



The Storm is Coming!

A Review of the Apocalypse!

Rev. Charles E. Darnell, PhD

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Scripture quotations

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Throughout my works I have attempted to incorporate supporting scripture for the convenience of the reader. In doing such I may, or may not, follow the appropriate manuscript style as stated in the Fifth Edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) or any other accepted manuscript guide. While acknowledging the authority of the APA there is a clause used in the stated manual which needs to be inserted herein:

The Publication Manual presents explicit style requirements but acknowledges that alternatives are sometimes necessary; authors should balance the rules of the Publication Manual with good judgment. Preface: p. xx.

Introduction

I have been told that a writer never really attempts to give any means of dating one's work. I, on the other hand, only try to fulfill my assignment from God. Since God has placed this on my heart, I'll listen to God and not to man. It is July 14th, 2024 and last night an attempted assassination of former President Donald J. Trump was made in Butler County, Pennsylvania. By Divine Intervention, only the right ear was glazed by a .223 caliber round. No one at the rally went into hysteria and ran. Yes, there was one victim and two others also injured. We most certainly pray for their families as they cope to get through the remainder of this tragic event.

As a watchman, God sends me assignments to warn and to teach. My dear wife, a teacher for over forty years, tells me that repetition of particular facts is what a person learns. Therefore, both God, and my wife, loving inform me that I must repeat many items pertaining to prophecy and the end-times. Both subjects need to be retold once again. This work represents a gathering of material from five different books, or booklets of my previous work and all are available on my website at www.vqpub.org. All of my work is in PDF file format and available for free download. I only ask that you respect my Copyrights. This current work will begin in Revelation to provide an insight of who is sending the Revelation and what He says about the seven churches in Asia (Minor). We then review the prophecy presented in the book of Daniel and go back and forth to understand what Daniel saw in his dream and what John saw on the Lord's Day while on the Isle of Patmos. These two books of prophecy do reflect the same images.

Along our journey, we also inserted maps to show what land areas are being spoken about as they are illustrated by various animals in prophecy. It is not the animal that prophecy is foretelling. The characteristics of the animal is reflected in the character of the people in different land empires through the history of mankind. There are six maps included and all six maps are scanned images of maps in the following titled book: "*Atlas of the Bible Lands*", New Edition, entire contents Copyright 1977, 1984 by Hammond Incorporated. It must be noted that Hammond Inc. was first incorporated in 1901 and went out of business in 1999.

We will also review the subjects of: The Rapture; The Mark of the Beast; False Teachers; Time of the Antichrist; The Great Tribulation; and The Spirit of Babylon. If there are any of these subjects that you are not sure about, think about taking the time to review and study this revised edition of previous work.

Introduction to the Revelation

Revelation 1

Prologue

Verse 1, *The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending His angel to His servant John.*

1. Revelation means unveiling, uncovering, presentation, appearing. In the Greek language, it is called the Apocalypse, meaning to reveal. Its twin word apocrypha means to conceal or hide. From these two words, we have the hidden meaning: to reveal that which had been hidden.

2. of Jesus Christ - meaning this revelation was given to Jesus. The second part of the Trinity.

3. which God gave him - meaning this revelation **is from GOD!** God, as used here in this verse represents the Father of the Trinity. We will see all three persons of the Trinity represented in this verse.

4. to show - or, if amplified, to illustrate to the world that God gave His Son the glory when He comes to avenge His death on the cross.

5. servants - meaning literally, **bondservants**. A bondservant is one who had completed his time as a slave, but out of love for his master volunteered to continue working as a servant. This is the kind of servant that God wants and I believe that God has said so in our Bible and in the Quran.

6. by sending his angel - here is the third part of the Trinity; meaning, His special angel, the Holy Spirit.

7. John - The writer of the Book. Which John? Verse 2 will tell.

8. Extra - Be fully aware that there is also a Satanic trinity in the spirit world. Satan is the counterfeit head of this unnatural trinity. The Antichrist is the counterfeit prince, or second part of this trinity. The False Prophet is the counterfeit third part of this trinity, opposite of the Holy Spirit.

Verse 2, *Who testifies to everything he saw-that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

1. The word of God - The Apostle John wrote in John 1:1, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

2. Testimony of Jesus Christ - The Apostle John wrote in John 20:31. *But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.* It was to the Apostle John that the angel brought the Revelation in order that it might be recorded.

Verse 3, *Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.*

1. Blessed - **As I began the introduction, I said there was a promise to those who studied the Revelation. Here is the promise from God. Notice who is being blessed:**

a. Those who read the words of this prophecy

b. Those who hear

c. Those who take to heart what is written in it: meaning those who believe and will guard these words.

I know this is not part of the Revelation, but there is another important promise I'd like to mention. Which one of the Ten Commandments contains a promise? It's Commandment number five, which reads in Exodus 20:12 TLB. *Honor your father and mother, that you may have a long, good life in the land the Lord your God will give you.* Do you see the promise? Today's children should read and

understand this verse, if they plan to have a long rewarding life, they must honor their mother and father.

2. The time is near - The Apostle Matthew wrote in Chapter 24, verse 36 of his gospel the following statement from Jesus. *“No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”* Luke wrote, in Acts 1:7, the words of Jesus saying, *“It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority.”* Paul probably gives us more of an understanding for these verses in 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11. ¹ *Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need to have anything written to you.* ² *For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.* ³ *While people are saying, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.* ⁴ *But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief.* ⁵ *For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness.* ⁶ *So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober.* ⁷ *For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night.* ⁸ *But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.* ⁹ *For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,* ¹⁰ *who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him.* ¹¹ *Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.* Note the important point in verse 2 when he says, *the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.*

Greetings and Doxology

Verse 4, *John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from Him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before His throne.*

1. I have repeatedly attempted to identify and illustrate to the Christian community the importance Turkey played within our religion. Here we have John identifying to whom he is writing: to the seven churches in the province of Asia. The province of Asia is located in the present day country of Turkey.

2. Notice that the Revelation is to churches. These were young churches in the first century of Christianity to which the Revelation was being revealed, yet many people say the Revelation is too difficult to understand. Now, who makes up the church of Jesus? We Christians do! So in effect, to whom is the Revelation being revealed? It was, and still is, revealed to all of us!

3. Grace and peace to you - There were many things wrong within these seven churches, just as there are things wrong in our churches today. Yet, John greeted them in a courteous manner.

4. Have you ever heard of the following outline:

- a. First, I’m going to tell you what I’m going to tell you.
- b. Then I’ll tell you what it is I’m going to tell you.
- c. Finally, I’m going to tell you what I told you.

In somewhat similar fashion, the person this message is coming from is told to the audience three different times in three different ways. The first occurrence is in verse 1 and foretells from whom the Revelation is given. Verses 4 and 5 is the second occurrence of this message and verse 8 gives this the third time in the salutation. Therefore: from Him Who is, and Who was, and Who is to come. The Him in this verse is the Trinity itself.

5. from the seven spirits before His throne.

a. Numbers do have meaning in much of Bible teaching. Seven is God’s perfect number or number for completion. One is for beginning or unity, two of separation, three the Trinity, four is the earth’s number, six is man’s number of imperfection, evil, eight is for new beginnings, ten is for testing

or completeness, twelve for wholeness and 144,000 is for all the people of God.

b. Isaiah 11:2 gives the seven spirits:

- (1.) The Spirit of the Lord
- (2.) The Spirit of wisdom
- (3.) The Spirit of understanding
- (4.) The Spirit of counsel
- (5.) The Spirit of power
- (6.) The Spirit of knowledge
- (7.) The Spirit of fear of the Lord

Isaiah 11:1-5, *A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him-the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord-and He will delight in the fear of the Lord. He will not judge by what He sees with His eyes, or decide by what He hears with His ears; but with righteousness He will judge the needy, with justice He will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth; with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be His belt and faithfulness the sash around His waist.* We just learned in note 5 a. that seven is God's number, and here in these verses from Isaiah, we see an illustration. The image Isaiah has is pertaining to Jesus, the Son of God, who has the seven spirits of God in His character, manner and judgement. Christians should study the Old Testament, especially the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel to fully understand many of the little things revealed in Revelation! In the verses from Isaiah, look at the last clause, *sash around His waist*, now look forward to verse 13 in this chapter and see similar wording. In both cases the reference is to Jesus.

Verse 5, *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood.*

1. from Jesus Christ - How about that, a personal letter from Jesus to Christians everywhere.

2. who is the faithful witness - Let us all remember upon our acceptance of Jesus as our personal savior, He became the faithful witness who would stand before His Father and testify that we belong to Him. Think about that! There will be a trial where Jesus is the main witness and we are the accused. We will be granted a pardon because of what Jesus says. Jesus says in Luke 12:8, *"I tell you, whoever acknowledges Me before men, the Son of Man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God."*

3. the firstborn from the dead - Jesus overcame death and at the first judgement, all the church who have gone before will be called to meet Jesus.

4. the ruler of the kings of the earth - remember Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords. 1 Timothy 6:15, *Which God will bring about in His own time-God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords.*

5. who loves us - If only mankind would follow two verses recorded in the Gospel of John;

a. John 3:16 - *"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."*

b. John 13:34-35 contains what I call the eleventh Commandment. Do not confuse my statement. If this is the eleventh Commandment that means there are TEN others! This is the only commandment Jesus gave us, and it reads, *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. All men will know that you are My disciples if you love one another."* Doesn't this say it all?

6. has freed us from our sins by His blood - As the second Adam, Jesus died on the cross for our sins and has freed us from the bondage of sin that the first Adam placed upon mankind.

Verse 6, *And has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve His God and Father-to Him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.*

1. has made us to be a kingdom - Don't we constitute the Church? Then, aren't we a kingdom? Isn't John looking forward to the years of peace when Jesus rules for the thousand years?

2. priests to serve His God and Father - I think there are very few Christians who fully understand man's placement in Heaven. If I can show you that man is above the angels, would you believe me?

a. 1 Corinthians 6:3, *Do you not know that we will judge angels?* If we were discussing a trial, the jury is composed of peers, and if we took that connotation, then we are equal to the angels. However, if we view a judge as being a step above the jury, then we are above the angels.

b. Hebrews 1:14, *Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?* Isn't it the Church that will inherit salvation? Doesn't this verse say angels are sent to serve us?

c. 1 Peter 1:12, Look at the last sentence of this verse. *Even angels long to look into these things.* We have been told things even angels want to know.

3. to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Matthew 6:9-13 KJV is the Lord's Prayer. Look at the last part stated. *"For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen."*

4. Amen. - meaning Let it be done! John is saying that he likes what he is being shown and told, and is anxious for these things to come to pass. As a Christian are you anxious for our Savior to return?

Verse 7, *Look, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of Him. So shall it be! Amen.*

1. He is coming with the clouds - In Acts 1:10-11, the two angels say, *"This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."*

Verse 8, *"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."*

1. I am the Alpha and the Omega - Remember the name that God told Moses to tell the Israelites who had sent him-**I AM**. Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet, so this says, *I am the first and the last.* This is the third occurrence revealing who is sending this Revelation. The term Alpha and Omega will appear again in the Revelation.

2. who is, and who was, and who is to come, - We see the Alpha and Omega of the Greek language, however, in the Hebrew Bible the fourth word of Genesis is Aleph Tau, meaning Christ, and this is not translated into our English Bibles. Remember what Hebrews 13:8 says, *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.* (NKJV)

3. the Almighty - The following is recorded in Isaiah 9:6, *For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

One Like a Son of God

Verse 9, *I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.*

1. John - John used only his name. No title is needed to impress the reader.

2. your brother - Throughout the teachings of the Apostles, the term Brother is used. John would rather be called brother and he realizes we are coequal (brothers) through Jesus.

3. and companion - John is trying to express the equality and simplicity that is intended in the Revelation. He placed himself on the same plane as you or I. He did not want to be higher or above a

layman, even though, he was one of the original 12 Apostles of Jesus and was called the one Jesus loved, John 13:23, *One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to Him.* God does not intend for the preacher to dress higher, or think of himself higher than the layman.

4. in the suffering and kingdom - John could not get his thoughts off the coming kingdom.

5. patient endurance that are ours in Jesus - John was patiently waiting for Jesus to return. He will show how strong his thoughts are on the kingdom and that he remains waiting for Jesus' return when, in chapter 22 verse 20, he says, "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus"

6. on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus - Here is the reason John is on this island and not at Ephesus

a. because of the word - or because he dared to preach the Word

b. the testimony of Jesus - He is teaching the story of Jesus and testifying to the truth.

c. Extra - the authorities had already attempted to kill John by boiling him in oil, but that did not kill him, so now he is in exile on the Isle of Patmos.

Verse 10, *On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet,*

1. On the Lord's Day - John is speaking about the Saturday Sabbath. We must remember that Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath, not Lord of the first day of the week! Mark 2:27-28, *Then He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."*

2. in the Spirit - you could say John was having communion with the Comforter

3. loud voice like a trumpet - the trumpet is a call. The next thing on God's timetable is the trumpet call. Two of the things a trumpet call can mean is:

a. Get up in the morning (resurrection)

b. Assemble (judgement)

Verse 11, *Which said: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea."*

We should consider three things in this verse:

a. John is to receive instructions for the church body.

b. These are God's instructions.

c. We should only take our teachings from God.

Verse 12, *I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands,*

1. see the voice - In order to hear a voice, there must be a word. Jesus is the Word (see John 1:1 and Revelation 1:2). In my first book, I stated there are references in Genesis (the beginning) that refer to the Revelation (the end), and verses in Revelation that refer to Genesis. Genesis 3:8 indicates Adam and Eve were startled by the sound of the Lord after partaking of the forbidden tree. This must be a powerful sound, but one we will understand and know the authority from whence it comes.

2. saw seven golden lampstands - verse 20 will identify these lampstands. Refer also to Zechariah 4:2, *He asked me, "What do you see?"*

I answered, "I see a solid gold lampstand with a bowl at the top and seven lights on it, with seven channels to the lights. Also there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left."

Verse 13, *And among the lampstands was someone like a Son of Man, dressed in a robe reaching down to His feet and with a golden sash around His chest.*

1. like a Son of Man - In the middle of the lampstands, stood Jesus. The high priest was assigned the responsibility to care for the lampstand of the Tabernacle. The tribe of Levi was the tribe to care for the Tabernacle. This duty was assigned in Numbers 3:31. *They were responsible for the care of the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, the articles of the sanctuary used in ministering, the curtain, and everything related to their use.* Jesus is our Chief Priest and He is doing His job to care for His church (tabernacle) and keep it in order.

2. sash around His chest. - Refer back to verse 4 and the cross reference to Isaiah 11:5.

Verse 14, *His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes were like blazing fire.*

1. white as snow - sign of purity

2. eyes were like blazing fire. - bright, full of power, piercing (like a parent to a child when the child has done wrong).

Verse 15, *His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of rushing waters.*

1. feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace - The NIV version uses the term bronze. The King James says feet like fine brass. I believe it means the liquid state. To me, there would be a bright sheen over the glowing metal, and when in liquid form can flow like water. Jesus can flow into any church.

2. voice was like the sound of rushing waters - another example of power, yet soothing and relaxing.

Verse 16, *In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.*

1. See verse 20 for the answer to the seven stars. Also, see Revelation 2:20

2. sharp double-edged sword. - The double-edged sword is explained in Hebrews 4:12. *For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.* See Revelation 2:12.

3. face was like the sun - His continence was as the sun. John saw Jesus in the Spirit. Boy! What a picture John had before his eyes.

Verse 17, *When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as though dead. Then He placed His right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last."*

1. fell at his feet as though dead. - See Genesis 3:8 again to understand the fear John had.

2. Do not be afraid. - Could John have felt as Adam and Eve did in the garden and want to hide? Genesis 3:8, *Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as He was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.* We should not fear our Lord and Savior.

3. I am the First and Last - a cross reference to verse 8 the Alpha and Omega or Aleph Tau.

Verse 18, *"I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades."*

1. Cross reference to verses 1, 4 and 8

2. I hold the keys of death and Hades - Jesus defeated death and God has granted Him the power over Satan and Satan's final home in Hell. Remember Satan is the prince of the air, and we are living in Satan's current domain.

Verse 19, *“Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later.”*

This is an outline for Revelation

- a. What you have seen - Chapter 1
- b. What is now - Chapters 2 and 3 - At this point we will break from a pure study of Revelation. However, I will complete Chapters 2 and 3 to explain the churches. If you desire to see the full work, go to my website www.vqpub.org and find “The Days to Come” under the tab Our Books. For the purpose of this work, we are linking together the prophecies of The End Times.
- c. What will take place later - Chapters 4 through 22

Verse 20, *“The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in My right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.”*

1. seven stars - represent messengers, leaders or preachers.
2. seven lampstands - represent the seven types of churches that make up the body. Some problems exist in each type. See verses 12, 16 and 2:1.

Revelation 2

To the Church in Ephesus

Chapter 2, verse 1, *“To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of Him who holds the seven stars in His right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands.”*

1. angel - To the pastor of the church. Jesus is writing to the pastor because no church can rise higher than its pastor. In like manner, any organization, state or government cannot rise higher than its leader.
2. Refer to verse 20, in chapter 1, for the explanation. To understand how close Jesus holds these seven stars turn to John 10:27-30. *“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one.”*
3. walks among - Chapter 1 verse 20 identified the seven candlesticks as the churches. Understand what this is saying. **Jesus walks within the churches, even today!**

Verse 2, *“I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false.”*

1. deeds, hard work, perseverance - This was a working church, but as will be shown, not satisfying to Jesus. What kind of church was this? It could get men to come help work on the building. It could get ladies to cook or even sew for the needy. They could get a large crowd together for a Sunday School teacher's conference or Bible School planning session, and yet they were not working for Jesus. **There is a difference in church work and working for Jesus!**
2. cannot tolerate wicked men - This church hated sin.
3. tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. - This church was sound in its faith and knew the ways to test for false teaching. The test for false teaching is found in 1 John 4:2-3. *This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not*

from God. This is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

- a. Many churches are sound on baptism, but are not baptizing anyone.
- b. Many churches are sound on soul winning, but are not winning souls. See verse 2:6.
- c. Look very closely at the last sentence. Have you understood that the Antichrist is already in the world?

Verse 3, *"You have persevered and have endured hardships for My name, and have not grown weary."*

This means that this church bore reproach for Jesus' name. The name of Jesus has never been popular in this world. To be a real church in this day and age means to bear reproach for Jesus' name. When a church really gets down to the business of God, there is going to be a stigma about the church.

Verse 4, *"Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love."*

Observe some newlyweds and compare how love changes with the passing of the years. In our nation, there is a 50% chance for a divorce in any marriage. This could be stated in two ways. (1) 50% of those reading this statement will say it is wrong, and, (2) 50% of those reading this will understand what is meant. The same has occurred in this church, and they have lost the feeling of their first love, which should be Christ. Love should increase with time and be growing. Jesus is trying to show these young churches the mistakes they are committing. The same mistakes apply to our churches today and will continue to apply until the second coming occurs. Remember the only command that Jesus gave us is John 13:34-35. *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another."*

Verse 5, *"Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place."*

1. Repent - This is the key word for this church. Repent means to turn around. What Jesus is saying is to get back to the honeymoon. Again consider a married couple. How wonderful would it be if a married couple could regain the sweet love they had when they were first married?

2. and do the things you did at first - What is usually the first thing that happens in young love? You tell everybody about it. A Christian should be telling others about Jesus. We should be sharing our experiences of living for Jesus and encouraging others to learn more of His love.

3. If you do not repent, I will come to you - I believe mankind has some control over the second coming. Here is one verse that leads me to this conclusion. The first part identifies the option, to repent or not, and the second part indicates Jesus will come if repentance is not made.

4. and remove your lampstand from its place - The lampstand is the church. What Jesus is effectively doing is saying this church is no longer winning souls and their power is removed.

Verse 6, *"But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate."*

Nicolaitans - adherents to Nicolaus. Some say the term *the Nicolaitans* means to rule the people, others say they encouraged some in the church to return to pagan looseness of morals. In verse 2 of this chapter, I illustrated the relationship between Church and pastor, therefore I believe the term gives meaning to a looseness of morals. Taking this meaning, it seems God does not tolerate a church that advocates loose moral practices. This idea seems apparent in our society and our churches today.

Verse 7, *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God."*

1. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches - This means a spiritual

ear, in other words, if you are spiritual, hear these words.

2. To him who overcomes - The word overcomes is used in each church identity clause. Overcomes could be taken as a promise. There are a total of thirteen promises given to the seven churches. This is the first of those promises: **the right to eat of the tree of life.**

3. tree of life - Let's complete the circle from the beginning to the end. Adam and Eve took of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and therefore violated God's command and placed man into sin. Jesus (the second Adam) takes away sin by reestablishing the relationship with God, through a belief in Him, and allows us to eat of the tree of life. See Revelation 22:2 to understand that God makes provision for his own.

To the Church in Smyrna

Verse 8, *"To the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These are the words of Him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again."*

1. The word Smyrna is the same as the word myrrh, a sweet smelling perfume. This church was a fragrance to the Lord, willing to suffer for Jesus.

2. Words of Him who is the First - Jesus is telling us here that He was before anything else and made man from dust. See Aleph Tau in chapter 1, verse 8.

3. and the Last - This settles what is in the future. When all else is gone, Jesus will still be here. There seems to be a day when everyone worries about the future. **Why?** Jesus holds the future!

4. who died and came to life again - This is an encouragement to the church at Smyrna. The next verse will explain more about this church. The church at Smyrna was suffering for Jesus' name. They were being persecuted and Jesus reminds them He was persecuted on the cross and was buried, but rose from the grave. Jesus is telling them to rise up and go on.

Verse 9, *"I know your afflictions and your poverty-yet you are rich! I know the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan."*

1. I know your afflictions and your poverty - This church did not have a grand building to attract people. They did not have carpeted floors, or stained glass windows, no prestige in the community, but they had the approval of God.

2. yet you are rich - This church had things money cannot buy. A church cannot buy the power of God or a spirit of unity among its members. Many churches should gladly exchange big buildings for a sweet spirit.

3. who say they are Jews and are not - apply this to all the sects that claim they are the only true church, or to those groups who actually preach a hate ministry. Have you ever wondered why these groups are always condemning the Jews? They want the power the Jews represent, but they can never have it.

4. but are a synagogue of Satan - Synagogue means gathering together. Church actually means a calling out. We have too many gatherings today where the people have never been called out. The devil also has churches. A church that does not teach salvation by grace through the blood of Jesus, is a church of the devil!

Verse 10, *"Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life."*

1. suffer persecution for ten days - Go back to the explanation of the numbers in Revelation 1:4. Ten is the number representing testing, just as it says here.

2. Be faithful - What a command to receive from Jesus. The one thing that God wants from His churches is faithfulness.

3. even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life - This has nothing to do with salvation. It refers to rewards and God is going to give a special crown to the faithful.

Verse 11, *“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death.”*

Will not be hurt at all by the second death - In other words, will not be cast into the Lake of Fire. This is the second overcomes promise. See Revelation 20:14.

To the Church in Pergamum

Verse 12, *“To the angel of the church in Pergamum write: These are the words of Him who has the sharp, double-edged sword.”*

1. Pergamum - means fortified tower or castle.

2. These are the words of Him who has the sharp, double-edged sword - This sword is the Word of God, as taught in Ephesians 6:17 illustrating the Armor of God. Ephesians 6:17, *Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.* The meaning here is that Jesus is bringing judgement upon the church at Pergamum. When a person is cut, they cry out. The same is true of a church that is cold and indifferent. Consider this: Jesus teaches love, the opposite of love is indifference, so, in effect, any church that has become indifferent is teaching a false doctrine more closely aligned with Satan. When someone preaches the true Gospel to a church of indifference, they cry like babies. See Revelation 1:16 and 19:15.

Verse 13, *“I know where you live-where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to My name. You did not renounce your faith in Me, even in the days of Antipas, My faithful witness, who was put to death in your city-where Satan lives.”*

1. I know where you live-where Satan has his throne - To understand this verse you must understand where Satan has his throne. This is disclosed in 2 Corinthians 4:4. *The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.* Satan's throne is in the world. The god of this world is Satan himself! In other words, this was a worldly church. How many churches do you know about today that have gotten out of the soul saving business and into the recreation business? Let's remember, the drawing card for the church is Jesus and nothing more.

2. Yet you remain true to my name - They believed Jesus was the son of God. There are preachers and churches who do not believe Jesus is God's Son. But this is not our greatest danger! Our greatest danger is the same as that of the church at Pergamum. We may be fundamentally sound, yet we are getting more worldly with every passing day.

3. You did not renounce your faith in me - This church was straight on the plan to salvation. They did not believe works were essential to being saved. They were straight on that, and yet, they were worldly.

4. My faithful witness, who was put to death in your city - There are those who are willing to witness, and even die, for Jesus.

Verse 14, *“Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality.”*

1. You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam. - Read Numbers 22 and Numbers 31 for the story of Balaam.

2. Note the following facts about Balaam.

a. He would not go to wicked King Balak in order to gain money for himself. He went to him after God had forbidden it. He was a popularity seeker.

b. He caused the Israelites to intermarry and to tolerate idolatry. Could we not say the illustration here is that the members of the church at Pergamum were seeking the world where Satan dwells.

Verse 15, *“Likewise you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans.”*

This is the second time the term Nicolaitans has been used (see Revelation 2:6). This is one of those places where the original material dates itself and also shows its biased head. The thought line in the original work is to present word pictures that would indicate that the Pope of the Catholic Church represents the Antichrist, and the teachings of the Nicolaitans represent the conceptional beginning of the hierarchy of that order, therefore, the following is presented. The ideology is to rule over the members of the church through many layers of bureaucracy, with bishops, etc. It seems God does not like this ideology and feels the only one to rule over the people is the Holy Spirit. I agree with the thought that God does not like this ideology, however the more I research the term Nicolaitans, the more I find information that the term means a teaching toward a return to pagan, immoral practices, homosexual acts, adultery, sexual promiscuity, etc. This teaching is also against God’s Word and therefore wrong.

Verse 16, *“Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.”*

Translate this to mean: Stop dealing with the world, get out of your worldliness before I come again, or I will have to fight against you.

Verse 17, *“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it.”*

1. To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna - God has hidden truths to teach us, but He will not let us understand them if we are living in the world. When we come out of the world, God lets us understand the hidden truths of His Word and those of His prophets. Third overcomes promise.

2. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it - He will engrave our name in Heaven. Fourth overcomes promise.

3. known only to him who receives it. - No man knows another man’s condition before God, except man himself, and then only if he has been saved by the blood of Jesus.

To the Church in Thyatira

Verse 18, *“To the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These are the words of the Son of God, whose eyes are like blazing fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze.”*

1. These are the words of the Son of God - If man had said these things, he would have been criticized. God reminds us these things were said by Jesus. Bible teaching is hard teaching. When we teach the truth of Jesus, we must say some hard things, yet it must be done with a tender loving spirit, as a parent who finds it necessary to punish a child. Let us remember that God is the parent and we are His children. God is only trying to correct us (our ways against His will), but also warns us of the consequences. His wrath, and the Second coming of Christ, is the consequence.

2. whose eyes are like blazing fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze - The blazing fire and burnished bronze would both be symbols of judgement. Fine metals are refined to purity by heat

(fire) and to burnish is to polish. It would seem God is reminding Thyatira that certain judgement will come because of their sins.

Verse 19, *"I know your deeds, your love and faith, your service and perseverance, and that you are now doing more than you did at first."*

1. Notice that all of the things Jesus said about this church are positive things.

2. and that you are now doing more than you did at first - This was a growing church. Its last works were more than the first ones. Growth is not the sign of a true church. In fact, it may not be a sign at all. Big reports and added membership are good, but they are not the sign of a true New Testament church.

Verse 20, *"Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads My servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols."*

1. I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel - Tolerate also means allow. This church allowed sin to creep in and it did not judge sin and condemn it. Instead, it tolerated the sin! In many of today's churches, a person can live as they please and never get their sins condemned.

2. Jezebel was the wife of a wicked king in the Old Testament. She dominated her husband. Obviously, Jesus was calling some woman in this church a Jezebel. Note these things about Jezebel.

a. She was worldly - 1 Kings 21:7-8, *Jezebel his wife said, "Is this how you act as king over Israel? Get up and eat! Cheer up. I'll get you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."* So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, placed his seal on them, and sent them to the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth's city with him.

b. She was out of her place - 1 Kings 21:25, *There was never a man like Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord, urged on by Jezebel his wife.*

3. The woman (women) in this church was probably trying to run the church. Or, she was trying to lead in the church instead of taking the place of a woman and following. 1 Timothy 2:11-12, *A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent.* 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, *Women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the Law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church. See Revelation 17:1.*

4. Because of the term prophetess there is reason to believe this was the preacher's wife.

5. By her teaching, she misleads My servants into sexual immorality - It would seem Jesus is warning about a bossy woman who's thoughts are misguided and is causing many members to fall into sin. Could this also be an illustration of very liberal women rights activists? 1 Kings 21:11 and 15, *So the elders and nobles who lived in Naboth's city did as Jezebel directed in the letters she had written to them. ... As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, she said to Ahab, "Get up and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite that he refused to sell you. He is no longer alive, but dead."*

6. and the eating of food sacrificed to idols - She was misleading the church to do doubtful things. 2 Kings 9:22, *When Joram saw Jehu he asked, "Have you come in peace, Jehu?"*

"How can there be peace," Jehu replied, "as long as all the idolatry and witchcraft of your mother Jezebel abound?" This comes about because the eating of sacrificial food was not a sin in itself, but, it was a doubtful practice, as Paul illustrated in Romans 14. Churches need to be taught and to teach against engaging in doubtful practices.

Verse 21, *“I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling.”*

Verse 22, *“So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways.”*

Verses 21-22, The taking out and protection by God will not affect this church unless she repents. It will be left here unprotected during the Great Tribulation that is to come upon the earth after the true saints have been given the mark of God to protect them. The Tribulation will last for seven years and will be a period of terrible wars and events.

Verse 23, *“I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am He who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds.”*

1. In this verse, Jesus is saying that He will judge the members of a church like this one as a warning to the other churches. We all need to watch our churches so they stay pure. Let us keep our church program one of simple preaching, praying and teaching the Word of God.

2. I am He who searches hearts and minds - In many verses throughout the Bible, we see the word heart. Here, we see the full authority of Jesus. He can see what our attitude and thoughts (heart and mind) really are.

3. I will repay each of you according to your deeds - In other words, you reap what you sow.

Verse 24, *“Now I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, to you who do not hold to her teaching and have not learned Satan’s so-called deep secrets (I will not impose any other burden on you).”*

Verse 25, *“Only hold on to what you have until I come.”*

Verses 24-25, Jesus is telling the real believers in this church to Hold Fast until He returns. In these days of darkness and apostasy, let us hold to the truth and look forward to the second coming.

Verse 26, *“To him who overcomes and does My will to the end, I will give authority over the nations-”*

Verse 27, *“‘He will rule them with an iron scepter; he will dash them to pieces like pottery’ - just as I have received authority from my Father.”*

Verse 28, *“I will also give him the morning star.”*

Verses 26-28, If you need a promise to get you through the reading and understanding of Revelation, here is the second one from God. In this promise, we are told that those who overcome and do God’s will shall rule with Jesus as saints over the nations (fifth promise made to those who overcome). This refers to the one thousand year reign of peace upon the earth when we shall rule with Jesus (see Revelation 20:1-6). Isn’t it wonderful to know, the load we bear is much lighter when we realize the impact this promise contains. The morning star refers to a spiritual morning. This is the sixth promise made to overcomers. Right now we are in a spiritual night, and we should understand it is hard to take a stand for Jesus. However, to live the life God wants us to live allows us to see the spiritual morning and to have a place in it!

Verse 29, *“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”*

Let us hear what the Spirit says to the churches and apply these teachings to our own church.

Revelation 3

To the Church in Sardis

Chapter 3, verse 1, *“To the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of Him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead.”*

1. Him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars - In chapter 1 verse 4, we identify the seven spirits. In chapter 1 verse 20, we have the explanation of the seven stars as the pastor of each of these churches. The importance shown here is the association between the two. Jesus walks with the pastors.

2. you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead - What a shame! This church had a good name! They turned in good reports! They had a fine reputation! They baptized people! They grew, but they were dead!

Verse 2, *“Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God.”*

1. Wake up! - Jesus wants everyone in this church to wake up, they’ve fallen asleep. If asleep, how can they be doing the work of the Lord?

2. Strengthen what remains and is about to die - Jesus is trying to save the remains. The remains of many churches could be set on fire, and the church could be revived. If this doesn’t happen, you might as well have a funeral for the church and bury the remains.

3. I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God - The important word here is complete. Jesus is saying this church is not doing His work. Church work for Jesus means *soul winning, praying, preaching* and *studying* the Bible. Why do we need so many new things for the folks to do when we haven’t done the ones God gave us to do?

Verse 3, *“Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.”*

1. Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard, obey it, and repent - This church had received the truth and had left it. They are told to return to the truth (repent) and perform (obey) it.

2. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you - First, there is a warning and again the option of choice. Now, let’s look at the word thief. What does a thief do? A thief takes something from you, normally unexpectedly. The waking up is to watch for Jesus’ coming. A great mystery will occur the moment of Jesus’ return. **If you know Jesus**, there is nothing to worry about, otherwise, something will be taken away and it will certainly be unexpected. The warning to repent for this church indicates, it will be missed if they do not return to the watch. A church cannot be watching if they are asleep. Oh! By the way, you cannot be very watchful if you believe the world must be converted or saved in its entirety before Jesus can return.

Verse 4, *“Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with Me, dressed in white, for they are worthy.”*

1. you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes - There are just a few left who love Jesus, who win souls, who come to prayer meetings, and who love the Word of God. I think their greatest sin was staying in Sardis. I don’t believe Jesus would want even one of His children to freeze to death in a dead church, even if Grandma did go there.

2. They will walk with Me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. - These are the ones who will

be changed at the call of Jesus. While the unsaved are going through the Tribulation, these will be walking with Jesus dressed in white.

Verse 5, *“He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the Book of Life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels.”*

1. He who overcomes will . . . be dressed in white - Seventh promise made to those who overcome.

2. I will never blot out his name from the Book of Life - God has a book of names with every person listed in those pages. Those who fail to trust Him as Savior are blotted out of His book, but those who have been born again remain listed. Eighth promise for the overcomers.

a. The term blot out from the book seems to give people a problem. Two other references using the term blot out are found in Exodus 32:33-34. *The Lord replied to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against Me I will blot out of My book. Now go, lead the people to the place I spoke of, and My angel will go before you. However, when the time comes for Me to punish, I will punish them for their sin.”* And Psalms 69:28, *May they be blotted out of the book of life and not be listed with the righteous.*

b. Look very carefully at the wording in this verse from Psalms 69. Notice the wording that *they be blotted out of the book of life* and the next clause, *and not be listed with the righteous*. The wicked will have their name lined through in the Book of Life. Therefore, their name is effectively blotted out. We will see later that books are opened, pertaining to the unsaved, at the second judgement. We, who know Jesus, do not have to worry because our name is recorded in God’s Book of Life and is not blotted out. The unsaved, by their own choice, have committed such actions that their name is effectively removed.

3. but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels. - Here is the reassurance that Jesus is the *Faithful Witness* as stated in Chapter 1 verse 5. This is also overcomer promise number nine.

Verse 6, *“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”*

To the Church in Philadelphia

Verse 7, *“To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of Him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What He opens no one can shut, and what He shuts no one can open.”*

1. Philadelphia - means brotherly love. This was a church of believers who loved each other. How refreshing in a day when so many churches are splitting in two for lack of love. Let’s keep loving each other. People who know the love of Jesus can tell when they walk into a church whether that love is present and the people love each other. Recall what Jesus’ new command was in the Gospel of John, 13:34.

2. What is the key of David? Every Christian has seen the key of David and never even considered what it was. Remember, to fulfill prophecy Jesus must be in the lineage of king David, and as Joseph was descended from David through the kingly line, there is an assumption made. WRONG ANSWER! Jesus must descend from David through his mother Mary, **not** Joseph! Therefore, the key of David is the genealogy of both David and Jesus, and is the lineage given in the book of Luke for Mary (**not Joseph**). The key of truth is the four words in Luke 3:23, *So it was thought*. People overlook the explanation given in these four little words. What is meant is simply that Joseph is not Jesus’ father or as stated, so it was thought!

3. what He opens no one can shut - Jesus reminds them if the door is left open, He is the One who will do it. If souls constantly walk the aisles, it is God who keeps the door open. Note that when God opens a door, no man can shut it, nor can anyone take away our salvation. **Make a note!** This did

not indicate a saved person will lose their salvation. That is assured by the blood of Jesus, however, we can still sin and become disfavored by God. If we, who are saved, make that choice and sin, we may be able to get into heaven but we'll be living in the slum area with very few treasures. God blessed us by accepting our choice to have Jesus as our Savior. We must also remember what Jesus told to many that He healed. Didn't He tell them: to go and sin no more? Another point to remember is that, we are to ask forgiveness of our sins. If we are not forgiven of our sins, they are burnt off like dross because we cannot carry sin into heaven. Why would we want to disgrace God by continuing to sin after we had received such grace? Remember, no human enemy can bother a church, or a Christian, when God keeps the door open.

4. and what He shuts no one can open - When God so desires, He can withdraw His power and influence (remove the Holy Spirit) from a church and close the door. It is God alone who can open and shut the door. Many churches have had their doors shut and could not reopen them. The same is true with denominations and individual Christians.

Verse 8, *"I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept My word and have not denied My name."*

1. I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut - This church had an open door. Let's look at the reason God kept their door open:

- a. They had little strength.
- b. They had kept the Word of God.
- c. They had not denied the name of Jesus.

The reason the doors of spiritual power have been closed to many churches is that some have ceased to believe the Bible is the Word of God. Some do not preach the Word anymore. Some do not believe Jesus is the Son of God, that the blood is essential for salvation, and other primary truths of the Bible. May God have mercy on this generation of so-called churches.

Verse 9, *"I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars-I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you."*

In this verse, Jesus is proclaiming there will be a day when the false churches will have to fall down and worship the true church and admit their errors.

Verse 10, *"Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth."*

Those of the true Church of Jesus will be kept out of the hour of trial that is to come. What is the hour of trial? It is the Tribulation that is going to last seven years, when Satan is turned loose and the greatest of all wars, famines, etc. shall take place. This verse reassures all true believers they will not have to go through this terrible Tribulation. However, we must also remember, just as **Noah was protected during the flood, he still went through the flood event!** In like manner, new believers, living at the time of the Tribulation, will be protected during the Great Tribulation, but it appears they will have to go through the event or be some of those who are martyred.

Verse 11, *"I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown."*

1. I am coming soon - Remember even Jesus does not know the hour God will cause all of this to occur. We are to be ever ready for that time.

2. so that no one will take your crown - Crown is used in this verse as a reward. What reward? The reward for being steadfast in our belief and working for Jesus. Those who follow Jesus and remain steadfast will receive a crown.

Verse 12, *“Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from My God; and I will also write on him My new name.”*

1. Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God - We may not have much strength here, but imagine our strength in heaven. Our belief has surpassed the test and is as a pillar. We help support the Temple of God. Promise number ten.

2. Never again will he leave it - We will no longer have to worry about being away from God. We'll worship Him forever and be in His presence evermore.

3. I will write on him the name of My God - We will proudly wear the mark of God and be called one of His. The eleventh promise for those who overcome. See Revelation 22:4.

4. I will also write on him My new name - Promise number twelve.

Verse 13, *“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”*

To the Church in Laodicea

Verse 14, *“To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation.”*

1. Laodicea means please the people. Galatians 1:10 says that you cannot please the people and God at the same time. Galatians 1:10, *Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ.*

2. These are the words of the Amen - The word amen means so let it be or it will be so. Jesus is reminding the people that His prophecies will transpire just as He had said they would.

3. the faithful and true witness - A witness tells what he has seen. Jesus sees all that goes on in our churches, and one day He will witness concerning what He has seen pertaining to each one of us.

Verse 15, *“I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other!”*

1. cold - A stagnant, nonproductive church. How many churches do we have today that would fit this definition?

2. hot - Wouldn't it be wonderful if our churches were really on fire for Jesus?

3. I wish you were either one or the other! - In other words, as spoken in the next verse, they were lukewarm. Have you ever had coffee, a cola or even milk that was nearly warm? Doesn't taste very good, does it? How awful for a church of Jesus, when it should be on fire, to be only lukewarm.

Verse 16, *“So, because you are lukewarm- neither hot nor cold-I am about to spit you out of my mouth.”*

1. This sums up many of us - neither hot nor cold. The world has more respect for a drunkard in the gutter than for a Christian who is lukewarm. How many times have you heard a lost person hide behind a lukewarm Christian? They love to use the phrase, I'm as good as he is.

2. spit you out of My mouth - Let's use vomit instead of this translation. Jesus says a lukewarm Christian makes Him want to vomit.

Verse 17, *“ You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.”*

1. In the first portion of this verse, notice what the church says about itself: I am rich. They had beautiful furnishings, prestige, and were self-satisfied.

2. Notice what Jesus says about them.

- a. wretched, pitiful, poor - They were just the opposite of the church at Smyrna.
- b. blind - They were blind to souls, missions, etc. Imagine, if you can, this letter being read at the Sunday morning worship hour at Laodicea. Do you see the anger on the faces of the aristocrats sitting there?
- c. naked - Laodicea was a fashionable city of that day. Yet Jesus says they were naked. Meaning that the Laodiceans were not clothed in righteousness.

Verse 18, *"I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see."*

1. Jesus extends hope to them. He is indicating that even a lukewarm church can be set on fire for His work. Many preachers have been set on fire for Jesus, such as John Wesley, William Booth, Martin Luther, John Calvin and others.
2. Notice Jesus' prescription for healing so they could see - salve. Eye salve stings at first when applied, then your eyes water and you can't see anything. Finally, the healing is performed and you can once again see.

Verse 19, *"Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent."*

1. Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline - The parent who doesn't discipline the child does not love them. A preacher who will not stand against the sins of his flock does not love them. Jesus shows us His love by disciplining us.
2. So be earnest, and repent - Turn away from your indifferent attitude and be on fire for Jesus.

Verse 20, *"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with Me."*

1. I stand at the door and knock - Jesus makes His request to enter at the door, but we hold the decision to let Him in or not! **Will you let Him in or ask Him to stand at the door?**
2. anyone - This doesn't say the entire church. It really says only one. Just one person can sometimes turn the tide. One person, on fire for Jesus, many times passes the flame to another, then another and another. The whole church could be revived.
3. I will come in and eat with him, and he with Me. - Through repentance and faith, Jesus will come into our lives. We are once again told the plan of salvation.

Verse 21, *"To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with Me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on His throne."*

Jesus is speaking about the Millennium period. As He overcame death, we must overcome the temptations of Satan and do the Lord's work. By so doing, **we will reign with Jesus as He sits at the right hand of God! This is the last (13th) promise made to those who overcomes.**

Verse 22, *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."*

This completes the study of the churches from the words of Revelation for our current work. Does your church exhibit any of the characteristics of the good churches identified by Jesus? Does your church demonstrate any of the undesirable things Jesus illustrated? Shouldn't we try to avoid those undesirable things in our churches and praise God by exhibiting good characteristics in our churches?

From chapter 3 until the end of chapter 22 of Revelation, the term church (ekklesia - ek-klay-see'-ah - G1577) is not used again in the Bible. Actually, every Christian should feel blessed that the Rapture happens and we are with Christ at the Wedding Feast in Heaven while absolute chaos is taking place on earth. Since we have said the Rapture has happened, at this time, let's include information pertaining to the Rapture. After that short teaching, we will need to study the book of Daniel to fully understand the Apocalypse. We will begin with some of the visions and dreams that we find in the Book of Daniel.

The Rapture

For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 (ESV)

The word *rapture* comes from the Latin word *raptu* which means “caught away” or “caught up.” This Latin word is equivalent to the Greek term *harpazō* which is found in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 (underlined above) and translated as caught up. This event is described here and in 1 Corinthians 15:20-23. ²⁰ *But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.* ²¹ *For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.* ²² *For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.* ²³ *But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.* It refers to the time when Christ will take His followers from the earth to meet Him in the air and be with Him in heaven. It involves only those who are part of Christ's true church, His faithful followers worldwide who are in a right relationship with Him.

(1) Just prior to the rapture, as Christ is descending from heaven for His church, the resurrection of the dead in Christ will occur. This is not the same resurrection described in Revelation 20:4. ⁴ *Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.* This is an event occurring after Christ returns to earth, destroys the forces of the antichrist and confines Satan to the bottomless pit. We find that in Rev 19:19-20:3. ¹⁹ *And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army.* ²⁰ *And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur.* ²¹ *And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of Him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.* Rev 20:1-3, ¹ *Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain.* ² *And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years,* ³ *and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.* Now, the resurrection described in Revelation 20:4 is limited to those who turned to Christ and died for their faith in Him during the tribulation (the period following the rapture, during which the antichrist will rise to power and God will execute His severe end-time judgments on

the earth). The Revelation 20:4 reference may possibly involve Old Testament followers of God as well.

(2) At the same time as the dead in Christ rise, followers of Christ who are alive on earth will be transformed, their bodies becoming imperishable and immortal. 1 Cor 15:51, 53, ⁵¹ *Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, . . .* ⁵³ *For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality.* This will happen in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye. 1 Cor 15:52, ⁵² *in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.*

(3) Both, the resurrected Christians and those who are instantly transformed, will be caught up together to meet Christ in the air (in the atmosphere between earth and heaven).

(4) They will be visibly united with Christ. See the reference at the beginning of this article. They will be taken to heaven. John 14:1-3, ¹ *“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ² In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.* There they will be reunited with loved ones who have died knowing Christ. 1 Thes 4:13-18, ¹³ *But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. ¹⁴ For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁵ For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.*

(5) They will be removed from all suffering and distress. 2 Cor 5:2, ² *For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, and Phil 3:20-21, ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself,* also from all persecution and oppression, Rev 3:10, ¹⁰ *Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth, and from the entire realm of sin and death, 1 Cor 15:54-58. ⁵⁴ When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” ⁵⁵ “O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.* The rapture also rescues Yeshua’s followers from the wrath to come, the Great Tribulation. 1 Thes 1:10, ¹⁰ *and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.*

(6) The hope that our Savior will soon return, to take us out of the world to “always be with the Lord” (stated above), is the blessed hope of all who have yielded their lives to Christ. Titus 2:13-14, ¹³ *waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.* The reference verse above is a major source of comfort for suffering Christians.

(7) Paul uses we, in 1 Thes 4:17, because he believed the Lord’s return could happen in his own lifetime. He communicates this same sense of urgency and anticipation to the Thessalonians. The Bible insists that Christians, must remain alert and ready for the Lord’s return at all times and in all periods.

(8) Those who claim to be Christians and part of the church, **yet are unfaithful to Christ** and do not truly have a personal saving relationship with the Lord, will be left behind. They will be left with only a false system of religion and will experience God's wrath during the tribulation period.

(9) Following the rapture is the day of the Lord, referring to a time that brings distress and judgment on the ungodly. That will be followed by the second stage of Christ's coming, when He literally returns to earth at the end of the tribulation, to defeat the forces of the Antichrist, destroy the ungodly and reign on earth for a thousand years at the end of time as we know it.

Time to look at the book of Daniel. Daniel's visions follow.

Excerpts From The Book of Daniel

At the end of chapter one, because of their wisdom, we found Daniel and his three companions taken into the king's service as a part of the king's inner circle. We are dealing with the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, when the king had a vision that troubled him greatly. He called for magicians of the realm to appear before him and we read the transaction set by the king. Chapter 2, verses 3-4, ³ *And the king said to them, "I had a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream."* ⁴ *Then the Chaldeans said to the king in Aramaic, "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation."* It seems we have a similar situation in our day and at this time. We do not have a king, nor magicians or others who claim to be servants of the people. Our form of government was set up so that those who went into the service of the people were to serve the people. They were not to serve themselves nor make foolish statements that if we, the people, would tell them what it was that troubled us, they would take care of the problem. The people's dream and vision was that of a free and democratic nation. The people already had enough of kings and rulers over them in Europe, and they wanted a different society structure. Established by our constitution, the government was to protect us from our enemies, and, that all the people of the land had a Godly moral spirit to deal fairly with our fellowman. At the same time, we were to act within the bounds of the law and in possession of the knowledge that the breaking of law could result in punishment for those violations.

We see the wisdom of king Nebuchadnezzar in his next statement in verses 5-6. ⁵ *The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, "The word from me is firm: if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins."* ⁶ *But if you show the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor. Therefore show me the dream and its interpretation."* I find it to be so funny that I am flipping the table as to who is the person being served, and who are the servants. It is the people of this nation that are supposed to be served by the leaders of government. However, it is those leaders of government who are acting as false magicians and telling us, the people, what they want us to believe.

Those false servants, the magicians and sorcerers, made this reply in verse 7. ⁷ *They answered a second time and said, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show its interpretation."* Ah yes! It sounds just like many of those in places of authority. They have to establish the ground rules for the answers they are going to give. The lies and the dishonest advice will be stated in the manner of all good lies, and have a small sprinkling of truth scattered amidst their words.

King Nebuchadnezzar makes a stand with the following statement to the magicians in verses 8-9. ⁸ *The king answered and said, "I know with certainty that you are trying to gain time, because you see that the word from me is firm"* ⁹ *if you do not make the dream known to me, there is but one sentence for you. You have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the times change. Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can show me its interpretation."* The king made a bold

move with that statement. The words of text from the Bible tells me that the king knew these pagan practitioners of magic and sorcery were just blowing smoke and only padding their own position. They were not, nor could not, tell the king what he really wanted to know. Every American should evaluate the current situation in our nation. Why are we having millions of illegal aliens cross our border and receive free food, free housing, free medical treatment, free driver's license, and, in some states, the right to vote in our elections. They are not American citizens, and it is the citizens of this land that are having to pay for all of this through our state and federal taxes. It is time we, the people, join together in the motto of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the state of Missouri that, "Together we Stand, Divided we Fall". There is no sound reason for the actions that are being taken by our government, the woke left crowd, and those with a global, technocratic idea that there must be a reset to society.

To illustrate that what I'm saying is true, look at the next statement made to the king in verses 10-11. ¹⁰ *The Chaldeans answered the king and said, "There is not a man on earth who can meet the king's demand, for no great and powerful king has asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or Chaldean. ¹¹ The thing that the king asks is difficult, and no one can show it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh."* We should all clearly see that the magicians admit that they cannot meet the king's request. False magicians admit that false gods cannot answer the desires of mankind. We should also consider that this nation, under our Constitution, needs to look at the laws and actions our officials are enacting as they push for changes being mandated upon every American (i.e., abortions, LBGTQ, Woke and open borders).

Look at the king's reply and the resultant action in verses 12-15. ¹² *Because of this the king was angry and very furious, and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed. ¹³ So the decree went out, and the wise men were about to be killed; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them. ¹⁴ Then Daniel replied with prudence and discretion to Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon. ¹⁵ He declared to Arioch, the king's captain, "Why is the decree of the king so urgent?" Then Arioch made the matter known to Daniel.* The king was so upset with the statement of the false magicians that he ordered all of the supposed wise men to be killed. When the captain of the guard got to Daniel, Daniel was not understanding the situation and asked what was the rush. Daniel was told what had happened, and because of his status before the king, he was allowed to go and ask the king a question in verse 16. ¹⁶ *And Daniel went in and requested the king to appoint him a time, that he might show the interpretation to the king.* Recall from chapter one that Daniel and his companions had found favor with the king, and the king was impressed with their wisdom. In fact, the king had found them to be ten times better than the magicians in the king's service.

Verses 17-23 provide to us the actions that Daniel took with his companions. ¹⁷ *Then Daniel went to his house and made the matter known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, ¹⁸ and told them to seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his companions might not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. ¹⁹ Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. ²⁰ Daniel answered and said:*

"Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. ²¹ He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding; ²² he reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him. ²³ To you, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, for you have given me wisdom and might, and have now made known to me what we asked of you, for you have made known to us the king's matter." Yahweh revealed the king's dream and its interpretation to Daniel. Notice, in verse 21, that God makes kings and removes kings. Do not be surprised by the elections later this year. To those who believe in a living and loving God, pray. Pray for our leaders at all levels, pray for this nation, even pray for all the illegal aliens who are now in this

country. Even pray for those who possess an understanding that Satan has sent some, who follow the wishes of the leaders of Iran, to attack this nation from within. It may not be our elected leaders who will stand and fight the good fight. It may be our God, Yahweh, who will fight for us as He fights for the nation of Israel itself.

Daniel is now ready to go and see the king to reveal his dream. Verses 24-25, ²⁴ *Therefore Daniel went in to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon. He went and said thus to him: "Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon; bring me in before the king, and I will show the king the interpretation."*

²⁵ *Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste and said thus to him: "I have found among the exiles from Judah a man who will make known to the king the interpretation."*

The king asked Daniel if he could tell him the dream? Daniel said that he couldn't, but his God could reveal mysteries, and we see the dream in verses 26-35. ²⁶ *The king declared to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, "Are you able to make known to me the dream that I have seen and its interpretation?"* ²⁷ *Daniel answered the king and said, "No wise men, enchanters, magicians, or astrologers can show to the king the mystery that the king has asked,* ²⁸ *but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream and the visions of your head as you lay in bed are these:* ²⁹ *To you, O king, as you lay in bed came thoughts of what would be after this, and he who reveals mysteries made known to you what is to be.* ³⁰ *But as for me, this mystery has been revealed to me, not because of any wisdom that I have more than all the living, but in order that the interpretation may be made known to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your mind.*

³¹ *"You saw, O king, and behold, a great image. This image, mighty and of exceeding brightness, stood before you, and its appearance was frightening.* ³² *The head of this image was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its middle and thighs of bronze,* ³³ *its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.* ³⁴ *As you looked, a stone was cut out by no human hand, and it struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.* ³⁵ *Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.*

We have learned a lot in these first two chapters of the book of Daniel, especially if a person would only stop, read and think for a moment of the meaning of things. In many ways, the book of Daniel illustrates for us the epic battle of spiritual warfare that has been going on since the sin of disobedience in the garden by Adam and Eve. In everything mankind does in life, there are always a minimum of two choices that is before everyone. We either choose right or wrong, good or evil, and either follow God's ways, or we follow Satan's ways. Recall from the book of Genesis that mankind's only job was to tend the garden and have dominion over the animals, the birds of the air and the fish of the sea. When the man disobeyed, several things changed and mankind began a new and different direction. The major item that changed by this action of disobedience was that a second kingdom was created, the kingdom of hell, Satan's domain. Also, at that time, the man lost the dominion over the creatures. From that point on, the creatures were afraid of man.

Now, look at what these first two chapters teach us. In chapter one, we learned that Daniel and his companions would not defile themselves by eating the royal food and wine that was placed before them. They went so far as to ask for a test to be done in order to determine the effects of the royal food and wine over the effects of vegetables and water. Then, after three years of learning, they were presented to the king. The king was so impressed with Daniel and his companions that the king placed them within his court servants. It is recorded, in verse 20 of chapter one, that the king when questioning these four young men, found that they were ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in the

entire kingdom of Babylon. We also see in chapter one, that Ashpenaz, chief of king Nebuchadnezzar's court officials, had found favor and sympathy for Daniel (verse 9 of chapter one). Another fact appears in verse 17. *¹⁷ As for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.* (ESV) In chapter two, we find another situation where Daniel had an influence over another of king Nebuchadnezzar's officials. In verse 14, we see Daniel questioning Arioch, the commander of the king's guard who was on assignment to kill all the magicians, etc. of the court. This would have included Daniel and his companions. Instead of killing them, Daniel asked Arioch to see the king.

All of these little things should be understood as illustrations from God to show the spiritual battle between what is right and what is wrong. But even with just two chapters from Daniel, we must go further in the questioning of the basis for these illustrations. From where did the concept of the spirit of Babylon come? There are places in Biblical text that the thought or presentation of a prophecy makes a jump forward in time to show a partial result of something placed in prophecy much earlier.

Our jump forward goes to Revelation, chapters 17 and 18. For the moment, I will only use one verse to identify the woman riding the beast. This is recorded in Revelation 17:5. *⁵ And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.* (NKJV) In chapter 18, we find the fall of Babylon. For our present purpose, let's review verses 1-8. *¹ After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was made bright with his glory. ² And he called out with a mighty voice, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable beast. ³ For all nations have drunk the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power of her luxurious living." ⁴ Then I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues; ⁵ for her sins are heaped high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. ⁶ Pay her back as she herself has paid back others, and repay her double for her deeds; mix a double portion for her in the cup she mixed. ⁷ As she glorified herself and lived in luxury, so give her a like measure of torment and mourning, since in her heart she says, 'I sit as a queen, I am no widow, and mourning I shall never see.' ⁸ For this reason her plagues will come in a single day, death and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for mighty is the Lord God who has judged her."* In the verse from chapter 17, we see that Babylon represents the mother of pagan (false) religion. It is the offshoot branches from this basic false religion who are the harlots. Babylon is also the mother spirit of all the variously named abominations that you can find throughout the Bible. In the verses from chapter 18, we see the partial fall of Babylon the great. We find two verses that are important to our present study. Notice in verse 4, a voice calls from heaven for all of God's people to come out of her. If you claim to be a follower of Jesus, you need to understand that there are denominations that are false religions. Test the spirit within the church you are attending by following the test given in 1 John 4:1-4. *¹ Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, ³ and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world. ⁴ You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.* (NKJV) If you find this spirit within your church, you need to leave that denomination and seek another that teaches the true gospel of the kingdom of God. The other verse is verse 8 which plainly states that false religions will be destroyed, along with those who practice these false religions and includes those who participate in the abominations spoken of in the Bible.

Let's go back to a question posed at the top of this page: From where did the concept of the spirit of Babylon come? In writing a previous book, *God's Full Circle*, I attempted to show from the book of Genesis, that pagan religions started even at the time of the tower of Babel, or even before. I am reusing an excerpt from my book, *God's Full Circle* to identify the three main pagan gods.

Consider this: We are dealing with spirits that are pagan spirits from thousands of years ago. Even so, as they began to influence the people at that time, they rose in authority and position of control over the human spirit to cause a tremendous amount of sin among mankind. We have already read about the three principal spirits of Baal, Istar and Molech. Understand that pagan culture was a possessed culture. It centered around practices of orgies, sexual rites and rituals as their main form of worship. Yeshua overcame their authority and pushed them into a minority position within the realm of man. Because, we have surely entered the end times, and, with the actions of mankind, we see that mankind is once again rebelling against God in a tremendous and similar manner. This has been a slow-moving takeover through the last 60 years. America took prayer out of the schools in the 1960's. We made it a law of the land that abortion was legal. We removed the written Ten Commandments from our government buildings. Of more recent slaps to the face of Almighty God, we have made same-sex marriages legal under the disguise of equal rights for all. We brought the LGBTQ community out into the open with the same kind of change of mindset as same-sex marriage. The LGBTQ community pushed so hard, and the legislators were so compliant, that they enacted a law to establish the month of June as PRIDE month, and as party time for all the degenerates to have an orgy. With all these changes, don't you feel even the smallest amount of shame for your actions? **America is following in the exact same pathways as the house of Israel and the house of Judah.** Don't you realize that God will punish all your sinful nature in the same manner as He has other groups of people? We now have the Woke left who are distorting truth in any manner they can! Everything from college classroom to kindergarten has been affected by the sins of many.

Don't you see that the story concerning the evil spirit is being fulfilled. Through the power of the blood of Yeshua, the breach was healed. That was the casting out of that spirit, however, with the lackadaisical mindset of the people in America, the spirit found the house empty, went and found seven other evil spirits to fill the house. God's wrath will be profound when it begins. Oh, by the way, we haven't even mentioned the worst, of the worst, of all this evil. They overturned the law of the land permitting abortions and the entire land went off in a pout declaring it was a harm to women's health. How indignant can you become? That act alone is the shedding of innocent blood for which God demands a repayment. From the blood of Abel to the 3 million plus babies killed for the sake of women to act foolishly in declaring that an abortion is a health condition, God will extract a repayment. Wait and see!

I have given three entities, as the demonic trio of evil, who were cast out of the house that was swept clean, given order and reason by the authority of the blood of Yeshua. They are back! Let's look at these three spirits that make up the dark trinity:

1) Baal, the possessor, chief god of the Canaanites. First time recorded in the Bible, Numbers 22:41. **Baal is the ancient sun god!** As such, he is the father of the Woke agenda. He pushes the joining of animals and man together in DNA splicing and other surgery tricks. He is the master image of all idols. Since he is the possessor, he has taken charge of our technology as a source of idol worship. Our smart phones and computers are now the house of AI, holograms, killing games and pornography.

2) Ishtar, the enchantress, consort or wife to Baal, she is the Goddess of sexual desires. As the Mistress of prostitutes, she has moved sex out of marriage and into the market place. On the darker side, she is a gender changer, mimicking her shape-shifting ability as a spirit. She is the emasculator of men, the Queen of "Drag", who has men dress as women and women dress as men. She is the goddess of PRIDE month and the fairy of all orgies.

3) Molech, the destroyer, is the orchestrator of Child sacrifices. He assists Istar in gender changes. He is the abuser of children and the poor. He assists Baal in the world sex-trade. He is the Master of abortions! He is the destroyer of families and marriages.

We should understand that the religious practices of the Babylonians included sun god worship and the worship of the king. Nevertheless, we need to understand the interpretation of the king's dream. We find that in chapter 2, verses 36-45. ³⁶ *"This was the dream. Now we will tell the king its interpretation. ³⁷ You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory, ³⁸ and into whose hand he has given, wherever they dwell, the children of man, the beasts of the field, and the birds of the heavens, making you rule over them all, you are the head of gold. ³⁹ Another kingdom inferior to you shall arise after you, and yet a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. ⁴⁰ And there shall be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron, because iron breaks to pieces and shatters all things. And like iron that crushes, it shall break and crush all these. ⁴¹ And as you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom, but some of the firmness of iron shall be in it, just as you saw iron mixed with the soft clay. ⁴² And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. ⁴³ As you saw the iron mixed with soft clay, so they will mix with one another in marriage, but they will not hold together, just as iron does not mix with clay. ⁴⁴ And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever, ⁴⁵ just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure."*

We see the result of this interpretation upon the king in verses 46-49. ⁴⁶ *Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face and paid homage to Daniel, and commanded that an offering and incense be offered up to him. ⁴⁷ The king answered and said to Daniel, "Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings, and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery." ⁴⁸ Then the king gave Daniel high honors and many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief prefect over all the wise men of Babylon. ⁴⁹ Daniel made a request of the king, and he appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon. But Daniel remained at the king's court.* Over the course of history, we have seen many times where a king allows a statement to go to their head and stupidity seems to be the result. Observe from these three verses that, the king acknowledged that Daniel's God was the God of Gods. Nevertheless, look at what king Nebuchadnezzar did in chapter 3, verse 1. ¹ *King Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its breadth six cubits. He set it up on the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.* Recall that a cubit was roughly 18 inches in length, therefore, this statue was 90 feet tall and 9 feet wide. I sure hope it was hollow in its construction. Can you imagine the wastefulness of this statue if it was made of solid gold? Nebuchadnezzar's Empire was only about five years old, and like many other kings, he was trying to use some form of religion to unite all the territories he had recently added to his empire. His religion demanded worshiping the image as a way of promoting loyalty to himself. He was not the first, nor will he be the last, world leader to use religion for political purposes or self-promotion. At any rate, the king sent for the officials of the realm to gather for a dedication of this image. Once gathered, a herald proclaimed aloud that when you hear the horn, pipes, lyre, zither, harp, and every kind of music, you are to fall down and worship the image. So, we see that even with the admission that God was God, the king went right back to pagan idol worship by making an idol of himself, king worship.

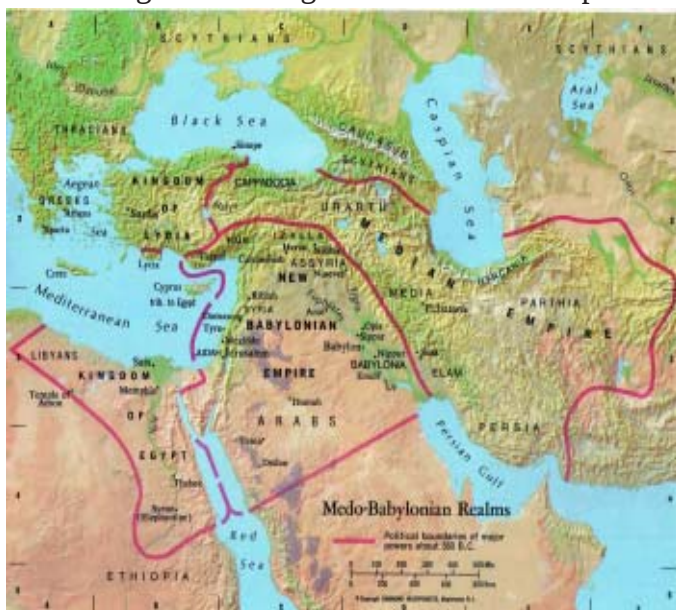
I am going to jump forward in the book of Daniel and include a portion of the story of Daniel and the lion's den. We find King Darius, in chapter six, and others in high positions had brought trumped-up charges against Daniel, and Daniel had been thrown into the lion's den. We pick up the story in verse 23 and go through verse 28. ²³ *Then the king was exceedingly glad, and commanded that Daniel be taken up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no kind of harm was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.* ²⁴ *And the king commanded, and those men who had maliciously accused Daniel were brought and cast into the den of lions-they, their children, and their wives. And before they reached the bottom of the den, the lions overpowered them and broke all their bones in pieces.*

²⁵ *Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth: "Peace be multiplied to you. ²⁶ I make a decree, that in all my royal dominion people are to tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God, enduring forever; his kingdom shall never be destroyed, and his dominion shall be to the end.* ²⁷ *He delivers and rescues; he works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, he who has saved Daniel from the power of the lions."*

²⁸ *So this Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.*

In the study of the book of Daniel, up to this point, we found two dreams (visions) about which King Nebuchadnezzar had questioned Daniel. We also read about the hand upon the wall at the banquet held by King Belshazzar. Now it is Daniel's turn to tell us about his dreams and what they meant. The first of these visions is in chapter 7, and provides for us information pertaining to the four beasts. These four beasts may be a counter parallel to King Nebuchadnezzar's vision of the giant image. If this is the case, then the characteristics of each beast is given as part of the description of each beast and the corresponding portion of the image.

For example, turn to chapter 7 and verses 1-4. ¹ *In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel saw a dream and visions of his head as he lay in his bed. Then he wrote down the dream and told the sum of the matter.* ² *Daniel declared, "I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea. ³ And four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another. ⁴ The first was like a lion and had eagles' wings. Then as I looked its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man, and the mind of a man was given to it.* The head of the image was King Nebuchadnezzar and, at one point, God gave him the state of mind of a beast. He was to eat grass like an ox. His hair became like huge bird feathers and his nails like cat claws. The first beast was a lion with the wings of an eagle. The lion is the king of beast and the eagle is the king of the birds. Both represent the head of a kingdom.



Map 1, on this page, - representing the Babylonian Empire. Recall that each of these beast represented an empire in the form of an animal and the image depicted the characteristics of that animal.

When the wings of the eagle were torn off, it could represent the period of time when God humbled the king in chapter 4. When the eagle lost its wings, it was lifted up and told to walk as a man. The mind of a man was given to it. Wouldn't that be a counter opposite to what happen to King Nebuchadnezzar. Wasn't his mind changed to that of a beast, and he was on all fours eating grass.

The second beast was like a bear, as shown in verse 5. ⁵ *And behold, another beast, a second one, like a bear. It was raised up on one side. It had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and it was told, 'Arise, devour much flesh.'* This beast would correspond to the silver chest of the image, and would be the Medo-Persian empire. The three ribs could represent their conquest over Babylon, Libya and Egypt. See Map 2 below.



Map 2 - Representing the Persian Empire and illustrated as a bear.

The third beast is shown in verse 6. ⁶ *After this I looked, and behold, another, like a leopard, with four wings of a bird on its back. And the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it.* This beast would be the empire of Alexander the Great. See Map 3 on the next page. The wings are representative of his rapid conquest. The four heads are the four kingdoms that come out of his empire that was divided after his death. See Map 4, on the next page, for the four kingdoms to come from Alexander's Empire after his death.

We find the vision of the fourth beast in verses 7-8. ⁷ *After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.* ⁸ *I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots. And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.* The fourth beast was more powerful than the others. It equates to the Roman empire and represents the legs and feet of the image in King Nebuchadnezzar's dream. The ten horns represent the ten toes on the image, or the ten kings under the power of the Antichrist in the Revelation. The little horn represents the Antichrist himself, and the three plucked up horns are kings overpowered by the Antichrist. I have not placed a map of the Roman Empire here. However, as we progress through this study, I will bring in two more maps to get us to the Roman Empire. Remember, Daniel did not see an animal for the fourth beast. Daniel identified this fourth beast as *terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong*.

The verses between 9 and 14 take us from the presence of earth to the throne room of God. Verses 9-14, ⁹ *"As I looked, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days took his seat; his clothing*



Map 3 - Representing the Grecian Empire of Alexander the Great, depicted as the Leopard.



Map 4 - represents the four kingdoms established after the death of Alexander by his four generals. Notice also that the influence of the Roman empire, at that time, was only over the country of Italy.

was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire. ¹⁰ A stream of fire issued and came out from before him; a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened. ¹¹ “I looked then because of the sound of the great words that the horn was speaking. And as I looked, the beast was killed, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. ¹² As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

¹³ “I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. ¹⁴ And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed. That picture was not given to Daniel when he saw King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. However, the last portion of these verses (13-14), reflects the great stone not made by hands that crashed into the image, in the king’s dream and destroyed those Gentile empires.

Daniel is perplexed by this vision. While he was able to interpret the king’s dream, this dream did not make sense to Daniel. He sought guidance and assistance from a watchman (angel - see verse 16 for someone standing there). The verses from 15-28, provide us with an understanding of what Daniel was told as an interpretation of his dream. ¹⁵ “As for me, Daniel, my spirit within me was anxious, and the visions of my head alarmed me. ¹⁶ I approached one of those who stood there and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of the things. ¹⁷ ‘These four great beasts are four kings who shall arise out of the earth. ¹⁸ But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, forever and ever.’

¹⁹ “Then I desired to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the rest, exceedingly terrifying, with its teeth of iron and claws of bronze, and which devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet, ²⁰ and about the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn that came up and before which three of them fell, the horn that had eyes and a mouth that spoke great things, and that seemed greater than its companions. ²¹ As I looked, this horn made war with the saints and prevailed over them, ²² until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom.

²³ “Thus he said: ‘As for the fourth beast, there shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, which shall be different from all the kingdoms, and it shall devour the whole earth, and trample it down, and break it to pieces. ²⁴ As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings shall arise, and another shall arise after them; he shall be different from the former ones, and shall put down three kings. ²⁵ He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.

²⁶ But the court shall sit in judgment, and his dominion shall be taken away, to be consumed and destroyed to the end. ²⁷ And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them.’

²⁸ “Here is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly alarmed me, and my color changed, but I kept the matter in my heart.”

Daniel, and anyone who reads the book of Daniel, was dealing with pure prophecy. God’s Word will always explain pure prophecy within the text itself. There is no reason why anyone would have to retrieve another book to find out what pure prophecy is trying to teach us. All we need to do is study what the one standing there told to Daniel. For an example, let’s go back just a little to look at the dominion given to the Son of Man.

The kingdom belongs to the Son of Man, but the saints receive the kingdom and share in Christ's reign over the kingdom. The Saints are those who are holy, meaning they are spiritually pure, complete in character and separated from evil.

Let's go forward and look at the interpretation given by the one standing nearby. The little horn will appear after the ten horns and will occupy the area of the old Roman Empire during the end-times. The little horn mentioned here is different from the horn that was *little* in verses 8-9. That horn comes out of the Greek kingdom and represents Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who was an antichrist type figure. The little horn in this verse comes out of the Roman beast and takes control of three kingdoms by force. The remaining kingdoms seem to delegate their powers to him. He speaks blasphemy against the Most High. He will wear out the saints as he tries to change *the times* and distort God's laws. He will continue to persecute followers of Christ for a period of three and one-half years until he is destroyed. The description of these verses identifies this little horn with the first beast in the book of Revelation.

That concludes another chapter. We turn to chapter 8 and find another vision that appeared to Daniel. This dream came to Daniel in the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar. I'm going to break this chapter into two parts. Verses 1-14 give the dream, and verses 15-27 provide the interpretation. Here is the first half, in verses 1-14. ¹ *In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me, Daniel, after that which appeared to me at the first.* ² *And I saw in the vision; and when I saw, I was in Susa the capital, which is in the province of Elam. And I saw in the vision, and I was at the Ulai canal.* ³ *I raised my eyes and saw, and behold, a ram standing on the bank of the canal. It had two horns, and both horns were high, but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last.* ⁴ *I saw the ram charging westward and northward and southward. No beast could stand before him, and there was no one who could rescue from his power. He did as he pleased and became great.*

⁵ *As I was considering, behold, a male goat came from the west across the face of the whole earth, without touching the ground. And the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes.* ⁶ *He came to the ram with the two horns, which I had seen standing on the bank of the canal, and he ran at him in his powerful wrath.* ⁷ *I saw him come close to the ram, and he was enraged against him and struck the ram and broke his two horns. And the ram had no power to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled on him. And there was no one who could rescue the ram from his power.* ⁸ *Then the goat became exceedingly great, but when he was strong, the great horn was broken, and instead of it there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.*

⁹ *Out of one of them came a little horn, which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the glorious land.* ¹⁰ *It grew great, even to the host of heaven. And some of the host and some of the stars it threw down to the ground and trampled on them.* ¹¹ *It became great, even as great as the Prince of the host. And the regular burnt offering was taken away from him, and the place of his sanctuary was overthrown.* ¹² *And a host will be given over to it together with the regular burnt offering because of transgression, and it will throw truth to the ground, and it will act and prosper.* ¹³ *Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to the one who spoke, "For how long is the vision concerning the regular burnt offering, the transgression that makes desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled underfoot?"* ¹⁴ *And he said to me, "For 2,300 evenings and mornings. Then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state."*

My, oh my, there is a lot to study in these verses. It seems we have a problem right at the beginning. In verse 2, we may find any of three different versions of what the verse even reads. Here is the verse from the King James (KJV), The New King James (NKJV) and the English Standard Version (ESV): ² *And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I was at Shushan in the palace, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai.* Dan 8:2 (KJV) ² *I saw in the vision, and it so happened while I was looking, that I was in Shushan, the citadel, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision that I was by the River Ulai.* Dan 8:2 (NKJV)

² *And I saw in the vision; and when I saw, I was in Susa the capital, which is in the province of Elam. And I saw in the vision, and I was at the Ulai canal.* Dan 8:2 (ESV)

According to Strong's, there are two words that I looked up. First, Shushan is the capital of Persia. Strong's number 7800, shûwshan, *shoo-shan'*, capital of Persia. The second word is palace, as used in the KJV, Strong's number 1002, bîyrâh, *bee-raw'*, castle or palace. Well, at least we know where Daniel was.

In verse three, we need to understand that the ram with the two horns represents the Medo-Persian Empire. In verse 5, we find a male goat with a horn between its eyes, looking something like a unicorn. In verses 6-7, we see the goat charging at the ram, overturning the ram and trampling the ram while on the ground. This goat represents Alexander the Great and his Greek army. This empire overthrew the Medo-Persian Empire. In verse 8, we see the Greek Empire becoming exceedingly great, but, the horn between its eyes was broken and four little horns replaced the one horn. This depicts the death of Alexander, and the four generals that took the Greek Empire and divided it up into four kingdoms. Let's use another map to show the breakup of Alexander's Empire. Once again, recall that the term beast is actually meaning the characteristics of an animal to reflect the overall character of a country.

Map 5, on the next page, will illustrate the rival kingdoms of the defunct Grecian Empire and the enlarging of the Roman Empire.

In verse 9, we find a little horn that came out of one of the four horns and grew exceedingly great in the south, the east and the glorious land. We have to shift over to the historical facts to see some of this vision of Daniel's. This little horn is the representation of the Greek ruler, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who in 168 BCE set up an image of the Greek god Zeus in the Jerusalem temple and sacrificed a pig on the altar. The two holy speakers, in the verses of 13-14, indicate that it will be 2,300 evenings and mornings or 1,150 days before the restoration of the temple will take place.

Now, for the remainder of chapter 8, verses 15-27. ¹⁵ *When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it. And behold, there stood before me one having the appearance of a man.* ¹⁶ *And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, and it called, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision."* ¹⁷ *So he came near where I stood. And when he came, I was frightened and fell on my face. But he said to me, "Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end."*

¹⁸ *And when he had spoken to me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face to the ground. But he touched me and made me stand up.* ¹⁹ *He said, "Behold, I will make known to you what shall be at the latter end of the indignation, for it refers to the appointed time of the end."* ²⁰ *As for the ram that you saw with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and Persia.* ²¹ *And the goat is the king of Greece. And the great horn between his eyes is the first king.* ²² *As for the horn that was broken, in place of which four others arose, four kingdoms shall arise from his nation, but not with his power.* ²³ *And at the latter end of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their limit, a king of bold face, one who understands riddles, shall arise.* ²⁴ *His power shall be great, but not by his own power; and he shall cause fearful destruction and shall succeed in what he does, and destroy mighty men and the people who are the saints.* ²⁵ *By his cunning he shall make deceit prosper under his hand, and in his own mind he shall become great. Without warning he shall destroy many. And he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes, and he shall be broken, but by no human hand.* ²⁶ *The vision of the evenings and the mornings that has been told is true, but seal up the vision, for it refers to many days from now."*

²⁷ *And I, Daniel, was overcome and lay sick for some days. Then I rose and went about the king's business, but I was appalled by the vision and did not understand it.*



Map 5 - Illustrates the Rival Powers in c. 192 B. C. and the enlarging of the Roman Empire.

We have seen the vision and had to give some meaning to portions of the vision itself. In the interpretation, we will confirm what we have learned in the first half of chapter 8. In verses 15-16, we find an unusual statement. A spirit, in the form of a man, gave instruction to Gabriel to teach Daniel what the vision meant. This spirit, who speaks to Gabriel, must be either God, Himself, or Yeshua (Jesus). Only those two would have the authority to give instructions to Gabriel. Verse 17 tells us that Daniel was fearful, however, Gabriel told Daniel that the *“vision was for the time of the end”*.

Daniel must have relaxed after being told this because, verse 18 says, he fell into a deep sleep. Gabriel touched Daniel and made him stand-up. Verse 19 indicates that Gabriel confirmed the timing of this vision by saying, *“Behold, I will make known to you what shall be at the latter end of the indignation, for it refers to the appointed time of the end.”* Gabriel continued with his explanation to Daniel. Verse 20 confirms that the ram with the two horns represented the Medo-Persian Empire. Verse 21 confirms that the goat represented the Greek Empire of Alexander. The great horn was its first king, Alexander. Verse 22 explains the horn that was broken and the four little horns that came up at the death of Alexander as four kingdoms formed from the Greek Empire.

We get into the hardest part of this vision in the verses from 23-26. The thoughts presented by those who have studied these verses, far more than I have, indicate that these verses are foretelling of an antichrist type, Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who desecrated the temple in Jerusalem, set up an image of Zeus and sacrificed a pig on the alter. This did, in fact, happen and is recorded in the annals of history. However, it is believed that Gabriel foretold this to Daniel, but, at the same time, foretold of the Antichrist or the beast of Revelation, that is also foretold in this vision. Finally, verse 27 states that Daniel was overcome and sick for several days prior to going back to performing his duties for the king. Nevertheless, Daniel states he was appalled by the vision and that he did not understand it.

We have another time shift in chapter 9. Chapter 8 was recorded while Daniel was under the kingship of Belshazzar, a Babylonian. Chapter 9 was recorded while Daniel was under the kingship of Darius, a Mede. Daniel, somehow, had the knowledge of the prophet Jeremiah and knew the appointed time of seventy years was getting close. The closeness that Daniel had to the Most High God caused him to offer a prayer of intercession to God for all the people of Israel. This clearly was meant for both the House of Israel and the House of Judah. Daniel's prayer of intercession is recorded in the verses from 3 through 19. ³ *Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.* ⁴ *I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession, saying, “O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments,* ⁵ *we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules.* ⁶ *We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.* ⁷ *To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us open shame, as at this day, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those who are near and those who are far away, in all the lands to which you have driven them, because of the treachery that they have committed against you.*

⁸ *To us, O Lord, belongs open shame, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against you.* ⁹ *To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him* ¹⁰ *and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God by walking in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.* ¹¹ *All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice. And the curse and oath that are written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against him.* ¹² *He has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled us, by bringing upon us a great calamity. For under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what has been done against Jerusalem.* ¹³ *As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this calamity has come upon us; yet we have not entreated the favor of the Lord our God, turning from our iniquities and gaining insight by your truth.* ¹⁴ *Therefore the*

Lord has kept ready the calamity and has brought it upon us, for the Lord our God is righteous in all the works that he has done, and we have not obeyed his voice. ¹⁵ And now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and have made a name for yourself, as at this day, we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

¹⁶ “O Lord, according to all your righteous acts, let your anger and your wrath turn away from your city Jerusalem, your holy hill, because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and your people have become a byword among all who are around us. ¹⁷ Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his pleas for mercy, and for your own sake, O Lord, make your face to shine upon your sanctuary, which is desolate. ¹⁸ O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name. For we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because of your great mercy. ¹⁹ O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, for your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people are called by your name.”

If there is anyone, who claims to be a Christian and a true believer in Yeshua (Jesus), who can read this prayer of Daniel’s and not come away in tears is beyond me. It is because the words of Daniel reflect the rebellion that mankind has had toward God since the giving of the Ten Commandments in the wilderness. We, believers, are to boldly claim our belief. We are to seek God daily and obey His law and His Commandments. I happen to be a person who has felt led to understand that the scattering of the House of Israel has marched down through history to today. The people of the United States who are of European descent, especially of English Isles descent, are Israelite. We are not Jews, but Israelite. If we follow God’s ways, we are to understand our brothers, the Jews, and stand with them and for them. We are not to follow in the influence of Satan, who hates the Jews and hates us for being Israelite. We are in the End-Times and Satan understands God’s plan for all of mankind. Satan hates anything that God has created that causes worship toward the Most High God. He hates Jews, Jesus, Jerusalem, the Bible and all those who worship the Most High God. These words from Daniel should give us an understanding of mankind’s rebellion against God, along with the wrath that He has stated within His Word, that will occur because of disobedience! Read and understand, this will happen, and the only way to avoid that wrath is with a belief in Christ as the Son of God!

In verses 20-23, we see that Gabriel was sent, once again, to Daniel to provide to him an understanding of End-Time events. Here are those verses. ²⁰ *While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my plea before the Lord my God for the holy hill of my God,* ²¹ *while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice.* ²² *He made me understand, speaking with me and saying, “O Daniel, I have now come out to give you insight and understanding.* ²³ *At the beginning of your pleas for mercy a word went out, and I have come to tell it to you, for you are greatly loved. Therefore consider the word and understand the vision.* Notice the wording that Daniel is speaking about all Israel in his prayer in verses 7, 11 and 20. Gabriel brought to Daniel an answer and another vision. This vision is the seventy weeks that Daniel is to understand. First, here are the verses themselves, verses 24-27. ²⁴ *“Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place.* ²⁵ *Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time.* ²⁶ *And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed.* ²⁷ *And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to*

sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.”

In the reading of these verses, who would have thought that four verses of scripture would cover much more than two thousand years of human history? I can only pray that my God will provide me with insight to completely explain these seventy weeks. Yes! I am assisted by the commentary that is laid out in the ESV Bible. Together, I hope and pray these seventy weeks are explained. The words that Gabriel brought to Daniel are broken down into different periods of time for specific events to happen.

The first period, we need to understand, is the seventy weeks itself. In this passage, a week represents a period of seven years, so we see that this entire prophecy will cover a total period of 490 years. Now, we are dealing with prophecy and the time stated is God’s time. Verse 24 speaks of many things that must occur over the whole of the seventy weeks. Verse 25 begins by revealing to us that 69 of these weeks (483 years) will pass between the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the coming of an anointed prince. Because of the wording that the beginning of this period is the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem, and not the rebuilding of the temple, most likely means that this date should be 457 BCE when Ezra returned and began to rebuild the city. That would bring the conclusion of this period in 27 CE when Christ (the anointed prince) began His earthly ministry. I know you just added these two figures together and ended with 484 years, and then said, “Ah, I caught you. It doesn’t add correctly.” Now it is my turn, remember that there is no such thing as the year zero, therefore, a total of 483 years as stated.

There is a definite gap between the 69th and the 70th week. Some have suggested that this period will be the time between the giving of the Holy Spirit to empower the church as the beginning of the church age, and the ending will be the rapture of the church. I can’t go along with that thought. Here is my reason. We do not know when the rapture of the church is going to happen, however, we do know that the seven year (the one final week) period at the end of time will begin with the signing of the covenant of peace with Israel. That is a definite known date to look toward. In the middle of this 7 year period, the person making the peace deal will be filled with the authority and power of Satan, and will end the daily sacrifices at the temple, make himself to be god and make desolate the land of Israel until the second coming of the True Prince of the Most High God. That brings to a close chapter 9.

Chapter 10 appears to be rather straight forward and not very complex. As such, I am using the full account of the verses from chapter 10, and then a short summary of my interpretation. Verses 1-21, *¹ In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar. And the word was true, and it was a great conflict. And he understood the word and had understanding of the vision.*

² In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three weeks. ³ I ate no delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, for the full three weeks. ⁴ On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the great river (that is, the Tigris) ⁵ I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, a man clothed in linen, with a belt of fine gold from Uphaz around his waist. ⁶ His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a multitude. ⁷ And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision, but a great trembling fell upon them, and they fled to hide themselves. ⁸ So I was left alone and saw this great vision, and no strength was left in me. My radiant appearance was fearfully changed, and I retained no strength. ⁹ Then I heard the sound of his words, and as I heard the sound of his words, I fell on my face in deep sleep with my face to the ground.

¹⁰ And behold, a hand touched me and set me trembling on my hands and knees. ¹¹ And he said to me, “O Daniel, man greatly loved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for now I have been sent to you.” And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. ¹² Then he

said to me, *“Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words.”*¹³ The prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days, but Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I was left there with the kings of Persia,¹⁴ and came to make you understand what is to happen to your people in the latter days. For the vision is for days yet to come.”

¹⁵ When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and was mute.¹⁶ And behold, one in the likeness of the children of man touched my lips. Then I opened my mouth and spoke. I said to him who stood before me, *“O my lord, by reason of the vision pains have come upon me, and I retain no strength.”*¹⁷ How can my lord’s servant talk with my lord? For now no strength remains in me, and no breath is left in me.”

¹⁸ Again one having the appearance of a man touched me and strengthened me.¹⁹ And he said, *“O man greatly loved, fear not, peace be with you; be strong and of good courage.”* And as he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, *“Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.”*²⁰ Then he said, *“Do you know why I have come to you? But now I will return to fight against the prince of Persia; and when I go out, behold, the prince of Greece will come.”*²¹ But I will tell you what is inscribed in the book of truth: there is none who contends by my side against these except Michael, your prince.

Chapter 11 begins with Daniel giving a prophecy concerning Darius the Mede. We can see this in verse one.¹ *“And as for me, in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood up to confirm and strengthen him.”* From this verse on through the remainder of chapter 11, we have words from the Bible and historical events in the affairs of Persia and Greece. Since this is a very challenging chapter, let’s go through this chapter a little at a time and explain what we have read from the Biblical verses. All the verses for chapter 11 will be from the ESV translation. Verse 2,² *“And now I will show you the truth. Behold, three more kings shall arise in Persia, and a fourth shall be far richer than all of them. And when he has become strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece.”* Daniel proceeds to give a prophecy outlining the key events leading to the rise of Antiochus Epiphanes. Antiochus was the Greek ruler who defiled and violated the Jerusalem temple. Prior to all of this, Persia would go through three more kings, Cambyses, Pseudo-Smerdis or Gaumata and Darius. Then, a fourth king, Xerxes, would fight against Greece. With the mention of Greece, no more is said about Persia, though Persia continued for a while. The content of this chapter shows the detail and accuracy of Biblical prophecy as it relates to the history of nations and world events, as these events were still centuries away when the prophecy was given. Not only do we have text of history pertaining to Xerxes and Persia, but we also have the second source of information from the book of Esther in the Bible.

Verse 3,³ *“Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion and do as he wills.”* This simple little verse is referring to Alexander the Great of Greece. Verse 4 provides a little more information toward the breakup of the Greek Empire after the death of Alexander. Here is verse 4,⁴ *“And as soon as he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity, nor according to the authority with which he ruled, for his kingdom shall be plucked up and go to others besides these.”* Alexander died in his thirties and he had no heir. His Empire went to four of his generals, who created kingdoms of their own. Lysimachus took Thrace and Bithynia. We will call this the east since the account in Daniel 11:4 says the Greek Empire would be divided toward the four winds of heaven. Cassander took Greece and Macedon, the west. The two major kingdoms would be under Seleucus, who took Babylonia and Syria, the north. And finally, Ptolemy, who took Egypt, the Holy Land and Arabia, the south.

Verses 5-6 provides for us some of the early fighting between these generals that took place after Alexander died. Here are those two verses.⁵ *“Then the king of the south shall be strong, but one of his princes shall be stronger than he and shall rule, and his authority shall be a great authority.”*⁶ *“After some years they shall make an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the south shall come to*

the king of the north to make an agreement. But she shall not retain the strength of her arm, and he and his arm shall not endure, but she shall be given up, and her attendants, he who fathered her, and he who supported her in those times. Ptolemy I Soter of Egypt (323-285 BCE) was the king of the south, and Seleucus I Nicator (311-280 BCE) was king of the north. After several years, Berenice, the daughter of Ptolemy II Philadelphus of Egypt (285-246 BCE), married Antiochus II Theos (261-246 BCE), the king of the north. Antiochus had divorced his former wife, Laodice, in order to marry Berenice. In 246 BCE, Ptolemy II died, and about the same time Laodice murdered Berenice, Antiochus and their son.

Verses 7-9, ⁷ *“And from a branch from her roots one shall arise in his place. He shall come against the army and enter the fortress of the king of the north, and he shall deal with them and shall prevail. ⁸ He shall also carry off to Egypt their gods with their metal images and their precious vessels of silver and gold, and for some years he shall refrain from attacking the king of the north. ⁹ Then the latter shall come into the realm of the king of the south but shall return to his own land.* The one from a branch from her roots is Berenice’s brother, Ptolemy III Euergetes of Egypt (246-221 BCE), who defeated the king of the north, Seleucus II Callinicus (246-226 BCE). Ptolemy III entered the fortress (probably the Syrian city of Antioch) and took back to Egypt both Syrian images and the Egyptian images that had been stolen by the Persian King Cambyses when he conquered Egypt in 525 BCE. Ptolemy III returned to Egypt with a lot of plunder, but he refrained from any further attacks on Seleucus. After a time, Seleucus attempted to invade Egypt to recover what he had lost, but he failed and was forced to go back to his own land.

Verses 10-13, ¹⁰ *“His sons shall wage war and assemble a multitude of great forces, which shall keep coming and overflow and pass through, and again shall carry the war as far as his fortress. ¹¹ Then the king of the south, moved with rage, shall come out and fight against the king of the north. And he shall raise a great multitude, but it shall be given into his hand. ¹² And when the multitude is taken away, his heart shall be exalted, and he shall cast down tens of thousands, but he shall not prevail. ¹³ For the king of the north shall again raise a multitude, greater than the first. And after some years he shall come on with a great army and abundant supplies.* The two sons of Seleucus II were Seleucus III Ceraunus (226-223 BCE) and Antiochus III the Great (223-187 BCE). Antiochus III was defeated by Ptolemy IV Philopater (221-203 BCE) with a loss of nearly 10,000 Syrian soldiers at the fortress of Raphia in southern Israel.

Verses 14-17, ¹⁴ *“In those times many shall rise against the king of the south, and the violent among your own people shall lift themselves up in order to fulfill the vision, but they shall fail. ¹⁵ Then the king of the north shall come and throw up siege works and take a well-fortified city. And the forces of the south shall not stand, or even his best troops, for there shall be no strength to stand. ¹⁶ But he who comes against him shall do as he wills, and none shall stand before him. And he shall stand in the glorious land, with destruction in his hand. ¹⁷ He shall set his face to come with the strength of his whole kingdom, and he shall bring terms of an agreement and perform them. He shall give him the daughter of women to destroy the kingdom, but it shall not stand or be to his advantage.* Antiochus III attacked Egypt in 200 BCE, but was crushed by the king of the south, Ptolemy V Epiphanes (203-181 BCE). Antiochus then gained new strength and conquered the fortified city of Sidon. By 197 BCE, Antiochus had taken control of the glorious land, referring to the land of Israel.

Verses 18-19, ¹⁸ *Afterward he shall turn his face to the coastlands and shall capture many of them, but a commander shall put an end to his insolence. Indeed, he shall turn his insolence back upon him. ¹⁹ Then he shall turn his face back toward the fortresses of his own land, but he shall stumble and fall, and shall not be found.* After several years, Antiochus III made a peace treaty with Egypt (194 BCE) and gave his daughter, Cleopatra I, as wife to Ptolemy V. Then Antiochus III advanced north but was defeated at Magnesia in Asia Minor in 190 BCE. Later (187 BCE), he died in an attempt to loot a pagan temple in the province of Elymais.

Verse 20, ²⁰ *“Then shall arise in his place one who shall send an exactor of tribute for the glory of the kingdom. But within a few days he shall be broken, neither in anger nor in battle.* The murder of Seleucus IV Philopater (187-175 BCE) was arranged by his finance minister, Heliodorus.

Verses 21-27, ²¹ *In his place shall arise a contemptible person to whom royal majesty has not been given. He shall come in without warning and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.* ²² *Armies shall be utterly swept away before him and broken, even the prince of the covenant.* ²³ *And from the time that an alliance is made with him he shall act deceitfully, and he shall become strong with a small people.* ²⁴ *Without warning he shall come into the richest parts of the province, and he shall do what neither his fathers nor his fathers’ fathers have done, scattering among them plunder, spoil, and goods. He shall devise plans against strongholds, but only for a time.* ²⁵ *And he shall stir up his power and his heart against the king of the south with a great army. And the king of the south shall wage war with an exceedingly great and mighty army, but he shall not stand, for plots shall be devised against him.* ²⁶ *Even those who eat his food shall break him. His army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain.* ²⁷ *And as for the two kings, their hearts shall be bent on doing evil. They shall speak lies at the same table, but to no avail, for the end is yet to be at the time appointed.* This chapter has been leading up to the coming of the contemptible person, Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164 BCE), the brother of Seleucus IV. He seized power while the rightful heir to the throne, Seleucus’s son, Demetrius, was still very young. Antiochus (the *little horn* mentioned in chapter 8:9-14, 23-25) made several military campaigns against Egypt. He murdered the prince of the covenant (the high priest, Onias, in 170 BCE, verse 22). His treaties with other nations were based on conspiracy and deceit. He supported Ptolemy Philometor against Ptolemy Euergetes for selfish reasons, and he made unprovoked attacks on rich cities in times of peace (verse 24). His attacks on Egypt were successful because those who should have helped Egypt did not, and Antiochus was able to return home with extreme wealth (verses 25-28).

Verses 28-31, ²⁸ *And he shall return to his land with great wealth, but his heart shall be set against the holy covenant. And he shall work his will and return to his own land.*

²⁹ *“At the time appointed he shall return and come into the south, but it shall not be this time as it was before.* ³⁰ *For ships of Kittim shall come against him, and he shall be afraid and withdraw, and shall turn back and be enraged and take action against the holy covenant. He shall turn back and pay attention to those who forsake the holy covenant.* ³¹ *Forces from him shall appear and profane the temple and fortress, and shall take away the regular burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate.* Antiochus developed a hatred of the Jews and their holy, God given law. He was persuaded that Greek culture and language were superior to all others. But the Jews claimed that their religion was exclusive (it claimed that there was only one true God, and that God alone determined the way for people to have a relationship with Him). These same attitudes of cultural superiority among nations and hatred toward Christians have produced, and will continue to produce, much suffering in the world. About 168 BCE, Antiochus invaded Egypt again, but the ships of the western coastlands (verse 30) headed by the Roman consul Laenas, defeated him, and he turned back to his own land. There he took out his frustration against the Jews with persecution. Some Jews yielded and betrayed the holy covenant, which was the basis of their special relationship with God, and joined Antiochus. These rebellious and unfaithful Jews tolerated the persecution of their countrymen and invited Antiochus to introduce Greek culture and religion to their society (verse 30). That is when Antiochus marched to Jerusalem, offered a pig on the temple altar, stopped the daily sacrifices required by God’s law and set up an image of the Greek god Zeus. This altar to Zeus is the abomination that makes desolate (verse 31), which is a sign of another abomination that Jesus said will occur in the last days of this age. All of this is an example of the spiritual corruption and wickedness that can result when God’s people allow ungodly, worldly culture to influence their lifestyle and relationship with God.

Verses 32-35, ³² *He shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant, but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action.* ³³ *And the wise among the people shall make many understand, though for some days they shall stumble by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder.* ³⁴ *When they stumble, they shall receive a little help. And many shall join themselves to them with flattery,* ³⁵ *and some of the wise shall stumble, so that they may be refined, purified, and made white, until the time of the end, for it still awaits the appointed time.* Some of the Jews were flattered and fooled by false compliments and chose to join the enemy, Antiochus. But in all the troubling times throughout the Old Testament, often caused by the sin of this wayward people, God always had, at least, a small group of Jews who remained faithful to Him. This situation was no different. There were those who knew God and remained loyal to Him. Though the persecution by Antiochus continued, the faithful Jews under the leadership of Judas Maccabeus, of the Hasmonean priestly family, strongly resisted. Through covert warfare, they eventually wore down Antiochus and caused him to take his armies home. After that, the temple was ritually purified and rededicated to God. Part of this ritual involved relighting the lamps, an event still celebrated by the Jews as the Feast of Hanukkah. God has not yet completed His dealings with the Jews, however, and the people will continue to go through a spiritual purifying process all the way through the end-time period. This verse is a small reminder of the importance of a close relationship with God. Even today, those who truly know God will have the wisdom to recognize, along with the strength to resist, ungodliness. This resistance is not through physical warfare, because Christ is patiently extending mercy and reserving His judgment until the end, but through trust in God and the development of spiritual disciplines. These include prayer, Bible study and godly character that will hold up under pressure, even to the point of death.

Verses 36-45, ³⁶ *“And the king shall do as he wills. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished; for what is decreed shall be done.* ³⁷ *He shall pay no attention to the gods of his fathers, or to the one beloved by women. He shall not pay attention to any other god, for he shall magnify himself above all.* ³⁸ *He shall honor the god of fortresses instead of these. A god whom his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts.* ³⁹ *He shall deal with the strongest fortresses with the help of a foreign god. Those who acknowledge him he shall load with honor. He shall make them rulers over many and shall divide the land for a price.*

⁴⁰ *“At the time of the end, the king of the south shall attack him, but the king of the north shall rush upon him like a whirlwind, with chariots and horsemen, and with many ships. And he shall come into countries and shall overflow and pass through.* ⁴¹ *He shall come into the glorious land. And tens of thousands shall fall, but these shall be delivered out of his hand: Edom and Moab and the main part of the Ammonites.* ⁴² *He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape.* ⁴³ *He shall become ruler of the treasures of gold and of silver, and all the precious things of Egypt, and the Libyans and the Cushites shall follow in his train.* ⁴⁴ *But news from the east and the north shall alarm him, and he shall go out with great fury to destroy and devote many to destruction.* ⁴⁵ *And he shall pitch his palatial tents between the sea and the glorious holy mountain. Yet he shall come to his end, with none to help him.* The prophecies in these verses do not fit Antiochus. The mention of **the time of the end**, verses 35 and 40, tells us that this prophecy is jumping ahead to the end of this present age to the one whom Antiochus symbolized, the Antichrist. The Antichrist will be a dictatorial ruler who will present himself as greater than any god and will speak astonishing things against the Most High God. He will not acknowledge the gods [God] of his fathers (verse 37; Hebrew *`elohim*, which can mean either *gods* or *God*); neither will he acknowledge the one beloved by women (some take this to be Tammuz, a Babylonian fertility god). That is to say, he will have no consideration for any authority, earthly or spiritual, other than himself. The only *god* he will honor will be the god of fortresses (verse 38), which may refer to his own ability to make war or the god of war, Mars. He will also

redive the territories he conquers in order to secure his power and promote his own gain. Though the Antichrist will be successful for a time, there will be further battles with another king of the north and another king of the south. This conflict will develop into the battle of Armageddon. This is the stage where the Antichrist will, finally and completely, be defeated by the sword coming out of Christ's mouth (by His Word). Finally, the Antichrist will be thrown into the fiery lake (Revelation 19:20).

That concludes chapter 11, and, we are now ready to address the final chapter in the book of Daniel. That portion of Daniel's prophecies will provide us a forward looking view to the time of the end as we know it. As with chapter 11, I will use the aid of the ESV commentary and will use the verses as recorded in the ESV translation. Chapter 12:1, ¹ *"At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book.* Michael is the archangel protector over Israel. Daniel predicts a time of extreme trouble for Israel, fulfilling Jeremiah 30:7. But, God's purpose is still to rescue those whose names are written **in the book**. They are those who have accepted forgiveness for their sins, entrusted their lives to God and have a personal relationship with Him because of Christ's personal sacrifice. Among these will be the Jews who accepted Yeshua (Jesus) as their Messiah and placed their faith in Him as Savior and Lord, the Forgiver of their sins and Leader of their lives.

Verse 2, ² *And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.* This verse contains the clearest Old Testament reference to the resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked, those who have followed the true God and those who have rejected Him. This points to the fact that there are only two destinies for all people. We all choose for ourselves whether to follow Yeshua on the path to eternal life, or reject Him and take the path that leads to eternal punishment. Yeshua Himself explains that there are two distinct resurrections in John 5:28-29. ²⁸ *Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice* ²⁹ *and come forth-those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.* (NKJV)

Verse 3, ³ *And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.* When the Old Testament refers to the wise, it usually means the godly. They show their wisdom, not only by how they live, but also by how their lives and testimonies influence others to follow God. The fact that they shall shine means their lives will be spiritually transformed, and God's glory will be reflected in and through their lives. The lives of all who follow Yeshua should light the way for others to come to Christ.

Verse 4-9, ⁴ *But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase."*

⁵ *Then I, Daniel, looked, and behold, two others stood, one on this bank of the stream and one on that bank of the stream.* ⁶ *And someone said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream, "How long shall it be till the end of these wonders?"* ⁷ *And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream; he raised his right hand and his left hand toward heaven and swore by him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time, and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end all these things would be finished.* ⁸ *I heard, but I did not understand. Then I said, "O my lord, what shall be the outcome of these things?"* ⁹ *He said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed until the time of the end.* Daniel is told to **seal the book** because the prophecies are not just for his own time, but for *the time of the end* as well. They are to be a source of encouragement to those who will be alive during that time. Daniel then sees two angels, one on each side of the river, asking how long it would be until that time is completed. The man clothed in linen promised, on God's honor, that the time would be three and one-half years, probably referring to the last half of the 70th week of seven years (refer to 9:27).

Verses 10-13, ¹⁰ *Many shall purify themselves and make themselves white and be refined, but the wicked shall act wickedly. And none of the wicked shall understand, but those who are wise shall understand.* ¹¹ *And from the time that the regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there shall be 1,290 days.* ¹² *Blessed is he who waits and arrives at the 1,335 days.* ¹³ *But go your way till the end. And you shall rest and shall stand in your allotted place at the end of the days.*” It is revealed to Daniel that the full understanding of the prophecy will not come until *the time of the end* (verse 4). During that time, those who trust Christ will be spiritually purified, refined and strengthened through times of extreme difficulty and testing. Then, they will be the wise ones, who comprehend what is happening. No wicked or rebellious person will grasp the meaning of what will take place in the end. From the time when the abomination that makes desolate is set up, there will be a period of 1,290 days, corresponding to the last three and one-half years of the tribulation period, plus 45 days. There will be a special blessing on those who come through the 1,335 days. The significance of these days is not explained to Daniel, but this vision does let us know that there will be a period of time between the battle of Armageddon, when the forces of the antichrist will be destroyed, and the full establishment of the millennial kingdom. The important thing to keep in mind is that the wise (the godly) will understand. Even if they do not understand everything, they will understand enough about end-time events to maintain their trust in Christ and secure their place in His eternal kingdom.

That completes the 12 chapters of the book of Daniel. There are visions and mysteries that are recorded for all to see and to know. Most of these visions and mysteries are reserved for *the time of the end*, which I personally believe that we have entered. There are many events that must occur prior to the return of Yeshua to the earth. There are battles that must be fought and a signing of a peace treaty between Israel and their neighbors, then, the period of rule of the Antichrist.

I feel that over the last forty years God has led me to comprehend and understand the meanings of His Holy Word. He has had me to write and record things that are to happen, and the meaning of many things in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. He has had me to go deep in the readings and their meanings. He has led me to record all the things sent for me to understand, and to place them on my website for others to have available for themselves, all for free. Everything that God has given to me was freely given, and they are freely given to you for your personal knowledge. The address for my website is www.vqpub.org. Please understand that everything God has given me has been in a learning experience. I had to learn a small simple thing before He would take me to the next thing to learn. There are simple books that God gave me twenty, thirty, even forty years ago that are on the website. Some things, in the beginning, were changed as the knowledge grew and God took me further on my journey. They have been left in place so that you could go from the simple truth to complex facts that need thought, prayer and understanding to fully comprehend the meaning of particular passages in the Bible. Along the way, my loving wife, a teacher for over forty years, gave me the understanding that repetition is necessary for training a subject. For that reason, I am going to add to this book several discussions on the Rapture, the Antichrist, the Great Tribulation, false teachers and the spirit of Babylon. Please pray with me that these additional subjects provide you with either new understanding, or an additional encouragement, that will guide you in faith toward the end of days.

We are at a point to make a major shift in our understanding of End-Time Prophecy. We first met Daniel who was the first to record the many visions pertaining to the Antichrist and the End-Times. We now, once again, jump to Revelation and take up the parallel teachings that John received pertaining to the great Beast, the fourth beast of Daniel’s dream. Turn over to the next page to begin.

The Beast of the Apocalypse

Let's begin this section with an overview of what the Apostle John saw in a vision while he was imprisoned on the Island of Patmos.

John was transported through time to write of strange, awesome things that he saw in his vision concerning the Apocalypse. He was instructed to write this vision by Jesus Christ, Himself for all of humanity to read and understand what was to come in the end of time. Today, we call the written vision the book of Revelation, which is the last book of the Bible.

John wrote, *"Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name."* Revelation 13:1 (NKJV), *"So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, 'Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?'"* (verse 4 NKJV). *"Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone."* Revelation 19:20 (NKJV).

Something so powerful, so gigantic, that it is worshipped because of its vast military power; something that stands up to fight the returning, conquering Christ at His coming is obviously a political, economic, and military power that exists at the time of the end, as we know it! But who? Where? **The prophet Daniel saw it first**, it was a monster. *After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.* Daniel 7:7 (NKJV)

Then John saw it at the end of the first century. A seven headed, ten horned monster rising from the sea, blaspheming God, and making *"war against the saints."* What is the Beast? Where did it first plant its feet? Where did it go? Now, follow, from the annals of history and from the pages of Bible prophecy, the trail of the Beast and come to understand its frightening prophetic significance in our time! **We are in the "Season of the Lord's Return!"**

So, we begin! The beast John saw, in his vision, seemed to rise out of a sea. Normally, a sea represents a group of people. This could be a nation, or a kingdom, or even an empire. It had seven heads and ten horns. The horns featured ten crowns, while the heads were decorated with names which are blasphemous in God's sight. What is the meaning of this seven headed, ten horned creature?

John said, *"Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority."*

In Revelation 13:2 (NKJV), John wrote what he was shown, without comprehending all the meaning. There is a key to Daniel's vision hidden within this verse. Where do the ten kings come from? If we look at Daniel's vision, we see the first beast as a lion, representing Babylon. At that time Babylon was only a portion of the land mass of present day Iraq. The second beast, as a bear represents the Medo-Persian kingdom and would include the territory of Babylon (Iraq), plus most of present day Iran and part of Afghanistan. The third beast, as a leopard, represents the kingdom of Alexander the Great. This kingdom greatly expands the land territory that is incorporated under these three beast. Under Alexander the land would include: Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Greece, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Egypt, and part of India. If you count the number of countries, there are ten. Do these represent the End-Time

ten kings? I don't think so, but surely you can see how the gathering of ten kings, to create the authority of the beast, could be made from captured territory. Map 6, on the next page, fully illustrates the size of the Roman Empire over its rule of the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries. Now Daniel, as a reporter, or a biographer, was faithfully recounting what he saw in a vision. A strange creature, indeed; terrible in aspect, threatening, and powerful. The power and authority from this many-headed, many-horned composite creature came from a dragon.

What is meant by a "dragon?"

Dragons, as purely mythological creatures, remind one of serpentine monsters with huge, batlike wings, a fierce head with blazing, snakelike eyes, heavy, clawed feet like those of a crocodile, and rows of wickedly gleaming, sharply pointed teeth, breathing roaring tongues of fire from their mouth.

But, we need not speculate about what is meant by the dragon which empowers the beast, for the Bible plainly tells us what it is. ⁷ *Then there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and his angels.* ⁸ *And the dragon lost the battle, and he and his angels were forced out of heaven.* ⁹ *This great dragon—the ancient serpent called the devil, or **Satan**, the one deceiving the whole world—was thrown down to the earth with all his angels.* Revelation 12:7-9 (NLT), plainly stated, the dragon is a symbol for Satan.

Jesus said in Luke 10:18-19. ¹⁸ *And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.* ¹⁹ *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.* (NKJV) The Apostle Paul wrote the following in Ephesians 12:1-3. ¹ *And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,* ² *in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,* ³ *among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.* (NKJV), Paul also stated in 2nd Corinthians 4:3-4. ³ *But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,* ⁴ *whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.* (NKJV) John recorded the following, as a small portion of his vision, in Revelation 12:10-12. ¹⁰ *Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down."* ¹¹ *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.* ¹² *Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! **Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.*** (NKJV) The Apostle Peter tells us what the dragon is now doing on earth in 1st Peter 5:8-9. ⁸ *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.* ⁹ *Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.* (NKJV)

The many-headed, ten-horned beast is empowered and guided by Satan! As such, it is the Spirit of Antichrist, against God, against His Holy Laws, the Ten Commandments and His Feast Days, His Sabbath Days, and viciously, hatefully against His people called the saints. Since we are speaking of saints in Revelation, we are speaking about the Jews and not Christians! It is against those who are performing the work of God on this earth. It is total rebellion against God's ways. Instead, the pride of humanistic endeavors become the rule pushed by Satan, the Antichrist, the False Prophet and the harlot of Babylon.

Why did Daniel and John see this beast as a leopard? Why were its feet like those of a bear? Why did its head look like that of a lion? For centuries, Bible scholars have known that the prophecies of Daniel and those of John, in the Apocalypse, are inseparable, that one interprets the other. To trace



Map 6 - Area of control of the Roman Empire.

the trail of the Beast from the time it first stood upon the earth until the time of the end, when it is said, *“make war with the saints,”* and to fight Christ at His return, we must know what God revealed to Daniel.

Daniel, together with three royal princes of the throne of Judah, was taken captive when Jerusalem fell to Neduchadnezzar, king of Babylon. Daniel 1:3, *³ And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes;* (KJV) Who is not familiar with the story of “Daniel in the Lion’s Den” which many of us were taught as children? The book of Daniel contains lengthy pronouncements from Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, who not only fulfilled the prophecy of the first beast, but is symbolic of the whole system of pagan, Gentile kingdoms under Satan’s control. The symbolism is shown in Revelation 17:5. *⁵ And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.* (KJV) The Beast is pictured in collusion with a great false religion called the *“mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.”* Daniel’s prophecy also contains a lengthy announcement from a heavenly messenger in chapters eleven and twelve. We find actual first-person quotations from an archangel of God.

The first chapter of the book of Daniel relates to Daniel’s capture, his condition in captivity, and informs us that God had given Daniel and the three princes knowledge and wisdom. *¹⁷ As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.* (NKJV) The second chapter tells us of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. Daniel 2:29-35, *²⁹ “While Your Majesty was sleeping, you dreamed about coming events. He who reveals secrets has shown you what is going to happen. ³⁰ And it is not because I am wiser than anyone else that I know the secret of your dream, but because God wants you to understand what was in your heart.*

³¹ “In your vision, Your Majesty, you saw standing before you a huge, shining statue of a man. It was a frightening sight. ³² The head of the statue was made of fine gold. Its chest and arms were silver, its belly and thighs were bronze, ³³ its legs were iron, and its feet were a combination of iron and baked clay. ³⁴ As you watched, a rock was cut from a mountain, but not by human hands. It struck the feet of iron and clay, smashing them to bits. ³⁵ The whole statue was crushed into small pieces of iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold. Then the wind blew them away without a trace, like chaff on a threshing floor. But the rock that knocked the statue down became a great mountain that covered the whole earth. (NLT)

To Nebuchadnezzar, the image towered into the sky! The brilliant reflections of gold, silver and brass were dazzling. Like a comet falling, a stone then smashed into the feet of mixed iron and clay. The iron, brass, silver, and gold seemed to completely disintegrate as the image collapsed forming a vast pile of metallic dust. The wind blew and the particles of metal were whisked away. Then, Nebuchadnezzar’s astonished mind seemed to see the stone which had smashed into the feet as it began to grow larger until it seemed to literally fill the whole earth! No wonder, this Babylonian king was astonished. No wonder, he was overcome with eager curiosity to learn what such a vision could mean!

Daniel informed the king the following in verses 36-38. *³⁶ “That was the dream. Now we will tell the king what it means. ³⁷ Your Majesty, you are the greatest of kings. The God of heaven has given you sovereignty, power, strength, and honor. ³⁸ He has made you the ruler over all the inhabited world and has put even the wild animals and birds under your control. You are the head of gold.* (NLT)

Notice several important points:

(1) It was the Great God (I AM) who had allowed Nebuchadnezzar to become a “king of kings,” having subjugated many other surrounding nations, taking their peoples captive, and forcing other governments to bow to his will. Daniel told this Babylonian king that it was God who decided the course of world events and who setup or deposed rulers.

(2) Nebuchadnezzar was the first real world dictator, for Daniel acknowledged that he ruled over the known inhabited earth.

(3) Nebuchadnezzar was the “head of gold,” which meant that, as king, he stood for and represented the Babylonian kingdom. Notice the proof in verse 39. ³⁹ *“But after your kingdom comes to an end, another kingdom, inferior to yours, will rise to take your place. After that kingdom has fallen, yet a third kingdom, represented by bronze, will rise to rule the world.”* (NLT) King and kingdom were synonymous.

(4) Babylon epitomizes the Beast’s power down through history. The Babylonian “mystery” religion, handed down from Nimrod continues down through history, masquerading as “the one true church,” that controls the political and military power of the end-time Beast.

(5) The Apocalypse predicts that the final union of church and state, that will fight Christ at His coming, will be like an end-time Babylon. The “woman”, or false church which sits on the Beast, is called *“MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.”*

(6) Ancient Babylon was destroyed. Today, its ruins are a tourist attraction near Baghdad, Iraq. Yet, the Apocalypse says that the great city, which represents the end-time Beast’s power and false church, is nevertheless called Babylon. Review Revelation 18:1-10. ¹ *After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. ² And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! ³ For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.” ⁴ And I heard another voice from heaven saying, “Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. ⁵ For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. ⁶ Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her. ⁷ In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, ‘I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.’ ⁸ Therefore her plagues will come in one day—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her.*

⁹ *“The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning, ¹⁰ standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.’”* (NKJV)

When John received these prophecies, ancient Babylon had lain in utter ruin for approximately six hundred and thirty-nine years! This prophecy could not refer to ancient ruins, but to an end-time modern city which is called the “seat of the Beast,” or the capital city of the Beast’s power. It is ridden or controlled, by the “mother of harlots” arrayed in scarlet. Thus, though Babylon, under Nebuchadnezzar, was the first of the four great world-ruling empires, the name of Babylon is permanently stamped upon the whole system until the time of the Second Coming of Christ.

After predicting another kingdom, inferior to Babylon (the Medo-Persian Empire of history), and yet a third kingdom of brass (the Greco-Macedonian Empire under Alexander), Daniel described the fourth kingdom which was Rome in Daniel 2:40-45. ⁴⁰ *Following that kingdom, there will be a fourth one, as strong as iron. That kingdom will smash and crush all previous empires, just as iron smashes and crushes everything it strikes. ⁴¹ The feet and toes you saw were a combination of iron and baked clay, showing that this kingdom will be divided. Like iron mixed with clay, it will have some of the strength of iron. ⁴² But while some parts of it will be as strong as iron, other parts will be as weak as*

clay.⁴³ *This mixture of iron and clay also shows that these kingdoms will try to strengthen themselves by forming alliances with each other through intermarriage. But they will not hold together, just as iron and clay do not mix.*

⁴⁴ *“During the reigns of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed or conquered. It will crush all these kingdoms into nothingness, and it will stand forever.”*⁴⁵ *That is the meaning of the rock cut from the mountain, though not by human hands, that crushed to pieces the statue of iron, bronze, clay, silver, and gold. The great God was showing the king what will happen in the future. **The dream is true, and its meaning is certain.**”* (NLT)

Obviously, though uttered thousands of years ago, this prophecy shows that there will be an end-time combination of ten nations represented by the ten toes of the great image who will be smashed into oblivion by the returning, conquering Christ!

It is called “Babylon the Great” in the Apocalypse. Yet, it is the end-time resurrection of what became the “Holy Roman Empire”. It will consist of ten nations. The ten horns of Revelation 17:12 are the same as the ten toes of the great image.

Now, let’s come to understand Daniel’s important seventh chapter, with his depiction of these same world-ruling kingdoms as beasts: three of them known creatures and the fourth a surrealistic, satanic-looking creature like no living animal.

These remarkable prophecies, including Daniel’s God-given interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, were uttered and later written long prior to 538 B.C. the time of the collapse of the Babylonian Empire. As the decades and centuries passed, it became clear, as a result of the rise and fall of city-states, nations, and empires, what was meant by the kingdoms of gold, silver, brass, iron and iron and clay. First, God revealed to Daniel the meaning of the king’s dream. Later, God gave Daniel a dream, which he carefully wrote down, and which is essentially chapter 7 of the book of Daniel. Which constitutes Belshazzar’s reign, near the end of Babylonian supremacy.

We now turn to Daniel chapter 7 and read the following in verses 1-7. ¹ *Earlier, during the first year of King Belshazzar’s reign in Babylon, Daniel had a dream and saw visions as he lay in his bed. He wrote down the dream, and this is what he saw.*

² *In my vision that night, I, Daniel, saw a great storm churning the surface of a great sea, with strong winds blowing from every direction.* ³ *Then four huge beasts came up out of the water, each different from the others.*

⁴ *The first beast was like a lion with eagles’ wings. As I watched, its wings were pulled off, and it was left standing with its two hind feet on the ground, like a human being. And it was given a human mind.*

⁵ *Then I saw a second beast, and it looked like a bear. It was rearing up on one side, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And I heard a voice saying to it, “Get up! Devour the flesh of many people!”*

⁶ *Then the third of these strange beasts appeared, and it looked like a leopard. It had four bird’s wings on its back, and it had four heads. Great authority was given to this beast.*

⁷ *Then in my vision that night, I saw a fourth beast-terrifying, dreadful, and very strong. It devoured and crushed its victims with huge iron teeth and trampled their remains beneath its feet. It was different from any of the other beasts, and it had ten horns.* (NLT)

We clearly see, that the end-time Beast portrayed in Revelation 13:1-2 embodies all the strongest characteristics of these three beasts in Daniel’s dream, and represents the culmination of all the Gentile kingdoms and governments ruled by men with minds like those of wild animals.

The first beast, like a lion with eagle’s wings, that was made to stand upon its feet as a man, and had a man’s heart given unto it, represented Nebuchadnezzar, at the head of the first world-ruling empire in all history, Babylon.

Details of the seven seasons of Nebuchadnezzar's insanity are given in Daniel 4. Nebuchadnezzar became completely insane. The Bible records the following in Daniel 4:33. ³³ *"That same hour the judgment was fulfilled, and Nebuchadnezzar was driven from human society. He ate grass like a cow, and he was drenched with the dew of heaven. He lived this way until his hair was as long as eagles' feathers and his nails were like birds' claws. (NLT)*

At the end of those seven seasons (three and one-half years), his reasoning was returned to him by a miracle from God. We see this in Daniel 7:34-37. ³⁴ *"After this time had passed, I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up to heaven. My sanity returned, and I praised and worshiped the Most High and honored the one who lives forever. His rule is everlasting, and his kingdom is eternal. ³⁵ All the people of the earth are nothing compared to him. He does as he pleases among the angels of heaven and among the people of the earth. No one can stop him or say to him, 'What do you mean by doing these things?' ³⁶ "When my sanity returned to me, so did my honor and glory and kingdom. My advisers and nobles sought me out, and I was restored as head of my kingdom, with even greater honor than before. ³⁷ "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and glorify and honor the King of heaven. All his acts are just and true, and he is able to humble the proud." (NLT)*

The Babylonian Empire was destroyed by Persian armies under Cyrus, conceivably in October, 538 B.C. The second kingdom, **represented by the chest and arms of silver in the great image, and by a bear** (Daniel 7:5), ruled over the known world. This was the kingdom of Medo-Persia ruled by Cyrus "the Great." Cyrus dated his years from 538 B.C. calling himself "king of Babylon and king of the countries," meaning "king of the world." The remarkable prophecies of Isaiah 44 and 45 were written about 150 years before Cyrus was born, and yet mention him by name (Isaiah 45:1-6). In these two chapters, Cyrus was directed to set the Jews free to rebuild the Temple, though the Temple had not yet been destroyed when Isaiah wrote the prophecies!

The third empire, represented by a leopardlike beast, had "four wings of a fowl" on its back and four heads. Daniel saw this beast as Alexander's Greco-Macedonian Empire. A tremendous amount of literature exists around the time of Alexander, who was a student of Aristotle. He was the son of Philip II of Macedon, and his mother was named Olympus. Alexander conquered the known world, leading his Greek, Macedonian, Spartan, and other troops into the faraway lands of modern-day Iraq and Iran, into India, through Palestine, and into Egypt. Daniel foretold (verse 7:6). ⁶ *Then the third of these strange beasts appeared, and it looked like a leopard. It had four bird's wings on its back, and it had four heads. Great authority was given to this beast. (NLT)* True to this prophecy, Alexander's kingdom was divided up into four kingdoms shortly after his death. Illustrated by the four wings (land territory) and the four heads (authority).

Notice how Daniel's prophecies of the fourth beast, identified as Rome, repeatedly culminate in the setting up of Christ's kingdom. Chapter 2 of Daniel shows how the ten toes of the whole Babylonian system are smashed by the 'stone cut out without hands' that represents the returning, conquering Christ. Daniel's prophecy continues in Daniel 7:8-10. ⁸ *As I was looking at the horns, suddenly another small horn appeared among them. Three of the first horns were torn out by the roots to make room for it. This little horn had eyes like human eyes and a mouth that was boasting arrogantly*

⁹ *I watched as thrones were put in place and the Ancient One sat down to judge. His clothing was as white as snow, his hair like purest wool. He sat on a fiery throne with wheels of blazing fire, ¹⁰ and a river of fire was pouring out, flowing from his presence. Millions of angels ministered to him; many millions stood to attend him. Then the court began its session, and the books were opened. (NLT)*

Horns are symbols of human leaders of governments. Notice that Daniel describes the Ancient of Days almost exactly as does John in Revelation 1:13-15. ¹³ *and in the midst of the seven lamp stands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. ¹⁴ His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of*

fire; ¹⁵ His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; (NKJV) Some commentaries think the Ancient One, described above in Daniel 7:8-10, is the Father, rather than Christ, because they see only the Father as conducting the Great White Throne Judgment, as stated in Revelation 20:11-12. ¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. (NKJV) Whether it refers to Christ or the Father, it is obvious it refers to the time of the setting up of the Kingdom of God on earth. This is after the "little horn" succeeds in overthrowing the first of the ten succeeding kingdoms. Daniel continued in verse 7:11. ¹¹ "I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame. (NKJV)

When is the Beast slain?

We find the answer in Revelation 19:11-21. ¹¹ Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³ He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. ¹⁵ Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶ And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. ¹⁷ Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, ¹⁸ that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great." ¹⁹ And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. ²⁰ Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. **These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.** ²¹ And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh. (NKJV)

Time and again Daniel saw how the dreadful fourth Beast, the Roman Empire, and the little horn, which is the False Prophet, continue until the time of the Second Coming of Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, Daniel 7:19-22. ¹⁹ Then I wished to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, which devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet; ²⁰ and the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, before which three fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance was greater than his fellows. ²¹ I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, ²² until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom. (NKJV)

These scriptures demonstrate that the ten horns of Daniel 7 are ten successive governments, ten revivals of the Beast system down through history. How remarkable that Daniel's prophecies, written over five hundred years before the time of Christ, should be so specifically detailed, so accurate! Christ Himself referred to Daniel's prophecies in Matthew 24:15. ¹⁵ "So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), (ESV)

What is the identity of the little horn? The little horn had eyes like a man, a mouth speaking great things, names of blasphemy, and will think to change times and laws. This little horn, masquerading as the “False Prophet,” persecutes God’s saints endlessly, makes war against them and engages in every kind of brutality and mass murder.

There is much disagreement about which three governments were “plucked up by the roots” by the little horn, which is identified as the papacy. Some believe they were the Vandals, Ostrogoths, and the Heruli. The important point is that this little horn is seen to have a “look stouter than its fellows,” and is specifically identified as persecuting and making war against the saints of God, and functions as a state. It is a government with power to overthrow other governments.

Referring back to the vision of John in Revelation 13:1, John wrote, ¹ *Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.* (NKJV) It was only after the little horn had overthrown the first three of the ten horns, leaving seven remaining, that the title “holy” was attached to the whole governmental system.

“And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, (its overall bodily characteristics were lithe, powerful, like a leopard, as referred to Alexander’s kingdom), and his feet were as the feet of a bear (referring to the strongest characteristics of a bear, the powerful paws, that can roll over huge rocks, smash logs, or disembowel a large range animal, as referred to Cyrus’ Medo-Persian empire), and his mouth as the mouth of a lion, (referring to the huge head of a male lion, its powerful jaws, depicting Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylonian kingdom) and the dragon (Satan) gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.”

“And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; (this was the collapse of the Roman Empire in A.D. 476), and his deadly wound was healed, (the restoration of the Holy Roman Empire in A.D. 554), and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast, and they worshipped the beast saying who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him? . . . And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindred, and tongues, and nations.” Abstracted from Revelation 13:1-7.

This is nothing short of state worship: a gigantic socio-economic, military, and industrial power that evokes awe and worship among its citizens and rises to such power and prestige that it is a true world power. This is the description that John saw in the vision of the final end-time Beast that embodies all the strongest characteristics of the first three beast: Babylon, Persia, and Greece.

Oops, time to chase rabbits for a moment. Everyone should realize that there is absolutely nothing contained in the Bible that predicts any particular nation or person as the Antichrist’s kingdom or prophecies as to just who the False Prophet is. I dearly respect Perry Stone and enjoy many of his sermons and teachings. In the series of sermons for the 2024 Prophetic Summit, Perry made a presentation on “The Mystery of the 8th Beast Whose Death Wound is Healed.” Perry makes a presentation that there are eight Empires. They are: Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, Roman, a Brief Wound and the revised Babylonian Empire. He further suggests that the Antichrist will be a Moslem and his capital will be a revised Babylon.

I disagree with Perry on several items in his presentation. I guess the major objection is the identification of a Moslem as the Antichrist who signs a treaty with Israel for a seven-year peace deal. I really cannot see a Moslem accepting a “Christian” for the False Prophet as the second in charge of this end-time government. At the same time, I cannot see an Israeli accepting a Moslem as their supreme ruler. There is little trust between the Jews and the Moslems. Yes! I know that the common man on the street can deal with either party and they do not fully hate one another. However, with the teaching that

the puppet regimes put forth in schools in the Palestine sections of the Middle East, there is a very big hatred of Jews by Hamas and others. I just cannot accept Perry's presentation as something complete. Another factor, in the presentation made, was maybe a one sentence statement pertaining to the False Prophet. I see the False Prophet as a very serious part of this geopolitical, military controlled government. I find it fascinating that Jonathan Cahn was also a presenter at this summit, and he spoke on the return of the pagan gods. There is a definite influence from the pagan trinity of evil that has returned with a vengeance. The spirit of Babylon doesn't have to revive itself in Babylon, nor even take up residence in Babylon. Why can't the Antichrist possess the spirit of Babylon and be an evil man like Hitler who was a previous antichrist?

But, who is the "spokesman" for this system? Who is it that blasphemes God and persecutes God's people? *Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.* Revelation 13:11 (NKJV) Here is a government that appears outwardly "Christ-like" for it has lamblike characteristics. Yet, it speaks as directly motivated by Satan. This lamblike beast, which is counterfeit Christianity, utilizes the economic, industrial, and military power of the civil government of the first Beast. However, this is the second beast of Revelation 13. This is the False Prophet! The first Beast, the Man of Lawlessness or the Antichrist, will fight Christ at His second coming. Revelation 13:12-18, *¹² He exercised all the authority of the first beast. And he required all the earth and its people to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed. ¹³ He did astounding miracles, even making fire flash down to earth from the sky while everyone was watching. ¹⁴ And with all the miracles he was allowed to perform on behalf of the first beast, he deceived all the people who belong to this world. He ordered the people to make a great statue of the first beast, who was fatally wounded and then came back to life. ¹⁵ He was then permitted to give life to this statue so that it could speak. Then the statue of the beast commanded that anyone refusing to worship it must die.*

¹⁶ He required everyone—small and great, rich and poor, free and slave—to be given a mark on the right hand or on the forehead. ¹⁷ And no one could buy or sell anything without that mark, which was either the name of the beast or the number representing his name. ¹⁸ Wisdom is needed here. Let the one with understanding solve the meaning of the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. His number is 666. (NLT)

This is obviously an ecclesiastical government under a human leader. It corresponds to the "mystery of lawlessness" foreseen by the Apostle Paul in his warning to the church in Thessalonica. 2nd Thessalonians 2:7-9, *⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. ⁸ And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. ⁹ The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, (ESV)*

The little horn of Daniel 7 represents the papacy, as does the lamblike beast of Revelation 13. Both of these references illustrate the False Prophet. The "man of sin" or the lawless one as illustrated in 2nd Thessalonians 2:3-10. *³ Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, ⁴ who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. ⁵ Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? ⁶ And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. ⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. ⁸ And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. ⁹ The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, ¹⁰ and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. (ESV)* In some circles, the False Prophet and the Man of Sin are assumed to be one and the same, commonly

called the Antichrist. However, there is no specific Bible verse that clearly labels the “man of sin” and the “false prophet” as the Antichrist. This is an assumption. To prove my point, that these are two different entities I make reference to Revelation 19:20, ²⁰ *And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur.* (ESV)

John saw a woman sitting astride a monstrous beast. The woman symbolizes a great false church, a church that rules over kings and governments, a church that has political intercourse with the civil governments of this world. This “Great Harlot” is the Roman Catholic Church. Look at history and you will find the truth. She has daughters that came from her called “harlots.” These daughters are the offshoot denominations founded and established during the Protestant Reformation. It could be said that there are even granddaughters of the Great Harlot, because there have been break off denominations from the first group. As we saw in Daniel 7, the little horn was depicted as continually making war with the saints.

It has been said that Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) was the “Most Powerful of all the Popes”. He claimed to be the “Vicar of Christ,” “Vicar of God,” “Supreme Sovereign of the Church and the World.” He claimed the right to depose kings and princes, and that “All things on earth and in heaven and hell are subject to the Vicar of Christ.” Even as it has been recorded about Pope Innocent III, prophecy has not been totally fulfilled.

God’s Word prophesied an end-time martyrdom of saints. A time in the future when the Abomination of Desolation will be seated in the “holy place” in Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be surrounded with armies, and the Great Tribulation will have begun.

Look around you at the condition of the earth today. The major cities of the United States are seeing an increase in criminal activity in just about every sector. We see increases in the price of food due to many reasons including inflation, bird flu, the war in Ukraine and weather conditions here in America. If you think the pictures you are seeing on the television concerning the war in Ukraine, or the results of the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria are horrible to view, you need to review the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation to see the results of God’s wrath to be poured out on the earth. Ninety-percent of the earth’s population will be removed through the wrath of God that is to come.

Hopefully, you have read all these pages up to this point, and have a better understanding of what God desires, including what will happen if mankind does not repent and turn back toward God. Actually, I fear that mankind has gone past the breaking point, and God is already preparing His judgment against humanity because they still will not obey God and follow His guidelines, rules, Commandments and Feasts.

In my next section, I will attempt to give you a better understanding of the wars that must still take place prior to the return of Christ.

Wars in the Middle East

Please allow me to attempt to go through the battles that the Middle East will go through between today and the end of the thousand-year reign of Christ.

There will be many people that think of the battle of Armageddon as the only war that will involve Israel. **Not so!** Would you believe that there are as many as 9 different battles that are identified in scripture. By God's grace, I am going to attempt to show you each battle, and where you can find the facts for each battle in scripture. The first battle will not be the battle of Armageddon. In fact, the battle of Armageddon may be the eighth battle in our list of battles.

Battle One

The first battle may be titled Israel's Extermination, or the Battle of Neighbors, and is found in Psalm 83. You wouldn't expect to find a battle concerning Israel in Psalms would you? We read in Psalm 83:2-8 the following. ² *For behold, Your enemies make a tumult; And those who hate You have lifted up their head.* ³ *They have taken crafty counsel against Your people, And consulted together against Your sheltered ones.* ⁴ *They have said, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, That the name of Israel may be remembered no more."* ⁵ *For they have consulted together with one consent; They form a confederacy against You:* ⁶ *The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites; Moab and the Hagrites;* ⁷ *Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek; Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre;* ⁸ *Assyria also has joined with them; They have helped the children of Lot.*

This is the inner circle of neighbor nations around present-day Israel. The current names of the countries around Israel are Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and **Gaza**. If you study the individuals and their relationship to Abraham, you will find that most of these countries are the descendents of Isaac's cousins and kin. Notice that all of these countries are Islamic. Here is the identity of each player:

Edom - also known as Esau, the brother of Jacob and son of Isaac. A portion of Jordan.

Ishmaelites - sons of Ishmael, the half brother of Isaac, and the son of Abraham and Hagar. Ishmaelites are the descendents of Ishmael and may include Saudi Arabia.

Moab - one of the sons of Lot and his daughter after the fall of Sodom and Gomorrah. Lot is the nephew of Abraham. A portion of Jordan.

Hagrites - same as Hagarites, descendent of Hagar, concubine of Abraham and mother of Ishmael. Hagar was an Egyptian, her other offspring are not identified in the Bible. Part of Egypt.

Gebal - an Edomite territory and Phoenician trade city. A portion of Lebanon.

Ammon - also known as Ben-ammi. The other son of Lot through his other daughter and half-brother to Moab. A portion of Jordan.

Amalek - grandson of Esau through his son Eliphaz and his concubine Timna. Israel's persistent enemy.

Philistia - Philistines, today living in and known as **Gaza**. Actually, it is the terrorist element of Hamas that is the real threat. Hamas, officially the Islamic Resistance Movement, is a Sunni Islamist political and military organization governing the Gaza Strip of the Palestinian territories. While it is headquartered in Gaza City, it also has a presence in the West Bank, Samaria to the Israelites.

Tyre - A coastal city of Phoenicia. Located in Lebanon.

Assyria - Syria. The ancient Assyrian Empire has progressed to become the present-day Germany. Present-day Syria remains as descendants of Syria (and not Germans).

The last portion of Psalm 83 is a request to God to help Israel. Here are those verses. Psalm 83:13-18, ¹³ *O my God, make them like the whirling dust, Like the chaff before the wind!* ¹⁴ *As the fire burns the*

woods, And as the flame sets the mountains on fire, ¹⁵ So pursue them with Your tempest, And frighten them with Your storm. ¹⁶ Fill their faces with shame, That they may seek Your name, O LORD. ¹⁷ Let them be confounded and dismayed forever; Yes, let them be put to shame and perish, ¹⁸ That they may know that You, whose name alone is the LORD, Are the Most High over all the earth.

There should be a warning inserted at this point pertaining to this war. Notice that the attack made by **Hamas**, early on October 7, 2023, was only the one nation that attacked Israel. The warning should be that there are other nations named in this passage of scripture from Psalms 83. This indicates that Israel could be fighting a war on many fronts before this is over.

Battle Two

This battle may be an escalation from battle one to battle two because of the media placing blame on Israel as the cause of battle one. Also, there is the possibility that battle one may become a multifront attack with Hezbollah on the north, and the Palestinians on the West Bank. This could push Russia and Iran into believing that any weakness shown by Israel could indicate that they could enter the war and rid the earth of the Jews. That will not happen, but, the war will be fought because God says so! Therefore, the next battle, that we have to deal with, is the first battle of Gog of Magog as shown in Ezekiel 38 and 39. For ease of reading, I'm using the New Living Translation for all verses used from Ezekiel 38 and 39. The players for this battle are named in verses 2, 3, 5 and 6 of Ezekiel 38. ² *"Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him, ³ and say, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I am against you, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal". . . . ⁵ Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya are with them, all of them with shield and helmet; ⁶ Gomer and all its troops; the house of Togarmah from the far north and all its troops-many people are with you.* Those named in Ezekiel form an outer ring of countries led by Russia that will attack Israel. In these verses, I will show why this war will be fought at least three and a half years before the start of the tribulation. First, here is a list of the players:

Gog, of the land of **Magog**, the chief prince of Rosh - Rosh is an old name for Russia. So it seems that the lead country for the war will be Russia.

Meshech, Tubal, Gomer and Togarmah - are all names of people now located in Turkey.

Persia - modern day Iran

Put - modern day Libya

Cush - modern day Sudan and Ethiopia

Most of these names are given in the table of nations in Genesis 10. Genesis 10:2 names the sons of Japheth. There we find Gomer, Magog, Tubal and Meshech in that group. Verse 3 gives the sons of Gomer which lists Togarmah. We find Cush and Put in verse 6, they are the sons of Ham. There is no direct link from the table of nations to the present day country of Iran.

A portion of the reason for this war is given in Ezekiel 38:14-16. ¹⁴ *"Therefore, son of man, prophesy against Gog. Give him this message from the Sovereign LORD: When my people are living in peace in their land, then you will rouse yourself. ¹⁵ You will come from your homeland in the distant north with your vast cavalry and your mighty army, ¹⁶ and you will attack my people Israel, covering their land like a cloud. At that time in the distant future, I will bring you against my land as everyone watches, and my holiness will be displayed by what happens to you, Gog. Then all the nations will know that I am the LORD. Then verses 18-20, ¹⁸ But this is what the Sovereign LORD says: When Gog invades the land of Israel, my fury will boil over! ¹⁹ In my jealousy and blazing anger, I promise a mighty shaking in the land of Israel on that day. ²⁰ All living things—the fish in the sea, the birds of the*

sky, the animals of the field, the small animals that scurry along the ground, and all the people on earth—will quake in terror at my presence. Mountains will be thrown down; cliffs will crumble; walls will fall to the earth. Finally, read verse 22. ²² *I will punish you and your armies with disease and bloodshed; I will send torrential rain, hailstones, fire, and burning sulfur!*

That gives us some of what is to happen during the first war of Gog and Magog. However, chapter 39 tells us more of the reason for this war, the results pertaining to both Gog and to Israel, along with the proof that this war begins prior to the tribulation. The following verses are from chapter 39 of Ezekiel, and will continue from the New Living Translation. We begin with verse 1. ¹ *“Son of man, prophesy against Gog. Give him this message from the Sovereign LORD: I am your enemy, O Gog, ruler of the nations of Meshech and Tubal. Then we read, in verses 3-6, the following. ³ I will knock the bow from your left hand and the arrows from your right hand, and I will leave you helpless. ⁴ You and your army and your allies will all die on the mountains. I will feed you to the vultures and wild animals. ⁵ You will fall in the open fields, for I have spoken, says the Sovereign LORD. ⁶ And I will rain down fire on Magog and on all your allies who live safely on the coasts. Then they will know that I am the LORD. The next entry will provide the reason to state that this battle must begin at least three and a half years before the beginning of the tribulation. Read verse 9. ⁹ “Then the people in the towns of Israel will go out and pick up your small and large shields, bows and arrows, javelins and spears, and they will use them for fuel. There will be enough to last them seven years!” **Read that last sentence again!** Did you see that it takes seven years to burn up all the weapons? The Abomination of Desolation stands in the temple at the 3 1/2 year point of the tribulation, and it states, in these verses, that it takes Israel 7 years to burn up all the weapons. Therefore, this battle must take place prior to the beginning of the tribulation, and could even be before this point of 3 1/2 years, however, it must be at least that long before the beginning of the tribulation.*

Continuing with chapter 39, we read the outcome of Gog in verse 11. ¹¹ *“And I will make a vast graveyard for Gog and his hordes in the Valley of the Travelers, east of the Dead Sea. It will block the way of those who travel there, and they will change the name of the place to the Valley of Gog’s Hordes.”* The next verse, verse 12, shows us how long it takes Israel to bury the dead and verse 13 indicates that Israel is victorious. ¹² *It will take seven months for the people of Israel to bury the bodies and cleanse the land. ¹³ Everyone in Israel will help, for it will be a glorious victory for Israel when I demonstrate my glory on that day, says the Sovereign LORD.*

Toward the latter part of chapter 39, we learn the reason God does this in Ezekiel 39:21-24. ²¹ *“In this way, I will demonstrate my glory to the nations. Everyone will see the punishment I have inflicted on them and the power of my fist when I strike. ²² And from that time on the people of Israel will know that I am the LORD their God. ²³ The nations will then know why Israel was sent away to exile—it was punishment for sin, for they were unfaithful to their God. Therefore, I turned away from them and let their enemies destroy them. ²⁴ I turned my face away and punished them because of their defilement and their sins.”* Then we see the restoration of Israel in verses 25-29. ²⁵ *“So now, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: “I will end the captivity of my people ; I will have mercy on all Israel, for I jealously guard my holy reputation! ²⁶ They will accept responsibility for their past shame and unfaithfulness after they come home to live in peace in their own land, with no one to bother them. ²⁷ When I bring them home from the lands of their enemies, I will display my holiness among them for all the nations to see. ²⁸ Then my people will know that I am the LORD their God, because I sent them away to exile and brought them home again. I will leave none of my people behind. ²⁹ And I will never again turn my face from them, for I will pour out my Spirit upon the people of Israel. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken!”*

Battle Three

We could call this battle many names. It could be called World War III, the Battle to Conquer the World, or the Seal Judgments. It appears that this battle is fought with conventional weapons. We find the explanation for this battle in the sixth chapter of Revelation. The leader for this battle is the Antichrist who is shown as the rider on the white horse in seal one. Revelation 6:2, ² *And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.* We must also review passages from Daniel to confirm some things. Daniel's vision of the seventy weeks tells us this in Daniel 9:27 (NLT). ²⁷ *"The ruler will make a treaty with the people for a period of one set of seven, but after half this time, he will put an end to the sacrifices and offerings. And as a climax to all his terrible deeds, he will set up a sacrilegious object that causes desecration, until the fate decreed for this defiler is finally poured out on him."*

Seal two brings forth war. Revelation 6:4, ⁴ *Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword.* Seals three and four bring forth pestilence and death. Revelation 6:5, ⁵ *When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come and see." So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand.* Revelation 6:8, ⁸ *So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.*

Stop for a moment and think about what this truly says. We are approaching a total population of the earth at 10 billion. Verse 8 above says one fourth of earth's population is to be killed in this battle. I must inject one other factor when I start giving figures. There are approximately 2 billion Christians now on earth. If they are removed in the Rapture, we must start viewing our figures at 8 billion and not 10 billion. Therefore, we are seeing the warning that 2 billion people are to be killed in this battle. With the fifth seal, we learn of the Christians and Jews who are martyred during this war. Revelation 6:11, ¹¹ *Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.* The sixth seal brings us to the escalation of this battle to the point that it goes nuclear. Revelation 6:12-14, ¹² *I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood.* ¹³ *And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind.* ¹⁴ *Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.*

Battle Four

This is the nuclear portion of the above war and Biblically called the trumpet judgments of Revelation 8 and 9. We find one-third used repeatedly in these two chapters, and we also see the demonic locusts, the four bound angels of the Euphrates, and their mounted troops who killed one-third of the remaining population of earth. Revelation 9:15, ¹⁵ *So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind.* With the killing of this one-third of the remaining population of mankind, an additional 2 billion people have now been killed. That's a total of 4 billion people or one-half of the total population of the earth at that time. Go just a little further in chapter 9, and you will find the horses and riders of the two hundred million mounted troops. Verse 18 says that these horses kill one-third of mankind. Revelation 9:18, ¹⁸ *By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed-by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came*

out of their mouths. The total population of mankind has been decreasing as these battles take place. Each time a number is given it seems that we are talking about the remainder of the population at that point in time. At this juncture, we started with 4 billion and we have one-third of this number killed by the demonic horses. That would be an additional 1.33 billion killed. There are those places within Revelation that present a flash forward, and also, there are a few that flash backward into history. One such flash forward is given here in the last two verses of chapter 9. Revelation 9:20-21, ²⁰ *But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk.* ²¹ *And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.*

Battle Five

Our fifth battle does not take place on earth, instead we jump to the Heavenly War. Read with me, as we look at Revelation 12:7-9. ⁷ *And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought,* ⁸ *but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer.* ⁹ *So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.* Revelation 12:12 informs us that Satan is thrown out of heaven for the last time, and he is furious. ¹² *“Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time*

Battle Six

This battle represents the Antichrist's battle against the Saints and the Jews. Since Satan has been thrown out of heaven, he goes after those who believe in Jesus as the Son of God. He continues to think that he can overpower God and take away His throne. He knows his time is short, and he thinks that if he can destroy the saints and the Jews, then he can gain God's throne. We also know that Satan has given his power, throne and authority to the Antichrist who acts as Satan's agent during this war. We see this in Revelation 12:13-17. ¹³ *Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child.* ¹⁴ *But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.* ¹⁵ *So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood.* ¹⁶ *But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.* ¹⁷ *And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.* The woman in verse 13 is Israel, Christ is the male child, the woman's place in the wilderness may be the city of Petra in Jordan and her other offspring are the Christians. We must also remember that the tribulation period is mainly for the Jews to come to acceptance that Jesus is Israel's Savior and the one that they pierced. Many of those who accept Jesus as Lord during the tribulation will be those martyred in Revelation, chapter 7. These actions by Satan will be the second holocaust of the Jews, and we may see this in Zechariah 13:8-9. ⁸ *And it shall come to pass in all the land, Says the LORD, “That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, But one-third shall be left in it:”* ⁹ *I will bring the one-third through the fire, Will refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them. I will say, ‘This is My people’; And each one will say, ‘The LORD is my God.’* “ This remaining one-third will be God's remnant of this time period. God has used a remnant many times.

Battle Seven

“The Middle East Campaign Against the Antichrist” should be the title of this battle. The battle is toward the end of the seven-year tribulation period. It represents the battle, or battles, between the king of the north and the king of the south in Daniel 11. In verse 36 of Daniel 11, we see that the one who is called king is actually the Antichrist. Daniel 11:40-41 sets up this final battle between the king of the north and the king of the south. ⁴⁰“*At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through.*” ⁴¹ *He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon.*” However, the Antichrist begins to hear rumors of discord from the north and from the east, and the Antichrist sets up his tents in the valley between the seas to await the advance of these other forces. Daniel 11:44-45, ⁴⁴ *But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many.* ⁴⁵ *And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him.*

Battle Eight

This sets up the battle that everyone seems to know about, the battle of Armageddon. The Antichrist and his forces are waiting for the others to gather from the north and from the east. Revelation 16:12, ¹² *Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared.* Finally, we get to the second rider on a white horse coming out from heaven in Revelation 19:11-21. ¹¹ *Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.* ¹² *His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself.* ¹³ *He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.* ¹⁴ *And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.* ¹⁵ *Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.* ¹⁶ *And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.* ¹⁷ *Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, “Come and gather together for the supper of the great God,”* ¹⁸ *that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great.”* ¹⁹ *And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.* ²⁰ *Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.* ²¹ *And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.* So! With the understanding of these verses, everyone should realize and understand that there is no Battle of Armageddon because all those who had gathered to fight against Jesus were destroyed with one word from His mouth.

With that said and done, the Kingdom of God has arrived and Jesus shall rule on earth for one thousand years. There will be no sickness, pain, worry or death during that thousand years of peace.

The righteous who have overcome the tribulation will be those in the flesh who will enter the thousand years and will have children. They will have children throughout the thousand years. At the end of this thousand years, Satan will be released from the abyss and he will deceive the world causing them to rebel against God.

Battle Nine

It is easy to establish what happens in this concluding battle that shall take place on earth. This is the second battle of Gog of Magog. It is different and distinct from the first battle of Gog of Magog. In the first battle of Ezekiel 38-39, we see Russia gathering Moslem countries and going against Israel. In this second battle, we see Russia gathering the world's armies to go against Jesus. Revelation 20:7-10, *' Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸ and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. ⁹ They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. ¹⁰ The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*

With this second battle between Gog of Magog and Israel, we close out all of the wars that shall occur on earth. Eternity is from this point forward, and there are only two places that mankind's soul and spirit can exist. Either you will spend eternity in the New Jerusalem on the new earth with God, Jesus and all souls who accepted Jesus as their personal savior. Or, the other place that souls will spend eternity is in the lake of fire with Satan, the beast, the false prophet and all the other souls who never accepted Jesus as the Son of God and Savior of mankind.

Through the presentation of information that is presented in these few pages, every person reading this should see the deception that Satan is using to get us to deny that God is real, or that there is a necessity to accept Jesus as your personal Savior. We should all see the influence the Black Lives Matter leaders along with Antifa have made within our society to instill violence, rioting and looting as a portion of their political anarchy agenda. We should also see the biased objectives of the media as they present what suits their opinion, along with how they criticize any word or action that doesn't go along with their political game plan.

God is also performing His work as only He can. The Bible informs us of many things about the living, supreme God. **He cannot lie!** He does not desire for anyone to will themselves into Hell, yet that is what you are doing by your own actions and decisions. God sent the COVID-19 pandemic upon the earth to get all of mankind to stop and review their personal actions to encourage mankind to repent and humbly seek forgiveness. We had three hurricanes to hit the Gulf coast in 2023. We had forest fires burning in nine states and the air quality in three western states was the worst in the world in 2023. We had a snow storm in Colorado, and it was only the first week in September, 2023. We had an earthquake in South Carolina and one in New Jersey in 2023. The Liberal, left wing, minority wants to declare it was all due to global warming. Folks who think things like that surely do not believe in God. Everything that we are seeing happen that pertains to weather is under the control of God.

Here is the bottom line decision that you must make. If you enjoy what is happening with the pandemic, the weather, the riots, the looting and the deprived ideas of humanity, you don't have to do a thing. You will fit right in with the plans of Satan. However, if, on the other hand, you would like to return to some semblance of life as we knew it, you need to evaluate your life. You need to see if there is something for which you need to ask God to forgive you, and then to repent. Maybe you need to make a change in your life and accept Jesus as your personal Savior. It is through the blood sacrifice

that Jesus made, on your behalf, that gives you an Intercessor to stand before His Father and vouch for you. Remember it is not by our works that we get into heaven, it is only by the accepted blood sacrifice of Christ that we have a means to spend eternity with our Creator. Let us return to Revelation and look at chapter 13 to learn more about the Antichrist and the False Prophet.

Revelation 13

The Beast out of the Sea

Chapter 13 will introduce us to the Antichrist as the second part of Satan's trinity. The False Prophet is introduced as the third part of Satan's trinity.

Chapter 13, verse 1, *And the dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name.*

1. beast - This is the Antichrist, or the final world dictator, who will try to rule the world.
2. he had ten horns - In the book of Daniel, these ten horns will be ten kingdoms that will be under the authority of the Antichrist. Daniel 7:24, *The ten horns are ten kings who will come from this kingdom. After them another king will arise, different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings.*

Verse 2, *The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority.*

1. resembled a leopard - Sounds a little like the beast in Daniel 7:6. *After that, I looked, and there before me was another beast, one that looked like a leopard. And on its back it had four wings like those of a bird. This beast had four heads, and it was given authority to rule.*

2. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority. - We indicated at the beginning of this chapter that the Antichrist was the second part of Satan's trinity. God represents the first part of the Godhead and in similar manner Satan represents the first part of his trinity.

- a. dragon - Still represents Satan.
- b. gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority - Jesus is the second part of the Godhead, and in similar fashion, the Antichrist is the second part of Satan's trinity. In the same manner of mimicking God, authority is given from Satan to the Antichrist. See the note at verse 12.
- c. Read 1 John 2:18-27. *Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.*

But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth. I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth. Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist-he denies the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. And this is what he promised us-even eternal life.

I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit-just as it has taught you, remain in him. These verses give a warning about the coming Antichrist, but look in verse 22. The liar is foretold, for he is the one who says Jesus is not the Christ.

Verse 3, *One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was astonished and followed the beast.*

There are many who have been taught that the Antichrist will be the Pope of the Catholic church at the time God wants this to occur. In some ways I agree, and in others I must look to a different view and see what is there. For the purposes of this work, I will disregard all teachings I have had and go with what the Holy Spirit tells me to type.

One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. - Since there is a tie between what John revealed in Revelation and what Daniel revealed in the book named for him, we must look at both to attempt to discover the answer given. We have determined that the heads represent kingdoms, so it would appear that there is a kingdom that was destroyed, or killed off, or was dead. Later it was revived, or rebuilt or changed into another form. Most people want to associate both to the Roman Empire and at that point it takes on a denominational note based on the rhetoric of man and not truth. For a moment let us look at truth.

a. There were two sections of the Roman Empire when it collapsed in 476 CE. One was the administrative section controlled by Rome itself which did indeed collapse. The other was the area controlled by Constantine and controlled from Constantinople, reigning as the Byzantine Era and lasting until approximately 1400 CE.

b. Furthermore, there were two major denominations reflected from this collapse. There was the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church. We must remember that these two denominations are both Christian. Along with this first schism, we must remember that the Protestant denominations begin appearing about 1700 CE with Martin Luther.

c. To complicate the matter even more was the introduction of Islam into this picture about 630 CE. Let us not forget that God blessed Ishmael's side of Abraham's family. Let us also remember that the seat of Roman authority transferred to Constantinople, and from there Christianity was accepted as the religion of state.

d. There is one more religion represented within the borders of the Old Roman Empire, and that is Judaism itself.

e. We can now deduce that the Antichrist will come from the area of the Old Roman Empire. The Antichrist can be a Christian, an Orthodox Christian, a Moslem, or even a Jew. The important point is that the Antichrist must come from within the borders of the Roman Empire. Any person mentioned that does not come from within this territory is not the Antichrist. Let's rule out the possibility of a Moslem being the Antichrist. The simple reason is that there is no Jewish person who would accept a seven-year treaty with a Moslem as the head of this agreement. Well, maybe there would be after the signing of the Abraham Accords.

Verse 4, *Men worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, "Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?"*

1. Doesn't this sound like mankind? They are not worried about the truth, they only want to be associated with power.

2. They forgot to ask about the blood! For it is through the power of the blood that the Antichrist is defeated. **There is one who can make war against him!**

3. Remember this is a world leader who leads the true believer away from God.

a. Review the historical side of Daniel chapters 11 and 12, given as text on pages 37-42. Isn't this another look at the battle of the king of the North and the king of the South? It seems, with these two kings at odds against each other, another crusade between Christians and Moslems, will occur as the final series of battles. **NOTICE!** Not just one battle, but many!

Verse 5, *The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months.*

1. proud words - How many times has the Word told mankind not to be prideful? Pride is a destroyer! It destroys the true meaning of everything God has told man in every religious belief and through every prophet! If we, as mankind, would listen to what we are told, we should know that pride is not our answer, quite the contrary, pride is our devastation, our destroyer!

2. In a different fashion, we are still looking at 3½ years. Four years would be 48 months, minus 6 equals 42 months.

Verse 6, *He opened his mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven.*

1. Remember! This is Satan incarnate. If Satan has been thrown out of Heaven he is still trying to accuse the saints before God.

2. The only place that remains for Satan to use these accusations is on Earth and he continues to accuse the righteous before God, for he thinks he is equal to God.

Verse 7, *He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation.*

I cannot continue to believe that mankind thinks their particular religious beliefs are going to get them to Heaven. This verse alone should prove to every believer that God Himself has allowed Satan the power to influence all mankind. At that moment in time, it will not matter if you are a Christian, a Moslem, or a Jewish believer. It does not matter if you are an American, an Arab, or an Israelite. When the final war against the saints occurs, everyone will be under attack.

Verse 8, *All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast-all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.*

God meant all to worship Him in truth, as Abraham did. How can mankind be so blinded as to not see the truth? God proclaimed the truth to the Jew, later passing this to the Gentile, and after all else failed, to Muhammad to bring forth the third religion from the loins of Abraham. Oh my brother! I pray for you! Understand this verse. It says all inhabitants of the earth! This verse did not say all Jews, nor all Christians, nor all Moslems. It says all the inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast. Remember, we are talking about Satan incarnate as being the beast.

It, also, says that all whose name has not been written in the Book of Life (forgive me but at this moment I'll dispense with the Lamb connotation). Every person has free choice to seek out God's gift of eternal life. Read once again John 3:16-18. "*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.*" It is up to us to make that decision within ourselves to accept this gift, or to carry out our life under the influence of Satan, by performing his deeds according to that which is beyond us to understand. However, everyone has that free choice as to whether they will accept the truth at any moment and believe in the eternal God who reigns over us all. The question is: Has your name been recorded in the Book of Life? I have not said you must be of a particular denomination, nor of a particular persuasion. The important point is whether you believe in God and worship Him! Period!!! We are all at war with Satan at this moment in time. Every child who descended from the loins of Abraham is facing the enemy. How we became a child of Abraham, and what we believe as being the truth, is not the matter at this time. All the descendants of the children of Abraham who believe in The One True

God are under siege!

Verse 9, *He who has an ear, let him hear.*

Do you see what it says? All who have an ear let him hear. This verse did not say anything about a particular denomination, nor a particular religious belief.

Verse 10, *If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity he will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword he will be killed. This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints.*

1. This verse deals with being a martyr. A jihad (or holy war) is being waged and the martyrs will be honored.

2. It is necessary for the saints to understand that God's plan will be completed, no matter the denomination in which we believe, and each time we pray the Lord's prayer, we ask for this to hurry and occur.

The Beast out of the Earth

Verse 11, *Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon.*

1. like a lamb, but spoke like a dragon - The importance of this verse is that the second beast portrays himself as a lamb. There is only one Lamb and we know that to be Jesus. This portrayal shows the imitation that Satan will make to show himself as God, in the form of the False Prophet.

2. **Greetings! - You have just met the third part of Satan's trinity! Meet the False Prophet!**

3. The first beast represented the *political* head of kingdoms. This second beast represents the *ecclesiastical* head of kingdoms. Doesn't this sound like the very essence of power itself? All control upon the earth is represented by two beasts. One political and one ecclesiastical. Talk about a church state, here is the ultimate church state.

Verse 12, *He exercised all the authority of the first beast on his behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed.*

Just as the other portions of Satan's trinity were the opposite of their counterpart, here we see the true meaning of how the false prophet is opposite the Holy Spirit and directing praise toward the second part of the trinity. In God's case, the second part is Jesus and in Satan's case it is the Antichrist.

Verse 13, *And he performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men.*

There are many people who will believe that, if a miracle is performed, the power must come from God. This is not the case. Just because a miracle occurs does not mean it is from God. Remember, Satan was an angel and has many supernatural powers. Test the source of the miracle before you believe anything. To understand how to test the spirits, read 1 John 4:2-3. *This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.*

Verse 14, *Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the first beast, he deceived the inhabitants of the earth. He ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived.*

1. he deceived - Who is the great deceiver? Satan is that great deceiver who deceives the world!
2. set up an image - Sounds like idolatry to me. Haven't we all been taught against false worship of God? Didn't the Old Testament show the golden calf being made on two separate occasions? Doesn't the Quran teach Moslems against false images?

Verse 15, *He was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that it could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed.*

1. He was given power - Let us look very carefully at what is being said. Who represents the ultimate authority for power? God himself! Therefore, who has granted a certain amount of power to be transferred? God has. Now this is not to say Satan is like God. In my opinion, Satan is again trying to act like God and wants mankind to fall for the false image put before him. Are we so stupid that we cannot see the difference? Mankind has fallen for this before and worshiped a false image, remember the golden calves, it seems it will happen again.

2. Notice the result, if mankind refused to worship the image - They would be killed! Sounds like the old Nazi party of Hitler, doesn't it? Remember, there are many who believe Napoleon was the first Antichrist, Hitler was the second Antichrist, and this represents the third time the Antichrist appears. If we look at the history surrounding Hitler's brutal attack on the Jews, we should understand what is meant by this verse.

Verse 16, *He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead,*

Again, see the similarity between what is recorded here and the actual facts in history concerning what Hitler did to the Jews during the Second World War! Wasn't every Jew tattooed so everyone knew they were a Jew?

Verse 17, *So that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name.*

Sounds like absolute control of power to me. Isn't that what Nazism or communism is all about? Isn't that what liberals want right now, for everything to be under universal control? Listen to the United States Congress fight among themselves, and hear the very thought of the seed that spreads this idea. Yet, there are those who spread the idea that their claim is right, that this is democracy, and they are the ones who understand what rules the rest of us need to use to live our lives. Read verse 8 (pg 63) of this chapter one more time.

Verse 18, *This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man's number. His number is 666.*

Everything is recorded here in this number. Seven represents God's number and six is man's number. Satan has revealed his trinity and the best he can do is this number of 666, a six for Satan, a six for the Antichrist and a six for the false prophet!

Let's continue in Revelation and observe the bowl judgments of God. We find this judgment in Revelation 16.

Revelation 16

The Seven Bowls of God's Wrath

Chapter 16, verse 1, *Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, “Go, pour out the seven bowls of God’s wrath on the earth.”*

Verse 2, *The first angel went and poured out his bowl on the land, and ugly and painful sores broke out on the people who had the mark of the beast and worshiped his image.*

sores - these sores are boils and ulcers. How realistically vivid a picture would you like? Consider running boils and bleeding ulcers upon the people who worship the Beast.

Verse 3, *The second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it turned into blood like that of a dead man, and every living thing in the sea died.*

Remember, in chapter 8, when the second trumpet was sounded and one-third of all the life in the sea died. Now everything living in the sea dies.

Verse 4, *The third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood.*

Verse 5, *Then I heard the angel in charge of the waters say: “You are just in these judgments, You who are and who were, the Holy One, because You have so judged.”*

Verse 6, *“For they have shed the blood of Your saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink as they deserve.”*

1. Verses 4-6 should be linked for the third plague. All fresh water will turn to blood.
2. Verse 6 tells why this is done. Because they have shed the blood of God’s saints and prophets.

Verse 7, *And I heard the altar respond: “Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and just are Your judgments.”*

There will be many who will ask how a merciful, righteous God can do such a thing. God has to do these things. Judgment requires that sin be punished by justice and righteousness. Laws in any country are accompanied by corresponding penalties. Here, we see the same thing, in God’s ways: Break My rules and there is a penalty. Justice will be completed through judgment.

Verse 8, *The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and the sun was given power to scorch people with fire.*

Verse 9, *They were seared by the intense heat and they cursed the name of God, who had control over these plagues, but they refused to repent and glorify Him.*

1. The sun was given power to scorch people with fire. Aren’t we aware that this is a possibility? With each passing year, the ozone layer changes more, and new sun lotion products come out with stronger and stronger protection factors.

2. Notice the following portion of verse 9, but they refused to repent and glorify Him. There are many people who use the statement that when the time comes, they will repent of their sins. Repentance can only come by conviction of the Holy Spirit. There are people, even today, that curse the name of God and refuse to repent. This will only get worse, not better!

Verse 10, *The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was plunged into darkness. Men gnawed their tongues in agony.*

Verse 11, *And cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they refused to repent of what they had done.*

Haven't the plagues been seen before. God showed them to Pharaoh and Pharaoh hardened his heart!

Verse 12, *The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East.*

1. Why would the Euphrates river need to be dried up? It has been the traditional stopping point for invading forces from the east. It will prepare the way for the kings from the East.

2. Between the verses in Revelation and those in Ezekiel, we see the king of the north, traditionally thought of as Russia, but this could also be a country of the old USSR group of nations, and their horde advancing from the north. However, with recent political changes in the world, I have become more inclined to view Germany as the king of the North. We have the Antichrist leading the renewed Roman Empire from the northwest. Now, we have the kings from the East advancing toward Israel. Let's stop for a moment and see where the United States is in this mess. Funny, I don't remember any verse that would have a reference pertaining to the United States. In fact, if you look, there is no mention at all. Why? Sorry! The United States will collapse on its own economical status. When the national debt is called for payment, this nation won't be able to buy a single bandage to put on the hurt!

Verse 13, *Then I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet.*

1. evil spirits - These are demons.

2. that looked like frogs - What a wonderful illustration. A frog lives in dark, quagmire places.

Verse 14, *They are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.*

1. demons performing miraculous signs - Satan has the power to perform miracles. This is Satan's work and these are his signs as he is doing this.

2. they go to the kings of the whole world - The miracles are used to deceive all the nations and to have them together at Armageddon.

Verse 15, *"Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed."*

1. Behold, I come like a thief! - This is a statement made by Jesus. No! He is not coming to steal. Yes! He is coming to carry off the last of His followers before the last plague is poured out.

2. Blessed - We could probably use the word happy here, and say, happy are those who watch for the Lord's return.

3. It would seem those who are not prepared for the Lord's return would be naked and shamefully exposed. In other words, they are vulnerable to the wrath of God.

Verse 16, *Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.*

Verse 17, *The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and out of the temple came a loud voice from the throne, saying, "It is done!"*

God's wrath has been poured out. God Himself uses the words that Jesus used on the cross and says, **"It is done!"**

Verse 18, *Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since man has been on earth, so tremendous was the quake.*

Verse 19, *The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed. God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of His wrath.*

This verse foretells the fall of Babylon that will be fully explained in chapters 17 and 18.

Verse 20, *Every island fled away and the mountains could not be found.*

Verse 21, *From the sky huge hailstones of about a hundred pounds each fell upon men. And they cursed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so terrible.*

Revelation 17

The Woman on the Beast

There have been several passages we read about the fall (destruction) of Babylon. We must understand that when the term Babylon is used, it is not in reference to a city in the present country of Iraq. The term Babylon represents a false image. There are two Babylons. One represents the false political or governmental ideology that has come into vogue. The other represents a false religion and the worship of false teachings. In both the Bible and the Quran, there are warnings after warnings seeking the attention of mankind to understand there will be false prophets who will mislead the believers into an acceptance of immoral, unwise and misleading practices that can only lead to self-destruction.

We saw the rise of political Babylon in Revelation 16. In Revelation 17, we will see the fall of ecclesiastical Babylon and the destruction of false religion. In Revelation 18, the destruction of political Babylon will be revealed.

Chapter 17, verse 1, *One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the punishment of the great prostitute, who sits on many waters."*

1. In the Bible we find a bad woman associated with something false. Jezebel is the name most widely connected with this lesson. Jezebel spread falsehoods and told lies about many things.

2. Great prostitute - This symbolic figure represents the anti bride. This is a coined term to explain the counterpart of the Bride of Christ. Consider that the Antichrist is the counterpart to Christ, therefore the anti bride is the counterpart to the bride. We have seen the trinity of Satan and how they mimic God's Holy trinity. We know the bride of Jesus represents the church. Here we find Satan's mimicking of the bride of Jesus as the great prostitute of false religion.

3. Who sits on many waters. - Water covers two thirds of the earth's surface. It touches every continent. It flows and finds its own level. What it means here is the symbolic spread of the effect of the great prostitute. This is our egos, our own prostitution of our self-esteem and desires. Our greed and what we covet are all found in her. She is universal and touches every nation, tongue and people. See verse 15 of this chapter to confirm this.

Verse 2, *"With her the kings of the earth committed adultery and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries."*

Here are some of her effects.

a. the kings of the earth committed adultery - This is a state religion with government and religion being mutually entwined into each other.

b. inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated - A drunk does not have sound judgement. Haven't

we seen false religions use mind control to keep the followers in line? Imagine when one of these religions becomes the religion of choice for the government and everyone wants to belong.

c. the wine of her adulteries - Sounds like the pagan rites of the old Roman Empire, wine women and song. Hey! Who cares? This certainly will not be a religion with a strong moral backbone.

DISCUSSION: In my travels around this globe, I have run into two sermons that professed to explain this universal harlot. One attempted to proclaim the false religion as being the Roman Catholic Church. They went on to make the Pope the false prophet, the mark of the beast was a rosary and all followers of this religion would support the Antichrist in his political office as world ruler. The second sermon attempted to point out that Islam was the false religion and some fanatic would become the Antichrist.

The question should be: Does either explanation make sense? No! Not to me! Here's another view-point, the false government represents liberalism and the false religion represents fanaticism taken to an extreme. Under liberalism, the government wants to have control of your life from birth to grave. They are going to have control over everything you do, and since the primary objective is to have everyone supported by the government, everyone would be on the dole. You'd need a mark of some kind to get food, have housing, or medical care, or to buy anything. The false religion would push to support this idea as simple truth, that it was God's own truth. Working together in harmony the two desire to dominate the world for their cause. My point is to cause you to think! Open your mind and see the possibilities! Note that in this discussion, there is no mention of any names nor any political party.

Verse 3, *Then the angel carried me away in the Spirit into a desert. There I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was covered with blasphemous names and had seven heads and ten horns.*

This woman sits on the back of the Antichrist or one of his minions. In other words, we could say the false prophet points his praise to the Antichrist. Isn't that what Revelation 13:4 foretold?

Verse 4, *The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls. She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries.*

1. This false religion has wealth. They can afford to have the prettiest buildings, the extra padded pews, elaborate furnishings, etc. Doesn't this sound like the church at Laodicea in Revelation 3:17?

2. Observe what is in the cup. It is not fruit juice! It is filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries. Sounds like a terrible, horrible brew that would make the normal person sick.

Verse 5, *This title was written on her forehead: MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.*

1. Let's look at the title in a different manner. THE GREAT MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES Isn't that an interesting title? Now! Who or what would be a mother of prostitutes? A mother gives birth to a child and a prostitute sells herself to others. I mentioned above that I've listened to sermons that try to get the listener to believe this is the Roman Catholic Church. While I'll admit that there are verses that could easily lead to such a conclusion that this is true, I'm not certain. The argument is made that the Catholic Church is the starting point where most other denominations find their beginning. However, my research proves without a shadow of a doubt, that God also blessed Ishmael. There is another question that should be asked. How does Islam fit into this grand picture?

Consider that the original religion is Judaism. This is the religion that rejected the Lamb. Jesus was a Jew and followed Jewish law. Jesus was *The Way* and His disciples are the ones who started the breakaway religions. Is the mother of false religion Judaism? Has it been diluted so much from what

God gave His people that this is what is being discussed. Think about it! The book of Revelation is there to illustrate the truth at the end-times and to tell of the marriage of the Lamb to the bride. There are numerous references to Israel and how God will deal with His chosen people.

2. AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH - A study of the Old Testament will reveal that Israel did not act according to God's will, and repeatedly rebelled. At one point, Israel is given a bill of divorce from God and Judah was a harlot. Jeremiah 3:8, *I gave faithless Israel her certificate of divorce and sent her away because of all her adulteries. Yet I saw that her unfaithful sister Judah had no fear; she also went out and committed adultery.* The people of Israel were committing abominations before God, as early as the book of Exodus. Exodus 8:26, *When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, "Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him."*

Verse 6, *I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus. When I saw her, I was greatly astonished.*

1. I will continue with my argument. If the Roman Catholic Church was the intended perpetrator of Babylon the Great, then you could use the Middle Ages with the inquisitions as an example. However, what would be the argument pertaining to Judaism? Has anyone stopped to think it was the Jews who crucified Jesus and spilled the Blood of the Lamb?

2. I was greatly astonished - This book is written to cause everyone to think. Think! Could the reason John is astonished be because he recognized who the woman was? Could some of my suggestions of explanation actually be the answer? For now, we do not know!

Verse 7, *Then the angel said to me: "Why are you astonished? I will explain to you the mystery of the woman and of the beast she rides, which has the seven heads and ten horns."*

Verse 8, *"The beast, which you saw, once was, now is not, and will come up out of the Abyss and go to his destruction. The inhabitants of the earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the creation of the world will be astonished when they see the beast, because he once was, now is not, and yet will come."*

1. once was, now is not, and will come up out of the Abyss - The Antichrist must be one who lived prior to the writing of the Revelation, who was not alive at the time John wrote this, but would return at a later time.

2. The next sentence is a mind blower! God has always known who would follow and believe. Yes! Mankind may have free choice, but God knows what response you will make! The Holy Spirit can place a conviction upon your heart, but God still knows what response you will make. I fully understand there are those who try to explain that everything is predestined, and if you have not been selected to have your name recorded in the Book of Life, so what? This thought goes against every true teaching concerning God. If that was the case, why are there verses recorded about God's love for mankind or that He even knows the number of hairs on our head. Understand why it says, "The inhabitants of the earth whose names have not been written in the Book of Life from the creation of the world." It is these inhabitants who make up the population of the Earth at this time. The church is being protected and their names are recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life.

3. The rest of the sentence says they will be astonished, and again repeats the statement that this is someone who once was, now is not, and yet will come. Can we say this is someone whom mankind should know?

Verse 9, *"This calls for a mind with wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits."*

This is one of the verses that gives strong reason to associate Rome with the political and religious Babylonians. Rome has always been called the city of seven hills. Therefore, that part of the argument would be that the Roman Empire is the seat of the Antichrist and the church of Rome, through its leader, the Pope as the False Prophet. I do not want to pick out one religion and say it is the one of which Revelation is speaking. However, another consideration should be made. There were seven churches that the Revelation was sent to and each did something God didn't like. Therefore, the number seven is used in a different manner instead of seven heads or seven hills on which the woman sits, yet, it should cause us to think that we may not know the true answer. Could the seven heads indicate the seven churches?

Verse 10, *"They are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; but when he does come, he must remain for a little while."*

Haven't we illustrated the kings to be empires in viewing the Revelation? Then we could say there were seven empires of which five had collapsed, one was in power at the time of John, and one will follow. This scenario does not match the image in Daniel 2, however the domination of the whole world must occur only during the Tribulation period.

Verse 11, *"The beast who once was, and now is not, is an eighth king. He belongs to the seven and is going to his destruction."*

One of the nations (empires) will be revived, from the other seven, to rule again. There are many who believe this is the Holy Roman Empire. On the other hand, Perry Stone believes this will be the Babylonian Empire. Actually, no one, other than God, knows for sure.

Verse 12, *"The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but who for one hour will receive authority as kings along with the beast."*

1. Once the kingdom of the fallen empire is reestablished, there will be ten members (kings). These members represent the toes on Daniel's image.

2. But who for one hour will receive authority as kings along with the beast. This is a symbolic amount of time. Peter has foretold us that with God a thousand years is a day and a day is a thousand years. Then this is just a minuscule portion of time to give a reference to mankind. 2 Peter 3:8, *But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.*

Verse 13, *"They have one purpose and will give their power and authority to the beast."*

There is but one objective, to rule with absolute power. This is, of course, the Man of Sin who is the final world dictator.

Verse 14, *"They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because He is Lord of lords and King of kings-and with Him will be His called, chosen and faithful followers."*

They, in this case, represent the 10 nations of the beast, but this is only one element of the forces that will be involved in the Battle of Armageddon.

Verse 15, *Then the angel said to me, "The waters you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations and languages."*

Verse 16, *"The beast and the ten horns you saw will hate the prostitute. They will bring her to ruin and leave her naked; they will eat her flesh and burn her with fire."*

Here is an interesting twist. In verse 3, the harlot was riding on the back of the beast. Now,

suddenly, the beast and the ten horns you saw will hate the prostitute. At that point, governmental Babylon no longer wants to support religious Babylon. In fact, the governmental kingdom will destroy the religious false prophet. Here is the destruction of the false religion! Notice, this end comes by the hand of Satan himself, and not by the hand of God. The reason follows in the next verse.

Verse 17, *“For God has put it into their hearts to accomplish His purpose by agreeing to give the beast their power to rule, until God’s words are fulfilled.”*

Verse 18, *“The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth.”*

Once more, there is a verse that could indicate a connection to Rome. Is the center of religious world power going to be Rome? God will complete all that His word has revealed?

Revelation 18

The Fall of Babylon

Chapter 18, verse 1, *After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven. He had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendor.*

Verse 2, *With a mighty voice he shouted: “Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a home for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit, a haunt for every unclean and detestable bird.”*

Verse 3, *“For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries. The kings of the earth committed adultery with her, and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries.”*

1. Verses 1-3. The last chapter closed with the fall of religious Babylon at the hands of governmental Babylon.

2. The city of political Babylon becomes a home for demons and evil spirits. Some days, I’m not sure that doesn’t describe Washington, D.C.

3. To all who believe, that through political discussion, there will be world peace and that government can change the outcome of world factions had better read these three verses one more time.

Verse 4, *Then I heard another voice from heaven say: “Come out of her, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues;”*

Mankind is given one final chance to come out of worldly religions that teach false doctrines.

Verse 5, *“For her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes.”*

Again, we see an illustration that all our sins are recorded.

Verse 6, *“Give back to her as she has given; pay her back double for what she has done. Mix her a double portion from her own cup.”*

Verse 7, *“Give her as much torture and grief as the glory and luxury she gave herself. In her heart she boasts, ‘I sit as queen; I am not a widow, and I will never mourn.’”*

Verses 6 and 7, don’t we (mankind) even say, “What goes around comes around”?

Verse 8, *Therefore in one day her plagues will overtake her: death, mourning and famine. She will be*

consumed by fire, for mighty is the Lord God who judges her.

Do you see the judgement God has in store for those who fail to obey God's will?

Verse 9, *"When the kings of the earth who committed adultery with her and shared her luxury see the smoke of her burning, they will weep and mourn over her."*

Verse 10, *Terrified at her torment, they will stand far off and cry: "Woe! Woe, O great city, O Babylon, city of power! In one hour your doom has come!"*

Verses 9-10, Politicians shall weep, they have invested their time, even their very life, in politics and government. Now Babylon is destroyed. Woe unto them!

Verse 11, *"The merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her because no one buys their cargoes any more."*

Verse 12, *"Cargoes of gold, silver, precious stones and pearls; fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet cloth; every sort of citron wood, and articles of every kind made of ivory, costly wood, bronze, iron and marble."*

Everyone, who puts great wealth before everything, else should read what is to come. Jesus said to store up treasures in heaven in Matthew 6:20. *But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.*

Verse 13, *"Cargoes of cinnamon and spice, of incense, myrrh and frankincense, of wine and olive oil, of fine flour and wheat; cattle and sheep; horses and carriages; and bodies and souls of men."*

All the pleasures of wealth, even slaves.

Verse 14, *They will say, "The fruit you longed for is gone from you. All your riches and splendor have vanished, never to be recovered."*

Here we see the results. Earthly treasures will fall by the way side.

Verse 15, *"The merchants who sold these things and gained their wealth from her will stand far off, terrified at her torment. They will weep and mourn."*

Verse 16, *And cry out: "Woe! Woe, O great city, dressed in fine linen, purple and scarlet, and glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls!"*

Those who provided and made their own wealth from the affluent show their disappointment.

Verse 17, *"In one hour such great wealth has been brought to ruin! Every sea captain, and all who travel by ship, the sailors, and all who earn their living from the sea, will stand far off."*

Verses 11-17, Commerce and the movement of goods will cease.

Verse 18, *When they see the smoke of her burning, they will exclaim, "Was there ever a city like this great city?"*

Verse 19, *They will throw dust on their heads, and with weeping and mourning cry out: "Woe! Woe, O great city, where all who had ships on the sea became rich through her wealth! In one hour she has been brought to ruin!"*

Many times, we see self-righteous individuals tear their garments and put on sackcloth to show

their repentance. In this verse, we see merchants feeling their personal woe for loss of trade and lack of profit.

Verse 20, *“Rejoice over her, O heaven! Rejoice, saints and apostles and prophets! God has judged her for the way she treated you.”*

Verse 21, *Then a mighty angel picked up a boulder the size of a large millstone and threw it into the sea, and said: “With such violence the great city of Babylon will be thrown down, never to be found again.”*

Verse 22, *“The music of harpists and musicians, flute players and trumpeters, will never be heard in you again. No workman of any trade will ever be found in you again. The sound of a millstone will never be heard in you again.”*

All forms of pleasure and amusement will stop. All manner of life that invests their work in the world will be a complete and total waste.

Verse 23, *“The light of a lamp will never shine in you again. The voice of bridegroom and bride will never be heard in you again. Your merchants were the world’s great men. By your magic spell all the nations were led astray.”*

Verse 24, *“In her was found the blood of prophets and of the saints, and of all who have been killed on the earth.”*

The Period of Time of the Antichrist

Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 (ESV)

According to the Bible, in the last days the spirit of antichrist must come. 1 John 2:18-24.¹⁸ *Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour.*¹⁹ *They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.*²⁰ *But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge.*²¹ *I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth.*²² *Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son.*²³ *No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also.*²⁴ *Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father.* This antichrist will be a satanic empowered opposition to God. All he has accomplished against Christ will be represented in bodily form as an influential, international leader. This person will engineer Satan’s final attempt to overthrow Christ, His work and His followers just before Christ returns to establish His kingdom on earth for the last thousand years of time, as we now know it. Paul uses a couple of terms for the Antichrist: the man of lawlessness and the son of destruction. Both terms are shown above in the

reference verse. Other terms used in the Bible for this figure are the beast rising out of the sea, Rev 13:1, ¹ *And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads, a scarlet beast*, Rev 17:3, ³ *And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns, and the beast*, Rev 17:8, ⁸ *The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to rise from the bottomless pit and go to destruction. And the dwellers on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will marvel to see the beast, because it was and is not and is to come.*

Signs of the Antichrist's Coming. Unlike the rapture, the coming of the Antichrist will not be without warning. Several signs will point to his appearance and rise to power. At least three events must occur before he appears on earth: (1) the mystery of lawlessness already at work in the world must greatly increase, 2 Thes 2:9-10, ⁹ *The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, ¹⁰ and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved;* (2) the rebellion must come (stated above); and (3) **He who now restrains it** must be taken **out of the way**. 2 Thes 2:7, ⁷ *For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way.*

(1) The mystery of lawlessness, will increase until it reaches its climax, referring to the behind-the-scenes activity of evil powers that are evident throughout the world. That point will be characterized by the complete ridicule, rejection and rebellion against any standards and commands established in the Bible. Because of a ruling spirit of rebellion and lawlessness, most people will lose any sense of true love and compassion. Matt 24:10, ¹⁰ *And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another*, Luke 18:8, ⁸ *I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"* Yet, there will always be those who choose to follow Christ and remain loyal to the Christian faith as revealed in the New Testament. Matt 24:13, ¹³ *But he who endures to the end shall be saved;* Matt 25:10, ¹⁰ *And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut;* Luke 18:7, ⁷ *And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them?* Through these faithful people, the true church will remain strong using the sword of the Spirit (God's Word) as the most effective weapon in the ongoing battle against the forces of evil.

(2) The rebellion (Gk. *apostasia*), which literally means departure, falling away or abandonment will occur. In the last days, many people who once followed Christ will abandon Biblical truth and reject true faith in Christ.

(a) Both, Yeshua and Paul paint a dark picture of the condition of many of the visible church (people in local congregations) as the present age comes to a close. Matt 24:5, ⁵ *For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray;* 24:10-13, ¹⁰ *And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. ¹¹ And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. ¹² And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³ But the one who endures to the end will be saved;* 24:24, ²⁴ *For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect;* 1 Tim 4:1, ¹ *Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons;* 2 Tim 4:3-4, ³ *For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, ⁴ and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.* The corruption will be evident morally, spiritually and doctrinally regarding foundational beliefs and teachings. Paul, in particular, stresses that the churches will be invaded by godless influences in the last days.

(b) This rebellion within the church will have two dimensions. [1] Theological apostasy refers to people turning from and rejecting part, or all, of the true and original teachings of Christ and His apostles as recorded in the New Testament (see the 1 Tim and 2 Tim passages just above). False leaders and teachers will offer salvation and cheap grace without true devotion to Christ. They will claim that people can be spiritually saved even though they reject Christ's demand for repentance, separation from evil and loyalty to God and His standards. False hope that centers on human desires, activities and goals of self-interest will become popular. [2] Moral apostasy refers to the rejection or abandonment of one's saving relationship with Christ and the returning to a sinful, rebellious way of life. People who have abandoned true faith in Christ may still claim to believe the right things and to accept the Bible's teachings, **yet they reject God's moral law and standards!** By doing so, they corrupt the truth and embrace deception. Many churches will tolerate almost anything for the sake of attendance, money, success and honor. The true message of Christ, with its call to suffer, to radically renounce sin, Rom 8:13-14, ¹³ *For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.* ¹⁴ *For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God,* to sacrifice for God's kingdom and to deny one's own selfish way, will be more unpopular than ever. 2 Tim 3:1-5, ¹ *But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty.* ² *For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,* ³ *heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good,* ⁴ *treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,* ⁵ *having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power.*

(c) Both, the history of the church and the predicted end-time rebellion within the church, should challenge all followers of Christ **not to be naive** about the widespread corruption of Christ's message of truth in the last days. At some point in time, it seems that rebellion against God and His Word will reach an astounding, almost unimaginable level. The day of the Lord will bring God's wrath, His justified anger, judgment and punishment on those who reject His truth.

(d) The ultimate, or complete, triumph of God's kingdom and purposes in the world does not depend on the gradual increase of the church's, so-called, success. God's purpose will prevail, because of His own final intervention when He breaks into the order of world events with right and proper judgment.

(3) A final and indisputable event must occur before the *man of lawlessness* can be revealed and *the day of the Lord* can begin. That event involves the taking out of the way of someone, or something that currently holds back, or restrains the secret power of lawlessness and the man of lawlessness. The day of the Lord can begin when the restraining influence is taken out of the way.

(a) He who now restrains it may best be understood as God, as He is revealed through the Holy Spirit. He alone has the power to hold back evil, the man of lawlessness and Satan. The restrainer is referred to by both the masculine article and by the neuter article. In the same way, the word Spirit in the Greek can be referred to by a masculine or neuter pronoun.

(b) At the beginning of the final seven years of tribulation, the restraining influence of God's Spirit will be lifted, or taken out of the way. This does not mean that the Holy Spirit is taken out of the world completely, but only that He will cease to exercise His restraining influence against lawlessness and the Antichrist's rise to power. All of God's restraints against sin will be removed and the satanically inspired rebellion will begin. Certainly, the Holy Spirit will still remain on earth during the tribulation to expose people's sin and convince them of their need for God. Why? Because, no one could be saved without the Spirit's enablement and life renewing power. The Spirit will enable those who show faith in God to turn from their own way and follow Him. The Spirit will empower those who choose to follow Christ during this time of widespread suffering and persecution.

(c) As God removes, or lifts, His restraining influence, the man of lawlessness then comes on the scene. God will send a strong delusion on all those who refuse to accept and love the truth. As a result, **they will be greatly deceived and will accept the claims of the man of lawlessness**. As a result, human society will degenerate to a depth of corruption never before seen.

(d) God's sin restraining presence and ministry are carried on, largely, through the church, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit. For this reason, many interpreters believe that the removal of the Spirit's sin restraining influence will occur simultaneously with the rapture of the church.

(e) Some scholars believe that the restrainer of 2 Thes 2:6 refers to the Holy Spirit and His sin restraining ministry, while in 2:7, he who now restrains it refers to Christ's followers before the rapture. They will be taken out of the way when they are caught up to meet Christ in the air to be with the Lord forever.

The Antichrist's Activities. The *man of lawlessness* is revealed as *the day of the Lord* begins. He will be a world ruler who will make a covenant with Israel seven years before the end of the age. (1) His true identity will be confirmed three and one half years later as he breaks his covenant with Israel, becomes the world ruler, declares himself to be God, defiles the temple in Jerusalem, forbids the worship of the Lord and brings devastation to the land of that region. (2) The Antichrist will declare himself to be God and will become a ruthless dictator, severely persecuting those who turn to and remain loyal to Christ during this time. He will demand worship, evidently, from a great temple that he uses as the center for his prideful announcements. In their ungodliness, humans have attempted to achieve this godlike status since the beginning of creation. (3) The *man of lawlessness* will be empowered by Satan to perform great signs, wonders and miracles **in order to deceive people and make his lies believable**. *False signs and wonders* refer to actual supernatural occurrences that deceive people into accepting a lie. (a) It is possible that these supernatural happenings will be seen around the world through various forms of media! Millions will be impressed, deceived and persuaded by this charismatic leader because they have no deep commitment to, or love for the truth of God's Word. The words of both Paul and Yeshua should caution believers against assuming that all miracles are from God. Every expression, of the supernatural gifts, needs to be tested by the standards given in God's Word, to be sure that it is the gift and work of the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor 12:4-11, ⁴ *Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit;* ⁵ *and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord;* ⁶ *and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone.* ⁷ *To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.* ⁸ *For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit,* ⁹ *to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit,* ¹⁰ *to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.* ¹¹ *All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.*

The Defeat of the Antichrist. At the end of the tribulation period, Satan will gather many nations at Armageddon under the direction of the Antichrist. He will prepare to make war against God and His people in a battle that will involve the entire world. When that time comes, Christ will return to earth and supernaturally intervene to destroy the Antichrist, his armies and all who defy God and His Word. Christ will then bind Satan and confine him to the bottomless pit, establish his kingdom of peace on earth for the last thousand years of time as we know it. Following this final period of history, Satan will be released for a brief time to deceive anyone who is not completely loyal to God, and he will gather them for a final battle against Christ. That battle will be brief and decisive, as the enemies of Christ will be consumed with fire, and the devil will be thrown into the lake of fire, where the Beast and

False Prophet already are, to be tormented for eternity. Rev 20:9-10, ⁹ *And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them,* ¹⁰ *and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.* A new heaven and new earth are then created in which God will live with His people forever. 2 Peter 3:7-13, ⁷ *But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.*

⁸ *But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.* ⁹ *The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.* ¹⁰ *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.*

¹¹ *Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness,* ¹² *waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!* ¹³ *But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*

The Mark of the Beast

What is the Mark of the Beast? Let's see if we can find an answer! Millions of people have heard about the dreaded Mark of the Beast and its number 666. There are many theories of what it might be. Some people have alleged that the number 666 is on the papal crown. Others have alleged that the number will be inserted under your skin by means of a microchip. Many believe it has something to do with a new form of money, or the coming "cashless society" that will replace cash. I've even seen a grid chart formed in a square of six boxes by six boxes. All the letters of the alphabet along with the numbers 0 through 9 are placed in the boxes and, the statement made that, the Mark of the Beast will be contained in that grid of 6 by 6 by 6 (this last six boxes is made up of the diagonal boxes).

a b c d e f
g **h** i j k l
m n **o** p q r
s t u **v** w x
y z 0 1 **2** 3
4 5 6 7 8 **9**

The Bible contains stern warnings about those who receive the mysterious Mark of the Beast. It was the Apostle John who received the visions from Christ about the Mark of the Beast. Revelation 16:1-2, ¹ *Then I heard a loud voice from the temple telling the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God."* ² *So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth, and harmful and painful sores came upon the people who bore the mark of the beast and worshiped its image.* (ESV) Notice that it is not only those who receive the Mark of the Beast, but also those who "worship his image" that will come under the wrath of God. So, if there is a Mark of the Beast, we must have a Beast and an image of the Beast. What is the Beast? What is the "image of the Beast?" How can we recognize it? How can you insure that you do not receive the Mark of the Beast? Think about it! You must understand this so that you do not come under God's wrath?

Weird, ridiculous theories about the meaning of the Mark of the Beast are legend. We just listed above some of the thoughts describing what the Mark of the Beast may be. To others, it seems it is a way for the government to keep track of everyone. It seems to be the harbinger of this mark and many have begun wondering whether it could be the first step toward a national identity card. This “deep state” or “big brother” identity card would spy on everyone of us who was carrying such a card. Through it the government would know everything we do, where we go, what we buy, to which church we belong, and be aware of everything about our individual private lives. This paranoid fear of surveillance convinces many that various forms of personal identification such as drivers license, social security cards, credit cards and the like are the Mark of the Beast.

Some have gone so far as to suggest that the bar code label that appears on practically any item you purchase is the Mark of the Beast. There are those who have been convinced that these striations on their packages are threatening to them. Actually, each bar represents a letter, or a number, like a code. The laser scanner instantly reads the code, and displays it on a small screen attached to the electronic cash register. The purchaser may then watch an electronic display of each item, such as a can of string beans, accompanied by the price appearing. A computer is automatically reducing the inventory in the store by one can of beans, thus saving the old-fashioned method of painstakingly counting all the cans remaining on the shelf and, at the same time, computing the sales of the day. Such modern methods have greatly reduced man-hours of labor, helped us get through checkout lines much faster, and are far more accurate than human fingers on a cash register.

This modern, much simpler and faster, development in computer age technology is in no way threatening to anyone. Yet, some people, who tend toward paranoia are fair game for religious hucksters who like to play upon people’s fears. Some paranoids believe super computers are watching them, somehow, believe black helicopters with no rotor blade noise are spying on them, and they believe they must be constantly on alert lest some government agency sneakily labeled them with the Mark of the Beast. All of this is sheer foolishness, of course, but there are hucksters of fear who continually spread their warnings or allegations of government surveillance and spying. We can actually see the play, the standards and the control that such a system would look like by the vast interconnected surveillance camera system all over China. It is time you swept away all this Babylon of confusion, and looked directly into the Word of God, to see what really **IS** the mysterious Mark of the Beast, and what it is **NOT!**

Obviously, before one can understand the Mark of the Beast, one must understand who or what is the Beast! We went through God’s Word in the last section to present you with the meaning of the Beast. Hopefully, you have come to an understanding that the Beast was a twofold entity of a composite government driven by a religious leader. The government portion of this social, economic and military entity would be a personification of the “man of sin” (the Beast) ruling the revised Holy Roman Empire. The religious portion of this two part entity would be the “False Prophet,” and together they encompass the “Antichrist” under the direct influence of Satan.

The Beast is a symbol of a great, super government (a future version of a revised Holy Roman Empire). That the beast rose up out of the sea indicates that it derived its power from masses of people. The seven heads are seven revivals, or stages, of this beast’s power. The ten horns are symbols of individual governments, each presided over by a king or an absolute ruler, symbolized by the “crowns.” Finally, the label on each of these seven successive governments was the “name of blasphemy” indicating its alignment with a spiritual power that was called Mystery Babylon. Revelation 17:5, ⁵ *And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.* (NKJV)

Therefore, this end-time Beast is the final resurrection of the same old Babylonian system that was to reemerge many times down through history. Its final version shall be a revised Holy Roman Empire just before the beginning of the Great Tribulation, the Day of the Lord and the Second Coming of Christ.

This great political, military and ecclesiastical power will have a SIGN, an identifying label, or a MARK that it will seek to impose on all who will submit to its will. It will not be a “secret” sign or mark, but an obvious, outward, easily recognized sign, that the whole system wears just like a label! The “little horn” of Daniel is the spokesman of this evil mystery religion. Daniel 7:25, ²⁵ *He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time.* (NKJV) He had all intention of changing times and laws. This ecclesiastical ruler has done just that. They have changed God’s laws, abolished His divinely appointed Sabbaths and His annual Holy Days.

This great false church has adopted the labels associated with SUN worship and changed God’s weekly Sabbath to SUNDAY, the day of the sun, and is forcing upon millions of unsuspecting believers the PAGAN holidays of Ishtar (Easter) and the Saturnalia (Christmas). For centuries, countless thousands were brutally martyred, tortured, burnt alive, and killed in the most horrifying ways for **refusing** to accept the Mark of the Beast, instead clinging to God’s holy Sabbath and His annual feast days.

For many centuries, those who continued to observe God’s Passover on the fourteenth of Abib, or Nisan, the first month of the sacred year, were labeled “Judaizers,” and relentlessly hunted down and slain! This had to do with TIMES and LAWS! The TIME for observing “communion,” or the Lord’s Supper, as it came to be called, was to be observed on the 14th day of the first month according to the Jewish Sacred Calendar. But, the apostate church issued a decree that Christians should not be found “Judaizing” by keeping God’s holy Passover exactly as Jesus had, but should substitute pagan Easter instead! Easter is celebrated amid symbols of sex and fertility, rabbits and eggs, and is known to be of wholly PAGAN ORIGINS! Thus, by decree, backed up by force of arms, the now paganized apostate church ENFORCED the changing of “times and laws” on those who, fearful of their very lives, would submit! The Bible shows that the identifying SIGN of the Beast and the Image of the Beast is something that has been around for many centuries! It is something that has already caused the death of countless thousands who refused to accept it! It is NOT something that is of modern invention, such as computer chips or identity cards. **The Mark of the Beast is the counterfeit day of worship, Sunday.**

Remember, it is not only those who receive the Mark of the Beast who will suffer God’s wrath in the Day of the Lord. It will also be those who “worship his image.” Recall what Revelation 13:11-18 reveals. ¹¹ *Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.* ¹² *And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.* ¹³ *He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.* ¹⁴ *And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived.* ¹⁵ *He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.* ¹⁶ *He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads,* ¹⁷ *and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.* ¹⁸ *Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.* (NKJV)

This second beast is able to CAUSE WORSHIP! It is therefore a political and religious system! It encourages state worship! It points to the great economic, industrial and military power of the first

beast! It urges loyalty, servitude, cooperation, and worship by all of its followers toward this great ten nation union. We have seen audio-animatronics coupled with robots at Disney World and watched presentations of historical U.S. presidents make speeches and move. We know of holographs that can mimic human sight and sound. Sprinkle a little Satanic influence over the image of the beast and you would have awe and wonder at the magic the image conveys.

Notice this scripture and think deeply about what you will read! This scripture is Revelation 20:4. *⁴ And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, **who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands.** And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.* (NKJV) Observe this: There is a conscious choice that is to be made! These who were beheaded refused to have anything to do with the beast, the mark of the beast or the image of the beast. That tells me that they knew what the mark was! They made a reasoned, conscious choice to refuse!

Just as happened during the infamous "Inquisition," when hundreds of thousands were put to death for refusing to give up their Bible-based faith, so the Beast and the False Prophet will be attempting to FORCE Christians to bow down to them in worship. True Christians will refuse, choosing to OBEY GOD rather than man, and they will be martyred because of that choice! Make no mistake, the Mark of the Beast is definitely something that will be enforced! It will be a matter of law and people will be ordered to obey it! That choice will be either submit, to give in and cooperate with the coming socioeconomic, military/spiritual system, or choose the pain of DEATH and refuse to cooperate and refuse the Mark of the Beast.

We have seen that a mark is a stamp, a sign, a symbol, or an identifying label! Anciently, Almighty God designated a great SIGN that would identify His people! Here is what God said about **His special SIGN** between Himself and His people. Exodus 31:12-17, *¹² And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ¹³ "Speak also to the children of Israel, saying: 'Surely **My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations,** that you may know that I am the Lord who sanctifies you. ¹⁴ You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. ¹⁵ Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. ¹⁶ Therefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as **a perpetual covenant.** ¹⁷ **It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed.** " (NKJV)*

Did you recognize God's special SIGN? I know that there will be those who reject the statements made here and especially concerning the scripture verse of Exodus 31:17 just above. They will make the claim that this does not apply to them because they are New Testament Christians and not "children of Israel". How foolish can you become in the falsehood that has been pulled over your eyes. If you claim to be Christian, that makes you a follower of Jesus the Christ! Jesus the Jew! Jesus the Lion of the tribe of Judah! Jesus the son of David, the son of Abraham, the son of Adam, the son of God! Do you now understand what the Mark of the Beast is? It is this law change of the apostate church that you must worship on Sunday and not on God's ordained Sabbath. Sunday worship is the thought of man and Sabbath observance is the special sign God gave His people in Exodus 31:17. This may not be enforced today, but I assure you it will be enforced, under penalty of death, at the time of the Beast and False Prophet, operating as the Antichrist.

Let's review a few things. First, look at a portion that the Apostle John declared concerning Jesus in the first chapter of the Gospel of John. John 1:10-13, ¹⁰ *He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.* ¹¹ *He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.* ¹² *But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:* ¹³ *who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* (NKJV) Do you understand that verse 11 basically says that Jesus came to the Jews and they refused to accept Him as their Messiah. Verse 12 says that those who believed in Jesus were given the right to become "children of God".

Here is a summary of the Beasts of Revelation:

The first great beast that comes out of the sea is a future revival of the Holy Roman Empire. The leader of this earthly superpower will be the final dictator of the world and called "the man of lawlessness (sin).

The second beast coming out of the earth will be the ecclesiastical ruler of that time and called "the False Prophet." This church leader will be working in conjunction with the Beast and forcing everyone who will yield to the doctrine of this apostate church to worship the Beast. Those who do not yield to the will of this apostate church will be killed.

The apostate church will wear the title of Babylon the Great. The image of this church is that of a woman riding a dragon and called a prostitute. This church will practice many of the pagan traditions of ancient Babylon and use the name of the Roman Catholic Church. The daughters of this false church are the harlot religious denominations formed during the time of the Protestant Reformation. These titles are the blasphemy spoken against God.

I plead with all who practice the Catholic faith. If you have any desire to be with Jesus in heaven, please, listen to what the Holy Spirit has led men to write in God's Word. You must return back to God's Commandments and God's Feast Days! To continue to follow the Pope's of history and the traditions of the counterfeit church only marks you a rebel against God. 2nd Peter 3:9, ⁹ *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.* (NKJV) Jesus can and will forgive you of all sins, if you repent and accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior. No human is your spiritual "Father," only God is "Father" and no human can stand in your place before the Father on the Day of the Lord to act as your defence attorney, Jesus can, if you have a personal relationship with Him. Remember it is your choice whether you want to be with Jesus in heaven, or if you will spend eternity with Satan in the lake of fire.

I have one final subject to bring to your attention. If Jesus returned to earth today, would He consider your church to be one of His churches? Would He even want to open the front door of your church? Would He come in to remove your church's lampstand because of unbelief?

Considered these five things Jesus' church is built upon. Now, ask yourself if your church meets these requirements.

1. Christ's church is built upon a rock. Who is that rock? If you answered Peter your answer is wrong? Let's look at Scripture. Matthew 16:15-19, ¹⁵ *He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"* ¹⁶ *Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."* ¹⁷ *Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.* ¹⁸ *And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.* ¹⁹ *And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."* (NKJV) I thought you might go to that verse for your answer. Peter

is a little rock according to the statement of Jesus. John 1:42, ⁴² *And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, “You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas” (which is translated, A Stone).* (NKJV) Do you see where Jesus calls Simon (Peter) a stone, not a rock? Now look at the description that Paul uses to identify who, in reality, is the rock. Ephesians 2:20-22, ²⁰ *having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone,* ²¹ *in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,* ²² *in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.* (NKJV) Paul declares that Jesus is the foundation and the corner stone. Jesus is the Rock the church is built upon.

2. Teach the same things Jesus taught: The Kingdom of God. Consider Mark 16:15-16. ¹⁵ *And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.* ¹⁶ *He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.* (NKJV) Please look at Mark 1:14-15. ¹⁴ *Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,* ¹⁵ *and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”* (NKJV) Look at Luke 4:43. ⁴³ *but He said to them, “I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.”* (NKJV)

3. Teach God’s Laws. View Matthew 5:17-20. ¹⁷ *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.* ¹⁸ *For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.* ¹⁹ *Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.* ²⁰ *For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.* (NKJV) Also view, Matthew 19:16-17. ¹⁶ *Now behold, one came and said to Him, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?”* ¹⁷ *So He said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.”* (NKJV)

4. Teach repentance of sin. Sin is rebellion against God. Review 2nd Corinthians 11:3-4. ³ *But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.* ⁴ *For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it!* (NKJV) Another way to state this is that, sin is a violation of God’s Commandments. 1 John 2:3-6, ³ *Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.* ⁴ *He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.* ⁵ *But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.* ⁶ *He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.* (NKJV)

5. Jesus’ church will be an assembly of unity. View Ephesians 4:1-6. ¹ *I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called,* ² *with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love,* ³ *endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.* ⁴ *There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;* ⁵ *one Lord, one faith, one baptism;* ⁶ *one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* (NKJV) Finally view, Ephesians 4:11-16. ¹¹ *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,* ¹² *for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,* ¹³ *till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the*

fullness of Christ; ¹⁴ that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, ¹⁵ but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. (NKJV)

People are the church, the building is where the church meets.. The Kingdom of God is here and now within those who truly believe. Every Bible Believer needs to stand bravely and boldly as they proclaim everything Jesus taught, and not this false nonsense that man wants to teach from the influence of Satan.

False Teachers

For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect. Mark 13:22

Description. Yeshua's followers today must be aware that, within some churches, there may be ministers and leaders who preach and teach God's Word, however, inside they are just like the corrupt teachers of God's law in Yeshua's time. Matt 24:11, 24, ¹¹ *And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. . . .* ²⁴ *For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.* Yeshua warns that not everyone who claims to know and follow Him is a true believer. There are a number of Christian writers, missionaries, pastors, evangelists, teachers, musicians and other church leaders and workers who are not what they claim or appear to be.

(1) On the outside, these individuals will appear righteous to others. Matt 23:28, ²⁸ *So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.* They come in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. Matt 7:15-16, ¹⁵ *"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?"* One of the reasons, that this type of minister could fool even godly people, is because they seem to base their messages on the standards and principles found in God's Word and talk of high moral and spiritual standards. They seem truly concerned for God's work and may show great interest in the spiritual salvation of the lost. These leaders may appear for a time to be great ministers and servants that are empowered by the Holy Spirit. They may even perform miracles and experience great success, causing many to follow their leadership. Matt 7:21-23, ²¹ *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' ²³ And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'*

(2) No matter how spiritually successful these people may seem, they are speaking and acting out of empty hearts. The Bible says they are related spiritually to the false prophets of the Old Testament or Pharisees of the New Testament. For example, 1 Kgs 18:40, ⁴⁰ *And Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape." And they seized them. And Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon and slaughtered them there.* Matt 23:13, 15, ¹³ *"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor*

allow those who would enter to go in.¹⁵ Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves. When they were away from the crowds and living their hidden lives, the Pharisees were full of greed and self-indulgence. Matt 23:25,²⁵ *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence.”* Yeshua strongly challenged the Pharisees and teachers of the law who made it difficult for people to understand and accept the truth. He exposed their double standards and false leadership when He said the following in Matthew 23:27-28.²⁷ *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people’s bones and all uncleanness.”*²⁸ *So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.*

(3) These imposters gain influence in the church in two ways. (a) Some false teachers, preachers and other leaders begin their ministry with right motives and are devoted to spiritual truth, moral purity and genuine faith in Christ. Then through pride (often due to insecurity, a desire for acceptance or a drive for success) and immoral desires, they gradually lose their love for and commitment to Christ. As they continue on this path, their devotion dies, and they lose their place in God’s kingdom. 1 Cor 6:9-10,⁹ *Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality,¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God; Gal 5:19-21,¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions,²¹ envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God; Eph 5:5-6,⁵ For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.* As a result, they become instruments of Satan, while still disguising themselves as ministers of truth. (b) Other false teachers and preachers have never been genuine followers of Christ. Satan has planted them within the church from the start of their ministry. Matt 13:24-28, 36-43,²⁴ *He put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field,²⁵ but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away.²⁶ So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also.²⁷ And the servants of the master of the house came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds?’²⁸ He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ So the servants said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ . . .³⁶ Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.”³⁷ He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man.³⁸ The field is the world, and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one,³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels.⁴⁰ Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age.⁴¹ The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers,⁴² and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.* Satan uses their abilities and appealing personalities to affect others and to move them further along toward success. The devil’s strategy is to place them in positions of influence so they can weaken and hinder the genuine work of Christ. Satan knows that when these dishonest and deceitful leaders are exposed, even more damage will be done to the message and reputation of the church. Yet even worse, the name of Christ will be put to open shame.

Testing. Yeshua warned His disciples fourteen times in the Gospels to watch out for leaders who would twist the truth and mislead people. Let's see how this warning was given in Matthew 7:15-16. ¹⁵ *"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?"* 16:6, 11, ⁶ *Jesus said to them, "Watch and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."*, . . . ¹¹ *How is it that you fail to understand that I did not speak about bread? Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."* 24:4-5, 24, ⁴ *And Jesus answered them, "See that no one leads you astray. ⁵ For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray. . . . ²⁴ For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. Mark 4:24, ²⁴ And he said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. 8:15, ¹⁵ And he cautioned them, saying, "Watch out; beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."* 12:38-40, ³⁸ *And in his teaching he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes and like greetings in the marketplaces ³⁹ and have the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, ⁴⁰ who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."* 13:5-6, ⁵ *And Jesus began to say to them, "See that no one leads you astray. ⁶ Many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and they will lead many astray. Luke 12:1, ¹ In the meantime, when so many thousands of the people had gathered together that they were trampling one another, he began to say to his disciples first, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. 17:23-25, ²³ And they will say to you, 'Look, there!' or 'Look, here!' Do not go out or follow them. ²⁴ For as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one side to the other, so will the Son of Man be in his day. ²⁵ But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. 20:45-47, ⁴⁵ And in the hearing of all the people he said to his disciples, ⁴⁶ "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and love greetings in the marketplaces and the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, ⁴⁷ who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."* 21:8, ⁸ *And he said, "See that you are not led astray. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is at hand!' Do not go after them. In other places, God's Word instructs His people to test teachers, preachers and leaders in the church to prove that their hearts are in a right relationship with Him and that their lives and messages are consistent with the principles and standards of God's Word. 1 Thes 5:19-22, ¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise prophecies, ²¹ but test everything; hold fast what is good. ²² Abstain from every form of evil. 1 John 4:1-3, ¹ Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³ and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. The following steps can be taken to discern, test and expose false teachers or false prophets.*

(1) Discern their character. Do they have active and consistent prayer lives? Do they show a heartfelt and pure devotion to God? Are they people of honesty, integrity and moral discipline? Do they show the fruit of the Spirit as a growth in godly character and evidence that God's Spirit is living in and through a person? Gal 5:22-23, ²² *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Do they truly love and reach out to those who do not yet have a personal relationship with Christ? Do they hate wickedness and love righteousness? Do they preach against sin and avoid all forms of it in their own lives? Luke 3:15-17, ¹⁵ As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, ¹⁶ John answered them all, saying, "I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.*

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

(2) Discern their motives. True and genuine Christian leaders will seek to do four things: (a) Honor Christ above all else. 2 Cor 8:23, ²³ *As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker for your benefit. And as for our brothers, they are messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ.* Phil 8:19-20, ¹⁹ *And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.* ²⁰ *To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.* (b) Lead the church into spiritual growth and holiness, modeling a moral purity, spiritual wholeness, separation from evil and devotion to God. Acts 26:18, ¹⁸ *to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’* 1 Cor 6:18, ¹⁸ *Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.* 2 Cor 6:16-18, ¹⁶ *What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, “I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* ¹⁷ *Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you,* ¹⁸ *and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.”* (c) Lead those who are spiritually lost into the light of forgiveness and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ (Yeshua). 1 Cor 9:19-22, ¹⁹ *For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them.* ²⁰ *To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law.* ²¹ *To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law.* ²² *To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.)* (d) Proclaim and defend the true message of Christ as revealed throughout the New Testament. Phil 1:15-16, ¹⁵ *Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will.* ¹⁶ *The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel.*

(3) Evaluate the fruit of their lives and message. Just like any living thing, people reproduce what they are. This applies spiritually as well as physically. A person with ungodly character will eventually show the fruit of ungodliness. Their message will hide the truth, confuse people and cause division in the church. Often, the fruit of false preachers will be followers and converts who also do not have any depth of character and who are not totally committed to all of God’s Word. Matt 7:17-20, ¹⁷ *So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit.* ¹⁸ *A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit.* ¹⁹ *Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.* ²⁰ *Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.*

(4) Discern their level of reliance on God’s Word. This is the key issue in revealing a false messenger. If what they believe, preach or teach is not consistent with the original writings of both the Old Testament and the New Testament, then their message should be rejected. If they do not believe that God’s written Word, as revealed in the Bible, is fully inspired by God and that we are to submit to all its teachings, then anything they teach is subject to doubt. 2 John 8-11, ⁸ *Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward.* ⁹ *Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.* ¹⁰ *If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting,* ¹¹ *for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.* If a minister is not personally convinced of or committed to the truth of God’s Word, we can be sure that neither the minister nor his or her message is from God.

(5) Finally, test their integrity in the area of handling the Lord’s money. Do they refuse to take large amounts for themselves? Do they handle all finances with the highest sense of truth and

responsibility? Do they further the growth of God's work in ways that are godly and in line with New Testament standards for ministry leaders? 1 Tim 3:1-5, ¹ *The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task.* ² *Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,* ³ *not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.* ⁴ *He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive,* ⁵ *for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?*

We must realize that in spite of all that God's faithful people do to evaluate leaders' lives and messages, there will still be false teachers who, with Satan's help, remain undetected until God decides to expose them for what they are.

The Acts of the Sinful Nature and the Fruit of the Spirit

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Gal 5:22-24

No passage in the Bible draws a clearer contrast between the lifestyle of Spirit filled followers of Christ and that of people still controlled by their sinful human nature than Gal 5:16-26. ¹⁶ *But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.* ¹⁷ *For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.* ¹⁸ *But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.* ¹⁹ *Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,* ²⁰ *idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions,* ²¹ *envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.* ²² *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,* ²³ *gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.* ²⁴ *And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

²⁵ *If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.* ²⁶ *Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.* Paul discusses general lifestyle differences by emphasizing that God's Spirit and the sinful human nature are at war with and in opposition to each other. He also includes a specific list of both the acts of the sinful nature and the fruit of the Spirit.

The Works of the Flesh. Works of the flesh (Gk *sarx*) refers to the human nature with its corrupt desires, resistance to God and insistence on going its own way. This has been in effect ever since the first man and woman disobeyed God, and allowed sin to enter the world and infect human existence. The sinful nature remains within Christians even after they choose to accept and follow Christ. It continues to be their deadly enemy that battles against their spirit. Rom 8:6-8, 13, ⁶ *For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.* ⁷ *For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.* ⁸ *Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. . . .* ¹³ *For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.* Gal 5:17-18, ¹⁷ *For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.* ¹⁸ *But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not*

under the law. Those who continue to yield to the sinful nature cannot truly be part of God's kingdom. For this reason, this sinful nature must be resisted and put to death spiritually through a continual spiritual battle that Christians must fight and win through the power of the Holy Spirit. The acts of the sinful nature include the following:

(1) Sexual immorality (Gk *porneia*) includes intercourse and other forms of sexual contact outside of a marriage relationship. It includes such things as pornography where sexual pleasures are fed through pictures or sexually suggestive forms of entertainment, films or writings. Acts 21:25, ²⁵ *But as for the Gentiles who have believed, we have sent a letter with our judgment that they should abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from sexual immorality.*"

(2) Impurity (Gk *akatharsia*) also refers to sexual sins, evil behaviors and ungodly motives, traits and habits. It includes secret thoughts and desires, which is where impurity begins and affects us morally and spiritually. Eph 5:3, ³ *But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.*

(3) Sensuality (Gk *aselgeia*) refers to shameful and abnormal behavior and a lack of self-control. It involves selfishly following one's passions and desires to the point of having no shame or thought for public decency. 2 Cor 12:21, ²¹ *I fear that when I come again my God may humble me before you, and I may have to mourn over many of those who sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual immorality, and sensuality that they have practiced.*

(4) Idolatry (Gk *eidōlōlatria*) means worshiping spirits, false gods, persons, images or anything else instead of the one true God. Idolatry is also an issue whenever someone or something is loved, trusted or given importance over God. Allowing anyone or anything to have equal or greater influence or authority than God and His Word is the most subtle form of idolatry. Col 3:5-6, ⁵ *Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.* ⁶ *On account of these the wrath of God is coming.*

(5) Sorcery (Gk *pharmakeia*) includes spiritism, attempting to contact the dead, black magic (calling on the devil or evil spirits, attempting magic for evil purposes), worship of demons and use of drugs to produce spiritual experiences. Rev 9:20-21, ²⁰ *The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk,* ²¹ *nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.*

(6) Enmity (Gk *echthra*) involves all forms of consuming, hostile thoughts, motives and actions, including extreme dislike, anger or desire to cause conflict.

(7) Strife (Gk *eris*) involves quarreling, causing undue tension, disunity and struggling for superiority over others. Rom 1:28-32, ²⁸ *And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.* ²⁹ *They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips,* ³⁰ *slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,* ³¹ *foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.* ³² *Though they know God's decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.*

(8) Jealousy (Gk *zēlos*) refers to resentfulness or envy of another person's situation or success. Romans 13:13, ¹³ *Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy.*

(9) Fits of anger (Gk *thumos*) are explosive outbursts of anger that can result in violent words or actions. Col 3:8, ⁸ *But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.*

(10) Rivalry (Gk *eritheia*) involves pursuing personal power or success without considering the desires of God or the impact it will have on others. 2 Cor 12:20, ²⁰ *For I fear that perhaps when I come I may find you not as I wish, and that you may find me not as you wish-that perhaps there may be quarreling, jealousy, anger, hostility, slander, gossip, conceit, and disorder.*

(11) Dissentions (Gk *dichostasia*) refers to causing divisions or introducing teachings not supported by God's Word. Rom 16:17, ¹⁷ *I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them.*

(12) Divisions (Gk *hairesis*) are divisions within a church congregation or group of Christians that develop into selfish groups or cliques destroying the unity of the church. 1 Cor 11:18-19, ¹⁸ *For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, ¹⁹ for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized.*

The Great Tribulation

For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. Matt 24:21

Beginning with Matt 24:15, Yeshua speaks about unique signs that will occur during the end-time period. This is the time often called the tribulation. Rev 7:14, ¹⁴ *I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. The signs that occur will be warnings that the end of this present age is very near. Matt 24:15-29, ¹⁵ "So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), ¹⁶ then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁷ Let the one who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house, ¹⁸ and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. ¹⁹ And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! ²⁰ Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath. ²¹ For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. ²² And if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved. But for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. ²³ Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There he is!' do not believe it. ²⁴ For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. ²⁵ See, I have told you beforehand. ²⁶ So, if they say to you, 'Look, he is in the wilderness,' do not go out. If they say, 'Look, he is in the inner rooms,' do not believe it. ²⁷ For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ²⁸ Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.*

²⁹ *"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. These signs will lead up to, and signal, Christ's physical return to earth after the tribulation. Matt 24:30-31, ³⁰ Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. ³¹ And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. At Christ's return, He will destroy the forces of the Antichrist and evil. He will then establish an earthly reign of peace for the last thousand years of time, as we know it.*

The first major sign, that signals the beginning of the great tribulation, is the abomination of desolation. This sign refers to a specific observable event that tells God's faithful followers (who are alive during the great tribulation) that Christ's literal return to earth will happen very shortly. **Christ's followers, during the tribulation, are those who accept Christ after the rapture.** This visible sign or event refers primarily to the future desecration of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem by the Antichrist. The Antichrist, or man of lawlessness, will set up an image of himself in God's temple, declaring himself to be God. 2 Thes 2:3-4, ³ *Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,* ⁴ *who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God.* Rev 13:14-15, ¹⁴ *and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived.* ¹⁵ *And it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even speak and might cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain.* The following are important facts about this event that will be the turning point for all that continues to happen.

(1) The abomination of desolation will mark the beginning of the final stage of the tribulation, which ends in Christ's return to earth to defeat the forces of the Antichrist and bring judgment and destruction on the ungodly at the battle of Armageddon. Dan 9:27, ²⁷ *And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator."* Rev 19:11-21, ¹¹ *Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war.* ¹² *His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself.* ¹³ *He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God.* ¹⁴ *And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses.* ¹⁵ *From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.* ¹⁶ *On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, **King of kings and Lord of lords.***

¹⁷ *Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly directly overhead, "Come, gather for the great supper of God,"* ¹⁸ *to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great."* ¹⁹ *And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army.* ²⁰ *And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur.* ²¹ *And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.*

(2) By noting the time of this event, "So when you see . . ." in Matt 24:15, ¹⁵ *"So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand).* Christ's followers, during the tribulation, can know with great certainty when the tribulation will end and Christ will come to reign on earth. The time span between this event and the end is given four times in the Bible as three and a half years, or 1,260 days. Rev 11:2-3, ² *but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months.* ³ *And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth."*

(3) Because, those who are waiting for Christ's coming will be filled with such eagerness and expectancy. Matt 24:33, ³³ *So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very*

gates. They must be aware that any report that Christ has returned will be untrue. There will be no doubt when Christ comes because the coming of the Son of Man, at the end of the tribulation, will be visible and known to all who are in the world. Matt 24:27-30, ²⁷ *For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.* ²⁸ *Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather.*

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

Another sign, that the great tribulation has begun, will be the appearance of false prophets, messengers of Satan, who will perform great signs and wonders. Matt 24:24, ²⁴ *For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.*

(1) Yeshua strongly warns His followers to be especially alert and on guard against deception. Many people who claim to be Christian prophets, teachers and preachers will really be hypocrites and liars, even though they appear to perform miracles, healings and other signs. They will seem to have success in their ministries. But these false prophets will present a changed and twisted message, unlike the truth found in God’s Word. Matt 7: 22-23, ²² *On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ ²³ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’*

(2) The Bible urges Christians to continually test the spirits that guide and empower all teachers, leaders and preachers to see how their messages, ministries and lives match up with the teachings, principles and standards of God’s eternal Word. God allows deception, accompanied by miracles, to test believers and to reveal the depth and quality of their love for Him along with their loyalty to the truth of His Word. This period of deception will be extremely difficult. Yeshua states that, during the last days, religious deceit will be so widespread, and presented with such craftiness, that it will be difficult even for the elect to wisely judge and determine truth from lies.

(3) Those, among God’s people who do not truly love the truth will be deceived. They will be given no further opportunity to believe and accept the truth of the real Christ after the Antichrist comes.

Finally, the great tribulation will be a specific period of horrible suffering and distress for all the people in the world. The following are Biblical facts, about this terrifying time, when the Antichrist will assume world control and God will release His seven end-time judgments on the earth.

(1) It will be worldwide. Rev 3:10, ¹⁰ ***Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world,*** to try those who dwell on the earth.

(2) It will be the worst time of suffering and distress ever to occur in the history of humanity. Dan 12:1-2, ¹ *“At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book. ² And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*

(3) It shall be a terrible time of persecution for the Jews. Jer 30:5-7, ⁵ *“Thus says the Lord: We have heard a cry of panic, of terror, and no peace. ⁶ Ask now, and see, can a man bear a child? Why In Revelation 18:4, a voice comes from heaven, saying, “Come out of her, My people, lest you share in*

then do I see every man with his hands on his stomach like a woman in labor? Why has every face turned pale? ⁷ Alas! That day is so great there is none like it; it is a time of distress for Jacob; yet he shall be saved out of it.

(4) The period will be under the control of the man of lawlessness. Dan 9:27, ²⁷ *And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator."*

(5) Those in Christ's churches, who have been faithfully following Him before this time begins, are promised deliverance and escape from the tribulation. 1 Thes 5:9-10, ⁹ *For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him*

(6) During this time, there will be both Jews and Gentiles who believe in Yeshua and are spiritually saved. But, those who come to trust Christ after the tribulation begins will have to endure what is to come.

(7) It will be a time of great suffering and dreadful persecution for all who continue to be faithful to God. Rev 12:17, ¹⁷ *Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And he stood on the sand of the sea.*

(8) It will be a time of God's wrath and judgment upon the ungodly throughout the earth. Rev 6:15-17, ¹⁵ *Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, 16 calling to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, 17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?"*

(9) Yeshua's statement, that those days will be shortened, does not mean that the period will be less than the predicted three and a half years, or 1,260 days. It does seem to bring attention to the fact, that the period will be so awful, that if it were not limited to a shorter period of time, no one would survive, that is, the whole human race would be destroyed.

(10) The great tribulation will end with Yeshua's glorious return to earth with His bride, the church, to rescue those who come to know Yeshua during the tribulation and who survive up to that point. When He comes, Christ will destroy the forces of the antichrist who have gathered against His people of Israel at the battle of Armageddon and bring final judgment on all the wicked.

(11) We must not confuse this coming of Christ at the end of the great tribulation with Yeshua's reference to His sudden and unexpected descent from heaven to rapture the church that will occur prior to Christ's final return at the end of the tribulation. Christ's unexpected pre-tribulation coming to take His church from the world may be referred to as the first stage of Christ's second coming. His physical return to earth at the end of the great tribulation would be the second stage of Christ's second coming.

(12) The major Bible passage describing the entire seven-year tribulation is found in Rev 6-18. The entire tribulation period will last seven years. During that time, the Antichrist will rise to political power. However, he will not be fully revealed, or assume world control, until the last three and a half years. This latter portion is typically referred to as the **great tribulation** because of the unique events described above.

One more transition to make. We read about the spirit of Babylon in Revelation Chapter 18. Here is my conclusion toward the spirit of Babylon (see pages 74-76). Regardless of the exact identity of this end-time city called **Babylon the Great**, we must recognize that this world is completely given over to the spirit of Babylon. It permeates wherever one lives. It first appeared in the Garden of Eden,

and in these prophecies in the books of Daniel and Revelation, we see, in ungodly humanity, the effects of 6,000 years under that spirit. This spirit is antagonistic toward every institution of God, even toward something as basic as a person's God-given gender. It is a spirit of deliberate gender questioning, gender-bending, and gender destroying that is influencing humans to desire to be in the image of Satan and his group of fallen angels. At its core, though, it is a spirit of self determination and independence that rebels at the idea of submitting to anything but its own desires.

In Revelation 18:4, a voice comes from heaven, saying, ⁴ *"Come out of her, My people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues."* We have read it many times, but we must continue to think about it because the spirit of Babylon will never retreat! God Himself will silence this demonic spirit at the end of this age. At present, it will only strengthen as more people receive and rebroadcast its concepts. The rampantly increasing sexual perversions may not sway us, but because of human nature that remains in us, we all desire self-determination and independence. To some degree, due to our exposure to the spirit of Babylon, we still hold God at arm's length. To fully understand the final judgment upon this spirit of Babylon, we need to view the remaining portion of chapter 18 of the Revelation.

Therefore, here are verses 5-24, ⁵ *for her sins are heaped high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.* ⁶ *Pay her back as she herself has paid back others, and repay her double for her deeds; mix a double portion for her in the cup she mixed.* ⁷ *As she glorified herself and lived in luxury, so give her a like measure of torment and mourning, since in her heart she says, 'I sit as a queen, I am no widow, and mourning I shall never see.'* ⁸ *For this reason her plagues will come in a single day, death and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for mighty is the Lord God who has judged her."* ⁹ *And the kings of the earth, who committed sexual immorality and lived in luxury with her, will weep and wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning.* ¹⁰ *They will stand far off, in fear of her torment, and say, "Alas! Alas! You great city, you mighty city, Babylon! For in a single hour your judgment has come."*

¹¹ *And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her, since no one buys their cargo anymore,* ¹² *cargo of gold, silver, jewels, pearls, fine linen, purple cloth, silk, scarlet cloth, all kinds of scented wood, all kinds of articles of ivory, all kinds of articles of costly wood, bronze, iron and marble,* ¹³ *cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and slaves, that is, human souls.*

¹⁴ *"The fruit for which your soul longed has gone from you, and all your delicacies and your splendors are lost to you, never to be found again!"* ¹⁵ *The merchants of these wares, who gained wealth from her, will stand far off, in fear of her torment, weeping and mourning aloud,* ¹⁶ *"Alas, alas, for the great city that was clothed in fine linen, in purple and scarlet, adorned with gold, with jewels, and with pearls!"*

¹⁷ *For in a single hour all this wealth has been laid waste."* *And all shipmasters and seafaring men, sailors and all whose trade is on the sea, stood far off* ¹⁸ *and cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning, "What city was like the great city?"* ¹⁹ *And they threw dust on their heads as they wept and mourned, crying out, "Alas, alas, for the great city where all who had ships at sea grew rich by her wealth! For in a single hour she has been laid waste."* ²⁰ *Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, for God has given judgment for you against her!"*

²¹ *Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "So will Babylon the great city be thrown down with violence, and will be found no more;* ²² *and the sound of harpists and musicians, of flute players and trumpeters, will be heard in you no more, and a craftsman of any craft will be found in you no more, and the sound of the mill will be heard in you no more,* ²³ *and the light of a lamp will shine in you no more, and the voice of bridegroom and bride will be*

heard in you no more, for your merchants were the great ones of the earth, and all nations were deceived by your sorcery. ²⁴And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slain on earth.”

That concludes my work of attempting to bring understanding to the prophecies in the Books of Daniel and Revelation. I have tried to show the relationship between the visions and dreams that Daniel had to deal with in his time, and, how those visions and dreams are also something that we have to deal with in the end-times, that I believe we have now entered. The present war between Israel and Gaza appears, to me, to be the Psalm 83 war that begins the downward slope or spiral through the other wars of the end-times, including those that must occur during the Great Tribulation until the return of Yeshua to planet earth. The spirit of Babylon has most certainly regrouped and presents a powerful influence upon many

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I have now studied and written books and booklets for over forty years, and can only pray and hope, that some of that knowledge has been passed on to others. If you still haven’t visited my website, go ahead and take a chance, there just might be something there that you want to know about. The website is located at www.vqpub.org and arrangements have already been completed to have it available for the next five years. After that, I cannot say whether God will keep me here or not.

As with many of my books and booklets, I try to leave you, the reader, on a positive note that selection is left up to each of us individually. There are at least two choices that can be made in any situation. It can be as simple as saying yes or no, and also in any direction, a general decision in life, or an actual turn to one point or another. The ultimate decision is saying yes, or no, to the great free gift that God gave to all mankind. Do you accept Yeshua as your Lord and Savior or not? Do you follow the commandments of God or not? Understand this above all else. In over seventy years of life, I have only found it recorded in God’s Word that there is only one chance for saving your very soul. There are those denominations who claim that, at the Great White Throne Judgment, all those who have not submitted to Yeshua as Lord and Savior will be offered a second chance to have eternal life in God’s kingdom. I really don’t think so! I become very depressed that there are those who will be deceived into believing they can live their life their way and then be offered eternal life with God and Christ at the second resurrection. Doesn’t that thinking actually follow in the same manner as the spirit of Babylon that was the concluding discussion in this work?

I have tried my best to meet the expectation that my God has given to me in my writings. On those occasions that God presents an assignment to me, I accept and work to complete that mission.

Within many of those occasions, I feel another work developing in my mind. On this task, I have not felt that presence as I complete the current work. I do not know if this will be the last book I write. I can only say that my God has led me through His Word to present things from Genesis to Revelation. I admit that not every book, of the 66 in the Bible, has been addressed, however, most major questions have been addressed, and there is a book presented that covers most major topics. Please, remember one thing! It is your choice concerning what you will believe and what direction you will take. Either you will follow Yeshua as your Lord, or you will not accept the free gift of eternal life that He offers to everyone during their life on earth. Please make a wise choice in your decisions.

Satan's Objective!

Ever since Lucifer decided to allow his personal pride to take over control of his spirit being. He has had only one objective. That objective was to take over the throne of God Most High. God had given this mighty angel the same free will choice that he has given to all of his created beings, as to wheather or not they may be spirit beings or flesh and blood beings. When Lucifer went against God. he made a calculation that he, now as Satan, would set out to prove God a liar. Satan believes that there are three ways that he might be able to perform this usurping of God's throne. He could destroy the land that God gave to His people, Israel. Second, he could persuade others in the Middle East to kill off all the Jews. The third way Satan feels that he can overthrow the throne of God is by eliminating all the descendants of Abraham. I hate to tell Satan that he lost on all three possibilities. First, God is not a liar, in fact God can't lie. Titus 1:1-3 (NKJV), ¹ *Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness,* ² *in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began,* ³ *but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior;* I also need to insert Revelation 21:7-8 here. ⁷ *He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.* ⁸ *But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."* (NKJV) Secondly, God gave the land from the Nile to the Euphrates River to Abraham for God's people, Israel. People can chant all they want: "From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be free!" The land belongs to Israel, and God will fiercely defend the Jewish people for their promised land. Thirdly, I think this is the funniest statement of the three. God made a promise to Abraham that He would make Abraham a mighty nation and kings would come from him. If Satan's objective is to destroy all the descendants of Abraham, it will never happen. Recall that there was a division in Israel, and with this split, there was the House of Judah and the House of Israel. God, by His own hand scattered the House of Israel throughout the known world. The descendants of these people reach from north to south and from east to west. Satan does not know who or where all these people are, only God knows that, and He isn't telling Satan a thing. God does state that at a certain point, He will take the two sticks, one being the House of Judah and the other being the House of Israel, and join them back together to be one people, and they will all be God's people, and He will be their God.

Just for the sake of illustration and pertaining to this last statement, I make the following statement. Great teachers of history and religion cannot tell you the Mystery of the Prophet Jeremiah. Go and look at the two final chapters of the book of Jeremiah. To begin with, turn to Jeremiah 1:10. This is the verse in which God instructs Jeremiah what his commission is to be. Now, to be fair, we must acknowledge that if God gave a commission, it was to be completed prior to the death of the

individual to whom the commission was assigned. Jeremiah 1:10, ¹⁰ *See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, To root out and to pull down, To destroy and to throw down, To build and to plant.*" (NKJV)

1. Notice that this commission has a plural portion, Jeremiah is set over the nations and the kingdoms.

2. There are three distinct two-sided tasks to be performed:

- a. To root out and to pull down
- b. To destroy and to throw down
- c. To build and to plant

I can take you through the book of Jeremiah and show you the completion of the first task and also the second task. But, show me where in the book of Jeremiah that there is a planting and a building of any type. There is no completion of the third task. Not only that, but there also is no closing of the book of Jeremiah, as to where he is, or where he went, or anything to provide information pertaining to Jeremiah. Go to Chapter 51, read the bottom line. *"Thus far are the words of Jeremiah."* So, who wrote Chapter 52? Why does Chapter 52 end with the telling of the release of King Jehoiachin from prison in Babylon. According to verses 33-34, we find the following. ³³ *So Jehoiachin changed from his prison garments, and he ate bread regularly before the king all the days of his life.* ³⁴ *And as for his provisions, there was a regular ration given him by the king of Babylon, a portion for each day until the day of his death, all the days of his life.* (NKJV) As far as I know, Jeremiah was never in Babylon, why Chapter 52? Where did Jeremiah plant and build? Aside from that question, who holds the birthright of Jacob (Israel) and where are those birthright people today? God knows, but I don't think too many others, including Satan, know where they are. There is a great surprise coming one day!

Maranatha

