

# THE REVELATION of JESUS CHRIST

## LAST GENERATION VERSION

Translation and notes by Tim Warner  
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### Chapter 1

#### *Prologue*

**T**he revelation of Jesus Christ<sup>1</sup> which God gave to Him to show<sup>2</sup> His servants the things which must occur suddenly,<sup>3</sup> and [God] communicated it, having sent it by His Messenger<sup>4</sup> to His servant John<sup>2</sup> who reported the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ as much as he perceived.<sup>5</sup> 3 The reader and the listeners to the sayings of this prophecy are privileged, also those who heed the things written in it; because the appointed time is ready.<sup>6</sup>

4 John, to the seven assemblies – those in Asia: Grace to you and peace from the One who is,<sup>7</sup> who was and who is coming, and from the seven Breaths<sup>8</sup> which are before His

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

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

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

<sup>4</sup> “The Messenger of YHVH” who appeared to Abraham (Gen. 22:11-12,15-18) and to Moses (Ex. 3:2-6) is identified here as Jesus Christ, the one who testified to John (v. 18). He is also identified as Jesus Christ in the last book of the Old Testament, being called “the Messenger of the Covenant” (Mal. 3:1), and “the Messenger of Great Council” (Isa. 9:6 LXX). See also Rev. 22:6.

<sup>5</sup> John expressed the limitations of his own understanding of this prophetic revelation, yet reported it faithfully what he saw and heard.

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

<sup>7</sup> This is the essential meaning of God’s name in Hebrew YHVH – ‘the Existing One.’

<sup>8</sup> cf. Isaiah 11:1-5; Zech. 3:9; 4:10 LXX & Rev. 5:6. Notice that there is no Trinity represented here. Paul began all of his Epistles (except Hebrews) with a similar statement of grace and peace to the assemblies from the Father and the Son, but never from a third person. John follows Paul’s pattern, but adds the “seven Breaths,” one for each of the “seven assemblies.” This is because the holy Breath of God is not a distinct person, but is a limited manifestation of God’s presence and power. In this case the holy Breath is the catalyst for each local assembly in worship to “enter the holiest” in the celestial Temple (Heb. 10:19). This is why the seven assemblies in Asia Minor are represented as “seven lampstands” (Rev. 1:20), but the “seven lamps” that correspond to them are said to be before the throne of

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throne,<sup>9</sup> 5 and from Jesus Christ – the Faithful Witness,<sup>10</sup> the first-begotten out from among the dead,<sup>11</sup> and the ruler of the kings of the land.<sup>12</sup> To the one loving<sup>13</sup> us and washing<sup>14</sup> us from our sins in His own blood, 6 and made us Kingdom priests<sup>15</sup> to His<sup>16</sup> God and Father – to Him be the glory and the power unto the ages of the ages,<sup>17</sup> Amen! 7 Look! He is coming with the clouds!<sup>18</sup> And every eye will see Him, even of those who pierced Him.<sup>19</sup> And all the tribes of the land will wail<sup>20</sup> because of Him! Truly, Amen!

8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,”<sup>21</sup> says the Master, the God<sup>22</sup> who is,<sup>23</sup> and who was, and who is to come, **THE SOVEREIGN OVER ALL.**<sup>24</sup>

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

<sup>9</sup> Rev. 4:5

<sup>10</sup> Isaiah 55:3-4 refers to Christ as follows: “*Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you – The sure mercies of David. Indeed I have given him as a witness to the people, A leader and commander for the people.*”

<sup>11</sup> Jesus is the prototype of the resurrection to immortality. The same statement appears in Col. 1:18.

<sup>12</sup> Psalm 2:7-12; Rev. 11:15; Rev. 19:16

<sup>13</sup> The Textus Receptus follows a minority reading in this case which has the aorist indicative (past) form of the verb “love.” The majority of manuscripts, as well as the oldest manuscripts, have the present tense.

<sup>14</sup> Several manuscripts read “loosed.”

<sup>15</sup> The Textus Receptus reads “kings and priests.” This Kingdom priesthood of believers will commence in the Millennium. (See Rev. 20:6).

<sup>16</sup> That the Father is Jesus’ own “God” (supreme Sovereign and Authority) is stated many times in the New Testament. (John 20:17; Rom. 15:6; 2 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 11:31; Eph. 1:3; Col. 1:3; 1 Pet. 1:3). It is also implied by the reference to the Father as “SOVEREIGN OVER ALL” (vs. 8), which includes His only-begotten Son.

<sup>17</sup> That John expressed worship of Jesus proves His divine origin out of God. If He had been merely a man, worship of this nature would have been absolutely forbidden. See Jesus’ own words in Luke 4:8. (See also Phil. 2:5-11).

<sup>18</sup> “Coming with the clouds” is quoted directly from Daniel 7:13, showing that the whole book of Revelation is an expansion of the celestial court of the Ancient of Days described in Daniel 7:9-14, 21-22, 26-27.

<sup>19</sup> Psalm 22:16; Zech. 12:10; John 19:37

<sup>20</sup> Matthew 24:30

<sup>21</sup> Here the Father referred to Himself as “the Alpha and the Omega” (cf. Rev. 21:6,13)

<sup>22</sup> The Textus Receptus omits “God.”

<sup>23</sup> The God who “is” or who “exists” is the sense of the Hebrew name, YHVH, and the name “I AM” (Ex. 3:14).

<sup>24</sup> The title, “SOVEREIGN OVER ALL” (παντοκράτωρ) always refers to God the Father in the LXX and the NT. It is usually translated “Almighty” and “Lord of hosts.” But both English terms are inadequate in expressing the full meaning. The real sense is the One who holds total and sole sovereignty and power over everything, the ultimate authority. That it refers to the Father alone is clear from Jer. 3:19 LXX, “... *I will appoint you as children. And I will give you the choice land of the Gentiles, the inheritance of God, SOVEREIGN OVER ALL, and I said, ‘You will call me Father; and you shall not turn away from Me.’*” Paul paraphrased this passage in 2 Cor. 6:18, “*I will be unto you a Father, and you will be unto Me sons and daughters,’ says the Master, SOVEREIGN OVER ALL.*” All other references to this title in the NT are exclusively in Revelation (1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7,14; 19:6,15; 21:22). In the LXX, the “SOVEREIGN OVER ALL” is clearly distinguished from His “Christ.” “*For, behold, I am He that strengthens the thunder, and creates the wind, and proclaims to men His Christ, forming the morning and the darkness, and mounting on the high places of the earth. The Master, God, SOVEREIGN OVER ALL is his name*” [κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ] (Amos 4:13 LXX). Zechariah

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## *The Vision of the Glorified Son of God*

9 I, John, (your brother and companion in the tribulation,<sup>25</sup> and Kingdom,<sup>26</sup> and resolve in Christ Jesus), arrived on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and because of the witness of Jesus Christ. 10 I began to be in the Breath<sup>27</sup> on the Chief Day<sup>28</sup> and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, 11 saying: <sup>29</sup>*“What you see, write in a scroll and send to the seven assemblies which are in Asia:<sup>30</sup> to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.”*

12 And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And upon turning, I saw seven golden lampstands.<sup>31</sup> 13 And in the middle of the seven lampstands [I saw] one like the Son of Man, having been clothed with a foot length<sup>32</sup> robe and fastened about the chest with a golden band. 14 His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire.<sup>33</sup> 15 His feet were like white brass as if having been molten in a furnace and His voice as the sound of many waters. 16 And He had in His right hand seven stars. Out of His mouth projected a sharp double-edged sword. And His

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far exceeded all other writers in using this title (55 times). He also portrayed “the Messenger of YHVH” (the preincarnate Christ) as addressing God using this title, showing His subordinate role (Zech. 1:12 LXX). The title, **“SOVEREIGN OVER ALL,”** expresses the core of biblical monotheism and explains why the Father is referred to as the “God” of the Son of God (vs. 6). This fact makes the Trinitarian idea of three co-equal and co-eternal Persons impossible to reconcile with Scripture. The Son of God has always been under the supreme authority of His Father.

<sup>25</sup> “The tribulation” (with the definite article) refers specifically to the time just prior to Jesus’ second coming (Matt. 24:29; Rev. 7:14). That John here indicates that he is a fellow participant in “the tribulation” may be explained in chapter 10. John was given further prophecy through “seven thunders” and a “little scroll,” the contents of which were not revealed in this book. He was then told that He must prophesy again. John will prophesy again as one of the two witnesses, and will actually be present in “the tribulation.” (See also Rom. 12:12 – Greek)

<sup>26</sup> The Textus Receptus has “in the Kingdom,” but both the Alexandrian and Majority Text do not.

<sup>27</sup> Engulfed in the Breath of God (the “Helper” as portrayed by Jesus in John 14:16-18, 23). Being “in the Breath” was generally something that occurred in the assembly (Rom. 8:9; Eph. 2:22; Phil. 3:3), as the Breath of God came to dwell in the local gathering. See also Rev. 4:2, 17:3, 21:10.

<sup>28</sup> τῆ κυριακῆ ἡμέρᾱ – “the Chief Day” (often incorrectly translated “the Lord’s Day”). The term κυριακῆ is an adjective derived from the noun, κύριος (master, chief, superior, lord). “The Chief Day” was the anniversary of Jesus’ resurrection, also known as “μῦτ᾽ τῶν σαββάτων” (the first [day] of the Sabbaths – referring to Firstfruits, which began the 50-day, 7 Sabbath countdown to Pentecost, Lev. 23:10-12, 15-16). Ignatius, disciple of John, used the term “the Chief Day” (τῆ κυριακῆ ἡμέρᾱ) for both the actual day of Jesus’ resurrection, “at the dawning of the Chief Day He arose from the dead” (Epistle to the Trallians, ch. ix), and again of the anniversary of the resurrection, “living in the observance of the Chief Day on which also our life has sprung up again by Him and by His death” (Epistle to the Magnesians, ch. ix). The longer version reads: “And after the observance of the Sabbath, let every friend of Christ keep the Chief Day (τῆ κυριακῆ ἡμέρᾱ) as a festival, the resurrection-day, **the queen and chief** of all the days.” The Sabbath was the weekly observance of Christians, but “the Chief Day” was the annual festival of the resurrection. Thus, John’s vision of Christ occurred on the anniversary of His resurrection.

<sup>29</sup> The Textus Receptus adds, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, and,” but these words only appear in a few late copies. They do not appear in either the Majority Text or the Alexandrian Text.

<sup>30</sup> Asia Minor, today’s Turkey.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Zech. 4:2

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Zech. 3:4

<sup>33</sup> Daniel 10:4-6

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appearance was like the sun shining in its power.<sup>34</sup> 17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He placed His right hand on me, saying to me: *“Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last.”*<sup>35</sup> 18 And I am He who lives, and became dead, and look, I am alive unto the ages of the ages! Amen. And I hold the keys<sup>36</sup> of the grave<sup>37</sup> and death.<sup>38</sup> 19 Write what you saw, and what is, and what is to come afterwards.<sup>39</sup> 20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands [are this]: The seven stars are the messengers<sup>40</sup> of the seven assemblies. And the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven assemblies.”<sup>41</sup>

## Chapter 2

### *Jesus' Letter to the Assembly at Ephesus*

*“To the messenger for the assembly in Ephesus write: ‘The One holding the seven stars in His right hand, the One walking in the midst of the seven golden lampstands, says this: 2 “I have observed your deeds, the toil, your endurance, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you tested those calling themselves ‘apostles’ and are not, and found them false;”*<sup>42</sup> 3 and you have patience and endured, and through My name have

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

<sup>35</sup> Jesus applied a title for YHVH to Himself – “the First and the Last” (Isaiah 44:6 & 48:12). In Isaiah 48, it was the Messenger of YHVH speaking for YHVH who used this title. *“Listen to Me, O Jacob, And Israel, My called: I am He, **I am the First, I am also the Last.** Indeed My hand has laid the foundation of the earth, And My right hand has stretched out the heavens; When I call to them, They stand up together. ... Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; **From the time that it was** [the LXX has “from the beginning” – cf. 1 Jn. 2:13-14], **I was there. And now the Lord GOD and His Spirit Have sent Me.”*** (Isa. 48:12-13,16 NKJ). That Christ applied this title to Himself (not merely reporting the Father's words) is proven by vss. 17-18 & Rev. 2:8.

<sup>36</sup> By virtue of the fact that Jesus conquered death, having died and risen again immortal, He alone possesses the authority over death and the grave. The resurrection unto life is through Him alone. See John 5:21, 25-26; John 11:23-26. The Jews had a tradition that God had the sole custody of four keys which He entrusted to no one, not man nor angel: the Key of Rain, the Key of Provision, the Key of the Barren Womb, and the Key of Death and the Grave. (Sanhedrin, fol. 113, 1)

<sup>37</sup> Greek: ᾅδης (hades) refers to the common grave of all mankind (“the grave” as an abstract concept) as opposed to an individual grave (cf. 1 Cor. 15:55). The twin terms “death and the grave” (ὁ θάνατος καὶ ὁ ᾅδης) are parallel abstract concepts in Revelation (20:13,14). In Greek mythology, ὁ ᾅδης (Hades) was in the underworld, a place of departed ghosts. But this concept is not found in the Bible.

<sup>38</sup> John 5:25-26

<sup>39</sup> This statement provides a three-part division to the book, past, present, and future. “What you saw” refers to the vision of Christ. “What is” refers to the current situation among the seven assemblies described in the seven letters that Jesus was about to dictate. “What is to come” is the prophecy of the future beginning in Rev. 4:1.

<sup>40</sup> These were members of the respective assemblies who traveled between each assembly and Patmos to communicate with John.

<sup>41</sup> Notice that the seven assemblies are portrayed as individual single lampstands. The lamps corresponding to these are before God's throne (Rev. 4:5). In Zech. 4:2, the single lampstand had seven lamps, symbolizing the nation of Israel.

<sup>42</sup> These were self-appointed “apostles” not commissioned or sent by Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 11:13), claiming authority to speak on His behalf. But Jesus only commissioned twelve Apostles including Paul (Rev. 21:14). The Roman Catholic

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labored.<sup>43</sup> 4 But I have [something] against you, that you abandoned your original love. 5 Remember then from where you have fallen and repent, and do the original deeds. Otherwise, I am coming to you suddenly and will remove your lampstand<sup>44</sup> from its place — unless you repent. 6 But you have this: that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans<sup>45</sup> which I also hate. 7 The one having an ear,<sup>46</sup> listen to what the Breath<sup>47</sup> is saying to the assemblies: ‘To the one being victorious, I will give to him to eat from the Tree of Life,<sup>48</sup> which is in the midst of the Garden<sup>49</sup> of God.’”

## *Jesus' Letter to the Assembly at Smyrna*

8 “And to the messenger for the assembly in Smyrna write, ‘The First and the Last, who died, and came to life, says this: 9 “I have observed your deeds, and the trials and the poverty. But you are rich.<sup>50</sup> And [I have seen] the blasphemy of those claiming to be Jews, and they are nothing but the synagogue of Satan.<sup>51</sup> 10 Fear nothing that you are about to suffer. Understand, the devil intends to throw some of you into prison so that you may be tested, and you will have trouble ten days.<sup>52</sup> Be faithful until death<sup>53</sup> and I

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Church continues this heresy to the present day (with their doctrine of “Apostolic Succession”). Several cults and the modern Charismatic movement also continue this heresy.

<sup>43</sup> A few manuscripts, and the Textus Receptus, add, “and have not fainted.”

<sup>44</sup> The Breath of God would no longer reside among that assembly.

<sup>45</sup> The term means, “conquerors of the people.” The Nicolaitans were a sect of professed Christians who had fully embraced the teachings of Plato (that man was a non-material “soul” imprisoned by the body of flesh). This teaching removed the necessity and possibility of the resurrection of the flesh. Paul first encountered this in the Corinthian assembly (1 Cor. 15:12-18). The Platonic dualism of the Nicolaitans caused them to deny the resurrection of the body, and greatly affected their teaching about Christ Himself, denying his humanity (John called those who taught this “antichrists” in 1 John 2:18-24, 1 John 4:1-3; 2 John 1:7). See: Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Bk. III, ch. xi for a further description of the Nicolaitans.

<sup>46</sup> This was a common expression of Jesus’ referring to those inclined to heed His voice. (cf. Matt. 11:15; 13:9; 13:43).

<sup>47</sup> In each of the seven letters, Jesus plainly identified Himself as the one issuing the commands. He was doing so through the Breath of God – the “Helper” (John 14:16-18). The Breath (Spirit) is clearly not a distinct Person, otherwise it would create a severe problem in each of the seven letters as to the source of the command. That the following words attributed to the “Breath” in each letter cannot be a message from a third Person is proven in Rev. 2:26-29.

<sup>48</sup> Ezekiel 47:12; Rev. 22:2,14

<sup>49</sup> Eden will be restored (Isaiah 51:3 LXX). Its location was where Jerusalem is now located. The Tree of Life will grow on both sides of the River of Life flowing from the Temple (Ezek. 47:12; Rev. 22:1-2).

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Rev. 3:17

<sup>51</sup> This area of Asia Minor, Phrygia, was known for Jewish mysticism which had blended Greek mythology and philosophy with Judaism, including an elaborate and fanciful theology concerning angels. The Essenes were of this type, as was Philo of Alexandria. The Letter to the Colossians (also in Phrygia) was written by Paul in part to counter the same Jewish – Greek mysticism (of the kind found in the Book of Enoch) which Jesus Himself hated, calling them “the synagogue of Satan.” See: 1 Tim. 1:3-4; Titus 1:14-16.

<sup>52</sup> Some commentators have understood this to refer to ten periods of persecution from Nero to Diocletian, or specific to the Diocletian persecution which lasted ten years exactly after which Constantine ended the official Roman persecution of Christians. However, it may have a more enigmatic reference directly to the end times, as there are ten literal days from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur, which is the Day of Christ’s return. The darkening of the sun and moon that accompany Jesus’ return will likely begin on Rosh Hashanah and last for ten days. Also, ten days was the period of testing for Daniel and his three friends (Dan. 1:12-15).

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will give you the wreath<sup>54</sup> of life.<sup>55</sup> 11 The one having an ear, listen to what the Breath says to the assemblies: 'The one being victorious shall not be injured by the second death.'"<sup>56</sup>

## *Jesus' Letter to the Assembly at Pergamos*

12 "And to the messenger for the assembly in Pergamos write, 'The One having the sharp two edged sword says this: 13 "I have observed your deeds, and where you live, where Satan's throne<sup>57</sup> is. And you retain My name, and did not deny My faith in the days of Antipas<sup>58</sup> My faithful witness who was killed among you where Satan lives.

14 But I have a few things against you: that you have there [some] holding the teaching of Balaam who taught Balak to place an obstacle before the sons of Israel, to eat idol's sacrifices<sup>59</sup> and to fornicate.<sup>60</sup> 15 Likewise you also have some embracing the teaching of the Nicolaitans<sup>61</sup> which I hate. 16 Repent then, otherwise I am coming to you suddenly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth. 17 The one having an ear, listen to what the Breath is saying to the assemblies: 'To the one being victorious, I will give some of the manna to eat that has been hidden.<sup>62</sup> And I will give him a white

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<sup>53</sup> Polycarp, who was appointed to the place of bishop by John in Smyrna prior to his imprisonment on Patmos, was "faithful until death," suffering martyrdom at Rome shortly after Revelation was written.

<sup>54</sup> Wreaths were given to victors of a struggle.

<sup>55</sup> James 1:12 – the "wreath of life" is given to those who successfully endure testing.

<sup>56</sup> Rev. 20:14, 21:8. In the first death there remains hope of resurrection to life again. Not so in the second death, which is permanent annihilation (See Matt. 10:28 & note on Jude 1:7).

<sup>57</sup> The city of Pergamos was noted for an enormous pagan altar. It contained a 371 foot long sculpture of the war of the gods against the Gigantes, a mythological race of giants. This myth was also circulated among some mystical Jewish sects such as the Essenes, as taught in the Book of Enoch (with the pagan gods replaced by angels, and connected to the fall of the sons of God {Sethites} in Gen. 6). The pagan altar was moved, and is currently housed in the Pergamon Museum in Berlin.

<sup>58</sup> Antipas was bishop of Pergamos during the reign of Domitian (Catholic Encyclopedia, Article "Oil of Saints"). This requires that Revelation was written during Domitian's reign, who began to persecute Christians towards the end of his reign. He was assassinated in AD 96.

<sup>59</sup> In reference to eating food sacrificed to idols, Paul said, "You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons" (1Cor. 10:21-22 NKJV).

<sup>60</sup> See Num. 25. The "Incident of Peor" was instigated by Balaam, whereby after being prevented by the Messenger of YHVH from cursing Israel, he instead counseled the Moabites to invite the Israelites to join with them and to intermarry with their women. This led to gross idolatry, including participating in pagan rituals for Baal Peor (eating idol's sacrifices). Because God forbid Israel from marrying pagan women, idolatry was often spoken of metaphorically as "fornication" and "adultery" in the Scriptures. Thus the crime of some of the members of this assembly was in tolerating and excusing forms of idolatry.

<sup>61</sup> See note for vs. 6.

<sup>62</sup> A portion of manna was hidden in the Ark of the Covenant, along with the stone tablets and Aaron's rod. These three items hidden away in the Ark symbolize God's work in the end times: The stone tablets represent the restoring of the Law of Moses for Israel's repentance (Dan. 9:27); Aaron's rod represents the anointing of the restored Levitical priesthood by Elijah (Mal. 4:4-6); The hidden manna represents supernatural provision for God's covenant people (Micah 7:15; Rev. 12:6, 14). The promise in this instance for those being victorious is supernatural provision.



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pebble,<sup>63</sup> and on the pebble a new name inscribed which no one has perceived except the one receiving it’.”

## *Jesus’ Letter to the Assembly at Thyatira*

18 “And to the messenger for the assembly in Thyatira write, ‘The Son of God, His eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like white brass, says this: 19 “I have observed your deeds, love, service, faith, and your endurance; and your works, that the latter are greater than the former. 20 But I have [something] against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel<sup>64</sup> who calls herself a prophetess.<sup>65</sup> And she is teaching<sup>66</sup> and seducing My servants to fornicate and to eat sacrifices of idols.<sup>67</sup> 21 And I gave her time so that she might repent, and she is not willing to repent out of her fornication. 22 Look! I am throwing her into a bed and those committing adultery with her into great tribulation<sup>68</sup> unless they repent from her<sup>69</sup> deeds. 23 And I will kill her children in death, and all the assemblies will know that I am the one searching the minds and hearts.<sup>70</sup> And I will give to each of you according to your works. 24 Yet to you I am saying (to the rest in Thyatira who do not have this teaching, who did not ‘know the depths of Satan,’ as they say) I will lay on you no other burden 25 except [that you] keep holding what you have until I may come. 26 And the one being victorious, and keeping My works<sup>71</sup> until the end, I will give him authority over the nations — 27 ‘*He shall shepherd them with a rod of iron; As the vessels of pottery are crushed*’<sup>72</sup> — as I also have received from My Father. 28 And I will give him the morning star. 29 The one having an ear, listen to what the Breath is saying<sup>73</sup> to the assemblies.”

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<sup>63</sup> In the ancient courts, the accused was condemned by judges giving him black pebbles, and acquitted by receiving white pebbles. Here, the sense seems to be not only acquittal, but a new beginning (new name).

<sup>64</sup> 1 Kings 18 – 21. Jezebel is used metaphorically because of her devotion to idolatry.

<sup>65</sup> Self-appointed prophets and prophetesses are abundant today in the Charismatic movement. See note on v. 2.

<sup>66</sup> Paul forbade women teaching in the assemblies (1 Tim. 2:12-14). The Charismatic movement not only encourages self-appointed “prophets” and “prophetesses” but also women teachers and pastors.

<sup>67</sup> See notes on vs. 14.

<sup>68</sup> See: Matt. 24:21 & Rev. 7:14

<sup>69</sup> The Textus Receptus has “their deeds.”

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Heb. 4:12-13

<sup>71</sup> “My works” refers to doing the works of Jesus Christ, obeying His commandments and carrying on His mission (Matt. 5:14-16; John 9:5).

<sup>72</sup> Psalm 2:9. God’s Son was promised the inheritance of all the nations, that He would “*shepherd them with a rod of iron.*” Here Jesus quoted the LXX, (the Hebrew has “break them,” while the LXX has “shepherd them”). In this verse Jesus promised to share His power and reign with His faithful followers. This Psalm is referenced again in Rev. 12:5 & Rev. 19:15, and this Psalm is fulfilled in Rev. 20:1-4.

<sup>73</sup> That “the Breath” is not a third divine Person is clear from these verses. The words are clearly those of Christ Himself, since He used the first person pronouns, yet He was speaking to the assemblies by means of the holy Breath.

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## Chapter 3

### *Jesus' Letter to the Assembly at Sardis*

“And to the messenger for the assembly in Sardis write, ‘The One possessing the seven Breaths<sup>74</sup> of God and the seven stars says this: “I have observed your deeds, that you have a reputation for being alive yet you are dead. 2 Wake up! And reinforce what remains, which have been on the verge of dying. For I have not found your deeds complete before My God. 3 Remember therefore the way you have received and heard; be attentive and repent. If, therefore, you should not awaken, I will arrive above you like a thief,<sup>75</sup> and you may not know what hour I will arrive<sup>76</sup> above you. 4 You have a few names even in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. And they shall walk with Me in white because they are worthy. 5 The one being victorious shall be dressed in white clothing. And I will not erase his name from the Book of Life, but I will acknowledge his name before My Father and before His messengers. 6 The one having an ear, listen to what the Breath is saying to the assemblies’.”

### *Jesus' Letter to the Assembly at Philadelphia*

7 “And to the messenger for the assembly in Philadelphia write, ‘The Holy One, The True One, The one with the key of David, who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens,<sup>77</sup> says this: 8 “I have observed your deeds. Look! I have placed before you a door that has been opened, which no one is able to lock, because you have a little strength, have been attentive to My Word and have not denied My name. 9 Look! I am arranging [things].<sup>78</sup> Those of the synagogue of Satan (those claiming to be Jews, who are not, but lie<sup>79</sup>), look, I will prepare them that they may come before you and may bow at your feet and may know that I have loved you. 10 Because you have guarded the word of My endurance,<sup>80</sup> I also will guard you out from<sup>81</sup> the hour of trial,<sup>82</sup> the one about to appear over the whole world<sup>83</sup> to test those who live on the land.<sup>84</sup> 11 Look! I am coming suddenly! Hold what you have so that no one may take your wreath. 12 The one being victorious I will make him a column in the Temple<sup>85</sup> of My God, which he should not leave thereafter. And I will write on him the name of My God, and the name

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<sup>74</sup> Rev. 5:6

<sup>75</sup> Matt. 24:43-44; 1 Thess. 5:2,4; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 16:15

<sup>76</sup> Luke 12:45-46

<sup>77</sup> Isaiah 22:22

<sup>78</sup> The verb describes present continuous action, not future action as in most translations.

<sup>79</sup> See notes on Rev. 2:9

<sup>80</sup> They remained faithful to the teaching of Jesus Christ despite severe opposition.

<sup>81</sup> ἐκ – out from among/within, implying presence within the hour of trial and safely emerging from it. See John 17:15.

<sup>82</sup> The Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:21; Rev. 7:14).

<sup>83</sup> “The whole world” (πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην / ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην / τῆς οἰκουμένης ὅλης) does not necessarily refer to all nations (Luke 2:1; Acts 11:28), although usually it does (Rev. 12:9; Rev. 16:14).

<sup>84</sup> cf. Matt. 24:21; Daniel 12:1-2. Note the “deliverance” of God’s people in the latter passage.

<sup>85</sup> The Temple will exist in the Kingdom (Ezek. 40-48). Cf. Rev. 21:22.



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

## *Jesus' Letter to the Assembly at Laodicea*

14 "And to the messenger for the assembly in Laodicea write, 'The Amen,<sup>86</sup> The Faithful and True Witness,<sup>87</sup> The Beginning<sup>88</sup> of the creation of God, says this: 15 "I have observed your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I hoped you might be cold or hot. 16 Since you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of My mouth, 17 because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and need nothing.' And you have not perceived that you are the miserable one, and pitiful, poor, blind, and naked. 18 I advise you to purchase from Me gold having been refined in the fire so that you may be rich; and white clothes, so that you may be clothed and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen. And rub some lotion on your eyes so that you may see. 19 As many as I love, I admonish and discipline. Therefore be zealous and repent. 20 Look! I have stood at the door and I am knocking. If anyone should hear my knock<sup>89</sup> and open the door, I will come in to him and dine with him and he with Me. 21 The one being victorious, I will permit him to sit with Me on My throne as I also was victorious<sup>90</sup> and sat down with My Father on His throne. 22 The one having an ear, listen to what the Breath is saying to the assemblies'."

## Chapter 4

### *The Celestial Court Seated<sup>91</sup>*

After these things I observed, and look, a door having been opened in the sky. And the first voice I heard was like a trumpet<sup>92</sup> speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you what is required to take place after these things." 2 Immediately I came to be in the Breath,<sup>93</sup> and look, a throne was sitting and someone was seated on the

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<sup>86</sup> "Amen" is a Jewish idiom, meaning, "certainty."

<sup>87</sup> Rev. 1:1

<sup>88</sup> Col. 1:15, 18 calls Jesus Christ "The Beginning," and "Firstborn of all creation." This is because the begetting of the Son was the beginning of time itself – Day one of creation. Psalm 2 refers to it as "Today" (I have begotten You). That the Son is Himself "The Beginning" of the creation of God does not mean He was Himself a creation. Rather, He was "begotten" as "the only-begotten Son of God" (John 3:18) who was "from the beginning" (1 John 2:14).

<sup>89</sup> φωνῆς – a noise, sound, or voice of any kind. In this context it appears to refer to Jesus' knocking.

<sup>90</sup> Phil. 2:5-10; Heb. 5:7-9

<sup>91</sup> John described in detail the celestial court that Daniel only glimpsed – the "Ancient of Days" seated on His throne surrounded by other thrones (24 elders) and "thousands, thousands" attending Him (Dan. 7:9-10). The purpose of the celestial court is to transfer the kingdoms of the world to the "Son of Man" and the "saints of the Most High" (Dan. 7:9-14, 22, 27).

<sup>92</sup> Christ has the voice like a trumpet according to Rev. 1:10.

<sup>93</sup> John was not bodily caught up into the sky as is often supposed (John 3:13; Acts 2:34). Rather, "in the Breath" he was allowed to see the spiritual realm as Steven did while remaining bodily on earth (Acts 7:55-56). This is the same mechanism Jesus uses to observe the local assemblies (Rev. 5:6). See also Rev. 1:10; 17:3, 21:10.

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throne. The one seated had an appearance similar to a jasper and sardine stone.<sup>94</sup> And a rainbow encircled the throne, similar in appearance to an emerald. 4 And encircling the throne were twenty-four thrones. And on the thrones I saw twenty-four<sup>95</sup> elders<sup>96</sup> sitting, having been clothed in white robes, and on their heads golden wreaths.<sup>97</sup> 5 And lightening discharged from the throne, and thunders, and voices. And seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Breaths of God.<sup>98</sup> 6 Before the throne was a glassy sea, similar to crystal.<sup>99</sup> And in the center of the throne, and around the throne,<sup>100</sup> were four creatures<sup>101</sup> covered with eyes front and back. 7 The first creature was like a lion,<sup>102</sup> the second creature like an ox,<sup>103</sup> the third creature had a face like a man,<sup>104</sup> and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle.<sup>105</sup> 8 Each of the four creatures had six wings<sup>106</sup> covered with eyes outside and inside. And they take no rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Master God, **SOVEREIGN OVER ALL**, who was, and is, and who is to come."<sup>107</sup> 9 And whenever the creatures will<sup>108</sup> give glory and honor and thanks to One sitting on the throne, the One living to the ages of the ages, 10 the twenty-four elders will fall down before the One sitting on the throne and will worship the One who lives to the ages of the ages. And they throw their wreaths before the throne, saying: 11 "Master, You are worthy to receive the glory and the honor and

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<sup>94</sup> Both stones are red in color.

<sup>95</sup> These twenty-four elders are the celestial angelic counterpart to the twenty-four divisions of the priesthood as established by David (1 Chron. 24:1-19). They function in priestly service (along with Jesus Christ as High Priest) in the celestial Temple, of which the terrestrial Temple is merely a copy (Heb. 8:5). This is shown by their offering incense (the prayers of the saints in the tribulation) before the Throne of God (Rev. 5:8), a priestly function.

<sup>96</sup> The term "elder" literally refers to age, but metaphorically to high rank.

<sup>97</sup> That the 24 elders wore wreaths shows that they were victorious over an opponent. Victory is not only true of men, but also of angels (Dan. 10:13, 21; Dan. 12:1; Rev. 12:7).

<sup>98</sup> These seven lamps of fire (the seven Breaths) are before the throne of God, yet correspond to the seven lampstands (assemblies) which were in Asia Minor at the time (Rev. 1:20). Obviously, each of the seven Breaths of God was present in each corresponding assembly on earth, providing the mechanism for the Lamb to observe what was occurring in each assembly, as stated in the seven letters.

<sup>99</sup> See Rev. 22:1 – the River of Life flowing from the New Jerusalem is also glassy like crystal. No doubt this sea before God's throne represents the endless supply of the water of life. Its 'glassy' character represents perfect calm and peace for God's people, even during times of persecution and tribulation (cf. Gen. 49:9-10; Rev. 15:2).

<sup>100</sup> That is, in the center of each of the four sides

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Ezekiel 1:5-21

<sup>102</sup> The Lion of Judah is a representation of Christ as King (Rev. 5:5).

<sup>103</sup> The ox symbolizes the mission of Christ extended through the Apostles and the assemblies, bringing the Good News of the Kingdom to all nations (1 Cor. 9:1-27).

<sup>104</sup> The face of a Man symbolizes the full humanity of Jesus Christ, who will reign over the creation as "Man" (Gen. 1:26, 28; Psalm 8:4-9; Heb. 2:5-9).

<sup>105</sup> The Eagle symbolizes the mission of the Son of God as Man being extended throughout the creation by the holy Breath (Exodus 19:4; Isaiah 40:31; Rev. 12:14), which is the "Breath of Christ" (Rom. 8:9-10; 1 Pet. 1:11).

<sup>106</sup> According to Isaiah 6:2, 6, these six-winged creatures are "Seraphim," plural of "Seraph," which means "burning."

<sup>107</sup> Isaiah 6:1-3

<sup>108</sup> The switch to future tense here indicates that John expected this kind of worship to continue on. This is apparently the same kind of worship that Isaiah observed also in his day (Isa. 6:3). The Majority Text reads "may give."

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the power, because You created everything. And through Your decree they exist, and were created.”<sup>109</sup>

## Chapter 5

### *The Seven-Sealed Scroll of Judgment*

And, in the right hand of the One sitting on the throne I saw a scroll having been engraved inside and outside,<sup>110</sup> sealed with seven seals. 2 Then I saw a strong messenger proclaiming in a loud voice: “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?” 3 And no one<sup>111</sup> in the sky, or on the land, or below the land<sup>112</sup> was able to open the scroll or to examine it. 4 And I wept much because no one was found worthy to open<sup>113</sup> the scroll or to examine it. 5 And one of the elders said to me: “Don’t weep. Look! The Lion of the tribe of Judah,<sup>114</sup> the Root of David,<sup>115</sup> has been victorious<sup>116</sup> to open the scroll and to break its seven seals.”

6 And I observed<sup>117</sup> in the middle of the throne<sup>118</sup> and four creatures, and in the middle of the elders, a Lamb, as if having been killed, was standing.<sup>119</sup> He had seven horns and seven eyes which are the seven Breaths of God<sup>120</sup> sent out to all the land. 7 Then He approached and took [the scroll] from the right hand of the One sitting on the throne. 8 And when He took the scroll, the four creatures and the twenty four elders bowed down before the Lamb, each having a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. 9 And they sing a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals, because You were slain, and have redeemed some<sup>121</sup> to

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<sup>109</sup> Col. 1:16-17, Heb. 1:1-3

<sup>110</sup> Ezekiel 2:9, Zech. 5:1-5

<sup>111</sup> Note that this statement excludes a third divine Person. The same problem exists for the “Third Person” doctrine in Matt. 11:27 & Luke 10:22.

<sup>112</sup> Some suppose that “below the land” refers to ghosts in an alleged conscious abode of the dead (Hades). But, the Old Testament uses the same expression repeatedly of the creatures of the deep sea (Ex. 20:4; Deut. 5:8). See vs. 13 which indicates that the sea was meant.

<sup>113</sup> Textus Receptus adds, “and read.” The majority and oldest manuscripts omit it.

<sup>114</sup> Gen. 49:9-10

<sup>115</sup> Isaiah 11:1-10; see note on Rev. 22:16. That the Lamb is the “Root of David” implies that He existed before David, and caused David to exist.

<sup>116</sup> Rev. 3:21 (cf. Phil. 2:8 & Heb. 5:7-9)

<sup>117</sup> Textus Receptus adds, “and look!”

<sup>118</sup> The Lamb is now seated at the right hand of His Father (Psalm 110:1) on the Father’s throne (Rev. 3:21).

<sup>119</sup> “having stood up.” The perfect tense emphasizes the result of standing after having stood up from being seated.

<sup>120</sup> Isaiah 11:1-4; Zech. 3:8-9; 4:10; Rev. 1:4; Rev. 4:5

<sup>121</sup> There are a variety of readings of this verse in the manuscript evidence as follows: “and have redeemed to God us,” “and have redeemed us to God,” “and have redeemed us,” “and have redeemed to God [some]” (omitting the first person pronoun). I have followed the last reading for two reasons: (a) it is the only reading that agrees grammatically with the third person statement in verse 10, and (b) the four creatures (who sing along with the 24 elders) are obviously not human, thus cannot claim to be “redeemed from among men” of all nations. This would require their singing in the third person, not first person. (See following note).

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God with Your blood from every tribe, and language, and people, and nation, 10 and made them<sup>122</sup> kings and priests<sup>123</sup> to our God. And they<sup>124</sup> shall reign on the land.”

11 And I looked and heard the voice of many messengers around the throne, the creatures, and the elders.<sup>125</sup> And the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,<sup>126</sup> 12 saying with a loud voice: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!” 13 And I heard every creature, those in the sky, and on land, and below the land<sup>127</sup> (even upon the sea and all that are in them), saying: “To the One sitting on the throne and to the Lamb [be] blessing and honor and glory and power unto the ages of the ages!” 14 And the four creatures said: “Amen!” And the twenty-four elders bowed down and worshiped.<sup>128</sup>

## Chapter 6

### *The Seven Seals Opened*<sup>129</sup>

And I observed when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four creatures, like the sound of thunder, saying: “Come and see.” 2 And I observed, and look, a white horse, and the one sitting on it had a bow. And a wreath was given to him, and he came out conquering, and that he may conquer.<sup>130</sup> 3 And when He opened the second seal, I heard the second creature saying: “Come and see.” 4 Another horse [that was] red went out. And it was granted to the one sitting on it to take peace from the land, and that they will kill one another. And there was given to him a great sword.<sup>131</sup> 5 And when He opened the third seal, I heard the third creature say, “Come and see.” And I observed, and look, a black horse, and the one sitting on it had a yoke<sup>132</sup> in his hand. 6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, “A quart of grain for a denarius<sup>133</sup> and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not

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<sup>122</sup> The majority and oldest manuscripts have “they/them” (third person plural). See previous note.

<sup>123</sup> Rev. 20:4-6

<sup>124</sup> Same as previous note.

<sup>125</sup> Note the complete absence of humans.

<sup>126</sup> This language is borrowed from Dan. 7:10.

<sup>127</sup> Some suppose that those “below the land” refers to ghosts of the dead in Hades. But, the Old Testament uses the same expression repeatedly of the creatures of the sea (cf. Ex. 20:4; Deut. 5:8; etc.).

<sup>128</sup> The Textus Receptus adds, “the One who lives unto the ages of the ages.”

<sup>129</sup> There can be no question that this chapter parallels the Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24). The four horsemen are similar to Zech. 1:8-17 & 6:1-8 which represent God’s judgment on the Gentile nations as He was about to restore Jerusalem.

<sup>130</sup> The rider on the white horse represents mass deception, (cf. Matt. 24:4-5). Paul called it “strong delusion” and “the lie” (2 Thess. 2:1-12) sent by God upon those who have already refused the truth. This will include a mass apostasy from the true Christian Faith (Matt. 24:9-13). It is probable that it will include a merging of apostate Judaism, apostate Christianity, and so-called moderate Islam.

<sup>131</sup> The second horseman is war, (cf. Matt. 24:6-8).

<sup>132</sup> The Greek word means a “yoke,” a device that attaches an animal to a heavy burden.

<sup>133</sup> The usual salary for a day’s labor.

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harm the oil and the wine.”<sup>134</sup> 7 And when He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth creature saying, “Come and see.” 8 So I observed, and look, a pale horse. And the name of the one sitting on it was Death. And the grave accompanied him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the land, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the wild beasts<sup>135</sup> of the land.<sup>136</sup> 9 And when He opened the fifth seal, I saw beneath the altar<sup>137</sup> the souls<sup>138</sup> of those slain for the word of God and the witness they were having. 10 And they called with a loud voice,<sup>139</sup> saying: “How much longer, Master, holy and true, before You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the land?”<sup>140</sup> 11 And a white robe was granted for each of them. And they were told that they will rest<sup>141</sup> a little longer until their fellow servants and their brothers, those about to be killed like them, may be completed.<sup>142</sup> 12 And I observed when He opened the sixth seal, and look, there was a great shaking, and the sun became black like mohair, and the whole moon became like blood.<sup>143</sup> 13 And the stars of the sky fell to the ground like a fig tree dropping its figs when shaken by a strong wind. 14 Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up,<sup>144</sup> and every mountain and island was stirred from its

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<sup>134</sup> Oil and wine were the commodities of the wealthy. Taken together the third seal seems to suggest famine that will strike the poor particularly hard, (cf. Matt. 24:7).

<sup>135</sup> Ezek. 14:21

<sup>136</sup> The fourth horseman seems to sum up the plagues listed by Jesus, war, famine, disease (perhaps animal borne), & natural disasters, (Matt. 24:6-8).

<sup>137</sup> Since these are martyrs, the altar mentioned must be the bronze altar of sacrifice which was outside the Temple. In Heb. 9:11-15, 23-28, Christ is portrayed as shedding His blood on earth, but afterwards entering the celestial Temple with His own blood, just as the High Priest entered the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur. In Temple imagery, the martyrs follow in Jesus’ footsteps, also shedding their blood on the bronze altar (on earth). The blood of the animal sacrifices was called their “souls” (Lev. 18:7) and was poured out at the base of the altar (Lev. 4:7,18,34; Lev. 5:9). Thus, to be “under the altar” (where their blood-soul was poured out) is a symbolic way of indicating that the remains of the martyrs are specially acknowledged by God.

<sup>138</sup> According to Genesis 9:4-5 & Lev. 17:14, the “soul” of the flesh is the blood. The “soul” of the blood was to be poured out beneath the altar (Lev. 17:11).

<sup>139</sup> Jesus portrayed Abel as the prototype martyr (Luke 11:50-51). The blood of Abel – the first martyr – called out to God from the ground to be avenged (Gen. 4:10). This same symbolic imagery is being applied to all of the martyrs. The sense is the same as with Abel’s blood crying out to God, that God remembers the injustice and will avenge His saints, and will restore them to life through resurrection.

<sup>140</sup> Not only does Scripture symbolically portray the blood of Abel calling out to be avenged, but also in Ezekiel 37:11 the dry bones of the patriarchs and the whole house of Israel cry out from their graves for the fulfillment of the promise of resurrection and eternal inheritance. “Then He said to me, ‘Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say, “Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!” Therefore prophesy and say to them, “Thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.’” (Ezek. 37:11-12). Such allegorical language does not mean that blood or bones actually speak, but rather reinforces the idea that God does not forget to avenge the blood of His servants, or forget His promises of the inheritance to His people.

<sup>141</sup> Death for the righteous is portrayed as “sleep” both in the Old Testament (Dan. 12:2) and the New Testament (Luke 8:52; John 11:11-14; 1 Cor. 15:51; 1 Thess. 4:14).

<sup>142</sup> Persecution and martyrdom of Jesus’ followers was also described by Jesus in the Olivet Discourse, (Matt. 24:9-13).

<sup>143</sup> Matthew 24:29; Joel 2:30-31; Acts 2:20.

<sup>144</sup> Isaiah 34:4

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place. 15 And the kings of the land, the great ones, the commanders, the rich men, the strong, every slave and free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains<sup>145</sup> 16 and said to the mountains and rocks: "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! 17 For the great day of His<sup>146</sup> wrath<sup>147</sup> has arrived, and who is able to stand?"

## Chapter 7

### *The Remnant of Israel Preserved from Death*<sup>148</sup>

And after this I observed four messengers standing at the four corners of the land, holding the four winds<sup>149</sup> of the land, that the wind should not blow on the land, or on the sea, or on any tree. 2 And I saw another messenger ascending from the rising of the sun having the seal of the living God. And he called with a loud voice to the four messengers to whom it was granted to harm the land and the sea, 3 saying: "Do not harm the land, the sea, or the trees till we should seal the servants of our God on their foreheads."<sup>150</sup> 4 And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand were sealed, from every tribe<sup>151</sup> of the sons of Israel: 5 from the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed; 6 from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed; 7 from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed; 8 from the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed; from the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed.

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<sup>145</sup> Isaiah 2:10,19,21

<sup>146</sup> The Alexandrian Text has "their wrath."

<sup>147</sup> Psalm 2

<sup>148</sup> Verses 1-8 are parenthetical. These are sealed for protection before any of the calamities of chapter 6 take place. Parenthetical sections like this are common in Revelation. This chapter is structured to follow the structure of Isaiah 49 (quoted in vss. 16-17), and cannot be rightly understood apart from that chapter.

<sup>149</sup> The "four winds" are equivalent to the "four horsemen" (cf. Zech. 6:5 LXX).

<sup>150</sup> In Ezekiel 9 the same metaphor was used regarding the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the Divine preservation of the faithful Jewish remnant.

<sup>151</sup> It is significant that "every tribe" does not include the tribe of Dan. Instead, the tribe of Joseph takes two places. When Israel blessed Joseph's two sons, Ephraim (the younger) was given the blessing of the firstborn (Gen. 48:8-21), and his descendants became the "tribe of Joseph." Manasseh was Joseph's oldest son, and is viewed here as a separate tribe. Some of the early Christian writers believed that Dan was omitted because of that tribes' consistent idolatry, and that the Antichrist would come from that tribe. (Hippolytus, Treatise on Christ & Antichrist, 6-15). However, it is doubtful that Antichrist will be a Jew, since he is repeatedly called "the Assyrian." However, Dan is included among the 12 tribes whose names appear on the gates of restored Jerusalem (cf. Ezek. 48:31-34 & Rev. 21:12).



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## *The Saints of the Most High Inherit the Kingdom*<sup>152</sup>

9 After these things I observed, and look, a crowd of many [people] which no one could count, from every nation, tribes and peoples and languages, having [come to] stand before the throne<sup>153</sup> and before the Lamb, having been dressed<sup>154</sup> in white robes, with palm branches<sup>155</sup> in their hands. 10 And they shout with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation [belongs] to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" 11 And all the messengers had [come to] stand around the throne and the elders and the four creatures. And they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying: "Amen! The blessing, and the glory, and the wisdom, and the thanksgiving, and the honor, and the power, and the strength be to our God, unto the ages of the ages! Amen!" 13 Then one of the elders responded, saying to me: "Who are these dressed in white robes, and where did they come from?" 14 And I said to him: "My master, you have observed." And he said to me: "These are the ones who emerge out from<sup>156</sup> the great tribulation,<sup>157</sup> and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His Temple.<sup>158</sup> And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them.<sup>159</sup> 16 They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; 17 for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead<sup>160</sup> them to living fountains of waters.<sup>161</sup> And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."<sup>162</sup> 8:1 And when He opened the seventh seal, it became silent in the sky for about half an hour.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Daniel 7:27

<sup>153</sup> The resurrected saints stand in view of the throne in the sky which Daniel saw (Dan. 7:9-10).

<sup>154</sup> While white robes were appointed for each of the martyrs who are resting in sleep (Rev. 6:11), being "clothed" implies the resurrection of the body (1 Cor. 15:51-57; 2 Cor. 5:4).

<sup>155</sup> This is a distinct feature of the Feast of Tabernacles celebration (Lev. 23:39-43). It is prophetic of the Kingdom of Christ, and will be celebrated after Christ returns as King (Zech. 14:16-20).

<sup>156</sup> This passage unquestionably shows the outcome of the promise made in Rev. 3:10.

<sup>157</sup> The same term θλίψις μεγάλη (great tribulation) is used in Matthew 24:21. Also in 1 Maccabees 9:27, the same term appears in reference to the persecution under Antiochus Epiphanies, and a similar statement follows: "So was there a great tribulation in Israel, the like whereof was not since the time that a prophet was not seen among them."

<sup>158</sup> The Throne of God will be in His Temple in Jerusalem (cf. Jer. 3:16-17 & Ezek. 43:1-7). This is also the "Temple" in which Jesus promised the Philadelphians to make the faithful permanent pillars (Rev. 3:12).

<sup>159</sup> Psalm 5:11 LXX. God dwells with men (rather than men dwell with God).

<sup>160</sup> John 10:1-5

<sup>161</sup> Isaiah 49:10. The Shepherd leads His faithful sheep out of the protection of the sheepfold into the pastures of His Kingdom. See also: Micah 2:12-13; 5:3-4; 7:14-15.

<sup>162</sup> Isaiah 25:8

<sup>163</sup> The silence represents ceasing of activity in the sky. The Kingdom has descended to the land, (Isa. 2:2-4; Jer. 3:16-17, Ezek. 43:1-7, Zech. 14:9, 16).

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## Chapter 8

### *The Seven Trumpets*<sup>164</sup>

2 And I observed the seven messengers who have stood before God and seven trumpets were given to them. 3 And another messenger came and stood before the altar having a golden censer. And much incense was given him that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense with the prayers of the saints ascended before God from the hand of the messenger. 5 And the messenger took the censer, and filled it from the fire of the altar, and threw it onto the land. And there were thunderings, noises, lightnings, and a shaking. 6 And the seven messengers having the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. 7 And the first messenger sounded, and there came hail and fire,<sup>165</sup> mixed with blood, and it was thrown upon the land. And a third of the land burned,<sup>166</sup> and a third of the trees burned, and all green vegetation burned. 8 And the second messenger sounded, and [something] like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood.<sup>167</sup> 9 And a third of the creatures in the sea having life died. And a third of the ships were destroyed. 10 And the third messenger sounded and a great star fell from the sky burning like a torch. And it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. 11 And the name of the star is called Wormwood.<sup>168</sup> And a third of the waters became wormwood and many men died from the water that was made toxic. 12 And the fourth messenger sounded and a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them should be obscured and a third of the day should not be illuminated, and the night likewise. 13 And I saw and heard an eagle<sup>169</sup> flying in mid-air,<sup>170</sup> saying with a great voice, "Woe, woe, woe,<sup>171</sup> land dwellers, from the remaining trumpet blasts of the three messengers about to sound!"

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<sup>164</sup> The seven trumpets begin a new sequence of events, going back and overlapping the previous events of the seals (which culminated in the second coming and establishing of the Kingdom on earth).

<sup>165</sup> The same plague occurred in Egypt on a smaller scale (Exodus 9:23-26; Psalm 18:12-13)

<sup>166</sup> The Textus Receptus omits this clause.

<sup>167</sup> Exodus 7:17-21

<sup>168</sup> "Wormwood" is a highly toxic plant from which the ancients made insecticides. It derives its name from the practice of brewing the leaves in a tea, for people and animals as a worming medicine.

<sup>169</sup> The Textus Receptus follows a minority of manuscripts that have "angel" (messenger). But the majority of manuscripts and the oldest manuscripts have "eagle."

<sup>170</sup> Cf. Rev. 12:14

<sup>171</sup> The three "woes" are the 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> trumpets. The first four trumpets deal with man's environment. The three woes affect man directly.

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## Chapter 9

And the fifth messenger sounded and I saw a star, having fallen from the sky to the ground,<sup>172</sup> and he was given the key to the well of the deep.<sup>173</sup> 2 And he opened the well of the deep, and smoke ascended from the well, like the smoke of a great furnace.<sup>174</sup> And the sun and the air were obscured from the smoke of the well . 3 And out of the smoke came locusts<sup>175</sup> upon the land. And they were given power as the scorpions of the land have power. 4 They were commanded not to harm the grass of the land, or any green thing, or any tree, but only the men not having the seal of God on their foreheads. 5 And they were not permitted to kill them, but to torment them for five months. And their torment is like the torment of a scorpion if it should strike a man. 6 In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will be yearning to die, and death will flee from them. 7 And the appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. And on their heads were something like wreaths of gold. And their faces were like the faces of men. 8 They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. 9 And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron. And the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running to battle. 10 And they have tails like scorpions, and stingers also in their tails. And their power was to injure men five months. 11 And they have a king over them, the messenger of the deep. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek his name is Apollyon.<sup>176</sup> 12 One woe has come, look, two woes are still coming after these things. 13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, the one before God, 14 saying to the sixth angel having the trumpet: "Release the four messengers, the ones having been restrained<sup>177</sup> at the great river Euphrates." 15 And the four messengers were released, having been prepared unto the hour, and day, and month, and year, that they may kill a third of men. 16 And the number of the soldiers of the cavalry was two hundred million. I heard the number of them. 17 And this is how I saw the horses in the vision: those sitting on them had breastplates like fire,<sup>178</sup> hyacinth,<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> Jesus used the same terminology prophetically regarding Satan in Luke 10:18. This is also referenced in Rev. 12:7-9, which occurs at the mid-point of the 70<sup>th</sup> week. This places the 5<sup>th</sup> trumpet (which is also the first woe)

<sup>173</sup> In the Old Testament, the "abyss" refers to the unknown depths of the waters (cf. LXX Gen. 1:2; 7:11; 8:2).

<sup>174</sup> Where water should be coming forth from the "abyss" (cf. LXX Deut. 8:7; 33:13; Psalm 33:7, etc.), there is smoke.

<sup>175</sup> The locusts represent demonic breaths. There is no question that this passage was meant to reference Luke 10:18-19. "And He said to them, 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 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). There are three clear connections to this passage, a) the messenger of the abyss who falls from the sky; b) the locusts; c) God's people are off limits.

<sup>176</sup> The meaning in both Hebrew and Greek is "The Destroyer."

<sup>177</sup> Compare Daniel 10:13,20-21. After the fall of Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon, four great empires have battled for control of the area of the Euphrates River. There have been demonic forces seeking to control these empires, which have been restrained by Michael and his messengers.

<sup>178</sup> Fiery red

<sup>179</sup> Deep blue

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and sulfur.<sup>180</sup> And the horses' heads were like the heads of lions. And out of their mouths goes fire, smoke, and sulfur. 18 From these three plagues a third of men were killed — from the fire, and the smoke, and the sulfur coming out of their mouths. 19 For their power of the horses is in their mouth and in their tails, for their tails are like serpents, having heads, and with them they injure. 20 But the rest of men, who were not killed by these blows, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which are not able to see, nor to hear, nor to walk. 21 And they did not repent from their murders, nor from their drugs,<sup>181</sup> nor from their fornication,<sup>182</sup> nor from their stealing.

## Chapter 10

### *The Powerful Messenger with the Little Scroll*<sup>183</sup>

And I observed another<sup>184</sup> Messenger,<sup>185</sup> powerful, coming down from the sky, having been clothed with a cloud.<sup>186</sup> And a rainbow<sup>187</sup> was above his head. His face was like the sun,<sup>188</sup> and His feet like pillars of fire.<sup>189</sup> 2 And in His hand was a little scroll having been opened. And He set his right foot on the sea and His left foot on the land, 3 and called out with a loud voice, as a lion roars. And when He called out, seven thunders proclaimed their sayings. 4 And when the seven thunders spoke, I was about to write. But I heard a voice from the sky saying: "Seal up<sup>190</sup> the sayings of the seven thunders," and, "you should not write them."<sup>191</sup> 5 And the Messenger whom I saw, having stood on the sea and on the land, raised His right<sup>192</sup> hand to the sky 6 and swore by the One living unto the ages of the ages, (who created the sky and the things in it, and the land and the things in it, and the sea and the things in it),<sup>193</sup> that there shall be time no longer.<sup>194</sup> 7 (But in the days of the sounding of the seventh messenger, when he should

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<sup>180</sup> Yellow

<sup>181</sup> The Greek word literally means "drugs." It is sometimes used figuratively of sorcery, since drugs were often employed by sorcerers.

<sup>182</sup> "Fornication" refers to sexual immorality, but is also frequently used in the LXX for idolatry.

<sup>183</sup> This entire chapter has a direct connection to the Mt. of Transfiguration experience, which was itself a preview of the arrival of the Kingdom (cf. Mark 9:1-9; 2 Pet. 1:16-19). That experience was directly dependent on Psalm 2.

<sup>184</sup> Apart from the seven messengers with the seven trumpets

<sup>185</sup> See note on Rev. 11:3. This "Messenger" is Christ, as the following descriptions prove.

<sup>186</sup> Matt. 15:5

<sup>187</sup> Ezek. 1:26-28; Rev. 4:3

<sup>188</sup> Matt. 17:2; Rev. 1:16

<sup>189</sup> Rev. 1:15

<sup>190</sup> Or conceal

<sup>191</sup> John was given revelation that was private.

<sup>192</sup> The Textus Receptus omits "right."

<sup>193</sup> The three part division of our world – sky, land, and sea, are all defined in Gen. 1:8-10. For this reason we have consistently translated the Greek terms as "the sky, land, and sea," rather than "heaven, earth, sea" as in most English translations.

<sup>194</sup> This statement does not mean that time itself ceases to exist, since it is clear that a thousand years remains (Rev. 20). Rather, it refers to the end of a specific length of time, the six-millennia punishment upon Adam and his race by

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be about to sound, the mystery of God<sup>195</sup> would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets). 8 And the voice which I heard from the sky spoke to me again saying, “Go, take the little scroll open in the hand of the Messenger standing on the sea and on the land.” 9 And I went to the Messenger, asking Him to give me the little scroll. And He says to me: “Take and eat it. It will make your stomach bitter. But in your mouth it will be sweet as honey.”<sup>196</sup> 10 And I took the little scroll from the hand of the Messenger and ate it. And it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. And when I had eaten it, my stomach was bitter. 11 And they<sup>197</sup> said to me: “It is necessary for you to prophesy again<sup>198</sup> against<sup>199</sup> many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.”<sup>200</sup>

## Chapter 11

### *The Jerusalem Temple & the Two Prophets*

And a reed like a measuring rod was given to me and I was told: “Arise and measure the Temple of God,<sup>201</sup> the altar, and those worshipping in it.<sup>202</sup> 2 And exclude the court outside the Temple. You should not measure it because it was given to the Gentiles<sup>203</sup>

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the curse upon all creation (Rom. 8:19-25; Heb. 4:3-9; Rev. 22:3). Note the reference to the creation in verse 6, which was six days in duration.

<sup>195</sup> Col. 2:2-3 The “Mystery of God” is the revelation of Jesus Christ to all the world, revealing who He really is (Ps. 2).

<sup>196</sup> Ezekiel had the same experience. He was given the little scroll to eat by the Son of God, who appeared to Him as a Man (Ezek. 1:26-3:11). The purpose of Ezekiel’s eating the scroll was to make him God’s prophet to Israel to announce God’s final words of warning, and also to denounce the surrounding Gentile nations. Here John ate the little scroll given to him by the Son of God, the Messenger of YHVH. But its contents were not revealed because they are special words for Israel in the last days, nor were the words of the seven thunders revealed because these are words of specific judgment upon the surrounding nations. These words will be delivered by John himself during Daniel’s 70<sup>th</sup> week as one of the two witnesses.

<sup>197</sup> The Textus Receptus has “he.” The plural apparently refers to the Messenger and the voice from the sky.

<sup>198</sup> *παλιν* - once more, at another time. Since John died shortly after Revelation was written, this refers to his role as one of the two witnesses.

<sup>199</sup> The preposition “*επι*” with a dative case object means “against,” implying an adversarial relationship. (See: LXX Ezek. 6:2; 11:4; 25:2; 28:21; 29:2 35:2; 38:2. See also: Matt 10:18-19; Mark 13:9).

<sup>200</sup> Early Christian writers understood from this passage that John would be raised from the dead in the last days to proclaim the message of the seven thunders and the contents of the little scroll. (See: Hippolytus, App. xxi). To “prophesy again against...” implies John’s once again standing in opposition to these peoples, just as Ezekiel did.

<sup>201</sup> Ezekiel was given the same task of measuring the Temple (Ezek. 40), in order to provide hope for the faithful remnant of Israel concerning the coming restoration of God’s house. When Ezekiel was told to measure God’s house, Nebuchadnezzar had already destroyed the Temple. Ezekiel’s measuring was in vision of the future rebuilt Temple. Likewise, when John was told to measure the Temple, Rome had already destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple more than two decades earlier. Like Ezekiel, John was measuring a future Temple in his vision.

<sup>202</sup> Those worshipping and offering sacrifices on the altar in the Temple are Jews. These 42 months must occur prior to the abomination of desolation (within the first half of the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel 9:27) because the abomination of desolation will stop these sacrifices, and render the Temple “desolate” (cf. Dan. 9:27; Dan. 11:31; Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:1-12). This passage provides proof that the Temple will be rebuilt prior to the beginning of the 70<sup>th</sup> week. Sacrifices will be offered in worship during the first 3.5 years. This is why the Mosaic Covenant is “renewed” at this time for one week (Dan. 9:27), to provide Israel an open path to repentance according to Deut. 30 & Mal. 4.

<sup>203</sup> It is clear from this statement that the Temple John was to measure was not the Kingdom Temple described by Ezekiel, since only a small portion of the Temple grounds will be under the control of Israel and worship allowed.

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(they will also trample the holy city forty-two months).<sup>204</sup> 3 And I will give<sup>205</sup> to My<sup>206</sup> two witnesses,<sup>207</sup> and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days<sup>208</sup> clothed in mohair.” 4 These are the two olive trees<sup>209</sup> and the two lampstands<sup>210</sup> having come to stand before the Master<sup>211</sup> of the Land.<sup>212</sup> 5 And if anyone is willing to harm them, fire goes out from their mouth<sup>213</sup> and consumes their enemies.<sup>214</sup> And if anyone should be willing to harm them he must be killed in this manner. 6 These have authority to lock the sky, so that no rain may fall in the days of their prophecy.<sup>215</sup> And they have authority over the waters to turn them to blood,<sup>216</sup> and to strike the land with every blow, as often as they should be willing.<sup>217</sup> 7 When they should finish their witness, the beast, ascending<sup>218</sup> out of the deep, will do battle with them, will conquer them, and will kill them. 8 And their corpses will lie upon the street of the great city which is spiritually called Sodom<sup>219</sup> and Egypt,<sup>220</sup> where also their<sup>221</sup> Master was

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This Temple is a prelude to the Kingdom Temple. It is the rebuilt “Temple of God” which Antichrist will defile (Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:3-4).

<sup>204</sup> This period of time is the reign of the Beast during the last 3.5 years (Rev. 13:5). In Hebrew understanding, the word *מִיָּנָוָס* refers specifically to new moons, and by extension the period of time between them (lunar months). 42 lunar months is about 1239 days. The time period mentioned here for the “trampling” of Jerusalem is counting from the abomination of desolation when the worship mentioned here will be abolished by the Antichrist. Jesus spoke of the “trampling of Jerusalem” from AD 70 “until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” (Luke 21:24), which is the beginning of the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel 12, the final 7 years. This will be followed by 1260 days of prophesying by the two witnesses during Temple worship. After the 1260 days, the two Prophets will be killed, the sacrifices will be halted and the abomination of desolation set up. Thereafter Jerusalem will be trampled for 42 lunar months.

<sup>205</sup> The Son of God, the Messenger of YHVH, will give His two witnesses the words to prophesy at the proper time.

<sup>206</sup> The same “Messenger” who gave John the little scroll to eat, and told him that he must prophesy again, also referred to the two prophets as HIS witnesses. This indicates that the Messenger in ch. 10 is Jesus.

<sup>207</sup> The two witnesses are Elijah and John.

<sup>208</sup> The two witnesses prophesy during the period that the Jews are worshipping at the Temple.

<sup>209</sup> Zech. 4:3, 11

<sup>210</sup> Cf. Zech. 4:11 which has a single lampstand, representing the nation of Israel. The two lampstands refer to Israel and Christians.

<sup>211</sup> The Textus Receptus has “God.”

<sup>212</sup> Zech. 4:14 – the two prophets then were Zechariah and Haggai (Ezra 5:1-2; Ezra 6:14) who provided the Breath of God to inspire the completion of the second Temple (Hag. 1:12-15). These two witnesses will provide a similar function concerning the Temple in vss. 1-2.

<sup>213</sup> They command fire to come down from the sky with their words just as Elijah did (2 Kings 1:10).

<sup>214</sup> In Luke 9:54, John (and James) wanted to imitate Elijah. “*Master, do You want us to call fire to descend from heaven and consume them, as also Elijah did?*” (NKJV)

<sup>215</sup> Elijah shut the sky for the same period – 3.5 years (Luke 4:25).

<sup>216</sup> cf. Rev. 8:8-11

<sup>217</sup> The first four trumpets are plagues of this type. Here we learn that they are called down by the two Prophets who prophesy during the first half of the 70<sup>th</sup> week, while sacrifices are being offered in the Temple (v. 1-3).

<sup>218</sup> If John meant that the Beast had previously ascended from the abyss but will kill them afterwards we would expect him to use the aorist or perfect participle here. His use of the present participle (in conjunction with the word “when”) indicates that the Beast will kill the witnesses at the time he ascends from the deep. This will occur at the mid-point of the 70<sup>th</sup> week (cf. Rev. 17:7-11). Therefore, the testimony of the two witnesses must be before the middle of the tribulation, at the time of the abomination of desolation.

<sup>219</sup> Isaiah 1:9-10; Ezek. 16:46



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crucified. 9 And those from the peoples, and tribes, and languages, and nations watch their corpses three-and-a-half days.<sup>222</sup> They do not permit their corpses to be put in graves. 10 And the dwellers on the land cheer over them, and rejoice, and will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those dwelling on the land. 11 And after the three-and-a-half days, the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet. And great fear fell on those watching them. 12 And they heard a loud voice from the sky saying to them, "Come up here." And they ascended into the sky in the cloud and their enemies watched them. 13 In that hour there was a great shaking, and a tenth of the city<sup>223</sup> fell, and seven thousand people were killed, and the rest became terrified and gave credit to the God of the sky.

### *The Third Woe – The Seventh Trumpet*

14 The second woe has come. Look! The third woe is coming quickly. 15 Then the seventh messenger sounded, and there were great voices in the sky, saying: "The kingdom<sup>224</sup> of the world has become [the Kingdom] of our Master and of His Christ, and He shall reign unto the ages of the ages!" 16 And the twenty-four elders who are sitting before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying: "We give You thanks, Master God, **THE SOVEREIGN OVER ALL**, the One who is, who was, and who is to come because You have taken hold of Your great authority and begun to rule! 18 And the nations were angry and Your wrath has arrived, also the time for the dead to be judged<sup>225</sup> and to give reward Your servants the prophets, and the saints, and those fearing Your name, small and great, and to destroy those destroying the land." 19 And the Temple of God was opened in the sky, and the Ark of His Covenant<sup>226</sup> was seen in His Temple.<sup>227</sup> And there were lightnings, voices, thunderings, a shaking, and a great hail.<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> Gal. 4:25 Paul referred to "Jerusalem which now is, and is enslaved with her children." The term "enslaved" is the word used repeatedly for Israel in Egypt.

<sup>221</sup> The Textus Receptus has "our."

<sup>222</sup> The resurrection of the two witnesses would seem to coincide with the woman fleeing into the wilderness (Rev. 12:14). The two witnesses will likely be caught up and relocated there. This would explain the statement in Rev. 12:6, "so that *they* may be nourishing her there a thousand two hundred sixty days." The third person active voice verb "*they may be nourishing*" has no antecedent in the immediate passage unless it refers back to the two witnesses.

<sup>223</sup> Jerusalem (vs. 8)

<sup>224</sup> The Textus Receptus has "kingdoms" (plural)

<sup>225</sup> Judgment of the dead necessitates the resurrection of the just

<sup>226</sup> That John saw the Ark of the Covenant in the sky during this point in his vision implies that it is transferred to the sky after the period of worship in the Temple in Jerusalem during the testimony of the two witnesses. Worship according to the Law of Moses (the renewed covenant) requires the high priest visiting the Ark on Yom Kippur. Perhaps God removes the Ark from the rebuilt Temple just before Antichrist commits the Abomination of Desolation.

<sup>227</sup> The celestial Temple was the pattern for the Temple on earth (Heb. 9:24-28).

<sup>228</sup> This event marks God's taking over the earth throughout Revelation. It occurs at the end of the 7 seals (Rev. 8:5), the end of the 7 trumpets (Rev. 11:19), at the end of chapter 14, and at the end of the 7 bowls (Rev. 16:18). This shows that all of these passages are parallel in time.

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## Chapter 12

### *The Watching and Praying Assembly Flees to Safety*<sup>229</sup>

And a great sign appeared in the sky – a woman, having been clothed with the sun, and the moon beneath her feet, and on her head a wreath of twelve stars.<sup>230</sup> 2 And being with child, she cried out, travailing and laboring to give birth.<sup>231</sup> 3 And another sign appeared in the sky, and look, a great red dragon,<sup>232</sup> having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven crowns.<sup>233</sup> 4 And his tail drags a third of the stars of the sky,<sup>234</sup> and threw them to the ground. And the dragon was standing before the woman who was about to give birth, that when she should bear her child he might devour [it]. 5 And

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<sup>229</sup> “Consequently be watching during every appointed time, praying, so that you may have strength [some mss. have “counted worthy”] to flee all these things that are about to occur, and to stand in the presence of the Son of Man” (Luke 21:36).

<sup>230</sup> Isaiah repeatedly referred to Jerusalem and the redeemed as a single entity – a woman whom he called “the Daughter of Zion” (Isaiah 52:1-2; 62:11-12), and “the wife” of the Master (Isaiah 54:5). He described her as giving birth to a “male child” – Jesus, and to all the redeemed (Isaiah 66:5-13). He described her troubled past and her glorious restoration in the coming Kingdom (Isaiah 54:1-17). She will be called by a new name, the New Jerusalem (Isaiah 62:1-2; Isaiah 65:17-19). Paul developed Isaiah’s imagery further in Gal. 4:21-31. He likened this restored (“elevated Jerusalem”) to Sarah, the mother of Abraham’s seed of promise, which includes Gentile believers (Gal. 3:26-29). In doing so, he quoted Isaiah’s prophecy concerning the “Daughter of Zion” (cf. Gal. 4:27 & Isaiah 54:1). In Hebrews 12, Paul again identified faithful believers with the Daughter of Zion. “But you have approaches toward Mount Zion, the city of the living God, Jerusalem of celestial dominion, and tens of thousands of messengers, toward the universal congregation and assembly of the firstborn ones having been pre-registered in the skies” (Heb. 12:22-23). The Greek word translated “universal congregation” appears only one other place in the Bible, Isaiah 66:10 LXX. “Rejoice, O Jerusalem, and all you who love her, hold in her the universal congregation. Rejoice greatly with her, all that now mourn over her, that you may suck, and be satisfied with the breast of her consolation, that you may be weaned, and delight yourselves with the influx of her glory. For thus says the Lord, Look! I turn toward them as a river of peace, and as a torrent [of rain] bringing upon them in a flood the glory of the Gentiles. Their children shall be borne upon the shoulders, and comforted on the knees. As a mother comforts one, so will I also comfort you. And you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.” This is what Paul was referring to in Hebrews 12:22-23. In Revelation, an angel told John he was going to show him “the Bride, the Lamb’s wife.” He then immediately showed Him the “New Jerusalem” – the Lamb’s wife, (Rev. 21:9-10). Scripture is very consistent in representing both the redeemed and the restored Jerusalem as a single entity – a woman. It is obvious that the “woman clothed with the sun” in Rev. 12 refers to the redeemed, those who are the rightful citizens of Jerusalem which is about to be restored and revealed. They are about to be gathered as “the universal congregation and assembly of the firstborn ones having been pre-registered in the skies.” For 2,000 years, true Christian assemblies have been rejected by the present Jerusalem and her inhabitants, remaining “outside the camp, bearing His reproach, for here we have no permanent city, but we seek one to come,” (Heb. 13:13-14). Jerusalem will be ours! The most ancient Christian writers also understood the “woman” of Revelation 12 to represent the faithful Christian assembly (See: Hippolytus, Treatise on Christ and Antichrist, 61).

<sup>231</sup> This sign in “the sky” is also an astronomical sign which gives us the date of Jesus’ birth – on Rosh Hashanah. Virgo is “clothed with the sun” in September. And the moon was beneath her feet on Rosh Hashanah. Jesus’ birthday is Tishri 1, on Rosh Hashanah, which is also the anniversary of the first day of creation. Rosh Hashanah begins on the new moon between Sept. 5 & Oct. 5.

<sup>232</sup> Just below Virgo is the constellation Hydra, which is represented in Greek mythology as a multi-headed sea serpent. This is also the “serpent” that Christ will defeat at His coming (Isaiah 27:1-2). Note that the “dragon” is called a “serpent” in vs. 9&14.

<sup>233</sup> The heads represent the former empires Satan has ruled. The ten horns represent the 10 kings who will reign with Antichrist for the last 3.5 years, (cf. Daniel 2:41-44; 7:7-8; Rev. 17:9-12).

<sup>234</sup> This likely refers to the number of angels who followed Satan in his rebellion (v. 7).

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she gave birth to a male son who is about to<sup>235</sup> shepherd all the nations with a rod of iron.<sup>236</sup> And her child was taken up to God and His throne.<sup>237</sup> 6 And the woman escaped into the wilderness wherever<sup>238</sup> she has a place there, having been prepared<sup>239</sup> from God, so that they<sup>240</sup> may be nourishing her there a thousand two hundred sixty days.<sup>241</sup> 7 And there was war in the sky. Michael and his messengers fought the dragon,<sup>242</sup> and the dragon fought and his messengers. 8 And they did not prevail, nor was any more room found for them in the sky. 9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the original snake, called the Devil, and Satan, the one deceiving the whole world. He was cast down to the ground, and his messengers were cast down with him. 10 And I heard a great voice in the sky saying; "Finally! Salvation and power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ has come because the accuser of our brothers, the one accusing them before our God day and night, has been thrown down, 11 and they were victorious over him through the blood of the Lamb, and through the word of their witness, and they did not love their lives until death.<sup>243</sup> 12 Through this rejoice, sky, and those dwelling in them. Alas! to the inhabitants of the land and the sea, because the Devil has come down to you having great anger, having known that he has a brief time."<sup>244</sup> 13 And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the ground, he pursued the woman who gave birth to the male [child]. 14 And two wings of a great eagle<sup>245</sup> were given to the woman, so that she might fly to the wilderness<sup>246</sup> to her place,

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<sup>235</sup> The Greek word is "μελλει." Strong's defines it as "to intend, i.e. be about to be." Christ's reign over the nations in fulfillment of Psalm 2 was still future from John's perspective. (See: Rev. 19:15)

<sup>236</sup> This is a reference to Psalm 2. Here, John follows the Greek LXX reading of "shepherd" instead of the Hebrew "break." He does the same in two other passages that refer to this Psalm, Rev. 2:26-27 & 19:15.

<sup>237</sup> See: Psalm 110:1, Hebrews 10:12-13.

<sup>238</sup> The Greek word ὅπου (wherever) implies an uncertainty in John's mind concerning a location. This may indicate that either the place was unknown to John, or else it had not yet been prepared when John saw the vision.

<sup>239</sup> The perfect tense indicates that this place is prepared entirely beforehand for this purpose.

<sup>240</sup> The clause, τρέφωσιν αὐτήν (they may be nourishing her), the verb τρέφωσιν is present, active, subjunctive, third person, plural, referring to a plurality of persons who actively nourish the woman. This most likely refers to the two witnesses who were caught up into the sky following their resurrection (Rev. 11:11-12; cf. Isaiah 26:20-21). After their initial period of prophesying for 1,260 days, they apparently fill the role that Moses and Aaron did during the first exodus for an additional 1,260 days.

<sup>241</sup> This number refers to the work of the two witnesses the only other time it occurs (Rev. 11:3).

<sup>242</sup> See: Daniel 10:13, 21 & 12:1

<sup>243</sup> Many suppose that being a martyr is the destiny of all true believers in the tribulation, and that martyrdom is the only way to "overcome." However, notice that the martyrdom spoken of is in the past at the time Satan is thrown down to the ground. The voice from the sky is therefore speaking of past faithfulness unto death by believers before the time of tribulation. This distinction between past martyrs and those killed in the tribulation is also seen in Rev. 6:9-11 & Rev. 20:4. Many living believers will flee to safety and survive the onslaught of Satan because of their past faithfulness (Luke 21:36; Rev. 3:10).

<sup>244</sup> 3.5 years. See Revelation 13:5.

<sup>245</sup> Early Christian interpreters believed the two eagle's wings represent the two witnesses (prophets) in chapter 11. (Victorinus, Commentary on the Apocalypse, 12). They apparently give aide to the woman in her flight to safety.

<sup>246</sup> This is an obvious reference to the Exodus. "You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself" (Exodus 19:4-5), referring to Israel's flight out of Egypt to the wilderness. In the

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where she is nourished there a time, times, and half a time<sup>247</sup> from before the snake. 15 And the snake projected a current of water<sup>248</sup> from his mouth after the woman that he might sweep her away with the current. 16 And the land rescued the woman. And the land opened its mouth and swallowed the current the dragon projected from its mouth. 17 And the dragon was enraged against the woman, and departed to battle with the remnants<sup>249</sup> of her seed,<sup>250</sup> of those who are keeping the commandments of God and holding the testimony<sup>251</sup> about Jesus.<sup>252</sup>

## Chapter 13

### *The Beast from the Sea: Satan's Messianic Substitute*<sup>253</sup>

And I stood on the sand of the sea. And I observed a beast rising out of the sea,<sup>254</sup> having seven heads<sup>255</sup> and ten horns,<sup>256</sup> and on its horns ten crowns, and on its heads blasphemous names. 2 And the beast I observed was like a leopard.<sup>257</sup> Its feet were like the feet of a bear,<sup>258</sup> and its mouth like the mouth of a lion.<sup>259</sup> And the dragon gave his

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Exodus, the Israelites also had "two witnesses" (Moses and Aaron). The two prophets of God will have a major role to play in the flight of believers to places of safety, since they will prophesy for the 1,260 days prior to the flight of the woman into the wilderness, and then nourish her in the wilderness for an additional 1,260 days.

<sup>247</sup> 3.5 years. cf. Daniel 12:7 where the same expression refers to the time after the Abomination of Desolation.

<sup>248</sup> A flood of water is often used as a metaphor for a large army (cf. Isaiah 59:19, Jeremiah 46:7-8, Daniel 9:26, 11:22). Just as the Egyptians pursued the Israelites into the wilderness, and were destroyed by God in the Red Sea, so too will the Antichrist send his army in pursuit of the righteous who flee into the wilderness. Like Pharaoh's army, they too will be destroyed by God's intervention.

<sup>249</sup> Not all Christians will flee to the places of safety. Many will abandon the Faith thinking that they are saving their lives and maintaining their lifestyle. Jesus warned of this when He said, "Remember Lot's wife. Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it," (Luke 17:32-33). Others may remain behind and stand boldly against the Antichrist, following the example of the two prophets (v. 11). However, the majority of those left behind will be those who are "offended" and fall away from the Faith when the pressure is on. Jesus said that the love of most of His followers will grow cold during this time, and that they will succumb to false prophets and bondage to sin. Only those who "endure to the end shall be saved" (Matt. 24:9-13). Paul called this the "apostasy" which he linked to the revealing of the "Man of Sin," (2 Thess. 2:1-4).

<sup>250</sup> John's second epistle was addressed to "the chosen mistress and her children" (ἐκλεκτῆ κυρία καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις), identifying Christians as the real subject of this prophecy about the woman and her offspring. The word "κυρία" (mistress) was first used of Sarah (Gen. 16:4,8,9 LXX). Collectively all of the redeemed are the "woman," the "Daughter of Zion," but individually they are children of Sarah.

<sup>251</sup> The dragon will only pursue those remnants that continue to obey God's commands and hold firmly to the Gospel message proclaimed by Jesus' Apostles (See: 1 John 1:1-5).

<sup>252</sup> The Textus Receptus adds "Christ."

<sup>253</sup> It is significant that the revealing of the "Beast" from the sea corresponds with the flight of the woman to safety. This is exactly what Isaiah indicated in Isaiah 26:20-27:1.

<sup>254</sup> The "sea" refers to the Gentile nations (Rev. 17:15). The Antichrist arises from among the Gentile nations.

<sup>255</sup> Rev. 17:9-11

<sup>256</sup> Dan. 7:7,20,24

<sup>257</sup> The seven-headed beast having features of a leopard indicates that the final kingdom will possess some features of the kingdom of Alexander the Great (Dan. 7:6).

<sup>258</sup> The Persian empire was likened to a bear (Dan. 7:5).

<sup>259</sup> Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian kingdom was likened to a lion (Dan. 7:4).

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power to it, his throne, and his great authority.<sup>260</sup> 3 And one of its heads<sup>261</sup> [appeared] as having been wounded unto death. And its blow of death was healed. And the whole land marveled after the beast.<sup>262</sup> 4 And they worshipped the dragon that gave authority to the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying: “Who is like the beast? Who is able to battle with it?” 5 And a mouth was given to it, speaking great things and blasphemies.<sup>263</sup> And it was given authority to act for forty-two months.<sup>264</sup> 6 And it opened its mouth with blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His Tent,<sup>265</sup> and those who dwell in the sky.<sup>266</sup> 7 And to it was granted to battle with the saints and to conquer them.<sup>267</sup> And authority was granted to it over every tribe, people, language, and nation. 8 And all those dwelling<sup>268</sup> on the land<sup>269</sup> shall worship him,<sup>270</sup> whose name is not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb, the one having been slain because of the casting down of the world.<sup>271</sup>

## *A Dire Warning to Christians Who Fail to Flee to the Wilderness*

9 If anyone has an ear, let him listen:<sup>272</sup> 10 If anyone must go into captivity,<sup>273</sup> he goes to captivity. [But] if anyone kills<sup>274</sup> with the sword, he must be killed with the sword.<sup>275</sup> In this is [tested] the endurance and the faith of the saints.<sup>276</sup>

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<sup>260</sup> The dragon gives his power, throne, and authority to the beast. This parallels the Father’s giving His authority to the Son. (cf. Matt. 26:18; John 6:26-27; John 17:1-2).

<sup>261</sup> Since the seven heads represent seven former kings/kingdoms (Rev. 17:9-11), the healing of the deadly wound of one of these heads (former king/kingdom) must refer to the renewal of one of the ancient kings/kingdoms.

<sup>262</sup> The beast is the eighth, but is also one of the seven former kings (Rev. 17:11). Thus, the Antichrist is a resurrected king from one of the seven former kingdoms.

<sup>263</sup> Dan. 7:8,20

<sup>264</sup> This is the period of Jerusalem’s trampling underfoot following the testimony of the two witnesses (Rev. 11:2).

<sup>265</sup> Thayer – “Tent, tabernacle, of that well known movable temple of God after the pattern of which the temple at Jerusalem was built.” Even the restored New Jerusalem is all its glory is called God’s “Tent” (Rev. 21:3).

<sup>266</sup> Michael and his messengers continued to dwell in the sky while Satan and his messengers had just been cast out of the sky (Rev. 12:7-9).

<sup>267</sup> cf. Rev. 12:11

<sup>268</sup> This word implies taking up a permanent residence.

<sup>269</sup> The term, “on the land” could refer to a particular country – Israel, or to all of the inhabited land.

<sup>270</sup> The neuter pronoun (it) is used throughout because “beast” is neuter in Greek and a pronoun must agree with its antecedent in gender. It is therefore significant that John switched here to the masculine pronoun (him) when giving the interpretation of the vision. This indicates that “the beast” represents a man. (cf. verse 18).

<sup>271</sup> The clause, “*casting down of the world*” refers to the overthrow of the original Divine order by the entrance of sin, and the subsequent curse put upon God’s creation.

<sup>272</sup> See: This was a common expression that Jesus used in the Gospels and in the seven letters (Rev. 2:7,11,17,29; Rev. 3:6,13,22), implying that this message is from Christ Himself.

<sup>273</sup> See: Jer. 15:2. The TR/KJV/NKJV adds the word *συνάγει* (“if anyone **leads** into captivity”) but this has no support from the majority and the oldest manuscripts. Some early mss. have “If anyone holds captivity, he departs.”

<sup>274</sup> The majority and TR have *ἀποκτενεῖ* “kills” (active voice) but a few manuscripts have “is killed” (passive voice).

<sup>275</sup> This passage apparently was meant to remind Christians of Jesus’ words to Peter in Matthew 26:52. Just as it was wrong for Peter to resist Jesus’ arrest because He was destined for the cross, so also it will be wrong for Christians to use force to resist the persecution of the Antichrist. Those who use force or violence to resist capture will be killed.

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## *The Beast from the Land: The False Prophet*<sup>277</sup>

11 And I observed another beast rising out of the land.<sup>278</sup> And it had two horns like a lamb, and spoke like a dragon. 12 And it exercises all the authority of the first beast before it. And it compels the land and those dwelling in it so that they will worship the first beast whose blow of death was healed. 13 And it does great signs so that it may also make fire come down from the sky<sup>279</sup> onto the land before men. 14 And it deceives those<sup>280</sup> who dwell on the land by the signs which were given to it to do before the beast saying to those dwelling on the land to make an image to the beast<sup>281</sup> which has the blow of the sword and lives. 15 And to it was granted to give breath to the image of the beast so that the image of the beast may speak and may require as many as should not worship the image of the beast should be killed. 16 And it requires all, small and great, rich and poor, free and bond that they should receive a mark<sup>282</sup> on their right hand or on their foreheads, 17 and that no one may buy or sell without having the mark, the name of the beast, or the number of its name.<sup>283</sup> 18 Here is wisdom: Let him that has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. His number is six-hundred sixty six.<sup>284</sup>

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This is a warning to the foolish or ignorant “remnants” of the woman’s descendants who do not flee to the places of safety, and now find themselves facing the mark of the Beast.

<sup>276</sup> Being passive in the face of capture and captivity will require great endurance and faith by those who did not heed the warnings to flee to safety, (Rev. 12:11).

<sup>277</sup> The history of Israel under Antiochus Epiphanies seems here to repeat itself. Antiochus replaced the faithful high priest Onias with his brother Yeshua who was eager to transform Jerusalem into a pagan Greek city. Yeshua changed his Hebrew name to the Greek name, Jason. He is the one who Hellenized the priesthood and received Antiochus into Jerusalem with great pomp. It was the resistance by the faithful priests against the Hellenization of Judea that led to the first “abomination of desolation” by Antiochus.

<sup>278</sup> This appears to be a reference to the land of Israel.

<sup>279</sup> This is apparently intended to reenact the showdown between Elijah and the false prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:20-38; 2 Kings 1:10-14). Elijah is to herald the coming of the Messiah for the Jews, (Mal. 4:5-6). He will be one of the two witnesses (Rev. 11). The “False Prophet” attempts to outdo Elijah, in the way that the prophets of Baal failed to do. (See also Moses’ contest with Pharaoh’s magicians (Ex. 7).

<sup>280</sup> The Majority Text reads, “*And it deceives my own people who dwell on the land.*” If this is the correct reading, John was referring specifically to Jews.

<sup>281</sup> Placing this speaking image of the Beast within the Holy of Holies in the Temple is the “Abomination of Desolation.” According to Daniel, the “abomination of desolation” will be “set up” in the Temple (Dan. 12:11). The Greek word rendered “abomination” almost always refers to idolatry in Scripture. Jesus said the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, will be “*standing where it ought not,*” (Mark 13:14). Note the use of the neuter pronoun, “it,” referring to an object, not a man. Jesus indicated that this is the signal for the faithful to flee immediately – the speaking image of the Antichrist being placed in the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem.

<sup>282</sup> The Greek word “*χάραγμα*” (mark) means an “engraving.” Seals were typically “engraved” in metal, and then used to stamp their image onto something. “*Deissmann (Bible Studies, pp. 240ff) shows that in the papyri official business documents often have the name and image of the emperor, with the date as the official stamp or seal, and with “χάραγμα” as the name of this seal.*” (A.T. Robertson, Word Pictures). The “mark” may be a logo impression, not unlike a registered trademark logo used by many corporations.

<sup>283</sup> “The number of its name” may either imply a number associated with the beast’s name, or that the name itself has the numerical value of six-hundred, sixty, six (since all Greek letters also corresponded to numbers).

<sup>284</sup> Ezra 2:13 records a man’s name with the number 666 – Adonikam, which in Hebrew means “my risen master.”



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## Chapter 14

### *The 144,000 Sethites on Mt. Zion in the Kingdom*

And I observed, and look, a Lamb having stood up<sup>285</sup> on Mount Zion,<sup>286</sup> and with It one hundred and forty-four thousand, having Its name<sup>287</sup> and Its Father's name<sup>288</sup> written on their foreheads.<sup>289</sup> 2 And I heard a sound [coming] from the sky,<sup>290</sup> like the voice of many waters, like the sound of loud thunder. And the voice I heard was like lyre singers playing their lyres. 3 They sing a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders. And no was able to learn the song except the hundred and forty-four thousand,<sup>291</sup> those having been redeemed from the land. 4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women,<sup>292</sup> for they are virgins.<sup>293</sup> These are the ones following the Lamb wherever He may lead.<sup>294</sup> These were redeemed from beside<sup>295</sup> men – firstfruits<sup>296</sup> to God and to the Lamb. 5 And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are flawless.<sup>297</sup>

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<sup>285</sup> The Greek word rendered “having stood up” frequently refers to someone taking a bold authoritative stance or position of power, (see: 2 Kings 10:4 LXX; Psalm 94:16 LXX; Isa. 44:11 LXX; Isa. 47:13 LXX; Dan. 12:1 LXX). The perfect tense implies that the Lamb has taken the power and authority on Mt. Zion (Jerusalem), just as His Father promised Him in Psalm 2. This implies a Kingdom setting for this passage.

<sup>286</sup> Mt. Zion is Jerusalem on earth, (See: Isaiah 5:3-6). This takes place after Jerusalem’s restoration in the Kingdom.

<sup>287</sup> The Textus Receptus omits “Its (His) name.”

<sup>288</sup> According to the Septuagint, the sons of Seth “*hoped [in the coming Savior], taking to themselves the name of the Master God.*” (Gen. 4:26 LXX). This shows a covenant relationship with God, and explains why both the Father’s name and the name of the Lamb are written on their foreheads.

<sup>289</sup> Rev. 3:12

<sup>290</sup> The music is coming from the sky, but the Lamb and these 144,000 are on Mt. Zion, in Jerusalem.

<sup>291</sup> The celestial choir teaches the new song to the 144,000 with the Lamb in Jerusalem. This scene obviously takes place after the return of Christ.

<sup>292</sup> Those “defiled with women” were the sons of Seth who were in a covenant relationship with God but intermarried with the “daughters of men” (the line of Cain). See Gen. 6:1-3 LXX where they are clearly called “men.” The Septuagint reads, “*My Breath shall surely not remain among these men forever.*”

<sup>293</sup> Scripture frequently uses sexual purity (virginity) or the lack thereof (fornication / adultery) as metaphors for faithfulness or unfaithfulness to God’s covenants. That “*παρθενοι*” (virgins) is used here as a metaphor for faithfulness to God is apparent because the noun is feminine in gender. This feminine term was never applied literally to males in koine Greek or in Scripture when referring to sexuality. The term “virgin” here literally means a pure young woman of marriagable age, (see: Strong’s #3933). Since the literal interpretation is impossible, it is clearly a metaphor for covenantal purity.

<sup>294</sup> These 144,000 will be Christ the King’s entourage of singers wherever He goes in the coming Kingdom.

<sup>295</sup> The Greek preposition is “*απο*” which means “from beside,” while “*εκ*” means “from among.” Here it refers to the Sethite separation from the rest of Adam’s children, to remain unpolluted in their covenantal relationship with God, (see: Gen. 4:26 LXX).

<sup>296</sup> These are the very first redeemed people, ten generations of righteous seed from Seth to Enoch. The later generations of Seth were polluted by their intermarriage with pagan women and refused to repent (1 Pet. 3:18-20). Only Noah and his family were spared the destruction that occurred because of the apostasy of the Sethites.

<sup>297</sup> The Textus Receptus adds, “before the throne of God.”

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## *The Declarations of the Three Messengers*<sup>298</sup>

6 And I observed another messenger flying in mid-sky, having the permanent good message to proclaim over those settled on the land, and over every nation, tribe, tongue, and people, 7 saying with a loud voice: "Fear God and give glory to Him, because the hour of His judgment has arrived; and worship the One having made the sky and land, the sea, and the springs of waters." 8 And another, a second messenger followed, saying: "Fallen, fallen, is Babylon the great! She has made all nations drink from the wine of the wrath of her fornication."<sup>299</sup> 9 And another messenger, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice: "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives the mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God which is mixed undiluted in the cup of His wrath."<sup>300</sup> And he shall be tormented in fire and sulfur<sup>301</sup> in view of the holy messengers and in view of the Lamb. 11 And the smoke of their torment ascends unto ages of ages,<sup>302</sup> and they have no relief day or night – those who are worshipping<sup>303</sup> the beast and its image – and if anyone receives the mark of its name." 12 Here is the endurance of the saints, the ones keeping the commands of God and the Faith of Jesus. 13 And I heard a voice from the sky saying to me: "Write: 'Blessed are the dead, those dying in the Master from this time. Yes,' says the Breath, 'so that they may be refreshed<sup>304</sup> from their toils and their deeds are following with them.'"

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<sup>298</sup> The order of these three messengers is critical to understanding the sequence of events in Revelation.

The first messenger proclaims the Gospel, and warns of the judgment that was already beginning to be unleashed. This messenger represents the first half of the 70<sup>th</sup> week during which the two prophets will preach repentance and call down God's judgments (Rev. 11:1-13). The second messenger comes in the middle of the 70<sup>th</sup> week, when the two prophets are killed. The ten kings will then immediately give their power to the beast and destroy Babylon the Great, which is Rome, (Rev. 17). The third messenger describes the beast system, its mark, and the worship of the image described in chapter 13. This occurs during the last half of the 70<sup>th</sup> week.

<sup>299</sup> See chapter 17-18 where the fall of Babylon is described in detail.

<sup>300</sup> This is a reference to the bowls of wrath which are to be poured out just before Christ returns (Rev. 15:1).

<sup>301</sup> At the 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet (which overlaps the bowls of wrath), a third of mankind is tormented and killed by fire and brimstone (Rev. 9:13-21).

<sup>302</sup> Smoke ascending "*unto the ages of ages*" is meant to point back to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. "*Then he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain; and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land which went up like the smoke of a furnace*" (Gen 19:28). The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah was "*an example of eternal fire*" (Jude 1:7). Yet Sodom did not burn perpetually, but rather permanently. Exactly the same expression is used of the destruction of Mystery Babylon (Rev. 19:3), "*Her smoke goes up unto the ages of the ages!*" Yet her total destruction is also said to be "*in one hour*" (Rev. 18:10,17,19), with nothing being left at all. "*With this kind of violence Babylon the great city shall be thrown down and shall not be found, not anymore*" (Rev. 18:21). There is no reason to suppose that this passage teaches eternal torment based on this expression alone. That question must be decided on other grounds.

<sup>303</sup> The use of the present participle here (those who are worshipping) in conjunction with the present indicative verb "have" shows that the torment coincides in time with their worshipping the beast. In other words, the "torment" is while they are alive and worshipping the beast.

<sup>304</sup> They are refreshed in the resurrection when their deeds follow them into the Kingdom inheritance.

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## *The Harvest of the Righteous*<sup>305</sup>

14 And I observed, and look, a white cloud and on the cloud was sitting One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden wreath, and in His hand a sharp sickle. 15 And another messenger came out of the Temple, calling with a loud voice to the One sitting on the cloud: “Swing<sup>306</sup> Your sickle and reap, because the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the land has dried up.” 16 So the One sitting on the cloud swung His sickle over<sup>307</sup> the land, and the land was harvested.

## *The Harvest of the Wicked*<sup>308</sup>

17 And another messenger came out of the Temple which is in the sky, he also having a sharp sickle. 18 And another messenger came out from the altar, having authority over fire, and he called with a loud voice to the one having the sharp sickle, saying: “Swing your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the land, for her grapes have ripened.” 19 So the messenger swung his sickle into the land and gathered the grape vine<sup>309</sup> of the land, and threw it into the great vat of the wrath of God.<sup>310</sup> 20 And the vat was trampled outside the city. And blood came out of the vat, up to the horses' bridles,<sup>311</sup> for one thousand six hundred stadia.<sup>312</sup>

## Chapter 15

### *Prelude to the Seven Bowls of Wrath*

And I saw another sign in the sky, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last blows, because in them the wrath of God was finished.

### *Victorious Saints Singing in the Great Tribulation*

2 And I saw a sea as glass,<sup>313</sup> having been mixed with fire.<sup>314</sup> And the ones who are conquering<sup>315</sup> from the Beast, and from his image, and from the number of his name, having come to stand<sup>316</sup> on the glassy sea, having lyres of God.<sup>317</sup> 3 And they are singing

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<sup>305</sup> Matt. 24:29-31, 1 Thess. 4:15-18

<sup>306</sup> Lit. “send”

<sup>307</sup> Compare verse 19

<sup>308</sup> Joel 3:12-13

<sup>309</sup> Not only the grapes, but the whole vine is cut down.

<sup>310</sup> Rev. 19:15

<sup>311</sup> This likely refers to the splattering of blood on the horses, not the depth of blood.

<sup>312</sup> The Greek word “stadion” meant a unit of measure. When the unit of measurement is not indicated in the context, it usually refers to the standard length race course of the Romans, about 600 feet. 1,600 stadion would be about 180 miles.

<sup>313</sup> A sea as glass is a metaphor for a perfectly calm sea, no doubt pointing to Jesus’ calming the sea of Galilee when the disciples were in fear of the ship sinking in the storm. “Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.” (Matt 8:26)

<sup>314</sup> The calm sea mixed with fire represents perfect peace and calm in the midst of intense tribulation.

<sup>315</sup> Present continuous tense – they are in the process of conquering these things, thus still in persecution.

<sup>316</sup> Perfect tense, “having come to stand,” pointing back to Jesus’ walking on the sea and Peter’s attempt to do so.

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the song of Moses,<sup>318</sup> the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: “Great and marvelous are Your works, Master, God, **THE SOVEREIGN OVER ALL!** Just and true are Your ways, King of the nations!<sup>319</sup> 4 Who would not fear [You], Master, and glorify Your name? Because, You alone are holy. Because, all the nations shall come and worship before You.<sup>320</sup> Because, Your righteous judgments have been manifested.”<sup>321</sup>

## *The Seven Bowls of Wrath*

5 And after these things I observed, and the Temple<sup>322</sup> of the tabernacle of witness in the sky<sup>323</sup> was opened. 6 And the seven messengers, having the seven blows, came out of the Temple,<sup>324</sup> having been dressed in pure bright linen, and having been girded about their chests with golden belts. 7 And one of the four creatures<sup>325</sup> gave to the seven messengers seven golden bowls having been filled with the wrath of the God who lives unto the ages of the ages. 8 And the Temple was filled with the smoke from the glory of God and from His power. And no one was able to enter into the Temple until the seven blows of the seven messengers should be finished.

## **Chapter 16**

And I heard a loud voice from the Temple saying to the seven messengers: “Depart and pour the seven bowls of the wrath of God upon the land.” 2 And the first went and poured his bowl upon the land and a vicious and malignant ulcer came upon men – those having the mark of the beast and those worshipping its image.<sup>326</sup> 3 And the second messenger poured his bowl into the sea and it became as blood of a dead man. And every living creature in the sea died.<sup>327</sup> 4 And the third messenger poured his bowl

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<sup>317</sup> Musical instruments dedicated to the worship of God (1 Chron. 25:6).

<sup>318</sup> There are two songs by this title. One is in Deut. 32, which Moses taught the Israelites at the end of the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. The other is in Exodus 15:1-21 which spoke of God’s supernatural deliverance through the plagues of Egypt, as well as defeating Pharaoh’s army in the Red Sea. This is the one referenced here since the deliverance of God’s people in the last days is portrayed as a second exodus (Rev. 12).

<sup>319</sup> The Textus Receptus has “saints.”

<sup>320</sup> Psalm 86:9; Isaiah 66:18-23; Zech. 14:16-21

<sup>321</sup> The saints in tribulation welcome God’s judgments upon their persecutors.

<sup>322</sup> “Temple” here appears to refer to the Holy of Holies only, which housed only the Ark of the Covenant.

<sup>323</sup> The “tent of witness” refers to the Tabernacle that Moses built. The “Temple of the tent of witness in the sky” refers to the celestial Temple which was the pattern for the Tabernacle that Moses built. (Heb. 8:5, 11-12, 23-24).

<sup>324</sup> It is significant that the final wrath of God proceeds from the very place where the atoning sacrifice of Christ’s blood was offered.

<sup>325</sup> Rev. 4:6-9

<sup>326</sup> It is significant that the bowls of wrath, which are the most severe blows of all, are specifically targeted at those who worship the Beast and take his mark. The obvious intent is to show that God’s wrath is selective and that He distinguishes between the wicked and righteous when He pours out His judgments. Psalm 91 predicts these same judgments with precisely the same message.

<sup>327</sup> While the trumpet judgments called down earlier by the two Prophets are similar in nature, they are different in magnitude. During the second trumpet judgment only a third of the creatures in the sea die (Rev. 8:8-9), but during

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into the rivers and into the springs of water, and they became blood. 5 And I heard the messenger of the waters saying: "You are just, the One who is and who was, the Holy One, in that You judged these things. 6 Because they shed the blood of saints and prophets. And You gave them blood to drink,<sup>328</sup> as they deserve." 7 And I heard [a voice] from the altar saying: "Yes, Master God, **SOVEREIGN OVER ALL**, true and just are Your verdicts."<sup>329</sup> 8 Then the fourth messenger poured his bowl upon the sun, and it was granted to him to burn men with fire. 9 And men were burned with severe burns, and men cursed the name of God, the One having authority over these blows. And they did not repent, to give Him glory.<sup>330</sup> 10 And the fifth messenger poured his bowl upon the throne of the Beast, and its kingdom became darkened<sup>331</sup> and they gnawed their tongues out of misery. 11 And they cursed the God of the sky because of their miseries and their ulcers,<sup>332</sup> and they did not repent of their deeds.<sup>333</sup> 12 And the sixth messenger poured his bowl upon the great river, the Euphrates, and its water dried up, so the way of the kings from the rising sun<sup>334</sup> might be prepared. 13 And I observed [coming] out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the Beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean breaths like frogs. 14 For they are breaths of demons performing signs, which spread out over the kings of the whole world, to collect them unto the battle of the great Day of God,<sup>335</sup> **THE SOVEREIGN OVER ALL**.

15 ("Look! I am coming like a thief.<sup>336</sup> Blessed is the one watching<sup>337</sup> and guarding his garments,<sup>338</sup> so that he should not walk naked and his shame be seen."<sup>339</sup>)

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the second bowl judgment, all creatures of the sea die. The other trumpet judgments also reflect a third, while the bowl judgments are universal. The trumpet judgments, therefore, are a warning and prelude of what is to come if people refuse to repent at the preaching of the two Prophets.

<sup>328</sup> This is another parallel to the plagues of Egypt.

<sup>329</sup> In all these judgments, the just character of God is vindicated, and the evil character of mankind is exposed.

<sup>330</sup> At this point, repentance is impossible, once they have taken the mark of the Beast, (Rev. 14:9-10). All that remains for those whom God no longer grants repentance is to curse God and await His damnation, (Rom. 1:18-32; Heb. 10:26-29).

<sup>331</sup> The same plague occurred in Egypt just before the Israelites' deliverance, and lasted three days. Yet the Israelites in Goshen had light (Exodus 10:21-23). Here, the darkness is limited to the Kingdom of the Beast. Those in the places of safety will have light.

<sup>332</sup> These blows are compounding rather than sequential. During the 5<sup>th</sup> bowl judgment (vs. 11), people are still suffering from the first bowl judgment (vs. 2).

<sup>333</sup> Rev. 9:20-21

<sup>334</sup> Referring to the east

<sup>335</sup> 2 Pet. 3:10-12

<sup>336</sup> These words of Jesus are one final warning to His own, that His coming is now imminent (cf. Matt. 24:43-44; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10). It is not imminent until the armies begin to gather for the battle of Armageddon after the first six bowl judgments.

<sup>337</sup> Mark 13:32-37; Luke 21:36

<sup>338</sup> Guarding one's garments means to keep from soiling them with sin, (Rev. 3:4; Rev. 7:14).

<sup>339</sup> Here Jesus reminds the reader of His warning to Laodicea, (Rev. 3:18).

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16 And He<sup>340</sup> assembled them into the place called in Hebrew, “Armageddon.”<sup>341</sup> 17 And the seventh messenger poured his bowl upon the air, and a loud voice came from the Temple of the sky, from the throne, saying: “It has been done!” 18 And there were lightnings and thunders, and noises. And there was a great earthquake, unlike any that have occurred since men came to be upon the land, such a great earthquake of this magnitude!<sup>342</sup> 19 And the great city<sup>343</sup> was divided into three parts,<sup>344</sup> and the cities of the nations collapsed.<sup>345</sup> (And Babylon the great was recalled before God, to give to her the cup of the wine of the fury of His wrath.<sup>346</sup>) 20 And every island disappeared, and the mountains were not found. 21 And great hail, as a talent weight,<sup>347</sup> fell from the sky upon men.<sup>348</sup> And men cursed God because of the blow of hail, because this blow was extremely severe.

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<sup>340</sup> While the unclean breaths deceive the kings of the land to come with their armies to Jerusalem, it is God who ultimately is gathering them for judgment, (Joel 3:9-18 & Zech. 14:2).

<sup>341</sup> Literally, “Mountain of Megiddo.” Megiddo is a very large plain about 50 miles north of Jerusalem. It is the place where the armies of the nations will assemble prior to their attack on Jerusalem. It is not the location of the final battle itself, which will be around Jerusalem (Zech. 14:1-9). Megiddo is overlooked from the south-east by Mt. Carmel, which will be the primary place of refuge for Christians who flee from Judea (Micah 7:14-15; Matt. 24:15-21). Believers in Israel will be able to watch the gathering of the armies from their vantage point in the caves of Carmel. This is probably why the text refers to “Armageddon” (Mountain of Megiddo) rather than merely “Megiddo” which is a valley. This is also why the exhortation to the believers in hiding was placed here in the text as a parenthetical statement. They will literally see the armies assemble as the sign to get ready for Jesus’ imminent arrival.

<sup>342</sup> Isaiah 24:19-23; Ezekiel 38:19:23; Zech. 14:4-5; Rev. 6:12.

<sup>343</sup> Jerusalem is the “great city.”

<sup>344</sup> This three-part division of Jerusalem is interesting in light of the fact that it has a designated section for Catholic and Orthodox Christians, another section designated as Jewish, and a third section designated as Muslim. Compare Zechariah 13:7-9 which may refer to the Jewish remnant being refined and ultimately saved at Christ’s return. This is also the 144,000 orthodox Jews, 12,000 from each tribe, mentioned in Revelation 7, sealed for protection until Jesus returns. They will remain in Jerusalem’s Jewish section, and the Antichrist, whom they will reject, will not be able to touch them. These are the ones who will flee to the valley caused by great the earthquake splitting the Mount of Olives when Christ’s feet touch it, (Zech. 14:4-5).

<sup>345</sup> This is probably a reference to the capitol cities of every nation on earth, as a signal that the dominion of the nations has come to an end, and Christ is about to rule from Jerusalem.

<sup>346</sup> Babylon is not to be destroyed here, but 3.5 years earlier when the Beast comes to power (Rev. 14:8-9; Rev. 17:16-18). While John was observing in vision the future destruction of all these cities through symbolic representations, God was being urged to carry out the same judgment upon Babylon the Great (Rome), the one persecuting God’s people at the time Revelation was written. Babylon the Great was “recalled before God” (by angels) at the time of John’s vision, not at the time that the prophesied events were appointed to occur.

<sup>347</sup> A talent was a measurement of weight, about 120 lbs.

<sup>348</sup> Comets consist of rock and ice. This final bowl of wrath very likely corresponds to Jesus’ statement in the Olivet Discourse about the stars of the sky falling to the ground, (cf. Matt. 24:29-30 & Rev. 6:12-13).

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## Chapter 17

### *The Woman Riding the Beast*<sup>349</sup>

And one of the seven messengers having the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying: "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute, the one sitting on many waters, 2 with whom the kings of the land fornicated, and those dwelling on the land became drunk from the wine of her fornication." 3 And he carried me in the Breath<sup>350</sup> into a wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a red beast being full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.<sup>351</sup> 4 And the woman was dressed in purple and red, adorned with gold and valuable gems and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, being full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. 5 And on her forehead a name had been written: "Mystery, Babylon<sup>352</sup> the Great, The Mother of Prostitutes<sup>353</sup> and of the Abominations of the Land." 6 I observed the woman being drunk from the blood of the saints, and from the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.<sup>354</sup> And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement. 7 And the messenger said to me: "Why did you marvel? I will explain to you the mystery of the woman and of the beast carrying her – the one having the seven heads and the ten horns. 8 The beast which you observed used to be, and is not [now], and is about to ascend out of the deep,<sup>355</sup> and is going to destruction. And those dwelling on the land shall marvel, (the ones whose names have not been written in the Book of Life since the casting down of the world<sup>356</sup>), observing the beast that used to be, and is not [now], and shall be again."<sup>357</sup>

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<sup>349</sup> This woman is the antithesis of the woman in Revelation 12. They represent two cities: Jerusalem destined for restoration and beautification, and Rome destined for destruction. And they represent the two bodies of "Christians" associated with those two cities: the persecuted yet faithful saints, and the persecuting whore who calls herself "Christian."

<sup>350</sup> Rev. 1:10; Rev. 4:2

<sup>351</sup> There are two other "beasts" with seven heads and ten horns, (Rev. 12:3; Rev. 13:1-2).

<sup>352</sup> "Babylon" was a code word for Rome (See: Tertullian, *An Answer to the Jews*, ch. 9; *Against Marcion*, Bk. III, ch. 13). Peter used this code in his first epistle written from Rome (1 Pet. 5:13).

<sup>353</sup> The assembly in Rome became a "prostitute" when the "Christian" emperor Constantine seduced the local assemblies, who married the pagan Roman government to Christianity in AD325. Many of the local assemblies within the Roman Empire united themselves with the state for political power. They were seduced away from Christ and began to persecute other Christian assemblies which would not align themselves with Rome. Rome became a pseudo-Christian empire. After the fall of imperial Rome, religious Rome, the spouse of the emperor, continued and remains to this day centered in the Vatican.

<sup>354</sup> Imperial Rome slaughtered many true Christians. But, the prostitute Rome has slaughtered many more in the name of maintaining her political power over nations and kings.

<sup>355</sup> Note the contrast here to the Man Child being caught up to the sky – Christ's ascension to the right hand of God in fulfillment of Psalm 110:1. The "beast" used to exist (one of the former kings – vs. 11), but will ascend out of the abyss (Rev. 11:7). Thus, he was placed into the abyss, is there now, and will come forth from the abyss in order to kill the two witnesses. This is literally the second coming of Antichrist. The remains of Antiochus Epiphanies have never been accounted for after God struck him down in 164 BC. He has no known grave. One account claims he "cast himself into the sea" (Megillat Antiochus).

<sup>356</sup> See footnote for Rev. 13:8. Names have been recorded in the Book of Life since "the casting down of the world" (when God placed the curse upon the whole system and decreed the death sentence upon all mankind). The names

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9 Here is the mind having wisdom: The seven heads are seven hills. There the woman is seated on them.<sup>358</sup> 10 There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come.<sup>359</sup> And whenever he should come, he must continue briefly. 11 And the beast that used to be, and is not [now], also is the eighth, and is from the seven,<sup>360</sup> and is going to destruction. 12 And the ten horns which you observed are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom,<sup>361</sup> but they receive authority as kings for one hour with the beast. 13 These have one mind, and give their power and authority to the beast.<sup>362</sup> 14 These will do battle with the Lamb, and the Lamb will defeat them, because He is Master of masters and King of kings. And those who are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful.” 15 And he says to me: “The waters which you saw, where the prostitute is sitting, are peoples and throngs and nations and languages.<sup>363</sup> 16 Also, the ten horns which you observed, and the Beast, these will hate the prostitute, and having

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recorded in the book since that time belong to those who will be spared the final judgment – the second death (Rev. 20:14-15).

<sup>357</sup> Daniel 8:9-14 & 23-26 prophesies of Antiochus Epiphanies IV as though he will be the Antichrist at the time of Christ’s return. Daniel 11:21-45 does the same thing, describing the reign of Antiochus as existing when the “time of trouble” occurs (Dan. 12:1-2). That the Antichrist is Antiochus Epiphanies resurrected is made virtually certain by the fact that the 2,300 days that Antiochus would cause the Temple to be desolate (Dan. 8:14) is precisely the sum total of the days it was made desolate by him in 168BC – 165BC plus the 42 months of its desolation in Revelation. The desolation by Antiochus in 168 BC was said to last exactly 3 years. Judah Maccabee cleansed the Temple on the three-year anniversary of its defilement according to Josephus. 36 lunar months minus one day (on which the Temple was cleansed on the anniversary of its defilement) leaves 1061 days of defilement. Add to this the 42 lunar months of Rev. 13:5 (1239 days) that the Temple will be desolate under Antichrist, and you have exactly 2300 days, the total number of days that Daniel 8 states that Antiochus would cause the Temple to be desolate. Thus Antichrist is Antiochus, whose deadly wound is healed. He was struck down by God in 164 BC, but will be resurrected in the end times to become the Antichrist. This is also why Jesus said, “When you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, let the reader understand” (Matt. 24:15). According to Daniel 11:31, the “abomination of desolation” was committed by Antiochus Epiphanies. Jesus’ statement means that this act will be repeated again in the end times.

<sup>358</sup> Rome is the city on seven hills. She was seated there when John wrote Revelation.

<sup>359</sup> Apparently, the five fallen kings are those kingdoms directly inspired by Satan in his attempt to overthrow God.

1. The Serpent’s seizing the initial dominion from Adam by tempting Eve.
2. Nimrod’s Babel, seeking to replace God with pagan mythologies and false deities (demons).
3. Egypt under Pharaoh who attempted to kill all of the Hebrew boys.
4. Tyre in Ezekiel’s day, whose “king” sinned formerly in the Garden of Eden (cf. Ezek. 28:12-19).
5. The Seleucid Empire of Antiochus Epiphanies who sought to exterminate all Jews refusing to abandon God.
6. Rome in John’s day, seeking to exterminate Christians.
7. Nazi Germany under Hitler seeking to exterminate the Jews. He was to “continue briefly.”

<sup>360</sup> The 8<sup>th</sup> king is the second coming of one of the seven previous kings – Antiochus Epiphanies. He is also the one head among the seven that was wounded to death, but his deadly wound healed (Rev. 13:3). This demonic beast will be revived and become the 8<sup>th</sup> king, Antichrist.

<sup>361</sup> These ten kings are the 10 toes of Nebuchadnezzar’s image, (Dan. 2:42-44). Daniel writes, “In the days of these [10] kings the God of heaven will set up a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed” (NKJV). They are also the ten horns in Dan. 7:7,20,24.

<sup>362</sup> In Daniel 7:11-12, the ten kings have their dominion taken away (transferred to the “little horn” – Antichrist) but they continue for the brief time of the reign of the “little horn” after they together destroy the 4<sup>th</sup> Beast (Rome) by fire.

<sup>363</sup> Since waters (seas) represent the Gentile nations, and since the beast of Rev. 13 comes up out of the sea, the Antichrist must be a Gentile.



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plundered [her], will strip her naked, and will eat her flesh, and will burn her down with fire.<sup>364</sup> 17 For God implanted into their hearts to do His purpose, and to be of one purpose, and to give their kingdom to the beast until the words of God shall be fulfilled.<sup>365</sup> 18 And the woman whom you observed is the city, the great one, the one having dominion over the kings of the land.”<sup>366</sup>

## Chapter 18

### *The Fall of Mystery Babylon*

After these things I observed another messenger descending from the sky, having great authority, and the land was illuminated from his glory.<sup>367</sup> 2 And he called with a strong voice, saying: “Babylon the Great fell! fell!<sup>368</sup> and became the home of demons, and the cage for every unclean breath, and the cage for every filthy and detestable bird, 3 because all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and [because] the kings of the land fornicated with her,<sup>369</sup> and [because] the merchants of the land were enriched through her capacity for indulgence.” 4 (And I heard another voice from the sky saying: “Flee from her, My<sup>370</sup> people,<sup>371</sup> so that you may have no fellowship with her sins, and so that you may not receive her blows, 5 because her sins have piled up to the sky, and God has recalled her iniquities”). 6 “Pay back to her as also she paid. And double to her twice, also according to her deeds. In the cup that she mixed, mix for her double. 7 As much as she glorified herself and indulged, give to her that much torment and sorrow. Because in her heart she says, ‘I shall not see sorrow, because I sit as queen. I am no widow!’<sup>372</sup> 8 For this, her blows will come in one day, death, sorrow, and famine. And she shall be burned down with fire, because the Master God, the One judging her, is powerful. 9 Also, the kings of the land, who fornicated and indulged with her, shall lament and mourn over her when they see the smoke of her burning. 10 Having stood far off for fear of her torment, they exclaim, ‘Alas! Alas! the great city, Babylon, the mighty city, that your judgment came in one hour!’ 11 Also, the merchants of the land weep and mourn over her, (because no one buys their cargo anymore: 12

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<sup>364</sup> While Satanic power carries the prostitute, and props her up for a while, when Satan is through with her, he will use his minions to destroy Rome. God puts it in their hearts because He is also judging her for her prostitution.

<sup>365</sup> The 10 kings will destroy Mystery Babylon (Rome) at the time they give their power to the Beast (Antichrist). Since he will reign for 42 months (Rev. 13:5), Babylon will be destroyed at the mid-point of the final 7 years. See also the declaration of the three messengers in chapter 14 which confirm this timing.

<sup>366</sup> Here, all doubt is removed. The prostitute is Rome, the only city that was reigning (present tense) over the kings of the earth when John wrote the book.

<sup>367</sup> Rev. 14:8

<sup>368</sup> The verb is in the active voice, implying that her fall is the result of her own doings, the result of her being drunk, (Rev. 17:6).

<sup>369</sup> Rome, which claims to be the spouse of Christ, has “fornicated” with all the kings of the earth.

<sup>370</sup> Christ calls out to His own to flee from Rome, referring to God in the third person.

<sup>371</sup> Despite the magnitude of her sins, Rome still has some who belong to Christ.

<sup>372</sup> When the assembly in Rome married Imperial Rome and the emperor Constantine in AD. 325, she became a whore. When political Rome fell a century later, she became a widow. Yet, she lives like a queen.

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cargo of gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linen, purple, silk, scarlet, every citron wood,<sup>373</sup> every ivory instrument, and every instrument of precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble, 13 also cinnamon, incense, perfume, frankincense, wine, oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle, sheep, horses, chariots, and the bodies and souls<sup>374</sup> of men.) 14 The satisfaction of your yearning soul has left you, and all the elegant and gaudy things have perished from you, and they shall not be found, not anymore. 15 And the merchants of these things who were enriched from her shall stand far off from fear of her torment, lamenting and mourning, 16 and saying, 'Alas! Alas! The great city, the one having been clothed in linen, purple and scarlet, and having been gilded with gold, precious stones, and pearls, 17 that in one hour so much wealth was destroyed.' And every helmsman, and all those sailing by that location,<sup>375</sup> and sailors, and as many as work on the sea, stood far off 18 and cried out, seeing the smoke of her burning, saying, 'Is there any [other] like this great city?' 19 And they threw dirt on their heads, and cried, weeping and mourning, exclaiming, 'Alas! Alas! the great city, in which were enriched through her wealth all those having ships on the sea, that she was destroyed in one hour!' 20 Sky, rejoice over her, also the saints and Emissaries<sup>376</sup> and prophets, because God carried out your sentence on her!"<sup>377</sup> 21 And a mighty messenger picked up a boulder, like a great millstone, and threw it into the sea, saying: "With this kind of violence Babylon the great city shall be thrown down and shall not be found, not anymore."<sup>378</sup> 22 And the sound of lyre-singers, of musicians, of flutists, and of trumpeters shall not be heard in you, not anymore. And no craftsman of any trade shall be found in you, not anymore. And the sound of a mill shall not be heard in you, not anymore. 23 And the light of a lamp shall not shine in you, not anymore. And the voice of a bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you, not anymore; because your merchants were the greatest of the land, because by your witchcraft all the nations were deceived, 24 and [because] in her was found the blood of prophets and saints,<sup>379</sup> and of all those who had been slain on the land."<sup>380</sup>

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<sup>373</sup> The citrus, an odoriferous North African tree used as incense, prized by the ancient Greeks and Romans on account of the beauty of its wood for various ornamental purposes – Thayer.

<sup>374</sup> Rome most definitely traffics in the "souls (lives) of men." She maintains her control of kingdoms by the influence she holds over the masses. She claims to wield the power to admit or deny "souls" entry into "heaven" – the "keys of the Kingdom." And in so doing, she gets people and kings to do her bidding. A review of the history of Europe will bear this out.

<sup>375</sup> Rome has one of the largest seaports on the Mediterranean Sea. In John's day, Rome was the hub of sea-trade.

<sup>376</sup> Christ's Apostles were killed by Rome.

<sup>377</sup> Both Imperial Rome and the Vatican sentenced many Christians to death by burning. Rome will receive the same sentence.

<sup>378</sup> Cf. Rev. 19:3

<sup>379</sup> Rome certainly killed multitudes of Christ's followers.

<sup>380</sup> She also killed others, such as Muslims in the Crusades, and Jews.

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## Chapter 19

After these things I heard [what sounded] like a loud voice of a great multitude in the sky, saying: "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power is of our God, 2 because true and righteous are His verdicts, because He judged the great prostitute who was corrupting the land with her fornication, and [because] He avenged the blood of His servants from her hand." 3 And a second time they said: "Hallelujah! Her smoke goes up unto the ages of the ages!"<sup>381</sup> 4 And the twenty-four elders and the four creatures fell and worshipped God sitting on the throne, saying: "Amen! Hallelujah!"

### *The Wedding Announcement*

5 And a voice came from the throne,<sup>382</sup> saying: "Praise our God all His servants and those fearing Him, the small and the great!" 6 And I heard [what sounded] like the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters, and like the sound of mighty thunders, saying: "Hallelujah, because the Master God, **THE SOVEREIGN OVER ALL**, has begun to rule!<sup>383</sup> 7 [Now] we may rejoice, and may celebrate, and may give Him glory, because the wedding of the Lamb has arrived<sup>384</sup> and His wife has prepared herself."<sup>385</sup> 8 And it was granted to her that she may be dressed in linen,<sup>386</sup> bright and clean, (for the linen is the righteousness of the saints). 9 And he<sup>387</sup> says to me: "Write: 'Blessed are those having been invited<sup>388</sup> to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he says to me: "These are the true words of God." 10 And I fell before his feet to worship him.<sup>389</sup> And he says to me: "No! Look, I am a co-servant of you<sup>390</sup> and of your brothers, of those who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God!<sup>391</sup> For Jesus' testimony is the Breath of the prophecy."<sup>392</sup>

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<sup>381</sup> Smoke ascending "unto the ages of ages" points back to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. "Then he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain; and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land which went up like the smoke of a furnace" (Gen 19:28). This was "an example of eternal fire" (Jude 1:7). Sodom did not burn perpetually, but permanently. The same is true of Mystery Babylon whose destruction is said to take place "in one hour" (Rev. 18:10,17,19), and she "shall not be found, not anymore." (Rev. 18:21).

<sup>382</sup> The Lamb is one said to be on God's throne with God Himself (Rev. 7:17)

<sup>383</sup> Compare Rev. 11:17

<sup>384</sup> It is significant that the wedding of the Lamb is at the beginning of His reign, not at the beginning of the 7-year tribulation. The pretribulation view has Jesus living with his bride for 7 years before the wedding.

<sup>385</sup> The bride has prepared herself by purifying herself (2 Cor. 6:14 – 7:1), and remaining faithful to Jesus Christ throughout the time of tribulation, (cf. Rev. 3:4-5,18; Rev. 7:14).

<sup>386</sup> Being dressed implies resurrection. See notes on Rev. 6:11.

<sup>387</sup> The messenger accompanying John, showing him the destruction of Mystery Babylon

<sup>388</sup> The verb is in the perfect tense. The invitations have already gone out at this time, (Matt. 25:1-13).

<sup>389</sup> Note that even the angels refuse the worship of men. But Jesus accepted human worship on earth (Matt. 2:11; 8:2; 9:18; 15:25; 14:33; 28:9,17) and in heaven (Rev. 5:11-14).

<sup>390</sup> Heb. 1:14, cf. Rev. 22:9

<sup>391</sup> Worship the One who originated the message, not the messenger.

<sup>392</sup> Compare this statement to the closing words of each of the seven letters.

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## *The Second Coming of Jesus Christ*

11 And I observed the sky having been opened,<sup>393</sup> and look, a white horse! And the One sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and with justice He judges and makes war. 12 His eyes are like a flame of fire,<sup>394</sup> and on His head are many crowns<sup>395</sup> having a name engraved that no one knows except Himself. 13 And He was clothed in a robe having been dipped in blood.<sup>396</sup> And His name is called Logos of God.<sup>397</sup> 14 And the armies<sup>398</sup> in the sky were following Him on white horses, having been dressed in linen white and clean. 15 And out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword so that with it He may strike the nations. And He will shepherd<sup>399</sup> them with an iron rod.<sup>400</sup> And He treads the vat of the wine of the fury and wrath of God,<sup>401</sup> **SOVEREIGN OVER ALL**. 16 And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name having been engraved, "King of kings, and Master of masters." 17 And I observed one messenger, standing in the sun. And he called with a loud voice to all the birds flying in mid-sky, saying: "Come, assemble together for the great feast from God,<sup>402</sup> 18 so that you may eat flesh of kings, flesh of captains, flesh of strong men, flesh of horses and their riders, and flesh of all, free and slave, small and great." 19 And I observed the beast and the kings of the land and their armies having been brought together<sup>403</sup> to do battle<sup>404</sup> against the One sitting on the horse and against His army. 20 And the beast was captured, and [along] with it the false prophet<sup>405</sup> who performed signs before it, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshipped its image. These two were thrown alive<sup>406</sup> into the lake of fire burning with sulfur. 21 And the rest<sup>407</sup> were slain with the sword proceeding from the mouth of the One sitting on the horse. And all the birds gorged themselves with their flesh.

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<sup>393</sup> John's point of observation changes from the sky to earth. He observed the sky parting. (cf. Rev. 6:14 & Isa. 34:4).

<sup>394</sup> Rev. 1:14

<sup>395</sup> Zech. 6:11-12 LXX

<sup>396</sup> Isaiah 63:1-6

<sup>397</sup> Here John undeniably attests that the "Logos" of his Gospel prologue (John 1:1,14) is the name of the Son of God. This fact alone destroys Unitarianism.

<sup>398</sup> "Armies" (στρατεύματα) refers to military forces (angels) not to Christians.

<sup>399</sup> This is a direct quote from Psalm 2:9 LXX. Most significant is the fact that John quoted the Greek Old Testament rather than the Hebrew, (which has "smash" rather than "shepherd"). The verb rendered "shepherd" (ποιμανεῖ) in both means to "tend (feed) a flock."

<sup>400</sup> To "shepherd them with a rod of iron" implies two things. First, the intent is not to destroy the nations, but to lead them. Second, force will have to be used, at least initially. This verse, and the Psalm it quotes, are absolute proof that amillennialism is false, because it proves that Jesus will lead the nations on earth after His second coming and cause them to eventually submit to His Kingdom, (cf. Zech. 14:16-21).

<sup>401</sup> Joel 3:13; Rev. 14:17-20

<sup>402</sup> Ezekiel 39:17-20

<sup>403</sup> The verb is in the perfect tense and passive voice. They had been led here by the "lying breaths," (Rev. 16:12-16).

<sup>404</sup> They know why they are gathering, as a brazen attempt to overthrow Jesus and His angelic army at His coming.

<sup>405</sup> Rev. 13:11-18

<sup>406</sup> 2 Thess. 2:8

<sup>407</sup> 2 Thess. 1:-10, Zech 14:12-13

# REVELATION

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## Chapter 20

### *The Imprisonment of Satan for the Seventh Millennium*

And I observed a messenger descending from the sky, having the key to the deep, and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he seized the dragon,<sup>408</sup> the ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan,<sup>409</sup> and he bound him for a thousand years. 3 And he threw him into the deep and closed and sealed it over him, so that he could no longer deceive the nations until the thousand years were expired. After these things he must be released for a short time.

### *The 1,000 year Reign of Christ and the Saints over the Nations*

4 And I observed thrones and those seated on them, and authority to judge was given to them. And the souls<sup>410</sup> of those having been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, who did not worship the beast or his image and did not receive the mark on their forehead or on their hand, they also come to life and reign with Christ a thousand years.<sup>411</sup> 5 (But the rest of the dead do not come to life until the thousand years should expire). This is the first resurrection.<sup>412</sup> 6 Blessed and holy is the one having a part in the first resurrection. Over these the second death has no power, but they shall be priests<sup>413</sup> of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

### *Satan's Last Stand*

7 And when the thousand years should expire, Satan will be released from his prison. 8 And he will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the land, Gog and Magog,<sup>414</sup> to lead them together to the battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. 9 They went up across the [whole] width of the land, and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city.<sup>415</sup> And fire from God<sup>416</sup> fell from the sky and consumed them. 10 And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire

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<sup>408</sup> Rev. 12:3-4

<sup>409</sup> The Majority Text adds, "the deceiver of the whole world."

<sup>410</sup> The martyrs, see Rev. 6:9-11

<sup>411</sup> Many translations give the impression that only the martyrs are raised at the first resurrection. However, the text distinguishes the martyrs of the tribulation from the larger group of faithful saints who John saw seated on thrones.

<sup>412</sup> This statement rules out a pretribulation resurrection. (Compare 1 Cor. 15:22-25).

<sup>413</sup> Peter stated that believers are now being prepared for a future priesthood, so they may offer sacrifices to God on behalf of the people. "You also, as living stones, are being constructed [into] a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2:5 LGV). Hebrews concurs: "How much greater the blood of Christ, Who offered Himself flawless to God through the age-enduring Breath, will cleanse your conscience from dead acts unto what is to be divine service to the living God!" (Heb. 9:14 LGV).

<sup>414</sup> Ezekiel 38:1 – 39:20

<sup>415</sup> Literally, "the city having been beloved," which is restored Jerusalem, (Psalm 78:67-69; Psalm 87:2; Psalm 132:13-15).

<sup>416</sup> God was the cause of fire falling from the sky.

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and sulfur, the place where the Beast and the False Prophet also [were thrown], (and they<sup>417</sup> shall be tortured day and night unto the ages of the ages).<sup>418</sup>

## *The Final Judgment*

11 Then I saw a great white throne and the One sitting on it from whose face the land and sky fled, and no place was found in them.<sup>419</sup> 12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing<sup>420</sup> before the throne, and the books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the [Book] of Life. And the dead were judged by the things having been written in the books according to their works.<sup>421</sup> 13 And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, and death and the grave gave up the dead who were in them.<sup>422</sup> And they were judged, each according to their works. 14 And death and the grave were thrown into the Lake of Fire.<sup>423</sup> This is the second death<sup>424</sup> – the Lake of Fire. 15 And if anyone was discovered not having been written in the Book of Life<sup>425</sup> he was cast into the Lake of Fire.

## Chapter 21

### *The Cohabitation of God with Man*

And I observed renewed sky and renewed land,<sup>426</sup> for the first<sup>427</sup> sky and first land passed by. And the sea is no more!<sup>428</sup> 2 And I saw the holy city, renewed Jerusalem,<sup>429</sup>

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<sup>417</sup> 'They' refers to the Beast and False prophet who are tortured in Gehenna during the Kingdom. That Satan is destroyed (not tortured forever) at the end of the Millennium is evident from Paul's statement that "*the last enemy that will be destroyed is death*" (1 Cor. 15:26) when Christ returns the sovereignty of the whole creation back to the Father after He has put down all rebellion. Revelation acknowledges the destruction of the 'last enemy' in verse 14. Gehenna (Tophet – Jer. 7:31-33) was originally prepared for "*the devil and his angels*" (Isaiah 30:33; Matt. 25:41), but it will eventually be cleansed and become "*holy to the LORD*" (Jer. 31:40) after the Millennium.

<sup>418</sup> See note on Rev. 14:11.

<sup>419</sup> The land and sky fleeing away is a metaphor for leaving no place to hide from God's face, (cf. Amos 9:1-5; Isa. 2:19-21; Rev. 6:15-17).

<sup>420</sup> having been resurrected, (see v. 5).

<sup>421</sup> All are condemned by their works, (Rom. 3:19-20; Gal. 2:16). Their only hope is to have their name written in the Book of Life.

<sup>422</sup> Amos 9:1-5

<sup>423</sup> Isaiah 66:24; Matt. 10:28

<sup>424</sup> "Death" in Scripture is ceasing to be alive and conscious. Those who believe in the "immortality of the soul" view death as the departure of a conscious ghost from the body. Yet, that view creates great difficulty in explaining the "second death," since in that view the second "death" means something completely different (eternal torment) from the meaning of the first "death" (separation of the ghost from the body). See also Rev. 21:8.

<sup>425</sup> Some of the dead are written in the Book of Life and are spared, those converted during the millennium.

<sup>426</sup> Isaiah 65:17, 66:22-24; 2 Peter 3:13. These parallel passages place the renewed sky and land at the beginning of the Millennium.

<sup>427</sup> The Greek word "πρωτος" used here is the superlative of the word "προ." Thus, it does not merely mean "former" (as "προ" would indicate), but "foremost" – the very first. In the context of Revelation, this refers to the present time, not to the skies and land in the Millennium. That could be "προ" (former) but not "πρωτος" (foremost – first). Thus, this passage is definitely saying that the "New Skies and New Land" are replacing the "first" skies and land where we now dwell. This is proof that Rev. 21-22 is recapping the Millennium in ch. 20, not following it chronologically.

<sup>428</sup> The Red Sea will be dried up in the Kingdom (Isaiah 11:15-16; Isaiah 19:5; Isaiah 51:10-11).

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descending out of the sky from God<sup>430</sup> prepared like a bride having been adorned for her husband.<sup>431</sup> 3 And I heard a loud voice from the sky saying: “Look! The tent of God is with men; and He will dwell with them; and they will be His people; and God Himself will be with them – their God.<sup>432</sup> 4 And He will wipe away every tear from their eyes;<sup>433</sup> and there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; nor will there be any more pain,<sup>434</sup> because the former things have passed away.” 5 And the One sitting on the throne said: “Look! I am renewing everything.”<sup>435</sup> And He said to me: “Write! For these words are faithful and true.” 6 And He said to me: “[It] is accomplished. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give freely from the spring of the water of life<sup>436</sup> to the thirsty one. 7 The one being victorious<sup>437</sup> will inherit these things. And I shall be God to him, and he shall be a son to Me. 8 But to the unbelieving cowards, and to those having become foul,<sup>438</sup> to murderers, to fornicators, to drug users, to idolaters, and to all the liars,<sup>439</sup> their part [is] in the lake burning with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”<sup>440</sup>

### *The Rehabilitated & Restored Bride of YHVH, Jerusalem and Her Inhabitants*<sup>441</sup>

9 And one from the seven messengers (having the seven bowls full of the seven last blows) came and spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s

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<sup>429</sup> Isaiah 62:2; Isaiah 65:18-19; Gal. 4:26-27; Heb. 12:22. The “renewed Jerusalem” consists of the restored Jerusalem and her inhabitants. In Galatians 4:26-27, Paul called “elevated Jerusalem” the “mother of us all,” and immediately quoted the opening verses of Isaiah 54, a prophecy of Jerusalem’s restoration from barrenness. Isaiah 60 & 62 are also foundational to this passage. See notes for chapter 12.

<sup>430</sup> This bride descending out of the sky is an allegory representing the restoration of Jerusalem by God’s power rather than man’s power.

<sup>431</sup> Isaiah 54:5

<sup>432</sup> Ezekiel 43:7. The Renewed Jerusalem is a dwelling suitable for the SOVEREIGN OVER ALL to cohabit with perfected mankind. Yet, even this magnificent city is called God’s “tent,” because even its splendor is inadequate to fully reflect the glory of the SOVEREIGN OVER ALL!

<sup>433</sup> God wipes away all the tears of His people at the time of the resurrection to the inheritance (Rev. 7:17). Both of these passages are referencing Isaiah 25:8 – “*The LORD God will wipe away tears from all faces*” when the marriage feast occurs and “*death is swallowed up in victory*” (1 Cor. 15:54). The act of God’s wiping away all tears points to believers’ victory over death. This places the resurrection of the just at the time the “New Jerusalem” appears – the beginning of the Millennium.

<sup>434</sup> Due to the resurrection

<sup>435</sup> God does not make a new (different) creation, but rather renews what He has previously created. (Acts 3:21; Rom. 8:16-25).

<sup>436</sup> cf. Ezekiel 47:1-12, Zech. 14:8-9, Rev. 22:1

<sup>437</sup> Each of the seven letters to the seven assemblies ends with a similar promise. Being “victorious” is defined in Rev. 12:11 as overcoming Satan by being faithful to Christ until death. That is, not being seduced away from Christ into apostasy.

<sup>438</sup> “having become foul” refers to believers who fell away during the time of testing

<sup>439</sup> 2 Tim. 4:2

<sup>440</sup> See note on Rev. 20:14.

<sup>441</sup> This is the second marriage, since God divorced Jerusalem when Christ was rejected (Isa. 50:1 & 54:6). Much of the imagery of the New Jerusalem is drawn from Isaiah 54, 60, & 62 and should be read alongside Rev. 21-22.

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wife.”<sup>442</sup> 10 And he lifted me in the Breath<sup>443</sup> upon a great and high mountain.<sup>444</sup> And he showed to me the city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of the sky from God, 11 having the glory of God. Its brilliance was like a most precious stone, like a crystalline jasper stone, 12 having a wall great and high, having twelve gates, and at the gates twelve messengers, and names engraved (which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel).<sup>445</sup> 13 [There were] three gates facing east, three gates facing north, three gates facing south, and three gates facing west. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them [were] the twelve names of the twelve Emissaries of the Lamb.<sup>446</sup> 15 And he who spoke with me had a golden measuring rod, so that he could measure the city, her gates, and her wall. 16 And the city is laid out [in] a square. Her length was the same as her width. And he measured the city with the rod to twelve thousand measures.<sup>447</sup> Her length, width, and height are equal.

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<sup>442</sup> Note the restored Jerusalem is called “the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife.” In Isaiah 54:5-8 & 62:5 Jerusalem is the espoused wife of YHVH whom He previously divorced for infidelity (Isa. 50:1), but will marry her and restore her once again. That she was formerly called the “wife” of YHVH, but when restored is called “the Lamb’s wife,” proves that the one called YHVH, who was formerly espoused to Jerusalem, was the Son, not the Father. This is proof of the Son’s preexistence, and that He claimed in Old Testament times the name of YHVH. The only person to do so specifically is called the “Messenger of YHVH,” the one who appeared in the burning bush to Moses, calling Himself the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. (Exodus 3:2 – 4:5). That the Messenger of YHVH claims the name of YHVH is also clear from the following: “*And Look! I am sending My Messenger before you so that He may keep you in the way, so that He may lead you unto the land which I prepared for you. Take heed to yourself, and listen to Him and do not disobey Him, for He will not pardon you; for My name is upon Him.*” (Exodus 23:20-21 LXX). However, nowhere has the Messenger of YHVH taken the title, “SOVEREIGN OVER ALL.”

<sup>443</sup> Compare Rev. 1:10, Rev. 4:2, Rev. 17:3.

<sup>444</sup> Ezekiel 40:2

<sup>445</sup> Ezekiel 48:31

<sup>446</sup> The only “Apostles” sent personally by Jesus (the Lamb) are the eleven and Paul.

<sup>447</sup> Many translations have “stadia” or “furlongs” here, the length of the Greek racecourse of 600 feet. That would make the New Jerusalem over 1,400 miles in circumference, impossible to fit on Mt. Zion or even within the borders of the Promised Land! Such an immense size is also impossible to reconcile with the measurements given by Ezekiel. However, that interpretation requires an assumption that is not at all certain. It is impossible to determine from the Greek text whether John was using the plural form of σταδῖος (a masculine noun) or σταδῖον (a neuter noun). Both words are spelled σταδῖων in the genitive plural form, which is what appears in this text. The masculine noun σταδῖος simply means a “fixed” measurement. The neuter noun σταδῖον refers to a unit of measurement of about 600 feet, the length of the Greek race course. Having just mentioned the angel’s golden measuring rod in the previous verse, John likely was referring to this particular fixed measure (σταδῖος) that was given to him. A 600 foot rod would be impossible to use. If it merely refers to the fixed rod, then John reported that the New Jerusalem was 12,000 measuring rods in circumference. The key, of course, would be the length of the rod itself. When Ezekiel reported the dimensions of the restored Jerusalem, the angel was using a measuring rod that was 12’ in length (Ezek. 40:5), being six long cubits (24”), consisting of a regular cubit (18” – the length from elbow to fingertip) plus a span (6” – the width of the hand). Ezekiel’s measuring rod was therefore 12 feet in length. According to Ezek. 48:30-35, the restored Jerusalem was 4,500 of these 12’ rods in length on each of the four sides. This totals 216,000 feet in circumference. If then John’s measuring rod was 18’ in length, then the total was also 216,000 feet around the entire city. Both a 12’ measuring rod and a 18’ rod could be handled by one man for measuring.



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17 And he measured her wall, one hundred and forty-four cubits,<sup>448</sup> by the measure of a man, (that is of the messenger). 18 And the construction of her wall was of jasper. And the city was clear gold, like transparent glass. 19 The foundations of the wall of the city had been adorned with every precious stone:<sup>449</sup> the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, 20 the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. 21 The twelve gates are twelve pearls. Each one of the gates was [made] from one pearl. And the street of the city was clear gold, like transparent glass. 22 And I saw no sanctuary in her,<sup>450</sup> for the Master God, **SOVEREIGN OVER ALL**, is her sanctuary, also the Lamb. 23 And the city has no need of the sun, or of the moon, that they may illuminate her. For the glory of God illuminated her, and the Lamb is her lamp.<sup>451</sup> 24 And the nations shall walk by her light. And the kings of the land bring their glory into her.<sup>452</sup> 25 And her gates should by no means be closed by day,<sup>453</sup> for no night shall be there. 26 And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into her. 27 And there will by no means enter into her anything profane,<sup>454</sup> or the one practicing idolatry and deceit, but only those having been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb.

## Chapter 22

And he showed me a pure river of water of life,<sup>455</sup> shining like crystal,<sup>456</sup> flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb. 2 In the middle of its street, and on this side and that side of the river, was the tree of life, producing twelve [kinds of] fruit, each according to its month.<sup>457</sup> And the leaves of the tree are to cure the nations. 3 And every curse will be

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<sup>448</sup> A regular cubit is the distance from the elbow to the fingertip (18 inches). The wall was therefore 216 feet high. Note the ratio between the height of the wall and the circumference of the city – a 1,000:1 ratio, the same ratio of God’s day to man’s years (2 Pet. 3:8), of the original Sabbath and the Sabbath Rest.

<sup>449</sup> Isaiah 54:11-12

<sup>450</sup> Rev. 3:12 and 7:15 indicate that the saints will serve God in His Temple perpetually, without ever leaving. This appears to conflict with this statement. However, the difficulty may be solved by understanding that the word “sanctuary” or “temple” can refer to the whole Temple structure (the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies) or to just the inner sanctuary (Holy of Holies). In Ezekiel 41:4 LXX, the same Greek word is used for the Holy of Holies exclusively. The same is true in Matt. 27:51. According to Jer. 3:16-17 the Ark of the Covenant will no longer exist. Nor will the High Priest attend to it yearly on Yom Kippur anymore. Instead, the throne of the Master will take the place of the hidden Holy of Holies. Thus, the Holy of Holies, which was to seclude the Ark of the Covenant from the rest of the structure and the view of mankind, will no longer serve a purpose. Instead, the Master will be there in its place, not secluded, but accessible to all. (See Rev. 22:3).

<sup>451</sup> Isaiah 60:19-21

<sup>452</sup> Isaiah 60:3; Isaiah 62:2

<sup>453</sup> Isaiah 60:11

<sup>454</sup> Isaiah 60:21

<sup>455</sup> Ezekiel 47:1-12, Zech. 14:8-9, Rev. 21:6

<sup>456</sup> Rev. 4:6

<sup>457</sup> Ezekiel 47:12

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abolished. And the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in her<sup>458</sup> and His servants will minister to Him, 4 and they shall see His face and His name shall be on their foreheads.<sup>459</sup> 5 And night shall no longer exist; there will be no need for a lamp, or light of the sun, because the Master God will illuminate them.<sup>460</sup> And they will reign unto the ages of the ages. 6 And he said to me: "These words are faithful and true. And the Master, the God of the Breaths<sup>461</sup> of the prophets, sent His Messenger<sup>462</sup> to show His servants the things which must occur suddenly – 7 'Look! I am coming suddenly! Blessed is the one heeding the words of the prophecy of this book.'"<sup>463</sup>

8 And I, John, (the one hearing and observing these things), when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the messenger<sup>464</sup> showing these things to me. 9 And he said to me: "No! Look! I am a co-servant of you, and of your brothers, of the prophets, and of those who heed the words of this book. Worship God!" 10 And he said to me: "You should not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the appointed time is ready. 11 Let the unjust remain unjust; and let the filthy remain filthy. But let the just remain just; and let the holy remain holy. 12 'Look! I am coming suddenly, and [bringing] My wage with Me, to distribute to each according to his work.'<sup>465</sup> 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega,<sup>466</sup> the First and the Last,<sup>467</sup> the Beginning and the End.'<sup>468</sup> 14 Blessed are those doing His<sup>469</sup> commandments,<sup>470</sup> so that they should have a right to the tree of life, and they may enter through the gates into the city. 15 But dogs, drug users, fornicators, murderers, idolaters, and the entirety of the [ones] fond of practicing falsehood are excluded. 16 'I, Jesus, sent My messenger<sup>471</sup> to testify these things to you for the assemblies. I am the Root and the Descendant of David,<sup>472</sup> the bright and

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<sup>458</sup> Ezekiel 43:1-7

<sup>459</sup> Rev. 14:1

<sup>460</sup> Isaiah 60:19-21

<sup>461</sup> The Textus Receptus omits "of the Breaths." That the prophetic "Breaths" is plural should not be a surprise since the Breaths of God when distributed among the seven assemblies in Asia Minor is also plural.

<sup>462</sup> God sent the Son (Jesus) who is "the Messenger of YHVH" to inform the assemblies through John. This statement by the angel speaking to John refers to what was described in chapter 1.

<sup>463</sup> Rev. 1:3

<sup>464</sup> This is the same angel who spoke to John in Rev. 19:10, who was one of the seven angels with the seven bowls of wrath (Rev. 21:9).

<sup>465</sup> Isaiah 40:10 ; Isaiah 62:11

<sup>466</sup> This title is applied to the SOVEREIGN OVER ALL in Rev. 1:8 & 21:5-6.

<sup>467</sup> This title is applied to Christ in Rev. 1:17 & 2:8, but to YHVH in Isaiah 44:6 (See note on Rev. 1:17).

<sup>468</sup> This title is applied to the SOVEREIGN OVER ALL in Rev. 1:8 & 21:5-6. Thus the Son of God is not afraid to take God's names and titles as His own because as the only-begotten Son, He shares in His authority, and the Father's permission to use His name given to the Messenger of YHVH (Exodus 23:20-21).

<sup>469</sup> Christ's commandments, the one this angel was quoting.

<sup>470</sup> Those who obey Jesus' commandments, the "Alpha and Omega," the One who is coming quickly

<sup>471</sup> Jesus' messenger was the one John fell down to worship (vs. 8), the one reporting these things to John.

<sup>472</sup> Jesus is both David's creator (Root) as well as his Son (Descendant), cf. Matt. 23:41-46.

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morning star.<sup>473</sup> 17 And the Breath and the bride are saying, 'Come!' And the hearing one, say "Come!" And the thirsting one, Come! And the one who is willing, receive the water of life freely!<sup>474</sup> 18 I am testifying to everyone hearing the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone should add to them, God will add to him the plagues having been written in this book. 19 And if anyone removes from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of Life,<sup>475</sup> and from the holy city, and from the things having been written in this book.<sup>476</sup> 20 The One testifying these things says, 'Yes, I am coming suddenly.' Amen."

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

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<sup>473</sup> Num. 24:17-19; Rev. 2:27

<sup>474</sup> Salvation is available to everyone who chooses to come, not only a select group whom God has previously chosen.

<sup>475</sup> The Textus Receptus has "Book of Life"

<sup>476</sup> I have prayerfully translated this book as faithfully as I am able and submitted the commentary notes with this warning in mind.