely traffics in the "souls (lives) of men." She maintains her control of kingdoms by the influence she holds over the masses. She claims to wield the power to admit or deny "souls" entry into "heaven" – the "keys of the Kingdom." And in so doing, she gets people and kings to do her bidding. A review of the history of Europe will bear this out.

⁴⁰⁴ Rome has one of the largest seaports on the Mediterranean Sea. In John's day, Rome was the hub of sea-trade.

⁴⁰⁵ Jesus' Emissaries were killed by Rome.

⁴⁰⁶ Both Imperial Rome and the Vatican sentenced many Christians to death by burning. Rome will receive the same sentence.

⁴⁰⁷ Cf. Rev. 19:3

⁴⁰⁸ Rome certainly killed multitudes of Jesus' followers.

⁴⁰⁹ She also killed others, such as Muslims in the Crusades, and Jews.

REVELATION

corrupting the land with her fornication, and [because] He avenged the blood of His servants from her hand.” 3 And a second time they said: “Hallelujah! Her smoke goes up unto the ages of the ages!”⁴¹⁰ 4 And the twenty-four elders and the four creatures fell and worshipped God sitting on the throne, saying: “Amen! Hallelujah!”

The Wedding Announcement

5 And a voice came from the throne,⁴¹¹ saying: “Praise our God all His servants and those fearing Him, the small and the great!”⁴¹² 6 And I heard [what sounded] like the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters, and like the sound of mighty thunders, saying: “Hallelujah, because the Master God, **THE SOVEREIGN OVER ALL**, has begun to rule!”⁴¹³ 7 [Now] we may rejoice, and may celebrate, and may give Him glory, because the wedding of the Lamb has arrived⁴¹⁴ and His wife has prepared herself.”⁴¹⁵ 8 And it was granted to her that she may be dressed in linen,⁴¹⁶ bright and clean, (for the linen is the righteousness of the holy ones). 9 And he⁴¹⁷ says to me: “Write: ‘Blessed are those having been invited⁴¹⁸ to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’” And he says to me: “These are the true words of God.” 10 And I fell before his feet to worship him.⁴¹⁹ And he says to me: “No! Look, I am a co-servant of you⁴²⁰ and of your brothers, of those who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God!”⁴²¹ For Jesus’ testimony is the Breath of the prophecy.”⁴²²

⁴¹⁰ Smoke ascending “unto the ages of ages” points back to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. “Then he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain; and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land which went up like the smoke of a furnace” (Gen 19:28). This was “an example of eternal fire” (Jude 1:7). Sodom did not burn perpetually, but permanently. The same is true of Mystery Babylon whose destruction is said to take place “in one hour” (Rev. 18:10,17,19), and she “shall not be found, not anymore.” (Rev. 18:21).

⁴¹¹ Jesus Christ, the Lamb, sits beside the Father on the Father’s throne (Psalm 110:1; Rev. 3:21).

⁴¹² The voice coming from the Throne of God cannot be from God Himself because the one speaking refers to Him as “our God” (first person plural). The only one seated on the throne of God beside Him is the Son of God (Psalm 110:1; Rev. 3:21). And He refers to the Father as both our God and His God (John 20:17).

⁴¹³ Compare Rev. 11:17. It is not that God has not been ruling at all. Rather, during the 70th Week, as the heavenly court is seated (Dan. 7:9-10,13-14; Rev. 4-6), God has begun to take back to Himself the authority that He has delegated to the governments and kings of the nations (cf. Exod. 9:13-16; Dan. 4:17,34-37; Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-14).

⁴¹⁴ It is significant that the wedding of the Lamb is at the beginning of His reign, not at the beginning of the 7-year tribulation. The pretribulation view has Jesus illicitly living with his bride in heaven for 7 years before His wedding.

⁴¹⁵ The bride has prepared herself by purifying herself (2 Cor. 6:14 – 7:1), and remaining faithful to Jesus the Anointed throughout the time of tribulation, (cf. Rev. 3:4-5,18; Rev. 7:14). She is only ready for the wedding at the very end.

⁴¹⁶ Being dressed implies resurrection. See notes on Rev. 6:11.

⁴¹⁷ The messenger accompanying John, showing him the destruction of Mystery Babylon

⁴¹⁸ The verb is in the perfect tense. The invitations have already gone out at this time, (Matt. 25:1-13).

⁴¹⁹ Note that even the celestial messengers refuse the worship of men. But Jesus accepted human worship on the land (Matt. 2:11; 8:2; 9:18; 15:25; 14:33; 28:9,17) and in the sky (Rev. 5:11-14).

⁴²⁰ Heb. 1:14, cf. Rev. 22:9

⁴²¹ Worship the One who originated the message, not the messenger.

⁴²² The “Breath of Prophecy” is what inspired the Old Testament prophets. Peter called this the “breath of Christ” that spoke through the prophets (1 Pet. 1:10-11). Here John informs us that those prophetic utterances were in fact the words of Jesus Christ who was the one relaying God’s words through the prophets until He finally came in person to reveal the Father (Heb. 1:1). Compare this statement to the closing words of each of the seven letters where Jesus is

REVELATION

The Second Advent of Jesus the Anointed

11 And I observed the sky having been opened,⁴²³ and look, a white horse! And the One sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and with justice He judges and makes war. 12 His eyes are like a flame of fire,⁴²⁴ and on His head are many crowns⁴²⁵ having a name engraved that no one knows except Himself. 13 And He was clothed in a robe having been dipped in blood.⁴²⁶ And His name has been given⁴²⁷ Logos of God.⁴²⁸ 14 And the armies⁴²⁹ in the sky were following Him on white horses, having been dressed in linen white and clean. 15 And out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword so that with it He may strike the nations. And He will shepherd⁴³⁰ them with an iron rod.⁴³¹ And He treads the vat of the wine of the fury and wrath of God,⁴³² **SOVEREIGN OVER ALL**. 16 And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name having been engraved, “King of kings, and Master of masters.” 17 And I observed one messenger, standing in the sun. And he called with a loud voice to all the birds flying in mid-sky, saying: “Come, assemble together for the great feast from God,⁴³³ 18 so that you may eat flesh of kings, flesh of captains, flesh of strong men, flesh of horses and their riders, and flesh of all, free and slave, small and great.” 19 And I observed the beast and the kings of the land and their armies having been brought together⁴³⁴ to do battle⁴³⁵ against the One sitting on the horse and against His army. 20 And the beast was captured, and [along] with it the false prophet⁴³⁶ who performed signs before it, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshipped its image. These two were thrown alive⁴³⁷

clearly the speaker, yet the message is delivered to the seven assemblies via the “Breath.”

⁴²³ John’s point of observation changes from the sky to the land. He observed the sky parting. (cf. Rev. 6:14 & Isa. 34:4).

⁴²⁴ Rev. 1:14

⁴²⁵ Zech. 6:11-12 LXX

⁴²⁶ Isaiah 63:1-6

⁴²⁷ The Textus Receptus has καλεῖται (present tense) implying only the present continuous use of “Logos” as a name for the Son of God. However the oldest and majority reading is κέκληται (perfect tense) which points to an event in the past of being “named” followed by the continuous state of this being His name to the present.

⁴²⁸ Here John undeniably attests that the “Logos” of his Gospel prologue (John 1:1,14) was the name given to the Son of God. This fact alone destroys Unitarianism. See also: Heb. 4:12; 1 Pet. 1:23; Rev. 20:4

⁴²⁹ “Armies” (στρατεύματα) refers to military forces (celestial messengers) not to Christians.

⁴³⁰ This is a direct quote from Psalm 2:9 LXX. Most significant is the fact that John quoted the Greek Old Testament rather than the Hebrew, (which has “smash” rather than “shepherd”). The verb rendered “shepherd” (ποιμανεῖ) in both means to “tend (feed) a flock.”

⁴³¹ To “shepherd them with a rod of iron” implies two things. First, the intent is not to destroy the nations, but to lead them. Second, force will have to be used, at least initially. This verse, and the Psalm it quotes, are absolute proof that amillennialism is false, because it proves that Jesus will lead the nations on the land after His second coming and cause them to eventually submit to His Kingdom, (cf. Zech. 14:16-21).

⁴³² Joel 3:13; Rev. 14:17-20

⁴³³ Ezekiel 39:17-20

⁴³⁴ The verb is in the perfect tense and passive voice. They had been led here by the “lying breaths,” (Rev. 16:12-16).

⁴³⁵ They know why they are gathering, as a brazen attempt to overthrow Jesus and His angelic army at His coming.

⁴³⁶ Rev. 13:11-18

⁴³⁷ 2 Thess. 2:8

into the lake of fire burning with sulfur. 21 And the rest⁴³⁸ were slain with the sword proceeding from the mouth of the One sitting on the horse. And all the birds gorged themselves with their flesh.

Chapter 20

The Imprisonment of the Adversary for the Seventh Millennium

And I observed a messenger descending from the sky, having the key to the deep, and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he seized the dragon,⁴³⁹ the ancient serpent, who is the Slanderer and the Adversary,⁴⁴⁰ and he bound him for a thousand years. 3 And he threw him into the deep and closed and sealed it over him, so that he could no longer deceive the nations until the thousand years were expired. After these things he must be released for a short time.

The 1,000-year Reign of the Anointed and His Holy Ones over the Nations

4 And I observed thrones and those seated on them, and authority to judge was given to them. And the souls⁴⁴¹ of those having been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus, even because of the Logos of God,⁴⁴² who did not worship the beast or his image and did not receive the mark on their forehead or on their hand, they also come to life⁴⁴³ and reign with the Anointed a thousand years.⁴⁴⁴ 5 (But the rest of the dead do not come to life until the thousand years should expire). This is the first resurrection.⁴⁴⁵ 6 Blessed and holy is the one having a part in the first resurrection. Over these the second death has no power, but they shall be priests⁴⁴⁶ of God and of the Anointed, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

⁴³⁸ 2 Thess. 1:9-10, Zech. 14:12-13

⁴³⁹ Rev. 12:3-4

⁴⁴⁰ The Majority Text adds, "the deceiver of the whole world."

⁴⁴¹ The martyrs, see Rev. 6:9-11

⁴⁴² Rev. 19:13

⁴⁴³ The verb translated "came to life" is used both of the dead (beheaded) raised before the 1000 years and those raised after the 1000 years (v. 5), indicating a resurrection of the body in both cases. Amillennialists claim that the "first resurrection" is spiritual and refers to conversion, but the repetition of the verb (came to life) requires the same kind of action both before and after the millennium. If the "first resurrection" refers to conversion, then this passage speaks of dead (beheaded) people being converted after death, after resisting the Beast "because of the testimony of Jesus," meaning they did so while unconverted. Likewise it requires universal salvation because "the rest of the dead" leaves none out of the second event of coming to life.

⁴⁴⁴ Many translations give the impression that only the martyrs are raised at the first resurrection. However, the text distinguishes the martyrs of the tribulation from the larger group of faithful holy ones who John saw seated on thrones.

⁴⁴⁵ This statement rules out a pretribulation resurrection. (Compare 1 Cor. 15:22-25).

⁴⁴⁶ Peter stated that believers are now being prepared for a future priesthood, so they may offer sacrifices to God on behalf of the people. "You also, as living stones, are being constructed [into] a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus the Anointed one." (1 Peter 2:5 LGV). Hebrews concurs: "How much greater the blood of the Anointed one, Who offered Himself flawless to God through the age-enduring Breath, will cleanse your conscience from dead acts unto what is to be divine service to the living God!" (Heb. 9:14 LGV).

REVELATION

The Adversary's Last Stand

7 And when the thousand years should expire, the Adversary will be released from his prison. 8 And he will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the land, Gog and Magog,⁴⁴⁷ to lead them together to the battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. 9 They went up across the [whole] width of the land, and surrounded the camp of the holy ones and the beloved city.⁴⁴⁸ And fire from God⁴⁴⁹ fell from the sky and consumed them. 10 And the Slanderer who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, the place where the Beast and the False Prophet also [were thrown], (and they⁴⁵⁰ shall be tortured day and night unto the ages of the ages).⁴⁵¹

The Final Judgment

11 Then I saw a great white throne and the One sitting on it from whose face the land and sky fled, and no place was found in them.⁴⁵² 12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing⁴⁵³ before the throne, and the books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the [Book] of Life. And the dead were judged by the things having been written in the books according to their works.⁴⁵⁴ 13 And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, and death and the grave gave up the dead who were in them.⁴⁵⁵ And they were judged, each according to their works. 14 And death and the grave were thrown into the Lake of Fire.⁴⁵⁶ This is the second death⁴⁵⁷ – the Lake of Fire. 15 And if anyone was discovered not having been written in the Book of Life⁴⁵⁸ he was cast into the Lake of Fire.

⁴⁴⁷ Ezekiel 38:1 – 39:20

⁴⁴⁸ Literally, “the city having been beloved,” which is restored Jerusalem, (Psalm 78:67-69; Psalm 87:2; Psalm 132:13-15).

⁴⁴⁹ God was the cause of fire falling from the sky.

⁴⁵⁰ ‘They’ refers to the Beast and False prophet who are tortured in Gehenna during the Kingdom. That the Adversary is destroyed (not tortured forever) at the end of the Millennium is evident from Paul’s statement that “*the last enemy that will be destroyed is death*” (1 Cor. 15:26) when Jesus returns the sovereignty of the whole creation back to the Father after He has put down all rebellion. Revelation acknowledges the destruction of the ‘last enemy’ in verse 14. Gehenna (Tophet – Jer. 7:31-33) was originally prepared for “*the Slanderer and his messengers*” (Isaiah 30:33; Matt. 25:41), but it will eventually be cleansed and become “*holy to the LORD*” (Jer. 31:40) after the Millennium.

⁴⁵¹ See note on Rev. 14:11.

⁴⁵² The land and sky fleeing away is a metaphor for leaving no place to hide from God’s face, (cf. Amos 9:1-5; Isa. 2:19-21; Rev. 6:15-17).

⁴⁵³ having been resurrected, (see v. 5).

⁴⁵⁴ All are condemned by their works, (Rom. 3:19-20; Gal. 2:16). Their only hope is to have their name written in the Book of Life.

⁴⁵⁵ Amos 9:1-5

⁴⁵⁶ Isaiah 66:24; Matt. 10:28

⁴⁵⁷ “Death” in Scripture is ceasing to be alive and conscious. Those who believe in the “immortality of the soul” view death as the departure of a conscious ghost from the body. Yet, that view creates great difficulty in explaining the “second death,” since in that view the second “death” means something completely different (eternal torment) from the meaning of the first “death” (separation of the ghost from the body). See also Rev. 21:8.

⁴⁵⁸ Some of the dead are written in the Book of Life and are spared, those converted during the millennium.

Chapter 21

*Interlude: The Restored Creation in the Kingdom*⁴⁵⁹

And I observed renewed sky and renewed land,⁴⁶⁰ for the first⁴⁶¹ sky and first land passed by. And the sea is no more!⁴⁶² 2 And I saw the Holy City, renewed Jerusalem,⁴⁶³ descending out of the sky from God⁴⁶⁴ prepared like a bride having been adorned for her husband.⁴⁶⁵ 3 And I heard a loud voice from the sky saying: “Look! *‘The tent of God is with men; and He will dwell with them; and they will be His people; and God Himself will be with them – their God.’*⁴⁶⁶ 4 And He will wipe away every tear from their eyes;⁴⁶⁷ and there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; nor will there be any more pain,⁴⁶⁸ because the former things have passed away.” 5 And the One sitting on the throne said: “Look! I am renewing everything.”⁴⁶⁹ And He said to me: “Write! For these words are faithful and true.” 6 And He said to me: “[It] is accomplished. I am the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end. I will give freely from the spring of the water of

⁴⁵⁹ The reason chapters 21-22 do not follow chronologically after chapter 20 (which brings us to the end of measured time) is because the purpose of Revelation was to encourage the assemblies and call them to perseverance in light of the Hope, the promised inheritance. Consequently, Revelation as the last inspired book ends with the most vivid and inspirational vision and description of the Hope of the redeemed.

⁴⁶⁰ Isaiah 65:17; Isaiah 66:22-24; 2 Peter 3:13. These parallel passages place the renewed sky and land at the beginning of the Millennium. Thus chapters 21-22 give a detailed description of the Kingdom briefly described in Rev. 20:4-6 and Rev. 7:15-17.

⁴⁶¹ The Greek word “πρῶτος” used here is the superlative of the word “πρῶ.” Thus, it does not merely mean “former” (as “πρῶ” would indicate), but “foremost” – the very first. In the context of Revelation, this refers to the present time, not to the skies and land in the Millennium. That could be “πρῶ” (former) but not “πρῶτος” (foremost – first). Thus, this passage is definitely saying that the “New Skies and New Land” are replacing the “first” skies and land where we now dwell. This is proof that Rev. 21-22 is recapping the Millennium in ch. 20, not following it chronologically.

⁴⁶² The Red Sea will be dried up in the Kingdom (Isaiah 11:15-16; Isaiah 19:5; Isaiah 51:10-11).

⁴⁶³ Isaiah 62:2; Isaiah 65:18-19; Gal. 4:26-27; Heb. 12:22. The “renewed Jerusalem” consists of the restored Jerusalem and her inhabitants. She is the “woman” described in Rev. 12, now glorified. In Galatians 4:26-27, Paul called “elevated Jerusalem” the “mother of us all,” and immediately quoted the opening verses of Isaiah 54, a prophecy of Jerusalem’s restoration from barrenness. This is the city Abraham waited for (Heb. 11:9-10) according to the promise confirmed by Melchizedek, “King of Salem” (Gen. 14:18; Heb. 7:1-2), for which faithful Christians also wait (Heb. 12:22-23). Isaiah 60 & 62 are also foundational to this passage. See notes for chapter 12.

⁴⁶⁴ This bride descending out of the sky is an allegory representing the restoration of Jerusalem by God’s power rather than man’s power.

⁴⁶⁵ Isaiah 54:5

⁴⁶⁶ Paraphrase of Ezekiel 37:27 Ezekiel 43:7. The Renewed Jerusalem is a dwelling suitable for the SOVEREIGN OVER ALL to cohabitate with perfected mankind. Yet, even this magnificent city is called God’s “tent,” because even its splendor is inadequate to fully reflect the glory of the SOVEREIGN OVER ALL!

⁴⁶⁷ God wipes away all the tears of His people at the time of the resurrection to the inheritance (Rev. 7:17). Both of these passages are referencing Isaiah 25:8 – “*The LORD God will wipe away tears from all faces*” when the marriage feast occurs and “*death is swallowed up in victory*” (1 Cor. 15:54). The act of God’s wiping away all tears points to believers’ victory over death. This places the resurrection of the just at the time the “New Jerusalem” appears – the beginning of the Millennium.

⁴⁶⁸ Due to the resurrection

⁴⁶⁹ God does not make a new (different) creation, but rather renews what He has previously created. (Acts 3:21; Rom. 8:16-25).

life⁴⁷⁰ to the thirsty one. 7 The one being victorious⁴⁷¹ will inherit these things. And I shall be God to him, and he shall be a son to Me. 8 But to the disbelieving cowards and to those having become foul,⁴⁷² to murderers, to fornicators, to drug users, to idolaters, and to all the liars,⁴⁷³ their part [is] in the lake burning with fire and sulfur which is the second death."⁴⁷⁴

Jesus sent one of His Own Messengers to reveal His Bride, New Jerusalem

9 And one from the seven messengers having the seven bowls full of the seven last blows came and spoke to me,⁴⁷⁵ saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife."⁴⁷⁶ 10 And he lifted me in the Breath⁴⁷⁷ upon a great and high mountain.⁴⁷⁸ And he showed to me the holy city, Jerusalem⁴⁷⁹ descending out of the sky from God, 11 having the glory of God. Its brilliance was like a most precious stone, like a crystalline jasper stone, 12 having a wall great and high, having twelve gates, and at the gates twelve messengers, and names engraved (which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel).⁴⁸⁰ 13 [There were] three gates facing east, three gates facing north, three gates facing south, and three gates facing west. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them [were] the twelve names of the twelve Emissaries of the Lamb.⁴⁸¹ 15 And he who spoke with me had a golden measuring rod, so that he could measure the city, her gates, and her wall. 16 And the city is laid out [in] a square. Her

⁴⁷⁰ cf. Ezekiel 47:1-12, Zech. 14:8-9, Rev. 22:1

⁴⁷¹ Each of the seven letters to the seven assemblies ends with a similar promise. Being "victorious" is defined in Rev. 12:11 as overcoming the Adversary by being faithful to Jesus until death. That is, not being seduced away from Jesus into apostasy.

⁴⁷² "having become foul" refers to believers who fell away during the time of testing

⁴⁷³ 2 Tim. 4:2

⁴⁷⁴ See note on Rev. 20:14.

⁴⁷⁵ The same messenger from Jesus accompanied John from Rev. 17:1 through the end of chapter 22.

⁴⁷⁶ This is the second marriage, since Jerusalem was divorced by the Son of God when He came and was rejected (Isa. 50:1-11 [spoken by the "Breath of Christ" through Isaiah – 1 Pet. 1:11] & 54:1-17). Note the restored Jerusalem is called "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife." In Isaiah 54:5-8 & 62:5 Jerusalem is the espoused wife of YHVH whom He previously divorced for her infidelity (Isa. 50:1), but will marry her and restore her once again. That she was formerly called the "wife" of YHVH, but when restored is called "the Lamb's wife," proves that the one called YHVH by Isaiah, who was formerly espoused to Jerusalem, was the Son of God, not the Father. This is proof of the Son's pre-human existence, and that He had the right to claim the name YHVH. The only person to do so specifically is called the "Messenger of YHVH," the one who appeared in the burning bush to Moses, calling Himself the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob (Exodus 3:2 – 4:5). The Messenger of YHVH was given the right to use His name and speak with His authority: "And Look! I am sending My Messenger before you so that He may keep you in the way, so that He may lead you unto the land which I prepared for you. Take heed to yourself, and listen to Him and do not disobey Him, for He will not pardon you; for My name is upon Him," (Exodus 23:20-21 LXX). However, nowhere in Scripture has the Messenger of YHVH, the Son, taken the title "SOVEREIGN OVER ALL," which is reserved for the Father alone.

⁴⁷⁷ Compare Rev. 1:10, Rev. 4:2, Rev. 17:3.

⁴⁷⁸ Ezekiel 40:2

⁴⁷⁹ Much of the imagery of the holy city Jerusalem is drawn from Isaiah 54, 60, & 62 and should be read alongside Rev. 21-22.

⁴⁸⁰ Ezekiel 48:31

⁴⁸¹ The only "Emissaries" sent personally by Jesus (the Lamb) are the eleven and Paul.

REVELATION

length was the same as her width. And he measured the city with the rod, twelve thousand measures.⁴⁸² Her length, width, and elevation are equal. 17 And he measured her wall, one hundred and forty-four cubits,⁴⁸³ by the measure of a man, (that is of the messenger). 18 And the construction of her wall was of jasper. And the city was clear gold, like transparent glass. 19 The foundations of the wall of the city had been adorned with every precious stone:⁴⁸⁴ the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, 20 the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. 21 The twelve gates are twelve pearls. Each one of the gates was [made] from one pearl. And the street of the city was clear gold, like transparent glass. 22 And I did not see the sanctuary in her,⁴⁸⁵ for the Master God, **SOVEREIGN OVER ALL**, is her sanctuary, also the Lamb. 23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon that they may illuminate her. For the glory of God illuminated

⁴⁸² Many translations have “stadia” or “furlongs.” That would make the New Jerusalem over 1,400 miles in its perimeter, impossible to fit on Mt. Zion or even within the borders of the Promised Land! Such an immense size is also impossible to reconcile with the measurements of this city given by Ezekiel. However, that interpretation requires an assumption that is not at all certain or required. It is impossible to determine from the Greek text whether John was using the plural form of σταδίος (a masculine noun) or σταδίον (a neuter noun). Both words are spelled σταδίων in the genitive plural form which is what appears here. The masculine noun σταδίος refers to the Greek race course of about 600 feet, and is used in the Gospels for giving specific distances from one place to another. The neuter noun σταδίον simply means a “fixed” unit of measurement, and can refer to any set standard of length. Strong’s defines this as: “a stade or certain measure of distance; by implication a stadium or race course.” (For the neuter noun σταδίον see the old Greek (LXX) Dan. 4:12; Sus. 1:37, & 1 Cor. 9:24). Both nouns come from the root verb that means to “stand” or be “fixed.” In this context, John was referring to the fixed length of the angel’s golden measuring rod (σταδίον). John reported that the New Jerusalem was 12,000 of these fixed measuring rods around the perimeter. Knowing the total distance requires knowing the length of the rod. But this information cannot be known from Revelation alone, but requires information from Ezekiel’s vision which gives the size of the city in definite units of measurement. Ezekiel’s messenger had a rod of six “long cubits,” which is defined as a regular cubit (distance from the elbow to the fingertip – about 19 inches) plus a “span” (the width of a man’s hand – about 5 inches), totaling about 24 inches. Thus, six “long cubits” equals 12 feet (Ezek. 40:5). Using this 12’ measuring rod, Ezekiel reported that the perimeter of the restored Jerusalem was 18,000 **rods** (not “cubits” which is wrongly added in most translations), a total of 216,000 feet around the entire perimeter (Ezek. 48:30-35). Since we know the perimeter of the New (restored) Jerusalem from Ezekiel, the measuring rod used by the messenger that John was observing had to be 18 feet (9 long cubits) in length, since 12,000 rods divided into 216,000 feet equals 18 feet. Both Ezekiel’s 12 foot (6 long cubits) measuring rod and John’s 18 foot (9 long cubits) measuring rod could easily be handled by one man for measuring.

⁴⁸³ A 1000:1 ratio of the 144,000 from the sons of Seth (Rev. 14:1-5) and the 144,000 from the 12 tribes (Rev. 7:4)

⁴⁸⁴ Isaiah 54:11-12

⁴⁸⁵ Rev. 3:12 and 7:15 indicate that the holy ones will serve God “in His Temple” perpetually which appears to conflict with this statement. However, the difficulty may be solved by understanding that the word “sanctuary” or “temple” can refer to the whole Temple structure (the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies) or to just the inner sanctuary (Holy of Holies). In Ezekiel 41:4 LXX, the same Greek word is used for the Holy of Holies exclusively. The same is true in Matt. 27:51. According to Jer. 3:16-17 the Ark of the Covenant will no longer exist. Nor will the High Priest attend to it yearly on Yom Kippur anymore. Instead, the throne of the Master will take the place of the hidden Holy of Holies. Thus, the Holy of Holies, which was to seclude the Ark of the Covenant from the rest of the structure and the view of mankind, will no longer serve a purpose. Instead, the Master will be there in its place, not secluded, but accessible to all. (See Rev. 22:3). This statement was meant to show that the Ark of the Mt. Sinai Covenant will not be present in the restored Jerusalem.

REVELATION

her and the Lamb is her lamp.⁴⁸⁶ 24 And the nations shall walk by her light. And the kings of the land bring their glory into her.⁴⁸⁷ 25 And her gates should by no means be closed by day,⁴⁸⁸ for no night shall be there. 26 And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into her. 27 And there will by no means enter into her anything profane,⁴⁸⁹ or the one practicing idolatry and deceit, but only those having been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb.

Chapter 22

And he showed me a pure river of water of life,⁴⁹⁰ shining like crystal,⁴⁹¹ flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb.⁴⁹² 2 In the middle of its street, and on this side and that side of the river, was the tree of life, producing twelve [kinds of] fruit, each according to its month.⁴⁹³ And the leaves of the tree are to cure the nations. 3 And every curse will be abolished. And the throne of God and the Lamb will be in her⁴⁹⁴ and His servants will minister to Him, 4 and they shall see His face and His name shall be on their foreheads.⁴⁹⁵ 5 And night shall no longer exist; there will be no need for a lamp, or light of the sun, because the Master God will illuminate them.⁴⁹⁶ And they will reign unto the ages of the ages.

A Final Message from Jesus relayed through His Messenger

6 And he said to me, "These words are faithful and true⁴⁹⁷ and the Master God of the Breaths⁴⁹⁸ of the prophets sent His Messenger⁴⁹⁹ to show His servants the things which must occur suddenly: 7 'Look! I am coming suddenly!⁵⁰⁰ Blessed is the one heeding the

⁴⁸⁶ Isaiah 60:19-21

⁴⁸⁷ Isaiah 60:3; Isaiah 62:2

⁴⁸⁸ Isaiah 60:11

⁴⁸⁹ Isaiah 60:21

⁴⁹⁰ Ezekiel 47:1-12, Zech. 14:8-9, Rev. 21:6

⁴⁹¹ Rev. 4:6

⁴⁹² The "Throne of God and the Lamb" refers to the Throne upon which Jesus will reign in His Kingdom, having been the "Lamb." But in the Kingdom, the Father grants to His Son the right to be "God" (sole Sovereign) in fulfillment of Psalm 2, (Psalm 45:6-7; Heb. 1:8-9). The Son, not the Father, sits on this throne (Rev. 3:21; Rev. 7:15; Rev. 14:5). This is also the "Throne of David" restored (Isa. 9:6-7; Mark 11:10; Luke 1:32-33). It is called the "Throne of YHVH" in OT prophecy because the authority is delegated to God's Agent, His Son, by YHVH (cf. 1 Chron. 29:23 & Jer. 3:17).

⁴⁹³ Ezekiel 47:12

⁴⁹⁴ Ezekiel 43:1-7

⁴⁹⁵ Rev. 3:12

⁴⁹⁶ Isaiah 60:19-21

⁴⁹⁷ That is, the words that follow from Jesus (in red) which this messenger was relaying

⁴⁹⁸ The Textus Receptus omits "of the Breaths." That the "Breaths" is plural when referring to the anointing on the prophets should not be a surprise since the Breaths of God when distributed among the seven assemblies in Asia Minor is also plural – seven Breaths before God's Throne (Rev. 1:4; Rev. 3:1; Rev. 4:5; Rev. 5:6).

⁴⁹⁹ The Father's Messenger is His Son, "the Messenger of YHVH." God sent Jesus to inform the assemblies through John (Rev. 1:1).

⁵⁰⁰ This is a repetition of the introduction to the book in Rev. 1:1-2. (See notes on that passage).

REVELATION

words of the prophecy of this book'.“ 8 And I, John, (the one hearing and observing these things), when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the messenger⁵⁰¹ showing these things to me. 9 And he said to me: “No! Look! I am a co-servant of you, and of your brothers, of the prophets, and of those who heed the words of this book. Worship God!” 10 And he said to me: “You should not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the appointed time is ready. 11 Let the unjust remain unjust; and let the filthy remain filthy. But let the just remain just; and let the holy remain holy. 12 ‘Look! I am coming suddenly, and [bringing] My wage with Me, to distribute to each according to his work.’⁵⁰² 13 I am the alpha and the omega,⁵⁰³ the first and the last,⁵⁰⁴ the beginning and the end.’⁵⁰⁵ 14 Blessed are those washing their robes⁵⁰⁶ so that they should have a right to the tree of life, and they may enter through the gates into the city. 15 But excluded are dogs, drug users, fornicators, murderers, idolaters, and the entire [entity] loving and practicing the lie. 16 I, Jesus, sent My messenger⁵⁰⁷ to testify these things to you for the assemblies. I am the Root and the Descendant of David,⁵⁰⁸ the bright and morning star.’⁵⁰⁹ 17 And the Breath and the bride are saying,

⁵⁰¹ This is the same messenger who spoke to John in Rev. 19:10, who was the messenger of the seventh bowl of wrath (cf. Rev. 16:15-17 & Rev. 21:9).

⁵⁰² Isaiah 40:10; Isaiah 62:11

⁵⁰³ See Rev. 1:8 & 21:5-6.

⁵⁰⁴ See note on Rev. 1:17

⁵⁰⁵ See Rev. 1:8 & 21:5-6. See also Exodus 23:20-23. There is only one Person who was given the authority to speak using God’s name, and that was the “Messenger of the Lord,” who was His Son, who became Man (Phil. 2:5-10).

⁵⁰⁶ The earliest Greek and Latin copies have “washing their robes” but the Majority Text and Textus Receptus have “keep His commandments.” The LGV follows the earlier (but minority) reading here because the other reading is awkward since the third person pronoun (His) would have no specific antecedent. If Jesus was still speaking here as He clearly was in 12-13 & 16-19, “His commandments” would have to refer to God. But God is not mentioned by Jesus in this passage, leaving the pronoun without a referent.

⁵⁰⁷ This “messenger” was sent by Jesus. But Jesus is the “Messenger” sent by the Father (Rev. 1:1-2).

⁵⁰⁸ This statement was intended to draw on a very important Messianic prophecy in Isaiah 11:1-10. In verse 1 the Messiah is a “stem” or “branch” that grows out of the “root” of Jesse, David’s father. Thus Messiah is the descendant of Jesse through David, having been born of Mary whose father was a descendant of David through Nathan (Lk. 3:23-32). Yet in verse 10, the same Messiah is said to be the “root” of Jesse, which necessarily means He not only predated Jesse, David’s father, but that He was the very cause of their existence. Thus the Son of God preexisted David and Jesse, and was in fact the Agent through whom God created all mankind – “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness” (Gen. 1:26). He was also the one who spoke through the prophet Samuel to Jesse, choosing David to be king, and is the one who confirmed the Davidic Covenant to David through the prophet Nathan (1 Chron. 17:3 LXX, ἐγένετο λόγος κυρίου πρὸς Ναθαν λέγων (“Logos {Word} of the Lord came to Nathan saying ...” – cf. Rev. 19:13). This fact of the Son’s pre-human existence, which was hidden in a mystery, is the only true solution to the riddle that Jesus posed to the Pharisees in Matt. 22:41-46. Since Messiah was David’s descendant, how could David call Messiah his “Master?” David was Messiah’s ancestor and thus considered superior in Jewish thought, so the Son of David could never be David’s Master. Only by recognizing that the Messiah was both David’s originator, and the originator of the Davidic Covenant, as well as David’s descendant via the virgin birth, can Jesus’ riddle be solved. In this passage, Jesus solved it Himself.

⁵⁰⁹ Balaam prophesied of a “Star” **rising** who is the Messiah (Num. 24:16-19). Peter stated that the “morning star” would “arise” on the Day of Christ’s return (2 Pet. 1:19). Here Jesus referred to Himself as the “bright and morning star,” which is actually the planet Venus when it appears early in the morning before sunrise. “The sign of the Son of man in the sky” which occurs while the sun and moon are darkened (Matt. 24:30) very well may involve the planet

REVELATION

‘Come!’ And the hearing one, say “Come!” And the thirsting one, Come! And the one who is willing, receive the water of life freely!⁵¹⁰ 18 I am testifying to everyone hearing the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone should add to them, God will add to him the plagues having been written in this book. 19 And if anyone removes from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of Life,⁵¹¹ and from the holy city, and from the things having been written in this book.⁵¹² 20 The One testifying these things says, Yes, I am coming suddenly.’ Amen.”

Yes! Come Master Jesus! 21 The grace of the Master, Jesus the Anointed, be with you all.⁵¹³ Amen.

Venus rising in conjunction with Regulus (King) in the constellation Leo (Lion). This conjunction at dawn (viewed from Jerusalem) will occur on Yom Kippur 2036, and will appear as the King star (Regulus) crowning Venus, the morning star. If this is indeed *“the sign of the Son of Man in the sky”* that Jesus referred to, it will be something to behold against the blackened sky.

⁵¹⁰ Salvation is available to everyone who chooses to come, not only a select group whom God has previously chosen.

⁵¹¹ The Textus Receptus has “Book of Life”

⁵¹² I have prayerfully translated this book as faithfully as I am able and submitted the commentary notes with this warning in mind.

⁵¹³ This signature statement was Paul’s official mark of authenticity for his letters (See: 2 Thess. 3:17-18). John’s adopting it here, three decades after Paul’s martyrdom, shows his intention in all of his works to augment Paul’s works.