

The Revelation of Jesus Christ “The Time is at Hand”

A revelation indeed of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom given to His servant John, during a troublous time, to give to God’s covenant people, the Church (made up of converted Jews and Gentiles-now one people in Christ), to reveal to them the coming to an end of the Old Testament and its economy and the breaking forth of the New Testament and all of its glory for ever and ever, Amen.

David Chilton:

- Revelation is the most “Biblical” book in the Bible: hundreds of OT passages
- Revelation has a system of symbolism
- Revelation is a prophecy and epistle about immanent events
- Revelation is a worship service: the worship of God is central to everything
- Revelation is about dominion: not a book about how terrible the Antichrist is, or how powerful the devil is, it is the Revelation of Jesus Christ, it tells us of how the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our God and of His Christ, and that Christ and His people shall reign forever and ever.

Bahnsen:

- A book that is a blessing to be obeyed; therefore we must understand it.
- The Revelation of Jesus Christ doesn’t present an obscure word, but one that was to be understood...Blessed are they who understand it.
- Christ loves His Church continually and reigns over the Kings of the earth to redeem His elect; assert His crown rights; make manifest the implications of His reign and recreate all things in terms of His sovereign will. Christ shares His reign with his people.
- The Kingdom of God is a present reality, and Christ has purchased from all nations a Kingdom of Priests with the cost of His blood.
- Christians (we) share in this rule of Christ
- All of these things will come to pass soon.
- Christ is the Amen, standing firm; Jesus is the witness of God who rules over Rome— don’t fear Rome; the faithful followers of Christ will, inspite of Rome, reign with Christ.
- Jesus was made manifest to destroy the works of the Devil (1 John 3:8)
- The Emperor was divinized and worshipped. The Christians were culturally conditioned to the psalms (Ps 89).
- The Whole world will lay at Christ’s feet in time and on earth. Christ and His Kingdom of Priests (1 Pet 2:4-10)
- Christ’s appearance for salvation and judgment would soon take place at the conclusion of the Great Tribulation of AD 66-70.

God is the source of all revelation (Mounce), and God is, as Daniel spoke to Nebuchadnezzar, the one who reveals mysteries and makes known what will happen

Dan 2:28 "But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these: 29 "As for you, O king,

thoughts came *to your mind while* on your bed, *about* what would come to pass after this; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be. 45 "Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold -- the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure."

Amos 3:7 Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets

Apocalyptic vision that uses symbolism and eschatological hope. The writer was wanting to comfort a disheartened people with words leading to perseverance and a waiting upon God's deliverance, God's salvation. The writers and the audiences would believe, according to Psalm 2, that God would soon arise from his throne to shatter the rule of the wicked nations, destroy all evil, and establish his Kingdom on earth. This would occur by shattering cosmic visitation which would completely displace the fallen evil order by the glorious Kingdom of God. A revelation is meant to be known, believed, and acted upon. It was not meant to remain secluded and a mystery. Jews of old wanted to know what Yahweh was revealing. A major role of the apocalypse is to explain why the righteous are suffering and the Kingdom is delayed.

Gurthrie says:

- Majority of early Christians valued this book
- Being addressed to the Asiatic churches ensured an initial circulation over a wide area
- Apocalyptic language with allegory and allusion to tribulation much like Shepherd of Hermas (2d century), Barnabus, and Ignatius.
- Justin Martyr knew the book and attributed it to John, as did Irenaeus.
- Certainly John, a disciple of the Lord
 - John's Logos Doctrine therein
 - Evidence within the book itself that John received the Revelation
 - Comparison with the Gospel of John "Boanerges" bringing stormy descriptions
 - Relationship with the Gospel and the epistles of John
- Melito, a bishop of Sardis, wrote a treatise on the Apocalypse of John (according to Eusebius' HE, iv, 26)

Author:

- John the Apostle, son of Zebedee. John, whose name is mentioned 4X in the Rev., also wrote the Gospel of John and the Three Epistles of John. Could have written the Revelation in AD 65 or 66 with more of a Semitic tone vs. the more perfect Greek tone of his Gospel and epistles, which could have been written later.
 - Was an elder of the church in Ephesus...the whole 2nd century church believed John was in Asia Minor living and ministering
 - John wrote Revelation: Attested to by St. Justin Martyr (AD165), St. Irenaeus (AD 180), St. Clement of Alexandria (AD200), St. Hippolytus (AD225), and St. Athanasius (AD350)
 - "Lamb of God," "Word," and "witness." Language is common in John's writings.
 - John was well known and readers knew him; John worked among the 7 churches of Asia Minor; John's later other writings share with Revelation: Jesus the Word,

the living water, references to Mary the Mother of Jesus as the Woman, and referring to Jesus as the Pierced One (Zech 12:10, Rev 1:7, John 19:37)

- John was also alive during this time period (as many wrote). C.f.: John 21: 20 Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?" 21 Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, "But Lord, what about this man?" 22 Jesus said to him, "If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me." 23 Then this saying went out among the brethren that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, "If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you?"

- Some have problematically declared the writer could have been John the Baptizer, John Mark, an unknown prophet named John from Palestine, John the Presbyter (unknown contemporary of John), or an unknown writer who used John as a pseudonym...all of these guesses coming from the Higher Critics seeking to discredit John the Apostle as the writer.

Audience: Written to the seven churches of Asia Minor...the Church, with a message to the Jews to come out of Babylon, also known as apostate Jerusalem. The province of Asia emerged as the area where Christianity was the strongest, with Ephesus as its radial point.

(W.H.C.Frend)...Asia was the center of the cult of Caesar worship, nowhere was the Caesar-cult more popular than in Asia.

- Each of the churches have a history behind them
- Birthed out of the synagogues

The message included an exhortation to holiness and a turning away from anything endangering faith in Christ, an encouragement to those suffering for righteousness sake, and warnings against heresies. Persecutions were coming from both unbelieving Jews and Pagans. A revelation of the King personifying the Beast, namely Nero and Rome respectively, and the picture of apostate Jerusalem, who played the Harlot as she rode the Beast for a season before being consumed by it.

The woman in the heavens with the garland of stars around her head, the Church of Jesus Christ (as the culmination of all the women who were in the line of the Seed being born) is presented as giving birth to the Son Jesus the Christ. Jerusalem as Babylon and Sodom (11:8), where the Law of the Lord and the Testimony of Christ was to roar forth, but instead, confusion, demonic possession and oppression, unbelief, persecution and murder, and every evil work. "may His blood be upon us and our children." Josephus in his War of the Jews describes them as a wretched people who if the Romans were not to have destroyed them, the earth would have opened itself and swallowed them and their city. In 4 Ezra (Esdras) and 2 Baruch (written after AD70), Babylon was associated with Jerusalem's destruction.

The focus of the Book is exhortation to the church community to witness to Christ in the midst of a compromising, idolatrous church and world.

A message of hope particularly adapted to those who are passing through, or who know they may soon be called to pass through, fierce temptation.

- Faith triumphs over might: The Lamb is victorious
- The inevitability of judgment
- Christianity presents the true philosophy of history

Date: Written in the late AD 60s, but prior to the last 3 ½ years (c.f. 42 months) of Jerusalem (AD67-AD70) since this was indeed a warning to the apostates and an exhortation to follow Christ.

- Popular majority states that Revelation was written during the reign of Emperor Domitian, however, St. Irenaeus simply spoke that John was seen in the days of Domitian...not that he wrote during that time period. Against Heresies, Irenaeus, says (5.30.3), "For it/he was seen, not long ago, but almost in our generation, near the end of Domitian's reign." This post-AD70 theory also doesn't correlate with the historical events of the time after the fall of Jerusalem.

- Nero, the sixth king of Rev 17:10

Rev 17: 9 "Here *is* the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. 10 "There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, *and* the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time. 11 "And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition. 12 "The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. 13 "These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. 14 "These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those *who are* with Him *are* called, chosen, and faithful."

- Julius, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero (Ruled AD54-68), Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian, Titus, Domitian

Nero was the fifth Roman emperor and the last of the Julio-Claudian dynasty. He is remembered as an ineffectual, neglectful and brutal leader.

Nero was born near Rome on 15 December 37 AD and was known as a child as Domitius. Through his mother Agrippina he was the only surviving direct male descendant of the emperor Augustus. In 49 AD, Agrippina married her uncle, the emperor Claudius, and began to promote her own son's claim to the succession, at the expense of Claudius's own son, Britannicus. She persuaded Claudius to adopt Domitius - who now took the name Nero - as his son and when it seemed as if Britannicus would be favoured, she had Claudius poisoned and Nero became emperor.

Agrippina clearly wished to rule through Nero, and her portrait briefly appeared on the coins alongside his. But the new emperor paid more heed to his advisors Burrus and the philosopher Seneca, and the result was five years of exemplary government. Britannicus was poisoned by Nero a year into the new reign and in 59 AD, he had his mother put to death. In 62 AD, Burrus died and Seneca retired, removing the key restraining influences on Nero. He divorced his wife Octavia, who was later executed, and married his mistress Poppaea. Two years later, much of Rome was destroyed in a fire, for which Nero was blamed, although this is now regarded as unlikely. Nero diverted blame from himself by accusing the Christians - then a minor religious sect - of starting the fire, leading to a campaign of persecution. He provided help for Romans made homeless by the fire and set about the necessary rebuilding of the city, appropriating a large area for a new palace for himself. This was the architecturally and artistically innovative 'Golden House' (Domus Aurea).

Meanwhile, the Roman empire was in turmoil. Nero established Armenia as a buffer state against Parthia (Iran), but only after a costly war. There were revolts - in Britain (60 AD - 61 AD), led by Boudicca, and Judea (66 AD - 70 AD). In 65 AD, Gaius Calpurnius Piso led a conspiracy against the emperor and in the purge that followed, a number of prominent Romans were executed, including Seneca and his nephew, the epic poet Lucan. In 65 AD, Nero is believed to have kicked his wife Poppaea to death. His next wife was Statilia Messalina, whose first husband Nero had executed. In 68 AD, the Gallic and Spanish legions, along with the Praetorian Guards, rose against Nero and he fled Rome. The senate declared him a public enemy and he committed suicide on 9 June 68 AD. Disputes over his succession led to civil war in Rome.

- Rome personified as a beast who demands worship 13:4; insisting everyone bear the mark of obeisance (13:5-7) or be put to death; plus the persecution of the saints (17:6)...lead to the external evidence for the pre-AD70 dating during the time of the

emperor cult and its fight against the Church. Nero, leader during the zenith of the emperor cult, persecuted Christians not due to his claims to deity, but to find a scapegoat for the devastating fires of Rome.

- Julius Caesar died in 29BC and a temple was built in Ephesus honoring him as divus (god). Beginning with Octavian, the rest of the emperors asserted their own divinity...Octavian changing his name to Augustus, a title of supreme majesty, dignity, and reverence. He was called the Son of God...they taxed, confiscated properties caused food shortages, took wives and husbands for their own pleasures...lorded over all of the lives of their subjects.
 - Salvation was found in no other name but Caesar. So, Christians were to reverence the state as personified by Caesar. They would not. To the Romans, this was a political affront. To the Christians, it was a religious issue. There is no other name under heaven whereby we may be saved, save that of Jesus...Philippians 2. See Acts 17:7
 - Victorinus of Pettau (AD270) and St. Jerome (AD370) are said to have believed this view, along with the school of higher criticism in the early 1900s.
 - Robinson criticized the dogmatism of many commentators for the way that it has been assumed that such developments could not have occurred before the time of Domitian.
- Popular minority view is that the Revelation was written at the end of the reign of Emperor Nero (AD54-AD68). He was the Beast of the Revelation whose name totaled 666 (Rev 13:18) in the Hebrew accounting (numerical value) of the consonants of his name KESAR NERON, or in Latin 660 (Vulgate). First suggested in scholarship by Fritzsche in 1831.
 - John writes of Nero as still on the throne...and he was until AD68.
 - Look at Daniel 9:24-27 (see my history notes). The revelation in Dan would conclude with the sealing of vision and prophecy and the end of the Holy City of Jerusalem. After AD70, no prophet, priest, or king in Israel, but only the risen Lord and Christ Jesus, whom the whole world is going after.
 - Rev 13:3-4; 17:8: Myth of Nero's reappearance held that Nero would return from the dead and lead a Parthian army against the Roman Empire, however, after Nero's death, there were Galba, Otho, and Vitellius who seemed to represent a resurgence of the empire for a year prior to the conflagration of Jerusalem.
 - Rev 17:10: Seven heads of the Beast, beginning with Julius Ceasar (49BC-44BC), Augustus (27BC-14AD, Tiberius (14AD-37AD), Caligula (37AD-41AD), Claudius (41AD-54AD); one who is: Nero (54AD-68AD); then Galba, Otho, Vitellius {all 3 in one year}, then Vespasian (69AD-79AD), whose son Titus (79AD-81AD) sacked Jerusalem culminating in the burning of the Temple and of Jerusalem.
 - Given the external (historical context) and internal (scripture) data, I view the writing as sometime between AD 67 and AD70 (since the Temple was burned and destroyed on 1 Tishri AD70) with many Catholic and Protestant Scholars. Many ancient writers see John writing his three writings after being banished to the Isle of Patmos by Nero, including Andreus of Caesarea, a bishop of Cappadocia in the fifth century who saw the Revelation

in relation to the Roman siege and destruction of Jerusalem in AD70. These scholars rightly see the burning of the Harlot in Rev. 17-18 as the destruction of apostate Jerusalem. Ignatius Catholic Study Bible places the date in the late 60's and states, "[this date] may be said to bring the greatest amount of clarity to the otherwise bewildering visions of the book."

- Rev 11:1-2 implies the Temple in Jerusalem is still standing...prior to 1st of Tishri, AD 70, the same day in 586 BC when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the first temple.
- This writing was also written during the severest Christian persecution by Nero which required perseverance of these saints. In addition, this time revealed John's banishment, Antipas' execution, and the expectation of arrests of Christians in Smyrna. First Neronian persecution of the Church in AD 64 (Tacitus, Ann, 15:44)
- Smalley IAW Mounce, John wrote the book in the middle months of AD70 under Vespasian, and showed his readers in the face of Jerusalem's fall, the vision of the New Jerusalem. The Christians, who were formerly Jews, needed to see the prophesied downfall of the Old Testament scaffolding, to unveil the full glory of the New Testament Church, God's Kingdom having come.

Literature: the genre is purported as apocalyptic (revealing the future and heaven and earth) and prophetic, and the only like it in the New Testament canon of Sacred Scripture. Very much like 1 Enoch, 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, and the Apocalypse of Abraham all showing a range of cosmic symbolism, heavenly visions, judgment scenes, angelic mediatorship, a focus on the triumph of Christ, and liturgical hymns (Rev 4:8, 11; 5:9-10, 13; 11:17-18; 15:3-4, etc.). John has used three genres: apocalyptic, prophecy, and epistle in composing the book. Apocalyptic genre flourished among the Jews between 200BC and AD 100. Apocalyptists, according to Chilton, expressed themselves in unexplained and unintelligible symbols, and generally had no intention of making themselves understood. Their goal was eschatology vs. ethics, contrary to the prophets. "The world is coming to an end, Give Up!" versus, "The World is coming to a beginning, Get to Work!" Goal of the prophet is to direct people toward right action in the present. Prophecy is ethical in purpose.

So, we don't read Revelation to find out about nuclear war, cobra helicopters, space travel, and such, but we see the Lord Jesus and His Law...Blessed is he who reads and hears the words, and keeps them, blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his garments, blessed are those who do His commandments. Rev 1:3.

- Revelation 7, 9, 14, and 22: God's people sealed with a mark on their forehead and hands...does this mean IC chips under the skin, social security numbers tattooed on your person...NO...to the Christian of the time, who knew OT scripture, the mark of the Lord, or the State, was upon the forehead and hands (thoughts and works) Deut 6:6-8 and Ezek 9:4-6. Same with the mark of the State, aka, the Beast.
- All creation is symbolic reflecting the glory of God, and the central value of anything is that it is a symbol of God first. All other values and relationships are secondary. Man is God's very image and everything is symbolic of man as well, therefore, everything reveals God and man. Bavink, Doctrine of Man; Jordan, Sociology of the Church. 666 (Rev 13:18) clearly refers to Nero Caesar when examining the Hebrew

numerical value of the consonants in His name (no vowel points). John wasn't trying to write in code. If that were the case, his writing Jesus is ruler of the kings of the earth would be enough to get you killed. There is symbolism and hyperbole involved in mystical prophecy vs. rationalism in the interpretation. *As the days of a tree shall be the days of my people Is 65:22; I destroyed the Amorite whose height is like the cedars Amos 2:9; the mountains skipped like rams (Ps 114).40 yrs is a long time to wander...a generation in the wilderness; and 1000 years is a number of wholeness or completion...God owns the cattle on a thousand hills...He owns them all.*

- One must have a sense of poetry and literature to understand this revelation, in addition to a sense of the audience and the OT. Just as one has to understand the use of language like "harder to go through the eye of a needle," "say to this mountain...be cast into the sea," "a man has a plank (trunk of a tree) in his eye."
- Interpretive Maximalism vs. Evangelical Minimalism in Judges 9:53: "but a certain woman threw an upper millstone on Abimelech's head, crushing his skull." The text doesn't just say he was killed. How was he killed...what was the language, what was the theme: the woman crushing the head by an implement of labor to overcome tyranny...Gen 3:15...the Woman and the Serpent...Mary's Son and the Devil. The interpretation of symbols is fenced by the Scriptures themselves and the Magisterium, including the Catechism and the Church's systematic theology prevents willy-nilly speculation about symbols and signs.

Aristotle says that drama, especially the Tragedy, is serious rather than trivial or ordinary. Revelation is certain and grave...like a tragedy. In his *Poetics*, Aristotle says of the function of tragedy, "through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions." The plot should depict the change of fortune from good to bad of a person who is decent but in error or frail. The audience is to pity him for his misfortune and fear that something similar could happen to them. Apostate Judaism errs in rejecting God's Christ and pays the cataclysmic price as did the wicked vinedressers who murdered the son of the owner while thinking they would receive everything from the owner, instead they were miserably destroyed.

Apocalyptic literature (like Daniel, Ezekiel, Zechariah, [Enoch]) is always eschatological (not just proclaiming, but foretelling), dualistic (not metaphysical, but historical and temporal, God and Satan), and rigidly deterministic (there is a distinct divine plan and end, and the readers forgo the process in lieu of the end as prophesied. The prophets speak, Thus says the Lord. The Revelation of John is the New Testament version of Daniel.

John, a converted Jew and apostle, uses Old Testament symbolism in his writings since he was writing to Christians, who had understood Moses, Elijah, the Law, and the Prophets. This was a Revelation, not something that was to be an enigma and uninterpretable. Today's interpreters must understand John's use of Old Testament prophecies and types, along with law and liturgy in order to understand and to teach its relevant message.

The Revelation was widely disseminated and is referenced in the writings of Barnabus, the Shepherd of Hermas, Ignatius, and Hippolytus to name a few. Marcion rejected it due to its Jewish references; anti-Montanists rejected it due to its unedifying nature and based on their alleged fact that there was no Church in Thyratira.

Some did not understand that the Appearing of Christ (the Parousia) did not mean the end of the world, or even the "Second Coming," but did indeed mean the end of the Old Testament age (aion) and the breaking forth of the Church. This lack of understanding, that is, not seeing that the Great Tribulation occurred between AD66 and AD70, led to an unbelief in the book post AD70 when the severe persecution ceased..."where is His coming," when, in fact, he had already appeared in judgment upon Jerusalem and the apostates, and rescued His elect in AD70...also Rome's power began a decline after that, as the influence and power of the Church began a great ascension, which would lead to Christianity filling the then known earth and being declared a legal religion by 325AD under Constantine.

General Interpretive Views.

- Critical View: seen in context of Church and State struggle in first century and in human history
- Preterist View: sees beginning of New Covenant, rising of Christ's dominion, and end of Old Covenant Israel and Jerusalem
- Historicist View: panorama of the Church's life as she journeys through history
- Idealist View: figures and symbols that depict a never-ending struggle between Church and the world, and spiritual struggle in every Christian's life
- Futurist View: talks primarily about the end times and final judgment in the future

Interpreting Symbols. God made known these things to John. Revelation is not abstract, but pictorial, symbolic communication. God reveals by a sign, a symbol, cf. Rev 1:1 and Daniel 2; God is going to communicate to John using symbolic communication while using Old Testament references. Revelation is a disclosing to a Covenant People. It is of necessity meant to be disclosed, not to an elite, but to His servants. Rev 1:1: to show to his servants...the word "to Show" as it is depicted in 4:1, 17:1, 21:9, is not synonymous with other words which mean to make known, but is a *revelation through a medium of symbolic heavenly visions communicated through an angel.*

- From Rev 4 on: linguistic level (record of text itself), visionary level (John's actual visionary experience, referential level (particular historical identification of the objects seen in the vision), and symbolic level (what the symbols in the vision connote their historical reference). The Old Testament and Judaism, along with pagan Roman symbology is to be used as reference points for interpretation given the audience, namely Christians who came from the instruction of the synagogues. Hebrew imagery is consistent with ears to hear...let him hear.
- Numerology: The number 7 used 54 times in the Revelation: Note the Seven days of creation of Gen 1 is associated with seven meaning completeness...seven churches

(survey the history of the covenant), the seven seals (stipulations of the covenant treaty), seven trumpets (invoke the covenant sanctions), and seven chalices (disinheritance of Israel, inheritance of the Church). Four, showing the four corners of the earth...the land...depicting a correlation with the Promised Land of Israel with Jerusalem being the capital. Twelve connoting the twelve tribes, the twelve apostles...adding both together, you get the 24 elders of both the old and new testaments. Thousand, God owns the cattle on a thousand hills. Thousand shows forth a completeness. The number 4 is listed in the OT in terms of fullness of judgment on the land for her sins, such as Leviticus 26, Jeremiah 15:3 (4 kinds of doom: sword to slay, dogs to drag off, birds of the sky, beasts of the earth), and Ezek 14:21 (sword, famine, wild beasts, and plague to cut off man and beast from it).

- Revelation contains more OT references than any other NT book, from Moses to the prophets. John shows OT prophecy as being fulfilled in Christ. Rev 4/Isaiah 6; Rev 4:3 and Ezek 1:28; and hymns in Revelation 4:11; 5:13; 7:9-12; 11:15-18; 19:1-8.
- Repetition of Judgment/Salvation Conclusions. We see persecutions, warnings, judgment, and salvation.
- Prophetic Lawsuit Terminology: Faithful city now a harlot Isaiah 1:21; you have lain down as a harlot: Jer 2:20; Hosea 9:1; Ezek 16:14-15; only 2 times in the Bible is the word Harlot applied to nations other than Israel: Tyre (Isa 23:15-17; Nineveh, Nah 3:4). We also see the reference to apostate Israel as the Great Harlot in Rev. 17:1, the Mother of harlots, versus the Queen of Heaven, the Blessed Virgin Mary, faithful...Matthew 24:28-31 we see the eagles gathered over the harlot to eat her, and the gathering of the Church into the Kingdom.

Typically, one would interpret literally unless forced to do otherwise based on the context, however, in Revelation, we interpret symbolically (Rev 1) unless forced to interpret literally given the context.

Liturgy: The Lord calls John (Rev. 4) , and us, up into the heavenly throneroom to participate in the liturgy. We see our Lord, the angels, the creatures, the saints, etc. "One way the church is to remember this heavenly perspective is by modeling its worship on that of the heavenly liturgy communicated in the apocalyptic vision (1:19). We see the heavenly ceremonial worship that, contrary to the mental Puritan/Protestant Evangelical worship, is not a purely intellectual and affective exercise, but is one in which the whole man, body as well as soul, his aesthetic and volitional as well as his intellectual powers, must take full part. It regards worship as an act just as much as an experience. It is this ceremonious view of worship that is taught in Sacred Scripture. Dom Gregory Dix, The Shape of the Liturgy.

Revelation and the Covenant

Prophecy is not prediction in the occult sense, but an evaluation of man's ethical response to God's Word of command and promise (why Jonah's prophecy of Nineveh didn't happen). See Jeremiah 18:7-10 and note God's rulership of the nations (cf, Ps 2 and 110). Revelation is a covenant document whose continuity rests with the transition from OT to NT. The NT is about to be opened in all of its glory. God makes a marital covenant with Israel, she becomes

unfaithful many times, is carried away to Babylon (586BC), is restored, then is visited by God's Son, the Christ, who is, on the one hand, accepted by many and who then represent the New Jerusalem, and on the other hand is rejected by many who then represent the Whore Babylon, who is subsequently disinherited, divorced (the covenantal lawsuit), and then burned with fire and destroyed forever. Covenant: Transcendence, Authority, Ethics, Sanctions, Continuity.

- The curses of Deut 28 poured out on Jerusalem and the apostates in a progressive desolation during the Last Days of Covenant Israel culminating in the Great Tribulation of AD 66-70
- Last Days is equal to the Advent of Christ (26AD) until the Destruction of Jerusalem in AD70. God has in these last days spoken unto us through His Son Heb 1:1-2; 8:13; James 1:5-9; 1 Pet 1:20; 1 John 2:18
- Numerology: Seven is fullness (Lev 26:18..punish you seven times for your sins) taken from the seven day cycle of creation (work and rest). Four is the number of the earth or the Land...the Promised Land (4 rivers to cover the whole earth Gen 2:10, 4 corners Isaiah 11:12, 4 winds blow Jer. 49:36)...the full judgment coming upon the Land of Israel for her wickedness and refusal to repent and obey the Lord's Christ. We'll see the sevenfold judgments as the Revelation unfolds.

Thematic Outline of the Revelation of Jesus Christ

General Themes:

- **The Time is at Hand:** The Lord's appearing/coming was immanent and the Church needed to understand and obey the warnings
- **Days of Vengeance:** these were the end of the days of Old Covenant Israel in which the blood of the prophets would be avenged on that generation alive around AD66
- **I come quickly**...Dr. Chambers: "the scope of this mysterious book is not to convince unbelievers, nor to illustrate the divine prescience, nor to minister to men's prurient desire to peer into the future, but to edify the disciples of Christ in every age by unfolding the nature and character of earth's conflicts, by preparing them for trial as not a strange thing, by consoling them with the prospect of victory, by assuring them of God's sovereign control over all persons and things, and by pointing them to the ultimate issue when they shall pass through the gates of pearl never more to go out."
- **The Lord Reigns:** one sees a clear picture, a vision of the Lord Jesus, which gave comfort to the saints that Jesus was the king ruling all things from heaven, and which placed the fear of God in those who were sinning against God and their neighbors

We will NOTE the introductions and initial exhortations to the Churches, then see the distinctions God makes between His true Bride of Christ (the true Jews, the true Israel of God, the New Jerusalem) as opposed to the Old Jerusalem (the False Prophet, the Beast of the Land, the Harlot, the Whore who fornicates politically and religiously with the nations). Both are

sealed in different ways to identify which one is blessed and saved, and which one is judged and burned.

We will also NOTE that the judgments are iterative and spoken from the viewpoint of a prophet (St. John)...the first judgments come to destroy 1/3 of the apostate populous, and the final Chalice judgments complete the destruction of Jerusalem...we see this in the words of the prophet before these events happen...that is why the exhortation to the Christians to stay righteous and to flee Babylon (apostate Jerusalem) is relevant to the 1st century hearer, and the words align with Jesus' words, "when you see Jerusalem surrounded, flee to the mountains."

Chapters 1-11: deal with the victory of Christ over his enemies, culminating in the glorious establishment of the Church as His holy Temple.

Chapters 12-22: deal with the victory of Christ over his enemies, culminating in the glorious establishment of the Church as His holy Temple. A recapitulation of the first 11 chapters from a different vantage point. A DOUBLE OR SECOND WITNESS!

Difference: 1-11 present this victorious battle of Christ from the vantage point of the heavenly throne room; whereas 12-22 presents this same Christ and his church in conflict with infernal and worldly principalities and powers, surviving all persecution, and triumphing by the word of her testimony, and, after Babylon the harlot falls and passes from view, appearing as the wife of the Lamb, the tabernacle of God with men, glorious in her beauty and imperishable as the throne of God (Milton Terry, Biblical Apocalypse)

1. The Revelation of Jesus Christ as Lord and the Exhortation to the Churches
 - a. Revelation 1:1-3:22
 - b. What John has seen and the things which are
2. The Heavenly Visions: A first Witness (Deut 17:6) to Christ and His Kingdom Coming
 - a. Rev 4:1-11:19
 - b. Opening of the Scrolls and Seven Seals
 - c. Blowing of the Seven Trumpets introducing the Kingdom Coming
3. The Historic Visions: A second Witness (Deut 17:6) to Christ and His Kingdom Coming
 - a. Rev 12:1-22:5
 - b. The Dragon, the Woman, the Beasts, the Saints, the Battle, the Reign of the Saints
 - c. The New Jerusalem, the Church and the Kingdom
4. Final Exhortation: Rev 22:6-21

Deut 17:6: mouth of two witnesses a matter is established regarding a death penalty.

Historical Context: Read Daniel's 70 weeks and look at the prophecy to note where we are in redemptive history that leads up to a most significant event in Christianity, the destruction of Jerusalem and the free expanse of the Church, the New Jerusalem from heaven.

Daniel's 70 Weeks = 70 7s, or 490 years for the Holy City of Jerusalem that would begin with a decree to build the city after the captivity and end with the destruction of the city in AD 70

457 BC Ezra's receives decree from God through Artaxerxes to go to Jerusalem as prophesied by Daniel (Dan. 9)

Add 483 years (69 weeks) (62 + 7 weeks until Messiah comes)= Anno Domini (AD) 26: *Year of the Lord 26*

AD 26 Beginning of Messiah's ministry—Anointing by God at His baptism.

Add 3 ½ years (First half of last week {week 70, or 7 year cycle) = Ministry of Christ and His being cut off through crucifixion.

AD 30 Death of Messiah for His people's sins

Add 3 ½ years (Last half of last week {week 70}) The exact time, according to Josephus and The Revelation (e.g., time, times, and a half of times; 42 months, 1260 days) (c.f., Dan 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 12:14. No one knew the time of Christ's coming in judgment, but the signs were there. His Kingdom came in power on 1st of Tishri AD 70, the same day the temple was destroyed in 586 by the Babylonians.

AD 70 70 weeks were completed for the Jews and their city.

- **Emperor Worship:** a cultic network of worship in every city. Jews were exempted from direct worship of the Emperor as a God, but sacrificed to him as an honorable man. Christians had to worship or risk charges of treason. No one was persecuted while they were to say, Caesar is Lord, however, Jesus is the Christ and Lord, was treason and damnable
- **Jews vs. Christians.** Rome and most pagans saw Christianity as just a sect of Judaism. In Rome, religions were considered illegal outside of their country of origin, although this was not enforced unless social misbehavior occurred. After AD70, Judaism made formal attempts to disassociate itself from Christianity, partly because Christians claimed Jerusalem's destruction was punishment for the Jews crucifixion of Jesus. Jews antagonized Christians by saying they offered a cut-rate Judaism.
- **Persecution of Christians:** atheism the primary charge against Christians. They were considered abominable, and cannibals (due to the presentation of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist). Rome's leadership, as well as the pagan populace saw the Christians as a subset of the Jews. Many despised the Jews, and by default, despised the Christians, too. Pliny, in his Epistles, recorded that the Christians should be punished for their "inflexible obstinacy." Tacitus, in his Annals, wrote that Christians were considered a Jewish sect, and considered separately "as a class hated for their abominations," which began in Judea. Christian teachings were considered "Christian Superstition." Later, during Clement's time (Clement I), he wrote, "senseless and stupid and foolish and ignorant people jeer and mock at us."
- **Condition of Churches in Asia Minor.** Trade guilds ostracized those who would not pay obeisance to their patron gods.
- **Myth of Nero's Reappearance:** see above.

Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, has overcome the world (Rev. 5:9) and is victor over Satan (Rev 12:10-11). John instructs and comforts the Church as she is ready to enter into a severe persecution.

The purpose of the Revelation was to reveal Christ as Lord (Matt 28:18) to a suffering Church. The temptation was that Jesus was neither Lord, nor in control. The Revelation was a warning against this man-centered error. Jesus Christ still demands from us what He demanded from the early church, absolute faithfulness to Him. The greatest enemy of the early church was apostate Israel, who used pagan Rome to try and stamp out Christianity.

1. The book is taken up with martyrs (6:9; 7:14; 12:11) who clearly present the church at the time
2. John writes of what must “shortly” take place...’soon’ versus 1000s of years from then
 - a. Book isn’t about the second coming, but about Christ’s appearing for judgment and salvation.
3. John speaks to his readers to understand given the elements of their day. He tells us the Great Harlot is [present tense] the Great City which reigns [is reigning] over the kings of the earth.
4. John is told NOT to seal up this vision, contrary to what the angel told Daniel (Rev 22:10 vs. Dan 12:4). John was to speak the vision because the END (namely the end of the Covenant City, and the Old Testament age) was NEAR...Christ was to appear [come] soon.

The Revelation was relevant and is relevant. We are exhorted to know Christ and to persevere in the faith of Christ against today’s Beasts and Harlots.

Philip Schaff: History of the Christian Church, Vol 1: The Great Tribulation

Published 1901, and revised based on his accepting the view of the Revelation being written prior to AD70, considered necessary to understand the message

- Christ spoke of this great tribulation that would have its focus on Jerusalem and Judea, and there was never a more alarming state of society. The horrors of the French Revolution were confined to one country, but the tribulation of the six years preceding the destruction of Jerusalem extended over the whole Roman empire and embraced wars and rebellions, frequent and unusual conflagrations, earthquakes and famines and plagues, and all sorts of public calamities and miseries untold. It seemed indeed that the world, shaken to its very center was coming to a close, and every Christian must have felt that the prophecies of Christ were being fulfilled before his eyes. For John, the Neronian persecution behind him, horrible persecution and wars before him, the destruction of the Holy City, who has played the whore with the nations upon him, and the triumph of the Church of Jesus Christ just a short time away...this was a Revelation of the times, for the times, and for an encouragement to the Christian brethren.

- Jerusalem crucified the Lord, Rome beheaded and crucified his chief apostles and plunged the whole Roman church into a baptism of blood. Vatican Hill was the Golgotha of the West. Rome had now rushed headlong into deadly conflict with the new religion.
- **Nero, the Caesar** during the martyrdom of Peter and Paul in AD 64. Paul, the most noble, and Nero one of the basest and vilest of tyrants
 - First 5 years were peaceful (AD 54-59) under the guidance of Seneca and Burrhus. The other nine years AD 59-68 were hideous by comparison.
 - The world to him was a comedy and a tragedy and he was the chief actor.
 - He donned animal skins and raped male and female prisoners, he had an insane passion for popular applause; he played on the lyre; he sung his odes at supper, he drove his chariots in the circus; he appeared on stage and compelled men of the highest rank to portray the obscenest of the Greek myths.
 - Nero's wife Poppaea Sabina had shown special favor to Josephus and loaded him with gifts. Josephus speaks of the crimes of Nero, but not of any persecution of Jews at the time...only Christians.
 - He became a monster of iniquity; murdered his brother (Britannicus), his mother (Agrippina), his wives Octavia and Poppaea, his teacher (Seneca), and many eminent Romans...and committed suicide in the 32nd year of his age by driving a dagger through his throat: "the world has lost a great singer."
 - With Nero's death, the family of Julius Caesar ignominiously perished, and the empire became the prize of successful soldiers and adventurers.
 - His youth, beauty, dash, and prodigality, and the stunning novelty of his wickedness (Tacitus calls him *incredibilium cupitor*), he enjoyed a certain popularity with the vulgar democracy of Rome. After his suicide, some believed he was not dead, but either was alive, or came back to life (Nero *redivivus*) Three imposters came about during the reigns of Otho, Titus, and Domitian. Even thirty years after his death, Domitian trembled at the name of Nero.
 - Schaff: Vol 1, 392..."There is scarcely another period in history so full of vice, corruption, and disaster as the six years between the Neronian persecution and the destruction of Jerusalem."
- **The Conflagration of Rome**
 - Nero was such a demon in human form that the murder of a crowd of innocent Christians was to him great sport...the occasion of the atrocities was the conflagration (burning) of Rome, the most destructive and disastrous that ever occurred in history
 - 18-19 July, same day when the Gauls set fire to the city 453 years earlier A.U.364
 - Lashed by the wind, the fire began among wooden shops in the southeastern end of the Great Circus, near the Palatine Hill, and lasted 7 nights and 6 days.
 - Only 4 of 14 city regions remained uninjured. Once seemingly extinguished, the fire broke out again near the field of Mars, and in three more days laid waste two other districts of the city. A nine-day conflagration. The whole interior of the city lay in ruins.

- Temples, monuments, Greek art, men and beasts, millions of mourners at the loss of irreparable treasures...a massive disaster during the Tribulation.
 - The great fire of London (in 1666 lasted 4 days, burned 436 acres)
 - The fire of Chicago lasted 36 hours in 1871, swept away 2110 acres.
 - The cause is a mystery, some thought Nero wanted to burn Rome to the ground and start a new city, Neropolis.
- The Persecution of the Christians
 - To divert the general suspicion of incendiarism from himself, Nero blamed the hated Christians
 - Christians were beginning to be distinguished as a dangerous offshoot from the Jews due to St. Paul's success in Rome, but many thought Judaism and Christianity were one.
 - Tacitus, Suetonius, and Pliny tagged Christians as pestiferous superstition, seeing them as novel, detached from any nationality (except the Kingdom of God), and aiming at world dominion. Tacitus says that many were arrested, made their confession of Christ, and were not convicted so much of incendiarism, but of hating human race. Knowing that an angry mob does not stop to reason, and is as apt to run mad as an individual...their Jewish origin, their indifference to politics and public affairs, their abhorrence of heathen customs, and such seemed to justify being guilty of burning the city...in their unjust, wicked, and heathen minds.
 - This all launched an unprecedented carnival of blood in Rome under Nero in which Peter and Paul died. This murderous time included Nero's covering Christians with pitch and oil and lighting them afire to light his parties and the city ways. Burning alive was the punishment for incendiarism. Took place on Vatican Hill in the Neronian Gardens.
 - Tacitus knew that the Christians were innocent of incendiarism, and in spite of his cold stoicism, he pitied the Christians for being slaughtered not for the public good, but to the ferocity of a wicked tyrant—Nero.
 - The Jews themselves instigated hatred of the Christians via lies, false witnesses, and false accusations.
 - John the Apostle was EXILED to Patmos under Nero...where John would see and write the Revelation of Jesus Christ he saw.
 - Says Gibbons (chapt 16, Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire): "Those who survey with a curious eye the revolutions of mankind, may observe that the gardens and circus of Nero on the Vatican, which were polluted with the blood of the first Christians, have been rendered still more famous by the triumph and by the abuse of that persecuted religion. On the same spot, a temple, which far surpasses the ancient glories of the capital, has been since erected by the Christian pontiffs, who, deriving their claim of universal dominion from a humble fisherman of Galilee, have succeeded to the throne of the Caesars, given laws to the Barbarian conquerors of Rome, and extended their spiritual jurisdiction from the coast of the Baltic to the shores of the Pacific Ocean.

- Summaries
 - Rome is seen as the Beast arising from the West out of the Sea (Mediterranean)
 - Number of the Image of the Beast, 666, correlated with Nero

- The Jewish War

Tacitus: [beginning his account after the death of Nero] “I proceed to a work rich in disasters, full of atrocious battles, of discord and rebellion, yea, horrible even in peace. Four princes (Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Domitian) killed by the sword); three civil wars, several foreign wars; and mostly raging at the same time. Favorable events in the East [the subjugation of the Jews], unfortunate ones in the West. Illyria disturbed, Gaul uneasy; Britain conquered and soon relinquished; the nations of Sarmatia and Suevia rising against us; the Parthians excited by the deception of a pseudo-Nero. Italy also weighed down by new or oft-repeated calamities; cities swallowed up or buried in ruins; Rome laid waste by conflagrations, the old temples burned up, even the capitol set on fire by citizens; sanctuaries desecrated; adultery rampant in high places...HISTORIES I.c.2

- The most unfortunate country in that period was Palestine...the tragedy of Jerusalem prefigures in miniature the final judgment, represented in the eschatological discourses of Christ in Matthew 24. The Temple burned and destroyed, and not one stone left upon another.
- James the Just stoned by the Jews in Jerusalem and thrown from the pinnacle of the Temple
- The peasant Joshua, or Jesus, prophesied of the doomed city within the city. “A voice from the morning, a voice from the evening! A voice from the four winds! A voice of rain against Jerusalem and the Temple! A voice against the bridegrooms and the brides! A voice against the whole people! Woe, woe to Jerusalem!

He was brought before the procurator Albinus, scourged until his bones could be seen. The man was seen as insane and let go when all he could say was Woe to Jerusalem

He continued 7 years and 5 months till the outbreak of the War, and during the siege his last words...Woe to Jerusalem, and Woe, woe also to me!...and a stone of the Romans hurled at his head put an end to his lamentations. Josephus VI.5,3sq.

- Rebellion: under the last governors, Felix, Festus, Albinus, and Florus, moral corruption and dissolution of all social ties, plus the oppression of Roman yoke increased every year.
- Political factions all inflamed by false prophets and Messiahs, one of whom drew 30,000 men after him. Recall Christ’s prophecy how they would lead men astray.
- In May 66AD, under Gessius Florus, (wicked and cruel tyrant), an organized rebellion broke out against Rome. The radicals and moderate parties of the Jews fought (Zealots and Conservatives). Zealots had the fiery patriotism and religious fanaticism plus the keeping up of Messianic expectations all the way to the destruction of the city. Reports of comets, meteors, and all sorts of fearful omens and prodigies were interpreted as signs of the coming Messiah and his reign over the heathen. The

Romans recognized the Messiah in the form of Vespasian and his son Titus.

- In AD 67, Vespasian opened the campaign by overrunning Galilee with an army of 60,000 men. Rome hindered him from completing the battles. Nero killed himself, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius followed him...the later being taken out of a dog's kennel in Rome while drunk, dragged through the streets, and shamefully put to death.
- Vespasian declared emperor in AD 69.
- Vespasian's son Titus became general to execute the war on Jerusalem
- 80,000 trained soldiers stationed upon Mt. Scopus and the adjoining Mt. Olivet in full view of the city and the temple...the Valley of Kedron separated the besiegers from the besieged
- In Apr AD70, immediately after the Passover, the siege began: the Jews made much affliction on the armies from the valley floor up into the mountains, which emboldened the Jews. The Romans crucified nearly 500 Jews per day, and during the famine caught a woman roasting her child for food. The cries of mothers and children were horrendous. Schaff: "History records no other instance of such obstinate resistance, such desperate bravery and contempt of death. The Jews fought, not only for civil liberty, life, and their native land...[they fought for their world]...even in this state of horrible degeneracy, infused into them an almost superhuman power of endurance.
- Men known as the saccari, dagger holders, would dress like women and go through the streets stabbing people...crazy and rebellious.
- Daily sacrifices ceased on 17 July AD70 due to all-hands needed for defense of the city and the Temple. The last and bloodiest sacrifice was the Romans entering the temple (the abomination that makes desolate) and slaughtered thousands of Jews who were clinging to the horns of the altar crowding around it.
- Titus wanted to save the Temple, but the fire seemed spurred on higher by a higher decree. His armies moved into the Holy of Holies to try and arrest the rebels. Then, by a soldier claimed divine inspiration, a firebrand was hurled through the golden gate of the temple. When the flames arose, the Jews let forth with a hideous yell and tried to extinguish the fire. No false messiahs were providing comfort, and the Romans were now wanting the rebels to feel the full force of their rage.
- The Temple was burned and destroyed on the 10th of August AD70, the first of Tishri, the same day of the year according to tradition the first temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. The Loud shout of victory from the legions, and the wailings of the people now surrounded by fire and sword...the echoes from the mountains around increased the deafening roar. Jerusalem was raised to the ground.
- The ground wasn't visible due to the innumerable corpses. The Romans planted their eagles on the ruins and made sacrifices to them, and proclaimed Titus Imperator with the greatest acclamation of joy.
 - Titus declared that God, by special providence aided the Romans and drove the Jews from their impregnable strongholds.

- Josephus went thru the entire war: first as Governor of Galilee and general of the Jewish army, then as prisoner of Vespasian, finally as companion of Titus



- and mediator between the Romans and the Jews.
- READ Josephus quote about this generation: Jews Book 5, 13, 6
- Kaulbach, painting in the museum of Berlin
- Mervali: The most soul-stirring struggle of all ancient history.
- There was no Jeremiah to sing any lament of the end of the Old heavens and earth of the Jews. The gentiles had trampled the city for 42 months underfoot.
- After the five month siege, 1.1M Jews died, 11K perished of starvation soon after the siege, and 97K were taken

captive...the strongest and handsomest men were to lead the triumphal procession, among them the chiefs of the revolt, Simon Bar-Giora and John of Gischala.

- No expense spared in Rome for the victory celebration. Vespasian and Titus were in separate chariots, purple robes, and all of the furniture and artifacts of the temple were taken to the Temple of Peace, which was burned under Commodus and the furniture gone with it. Simon was thrown from the Tarpeian Rock, and John was imprisoned. Neither Vespasian nor Titus took the victorious epithet Judaeus; they despised a people which had lost its fatherland.
- Vespasian retained Jerusalem as his private property. The people were reduced to poverty. No magistrate, no temple, no sacrifice...nothing...stripped...disinherited from the Kingdom of God.
- The Christians forsook the doomed city in good time and fled to the town of Pella in the Decapolis, beyond the Jordan, in the north of Perea, where king Herod Agrippa II, before whom Paul once stood, opened to them a safe asylum. Also Eusebius Hist III. 5., who says the flight took place 4 years prior to the destruction of Jerusalem. Tradition says the leaders of the Christians were led by divine voice or angel to take flight
- When Jerusalem was rebuilt as a Christian city, its bishop was raised to the dignity of one of the four patriarchs of the East, one of honor, not power, and it sank into

oblivion after the Mohammedan invasion.

- The greatest calamity of Judaism and the greatest benefit of Christianity
- Separated them FOREVER. The rupture was consummated by the thunderbolt of divine omnipotence. God himself destroyed the house in which he thus far dwelt. The cords of the infant Church of Jesus Christ were cut, and she arose to a sense of maturity. The scaffolding of the Old Testament theocratic fabric came down, and the New Jerusalem stood strong and tall and began filling the earth.
- The Christians appeared as genuine Jews, as spiritual children of Abraham, who followed Messiah Jesus. The Jewish-Christian and Gentile-Christian assemblies were now fused as ONE HOLY, CATHOLIC, AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

TITLE AND BLESSING: Revelation 1:1-3

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants what must soon take place; and he made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. Blessed is he who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written therein; for the time is near.

- The How and What Purpose of the prophecy. The earliest manuscripts declare, The Apocalypse of John, whereas the Textus Receptus states, "The Apocalypse of John the Theologian." ...tu theologou...of the herald of God...and these three verses give us a summary of the entire book.
- This is the unveiling of Christ the risen King and His words and His works to His Blessed People, the Church, the New Jerusalem...see the paper notes. Christ is the main subject from the beginning to the end of this revelation, of this prophecy. Revelation removes the veil from God's plan, drawing back the curtain that hides Christ's glory, kingship, and control over history from the naked eye. CCC 50
- Mounce: A revelation mediated by Jesus Christ vs. of Jesus Christ...Christ is the revealer because He alone is worthy to open the scroll of destiny (Rev 5:5,7) and disclose its contents (Rev 6:1,3,5,7,9,12; 8:1)
- G.K.Beale: the Apocalypse was revealed so that believers would be blessed by having a heavenly perspective on redemptive history and consequently obeying the commands of the Lord of history.
- DRA Revelation 21:23 And the city hath no need of the sun, nor of the moon, to shine in it. For the glory of God hath enlightened it: and the Lamb is the lamp thereof.
- DRA Revelation 22:5 And night shall be no more. And they shall not need the light of the lamp, nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall enlighten them. And they shall reign for ever and ever.
- Jesus speaks to His Church through John the Apostle.
This message of Christ's people and the Age was previously sealed based on the instructions to Daniel regarding the End of the Old Testament Age, and the End of the Age for the Old Covenant Israel...what was not disclosed was the New Jerusalem, the Church of Jesus Christ, whose unveiling Revelation is all about.
- NKJ Daniel 12:1 "At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands *watch* over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, *Even* to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book. 2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame *and* everlasting contempt. 3 Those who are wise shall shine Like the

brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever. 4 "But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase." 5 Then I, Daniel, looked; and there stood two others, one on this riverbank and the other on that riverbank. 6 And *one* said to the man clothed in linen, who *was* above the waters of the river, "How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders *be*?" 7 Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who *was* above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that *it shall be* for a time, times, and half *a time*; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these *things* shall be finished. 8 Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, "My lord, what *shall be* the end of these *things*?" 9 And he said, "Go *your way*, Daniel, for the words *are* closed up and sealed till the time of the end. 10 "Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand. 11 "And from the time *that* the daily *sacrifice* is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, *there shall be* one thousand two hundred and ninety days. 12 "Blessed *is* he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days. 13 "But you, go *your way* till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days."

- Daniel would partake of the New Jerusalem, too...and note the similar language of the 3 ½ years of Tribulation that we shall see in the Revelation.

Soon take place, and the time is near:

- The note is immediacy to the Churches being addressed by the prophecy. The Tribulation of the Last Days of Israel was at that time AD66-AD70. What was far off in Daniel's day was on the verge of fulfillment in John's day.
- The straightforward interpretation was an immanent appearing of Christ to avenge his elect speedily (Luke 18:8) and to crush Satan under their feet shortly (Romans 16:20).
- A parallel with Mark 1:15, that the "time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has drawn near.
- The Kingdom has already come and it is now coming, and the tribulation is imminent (1:9; 2:9,22; 3:10), and now the immanent end of the age of Old Testament Israel as Daniel had predicted...the Climax with the final appearing (coming...parousia) (2:16; 3:11; 16:5)...I come quickly

Rev. 22:6 Then he said to me, "These words *are* faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place. 7 "Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed *is* he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."...10 And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. 11 "He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still." 12 " And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to give to every one according to his work....20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! 21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

This is a divine disclosure vs. a predictive revelation. Blessings are associated with the hearing and obeying of the prophecy.

Blessedness to those reading, hearing, and obeying the prophecy:

Blessed are those...implies a public reading of the book in a liturgical setting where, as in the synagogue, the book would be read by a lector to a congregation assembled for worship. The

Word of God is read in liturgy and then the congregation goes forth into the world to serve in the liturgy of life. The hearer KEEPS the Word brought forth...Chilton: "The goal of apostolic instruction is always ethical. It is written to produce love from pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith (1 Tim 1:5).

The first of seven Blessings, or Beatitudes:

Rev 14:13 Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' " "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."

Rev 16:15 "Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame."

Rev 19:9 Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!' " And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

Rev 22:7 "Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."...14 Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.

THE TIME IS NEAR: is repeated in Rev 22: 6 Then he said to me, "These words are faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place. 7 "Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."10 And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.

The Book is a "covenantal lawsuit," prophesying the outpouring of God's wrath on Jerusalem...it is a prophecy of the period known in Sacred Scripture as "the Last Days," meaning the last days of the covenantal nation of Israel, meaning the last days of the covenantal nation of Israel, the forty-year generation (Matt 24:34) between the Ascension of Christ (AD30) and the Fall of Jerusalem to the Romans (AD70).

The word "soon" "shortly" "at hand" refutes clearly the Futurists View of Revelation, and the prophecy was sign-ified by the angel. God and John, Christ and His Servants...two witnesses that bear witness of the truth.

Chilton: ancient world was to be shaken to its foundations (Matthew 24) at this End of the Age, and the Christians needed the Revelation as a stable guide during the dramatic change that was to come...the END OF THE WORLD was approaching—not the destruction of the physical universe, but the passing away of the old world-order, the governing of the world around the central sanctuary in Jerusalem. God had established a New Nation, a New and Royal Priesthood (c.f., 1 Peter 2), a new humanity worshipping in a new sanctuary. God's House was nearing completion, and the old, provisional dwelling, like scaffolding, was about to be torn away.

Greeting and Doxology: Revelation 1:4-8

John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, every one who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so, Amen. I am the Alpha and Omega, says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

- This is a clear address to the Seven Churches of Asia Minor, which were flourishing at the time in a world that was about to be engulfed in great tribulation for everyone, and especially Christians...the message to the churches was about that which ***must shortly take place***
- C.I. Scofield spoke (Scofield Reference Bible 1901 having its source from the Darbyites from the late 1800's...led to the relatively contemporary, yet widespread eschatological doctrine called Dispensationalism) of the seven churches as seven ages or phases of church history ending with the Laodicean Church...but there is no evidence for this conjecture. The church, Scofield says, will end in defeat and apostasy. These Dispensational ideas and teachings, which have many variations, are not dogmatically believed in the mainline churches, or Catholic Church, and have no history in the church at all prior to the mid-1800s, with the exception of the doctrine of Millenariansim, which holds that the Lord will come back to reign for a literal 1000 years, which has been disputed by the Church in leau of the symbolic nature of the Thousand Year reign of Christ, which now is.
- Dispensational presuppositions:
 - Presupposition 1: The things spoken about must take place shortly
 - Presupposition 2: The message was to bring warning and comfort regarding coming judgment and salvation.
 - Presupposition 3: We're living in the last days of the Laodicean Church.
- The New Testament Church is still in her infancy...rather young, 2000 years are as two days to the Lord. We are still only at the beginning of the *Church's* history.
- SEVEN: a number that indicates *qualitative fullness*, with the sense that there is a local and immediate sense of the seven churches listed in chapters 2 and 3, and there is the sense that the prophecy is to the whole church in every age...just as is St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, however, we must not rip the interpretation out of the letter's historical context.
- Beale says that the number seven in Scripture and in prophetic contexts can be taken either literally (Lev. 4:16: sprinkle the blood seven times), or purely figuratively (Lev 26:18: God will punish her seven times), for completeness' sake.

- The seven churches: literally, yet to the complete or whole church in the first century
- The seven lampstands: literally, or the completeness of the power and presence of the Spirit of God.
- Grace, according to Chilton, shows forth the favor of God bestowed upon those who, apart from Christ, deserve wrath, and Peace is that state of permanent reconciliation with God through Christ's atonement. The Father chose us before the foundations of the world for salvation based on the atonement provided by the lamb slain from the foundations of the world. Beale: Grace and peace from the Sovereign God who is a stable mountain, as Mt. Zion, to His people in the midst of coming Great Tribulation and the End of the Age.
- John describes the Father as *the Being, and the Was, and the Coming*
- God's coming is not His coming at the end of the world, but His appearing at the end of the Jewish age.
- John speaks of the Holy Spirit as the seven Spirits who are before His throne. Grace and peace originate from God...not angels...so this is the fullness of the Spirit of God...like the seven spirits of God: See Zechariah 4: the Golden Lampstand with the seven lamps
- Rev. 5: 6 And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having **seven** horns and **seven** eyes, which are the **seven Spirits** of God sent out into all the earth.
- Christ is the Inaugurator of a New Creation through His death and resurrection. He is king over the rulers of the earth. Christ Jesus, through His resurrection is king not only over the rulers of peoples and kingdoms, now, but is also ruler over the satanic principalities that motivate them. Christ is also King of the saints in the earth...namely the Church.
- Revelation is about rule, and it reveals Jesus Christ as the Lord of history restoring His people to dominion through the power of the Holy Spirit. He has made us kings and priests to His God and Father. Jesus portrayed his prophetic, kingly, priestly nature in the earth by mediating as a priest through his sacrificial death and uncompromising witness of the truth to the world; and he reigned as king by conquering death and sin through the defeat of them at the cross. We are to have this same mind that Christ had (Phil. 2). Like Old Testament priests, (see Is. 43:10-13) we now have free, unmediated access to God's presence because Christ has removed the barriers of sin by his substitutionary blood. We are to reflect that light of God's presence and to represent and speak His Word to the world as was Israel of Old was to do, but failed to do (c.f., Is. 40-55).
- This is a present and active reign of the saints now, and a consummation in the future. As saints, we are fellow partakers, actively engaged in three realms: tribulation, the kingdom, and endurance...reigning as prophets, by the Spirit of God bearing witness of Christ and His truth; reigning as priests (mediators between the salvation of God and the world through word and deed, letting our light so shine before men that they come to God); and as kings, in that we are fruitfully dominating and stewarding our lives and the earth to God's glory

having dominion over sin and death through Christ (this is how the Puritans thought and lived as they built a City Set Upon a Hill in America).

- 1 Peter 2: ⁹ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.
- Our Catholic expression: the Priesthood:
 - The early church understood herself to be in the true succession of Israel and thus the inheritors of all the blessings promised to their spiritual predecessors (1 Pet 2:5, 9)
 - (1) *Of the faithful*: The priestly people of God. Christ has made of his Church a "kingdom of priests," and gives the faithful a share in his priesthood through the sacraments of baptism and confirmation.
 - (2) *Ministerial*: The ministerial priesthood received in the sacrament of holy orders differs in essence from this common priesthood of all the faithful. It has as its purpose to serve the priesthood of all the faithful by building up and guiding the Church in the name of Christ, who is head of the Body. (Cardinal Levada's glossary)
- Revelation 11:4 and Zechariah 4 show forth the Church as the kingly and priestly nation ablaze with the Holy Spirit to bear witness of God and His truth in the earth.
- In our daily lives, and in our assembly at Mass, we're in God's official court...His throne, where He receives worship...the entire Revelation is given on the Lord's Day. The Spirit communicates grace through worship throughout history. This grace is communicated through the ministry of the Word of God and the Sacraments—the grand liturgical phases of Mass.
- Chilton, "the notion that we can have fellowship with God, yet separate ourselves from the Church and from the corporate worship of the Body of Christ, is an altogether pagan idea, utterly foreign to Holy Scripture."
- **Jesus Christ is the Faithful Witness** (Gr. *Martyr*) the witness is the one who works to enforce the law and assist in its execution, even to the enforcement of the death penalty. Now, martyr only seems to represent one who is executed vs. one who works to enforce the truth. Christ is the Faithful Witness, coming into English as "martyr" one who suffers death for allegiance to a cause..
- Christ the true witness was put to death by the word of false witnesses.
- **Jesus Christ, the Firstborn from the Dead**: Just as the Apostle Peter preached in Acts 2: 32 "This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. 33 "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. 34 "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, 35 Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'" ' 36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

- The Ruler...the highest of the Kings of the Earth (Ps. 89:27). All authority is Christ's in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth. Matt 28:18 and Phil 2. Also note that Christ shares His glory with no other, and will vie with no other law system: Psalms 2, and 110.
- We don't hold to the retreatest theology that Jesus is only Lord of the heart...He is Lord overall all peoples and things. Such a namby-pamby doctrine would have been NO THREAT to the Caesar is Lord doctrine of the day.
- Acts 17:1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. 2 Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, 3 explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and *saying*, "This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ." 4 And some of them were persuaded; and a great multitude of the devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women, joined Paul and Silas. 5 But the Jews who were not persuaded, becoming envious, took some of the evil men from the marketplace, and gathering a mob, set all the city in an uproar and attacked the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.
- 6 But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here too. 7 "Jason has harbored them, and these are all acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying there is **another king** -- Jesus." 8 And they troubled the crowd and the rulers of the city when they heard these things.
- Chilton: "Toothless, impotent Christianity is a gold mine for statism: it keeps men's attention focused on the clouds while the State picks their pockets and steals their children."
- Christians are assured of two things: 1) warfare to the death against all would-b-gods; and 2) the complete triumph of the Christian faith over all its enemies.

Verse 7: Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, every one who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Verse 8: Even so, Amen. I am the Alpha and Omega, says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

- As St. Bede says, Our Lord Jesus was betrayed and crucified in obscurity with no one to plead his cause, but the prophet says that He comes/is coming in full view of all the rebels who crucified him...of the Jews and the Gentiles.
- Coming in Clouds: metaphorically as against Egypt (Is 19:1), Mal 1:3; Ps 97:2-3; and Ps 104:3
- Daniel 7: [13] I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him.[14] And to him was given dominion and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.
- Zechariah 12: [8] On that day the LORD will put a shield about the inhabitants of Jerusalem so that the feeblest among them on that day shall be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the angel of the LORD, at their head. [9] And on that day I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. [10] "And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of compassion and supplication, so that, when they look on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a first-born.

- God stresses his timeless sovereignty over all the universe for the encouragement of the Asian Christians who are facing persecution for their faith.
- Jesus' coming in the clouds is a phrase known by the Jews, both believers in Christ and non-believers. The word, "coming" is the Greek word, "parousia," which means an active presence, or an appearing. For example, if I were to say, the boss is coming, the active presence of his authority causes others to act. If the boss were present, the state of affairs in the office changes.
- The Analogy of Scripture, comparing Sacred Scripture with Sacred Scripture to understand better more difficult passages in light of those passages which are easier to understand.
- Matthew 24:1 Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. 2 And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not *one* stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down." 3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" 4 And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. 5 "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. 6 "And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. 8 "All these *are* the beginning of sorrows. 9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. 10 "And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. 11 "Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12 "And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. 13 "But he who endures to the end shall be saved. 14 "And this Gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. 15 " Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand),
- 16 "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 17 "Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. 18 "And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. 19 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 "And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. **21 "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.** 23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here *is* the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe *it*. 24 "For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 25 "See, I have told you beforehand. 26 "Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; *or* 'Look, *He is* in the inner rooms!' do not believe *it*. 27 "For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 28 "For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together. 29 " Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power

and great glory. 31 "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

- 32 " Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer *is* near. 33 "So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near -- at the doors! **34 "Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.** {{This key verse clearly tells us that the generation hearing the voice of Christ would not die out until all of the things prophesied by Christ would come to pass}}
- Luke records Jesus' comforting words to His disciples regarding this great distress:
- Luke 21: NKJ Luke 21: 11 "And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven. 12 "But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute *you*, delivering *you* up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake. 13 "But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony.
- 14 "Therefore settle *it* in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; 15 "for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist. 16 "You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put *some* of you to death. 17 "And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. 18 "But not a hair of your head shall be lost. 19 "By your patience (patient endurance, perseverance) possess (you will acquire) your souls. 20 " But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. 21 "Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. **22 "For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.** 23 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. 24 "And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. 25 " And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; 26 "men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. 27 "Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28 "Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption [apo-lu-trosis: deliverance, release) draws near."
- This would be the end of the age, the end of the Jewish world (that first century generation, temple, priesthood, the city of Jerusalem.
Tribulation was upon them...Tribulation will come upon us and we must not avoid it
 - Matt 24:1 Great Tribulation; John 16:33, you will have great tribulation; Rom 12:10, be patient in tribulation; 2 Cor 7:4, be joyful in tribulation; Acts 14:22, through much tribulation we enter the kingdom; 2 Thess 1:4, must endure tribulation.
- Redemption would come for the elect, but not for those who were disobedient. The time would be cut short and not be prolonged for the sake of the elect. But, as Peter states, the children of God must wait until the end so that all of the elect could be drawn into the Kingdom:
- 2 Peter 3: 8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

- 9 The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not **willing** that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.
- And although these were the days of God’s vengeance, Christ was clearly grieved over the evil hearts of unbelief harbored in the bosom of the apostate Jews and the holy city that would, within the next 40 years:
- Christ stated at His passion (crucifixion) (Luke 23:28) "Daughters of **Jerusalem**, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. 29 "For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, 'Blessed *are* the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!' 30 "Then they will begin 'to say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" and to the hills, "Cover us!" ' 31 "For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?"
- Matthew 23:37 " O **Jerusalem, Jerusalem**, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing! 38 "See! Your house is left to you desolate (lonely, uninhabited, without God); 39 "for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed *is* He who comes in the name of the LORD!'
- This was a trying time wherein many believers gave their lives for their testimony of another King—Jesus. They believed He reigned above all. They lived their lives in love, in obedience, and in strong faith in His Words. They overcame this tribulation by the blood of the Lamb (Christ), the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives even unto death. You can’t meaningfully threaten one who is dead to this world. You can even take away all, even his life, and he is persuaded that His eternal deliverance rests in God. You can’t crush one who has that stance as an anchor of His soul. Using our first century brethren as an example, let’s nurture that overcoming faith in our own lives by believing and doing His word in our lives—in the times of distress and in the times of peace—for our God is worthy of this testimony among His people.
- He is Coming with Clouds, or Coming in the Clouds. Again, an Active Presence of Christ in Judgment and Redemption. Let us go further into the context:
- For the second time, I wish to divert from our exegesis of the Revelation of Jesus Christ to give you some historical background behind the writing of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Again, I will elaborate upon what Merivale calls, “the most soul-searching struggle of all ancient history.” I will teach you about the Great Tribulation that would try the hearts of men during the first century—during the covenantal and kingdom transfer from the nation of the unbelieving Jews to the nations of the world who would bear the proper fruit of it.
- **Matthew 24:21 For, at that time, there will be a very great distress, such as has not come into being from the beginning of the world order until the present time, No (emphatically), neither shall ever be. 22 And if those days were not shortened, no flesh would be saved, but on account of the chosen ones, those days shall be shortened.**
- These are the days that Luke, in Luke 21:22, calls “the **days** of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.”
- Jesus revealed the intensity, the nearness, and the shortness of these days in Matthew 10: 21 "Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. 22 "And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. 23 "When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the **cities** of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

- These days were prophesied by the prophets of old, including John the Baptizer when he said “to all, “I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 “His **winnowing** fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.” 18 And with many other exhortations he preached to the people.
- We spoke of how Jesus prophesied the events of this great time of distress that would test the faith of God’s people. As one reads the New Testament, one cannot help but see that the apostles spoke of these times, especially Paul. We can note in 1 Corinthians 7: 25 Now concerning virgins: I have no commandment from the Lord; yet I give judgment as one whom the Lord in His mercy *has made* trustworthy. 26 I suppose therefore that this is good because of the present **distress** -- that *it is* good for a man to remain as he is: 27 Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be loosed. Are you loosed from a wife? Do not seek a wife. And in 1 Cor. 7: 29 But this I say, brethren, the time *is short*, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none,
- Finally, the culminating New Testament prophecy, the Revelation of Jesus Christ, clearly portrays the characters and the tenor of these first century times of tribulation for all to see—clearly, for it is indeed a Revelation—a Revelation of Christ—not a continuing mystery. In the Revelation we see four visions that are quite interrelated for the purpose of helping us to interpret this prophecy, which is steeped in Old Testament symbology. We see Rome, her seven hills, and her ten Caesars depicted as the Beast of the Sea. We see Israel, the nation who was to inherit the land, as the Beast of the Land. We see Caesar Nero as the image of the Beast of the Sea, its personification. We see Apostate Israel as the Harlot, the Babylon the Great. We see Jerusalem, the Great City, the covenantal city that rules over the Kings of the earth. And we see the glorious woman—Zion, the lady who births the Child whom the serpent desires to devour.

Before examining the factors leading up to the conflagration of the city of Jerusalem and the end of the Old Testament, let’s look at the socio-political undertow that our God used to bring His Word to pass.

- The Jews in Palestine hated Rome. Rome, through her procurators, was only able to appease the Jews by force and cruelty for a season until an all out rebellion resulted against the Imperial forces. Herod, for example, enhanced their temple with gold. That temple was finished around AD61. The streets were also white-washed.
- Rome at first protected the Christian church through the Procounsel Gallio in Corinth, Captain Lysias in Jerusalem, and the Procurator Festus in Caesara.
- In spite of interludes of favor, the Judaizers and Christ-haters of the baser sort early-on began to harass the church throughout the empire, but especially in Jerusalem.
- Wars and rumors of such were breaking out throughout the empire, which made insurrections like that of the Jews in Palestine intolerable for the Empire.

It would seem that there were three unmistakable factors used by God in the wrapping up of the Old Testament system, the bringing on of judgment upon Israel and Rome, and the deliverance of the Christians: Caesar Nero, the Conflagration of Rome, and the Jewish War.

Caesar Nero was the most wicked man who had ever lived.

- Schaff says that “the world was to him a comedy and tragedy, and he was the chief actor.” He had an insane appetite for applause. He played the lyre, sung odes at supper, drove his chariots in the circus, and compelled men of the highest rank to be in humiliating obscene dramas of Greek myths.
- He was the last of the Julian lineage, and with his death, the Julian line ignominiously perished. He reigned from AD54-59 quite tamely while guided by Seneca and Burrhus, who were philosophers. This time was Rome’s most glorious hour. Nero’s reign from AD59-68, however, was one characterized by monstrous activities on his part that seem to throw Rome into chaos. It would seem as though God began to unravel the whole world order in preparation for special revelation to manifest—the destruction of the old order according to prophecy and the transfer of the Kingdom of God to believers.
- Nero executed Peter and Paul in AD64. He would be known for his perverse sexuality, dressing up like an animal and attacking prisoners in his dungeons. “He heaped crime upon crime until he became a proverbial monster of iniquity.” He murdered his brother Britannicus, his mother Agrippina, his wives Octavia and Poppaea, his teacher Seneca, and many eminent Romans.

In AD64 after Peter and Paul’s execution, a great fire broke out in Rome that destroyed all but 4 of the 14 sections of the city. Nero was at first accused of this conflagration, but he then displaced the blame for the destructive fire upon the Christians—the Atheists of Rome. Pliny said that Christians were vulgar and pestiferous (dangerous and noxious to the morals and welfare of society). Nero swayed the Romans to persecute the Christians, and the Romans and Jews did so, not because of the fire so much as for the perception that the Christians were haters of the whole human race.

Referring to Nero, John in Revelation 13:18 says, Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666. Dr. Kenneth Gentry, in great detail, proves that the sum of the number associated with each Hebrew letter in Caesar Nero’s name equals 666, or in Latin 660.

- By this beast, Christians were subsequently murdered as pleasant sport in the circus, which held 250,000 people. The circus also contained wooden shops within that housed Jewish shopkeepers and prostitutes. Those confessing Christ were thrown to beasts—men, women, and their children. Nero also wrapped Christians in sheets doused with tar, or pitch, and flammable fluids, and then hung them in his gardens and lit them for his parties (Roman candles). So, many confessors of Christ were burned alive.

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

- At age 32, Nero took a dagger to his throat, spoke the words, “the world has lost a great singer,” and then plunged it into his throat in a suicidal death.

Rome was then plunged into political chaos with enemies outside the borders and many foreign wars occurring, and 3 civil wars or insurrections occurring within the borders of the empire, and one strong rebellion occurring in Palestine, the land of the Jews. Within one year, during AD68-69, 3 emperors rose to the throne and were mysteriously murdered, most likely by the Roman army—Galba, Otho, and Vitellius. Emperor Vespasian took the helm as Worshipful Caesar in AD 69 when Rome was still laid in

waste by fires, her temples were burned up, and adultery and intrigue was rampant in high places. Vespasian and the Roman armies were stirred to stop this chaos, and the insurrection at Jerusalem was timed in just a manner so as to receive the crushing brunt of the power of Rome. Revelation refers to this as the Beast turning upon the Harlot.

Mark 13:1 Then as He went out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings *are here!*"

2 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? Not *one* stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

Tacitus in his Histories speaking of the Jewish War stated, "I proceed to a work rich in disasters, full of atrocious battles, of discord and rebellion, yea horrible even in peace."

The most wonderful and accurate chronicle of the events that would now occur against the Jews was Josephus' War of the Jews. The Jews placed Joseph Flavius, or Josephus, , a son of a Jerusalem priest and an untrained warrior, in charge of the furthest outpost of Ceasarea Philipi. Ceasarea Philipi was captured and Josephus along with it. Josephus saw the irrational, rebellious, and wicked nature of his countrymen; he subsequently pitied them, and then aligned himself with Roman General Titus as a Jewish translator on Titus' campaigns against the Jews. Now the Jews refer to Josephus as a traitor. Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical History, Chap. IX, says that Josephus "has contibuted so much to the history in hand,..." His most famous works are, Antiquity of the Jews, History of the Jewish War, and Reply to Apion.

Here are some of the horrifying events that happened during the Jewish Wars:

Josephus, War, v.2.285-315

- James the Just, Bishop of the Jerusalem church, writer of the Epistle of James, half-brother of Christ, was murdered by the Jews. He was instrumental in the conversion of many Jews to Christ. He interceded for his countrymen, but they ultimately threw him from a local pinnacle. He survived the fall and then was subsequently kicked and then stoned to death. Many believe that after this death, God's wrath came upon the Jews and their city.
- The Jews hating the Romans, were excommunicated from many Palestinian cities. The Romans proceeded to slaughter many of the Jews for which they then rebelled and exacted a large number of deaths upon the Romans. Emboldened, the Jews continued to trounce Christians.
- Seven years before the destruction of the city Agrippa II left for his special mountain sanctuary in Pella, where Christians sought refuge for a time when the armies surrounded Jerusalem.
- False prophets and false messiahs were leading many Jews astray and into the hand of the Romans where they were mercilessly slaughtered. One led as many as 30,000 to their deaths.
- Inside the city of Jerusalem, Sacarians (dagger men) were committing murders daily during the festivals. In AD 66 civil war broke out between Jewish zealots and moderates—Jews killing their own people. The Zionistic, anti-Roman Zealots took control of the city and temple and introduced a reign of terror. The Jews expected their Messiah to come and deliver them from this tribulation.
- Astrological signs, such as meteors, comets, and fearful omens appeared over the skies of Jerusalem. The Jews drastically misinterpreted these signs, of which our Lord spoke, as signs of national deliverance vs. impending doom.
- Josephus in Eccl VIII: "at one time, ... a star very like a sword stood above the city, ... also a comet that continued to be seen a whole year. Once on the 8th of April, about 3am so great a light shone around the altar and the temple as to seem a bright day. This continued for a half hour. The ignorant thought that this was a good omen.
- Strange signs occurred at the Feast of Unleavened Bread such as when a cow, struck by the priest for sacrifice, brought forth a lamb in the midst of the temple. Also, the Eastern Gate of the inner

temple, made of brass and so heavy that it took 20 men to open and close it, was seen at 12 midnight to have opened by itself. Some thought that this was God's sign that blessing was coming in. Others saw it as a sign that their defenses were useless and God made them vulnerable.

- Josephus trembling speaks of the truthful event witnessed by many that on the 21st of May (Artimisium), a wonderful spectacle was seen, which surpasses all belief, for before the setting of the sun there were seen chariots and armed troops on high, wheeling through the clouds around the whole region and surrounding the cities.
- At Pentecost that year, the priest entering the temple at night according to their customs...said they first perceived a motion and noise, and after this a confused voice saying, "let us go hence."
- These Jews were given over to madness by God. They rejected the truth, therefore they lost their minds and spiraled into community self-destruction. Jews were madly headstrong to rebel against God and the world.
- In AD67, Nero sent Vespasian and 60,000 troops to crush the rebellion in Jerusalem. After Nero committed suicide, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius reigned. Vitellius was found in and taken out of a dog kennel while drunk and dragged through the city of Rome and shamefully put to death. Vespasian returned to rule Rome and sent his son Titus to Jerusalem with 80,000 to complete the Jewish War.
- Titus' troops were positioned on Mt. Scopus and the Mt. Of Olives facing Jerusalem seemingly fulfilling Zechariah's prophecy about the Lord feet on the mounts preparing for judgement. This was the last opportunity for those in Christ to leave according to the prophecies of Christ.

Zechariah 14:1 Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, And your spoil will be divided in your midst.

2 For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. 3 Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle. 4 And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, *Making* a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south. 5 Then you shall flee *through* My mountain valley, For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee As you fled from the earthquake In the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the LORD my God will come, *And* all the saints with You. 6 It shall come to pass in that day *That* there will be no light; The lights will diminish. 7 It shall be one day Which is known to the LORD -- Neither day nor night. But at evening time it shall happen *That* it will be light. 8 And in that day it shall be *That* living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, Half of them toward the eastern sea And half of them toward the western sea; In both summer and winter it shall occur. 9 And the LORD shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be -- "The LORD *is* one," And His name one.

Revelation 18: 4 And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my **people**, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. 5 "For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. 6 "Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her. 7 "In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, 'I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.' 8 "Therefore her plagues will come in one day -- death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong *is* the Lord God who judges her. 9 " The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning, 10 "standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.'

Eusebius records that "...those that believed in Christ, having removed from Jerusalem, having been commanded by a divine revelation, given to men of approved piety there before the war, removed from the city, and dwelt at a certain town beyond Jordan called Pella. Here, those that believed in Christ, having removed from Jerusalem, as if holy men had entirely abandoned the royal city itself, and the whole land of Judea; the divine justice, for their crimes against Christ and his apostles, finally overtook them, totally destroying the whole generation of these evil doers from the earth.

After Christ helped His people to escape, He, the Ruling King would smite the evil unbelievers with His rod called Titus' army. The Jews own words would come back to haunt and destroy them: Matthew 27: 22 Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" *They* all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!"

23 Then the governor said, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they cried out all the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified!" 24 When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather *that* a tumult was rising, he took water and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the **blood** of this just Person. You see *to it.*" 25 And all the people answered and said, "His **blood** be on us and on our children." 26 Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered *Him* to be crucified.

- The Zealots inside of Jerusalem and those fighting outside rejected proposals of surrender by Titus. They seemed to reject the prayers of Josephus to surrender. All who spoke of surrender were slaughtered by the Zealots. The Romans caught many Jews during skirmishes. The Romans were crucifying 500 Jews per day and lining the roads with the crosses until there was no more wood to carryout the crucifixions.
- Once the city was shut up "like a prison," no food was able to come in to the city. Famine resulted and families baked bread in secret lest those being overcome with starvation murder them for barley. "History records no other instance of such obstinate resistance, such desperate bravery and contempt of death." It were as if the Jews were endowed with superhuman power to persevere and defy.
- One of the most horrific accounts was about a starving mother who, being urged by frenzy and necessity from her counselors, proceeded against nature. Eccl VI: "Seizing her little son, who was yet at her breast, she said, "wretched child! In the midst of war, famine, and faction, for what do I preserve thee?" She didn't want Roman slavery or starvation, so she slew her son and roasted him and ate half herself and saved the rest. Robbers smelling the food sought to kill her for it until they saw what it was she was eating. The murderers were horrified. She said, "This is my own son, and the deed is mine. Eat, for I too have eaten, be not more delicate than a woman, nor more tender than a mother; but if you are so pious, and reject my offering, I have already eaten half, and let the rest remain for me." The robbers left.
- Eusebius VII: "Such then, was the vengeance that followed the guilt and impiety of the Jews against the Christ of God.
- The starved and diseased dropped dead in the streets. The dead began falling on the dead. Those who were sick could not bury the numbers of dead for the number. After there were no more burial spaces in the cities, the dead bodies were thrown over the wall into the ditches below.
- In July of AD70, the daily sacrifices at the temple ceased because all men were needed to fight at the city walls. Josephus records that the "last and bloodiest sacrifice was that of the slaughter of 1000's of Jews who crowded around the alter of burnt offering hoping to be saved by their Messiah. But no such deliverance would come.
- In the final days of the siege, with nerves on edge on both sides (Romans and Jews), Titus was to take the city with the intention to save the temple as a trophy; however, how to do this with the

rebels held up in it would be challenging. Severus said that Titus thought his next crushing move would end the Jewish and Christian religions. Titus began to have the gates burned. While Titus was holding off on torching the temple, one of his soldiers threw a torch toward the temple based upon, what he called, a divine command. All Titus' soldiers then sought to burn the rebels and their temple, and then steal the golden treasuries. Josephus said that there was more blood than fire. Dead, bloating bodies covered the ground and the Romans ran over them all pursuing the rebel Jews when the walls were burned down.

- The temple and the city were burned with fire on August 10th AD70; the same day the first temple of Solomon was finally destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in AD 586.

As Christ, through Rome, triumphed, this siege of Jerusalem, which lasted 5 months and culminated the 3 ½ year Jewish War, resulted in the deaths of 1.1M unbelieving Jews. 11,000 died of starvation after the siege, and 97,000 were carried away captive to Rome—their choice men were paraded as trophies through the streets of Rome. The great many of the captives were distributed to the provinces to be destroyed by the sword or wild beasts in the theatres. Those under 17 years of age were sold as slaves—nearly 90,000

Vespasian and Titus celebrated the victory lavishly and Josephus, for his part, was given a royal pension and land in Palestine to the disgust of the Jews. The Jews had lost it all, their land, their city, their temple, and their all—the worship of Yahweh. It had all been transferred to a nation who would bear the fruits of it all according to Jesus' parable. The famous Arch of Titus, which still stands in Rome, remains as a trophy of Christ's victory and haunting reminder of the fruit of corporate unbelief.

Jerusalem was rebuilt as a Christian city. It later became one of the 5 primary bishoprics of the Occidental Church (Eastern Orthodox). Schaff says that the cities destruction and subsequent being given to the Christians was a "refutation of Judaism and a vindication and emancipation of Christianity."

Josephus: "If the Romans hadn't destroyed these villains, the earth would have swallowed them up like Sodom, for the generation which was in it was far more ungodly than the men on whom these punishments had in former times fallen. By their madness, the whole nation came to be ruined."

Schaff: "Thus, therefore, must one of the best Roman Emperors execute the long threatened judgment of God and the most learned Jew of his time describe it, and thereby, without willing or knowing it, bear testimony of the truth of the prophecy and the divinity of the mission of Jesus Christ, the rejection of whom brought all this and the subsequent misfortune upon the apostate race."

The climax to the Great Tribulation separated Christianity and the false religion of Judaism forever. Again, Schaff: "Rupture was outwardly consummated by the thunderbolt of divine omnipotence. God himself had destroyed the house, in which he had thus far dwelt, in which Jesus had taught and in which the apostles had prayed. He rejected his peculiar people for their obstinate rejection of the Messiah, he demolished the whole fabric of the mosaic theocracy." "The scaffolding of the New Testament Temple, the church, was ripped away to display the Bride of Christ, the New Jerusalem, the Zion of Christ and all her glory. The Bride had made herself ready."

NKJ Revelation 19:1 After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power *belong* to the Lord our God! 2 "For true and righteous *are* His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants *shed* by her." 3 Again they said, "Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!" 4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, "Amen! Alleluia!" 5 Then a voice came from the throne, saying, "Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!" 6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! 7 "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." 8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. 9 Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!' " And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

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

- Alpha and Omega, the first and last ltrs of the Greek alphabet...Our risen and exalted Lord reveals that He is the Existing Living One, Yahweh, and is the Panto-Kratora, all powerful ready to appear, THE ALL-RULER... therefore, prepare, and make yourself ready for the appearing of judgment against the wicked and persecutors, and reward for the faithful.
- Jesus the Christ is the origin and finisher of all creation, and is the Governor, King, and Emperor over all...see Psalm 2, 110, and in the following passages:
- Rev 22:10 And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. 11 "He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still." 12 " And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to give to every one according to his work. 13 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End, the First and the Last." 14 Blessed *are* those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.
- 15 But outside *are* dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.
- Isiah 41:4 Who has performed and done *it*, Calling the generations from the beginning? 'I, the LORD, am the first; And with the last I *am* He.' "
- Isaiah 44:6 " Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I *am* the First and I *am* the Last; Besides Me *there is* no God. 7 And who can proclaim as I do? Then let him declare it and set it in order for Me, Since I appointed the ancient people. And the things that are coming and shall come, Let them show these to them. 8 Do not fear, nor be afraid; Have I not told you from that time, and declared *it*? You *are* My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? Indeed *there is* no other Rock; I know not *one*.' "

Revelation 1: ⁹ I John, your brother, who share with you in Jesus the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. ¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet ¹¹ saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Per'gamum and to Thyati'ra and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to La-odice'a."

¹² Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man,^[b] clothed with a long robe and with a golden girdle round his breast; ¹⁴ his head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire, ¹⁵ his feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters; ¹⁶ in his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth issued a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength.

¹⁷ When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand upon me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, ¹⁸ and the living one; I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. ¹⁹ Now write what you see, what is and what is to take place hereafter. ²⁰ As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

Saint John is caught up in a vision, a trance, "I became spirit-possessed," and hears the risen Christ's instructions and sees the glorified Ruler of the Universe: Jesus Christ.

- Peter's trance: Acts 11:5; Paul's warning from the Lord: Acts 22:17
- John speaks that he shares in the sufferings of Jesus Christ and of His body, the Church as he is banished to the Island of Patmos...a small island in the southern Aegean Sea. This island was the location of a Roman penal colony used for prisoners of the Emperor.
 - An island 10 miles long and 6 miles wide—a bare, rocky volcanic island with hills rising to about one thousand feet.
 - Prior to the destruction of Jerusalem, Christianity was considered a nuisance sect of Judaism
- Both Isaiah and Ezekiel began their ministries with a great vision of the glory of God: Isaiah 6 and Ezekiel 1.
- John was partaking of the, as Paul spoke in Phil 3:9-10, the fellowship of Christ's suffering, which the Christians were partaking of because of Jesus and His testimony of the Kingdom of God. The Church, to whom he is speaking are fellow partakers with Christ, and with John of the following:

1. Tribulation of Jesus Christ: therefore they should count it all joy and endure...see James 1; taking place during Nero's persecution when Christianity was seen as a movement within rebellious Judaism
2. The Kingdom of God: the kingdom was present in Christ at the time, yet it was about to come in great power for the destruction of the apostates and the persecutors, and for the salvation of those who, by the Spirit, were engaging in:
3. Patient Endurance...perseverance in loyalty to the way of life advocated by Christ so as to avoid eternal punishment...their faith was rooted and grounded in the words of Christ, that "He comes quickly, and He comes in the clouds...to bring deliverance to those who await him faithfully.

2 Timothy 1:8 RSV: Do not be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the Gospel in the power of God,

2 Timothy 2:3 RSV: Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

Romans 5:3 RSV: More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance,

Ephesians 3:13 RSV: So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you, which is your glory.

2 Thessalonians 1:5 RSV: This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be made worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering--

2 Timothy 1:8 RSV: Do not be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the Gospel in the power of God,

2 Timothy 2:3 RSV: Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

Being a kingdom means being under God's rule vs. Satan's.

John, banished for his testimony of Christ, encounters God in His Throne Room. John is in meditation, in prayer, perhaps seized in spirit and given a vision from the Lord Jesus on the Day of Yahweh, the Day of the Lord...the Resurrection Day, the first day of the week, when Christians gather for liturgy (Acts 20:7) to commemorate the Resurrection of Jesus (Luke 24:1-7; CCC 1166-1167).

- A Sunday...the evolutionary practice of assembling on the First Day of the Week is what the Lord's Day, or Sunday Mass became in the early church...the Christian Sabbath Day as the Reformed theologians called it. The day that Jesus was declared to be the Lord in power...Acts 20:7

John sees the glorified Christ as Prophet (speaker), King (ruler) and High Priest (according to Melchizedek—note the apparel)

- The sound of the trumpet used to symbolize the presence of God manifested, such as at Sinai (Exodus 19:16-19)
- 16 Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. 17 And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. 18 Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. 19 And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice.
- Jesus, as High Priest, in Priestly apparel speaks from the throne. The Eternal Word of God, whose eyes pierce through the division of soul and spirit knows the works of His

people, the Church. He sees the works of love, service, fidelity, steadfastness, which is manifest evidence of their worthiness of the kingdom of God. 2 Thess 1:3-5

- The works, which the one whose eyes are ablaze sees, should and do indeed show growth and progression.
- Jesus speaks of the seven stars as being the Angels/Messengers of the seven congregations of Asia Minor. Images here may allude to a particular constellation, such as the Little Bear (Little Dipper) or the Pleiades, or to the seven planets. The angels of the congregations are their heavenly patrons and protectors (Dan 10:20-11:1), or could be their bishops, symbolically speaking.

Dan 10: 2 In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. 3 I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled. 4 Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, that *is*, the Tigris, 5 I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist *was* girded with gold of Uphaz! 6 His body *was* like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude. 7 And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. 8 Therefore I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength. 9 Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground. 10 Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and *on* the palms of my hands. 11 And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you." While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling. 12 Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. 13 "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. 14 "Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision *refers* to *many* days yet *to come*." 15 When he had spoken such words to me, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. 16 And suddenly, *one* having the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me, "My lord, because of the vision my sorrows have overwhelmed me, and I have retained no strength. 17 "For how can this servant of my lord talk with you, my lord? As for me, no strength remains in me now, nor is any breath left in me." 18 Then again, *the one* having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me. 19 And he said, "O man greatly beloved, fear not! Peace *be* to you; be strong, yes, be strong!" So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, "Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me." 20 Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. 21 "But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince.

Christ speaks the preparatory words to the vision...the revelation.

- An epiphany is a vision whose focuses are the appearance and speech of the revealing figure
- "Son of Man" is a Semitic idiom meaning, "a man."
- The picture is that of God, as in Daniel

Daniel 7:9 " I watched till thrones were put in place, And the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment *was* white as snow, And the hair of His head *was* like pure wool. His throne *was* a fiery flame, Its wheels a burning fire; 10 A fiery stream issued And came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, And the books were opened.

- The voice of God through Christ commands John to commit these visionary things to writing, and that the entire 7 letters to 7 churches script should be sent to and read at each of the 7 churches. The two primary themes:

- The tribulation which the churches were to experience: John 16:33: in the world you will have tribulation...
- The coming of the Kingdom of God

Acts 14: 21 And when they had preached the Gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting *them* to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

- John sees seven golden lampstands ablaze as the menorah (Exo 25:31-39) within the holiest place of the temple, with the glorified Christ in the center of them. These are the seven churches of Asia Minor placed as a circuit, they stand as one church, yet they are known as separate congregations by the Lord. Bahnsen says it shows the decentralization of Christ's Church. He knows them, weighs them in the balance, and brings them close as sons for the chastening and the promise of blessing.
St. Irenaeus, Against Heresies 5.20.1: The Church's preaching is steady and true and through announcing the truth everywhere, the Church is the seven-branched candlestick that bears the light of Christ.
- The Prophet, High Priest, and King Christ Jesus adorns the clothing of the high priest (Ex 28:4; 15:6). His hair is hoary, or white, showing forth age, wisdom, and His gaze is penetrating just as are His words...He is indeed the Word of God glorified.
- We see Christ present in His Church, symbolized here as the seven Asiatic Churches, the stars in his hand. And as on the Mountain of Transfiguration, Christ's face shines as bright as the noon day.
- John responds as one in the Old Testament would when seeing an Angel of the Lord, falling as dead at the feet in obeisance and with the hope of mercy from death.
- Our Lord Jesus, who has all authority, even authority over death and hades, the Abyss, commands John to write in a manner describing what is...and what will take place soon after this point in time.
- Christ provides the interpretation of the vision.

The Messages to the Seven Churches

We need to know the context and framework to these real and relevant letters to these first century churches, as well as what the Spirit is saying in a timeless manner.

Framework of the letters:

- Christ designates himself
- Christ provides a commendation (praise, approval, acclamation)
- The Lord then gives a condemnation
- Jesus exhorts the Church, giving a strong encouragement of action
- Christ then gives the Church a stern warning
- The Risen Lord provides a promise to those who overcome and continue in obedience

Beginning with the Letter to the Church at Ephesus:

2 “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: ‘The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands.² “I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear evil men but have tested those who call themselves apostles but are not, and found them to be false; ³I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name’s sake, and you have not grown weary. ⁴But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. ⁵Remember then from what you have fallen, repent and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. ⁶Yet this you have, you hate the works of the Nicola’itans, which I also hate. ⁷He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.’

Church at Ephesus was founded by Priscilla and Aquilla, and nurtured by Apollos

Acts 18:18 After this Paul stayed many days longer, and then took leave of the brethren and sailed for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila. At Cen’chre-ae he cut his hair, for he had a vow. ¹⁹And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there; but he himself went into the synagogue and argued with the Jews. ²⁰When they asked him to stay for a longer period, he declined; ²¹but on taking leave of them he said, “I will return to you if God wills,” and he set sail from Ephesus. ²²When he had landed at Caesare’a, he went up and greeted the church, and then went down to Antioch. ²³After spending some time there he departed and went from place to place through the region of Galatia and Phryg’ia, strengthening all the disciples. ²⁴Now a Jew named Apol’los, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, well versed in the scriptures. ²⁵He had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. ²⁶He began to speak boldly in the synagogue; but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him and expounded to him the way of God more accurately. ²⁷And when he wished to cross to Acha’ia, the brethren encouraged him, and wrote to the disciples to receive him. When he arrived, he greatly helped those who through grace had believed, ²⁸for he powerfully confuted the Jews in public, showing by the scriptures that the Christ was Jesus.

Paul served the church well, and then passing by on his way to Jerusalem, he sent for the Ephesian elders and gave them a final exhortation:

Acts 20: “You yourselves know how I lived among you all the time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, ¹⁹ serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which befell me through the plots of the Jews; ²⁰ how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, ²¹ testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance to God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

²² And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, bound in the Spirit, not knowing what shall befall me there; ²³ except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. ²⁴ But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may accomplish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the Gospel of the grace of God. ²⁵ And now, behold, I know that all you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will see my face no more. ²⁶ Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all of you, ²⁷ for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. ²⁸ Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you guardians, to feed the church of the Lord^[c] which he obtained with his own blood.^[d] ²⁹ I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; ³⁰ and from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. ³¹ Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. ³² And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. ³³ I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. ³⁴ You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities, and to those who were with me.^[e] ³⁵ In all things I have shown you that by so toiling one must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'³⁶ And when he had spoken thus, he knelt down and prayed with them all. ³⁷ And they all wept and embraced Paul and kissed him, ³⁸ sorrowing most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they should see his face no more. And they brought him to the ship.

Ephesus was a missionary center, and a very potent church that was located in the middle of the Diana (Artemis) Cult (Eph 19:21)

Christ's designation as God: Jesus as sovereign Lord over the Church, who holds (guides, sustains) the seven churches in his right hand...the hand of skill speaks to the Church.

A Commendation: Jesus sees the church as one that tries the spirits (1 John 4:1), especially ones they have found false. The church is not to be so picky with each other so as to quench the Spirit, but is to test those that teach so as to ensure orthodoxy. Note the Apostolic Fathers, Didache, which speaks to true and false prophets.

- The Lord is not unjust to forget your works in the Lord. Jesus sees our toil, and our working for Him while persevering hardship.
- Evil men were noted and avoided
- The Lord sees their persevering in the faith...and that they have not fainted. Hebrews 12:1-11...they had obeyed the instructions of their elders to endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.
-

Condemnation: Christ's assessment to the Church of Ephesus is not a final condemnation, but an act of discipline that needs to be heard and obeyed lest judgment be upon the church. This condemnation has an immediate sense for this first century church, and a timeless sense for the church in all ages.

- You have abandoned the love you had at first. Some direct the reader to 1 Cor 13, 2, 3, and 8: that the first love is love of neighbor as a result of love toward God. The loss of the first love is measured by works, therefore, it seems that the loving works of serving one's neighbor seem to be the works that have been abandoned...perhaps their love waxed cold due to persecution.
 - Note Matt 24:12: due to false teachings, perhaps from the Nicolaitans, and the resulting lawlessness, the love of many had waxed or grown cold.

Exhortation: backtrack and determine where you left the tracks, perform an about face, and do the works you performed at first. Keep on remembering from where you have fallen, repent of this short-coming, and do those first works.

- Call to Conversion: 1) to acknowledge and recognize that one has sinned; 2) then contrition (love-sorrow), telling us to mend our ways, to turn; then 3) an act of penance that lead us to draw closer to God and a greater intimacy with him.

Warning: Christ will remove the lampstand from its place...remove the active Holy Spirit and supply of life, so that it cease to exist.

- Christ is pleased that the Church knows and **hates the works of the Nicola-i-tans**, which Christ also hates.

- According to Irenaeus (Against Heresies), “the Nicolaitans are the followers of that Nicolas who was one of the seven first ordained to the diaconate of the Apostles (Acts 5:5). The Church and theologians outside of Catholicism debate Irenaeus’ conclusion that this Nicolas was the Jerusalem deacon.
- Nikolaos means Conqueror of the People. The Balaam of Rev 2:14 referred to in the message to Pergamos means Conqueror of the People. The doctrines of the Nicolaitans and Balaamites are the same and offensive to the Lord...lawlessness for sure. We also see the fornication connection to these lawless cults with that of the Jezebel in the message to the Church of Thyratira (Rev 2:20).
- These Churches are being seduced by cults that claim Christianity and teach idolatry and fornication to the believers. These are the imposters of Revelation 2:2. Very important for the church to follow her lawfully ordained shepherds and to adhere to the doctrines written down in the sacred scriptures, the creeds, the catechism, and encyclicals (Traditions), along with those things taught by the bishops and the Church
- The Nicolaitans, Balaamites, and Jezebelians are those wolves that Paul talked about before he left Ephesus:
- They do and teach other to lead lives of indulgence...see Rev 2:14-15, who cause believers to stumble for their eating food offered to idols (See 1 Cor 6:12-13: all things are lawful for me, but not all things are expedient); and offending, causing a brother to stumble (1 Cor 8) by indulging in your freedom of conscience. Nicolaitans were indifferent to acts of adultery.
 - Acts 20: 17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. 18 And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, 19 "serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews; 20 "how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, 21 "testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. 22 "And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, 23 "except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. 24 "But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the Gospel of the grace of God. 25 "And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. 26 "Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. 27 "For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. 28 "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. 29 "For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 "Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. 31 "Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. 32 "So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. 33 "I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. 34 "Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. 35 "I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' " 36 And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. 37 Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, 38 sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.
- Christ hated the doctrines of the Nicolaitans!

Promise: Christ invites the hearing ones to hear what the Spirit of God is saying to the Churches.

- Christ encourages the overcoming ones, the conquering ones (Nike), the ones who remain true while overcoming sin and the temptations to turn back...to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the paradise of God

- Tree of Life...the symbol of immortality. The vision is that of the Garden, which if Adam were to have eaten of Tree of Life, he would have been confirmed in life...now, the tree is available to the one overcoming.

⁸“And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: ‘The words of the first and the last, who died and came to life.

Message to Smyrna:

Revelation 2: 8 “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: ‘The words of the first and the last, who died and came to life. 9 “I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10 Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days[a] you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. 11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who conquers shall not be hurt by the second death.’

Smyrna

- About 35 miles north of Ephesus, competed with Eph in trade
- In 580 BC, the city was leveled and then rebuilt. It had golden streets.
- By 200 BC, it was already idolatizing Rome. A seat of emperor worship—the athletic games held here. John weaves into these words the games (crown) and the City of the Jews (synagogue).
- Chief city of Lydia, with a temple to the goddess Roma.
- Had a Jewish community within that was hostile to the Church.

Christ’s divine designation: The First and the Last...Christ addresses as the one firstborn from the dead, and the last Adam. Christ is the firstfruits of the new birth to save all those born of Adam. Christ is the Last Adam...all that is needed for new birth and complete salvation.

- Revelation 22: 13 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."
- 1 Cor 15: 42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. 43 It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. 44 It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. 45 And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

Commendation: Our Lord sees the great tribulation of this Church, their poverty (yet Christ says they’re blessed), and the slander that they must endure.

- Unlike the Laodicean Church, who thought they were rich, yet they were poor, blind, and naked; the Smyrna Church had endured poverty for the sake of the Lord, and, in reality, were rich in the Kingdom of God, rich in faithfulness under trial, and heading toward a rich inheritance in Christ, if they were to persevere
- Mark 10: 24 And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, "Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God! 25 "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." 26 And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, "Who then can be saved?" 27 But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible." 28 Then Peter began to say to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You." 29 So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the Gospel's, 30 "who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time -- houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions -- and in the age to come, eternal life.
- Heb 10: 30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people." 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. 32 But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: 33 partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became

companions of those who were so treated; 34 for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven. 35 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 37 "For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him." 39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

- Synagogue (a gathering place) of Satan: A Jew was from the Tribe of Judah, yet after the exile, all who returned were referred to as Jews. The only ones who were graced with direct revelation from Yahweh God.
 - Yet Jews were always so because they were obedient covenant-keepers of Yahwey, their God. God had always told them that He wants obedience from the heart, which is the identifying character of the Jew.
 - Note Paul: Romans 2:28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; 29 but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.
 - Rebellious and unbelieving Jews heard Paul's words, but made trouble for him in the synagogues, and would follow him to stir up the Jews and citizenry against him and the other believers.
- Acts 17:1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. 2 Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, 3 explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ." 4 And some of them were persuaded; and a great multitude of the devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women, joined Paul and Silas. 5 But the Jews who were not persuaded, becoming envious, took some of the evil men from the marketplace, and gathering a mob, set all the city in an uproar and attacked the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. 6 But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here too. 7 "Jason has harbored them, and these are all acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying there is another king -- Jesus." 8 And they troubled the crowd and the rulers of the city when they heard these things. 9 So when they had taken security from Jason and the rest, they let them go. 10 Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11 These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. 12 Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men. 13 But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that the word of God was preached by Paul at Berea, they came there also and stirred up the crowds. 14 Then immediately the brethren sent Paul away, to go to the sea; but both Silas and Timothy remained there. 15 So those who conducted Paul brought him to Athens; and receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him with all speed, they departed. THESE WERE A THORN IN PAULS FLESH 2 Cor 12
This is the Satanic work of the Jews, namely, to hinder the preaching of the Gospel and discipling of the converts.
- To the Church of Philadelphia: Rev 3: 9 "Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie -- indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. 10 "Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

Condemnation: Interesting that this church had no condemning words from Jesus...an example to all of us.

Exhortation: Jesus strongly encourages the church to prepare for severe persecution...that they would be cast into prison for ten days...The Lord gives them a divinely appointed time of persecution, which shows us that God is sovereignly in control of our trials and will not permit us to be tested above that which we are able. So, he says, "Do not fear."

- James 1: 2 Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. 13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. 14 But

each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

- The Great Tribulation itself was shortened so as to not consume God's chosen ones with the wicked. Matt 24: 21 "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened. (c.f.: Isa 26:20; Isa 54:8; and 1 Pet 1:6
- Satan was using the Jews as a tool in the hands of the Emperor. The Smyrneans in Thessalonica knew this from Paul's second epistle: 2 Thessalonians 2:1 Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, 2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. 3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. 5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? 6 And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. 8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. 9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

Warning: Jesus encourages the Smyrnaeans to be faithful even unto death. He says if they persevere, then, the second death would not hurt them. The first death is that which is physical, and the second death is that of final judgment, with the verdict being damnation to Hell forever.

- Revelation 20:1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; 3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. 4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.
- Rev 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.
- Rev 21:7 "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. 8 "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."
- The Second Death is the Lake of Fire
 - AD 155, Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna martyred. See his final speech in the Apostolic Fathers
 - Life is for the believing one who continues in the faith of Christ. John 11: 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. 26 "And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" 27 She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."
- Persevere: St Teresa of Avila: "to attain salvation, each person must persevere to the end by making an earnest and most determined resolve not to halt until the goal [eternal life] is reached, whatever may come,

whatever may happen, however, much effort one needs to make, whoever may complain, whether on eddies on the road or has no heart to face the trials one meets, even if the ground gives away under one's feet (Way of Perfection, 21,2)

The Promise is the Crown of Life and immunity from the Second Death

- The crown of life is the imperishable crown reserved for believers: 1 Cor 9:25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.
- A crown of righteousness: 2 Tim 3:8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.
- James 1:12 Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.
- The reward is to the priests and bishops, too: 1 Peter 5:1 The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: 2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; 3 nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; 4 and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.
- We see the final punishment in this Revelation
 - Of the Jews and Jerusalem: Rev 4-11
 - Of Rome Rev 13-18
 - Of Satan himself in Rev 12 and 20

We summarize this passage of the Revelation with the words of Paul from Philippians 3:1 Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe. 2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! 3 For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, 4 though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; 6 concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. 7 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. 8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. 16 Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.

Message To Pergamum.

Revelation 2:12“To the angel of the church in Pergamum,* write this: “The one with the sharp two-edged sword says this: 13“I know that you live where Satan’s throne* is, and yet you hold fast to my name and have not denied your faith in me, not even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was martyred among you, where Satan lives. 14* Yet I have a few things against you. You have some people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who instructed Balak to put a stumbling block before the Israelites: to eat food sacrificed to idols and to play the harlot. 15Likewise, you also have some people who hold to the teaching of [the] Nicolaitans. 16Therefore, repent. Otherwise, I will come to you quickly and wage war against them with the sword of my mouth. 17“Whoever has

ears ought to hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the victor I shall give some of the hidden manna;* I shall also give a white amulet upon which is inscribed a new name, which no one knows except the one who receives it.”^e

Pergamum:

- Not a great commercial center, but the seat of excessive political and religious power. The church would certainly clash with the Emperor Cult in this city.
- Altars to Zeus, Dionysos, Asklepios (the Serpent God (god of healing) who was officially designated Savior).
- Boasted magnificent temples to the Caesars and to Rome.
- 197 BC erected a great library and an altar to Zeus. Antony moved the library to Alexandria and then gave it to Cleopatra
- Devoted to Rome; a city of political fornication
- The seat of Roman power, but it must submit itself to Christ; and the Church of Christ must overcome the temptation to fail in their faith and humble themselves to the idolatrous cults.

Christ’s Designation:

- The One with the sharp two-edged sword: Christ, the Eternal Word of God recalling the penetrating power of the Word of God and its use:

Hebrews 4:11 Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. 12 For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account.

Ephesians 6:13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; 16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

- Christ is the Judge and carries a sword of punishment
- The Exalted Christ sits at the right hand of the father waiting until all of his enemies are made a footstool for His feet: Psalm 110:1; Matt 22:44; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:43; Hebrews 1:13; 10:13
- Christ rules through rulers, leading them, overruling them, and having His will accomplished in spite of them; but God works through the authorities. Daniel 10:11-13: Prince of Persia hindered the Angel of the Lord.

Psalms 2:1 Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, *saying*, 3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." 4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The LORD shall hold them in derision. 5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: 6 "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion." 7 "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You *are* My Son, Today I have begotten You. 8 Ask of Me, and I will give *You* The nations *for* Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth *for* Your possession. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.' " 10 Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth. 11 Serve the LORD with fear, And rejoice with trembling. 12 Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish *in* the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed *are* all those who put their trust in Him.

Christ is Lord and will not have any nation, institution, or king usurping him.

- The Jews would have the Emperor vs. the Christ: we have no king but Caesar was their cry Jn 18:15
- “Caesar is Lord,” was the cry of everyone in the Roman Empire except those of the Christians, who proclaimed that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father
- The clash between Christianity and Rome was not because Rome didn’t want nice people who worshipped a god...everyone was doing that...the rub was that Christianity preached a King, Jesus, who was to be followed and worshipped as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Acts 17:1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. 2 Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, 3 explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and *saying*, "This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ." 4 And some of them were persuaded; and a great

multitude of the devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women, joined Paul and Silas. 5 But the Jews who were not persuaded, becoming envious, took some of the evil men from the marketplace, and gathering a mob, set all the city in an uproar and attacked the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. 6 But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here too. 7 "Jason has harbored them, and these are all acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying there is another **king** -- Jesus." 8 And they troubled the crowd and the rulers of the city when they heard these things. 9 So when they had taken security from Jason and the rest, they let them go.

- Revelation 13 speaks of the Dragon, Satan himself, giving his power to the Beast, which is a colorful and terrifying vision of the power and nation of Rome. Jesus, the Lord of all, will conquer this beast through His Church, and will bring judgment upon the apostate Jews and Jerusalem (Babylon) who troubled Christ's people oppressively.

The Lord's Commendation:

- Deified Statism: Mounce says that due to the Temple of Zues and Asklepios being seen from the citadel of the city, Pergamum was known as the official cult center of emperor worship in Asia. As Rome had become the center of Satan's activities in the west, so Pergamum had become his throne in the east.
- For Christian's, their livelihoods, freedom of worship, and very lives were threatened. The cults not only were centers of worship, but they were also the substance of trades in which one would have work. If one did not worship the gods of the guild, thereby having their thoughts, words, and deeds aligned to idols (having the idol's mark, symbolically speaking, written on the forehead and the hands), then one could lose one's means for livelihood and starve themselves and their children. Very trying times.
- The Church was witnessing martyrdom, such as that of Antipas (meaning, "Against All," who was a faithful witness to Christ Jesus. We know nothing of this Antipas other than that he had a faithful testimony of our Lord even unto death...Antipas overcame the wiles of the devil where his throne was in this city...Note the clarion call of the faithful according to Rev. 12: 11 "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.
- This Church exemplified Antipas in resisting persecution. This Church was an overcoming church in that they never denied our Lord's testimony regardless of the pressure to cave...and Christ is not unjust to note their labors of love and their faithful witness unto his name

Jesus' Condemnation:

- Jesus chastens the church so that her people turn from their error and bear good, long lasting fruit.
- Christ accuses some of the Church of adhering to the doctrines of Balaam
 - If Satan cannot defeat Israel, the Church through outside attack and annihilation, then he plants the teachers and the teaching within the church that brings internal corruption, error, and eventually rot and judgment, unless there is repentance, which is being brought here.
 - Balaam, a prophet is seen in Numbers 22:5 through Numbers 25. Pagan sorcerer who plays the spirit world for profit, may have known Yahweh, and would know that Balak could use him to pronounce a curse...it seems that Balaam at some uninscriptured time did teach Balak that he would have to have Israel cursed to be free from their ability to conquer nations.
 - Balak, out of fear, tried to hire Balaam to curse Israel, but God would not permit Balaam to do so...Balaam would only bless Israel based on speaking what Yahweh God told him to speak...blessing. This infuriated Balak, and Balaam's continuing to work with Balak infuriated God, and this is where Balaam's donkey comes in and is used to rebuke the prophet.
 - We do see however that there was a connection, however uninscriptured, in which one can deduce that the teachings of Balaam had a part in teaching Israel to fornicate and play the harlot with the Moabites
 - This scenario is lived out in Pergamum where the teachings of Balaam, similar to the teaching of the apostate Jews, the Nicolaitans, and Jezebel, ALL BEING THE SAME, is causing offense against God: 1: doctrines that include eating food offered to the idol cults; and 2: fornicating, perhaps with temple prostitutes, or being indifferent to the Emperor cult sexual escapades as a part of being a part of the trade guilds...they were indulging in the pagan sexual practices...either way, Christ hated the doctrine and its practical and ethical impacts. (see in Revelation the works that will keep one out of the heavenly city: Revelation 22: 12 "Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense, to repay every one for what he has done. 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."14 Blessed are those who wash their robes,[b] that they

may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. 15 Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and fornicators and murderers and idolaters, and every one who loves and practices falsehood.

- Christians were being led into compromise...they wanted to fit in...they wanted their Christianity to be societal and respected, perhaps. Perhaps they didn't want to lose their positions, respect, and livelihood.
- Theology is practical and ethical. Doctrine is the teaching of what we should believe and do, and these doctrines are contrary to Christ's doctrines, they matter, and the people must repent of believing error, or else...sanctions.
- Truth was presented to these churches from the Jerusalem Council to the Gentile converts who would have been dealing with these things:

Acts 15: 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: 29 that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.

- False apostles seek to seduce the Christians away from Christ to idolatry and fornication, which is what Satan did to Eve in the garden. 2 Corinthians 11:1 Oh, that you would bear with me in a little folly -- and indeed you do bear with me. 2 For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. 3 But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Christ's Exhortation:

- Speaking to the rulers of the Church, Christ says, "REPENT," make an about face from these teachings and these behaviors. Don't mimic or imitate the disobedient ones.
- St. Paul speaks strongly about the elders exercising church discipline so as to purify the Church. Note the issue in Corinth in 1 Corinthians 5:1 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles -- that a man has his father's wife! 2 And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you. 3 For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. 4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5 deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. 6 Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? 7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. 9 I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. 10 Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. 11 But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner -- not even to eat with such a person.

His Warning:

- Jesus gives warning that He will come and war with the leaders of the church and the people if they should not repent. Christ's weapon is the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God...Christ's Rod of Iron with which he rules while seated at the right of the Father in the Heavenly Jerusalem. Christ will wage WAR, and his opponent WILL NOT WIN.
- The lampstand of the church is threatened, and the Christians minds would be taken back to Deut 31:8, where in Moses' revenge on the Midianites, Balaam that false prophet was killed with the Sword.
- The reader also gets the sense that there is not much time to repent, for the Lord is coming quickly.

- Christ's coming quickly here means that he is coming quickly then...not at the end of time, but quickly, within days, weeks, or, in this case, within the 3.5 years of the Great Tribulation between AD66 and 70. AD70 is a definitive appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord's Promise to the Overcomer:

- The Call to Attention: Asking who has the ear to hear...who has the ability to hear and understand, let him hear what the Holy Spirit is saying to all of the Churches.
- The one hearing is the one who has the opportunity to be an overcomer of sin and apostasy, and they will receive:
 - Hidden Manna (allusion to the manna placed in the Ark of the Covenant in the days in the wilderness journey (see Ex 16:33-34; and Heb 9:4). The overcomer in the church is sustained now by the hidden manna, the spiritual food from Christ, so that he may live forever...a picture of that food, Christ, which we partake of at every Mass celebration
 - White amulet with the name that the overcomer knows. A White Stone, like that one received when invited to a Wedding Feast in the days of old of the first century, or this could have been a token of acquittal, justification.
 - White stone, bdellium (Ex 16:31; Num 11:7) a stone in the Garden of Eden, associated with manna...depicts to the reader the restoration in Christ to paradise.
 - A new name: depicting the new creation in Christ and reminding the reader of the 2 onyx stones placed on the shoulders of the high priest, on which were engraved the names of the tribes of Israel (Ex 28:9-12).
 - The receiver of the stone is the one possessing the stone...hence, only the receiver has this stone due to his overcoming and his receiving salvation/deliverance. It is exclusive to the receiver, not that the name is secret, but owned.

The Message to Thyatira

Revelation 2:18 “And to the angel of the church in Thyati’ra write: ‘The words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze.¹⁹ “‘I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first.²⁰ But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jez’ebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and beguiling my servants to practice immorality^[b] and to eat food sacrificed to idols.²¹ I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her immorality.^[c]²² Behold, I will throw her on a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation, unless they repent of her doings;²³ and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches shall know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you as your works deserve.²⁴ But to the rest of you in Thyati’ra, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan,^[d] to you I say, I do not lay upon you any other burden;²⁵ only hold fast what you have, until I come.²⁶ He who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, I will give him power over the nations,²⁷ and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received power from my Father;²⁸ and I will give him the morning star.^[e]²⁹ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

Thyatira: key characteristic of this city was the DOMINANCE of the trade guilds over the economy of this city

- Evolved from a military outpost to a thriving city in which every imaginable manufacturing industry or vocation was controlled by the trade guilds: smelting, weaving, and dying (Lydia a seller of purple came from here Acts 16:13-15)
- To be a member of the guilds meant worship of pagan gods, and participate in meetings which meant eating the meats in the temples that were offered to idols. Pressure on the Christians to participate was immense, the alternative was social disgrace and financial ruin for the conscientious Christian objector.
- Guardian god of the city was Tyrimnos, son of Zeus, and worship of Tyrimnos meant co-worship of Caesar, the incarnate Son of God.
- The norm would be that citizens who worshipped the false gods would eat the meat offered to the idols and commit sexual acts of worship in their temples...in order to eat and to work.
-

Christ's Designation

- Christ Jesus depicted as the all knowing One, filled with the spirit of wisdom, might, knowledge and power. John saw Christ in this manner as recorded in Chapter 1:13-16.
- Christ declares himself: Son of God, in contrast to those who call Caesar the son of God...

THE NAME OF CHRIST in the preaching of the Apostles in the Book of Acts:

Acts 2: 21 And it shall come to pass *That* whoever calls on the **name** of the LORD Shall be saved.'

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the **name** of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." 40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."

Acts 3:6 Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the **name** of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." 16 "And His **name**, through faith in His **name**, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which *comes* through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

Acts 4:10 "let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the **name** of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. 11 "This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' 12 "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other **name** under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." 29 "Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, 30 "by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the **name** of Your holy Servant Jesus." 31 And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Acts 5:27 And when they had brought them, they set *them* before the council. And the high priest asked them, 28 saying, "Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this **name**? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man's blood on us!" 29 But Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men. 30 "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree. 31 "Him God has exalted to His right hand *to be* Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. 32 "And we are His witnesses to these things, and *so* also *is* the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him." 33 When they heard *this*, they were furious and plotted to kill them. 34 Then one in the council stood up, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in respect by all the people, and commanded them to put the apostles outside for a little while. 35 And he said to them: "Men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what you intend to do regarding these men. 36 "For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody. A number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was slain, and all who obeyed him were scattered and came to nothing. 37 "After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census, and drew away many people after him. He also perished, and all who obeyed him were dispersed. 38 "And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; 39 "but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it -- lest you even be found to fight against God." 40 And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten *them*, they commanded that they should not speak in the **name** of Jesus, and let them go. 41 So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His **name**. 42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus *as* the Christ.

Acts 9:15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My **name** before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. 16 "For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake." 29 And he spoke boldly in the **name** of the Lord Jesus and disputed against the Hellenists, but they attempted to kill him. 43 "To Him all the prophets witness that, through His **name**, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins."

Acts 10: 44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. 45 And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, 47 "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we *have*?" 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the **name** of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

Acts 15:14 "Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His **name**. 15 "And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: 16 'After this I will return And will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, And I will set it up; 17 So that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD, Even all the Gentiles who are called by My **name**, Says the LORD who does all these things.'

Acts 16:17 This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation." 18 And this she did for many days. But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the **name** of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And he came out that very hour. 19 But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged *them* into the marketplace to the authorities.

Acts 19:13 Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the **name** of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches." 14 Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" 16 Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. 17 This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the **name** of the Lord Jesus was magnified. 18 And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds. 19 Also,

many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned *them* in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and *it* totaled fifty thousand *pieces* of silver. 20 So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

Acts 21:13 Then Paul answered, "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the **name** of the Lord Jesus."

Acts 22:16 'And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the **name** of the Lord.'

- The name of Christ is the name of God: Yahweh, Ever living, Ever-Loving God Most High; and at that name every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Yahweh (Lord—Kurios) to the glory of God the Father (Phil 2)

A Commendation:

- Christ commends the church of Thyatira for its labors of love toward one another, to others and that they had abounded more and more in this love, as St. Paul has spoken to the Church at Thessalonica (1 Thess. 3:12; 4:1).

Exhortation:

- The Thyatiran Church tolerated false doctrine and immoral, unethical behavior that was scandalizing the church...causing the servants of the Lord to stumble.
- False doctrine and sin was tolerated as coming from "the woman Jezebel," which could have been a prophetess allowed by the church. Prophets and prophetesses were many in the church during this dispensation of time as the Spirit of God was being poured out, but the Jerusalem Church Council warned against fornication and eating blood and meat offered to idols.
- Jezebel: wicked queen of Israel, Sidonian wife of Ahab. She was filled with harlotry and witchcraft. She slaughtered the innocent 1 Kings 21:25; "there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do wickedness in the sight of the Lord, because Jezebel his wife stirred him up." "incited him" He behaved very abominably. God caused the King of Syria to say to his armies to fight against the King of Israel (1 Ki 22) and a random warrior shot in the air at random and hit and killed Ahab. Jezebel of old died at the hands of Yahweh God. She was thrown out of a tower window, hit the ground, and then died. The dogs came and ate her and all that was left was the palms of her hands.

1 Kings 21: 15 And it came to pass, when **Jezebel** heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, that **Jezebel** said to Ahab, "Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead." 16 So it was, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab got up and went down to take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite. 17 Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 18 "Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who *lives* in Samaria. There *he is*, in the vineyard of Naboth, where he has gone down to take possession of it. 19 "You shall speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "Have you murdered and also taken possession?" ' And you shall speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, dogs shall lick your blood, even yours." ' " 20 So Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, O my enemy?" And he answered, "I have found *you*, because you have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of the LORD: 21 'Behold, I will bring calamity on you. I will take away your posterity, and will cut off from Ahab every male in Israel, both bond and free. 22 'I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, because of the provocation with which you have provoked *Me* to anger, and made Israel sin.' 23 "And concerning **Jezebel** the LORD also spoke, saying, 'The dogs shall eat **Jezebel** by the wall of Jezreel.' 24 "The dogs shall eat whoever belongs to Ahab and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the field." 25 But there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do wickedness in the sight of the LORD, because **Jezebel** his wife stirred him up. 26 And he behaved very abominably in following idols, according to all *that* the Amorites had done, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

1 Kings 9: 29 In the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab, Ahaziah had become king over Judah. 30 Now when Jehu had come to Jezreel, **Jezebel** heard of *it*; and she put paint on her eyes and adorned her head, and looked through a window. 31 Then, as Jehu entered at the gate, she said, "*Is it* peace, Zimri, murderer of your master?" 32 And he looked up at the window, and said, "Who *is* on my side? Who?" So two or three eunuchs looked out at him. 33 Then he said, "Throw her down." So they threw her down, and *some* of her blood spattered on the wall and on the horses; and he trampled her underfoot. 34 And when he had gone in, he ate and drank. Then he said, "Go now, see to this accursed *woman*, and bury her, for she was a king's daughter." 35 So they went to bury her, but they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of *her* hands. 36 Therefore they came back and told him. And he said, "This *is* the word of the LORD, which He spoke by His servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 'On the plot of *ground* at Jezreel dogs shall eat the flesh of **Jezebel**;

- When we're called to confront the lawlessness of a society, the Church has typically
 - Retreated, as in the days of Tertullian,
 - Compromised or synthesized...some say Justin Martyr did this,
 - Reconstruct, as did Augustine
 - Thyatira compromised
- Jesus, the Lord of the Church, has seen this behavior and, in his mercy that endures forever (Ps. 103), he gave her and her adherents time to repent, but she, as the leader refused.

- Those who lead are more responsible for their teachings and doings. Teachers will receive the stricter judgment, and rulers were to offer larger beasts in atonement for their sin. Therefore, they are more accountable to walk uprightly and repent when warned, but Jezebel would not.
- Toleration of false teaching is a sin: Chilton: “Orthodox, Biblical Christianity is intolerant. A church that tolerates evil and false doctrine is a church under judgment; God will not long tolerate her. This is not to say that Christians should be intolerant of each other’s mistakes, idiosyncrasies, and differences over non-essentials. But when it comes to clear violations of Biblical law and orthodox doctrine, the government of the church is required by Scripture to put a stop to it before it destroys the church.”
- Jezebel was here either literally or figuratively speaking causing the Church members to believe her false doctrine and commit fornication and idolatry. This arch-heretic could have been the bishop’s wife, or an angelic messenger, or a real prophetess who was not stopped by the one/one’s in charge of church oversight...she was not stopped, and the church was about to pay for it by Christ her Lord.
- The Church was playing the Harlot with the State of idolatrous Rome. Perhaps the apostate Jews (referred to in the Revelation as the Great Harlot of Babylon) were a part of this as they had influenced others toward playing the harlot...a theme of the Book of Judges.
- Summary: the false doctrines of the Nicolaitans, the Balaamites, and the Jezebelites were IDENTICAL and were connected with the false Israel, the “Synagogue of Satan.”

Warnings:

- Jesus provides a play on words, “you want to go to bed and commit fornication, then I will throw you into a sickbed of Great Tribulation wherein you and your disciples will be struck with death.”
- “kill her children with death.” Hebrew pleonasm, double witness, emphasis, which in this case, dying, thou shalt die (cf. Gen 2:17).

Our Lord says this that He might be glorified...NOTE: our Lord’s words about the death of Aaron’s sons: Leviticus 10:1 Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. 2 So fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD. 3 And Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD spoke, saying: 'By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; And before all the people I must be **glorified.**' " So Aaron held his peace.

Matt 24:21 "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened. 34 "Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. 35 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

Even Ahab repented in sackcloth and fasted, and gain life at first, when confronted by Elijah the Tishbite. Ahab’s judgment would indeed come, and that also upon his children. 1Ki 21:27-29

- The Cure of Ars warns us (Sermon on the 4th Sunday in Lent): “the greater the danger we run of dying wit our sins on us, for the simple reason that bad habits become more and more difficult to shed. Every time we despise a grace, our Lord is going further away from us, and we are growing weaker, and the devil gets more control of us. So, my conclusion is that the longer we remain in sin, the greater the risk we run of never being converted.”

Christ’s Promise:

- Christ the just One, who knows the heart, and judges justly and renders to each according to their works, as all things are naked and open to Him to whom we must give account.
- St. Paul spoke of the pagans and the Church being judged by their works in Romans 2
- He addresses the remaining Christian brethren of the Church there who have not learned what “some” have called the deep things of Satan:
 - Proto-Gnostic teaching that Christians would gain spiritually...greater levels of sanctification through immersion into the depths of Satanism: worshipping of idols, committing fornication, entering into the depravity of the pagans around them.
 - Salvation through Chaos...let sin abound that grace may abound more. R.J.Rushdoony: “Chaos as revitalization has a long and continuing history in Western civilization, and, with the French Revolution, it gained a new vitality as revolution and sexual chaos became the means to social regeneration. In the world of art, the creative artist came to be identified as of necessity with a social and sexual anarchist, and in popular thinking, order and morality came to mean monotony

and devitalizing, enervating palls, wherein lawlessness means liberty and power. The middle-aged “fling” and sexual license came into being as a grasping after renewal, and the prostitute came to be used as a “change of luck” device, as especial sin against order as a means of recharging of luck and power. Basic to all of these manifestations, from Egypt through Caesar to modern man, is one common hope: destroy order to create order afresh, or, even more bluntly, destroy order to create order.”

- The church was suffering from the heathen world outside and the corruption from brethren on the inside, who were encouraging sin so that more righteous sanctification would abound...what chaos, which would make the witness to the name of the Son of God of no affect.
- HOLD FAST to the faith and to the loving works until Christ’s appearing for salvation of His elect and judgment of the sinners...a message he gave to the whole church:

Revelation 21:22 And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. 23 And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. 24 By its light shall the nations walk; and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it, 25 and its gates shall never be shut by day—and there shall be no night there; 26 they shall bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. 27 But nothing unclean shall enter it, nor any one who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life. Rev. 22:1 Then he showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb 2 through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life^[a] with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 There shall no more be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall worship him; 4 they shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads. 5 And night shall be no more; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they shall reign for ever and ever. 6 And he said to me, “These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place. 7 And behold, I am coming soon.” Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book. 8 I John am he who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me; 9 but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brethren the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.” 10 And he said to me, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. 11 Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy.” 12 “Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense, to repay every one for what he has done. 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” 14 Blessed are those who wash their robes,^[b] that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. 15 Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and fornicators and murderers and idolaters, and every one who loves and practices falsehood.

- Yes, the Christians with the most money and profit were the most faithless to Christ. The orthodox could have thought they were fighting a losing battle, and then they would die powerless, BUT CHRIST speaks their doings and lot to the contrary: The OVERCOMING ONE who is faithful to the end will inherit the earth and have power over the nations, and they shall rule with Christ. They receive the same promise as did Christ from the Father...I will give thee the nations as thy inheritance. Psalms 2 and 110
- Christian overcomers then and now, in this age, are promised a share in the messianic reign of Christ, in time and on earth.
- Christ has been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Earthly rulers who hold his rule or his church in contempt will pay the price of disobedience (Ps 2:10-12). The same is true of His Church...Isiah 60: all peoples of the earth will be subdued under Christ and His Church (Ps 47:1-3...and the promises made to Old Testament Israel, are now ours through faith in Christ.

Psalm 47:1 To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of the sons of Korah. Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph! 2 For the LORD Most High is awesome; He is a great King over all the earth. 3 He will subdue the peoples under us, And the nations under our feet. 4 He will choose our inheritance for us, The excellence of Jacob whom He loves. Selah

Galatians 3: 6 just as **Abraham** "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." 7 Therefore know that *only* those who are of faith are sons of **Abraham**. 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the Gospel to **Abraham** beforehand, *saying*, "In you all the nations shall be blessed." 9 So then those who *are* of faith are blessed with believing **Abraham**.

10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." 11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "the just shall live by faith." 12 Yet the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by them." 13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"), 14 that the blessing of **Abraham** might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

- Thyatira's hardship and persecution was not martyrdom so much as unemployed men, and distraught women dealing with the hunger of their children...everyone else got work and food by simply worshipping the pagan gods and having a little consensual sex with the temple prostitutes. HOLD FAST in the midst of your brethren and the world thinking you're weird and out of touch
- Those who would hold fast, would see the bright day of Christ's appearing for salvation, His wiping away the Synagogue of Satan and the Jezebelian followers, and the New Heaven and New Earth of Christ's New Testament Church...the gift of the Morning Star...the new dawn and new day of the Kingdom of God having come.
 - Morning Star: a name for the planet Venus just visible before break of morning...a symbol of victory in pagan literature that later became a symbol of Christ's resurrection and victory over death (Rev 22:16; 2 Pet 1:19)
 - The symbol here is of the Christians' overcoming victory, his resurrection over death, and his victory over evil in time and on earth.

The Message to Sardis

Chapter 3 "And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: 'The words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. "I know your works; you have the name of being alive, and you are dead. ² Awake, and strengthen what remains and is on the point of death, for I have not found your works perfect in the sight of my God. ³ Remember then what you received and heard; keep that, and repent. If you will not awake, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you. ⁴ Yet you have still a few names in Sardis, people who have not soiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy. ⁵ He who conquers shall be clad thus in white garments, and I will not blot his name out of the book of life; I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels. ⁶ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

Sardis:

- Junction of 5 Roman roads, considered an impregnable city. Tiberius Caesar rebuilt it.
- Was built on a mountain, and an acropolis was built on the spur of that mountain, yet twice in its history it was taken by enemies...the parallel theme is that the Sardis Church was established, initially strong in doing good works and alive, but, like the city of Sardis, she is in danger of falling asleep in a sleep of compromise and indifference...to which Christ says, "Awake, and strengthen yourself!"
- The city's lack of diligence was nearly its downfall, but it shall not be so for the church.

Christ's Designation

- The reader sees Christ designated as God Almighty ablaze with the Spirit of God as spoken in Isaiah. He is God almighty the just Judge of the universe and that of the bishops of the Church, represented by the seven stars. (cf. Rev 1)

Isaiah 11:1 There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. ² The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. ³ His delight is in the fear of the LORD, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears; ⁴ But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. ⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, And faithfulness the belt of His waist.

A Commendation:

- Christ knows that the reputation of the church is that she is ALIVE, but Christ, the Lord and Head of the Church declares the Church wanting in that she is DEAD, ASLEEP vs. watching and praying that she not enter into temptation. As the Great Tribulation was coming upon the entire world of the Roman Empire, Jesus exhorted his church to Watch, occupy herself doing good and obeying the commands, until He comes...until He appears. Watch and pray that she remain faithful.

Matt 25:13 as to the parable of the virgins: "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming; Matt 26 regarding Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsamene: ³⁹ He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." ⁴⁰ Then He came to the disciples and found them asleep, and said to Peter, "What? Could you not watch with Me one hour? ⁴¹ "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Mark 13:30 "Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place. 31 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. 32 " But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 "Take heed, **watch** and pray; for you do not know when the time is. 34 "*It is* like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to **watch**. 35 "**Watch** therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming -- in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning -- 36 "lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. 37 "And what I say to you, I say to all: **Watch!**"

Luke 12:37 "Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down *to eat*, and will come and serve them. 38 "And if he should come in the second **watch**, or come in the third **watch**, and find *them* so, blessed are those servants. 39 "But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 40 "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." 41 Then Peter said to Him, "Lord, do You speak this parable *only* to us, or to all *people*?" 42 And the Lord said, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* master will make ruler over his household, to give *them their* portion of food in due season? 43 "Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. 44 "Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has.

Luke 21:31 "So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. 32 "Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place. 33 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. 34 " But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. 35 "For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36 "**Watch** therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

- The church was dead, irrelevant in the midst of the pagan culture because, as Mounce says, she was secularized. She had completely come to terms with her pagan environment.
- Jesus said, "if the salt has lost its savor, how will it be salted: Matt 5:16. Sardis' light had gone out, and she had certainly lost her savor.
- But not all was lost. There was grace remaining, which had to be strengthened...through obedience, the preaching of the Word, and through reception of the sacraments, that which remained would be strengthened. Obviously, much was lost in this Church...their works were not perfect in the Lord's sight.
- Their works were NOT PERFECT, or NOT COMPLETED. Matthew gives us insight into perfection as the Lord sees it.

Matt 5:44 "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45 "that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 "For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 "And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more *than others*? Do not even the tax collectors do so? 48 "Therefore you shall be **perfect**, just as your Father in heaven is **perfect**.

Matthew 19: we see that the rich young ruler was asked to sell all that he had and give it to the poor, and then follow Christ...he didn't do it, therefore his works were not perfect.

- Perhaps living life in the midst of compromise and worldliness, their love had waxed cold and they were no testimony to those around them...at the same time, they, perhaps, believed they were doing the work of the Lord and shining as a distinct light among the pagans and those walking in error
- The church embraced mediocrity and tolerance of sin, therefore they were dead, good for nothing, but to be trampled underfoot by men.

Exhortation:

- KEEP and GUARD the ministry of the Word of God, and the Sacraments. See how St. Peter exhorted the elders: Shepherd the flock of God over whom you have been made overseers
- Christ tells the church to REPENT, to make an about face, and to re-embrace the first works that were taught and build upon them without a slothful attitude and conduct.

Warnings:

- Christ warns that if they do not repent, He will come, appear, unawares when they do not expect.
- They will be caught as if they were not even Christian...this was the first century warning from St. Paul to the Thessalonians... Watch and be knowledgeable about the Lord's return, His appearing, so that you may be exalted with Him, and not find yourselves as the recipients of His wrath because you were ASLEEP:

1 Thessalonians 4: 13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words. 1 Thessalonians 5:1 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. 5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do*, but let us watch and be sober. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. 8 But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and *as* a helmet the hope of salvation. 9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. 11 Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

- Christ's coming against a local church, or a nation is not the same as his "Second Coming" wherein he returns to judge all of the living and the dead. This was the appearing of Christ around AD70 for the salvation of his elect from persecution, the resurrection of those who gave their lives for Christ's testimony, and the judgment of those who rejected His grace.

Christ's Promise:

- To the faithful, who had not compromised, or who had not "soiled their garments, Christ affirms that they can rest their hope in walking with Christ in white garments...for they are worthy to do so.
- White garments mentioned 7 times in the Revelation:

Here the overcomers in the Church at Sardis

Rev 3:18 "I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and **white** garments, that you may be clothed, *that* the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. 19 "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.

Rev 4:4 In the Throne Room of God...Around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in **white** robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.

Rev 6:10 During the Great Tribulation: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" 11 Then a **white** robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both *the number of* their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they *were*, was completed.

Rev 7:9 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with **white** robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation *belongs* to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" 11 All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honor and power and might, *Be* to our God forever and ever. Amen." 13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in **white** robes, and where did they come from?" 14 And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them **white** in the blood of the Lamb.

Rev 19:14 The Armies in Heaven...And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, **white** and clean, followed Him on **white** horses.

- The overcomer will be clothed in white garments...the traditional garment of purification and salvation. We definitively put on our white garments at our baptism, and progressively put these white garments as we work out our salvation with fear and trembling, and finally on the Last Day—our final salvation in Christ.
- What is most important is not our confession of Christ's name, but Christ's confession of our name to the Father and before his angels...we should open our hearts to hear this
 - Those who have confessed Christ must persevere in the faith and continue to believe and obey and not turn to apostasy, immorality, or other sin, which if remained in and not repented of, will result in the blotting out of one's name from the book of life

The Book of Life in which the elect, the chosen ones, are entered from the foundations of the world. They are entered into the Book of the Elect in the Church upon confirmation after baptism. We see the evolving theology of the Book of Life beginning in Exodus:

Exodus 32:31 Then Moses returned to the LORD and said, "Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold! 32 "Yet now, if You will forgive their sin -- but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your **book** which You have written." 33 And the LORD said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My **book**. 34 "Now therefore, go, lead the people to *the place* of which I have spoken to you. Behold, My Angel shall go before you. Nevertheless, in the day when I visit for punishment, I will visit punishment upon them for their sin." 35 So the LORD plagued the people because of what they did with the calf which Aaron made.

Ps 69:28 Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, And not be written with the righteous. 29 But I *am* poor and sorrowful; Let Your salvation, O God, set me up on high. 30 I will praise the name of God with a song, And will magnify Him with thanksgiving.

Psa 139:15 My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, *And* skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. 16 Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet *there were* none of them.

17 How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them!

Daniel 12:1 "At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands *watch* over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, *Even* to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book.

Malachi 3:16 Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, And the LORD listened and heard *them*; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the LORD And who meditate on His name. 17 "They shall be Mine," says the LORD of hosts, "On the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him."

And then in the Revelation itself:

Revelation 13:1 Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. 2 Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like *the feet* of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. 3 And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. 4 So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" 5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. 6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. 7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. 8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. 9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear.

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

Rev 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book* of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Rev 21:22 But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 23 The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb *is* its light. 24 And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. 25 Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). 26 And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. 27 But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Are we in the Book of Life? Only way we can know is to make our calling and our election sure, as Peter says:

2 Peter 1:2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, 3 as His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption *that is* in the world through lust. 5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, *you will be* neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. 10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election **sure**, for if you do these things you will never stumble; 11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

- St Athanasius: "the Son of God became man that we may become God." CCC: 460: This divinization is both the origin and final goal of the Christian life.
- God shows himself through these virtues as St. Peter says. St. Teresa of Avila: "for, as you know, anyone who fails to go forward begins to go back."
 - Error 1: those who have been saved can fall away and be lost forever...St John says that the true believers remain in Him and do not fall away because His seed remains in them. They, as Jesus warned, repent when they do evil, and seek to do good again, and again from a pure heart.
 - Error 2: all who accept Christ will be saved regardless of what they do...no! the church here was told to repent lest they be blotted out of the book of life

- Error 3: everyone written in the book of life is saved, unless they continue to sin and are blotted out...not true, there is no age of accountability prior to which is the safe point of all humans. This is why we baptize infants of believers and exhort and teach them to improve upon their baptism.

- Therefore, as the Epistle to the Hebrews states:

Hebrews 10: 23 Let us **hold fast** the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful. 24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

The Message to Philadelphia

Chapter 3:7 “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: ‘The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one shall shut, who shuts and no one opens.’⁸ “I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut; I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.⁹ Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and learn that I have loved you.¹⁰ Because you have kept my word of patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial which is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell upon the earth.¹¹ I am coming soon; hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown.¹² He who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God; never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.^[a]¹³ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

Philadelphia:

- Meaning Love of Brother, was a city founded 140 yrs before Christ. Adelas II moved the city to its current location and wanted to Hellenize the city...and became the Hellenistic missionary center
- Dyoisios was the Goddess of the city. Volcanic activity and hot springs in the region brought an earthquake in 17BC
- Church of Philadelphia remained a church until the 14th century resisting several attempted sieges by the Turks

Christ's Designation

- Jesus, the holy and true one, as Lord of the Church, as the one who said that ALL AUTHORITY is given to me on heaven, and earth, and under the earth possesses God's key of David.
 - A representation of all covenantal authority as derived from God
 - A statement and artifact that ensures the reader that the one speaking is credible and can do whatever is necessary to do
 - A statement that declares that Christ has all knowledge and wisdom to declare and execute.
- The Key of David, represents the all-encompassing authority of God. The reader/listener would be reminded of Isaiah's words about Eliakim, the faithful steward who was about to receive the Key of David, from the unfaithful Jewish leaders of the time.
- This key is also the key of the Kingdom of God, representing all authority to execute decision-making power in the Church on earth...it is the most powerful key in the universe because it carries the power of eternal life and eternal damnation.
- Jesus is the holder of this key of authority, and what he says about the open and closed doors are true!
- He gives these keys of the Kingdom, the Key of David, to his bishops in the church, who have the authority to bind and to loose...their decisions are executed as already having been pronounced in heaven (Greek Present Perfect tense) E.g., whatever you bind on earth, shall have already been as bound in heaven.

Isaiah 22:20 ' Then it shall be in that day, That I will call My servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah; 21 I will clothe him with your robe And strengthen him with your belt; I will commit your responsibility into his hand. He shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem And

to the house of Judah. 22 The **key** of the house of David I will lay on his shoulder; So he shall open, and no one shall shut; And he shall shut, and no one shall open. 23 I will fasten him as a peg in a secure place, And he will become a glorious throne to his father's house. 24 'They will hang on him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the posterity, all vessels of small quantity, from the cups to all the pitchers.

Luke 11:52 "Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the **key** of knowledge. You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered."

Rev 20:1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the **key** to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

Matt 16:18 "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. 19 "And I will give you the **keys** of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

Rev 1:18 "I *am* He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the **keys** of Hades and of Death.

A Commendation:

- Christ obviously is blessing the Philadelphian Church with an open door, which he has opened, and no one can shut.
- Paul (Col 4:3) asked the church to pray for an open door so that he may effectually preach the Gospel as he ought. The apostate Jews were always wreaking havoc behind Paul after he had preached the Gospel to the churches of Asia Minor. 2 Cor 12 shows that Paul requested God take away a thorn in the flesh...the Jews from the synagogue of Satan always buffeted him, but God said, My grace was sufficient for Paul's mission.
- Perhaps a door of ministerial fruitfulness for the church was about to be opened...to preach the Gospel and to make disciples, regardless of the apostate Jews who were always causing a stumbling block to be placed in the way.
- They had a little power as a church, very little influence, not stylish, no reputation of "being Alive."
- Christ commends their perseverance in the faith, even doing so with little strength, substantiated by their keeping His word and not denying His name.
- These Christians in this Church had been put out of the synagogue for their testimony of Jesus Christ. The holders of the keys of communion and excommunication had put out these Christians, but Christ says that this synagogue is lorded over by Satan, and that their words are not only not authoritative, but are a lie.
- Jesus will again come upon this synagogue of Satan, take away any resemblance of authority about which they lie, and will give it to the Church, the New Jerusalem
- All Authority is Christ's, yet at this time, prior to the Great Tribulation (AD66-AD70), we see apostate Jews and idolatrous Rome leaguings together to fight against the Christ...and although the lying Jews have the upper hand this day, the tables will be turned at the appearing of Christ, when all authority will be transferred and bestowed upon the New Jerusalem, while the Old Jerusalem, who played the harlot and confused the world as to the ways of Yahweh, would be burned to the ground.
- NO SUCH THING AS ORTHODOX JUDAISM
 - No such thing as a genuine belief in the Old Testament that is consistent with rejection of Jesus Christ as Messiah
 - The Jew will not be recognized by God as in Covenant until he repents of his unbelief, abandons his demonic religion, and returns to the faith of Abraham, who believed God and in Jesus Christ.
 - The Church is the true Israel of God, and the condemnation of the apostate Jews is far more severe since they have known God's name and have seen God's son.

John 8:39 They answered and said to Him, "**Abraham** is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of **Abraham**. 40 "But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. **Abraham** did not do this. 41 "You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father -- God." 42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. 43 "Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. 44 "You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and *does not* stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it. 45 "But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. 46 "Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? 47 "He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God." 48 Then the Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?" 49 Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me. 50 "And I do not seek My *own* glory; there is One who seeks and judges. 51 "Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death." 52 Then the Jews said to Him, "Now

we know that You have a demon! **Abraham** is dead, and the prophets; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.' 53 "Are You greater than our father **Abraham**, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. Whom do You make Yourself out to be?" 54 Jesus answered, "If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God. 55 "Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, 'I do not know Him,' I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and keep His word. 56 "Your father **Abraham** rejoiced to see My day, and he saw *it* and was glad." 57 Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen **Abraham**?" 58 Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before **Abraham** was, I AM." 59 Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

- And to the Christians, who reside in the New Jerusalem, which has its origin in heaven, Christ comforts them by saying they will inherit all things, and, according to the blessings in Deut 28, they will be the head and NOT the tail. The Jewish persecutors will be stripped of all power and will come and worship those who are Christ's, thus fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy:

Isaiah 60:14 Also the sons of those who afflicted you Shall come bowing to you, And all those who despised you shall fall prostrate at the soles of your feet; And they shall call you The City of the LORD, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

Exhortation:

- Jesus reminds the Church that he is coming soon, His coming is at hand; therefore, HOLD FAST the good testimony that they have. Continue fighting the good fight of faith so that no one seize your victory, or that through sin, you do not find yourself disqualified in the race to glory.
- Christ will KEEP them from the terrible hour of testing that will come upon the whole world, which in the context of Scripture, is the Roman Empire
 - The Great Tribulation of the Church and of the world between AD 66 to AD 70: 3 ½ years

The Gospel will be preached in all of the world prior to Christ's appearing: Matt 24:13 "But he who endures to the end shall be saved. 14 "And this Gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the **world** as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

This Great Tribulation will be the greatest that has ever been and that will ever be regarding the church: Matt 24:21 "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the **world** until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

The Gospel will be preached to all of the cities of Israel before Christ's appearing Matthew 10:22 "And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. 23 "When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the **cities** of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

The Gospel was already preached in the whole world during that later part of Paul's ministry: Colossians 1:3 We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, 4 since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints; 5 because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the Gospel, 6 which has come to you, as *it has* also in all the **world**, and is bringing forth fruit, as *it is* also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth;

- Christ does not promise to "rapture" them out of the tribulation, but to keep them faithful during it

No Warnings:

Christ's Promise:

- Christ promises the Living Stones (see 1 Peter 2:5) that they will be pillars in the House of God on which Christ's name, which they have given their lives for, will be written on their heads...Christ is Lord of their thoughts and deeds
- Also the Name of the Church: the New Jerusalem, Zion, will be placed upon the foreheads of the Christians, as Paul spoke in Hebrews, while co-mingling the exhortation with the forecast of Great Tribulation and shaking

Hebrews 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than *that of* Abel. 25 See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more *shall we not escape* if we turn away from Him who *speaks* from heaven, 26 whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven."

- The citizens of the Synagogue of Satan, would be scattered as their judgment, just as the rebels were scattered at Babylon, the code name for apostate Jerusalem within the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

Regarding Jerusalem

Matthew 24:1 Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple.

2 And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not *one* stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down." 3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

Regarding the Apostate Jews

Luke 21: 19 "By your patience possess your souls. 20 " But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.

21 "Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. 22 "For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people.

24 "And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

The Message to Laodicea

Chapter 3:14 "And to the angel of the church in La-odice'a write: 'The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation. 15 "'I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were cold or hot! 16 So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth. 17 For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing; not knowing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. 18 Therefore I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, that you may be rich, and white garments to clothe you and to keep the shame of your nakedness from being seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see. 19 Those whom I love, I reprove and chasten; so be zealous and repent. 20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. 21 He who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. 22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'"

Laodicea:

- Situated between Colossae and Hieropolis. Colossae was wedged into a narrow valley in the shadow of towering mountains and was watered by icy streams of water...refreshing to drink. Hieropolis was famous for hot mineral springs that flowed through the city, was filled with healing properties, and then cascaded down a mountain side near Laodicea.
- Between the two cities, Laodicea had the misfortune of having the hot spring water pool with the cold drinking water, which created a luke warm cesspool neither good for healing or drinking. The water by the time it hit Laodicea was lukewarm, putrid, and nauseating. This is the picture of Laodicea in the natural, and, sad to say, in the spiritual realm.
- Three outstanding characteristics of the city that align with Christ's exhortation to this church:
 - Great wealth and financial independence as an important banking center
 - Textile industry which produced a world famous black glossy wool
 - Renowned medical school from which came an eye salve called Phrygian powder known since the days of Aristotle.

Christ's Designation

- Christ is the Amen...So be it...the One who calls down from heaven the blessings and the curses of the covenant. Our salvation is based not on our ability to keep the New Covenant, but upon Christ's ability to keep the covenant. God swore by His own name regarding the covenant, therefore the Covenant is between God, the Father, and His Son. His Son's people, the Church, are God's people by covenant whose ethical stipulations are adhered to by Christ alone.

Colossians 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created

through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. 18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

- Christ is the true witness of God, as he said, “If you’ve seen me, you’ve seen the Father.”
- Christ is the pre-incarnate Word of God, who was in the beginning with God, and who was God.

A Commendation:

- Not much to commend the Church about, however, because Christ Jesus loves His Church, and His people in this church, he chastens them and exhorts them to be burning hot...zealous...and repent from irrelevance.

Exhortation:

- All things, including all works, are naked and open to the Lord Jesus Christ (Heb 4), and he sees the works of this church, that they are worthless, irrelevant, ineffectual.
- The salt had become tasteless, and the light had become covered with a bushel basket (Matt 5)
- They are a church that is not influential within their culture for the kingdom of God’s sake, therefore Christ threatens to spit them out...just as the land would vomit out the sinful inhabitants if those inhabitants continue in their sin. Recall Israel’s warning about this in Leviticus 18:24-28
- The church is being called to task not because of spiritual temperature, but because of barrenness of its works
- Christ rebukes them for saying and thinking to themselves that they are rich, and have need of nothing, when in fact they are poor, blind and naked.
 - Buy Gold from me refined by fire: see 1 Cor 3:13-15 corresponding to good works built upon the foundations of obedience to Christ Jesus. Use your banking prowess to buy what counts. God is not against us prospering, but he does not want us to prosper without being rich toward God in good works...to overcome the ineffectual nature of this church, and become truly rich.
 - Smyrna was poor, but was indeed rich...Laodicea had no excuse for their poor wretched worthlessness
 - Buy White garments to clothe your nakedness: Instead of obsessing over their wealth with black wool, and instead of basking in their estate of nakedness, which corresponds to disobedience (cf. Genesis 3:7), CLOTHE yourselves in white garments, which signify justification, sanctification, and righteousness (as in Rev 19:8 wherein the righteous are clothed in white)
 - Buy eye salve that you may see. Contrary to their ownership of Phrygian powder, which didn’t help them to see the reality of the Kingdom of God, but only led to their boastful blindness and impotence; buy from Christ eye salve that leads to an understanding heart and a perceiving mind as to what the Spirit is saying to the Church

Warnings:

- Be zealous and repent, lest the church’s lampstand be taken away, which here is translated, “spew you out of my mouth.”
- The Christian would recall the teaching from Proverbs in the synagogue lest they become discouraged

Hebrews 12:5 And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the **chastening** of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; 6 For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives." 7 If you endure **chastening**, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? 8 But if you are without **chastening**, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. 9 Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected *us*, and we paid *them* respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? 10 For they indeed for a few days chastened *us* as seemed *best* to them, but He for *our* profit, that *we* may be partakers of His holiness. 11 Now no **chastening** seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Christ’s Promise:

- Christ concludes his discourse to the bishop of the church of Laodicea by offering the church the opportunity to let him into the Mass. Christ Jesus knocks on the door of His Church giving the conditional promise to come in and partake of the Eucharist with the members, if they will but let him in.

- Christ is here speaking as the Amen, the faithful and true witness, and the sovereign Lord over all...He is not making a feeble plea. He making an offer to members of the Church to let him in, lest he spew them all out of his mouth.
- Christ emphasizes his real presence at this meal...the Liturgy of the Eucharist...the weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper and its efficacy. Christ is present to sup, to heal, to strengthen, to edify. Ours is not a barren intellectual worship...just like in heaven, we have the sounds, the smells of incense, the presence of Christ in the Word and in the Eucharist. Christ offers to dine with the church, and with us today, and to renew that communion with us in this divine mystery.

John 6: 53 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. 54 "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 "For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. 56 "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. 57 "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.

- Christ has entered upon His kingdom already
- He has disarmed principalities and powers, and Satan himself
- He is readying to bind Satan for a 1000 years...his current expanded reign
- He has already made us priests and kings unto himself in his kingdom
- OVERCOME and CONQUER
- He promises the overcomer to be co-heirs of his reign, to sit with him on his throne...as did Christ overcome, conquer, and sat down with His Father on his throne.
- R.J.Rushdoony: "The purpose of this vision is to give comfort and assurance of victory to the Church, not to confirm their fears or the threats of the enemy. To read Revelation as other than the triumph of the kingdom of God in time and eternity is to deny the essence of its meaning."

Etched in stone at the Vatican over the place where the Christians were thrown to the lions:

Christus Vincit
Christus Regnat
Christus Imperat

Chapter 4 1 After this I looked, and lo, in heaven an open door! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, “Come up hither, and I will show you what must take place after this.”² At once I was in the Spirit, and lo, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne!³ And he who sat there appeared like jasper and carnelian, and round the throne was a rainbow that looked like an emerald.^[a]⁴ Round the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders,^[b] clad in white garments, with golden crowns upon their heads.⁵ From the throne issue flashes of lightning, and voices and peals of thunder, and before the throne burn seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God;⁶ and before the throne there is as it were a sea of glass, like crystal.

And round the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures,^[c] full of eyes in front and behind:⁷ the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like a flying eagle.⁸ And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all round and within, and day and night they never cease to sing,

“Holy, holy, holy,^[d] is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!”

⁹ And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives for ever and ever,¹⁰ the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives for ever and ever; they cast their crowns before the throne, singing,

¹¹ “Worthy art thou, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for thou didst create all things, and by thy will they existed and were created.”

- God now reveals to John the liturgy of heaven, its glory, its participants, its repository paradigm, which is the pattern after which we worship in the Church on earth
 - John sees this worship on the Lord’s Day, and the vision he sees is the view of coming events, which will come to pass soon, all being seen from the vantage point—the chariot throne of God in the Glory Cloud
 - This is a picture of the weekly ascension of the Church into heaven every Lord’s Day where she joins in the communion of saints and angels “in festal array” (Heb 12:22-23)
 - The Church acts this scene out every Lord’s Day in the Sursum Corda: “Lift up your hearts!, and the congregation says in response, “We lift them up to the Lord.”
 - St. Germanus, “the Church is an earthly heaven. The souls of Christians are called to assemble together to assemble with the prophets, apostles, and hierarchs in order to recline with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at the mystical banquet of the Kingdom of Christ. There by having come into the unity of faith and communion

of the Spirit through the dispensation of the One who died for us and is sitting at the right hand of the Father, we are no longer on earth but standing by the royal Throne of God in heaven, where Christ is, just as he himself says, “Righteous Father, sanctify in Your name those whom you gave me, so that where I am, they may be with me.” (John 17)

- After Christ finishes speaking to John regarding what needs to be presented to the Churches, God commands John to come up into the heavens so that He may show John what must happen after this time of exhortation and comfort to the churches
 - “Come up Here,” depicts John being caught up into the throne room of God to witness the glory of God and speak about what he was seeing
 - Some Dispensationalist say that this “Come up hither,” represents the rapture of the Church before the Great Tribulation that will be written about in subsequent chapters. Orthodox theologians in this matter hold that the only one being “raptured” is the Apostle John
- John is transported into the throne room of God. A place seen from by Isaiah, and from below the clear floor by Ezekiel

Isaiah 6:1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. 2 Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!"

Ezekiel 1:1 Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth *month*, on the fifth *day* of the month, as I was among the captives by the River Chebar, *that* the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. 2 On the fifth *day* of the month, which was in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity, 3 the word of the LORD came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the River Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was upon him there. 4 Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire. 5 Also from within it *came* the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had the likeness of a man. 6 Each one had four faces, and each one had four wings. 7 Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like the soles of calves' feet. They sparkled like the color of burnished bronze. 8 The hands of a man were under their wings on their four sides; and each of the four had faces and wings. 9 Their wings touched one another. *The creatures* did not turn when they went, but each one went straight forward. 10 As for the likeness of their faces, *each* had the face of a man; each of the four had the face of a lion on the right side, each of the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and each of the four had the face of an eagle. 11 Thus were their faces. Their wings stretched upward; two wings of each one touched one another, and two covered their bodies. 12 And each one went straight forward; they went wherever the spirit wanted to go, and they did not turn when they went. 13 As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches going back and forth among the living creatures. The fire was bright, and out of the fire went lightning. 14 And the living creatures ran back and forth, in appearance like a flash of lightning. 15 Now as I looked at the living creatures, behold, a **wheel** was on the earth beside each living creature with its four faces. 16 The appearance of the wheels and their workings was like the color of beryl, and all four had the same likeness. The appearance of their workings was, as it were, a **wheel** in the middle of a **wheel**. 17 When they moved, they went toward any one of four directions; they did not turn aside when they went. 18 As for their rims, they were so high they were awesome; and their rims were full of eyes, all around the four of them. 19 When the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up. 20 Wherever the spirit wanted to go, they went, *because* there the spirit went; and the wheels were lifted together with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels. 21 When those went, *these* went; when those stood, *these* stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up together with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels. 22 The likeness of the firmament above the heads of the living creatures was like the color of an awesome crystal, stretched out over their heads. 23 And under the firmament their wings spread out straight, one toward another. Each one had two which covered one side, and each one had two which covered the other side of the body. 24 When they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of many waters, like the voice of the Almighty, a tumult like the noise of an army; and when they stood still, they let down their wings. 25 A voice came from above the firmament that was over their heads; whenever they stood, they let down their wings. 26 And above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne was a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it. 27 Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around. 28 Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the brightness all around it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. So when I saw *it*, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking.

- To be caught up in the spirit is to be received into the divine assembly...the worship of the one, true God, Yahweh, originating from the throne room of God.

- This was once the prerogative of the special class of God's people called the prophets, but, with the coming of the New Covenant, as presented in the Revelation,
 - Moses' desire that all of God's people be prophets, now comes to pass (Num 11:29)
 - The sign of this is that of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost in AD30 (Acts 2:17-21)
 - We all, now through Christ, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. (2 Cor 3:18)
 - The Church has definitively ascended positionally with Christ in whom we are seated in heavenly places with him (Eph 1:20); progressively and experientially we ascend with Him and to Him and his Father weekly as we assemble on the Lord's Day; and finally, there will be a culmination of ascension that will take place spiritually at death (Rev 20:4), and bodily, at the end of history (1 Cor 15:50-55).

1 Cor 15:50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed -- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." 55 "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" 56 The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

- John sees God in unapproachable light, and he sees the throne room of God. The rainbow around the throne was like. God was like jasper and sardius, and the rainbow was like an emerald.
 - Emerald in appearance
 - Jasper (possibly an opal or a diamond)
 - Sardius (a reddish stone)
 - These three stones were on the priest's breastplate representing 3 of the 12 tribes of Israel
 - Ex. 28:17-19...also like the jewels that littered the ground in Eden Ezek 28:13

Ezekiel 28: 13 You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created.

- 24 thrones and 24 elders: a ruling presbytery of heaven. The term elders always refers to men who are faithful and who rule because of that reputation
- 12 is the number associated with the people of God: 12 tribes of Israel, 12 apostles of the Lamb, 24 divisions of priests (1 Chron 25), and 24 is a double portion of the 12; and we see multiples of 12 in the numbers throughout the Revelation: 12 foundational stones in the New Jerusalem, 144,000 who escaped the Great Tribulation.
- The elders are kings and priests, sitting on thrones and, as were the priests of old, clad in white garments, clothed with the righteousness of God, which is through a persevering faith in Christ: ...they are the Royal Priesthood, the Church
- We see these rulers as rulers of the New Jerusalem. Comparing other portions of the Revelation, we see:

Revelation 21: 9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. 12 Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are *the names* of the twelve **tribes** of the children of Israel: 13 three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. 14 Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. 15 And he who talked with me had

a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. 16 The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal. 17 Then he measured its wall: one hundred *and* forty-four cubits, *according* to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. 18 The construction of its wall was *of* jasper; and the city *was* pure gold, like clear glass. 19 The foundations of the wall of the city *were* adorned with all kinds of precious stones: 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 *were* twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city *was* pure gold, like transparent glass. 22 But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 23 The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb *is* its light. 24 And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. 25 Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). 26 And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. 27 But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

- Note the color of the throne room. Richard Paquier states that "Color is a teacher through site, and it creates moods." Part of the dynamics of worship, and is why the colors in the worship and priestly robes flow from the Old Testament and indeed represent the current liturgy in the heavens
- The throne issued forth lightning, voices, and peals of thunder reminding the reader of God's presence in the cloud atop Mount Sinai (Heb 8:9; 9:23). John saw the heavenly throne room while in it, whereas Ezekiel saw it from below:

Ezek 1:4 Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness *was* all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire. 5 Also from within it *came* the likeness of four living creatures. And this *was* their appearance: they had the likeness of a man....22 The likeness of the firmament above the heads of the living creatures *was* like the color of an awesome crystal, stretched out over their heads....26 And above the firmament over their heads *was* the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne *was* a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it.

- The Lampstand of seven torches were ablaze with fire, which could be the seven spirits of God...the fullness of the Holy Spirit, or perhaps the 7 "Angels of the Presence" who stand before God, one of whom is Raphael as depicted in Tobit 12:15 I am Raphael, one of the seven angels who stand and serve before the Glory of the Lord." 16Greatly shaken, the two of them fell prostrate in fear. 17But Raphael said to them: "Do not fear; peace be with you! Bless God now and forever. 18As for me, when I was with you, I was not acting out of any favor on my part, but by God's will. So bless God every day; give praise with song.

The Angels are comprised of 9 choirs; Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominions, Powers, Virtues, Principalities, Archangels and Angels. Particularly powerful are the 7 great Archangels spoken of in Apoc VIII:2 "And I saw 7 Angels standing in the presence of God".

The Seven Archangels (associated with patron saints of the sacraments: Michael (patron saint of the Eucharist), Gabriel (Patron saint of Baptism), Raphael (Patron saint of Penance), Uriel (Fire of God, carries the Sword of Truth, Patron saint of Confirmation), Jehudiel (praise of God, patron saint of extreme unction and anointing of the sick and dying, having the flaming crown of mercy), Sealtiel (prayer of God, patron saint of Holy Orders), and Barachiel (blessings of God, patron saint of marriage, family, children)

Isaiah 11:1 There shall come forth a Rod from the stem **of** Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out **of** his roots. 2 The **Spirit of** the LORD shall rest upon Him, The **Spirit of** wisdom and understanding, The **Spirit of** counsel and might, The **Spirit of** knowledge and **of** the fear **of** the LORD. 3 His delight *is* in the fear **of** the LORD, And He shall not judge by the sight **of** His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing **of** His ears; 4 But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek **of** the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod **of** His mouth, And with the breath **of** His lips He shall slay the wicked. 5 Righteousness shall be the belt **of** His loins, And faithfulness the belt **of** His waist. 6 " The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the

young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them. 7 The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

- The creatures in the heavenly throne room of God are very interesting here, and would be familiar with the Christians at this time who would have known the visions of the Ezekiel, which are very similar.
 - Four living creatures represent the 4 corners of the earth, if we compare the relationship with Scriptures speaking about the 4 corners of the earth, the four winds, four directions, 4 rivers from Eden that watered the whole earth. These four creatures have a relationship like that to the earth.
 - Lion...calf...human being...eagle: these symbolize, respectively, what is noblest, strongest, wisest, and swiftest in creation. Calf: traditionally translated "ox," the Greek word refers to a heifer or young bull. Since the second century, these four creatures have been used as symbols of the evangelists Mark, Luke, Matthew, and John, respectively.
- Nothing in the Revelation, even the numbers, are random...they have significance and are interesting:
 - Lion, as Leo (Zodiac and stars, not pagan astrology) reminds us of the Lion of the Tribe of Judah who is worthy to open the Scroll of the New Testament Age in all of its fullness
 - Bull, as Taurus, depicting the Tribe of Ephraim, perhaps the shoulders on which all of the seven churches rested.
 - Eagle, which reminds the Christian of the Tribe of Dan, eagle's wings, which fly throughout the heavens proclaiming the woes to the earth, and the Gospel of the kingdom
 - The man, Aquarius, water-bearer/pourer, pouring out the chalices of wrath and the rivers of living water
- John Calvin said that all creatures are animated by angelic motion...interesting comment...his intent was to show that the breath of all creatures comes from and is sustained by God, and not by a mediate process called NATURE. (Gen 7:22) God created all things from nothing and all life by immediate actions. No place for a deistic natural process apart from God...a neo-Baalism, or Deism. What we call natural law is actually a rough approximate generalization about the ordinary activity of God in governing his creation in a world being redeemed from sin.
- We then get a glimpse of what Isaiah saw (Isaiah 6:1-3), in the year that King Uzziah died...he saw the Lord high and lifted up with Seraphim above him each having six wings...2 covering the face, 2 covering the feet, and with 2 he flew...Angels consist of flaming fire, with lightening around them, and who do the bidding of God. Their being full of eyes and eternal praise to God show their wise and faithful nature...unlike the angels who left their post and rebelled...who were thrown to earth as demons, and with Satan himself
- And now, the everlasting liturgy in heaven. The Burning Ones, Seraphim, sing: Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God almighty, who was and is and is to come

Officiant: Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name; evermore praising Thee and saying,

All: HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and Earth are full of thy glory; Hosanna in the Highest!

- When the Seraphim sing, the Presbytery of Heaven, the 24 elders respond in a psalm-like responsorial giving glory to the God, the Almighty One, who ordains, created, and sustains all things

- This is domain of eternal worship, the ultimate and everlasting liturgy, and the powerful presence of God from whom...from which...all actions on earth are brought forth...blessings to the faithful Church, intercessions before the Mighty One and His Christ, and wrath and judgment (and comings, appearances of Christ) of God on those who refuse to repent...and that after all of his mercy is extended.
- We see what God would have in earthly worship:
 - **Worship must be corporate:** not individualistic, not an aggregate of individual worshippers, not quietistic, or solely internal, but full participation among united believers demonstrating a harmony of unity and diversity
 - **Worship must be responsorial:** The Revelation is about worship and it depicts responsive liturgy...a dialogue among elders, living creatures, saints, Christ...We respond to the liturgy of the Word, the singing of psalms, and to the liturgy of the Sacraments
 - **Worship must be orderly:** Not chaotic, "let all things be done decently (decorously) and in order." 1 Cor 14:40
 - ;lskdjf

Malachi 1: 6 " A son honors *his* father, And a servant *his* master. If then I am the Father, Where *is* My honor? And if I *am* a Master, Where *is* My reverence? Says the LORD of hosts To you priests who despise My name. Yet you say, 'In what way have we despised Your name?' 7 "You offer defiled food on My altar. But say, 'In what way have we defiled You?' By saying, 'The table of the LORD is contemptible.' 8 And when you offer the blind as a sacrifice, *Is it* not evil? And when you offer the lame and sick, *Is it* not evil? Offer it then to your **governor**! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you favorably?" Says the LORD of hosts. 9 "But now entreat God's favor, That He may be gracious to us. *While* this is being *done* by your hands, Will He accept you favorably?" Says the LORD of hosts. 10 "Who *is there* even among you who would shut the doors, So that you would not kindle fire *on* My altar in vain? I have no pleasure in you," Says the LORD of hosts, "Nor will I accept an offering from your hands. 11 For from the rising of the sun, even to its going down, My name *shall be* great among the Gentiles; In every place incense *shall be* offered to My name, And a pure offering; For My name shall be great among the nations," Says the LORD of hosts. 12 "But you profane it, In that you say, 'The table of the LORD is defiled; And its fruit, its food, *is* contemptible.' 13 You also say, 'Oh, what a weariness!' And you sneer at it," Says the LORD of hosts. "And you bring the stolen, the lame, and the sick; Thus you bring an offering! Should I accept this from your hand?" Says the LORD. 14 "But cursed *be* the deceiver Who has in his flock a male, And takes a vow, But sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished -- For I *am* a great King," Says the LORD of hosts, "And My name *is to be* feared among the nations.

- Chilton: "Biblical public worship is very different from private or family worship; it is radically different from a mere bible study group, as important as that may be. The Sunday worship of the Church is qualitatively unique: It is God's people coming into the palace for a formal ceremony before the Throne, an official audience with the King. We come to confess our faith and allegiance, to take solemn oaths, to receive forgiveness, to offer up prayers, to be instructed by God's officers, to eat at His table, and to render thanksgiving for all his benefits; and we are to respond to all of this with music and singing. All of this is corporate, and that necessarily means liturgy. This may mean certain complex and involved changes in our habits and patterns of worship. But God should have nothing less than the best. He is the King, and worship means serving Him.

Acts 17:24 "God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. 25 "Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. 26 "And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, 27 "so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; 28 "for in Him we live and move and have our being,

5 1 And I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll^a written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals; ² and I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?” ³ And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, ⁴ and I wept much that no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. ⁵ Then one of the elders said to me, “Weep not; lo, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.”

⁶ And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes,^b which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth; ⁷ and he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne. ⁸ And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and with golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints; ⁹ and they sang a new song, saying,

“Worthy art thou to take the scroll and to open its seals,
for thou wast slain and by thy blood didst ransom men for God
from every tribe and tongue and people and nation,
¹⁰ and hast made them a kingdom and priests to our God,
and they shall reign on earth.”

¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, ¹² saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” ¹³ And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all therein, saying, “To him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might for ever and ever!” ¹⁴ And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped.

- The Scroll of the Covenant written on both sides, just as the 2 tablets of Moses...2 testimonies...1 tablet had the full set of commands on front and back, and the 2nd tablet had the same. One was a copy of the Covenantal terms for God and the other was Israel's, and both were stored in the Ark of the Covenant.
 - When the testator dies, the seals of the will are broken and the testament read.
 - The churches would have known that this was a testament to be unsealed, read aloud, and then EXECUTED.
 - 2 copies of the treaty, or covenant between the King and His servants were ratified. Israel had begot the Church, however, as a nation, Israel had apostatized, and was now ready to pay the price of executing and rejecting the Son of God, their Messiah. The believers would be saved and blessed, yet after Great Tribulation, and even death of some of their witnesses. The unbelievers and persecutors would be miserably destroyed.

Matthew 21: 33 " Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. 34 "Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. 35 "And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. 36 "Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. 37 "Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 38 "But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' 39 "So they took him and cast *him* out of the vineyard and killed *him*. 40 "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?" 41 They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men **miserably**, and lease *his* vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons." 42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD's doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes'? 43 "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. 44 "And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder." 45 Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them. 46 But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitudes, because they took Him for a prophet.

- Here we have the New Testament in all of its fullness containing the bloom of the New Heavens and New Earth, and the fullness of the New Jerusalem, as well as the definitive installment of the Kingdom of God having come to earth, ALL as we shall see unfold throughout the Revelation.
- But first, the seals to this magnificent scroll must be broken that the full Revelation of Jesus Christ and His Kingdom may be seen and understood.

- Daniel had to wait and could not open the book until the end of the days...the days that now are in John's Days...the Last Days of Israel, and the beginning of the New Israel of God, the New Jerusalem, the Church of Jesus Christ.

NOTE HERE at the end of Daniel's prophecy how Michael speaks to Daniel about the times that John is prophesying about...the Great Tribulation of Israel, the distinction between the apostates and the faithful, and the Book.

Daniel 12:1 "At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book. 2 And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt. 3 Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever. 4 "But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase." 5 Then I, Daniel, looked; and there stood two others, one on this riverbank and the other on that riverbank. 6 And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, "How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?" 7 Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished. 8 Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, "My lord, what shall be the end of these things?" 9 And he said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

10 "Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand. 11 "And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days. 12 "Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days. 13 "But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days."

- Israel had a copy of the Book (perhaps of Deuteronomy) to be read as a witness to them every year during the Feast of Tabernacles: Deuteronomy 31: 10 And Moses commanded them, saying: "At the end of every seven years, at the appointed time in the year of release, at the Feast of Tabernacles, 11 "when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing. 12 "Gather the people together, men and women and little ones, and the stranger who is within your gates, that they may hear and that they may learn to fear the LORD your God and carefully observe all the words of this law, 13 "and that their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God as long as you live in the land which you cross the Jordan to possess."
- The Book that John sees is nothing less than **the Testament of the resurrected and ascended Christ; the New Covenant**...c.f. Hebrews chapters 8-12 regarding the Testament and the Coming Kingdom of God, the New Covenant revealed in all of its fullness with Jesus Christ, the Lord of All.
- The sacred scriptures speak of Angels as flames of fire, and as warriors, and as those fiercely loyal to God and His interests, the prime interest of which is Christ's Church. Angels are not little Greek Cupidic babies flying around with wings, effeminate poses, and love arrows...just sayin' This Strong Angel proclaims LOUDLY: Who is worthy to break the seals of this Scroll and open it?
- The Book, the Testament was LOCKED SHUT, with no mediator worthy since time's beginning to open it...no one was a worthy mediator to open the New Testament: not Adam, not Moses, not David, not Daniel, NOT ANYONE! So John weeps...all of this vision, yet to no purpose or avail.

- Then, one of the Elders tells John to stop weeping, for behold, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David has overcome/conquered, and is worthy to open the scrolls and the seven seals of God's execution of the New Covenant...the Kingdom of God ready to come upon the world

- Lion of the Tribe of Judah

Deuteronomy 49: 8 "Judah, you *are he* whom your brothers shall praise; Your hand *shall be* on the neck of your enemies; Your father's children shall bow down before you. 9 Judah *is* a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He bows down, he lies down as a **lion**; And as a **lion**, who shall rouse him? 10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him *shall be* the obedience of the people. 11 Binding his donkey to the vine, And his donkey's colt to the choice vine, He washed his garments in wine, And his clothes in the blood of grapes. 12 His eyes *are* darker than wine, And his teeth whiter than milk.

- The Root of David: not a simple matter of the past causing the future; it is also true that the future causes the past. Jesus, the Effect, determined the cause, namely David. Jesus was born and was glorified much after David, and Jesse his father. However, if we look at the end of all things being God being all in all...and that God would unite all things to himself through Christ Jesus, then, to get to Jesus Christ, God ordained that Jesse live, marry, and bear David, and that David have a son named Solomon, and down the line from Solomon would come the Christ...so, if we look at the future end of all things and see that God ordains all to accomplish his end redemptive purpose, then Jesus Christ, the glorified one is the root of David...David's cause.

Isaiah 11:1 There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. 2 The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. 3 His delight is in the fear of the LORD, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears; 4 But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. 5 Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, And faithfulness the belt of His waist. 6 " The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them.

- Christ has overcome and is Lord over all. Jesus Christ is Yahweh; He is God. Christ humbled himself and became a man, was tempted in all points as are we, yet without sin...He overcame sin in the flesh, He resisted sin, He resisted the temptation to turn away from the Father's will and redemptive mission...He did good, healed all who were oppressed by the devil, fasted, and prayed he not enter into temptation, and submitted to the death of the cross. God justified him by raising Him up from the dead and declaring Him by the name of God, Yahweh:

Philippians 2: 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of death*, even the death of the cross. 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- Christ overcame, and said so in Rev 3, recall that He is exhorting the church to overcome just as He overcame and was seated at the right of God...He extends the same ability to overcome.

- John sees a Lamb standing.
 - As if slain: brings to mind the burnt offering of the slain lamb of Abraham, the Paschal Lamb of the Passover, the sin offerings: one in the morning and one at night; and the prophesied Messiah (Isaiah 53) that was led to his shearers and slain for the sins of His people...all bringing to mind the Gospel of John's presentation of Jesus the Christ, as the sacrificial Paschal Lamb, slain from the foundations of the world (in eternity past), but made manifest in these last days for your behalf...
 - Seven Horns: Psalm 75: 10 'All the horns (strength and power) of the wicked I will also cut off, *But* the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.'" The seven represents the fullness of strength possessed by Christ, who, by his overcoming, received all POWER (dunamis), and AUTHORITY (legal power for rule) in heaven and on earth and under the earth.
 - Seven Eyes: representing an all-powerful and exalted Redeemer who, as part of the Godhead, sees and KNOWS all in everyplace, and who judges the thoughts and intents of men's' hearts. These are the Seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth...see Zechariah 6: Zechariah 6:1 Then I turned and raised my eyes and looked, and behold, four chariots *were* coming from between two mountains, and the mountains *were* mountains of bronze. 2 With the first chariot *were* red horses, with the second chariot black horses, 3 with the third chariot white horses, and with the fourth chariot dappled horses -- strong *steeds*. 4 Then I answered and said to the angel who talked with me, "What *are* these, my lord?" 5 And the angel answered and said to me, "These *are* four spirits of heaven, who go out from *their* station before the Lord of all the earth.
 - Daniel sees the resurrected Christ ascending to God to receive his due from the Father: Daniel 7: 13 " I was watching in the night visions, And behold, *One* like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. 14 Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom *the one* Which shall not be destroyed.
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 - This is the Worthy one who takes the scroll from God's right hand and causes all of the creatures in heaven to worship Christ
 - Each holding a harp: depicting the musical interlude continuing in heaven
 - Golden bowls of incense, which are symbolically the prayers of all of the saints
 - The singing of a New Song is that which has been spoken of 6X in the Psalms and once in Isaiah 42: 8 I *am* the LORD, that *is* My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images. 9 Behold, the former things have come to pass, And new things I declare; Before they spring forth I tell you of them." 10 Sing to the LORD a new song, *And* His praise from the ends of the earth, You who go down to the sea, and all that is in it, You coastlands and you inhabitants of them!
 - A song of the New Testament, a song that will culminate in the appearance of the canonical scripture until that which is perfect would come: all were awaiting this Revelation of Jesus Christ, which would seal up all prophecy and bring to an end the Old Covenant redemptive system and bring forth a canon of Sacred Scripture, a New Testament Church made of living stones, a New Kingdom that will fill the earth, and a New Covenant to redeem God's elect people from all four corners of the earth.
 - The new wine of the New Covenant could not be placed into the old wineskins of the Old. The new redemptive song is that Christ is Yahweh Lord and we feed upon his flesh weekly.
- We see in the response:
 - Elders and Living Creatures (Kingdom and Treaty/Covenant): Worthy art Thou to take the Book and to break its seals.

- Elders: (Redemption) For thou wast slain, and didst purchase us for God with thy blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation.
- Living Creatures: (Nationhood and dominion): and thou has made them to be kings and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.
 - God's people, through Christ, are rulers and priests, bringing order, God's kingdom, and redemptive sanctification to the earth, its people, its governments, its business, its vocations...all things.
 - This is the direction of redemptive history: The Reign of Christ's Church, His people. God had planned this with Adam, but, His plan initially thwarted by Adam's sin (not to God's surprise), the plan of redemption had in mind a Messiah (Gen 3:15).
 - Christ reigns at the right of God until all of His enemies are made a footstool for His feet. This will happen in time and on earth.

Acts 2:32 "This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. 33 "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. 34 "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, 35 Till I make Your enemies Your **footstool**." ' 36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." 37 Now when they heard *this*, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?" 38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." 40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." 41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added *to them*. 42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Hebrews 10:12 But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, 13 from that time waiting till His enemies are made His **footstool**.

Heb 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than *that of* Abel. 25 See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more *shall we not escape* if we turn away from Him who *speaks* from heaven, 26 whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven." 27 Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we are **receiving** a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God *is* a consuming fire.

- Myriads of myriads: a myriad is 10,000, but it is also used in a vague sense to depict a very large number, so this could mean thousands of thousands of Angels proclaimed the Lamb's worthiness, and Every creature in heaven and on earth and under and in the sea worshipped, then the 24 elders worshipped the Lamb of God slain from the foundations of the world.
- Where we are in time and in this context:
 - The church was about to enter severe tribulation for their faith and witness of Jesus Christ
 - Church was seeing an unholy alliance between apostate Israel and Rome, the antichristian Beast
 - The church needed to see that events in the earth were not being ruled by chance or fates, but by God and His Christ

- They needed to see that Christ was reigning now and was doing so because of His overcoming all things
- They were to see that Christ Jesus had wrested the world from Satan's grasp and that all things in the heavens and on earth were to bow to Christ alone
- They needed to see themselves in the light of their Lord, and their being kings and priests unto God with the armament of intercessory prayer and worship
- They needed to rest their faith and hope in the fact that through Christ, they would overcome and reign with Christ forever after they had suffered a little while...for He would come and deliver them from all their enemies
- All governments, rules, and power were going to become subdued by the universal dominion of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- "The new and final age of history has arrived; the New Covenant has come. Behold, He has conquered."

6 ^[a]Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say, as with a voice of thunder, “Come!” ² And I saw, and behold, a white horse, and its rider had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer. ³ When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, “Come!” ⁴ And out came another horse, bright red; its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that men should slay one another; and he was given a great sword. ⁵ When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come!” And I saw, and behold, a black horse, and its rider had a balance ^[b] in his hand; ⁶ and I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, ^[c] and three quarts of barley for a denarius; ^[d] but do not harm oil and wine!” ⁷ When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, “Come!” ⁸ And I saw, and behold, a pale horse, and its rider’s name was Death, and Hades followed him; and they were given power over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth. ⁹ When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne; ¹⁰ they cried out with a loud voice, “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before thou wilt judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell upon the earth?” ¹¹ Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been. ¹² When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, ¹³ and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale; ¹⁴ the sky vanished like a scroll that is rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. ¹⁵ Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the generals and the rich and the strong, and every one, slave and free, hid in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, ¹⁶ calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; ¹⁷ for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand before it?”

- Now, in the Revelation we see the breaking of the seals, and the beginning of the End of the Age of Old Testament Israel, its city, its temple, its sacraments, its priesthood...the END of the whole world of the Old Covenant system, AND the breaking forth of the Kingdom of Christ in all of its glory.
- The Kingdom of God and of His Christ was foretold not only in the Garden in Gen. 3:15, but also by Daniel:

²⁵ Then Ar’i-och brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus to him: “I have found among the exiles from Judah a man who can make known to the king the interpretation.” ²⁶ The king said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshaz’zar, “Are you able to make known to me the dream that I have seen and its interpretation?” ²⁷ Daniel answered the king, “No wise men, enchanters, magicians, or astrologers can show to the king the mystery which the king has asked, ²⁸ but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezz’zar what will be in the latter days. Your dream and the visions of your head as you lay in bed are these: ²⁹ To you, O king, as you lay in bed came thoughts of what would be hereafter, and he who reveals mysteries made known to you what is to be. ³⁰ But as for me, not because of any wisdom that I have more than all the living has this mystery been revealed to me, but in order that the interpretation may be made known to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your mind. ³¹ “You saw, O king, and behold, a great image. This image, mighty and of exceeding brightness, stood before you, and its appearance was frightening. ³² The head of this image was of fine gold, its breast and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, ³³ its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. ³⁴ As you looked, a stone was cut out by no human hand, and it smote the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces; ³⁵ then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

³⁶ “This was the dream; now we will tell the king its interpretation. ³⁷ You, O king, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, and the might, and the glory, ³⁸ and into whose hand he has given, wherever they dwell, the sons of men, the beasts of the field, and the birds of the air, making you rule over them all—you are the head of gold (*the Kingdom of Babylon*). ³⁹ After you shall arise another kingdom inferior to you (*the Kingdom of Medo-Persia*), and yet a third kingdom of bronze (*the Kingdom of Greece*), which shall rule

over all the earth. ⁴⁰ And there shall be a fourth kingdom (*the Kingdom of Rome*), strong as iron, because iron breaks to pieces and shatters all things; and like iron which crushes, it shall break and crush all these. ⁴¹ And as you saw the feet and toes partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it shall be a divided kingdom; but some of the firmness of iron shall be in it, just as you saw iron mixed with the miry clay. ⁴² And as the toes of the feet were partly iron and partly clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly brittle. ⁴³ As you saw the iron mixed with miry clay, so they will mix with one another in marriage,^[b] but they will not hold together (*as presented in the Revelation, this is the Pagan Empire of Rome (the Beast) mixing with the Harlot, namely Apostate Jerusalem*), just as iron does not mix with clay. ⁴⁴ And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom (*the Kingdom of Christ Jesus*) which shall never be destroyed, nor shall its sovereignty be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand for ever; ⁴⁵ just as you saw that a stone was cut from a mountain by no human hand, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A great God has made known to the king what shall be hereafter. The dream is certain, and its interpretation sure."

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| <p>Discourse context about the Last Days of Israel and Jerusalem. WARS and Rumors of Wars</p> | <p>Revelation 6 [a]Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say, as with a voice of thunder, "Come!" 2 And I saw, and behold, a white horse, and its rider had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.</p> | <p>Matthew 24:3 As he sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?" 4 And Jesus answered them, "Take heed that no one leads you astray. 5 For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray. 6 And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars; see that you are not alarmed; for this must take place, but the end is not yet.</p> | <p>Mark 13 And as he came out of the temple, one of his disciples said to him, "Look, Teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!" 2 And Jesus said to him, "Do you see these great buildings? There will not be left here one stone upon another, that will not be thrown down." 3 And as he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, 4 "Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign when these things are all to be accomplished?" 5 And Jesus began to say to them, "Take heed that no one leads you astray. 6 Many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and they will lead many astray. 7 And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is not yet.</p> | <p>Luke 21: 5 And as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with noble stones and offerings, he said, 6 "As for these things which you see, the days will come when there shall not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down." 7 And they asked him, "Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign when this is about to take place?" 8 And he said, "Take heed that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is at hand!' Do not go after them. 9 And when you hear of wars and tumults, do not be terrified; for this must first take place, but the end will not be at once."</p> |
| <p>International Strife</p> | <p>3 When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" 4 And out came another horse, bright red; its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that men should slay one another; and he was given a great sword.</p> | <p>7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom,</p> | <p>8 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom;</p> | <p>10 Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom;</p> |
| <p>Famine</p> | <p>5 When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" And I saw, and behold, a black horse, and its rider had a balance[b] in his hand; 6 and I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius,[c] and three quarts of barley for a denarius;[d] but do not harm oil and wine!"</p> | <p>and there will be famines and</p> | <p>there will be famines; this is but the beginning of the sufferings.</p> | <p>and in various places famines and pestilences; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven.</p> |
| <p>Pestilence</p> | <p>7 When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living</p> | | | |

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| | creature say, "Come!" 8 And I saw, and behold, a pale horse, and its rider's name was Death, and Hades followed him; and they were given power over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth. | | | |
| Persecution | 9 When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne; 10 they cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before thou wilt judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell upon the earth?" 11 Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been. | 9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation, and put you to death; and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. 10 And then many will fall away, ^[b] and betray one another, and hate one another. 11 And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. 12 And because wickedness is multiplied, most men's love will grow cold. | 9 "But take heed to yourselves; for they will deliver you up to councils; and you will be beaten in synagogues; and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, to bear testimony before them. 10 And the Gospel must first be preached to all nations. 11 And when they bring you to trial and deliver you up, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say; but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. 12 And brother will deliver up brother to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; 13 and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. | 12 But before all this they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors for my name's sake. 13 This will be a time for you to bear testimony. 14 Settle it therefore in your minds, not to meditate beforehand how to answer; 15 for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict. 16 You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and kinsmen and friends, and some of you they will put to death; 17 you will be hated by all for my name's sake. 18 But not a hair of your head will perish. |
| Earthquake; De-creation | 12 When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, 13 and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale; 14 the sky vanished like a scroll that is rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. 15 Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the generals and the rich and the strong, and every one, slave and free, hid in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, 16 calling to the | earthquakes in various places: 8 all this is but the beginning of the sufferings... 13 But he who endures to the end will be saved. 14 And this Gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come. 15 "So when you see the desolating sacrilege spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), 16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; 17 let him who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house; 18 and let him who is in the field not turn back to | there will be earthquakes in various places... ¹⁴ "But when you see the desolating sacrilege set up where it ought not to be (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; 15 let him who is on the housetop not go down, nor enter his house, to take anything away; 16 and let him who is in the field not turn back to take his mantle. 17 And alas for those who are with child and for those who give suck in those days! 18 Pray that it may not happen in winter. 19 For in those days there will be such tribulation as has not been from the beginning of the creation which God | 11 there will be great earthquakes,... 19 By your endurance you will gain your lives. 20 "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near. 21 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country enter it; 22 for these are days of vengeance, to fulfil all that is written. 23 Alas for those who are with child and for those who give suck in those days! For great distress shall be upon the earth and wrath upon this people; 24 they will |

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| | <p>mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; 17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand before it?”</p> | <p>take his mantle. ¹⁹ And alas for those who are with child and for those who give suck in those days! ²⁰ Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a sabbath. ²¹ For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be. ²² And if those days had not been shortened, no human being would be saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened. ²³ Then if any one says to you, ‘Lo, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There he is!’ do not believe it. ²⁴ For false Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. ²⁵ Lo, I have told you beforehand. ²⁶ So, if they say to you, ‘Lo, he is in the wilderness,’ do not go out; if they say, ‘Lo, he is in the inner rooms,’ do not believe it. ²⁷ For as the lightning comes from the east and shines as far as the west, so will be the coming of the Son of man. ²⁸ Wherever the body is, there the eagles^[e] will be gathered together. ²⁹ “Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken; ³⁰ then will appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; ³¹ and he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.</p> | <p>created until now, and never will be. ²⁰ And if the Lord had not shortened the days, no human being would be saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom he chose, he shortened the days. ²¹ And then if any one says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘Look, there he is!’ do not believe it. ²² False Christs and false prophets will arise and show signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, the elect. ²³ But take heed; I have told you all things beforehand. ²⁴ “But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵ and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶ And then they will see the Son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷ And then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.</p> | <p>fall by the edge of the sword, and be led captive among all nations; and Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles^[a] are fulfilled. ²⁵ “And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth distress of nations in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, ²⁶ men fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷ And then they will see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ Now when these things begin to take place, look up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”</p> |
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The Time is at Hand, the Coming of the Kingdom with the Appearing/Coming of the Son of Man for salvation and judgment...therefore, WATCH!

Matthew: **The Lesson of the Fig Tree Depicting that the time is at hand/Very Near/Would happen within days, weeks, or months....NOW!**

³² "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ³³ So also, when you see all these things, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁴ Truly, I say to you, THIS GENERATION (the terminal generation) will not pass away till all these things take place. ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

- **Our Lord Jesus breaks one of the seals (not necessarily in any chronological order), and one of the Living Creatures calls forth loudly, as with a voice of thunder...Come!** He calls forth the first of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.
 - The horsemen show us God's means of controlling and bringing judgment upon the disobedient nation of Israel
- What we are about to see can be interpreted generally, but should not be interpreted as to very pinpointed and exact events in history, but very general happenings, such as Persecutors of the Church being attacked and destroyed, famines in the land, pestilences in the land, failure of trade in the land, and collapse of governments in the land
 - We see symbolic representations of Wars, Famines, Pestilences, and Earthquakes
- The Christian of the first century would see these four horses and their riders as manifestation visions of the prophet Zechariah's four winds, controlled by the angelic hosts to carry out God's will (Zech 6:1-7), which in this case was to bring God's judgment upon the apostate Jews and Jerusalem in final form, and upon Rome definitively.
 - To avenge the righteous blood of Abel to Zechariah Matthew 23:35-37. This terminal generation of Jewish leaders and venomous apostate Jews would reap the wrath of the filled chalices: Serpents and offspring of vipers they were.
 - A Great Tribulation representing covenantal impacts...the curses of Deut 28...such as has never been before AD 67-70, and would NEVER be again (Matthew 24:21)
- Biblical symbolism views the earth, and especially the Land of Israel, as God's four-cornered altar. The words, "the Land," refer to Israel, when one remembers that this was God's people's Promised Land. So, in the Revelation, when one sees the words, "the Land," one should think Jerusalem terra firma.
- The White Horse, carrying a Bow, wearing a crown, going forth conquering and to conquer.
 - White, in the Revelation, always symbolizes righteousness. We add this to the fact that Christ is the one who has conquered and is conquering, and we can discern this White Horseman is the Messiah, Jesus the Christ
 - The Picture of Jesus, the Warrior-King, as David sings in Psalm 45

Psalm 45 My heart overflows with a goodly theme; I address my verses to the king; my tongue is like the pen of a ready scribe.² You are the fairest of the sons of men; grace is poured upon your lips; therefore God has blessed you for ever.³ Gird your sword upon your thigh, O mighty one, in your glory and majesty!⁴ In your majesty ride forth victoriously for the cause of truth and to defend^[a] the right; let your right hand teach you dread deeds!⁵ Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; the peoples fall under you.⁶ Your divine throne^[b] endures for ever and ever. Your royal scepter is a scepter of equity;

We're reminded of Psalm 2: Kiss the Son, lest he be angry with you and you perish in the way, and, of course: Psalm 110:1 A Psalm of David. The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." 2 The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! 3 Your people *shall be* volunteers In the day of Your power; In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth. 4 The LORD has sworn And will not relent, "You *are* a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." 5 The Lord *is* at Your right hand; He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath. 6 He

shall judge among the nations, He shall fill *the places* with dead bodies, He shall execute the heads of many countries.

- Christ holds the bow of God in his hand
 - This bow was hung in the clouds for all to see: Gen 9:13 "I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. 14 "It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud;
 - The bow that Ezekiel saw in Ezek 1: 26 And above the firmament over their heads *was* the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne *was* a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it. 27 Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around. 28 Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so *was* the appearance of the brightness all around it. This *was* the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. So when I saw *it*, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking.
 - The first rider carries the bow of God's vengeance to be unleashed upon Israel's ground, for these apostates in Jerusalem, the Covenant is undone
 - Hebrews 10: 26 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people." 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.
- Christ Jesus, the first rider, wears the crown received for his persevering obedience to the Father...He overcame, and now is conquering...the earth and universe is HIS!
 - Rev 14: 14 Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat *One* like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. Rev 19: 11 Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. 12 His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. 13 He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. 15 Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. 17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, 18 "that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all *people*, free and slave, both small and great."
- Our Lord is Conquering until the last of God's vengeance is poured out upon the rebels. Christ is using His bow and arrows, his sword, and his authoritative execution powers to conquer those fighting against Him and His Church
 - Christ as rider in Rev 6, with the breaking of the seal is the Conqueror coming and beginning the quest at the beginning of the Great Tribulation...around AD 66
 - Christ as rider in Rev 19 is the victor after the trouble is over...around Tishri AD 70 on the Feast of Trumpets, when the temple was burned to the ground
 - The next horsemen bring no hope, only judgment...The Message: Israel is Doomed

Luke 23:27 And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him. 28 But Jesus, turning to them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. 29 "For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!'

Luke 21:20 " But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. 21 "Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. 22 "For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. ... 27 "Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

- **The opening of the Second Seal: the angel calls forth the Blood-red Horse of War**
 - Here, God takes peace from the land, and permits men to be as depraved as possible, allowing their concupisence to rule them totally...allowing them to lust and not have...so they battle
 - We see the battles within the cities, and especially within Jerusalem as recorded in Flavius Josephus', War of the Jews, Books ii-iv
 - READ The War of the Jews, ii, xviii.2

- **The opening of the Third Seal reveals the Calling forth of the Black Horse**
 - This black horse's rider has scales in his hand indicating economic hardship
 - Chilton says the Scales stand for Libra in the zodiac, which is an indicator of the Sept/Oct timeframe in which men would buy scarce wheat after the failure of the crop in April and May
 - Due to the scarcity during the Great Tribulation...famine...the price of the staples of Israel, namely wheat (most important), oil, wine, and corn...a measure of wheat going for more than 1000% of its former price, consuming an entire day's wage.
 - The curse devours productivity in every area, and the ungodly culture perishes through starvation, disease, and oppression (Deut 28:15-34)
 - "This is how God controls the wicked: They must spend so much time just surviving that they are unable to exercise dominion over the earth. In the long run, this is the history of every culture that departs from God's Word."
 - Josephus describes the famine in Jerusalem: See The Jewish War v, x, 2.
 - God spoke to the horseman not to harm the oil and wine, which shows that in destruction, God makes a distinction between the good and the evil...he protects the righteous and spares them for salvation, yet destroys the wicked.
 - This portion of protecting wine and oil could speak to the protection of God of His elect, which he will speak of in later passages in the Revelation: Psalm 104: 15 And wine that makes glad the heart of man, Oil to make his face shine, And bread which strengthens man's heart.

- **In the breaking of the Fourth Seal the Living Creature calls forth the Pale, or Green Horse.**
 - A sickly color as a prelude to death and Hades (the grave). Standing for the death and destruction coming from the authority this one has to kill with the sword, and with famine, and with death, and by the wild beasts.
 - Very similar to the judgments of Jerusalem as spoken by Ezekiel

Ezekiel 14:21 "I will also tear off your veils and deliver My people out of your hand, and they shall no longer be as prey in your hand. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Ezekiel 5:13 ' Thus shall My anger be spent, and I will cause My fury to rest upon them, and I will be avenged; and they shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken *it* in My zeal, when I have spent My fury upon them. 14 'Moreover I will make you a waste and a reproach among the nations that *are* all around you, in the sight of all who pass by. 15 'So it shall be a reproach, a taunt, a lesson, and an astonishment to the nations that *are* all around you, when I execute judgments among you in anger and in fury and in furious rebukes. I, the LORD, have spoken. 16 'When I send against them the terrible arrows of famine which shall be for destruction, which I will send to destroy you, I will increase the famine upon you and cut off your supply of bread. 17 'So I will send against you famine and wild beasts, and they will bereave you. Pestilence and blood shall pass through you, and I will bring the sword against you. I, the LORD, have spoken.' "

- These are the four severe judgments by which God judges the disobedient. In this case, ¼ of the Land [of Israel] will be taken in death. The Trumpet judgments will take 1/3 of the Land, and the Chalice judgments will devastate it all.
- It is Jesus, the Lamb of God, the One who rises in the East with healing in His Wings, who breaks the seals of judgment, and it is Jesus, the King of Kings, who rides out in conquest, leading the angelic armies against the nations to destroy those who rebel against His universal rule. The Lord Reigns!
- **The broken Fifth Seal** reveals the comforting exhortation to the martyrs who died in faith and for the faith...How long, Oh Lord, until our blood is avenged?
- Does God see? Does He care? David thought those thoughts:

Psalm 73:1 A Psalm of Asaph. Truly God *is* good to Israel, To such as are pure in heart. 2 But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped. 3 For I *was* envious of the boastful, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked. 4 For *there are* no pangs in their death, But their strength *is* firm. 5 They *are* not in trouble *as other* men, Nor are they plagued like *other* men. 6 Therefore pride serves as their necklace; Violence covers them *like* a garment. 7 Their eyes bulge with abundance; They have more than heart could wish. 8 They scoff and speak wickedly *concerning* oppression; They speak loftily. 9 They set their mouth against the heavens, And their tongue walks through the earth. 10 Therefore his people return here, And waters of a full *cup* are drained by them. 11 And they say, "How does God know? And is there knowledge in the Most High?" 12 Behold, these *are* the ungodly, Who are always at ease; They increase *in* riches. 13 Surely I have cleansed my heart *in* vain, And washed my hands in innocence. 14 For all day long I have been plagued, And chastened every morning. 15 If I had said, "I will speak thus," Behold, I would have been untrue to the generation of Your children. 16 When I thought *how* to understand this, It *was* too painful for me -- 17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; *Then* I understood their **end**. 18 Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction. 19 Oh, how they are *brought* to desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors. 20 As a dream when *one* awakes, *So*, Lord, when You awake, You shall despise their image. 21 Thus my heart was grieved, And I was vexed in my mind. 22 I *was* so foolish and ignorant; I *was like* a beast before You. 23 Nevertheless I *am* continually with You; You hold *me* by my right hand. 24 You will guide me with Your counsel, And afterward receive me *to* glory. 25 Whom have I in heaven *but* You? And *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire besides You. 26 My flesh and my heart fail; *But* God *is* the strength of my heart and my portion forever. 27 For indeed, those who are far from You shall perish; You have destroyed all those who desert You for harlotry. 28 But *it is* good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, That I may declare all Your works.

- These martyrs, like Abel in the beginning, lost their lives for doing and speaking God, by bearing witness to Christ in thought, word, and deed. Their blood, their life blood, the voice of their soul cries out to God. Their life was in the blood (Lev. 17:11)
- Their blood streams down the altar of sacrifice like the innocent bulls and goats of old, yet, these are redeemed sinners who gave their lives for Christ.

- These Christian brethren confronted evil and did not love their lives more than the true testimony of Christ. They were strong men, virtuous women, and strong young men and boys and girls. Unlike the effeminate and indecisive culture of today.
- How Long? Is a standard phrase in Scripture for invoking divine justice for the oppressed.
 - Mostly in the Psalms (6:3; 13:1-2; 35:17; 94:3-4; and Habakkuk 1:2; 2:6)
 - Jerusalem was the murderer of the prophets, and like Cain, the older brother murdering the younger; Old Testament Israel is murdering and plotting with idolatrous Roman authorities to murder the younger Church, therefore the blood of these brethren cry out.

See John's words about brotherly love in 1 John 3: 11 For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, 12 not as Cain *who* was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous.

- These saints were comforted with the Lord's words and the gift of the White Robe and the words to wait a little while longer
 - Strengthened them in confidence that the Lord has seen and heard
 - They were affirmed in their faith...they died for Christ righteously...the white robe was given to them as a reward for their faith...a robe of righteousness...a testimony to their faith...to them who were partakers of the First Resurrection...over such, death shall not triumph and they shall shed tears no more.
 - First resurrection is spiritual and ethical...it is the new birth, it was their regeneration in Christ and the staying power of the Holy Spirit that enabled that first generation of believers to be partakers of the First Resurrection.
 - There will be a final resurrection of the dead, both the good and the evil dead, but that raising up is at the end of this current age in which Christ reigns.
 - The first resurrection is God's richness of mercy, as Paul says in Eph 2:4...because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up [a first resurrection...which saves from the Second Death] together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.
 - The full number of those who were to give their lives had not been reached yet.
 - Very similar to God's words to Abram regarding the Amorites:

Genesis 15: 13 Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. 14 "And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. 15 "Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. 16 "But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."

- White horse...white robes
- Red horse...moon like blood

- Black horse...the sun black
- Green horse...green grass burned
- The martyrs were to wait a little while until the wrath of God was to be poured out upon the “Land” of apostate Israel, namely Jerusalem:

1 Thess 2:14 For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they *did* from the Judeans, 15 who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men, 16 forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up *the measure of* their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

2 Thessalonians 1: 3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other, 4 so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, 5 *which is* manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer; 6 since *it is* a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, 7 and to *give* you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, 10 when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

- The saints were to await God’s wrath and judgment to be poured out during the 3 ½ years of Great Tribulation that was to test the world, and conclude with the destruction of the Old Covenant City of Jerusalem on the 1st of Tishri, AD 70, Rosh Hashannah, the First of the New Year of Israel...the New Israel and New Jerusalem.
- At the end of the Tribulation, the Lord Jesus would appear/come (His Parousia) for salvation of the elect, and for destruction and damnation to the persecutors of the Lamb and of his people.
- **As the Sixth Seal is broken**, John sees de-creation presented symbolically, which represents the fall of Jerusalem, and the earthly impacts of God’s judgment
 - A Sevenfold judgment, comparisons of which we see in the chart above
 - Earth: a giant earthquake, destabilization (Isa 13:13-14; Nah 1:5)
 - Sun: turns black as sackcloth, Isa 5:30, 24:23 (upon kings and their kingdoms...lights out...rule is over). Note the words of Ezekiel to Pharaoh regarding the end of his kingdom. This is the language of the prophets, comparing scripture with scripture...analogy of scripture method of interpretation.

Ezekiel 32:7 When I put out your light, I will cover the heavens, and make its stars dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, And the moon shall not give her light. 8 All the bright lights of the heavens I will make dark over you, And bring darkness upon your land,' Says the Lord GOD. 9 'I will also trouble the hearts of many peoples, when I bring your destruction among the nations, into the countries which you have not known. 10 'Yes, I will make many peoples astonished at you, and their kings shall be horribly afraid of you when I brandish My sword before them; and they shall tremble every moment, every man for his own life, in the day of your fall.' 11 " For thus says the Lord GOD: 'The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon you.

- Moon (Joel 2:10, 31) the fall of lesser lights and rulers. The picture here is that Israel’s time has run out.

Genesis 1: 14 Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; 15 "and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. 16 Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. *He made* the stars also. 17 God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, 18 and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that *it was good*.

- Stars, the fall of which depict the seemingly untimely death of men and kingdoms, just as the untimely fall of the unripe figs from a fig tree. The great wind of judgment was brought by the four horsemen of Revelation and seen in Zechariah 6:5.
- Firmament: The description of the heavens vanishing or rolling up like a scroll would be familiar to the Christian of the first century based on the writings of the prophets, like:

Isaiah 34: 1 Come near, you nations, to hear; And heed, you people! Let the earth hear, and all that is in it, The world and all things that come forth from it. 2 For the indignation of the LORD *is* against all nations, And *His* fury against all their armies; He has utterly destroyed them, He has given them over to the slaughter. 3 Also their slain shall be thrown out; Their stench shall rise from their corpses, And the mountains shall be melted with their blood. 4 All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, And the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll; All their host shall fall down As the leaf falls from the vine, And as *fruit* falling from a fig tree.

Isaiah 51: 6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens, And look on the earth beneath. For the heavens will vanish away like smoke, The earth will grow old like a garment, And those who dwell in it will die in like manner; But My salvation will be forever, And My righteousness will not be abolished.

- Land: Mountains were moved out of their places as the church was praying and using their faith that the Mountain, which stands for nations and kingdoms...the Mountain of Israel be moved out of place and that the meek ones would be delivered from apostate Israel's oppression and murders. Mark 11: 19 When evening had come, He went out of the city. 20 Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. 21 And Peter, remembering, said to Him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away." 22 So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God. 23 "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. 24 "Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive *them*, and you will have *them*. 25 " And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. 26 "But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses."
- Man: finally, we see the curse of God upon the apostates as depicted by the picture of all men (apostate and unbelieving) being cursed of God and running like roaches in the light, to escape the wrath of God's Christ, as God, his father, makes his enemies a footstool for his feet.
 - The whole land, Israel and the pagan Romans have rejected the Christ.
 - Note the parallelism of this passage and that of Isaiah 2 and Micah 4...in the prophets all men of great and small, slave and free stature come to Mt Zion, the Church to hear the Word of the Lord and worship; however, during judgment, they flee the Lord's wrath after having rejected his word...they, according to the curse, bid the mountains fall on them...they want and desire death vs. judgment
 - They hid as did Adam: Gen 3:8
 - This is not speaking of the End of the World, but the end of Israel, the Last of the Last Days in AD70.

Nahum's rebuke of Ninevah:

Nahum 1:1 The burden against Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite. 2 God is jealous, and the LORD avenges; The LORD avenges and is furious. The LORD will take vengeance on His adversaries, And He reserves wrath for His enemies; 3 The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, And will not at all acquit the wicked. The LORD has His way In the whirlwind and in the storm, And the clouds are the dust of His feet. 4 He rebukes the sea and makes it dry, And dries up all the rivers. Bashan and Carmel wither, And the flower of Lebanon wilts. 5 The mountains quake before Him, The hills melt, And the earth heaves at His presence, Yes, the world and all who dwell in it. 6 Who can stand before His indignation? And who can endure the fierceness of His anger? His fury is poured out like fire, And the rocks are thrown down by Him. 7 The LORD is good, A stronghold in the day of trouble; And He knows those who trust in Him.

Malachi 3:1 "Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," Says the LORD of hosts. 2 "But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire And like launderer's soap. 3 He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, And purge them as gold and silver, That they may offer to the LORD An offering in righteousness. 4 "Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem Will be pleasant to the LORD, As in the days of old, As in former years. 5 And I will come near you for judgment; I will be a swift witness Against sorcerers, Against adulterers, Against perjurers, Against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans, And against those who turn away an alien -- Because they do not fear Me," Says the LORD of hosts. 6 "For I am the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.

Hosea 10:7 As for Samaria, her king is cut off Like a twig on the water. 8 Also the high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, Shall be destroyed. The thorn and thistle shall grow on their altars; They shall say to the mountains, "Cover us!" And to the hills, "Fall on us!"

- Note the writer to the Hebrews speaks of this great shaking, as well as St. Peter, in which we see the apocalyptic language of the salvation of the Church, and the destruction of apostate Jerusalem by fire...the elements (first things...the First Covenant) being destroyed by fire, which is what occurred in AD 70.

Hebrews 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than *that of* Abel. 25 See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more *shall we not escape* if we turn away from Him who *speaks* from heaven, 26 whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I **shake** not only the earth, but also heaven." 27 Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God *is* a consuming fire.

2 Peter 3:1 Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in *both of* which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), 2 that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, 3 knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation." 5 For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, 6 by which the world *that* then existed perished, being flooded with water. 7 But the heavens and the earth *which* are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. 8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent

heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. 11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? 13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. 14 Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; 15 and consider *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation -- as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, 16 as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable *people* twist to their own destruction, as *they do* also the rest of the Scriptures. 17 You therefore, beloved, since you know *this* beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; 18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* the glory both now and forever. Amen

- The generation who had rejected the Landlord's Son (Matt 21:33-45) would soon be screaming these words. That generation that said, "Let his blood be upon us and our children forever," which were not the wisest words to utter, was about to receive the outpoured wrath of the Lamb.

The 144,000 of Israel Sealed

Revelation 7:7 After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, that no wind might blow on earth or sea or against any tree. 2 Then I saw another angel ascend from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, 3 saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God upon their foreheads." 4 And I heard the number of the sealed, a hundred and forty-four thousand[a] sealed, out of every tribe of the sons of Israel, 5 twelve thousand sealed out of the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand of the tribe of Reuben, twelve thousand of the tribe of Gad, 6 twelve thousand of the tribe of Asher, twelve thousand of the tribe of Naph'tali, twelve thousand of the tribe of Manas'seh, 7 twelve thousand of the tribe of Simeon, twelve thousand of the tribe of Levi, twelve thousand of the tribe of Is'sachar, 8 twelve thousand of the tribe of Zeb'ulun, twelve thousand of the tribe of Joseph, twelve thousand sealed out of the tribe of Benjamin.

- The Gospel was to go to the Jew first, and that message went to the Jews and God-fearing Gentiles who worshipped in the synagogues. We see now a picture of God's elect from among the Sons of Israel, the Jews, upon whose heads no harm would come if they remained faithful to Christ by enduring.

Luke 21:11 "And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven. 12 "But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake. 13 "But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony. 14 "Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; 15 "for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist. 16 "You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. 17 "And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. 18 "But not a hair of your head shall be lost. 19 "By your patience possess your souls.

- The point of this passage is that God's angels, who do his bidding, are holding back judgment until the chosen and faithful of Israel are sealed...in the Greek language, the word "trees" is in the accusative case (vs. genitive as is "earth" and "sea"), indicating emphasis...the trees, which stand for

men, or people (note the parable in Judges 9:8-15 in which trees are likened to men).

- The apocalyptic language depicts a judgment is immanent, however, the righteous, the wheat, the Christians from among the Jews, must now be separated from the chaff...the rejectors of Christ and the apostates, prior to the great gathering and burning of wrath.

Jeremiah 17:1 "The sin of Judah *is* written with a pen of iron; With the point of a diamond *it is* engraved On the tablet of their heart, And on the horns of your altars, 2 While their children remember Their altars and their wooden images By the green trees on the high hills. 3 O My mountain in the field, I will give as plunder your wealth, all your treasures, *And* your high places of sin within all your borders. 4 And you, even yourself, Shall let go of your heritage which I gave you; And I will cause you to serve your enemies In the land which you do not know; For you have kindled a fire in My anger *which* shall burn forever." 5 Thus says the LORD: "Cursed *is* the man who trusts in man And makes flesh his strength, Whose heart departs from the LORD. 6 For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, And shall not see when good comes, But shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, *In* a salt land *which is* not inhabited. 7 "Blessed *is* the man who trusts in the LORD, And whose hope is the LORD. 8 For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, Which spreads out its roots by the river, And will not fear when heat comes; But its leaf will be green, And will not be anxious in the year of drought, Nor will cease from yielding fruit.

- Our God personally knows the righteous...Romans 8: 28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. 31 What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us? 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? *It is* God who justifies. 34 Who *is* he who condemns? *It is* Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." 37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- We then see another angel, perhaps the manifestation of the Christ, who arises from the East with healing in his wings (Malachi 4:1 "For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven, And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," Says the LORD of hosts, "That will leave them neither root nor branch. 2 But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With **healing** in His wings; And you shall go out And grow fat like stall-fed calves. 3 You shall trample the wicked, For they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet On the day that I do *this*," Says the LORD of hosts. 4 "Remember the Law of Moses, My servant, Which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, *With the* statutes and judgments. 5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. 6 And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."

- This representative of Christ, the Angel, cries with a loud voice to the four angels to hold back the judgment of God, the winds of destruction and wrath, until the "servants of God" are sealed on their foreheads.
 - A seal of the Spirit of God is applied to the righteous before the seal and mark of the wicked is placed on those destined to doom. Pentecost precedes Holocaust.
 - The seal is a grant of authority and power, a guarantee of protection and a mark of ownership.
 - Note the seal of God upon the God-fearers in Ezekiel 9:1 Then He called out in my hearing with a loud voice, saying, "Let those who have charge over the city draw near, each *with* a deadly weapon in his hand." 2 And suddenly six men came from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, each with his battle-ax in his hand. One man among them *was* clothed with linen and had a writer's inkhorn at his side. They went in and stood beside the bronze altar. 3 Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub, where it had been, to the threshold of the temple. And He called to the man clothed with linen, who *had* the writer's inkhorn at his side; 4 and the LORD said to him, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it." 5 To the others He said in my hearing, "Go after him through the city and kill; do not let your eye spare, nor have any pity."

6 "Utterly slay old *and* young men, maidens and little children and women; but do not come near anyone on whom *is* the mark; and begin at My sanctuary." So they began with the elders who *were* before the temple. 7 Then He said to them, "Defile the temple, and fill the courts with the slain. Go out!" And they went out and killed in the city.

- Also, note that a seal upon the forehead and the hands are symbolic of the thoughts of the mind and heart, as well as the work of the hands. The mark of God must be on both. Note the symbolism of God's seal on the heart and hands.
 - The mark on the forehead is a symbol of man restored to fellowship with God
 - Holy to the Lord: Exodus 28: 35 "And it shall be upon Aaron when he ministers, and its sound will be heard when he goes into the holy *place* before the LORD and when he comes out, that he may not die. 36 " You shall also make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, *like* the engraving of a signet: HOLINESS TO THE LORD. 37 "And you shall put it on a blue cord, that it may be on the turban; it shall be on the front of the turban. 38 "So it shall be on Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things which the children of Israel hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall always be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before the LORD.
 - The sign of Yahweh on the Hands and Forehead...later we shall see the mark and seal of the Beast of idolatrous Rom on the hands and forehead of the apostates and pagans...Deut 6: 4 " Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one! 5 "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. 6 " And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8 "You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.
 - Zechariah 14...showing the separating out of the sinners and unbelievers from the New Jerusalem, Zion, the Church, who are not participating in the symbolic Feast of Tabernacles...what the Church is doing in gathering in the nations unto Yahweh Jesus the Lord: 16 And it shall come to pass *that* everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 17 And it shall be *that* whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain. 18 If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they *shall have no rain*; they shall receive the plague with which the LORD strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 19 This shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 20 In that day "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" shall be *engraved* on the **bells** of the horses. The pots in the LORD's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. 21 Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the LORD of hosts. Everyone who sacrifices shall come and take them and cook in them. In that day there shall no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.
 - Chilton says that the protective mark in Ezekiel 9 is literally *tav*, the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet, which in the time of Ezekiel looked like a cross...perhaps a quasi-prophetic sign of the cross, which God predicted would be the sign on our foreheads in the true Catholic Jerusalem...filled with the Covenant-keeping bond servants of God.



Modern Hebrew
letter **tav**
(Hebrew square)



Hebrew letter
tav at the time
of Ezekiel
(Paleo-Hebrew)



Milton Terry, *Biblical Apocalypitics*: "The purpose of the sealing was to preserve the true Israel of God as a holy seed. It was not designed to save them from tribulation, but to preserve them in the midst of the Great Tribulation about to come and to glorify them thereby. Through the old Israel be cast off, a new and holy Israel is to be chosen and

sealed with the Spirit of the Living God. Written in the year 1898.

- The sealed numbered 144,000 from the Land of Israel, twelve thousand from each of the twelve tribes.
 - The 144,000 is obviously symbolic: 12 is the number of the tribes of Israel, then squared, then multiplied by 1000, which in scripture represents a complete and large number...God owns the cattle of 1000 hills...the reign of Christ will be for "a thousand years," Duet 1:11; Ps 50:10; 84:10; and 90:4
 - A thousand was the basic military division in the camp of Israel...Numbers 10:-4...Note the Nativity prophecy in Micah 5: 2 " But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *Though* you are little among the thousands of Judah, *Yet* out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth *are* from of old, From everlasting." 3 Therefore He shall give them up, Until the time *that* she who is in labor has given birth; Then the remnant of His brethren Shall return to the children of Israel. 4 And He shall stand and feed *His flock* In the strength of the LORD, In the majesty of the name of the LORD His God; And they shall abide, For now He shall be great To the ends of the earth;
 - Here, John hears the names of the 12 tribes of Israel, each enabled to field 12 full divisions of 1000 elect believers (arrows in the quiver of the Warrior Christ) to represent a numerically perfect army of 144,000 soldiers of the Lord.
 - An apocalyptic picture of the Holy Seed, the elect, the wheat as taken out from among the tares. Elect of God taken from the 12 tribes of the scattered ones as in James 1:1, written to the 12 tribes of the diaspora. Matthew 24: 14 "And this Gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.
- All of the promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are fulfilled in the true Israel being saved. The Church is of believing Abraham...and even Jesus said that Abraham believed in him
- The outpouring of wrath in the destruction of Jerusalem will only serve to reveal the true Israel in greater glory than ever before. Jerusalem is sacked and burned, its inhabitants are killed and scattered; but *Israel*—all of her people, in all of her tribes—is sealed and saved. However devastating the fall of Jerusalem was to the faithful remnant, without that fall no remnant would have remained.
- Note that the ordered names of the 12 tribes of Israel is different that one might expect
 - Revelation 21:12-14 depicts the names of these tribes being written on the gates of the New Jerusalem...these were the tribes, the gates, through whom all would come into the Old Covenant Israel. The 12 foundations of the Church, Zion, the New Covenant, the Kingdom of God, have the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb written on them
 - Judah, scholars believed, named first due to Jesus being from the Tribe of Judah, the preeminent Lord God Almighty
 - Jacob's sons come from his wives and his concubines:

- Leah: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulan; plus Gad and Asher from Zilpah.
 - Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin; plus Dan and Naphtali from Bilhah
 - We know the tribes were allotted land in the Promised Land due to Levi being set apart unto the Lord, and Joseph's inheritance going to his sons Ephraim and Manasseh. However, the writing of the tribes as the gates are different in the Revelation.
- Austin Farrer, *A Rebirth of Images, The Making of St. John's Apocalypse*, states that the gate names are taken after the final words of the prophet Ezekiel about the gates of the New Jerusalem...he prophesied:

Ezekiel 48:29 "This *is* the land which you shall divide by lot as an inheritance among the tribes of Israel, and these *are* their portions," says the Lord GOD. 30 " These *are* the exits of the city. On the north side, measuring four thousand five hundred *cubits* 31 '(the gates of the city *shall be* named after the tribes of Israel), the three gates northward: one gate for **Reuben**, one gate for **Judah**, and one gate for **Levi**; 32 "on the east side, four thousand five hundred *cubits*, three gates: one gate for **Joseph**, one gate for **Benjamin**, and one gate for Dan; 33 "on the south side, measuring four thousand five hundred *cubits*, three gates: one gate for **Simeon**, one gate for **Issachar**, and one gate for **Zebulun**; 34 "on the west side, four thousand five hundred *cubits* with their three gates: one gate for **Gad**, one gate for **Asher**, and one gate for **Naphtali**. 35 "All the way around *shall be* eighteen thousand cubits; and the name of the city from *that day shall be*: THE LORD *is* THERE."

- Interesting that in the Revelation, Levi is left in along with Joseph, leaving out Issachar.
 - Why?

- **The Remaining Sealed and Sanctified Ones, the Multitude from Every Nation**

⁹ After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no man could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb!" ¹¹ And all the angels stood round the throne and round the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen."

¹³ Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and whence have they come?" ¹⁴ I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation,^[b] they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

¹⁵ Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night within his temple; and he who sits upon the throne will shelter them with his presence.

¹⁶ They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more;

the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat.

¹⁷For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd,
and he will guide them to springs of living water;
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

- The sixth seal is still broken, and John sees an innumerable multitude from the nations standing before the throne of the Lamb worshipping Him. These are those who are called out from among the Gentiles to join those called out from among the tribes of Israel.

Just as in Isaiah 2 and Micah 4, God’s elect come from the four corners of the earth, as if the earth were a table, and it is, it is the Lord’s footstool, it is his altar.

The elect come forth to be grafted into the Seed of Abraham: Rev 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of **every tribe** and tongue and people and nation, 10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth."

Rev 14:6 Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth -- to **every** nation, **tribe**, tongue, and people -- 7 saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."

Those not receiving Christ and His Gospel are not sealed by the Spirit of God, and are destined for wrath and Great Tribulation that leads to a second death eventually...Revelation 13:1 Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea... 4 So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who *is* like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" 5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. 6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. 7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over **every tribe**, tongue, and nation. 8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. 9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear.

- These believers from among the “ethnoi” the Nations, are joined with the believing Jews, and are now called ONE CHURCH, submitting to ONE LORD, ONE BAPTISM, and are part of ONE KINGDOM...Galatians 3: 26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.
- This was the promise to Abraham, that (Genesis 22) "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only *son* -- 17 "blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the **sand** which *is* on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. 18 "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

- God sent His Son that the world might be saved, and this is the number of the elect from both Jew and Gentile sources to date, prior to the last day of Israel and her destruction. God governs the world and, as BB Warfield has said, leads it steadily onward to the end which, from the beginning, or ever a beam of it had been laid, he had determined for it...through all the years one increasing purpose runs, one increasing purpose: the kingdoms of the earth become ever more and more the kingdom of our God and his Christ...the process may be slow; the progress may appear to our impatient eyes to lag. But it is God who is building; and under his hands the structure rises as steadily as it does slowly, and in due time the capstone shall be set into its place, and to our astonished eyes shall be revealed nothing less than a saved world. God's Immeasurable Love, in Biblical and Theological Studies.

We have a Scripture-based hope of the Lord's reign being completed in the earth before the end of time:

Isaiah 11:1 There shall come forth a Rod from **the** stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. 2 **The** Spirit of **the** LORD shall rest upon Him, **The** Spirit of wisdom and understanding, **The** Spirit of counsel and might, **The** Spirit of knowledge and of **the** fear of **the** LORD. 3 His delight is in **the** fear of **the** LORD, And He shall not judge by **the** sight of His eyes, Nor decide by **the** hearing of His ears; 4 But with righteousness He shall judge **the** poor, And decide with equity for **the** meek of **the** earth; He shall strike **the** earth with **the** rod of His mouth, And with **the** breath of His lips He shall slay **the** wicked. 5 Righteousness shall be **the** belt of His loins, And faithfulness **the** belt of His waist. 6 " **The** wolf also shall dwell with **the** lamb, **The** leopard shall lie down with **the** young goat, **The** calf and **the** young lion and **the** fatling together; And a little child shall lead them. 7 **The** cow and **the** bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And **the** lion shall eat straw like **the** ox. 8 **The** nursing child shall play by **the** cobra's hole, And **the** weaned child shall put his hand in **the** viper's den. 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For **the** earth shall be full of **the** knowledge of **the** LORD As **the** waters cover **the** sea.

Habakuk 2:14 For **the** earth will be filled With **the** knowledge of **the** glory of **the** LORD, As **the** waters cover **the** sea.

- Note the palm branches in the worshippers hands as they have been gathered into the Temple...this is the meaning of the ancient Feast of Tabernacles (Feast of Ingathering), a feast of Israel in which 70 bullocks were offered to Yahweh representing sacrifice for the 70 nations across the face of the earth at the time. Those saved and depicted here are clothed in white robes indicating the righteousness of Christ is imputed to them through persevering faith.
- Responsive liturgy begins with redeemed from the nations crying out to God: "Salvation belongs to our God who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb!"
 - The idolaters of Rome praised Caesar with these type of words...Mark Antony said of Julius Caesar that his "only work was to save where anyone needed to be saved."(Stauffer, Christ and the Caesars)...Now, NERO, who was now on the throne, whom Seneca (speaking as Apollo) had praised as the divine Savior of the world, said: **SEE DAYS OF VENGEANCE: 218**
 - Nero eventually repaid Seneca for a lifetime of servile idolatry by ordering him to commit suicide.
 - Responding to the praise are the angels, who, as praise is exercised, are standing or bowing down...nowhere do we see worshippers sitting.

- An elder addresses John by asking him a question regarding the identity of those in the white robes, and furthermore, from where have they come>
- John didn't know, but the elder knows that these are those numbered among the Israel of God:

Galatians 6:15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. 16 And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy *be* upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

- These believers came out of the Great Tribulation (AD 66-70), they gave their lives for the testimony of Christ, were redeemed having washed these robes in the sacrificial blood of the Lamb of God, Christ Jesus...and now serve God in the heavenly temple day and night as their reward
 - The early church, Jews and Gentile believers persevered through hardship during the first century until the Lord's appearing in judgment upon Jerusalem and destroyed the persecutors
 - Priests of old submitted to the twofold test: 1. Genealogy, and 2. Physical defects...those who passed were draped in white linens and had their names permanently inscribed in the priestly books (Alfred Edersheim, *The Temple, Its Ministry and Services as They Were at the Time of Jesus Christ*; see also his *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*)
 - Peter prepared the Lord's sheep (out of love for Christ thus feeding and tending the flock)

2 Peter 4: 12 Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; 13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. 14 If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed *are you*, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.

- The Reward for those who ran the race faithfully to the END of the Great Tribulation:

Isaiah 4:4 When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the blood of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning, 5 then the LORD will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and above her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night. For over all the glory there *will be* a covering.

Isaiah 51:16 And I have put My words in your mouth; I have covered you with the shadow of My hand, That I may plant the heavens, Lay the foundations of the earth, And say to Zion, 'You *are* My people.' "

The Bringing in of the Nations: Haggai 2:6 " For thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Once more (it *is* a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; 7 'and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,' says the LORD of hosts. 8 ' The silver *is* Mine, and the gold *is* Mine,' says the LORD of hosts. 9 'The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,' says the LORD of hosts. 'And in this place I will give peace,' says the LORD of hosts."

Zechariah 14:16 And it shall come to pass *that* everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 17 And it shall be *that* whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem

to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain. 18 If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they *shall have* no rain; they shall receive the plague with which the LORD strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 19 This shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 20 In that day "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" shall be *engraved* on the bells of the horses. The pots in the LORD's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. 21 Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the LORD of hosts. Everyone who sacrifices shall come and take them and cook in them. In that day there shall no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.

Note the Father's words of comfort to His Son and His people in Isaiah 49: 7 Thus says the LORD, The Redeemer of Israel, their Holy One, To Him whom man despises, To Him whom the nation abhors, To the Servant of rulers: "Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall worship, Because of the LORD who is faithful, The Holy One of Israel; And He has chosen You." 8 Thus says the LORD: "In an acceptable time I have heard You, And in the day of salvation I have helped You; I will preserve You and give You As a covenant to the people, To restore the earth, To cause them to inherit the desolate heritages; 9 That You may say to the prisoners, 'Go forth,' To those who *are* in darkness, 'Show yourselves.' "They shall feed along the roads, And their pastures *shall be* on all desolate heights. 10 They shall neither hunger nor thirst, Neither heat nor sun shall strike them; For He who has mercy on them will lead them, Even by the springs of water He will guide them. 11 I will make each of My mountains a road, And My highways shall be elevated. 12 Surely these shall come from afar; Look! Those from the north and the west, And these from the land of Sinim." 13 Sing, O heavens! Be joyful, O earth! And break out in singing, O mountains! For the LORD has comforted His people, And will have mercy on His afflicted.

- Rest comes as the reward for the faithful
 - In Nero's Circus Maximus, the scene of the bloody slaughters of Christians by wild beasts, crucifixion, by fire and sword...there was a great stone obelisk as a silent witness to the valiant conduct of those brave saints who endured the Great Tribulation. It still stands now in the center of the great square in front of St. Peter's Basilica. Chiseled on its base are these words, taken from the overcoming martyrs' hymn of triumph
 - Christus Vincit (Christ is conquering)
 - Christus Regnat (Christ is reigning)
 - Christus Imperat (Christ rules over all)

The Seventh Seal is Broken and the Seven Trumpets Blow forth Judgment

- The vision of the seals being broken, the trumpets being blown, and the chalices being poured out in judgment upon apostate Israel
- We will see the progressive nature of these judgments and how the intensity builds and seemingly repeats itself...seal judgments very similar to trumpets and chalice judgments
- We will also note the similarity of these judgments with the judgments of Egypt, and other nations that rejected God's mercy
- We will also see how that God spared and gave merciful deliverance and salvation to His people in Christ, as He did to His people in Goshen (in Egypt), and in the Exodon from Egypt and the blessed arrival into the Promised Land...the Land...of Jerusalem...Peace and Salvation of the Jews.

- We will see the Covenantal Sanctions upon Apostate Israel and Jerusalem as they follow, nearly to the detail, the CURSES pronounced and agreed to on Mount Ebal (Deut 27:1-26; and that the curses would extend generationally Deut 29:10-15)

Deuteronomy 27:1 Now Moses, with the elders of Israel, commanded the people, saying: "Keep all the commandments which I command you today. 2 "And it shall be, on the day when you cross over the Jordan to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, that you shall set up for yourselves large stones, and whitewash them with lime. 3 "You shall write on them all the words of this law, when you have crossed over, that you may enter the land which the LORD your God is giving you, 'a land flowing with milk and honey,' just as the LORD God of your fathers promised you. 4 "Therefore it shall be, when you have crossed over the Jordan, *that* on Mount Ebal you shall set up these stones, which I command you today, and you shall whitewash them with lime. 5 "And there you shall build an altar to the LORD your God, an altar of stones; you shall not use an iron *tool* on them. 6 "You shall build with whole stones the altar of the LORD your God, and offer burnt offerings on it to the LORD your God. 7 "You shall offer peace offerings, and shall eat there, and rejoice before the LORD your God. 8 "And you shall write very plainly on the stones all the words of this law." 9 Then Moses and the priests, the Levites, spoke to all Israel, saying, "Take heed and listen, O Israel: This day you have become the people of the LORD your God. 10 "Therefore you shall obey the voice of the LORD your God, and observe His commandments and His statutes which I command you today." 11 And Moses commanded the people on the same day, saying, 12 "These shall stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people, when you have crossed over the Jordan: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin; 13 "and these shall stand on Mount Ebal to curse: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali. 14 " And the Levites shall speak with a loud voice and say to all the men of Israel: 15 'Cursed *is* the one who makes a carved or molded image, an abomination to the LORD, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and sets *it* up in secret.' And all the people shall answer and say, 'Amen!' 16 'Cursed *is* the one who treats his father or his mother with contempt.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!' 17 'Cursed *is* the one who moves his neighbor's landmark.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!' 18 'Cursed *is* the one who makes the blind to wander off the road.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!' 19 'Cursed *is* the one who perverts the justice due the stranger, the fatherless, and widow.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!' 20 'Cursed *is* the one who lies with his father's wife, because he has uncovered his father's bed.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!' 21 'Cursed *is* the one who lies with any kind of animal.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!' 22 'Cursed *is* the one who lies with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!' 23 'Cursed *is* the one who lies with his mother-in-law.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!' 24 'Cursed *is* the one who attacks his neighbor secretly.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!' 25 'Cursed *is* the one who takes a bribe to slay an innocent person.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!' 26 'Cursed *is* the one who does not confirm *all* the words of this law.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

Deut 29:10 " All of you stand today before the LORD your God: your leaders and your tribes and your elders and your officers, all the men of Israel, 11 "your little ones and your wives -- also the stranger who *is* in your camp, from the one who cuts your wood to the one who draws your water -- 12 "that you may enter into covenant with the LORD your God, and into His oath, which the LORD your God makes with you today, 13 "that He may establish you today as a people for Himself, and *that* He may be God to you, just as He has spoken to you, and just as He has sworn to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. 14 " I make this covenant and this oath, not with you alone, 15 "but with *him* who stands here with us today before the LORD our God, as well as with *him* who *is* not here with us today.

Recall the Jews words at the judgment of Christ: Matt 27: 21 The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" They said, "Barabbas!" 22 Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" *They* all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!" 23 Then the governor said, "Why, what evil has He done?" But they cried out all the more, saying, "Let Him be crucified!" 24 When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather *that* a tumult was rising, he took water and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see *to it*." 25 And all the people answered and said, "His blood *be* on us and on our children."

Deuteronomy 28: we see the apostates cursed:

In every aspect of life: 15 " But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: 16 "Cursed *shall you be* in the city, and cursed *shall you be* in the country.

17 "Cursed *shall be* your basket and your kneading bowl. 18 "Cursed *shall be* the fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks. 19 "Cursed *shall you be* when you come in, and cursed *shall you be* when you go out.

Smitten with Pestilence of every sort: 20 " The LORD will send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me. 21 "The LORD will make the plague cling to you until He has consumed you from the land which you are going to possess. 22 "The LORD will strike you with consumption, with fever, with inflammation, with severe burning fever, with the sword, with scorching, and with mildew; they shall pursue you until you perish. 23 "And your heavens which *are* over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you *shall be* iron. 24 "The LORD will change the rain of your land to powder and dust; from the heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed. 25 "The LORD will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them; and you shall become troublesome to all the kingdoms of the earth. 26 "Your carcasses shall be food for all the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and no one shall frighten *them* away.

Plagues, Violence, and Oppression: 27 "The LORD will strike you with the boils of Egypt, with tumors, with the scab, and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed. 28 "The LORD will strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of heart. 29 "And you shall grope at noonday, as a blind man gropes in darkness; you shall not prosper in your ways; you shall be only oppressed and plundered continually, and no one shall save *you*. 30 "You shall betroth a wife, but another man shall lie with her; you shall build a house, but you shall not dwell in it; you shall plant a vineyard, but shall not gather its grapes. 31 "Your ox *shall be* slaughtered before your eyes, but you shall not eat of it; your donkey *shall be* violently taken away from before you, and shall not be restored to you; your sheep *shall be* given to your enemies, and you shall have no one to rescue *them*. 32 "Your sons and your daughters *shall be* given to another people, and your eyes shall look and fail *with longing* for them all day long; and *there shall be* no strength in your hand. 33 "A nation whom you have not known shall eat the fruit of your land and the produce of your labor, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually. 34 "So you shall be driven mad because of the sight which your eyes see. 35 "The LORD will strike you in the knees and on the legs with severe boils which cannot be healed, and from the sole of your foot to the top of your head. 36 "The LORD will bring you and the king whom you set over you to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods -- wood and stone. 37 "And you shall become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all nations where the LORD will drive you.

Struck with Poor Harvests, Economic Reversals, and the loss of their Children: 38 "You shall carry much seed out to the field but gather little in, for the locust shall consume it. 39 "You shall plant vineyards and tend *them*, but you shall neither drink *of* the wine nor gather the *grapes*; for the worms shall eat them. 40 "You shall have olive trees throughout all your territory, but you shall not anoint *yourself* with the oil; for your olives shall drop off. 41 "You shall beget sons and daughters, but they shall not be yours; for they shall go into captivity. 42 "Locusts shall consume all your trees and the produce of your land. 43 "The alien who *is* among you shall rise higher and higher above you, and you shall come down lower and lower. 44 "He shall lend to you, but you shall not lend to him; he shall be the head, and you shall be the tail. 45 "Moreover all these curses shall come upon you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you. 46 "And they shall be upon you for a sign and a wonder, and on your descendants forever. 47 " Because you did not serve the LORD your God with joy and gladness of heart, for the abundance of everything, 48 "therefore you shall serve your enemies, whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in need of everything; and He will put a yoke of iron on your neck until He has destroyed you.

Besieged by Enemies and Starved into Cannibalism. 49 "The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, *as swift* as the eagle flies, a nation whose language you will not understand, 50 "a nation of fierce countenance, which does not respect the elderly nor show favor to the young. 51 "And they shall eat the increase of your livestock and the produce of your land, until you are destroyed; they shall not leave you grain or new wine or oil, *or* the increase of your cattle or the offspring of your flocks, until they have destroyed you. 52 "They shall besiege you at all your gates until your high and fortified walls, in which you trust, come down throughout all your land; and they shall besiege you at all your gates throughout all your land which the LORD your God has given you. 53 "You shall eat the fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and your daughters whom the LORD your God has given you, in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you. 54 "The sensitive and very refined man among you will be hostile toward his brother, toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the rest of his children whom he leaves behind, 55 "so that he will not give any of them the flesh of his children whom he will eat, because he has nothing left in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates. 56 "The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of her delicateness and sensitivity, will refuse to the husband of her bosom, and to her son and her daughter, 57 "her placenta which comes out from between her feet and her children whom she bears; for she will eat them secretly for lack of everything in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates.

Enslaved and Scattered throughout the Nations of the World, Living in Fear and Despair Night and Day.

58 " If you do not carefully observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, THE LORD YOUR GOD, 59 "then the LORD will bring upon you and your descendants extraordinary plagues -- great and prolonged plagues -- and serious and prolonged sicknesses. 60 "Moreover He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. 61 "Also every sickness and every plague, which *is* not written in this Book of the Law, will the LORD bring upon you until you are destroyed. 62 "You shall be left few in number, whereas you were as the stars of heaven in multitude, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God. 63 "And it shall be, *that* just as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess. 64 " Then the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known -- wood and stone. 65 "And among those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and anguish of soul. 66 "Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life. 67 "In the morning you shall say, 'Oh, that it were evening!' And at evening you shall say, 'Oh, that it were morning!' because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and because of the sight which your eyes see. 68 "And the LORD will take you back to Egypt in ships, by the way of which I said to you, 'You shall never see it again.' And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy *you*."

Moses, the Mediator of the First Covenant warned that the Land of Israel would become a desolation if the people forsook the Covenant, like Sodom and Gomorrah, a monument to the judgment of God.

And what was written in the Days of Moses, as is what is written in the Revelation, as St Paul said, in 1 Cor. 10: 11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition (warning), upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

Deuteronomy 29: 22 "so that the coming generation of your children who rise up after you, and the foreigner who comes from a far land, would say, when they see the plagues of that land and the sicknesses which the LORD has laid on it: 23 'The whole land is brimstone, salt, and burning; it is not sown, nor does it bear, nor does any grass grow there, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in His anger and His wrath.' 24 "All nations would say, 'Why has the LORD done so to this land? What does the heat of this great anger mean?' 25 "Then people would say: 'Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt; 26 'for they went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods that they did not know and that He had not given to them. 27 'Then

the anger of the LORD was aroused against this land, to bring on it every curse that is written in this book. 28 'And the LORD uprooted them from their land in anger, in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day.'

As in Deuteronomy, we see two mountains, the Mount of Cursing (Chapter 8) and the Mount of Blessing (Mt Zion in Chapter 14), where the Lamb meets with His army of 144,000, the Remnant from the Land of Israel.

The CENTRAL image of this section is the Covenant ratification ceremony (Chapter 10) in which the Angel of the Covenant stands on the Sea and on the Land, lifting His right hand to heaven, swearing an oath and proclaiming the coming of the New Covenant, the inauguration of a new administration of the world under "the Lord and His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever." Rev 11:15

Revelation 8:1 When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. ² Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. ³ And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer; and he was given much incense to mingle with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar before the throne; ⁴ and the smoke of the incense rose with the prayers of the saints from the hand of the angel before God. ⁵ Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth;^[a] and there were peals of thunder, loud noises, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

- As the seventh seal opens there is a silence for about a ½ hour in heaven...which, according to Alfred Edersheim was about the time the priests awaiting the signal to light the incense at the incense altar in the Holiest Place.
 - The silence could be due to the cessation of singers and trumpets...as the silence of the singers in King Hezekiah's day (2 Chron. 29:28-29)
 - One priest would lay the coals upon the altar, and another would lay the incense across the coals awaiting the signal from another priest for the right time to light the oblation unto Yahweh.
 - Some say that this was the time perhaps when the Angel Gabriel appeared to Zacharias (Luke 1:8-11). The President would give the word, "The time of incense had come," and all would depart the Inner Court, bow down, and worship God.
- The Seven Angels who stand before God, perhaps the Angels of the seven churches, or the seven angels of the presence of God.
 - Angels are present in the worship services of the Church (1 Cor. 11:10, Eph 3:10)
- An angel comes forth with a Golden Censor filled with incense...he stands at the altar of incense with the prayers of the saints...the smoke of the incense and that of the prayers of the saints rises before God.
 - The Church is praying, the Angel is ministering before Yahweh
 - What happens next is amazing
- The angel, numbered among all of those ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation (Heb 1:14), fills the censor with holy fire from the Altar of Incense and throws it to the earth...to the Land of Israel, Jerusalem in judgment.
 - This is the judgment of an official covenantal lawsuit brought by God against the Covenant breakers of Israel. The fire was official fire, unlike the strange fire offered by Aaron's sons

Nadab and Abihu. God must be regarded as holy, and the fire of judgments comes appropriately from the throne room and incense altar of God Himself

- We see the trappings of the presence of God appearing on Mount Sinai: peals of thunder, voices, and lightening and earthquake.
- Exodus 19:16 Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who *were* in the camp trembled. 17 And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. 18 Now Mount Sinai *was* completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly.
- Irony, according to Chilton, is that the fire on the Altar of Burnt Offering came down from heaven, and the priests were to take fire from the altar from one place and carry it to another. Only that holy fire could be used for this purpose.
- According to the Law, when a city was to be burnt as a whole burnt offering to God, fire from the altar had to be used to burn it as a judgment from Yahweh. If any other man-made fire were used, the punishment on the user would be death. Lev 10:1-4...this would be profane fire offered before the Lord, and to Yahweh, this was NOT acceptable, but abominable
 - Duet 13: 16 “And you shall gather all its plunder into the middle of the street, and completely burn with fire the city and all its plunder, for the LORD your God. It shall be a heap forever; it shall not be built again.
- “Church history is the key to world history: when the worshiping assembly calls upon the Lord of the Covenant, the world experiences His judgments. History is managed and directed from the altar of incense, which has received the prayers of the Church.” Note Egypt, when God’s people cried out for help...and the psalmist:

Psalm 18: 6 In my distress I called upon the LORD, And cried out to my God; He heard my voice from His temple, And my cry came before Him, *even* to His ears. 7 Then the earth shook and trembled; The foundations of the hills also quaked and were shaken, Because He was angry. 8 Smoke went up from His nostrils, And devouring fire from His mouth; Coals were kindled by it. 9 He bowed the heavens also, and came down With darkness under His feet. 10 And He rode upon a cherub, and flew; He flew upon the wings of the wind. 11 He made darkness His secret place; His canopy around Him *was* dark waters *And* thick clouds of the skies. 12 From the brightness before Him, His thick clouds passed with hailstones and coals of fire. 13 The LORD thundered from heaven, And the Most High uttered His voice, Hailstones and coals of fire. 14 He sent out His arrows and scattered the foe, Lightnings in abundance, and He vanquished them. 15 Then the channels of the sea were seen, The foundations of the world were uncovered At Your rebuke, O LORD, At the blast of the breath of Your nostrils.

The Angels Prepare to Blow the Seven Trumpets

- The symbolic significance of blowing of trumpets
 - Old Testament liturgy for ceremonial procession, especially in the escort of the Ark of the Covenant (Joshua 6, 1 Chron 15:24; Neh 12:41)
 - The Rule of a new King (1 Kings 1:34)
 - The sounding of an alarm, warning Israel of approaching judgment or urging national repentance (Isa 58:1; Jer 4:5-8, note Rev 9:20)
 - Two silver trumpets for summoning the congregation for worship or to set out into battle against the enemy. (Num 10:1-9)

- Blown at feasts, and on the first day of every month, especially on Tishri 1, the civil New Year's Day...this Day of Trumpets was a special liturgical acknowledgement (a holy convocation) of the Day of the Lord (Lev 23:24-25). The Lord is present among His people.
- In Summary: John is telling his readers that the trumpets were an escort for the ark, a proclamation of the divine sovereignty, and a summons to general repentance; and by placing them in the hands of the Angels of the Presence, he has indicated their close association with worship...G.B. Caird, The Revelation of St John the Divine

⁶ Now the seven angels who had the seven trumpets made ready to blow them.⁷ The first angel blew his trumpet, and there followed hail and fire, mixed with blood, which fell on the earth; and a third of the earth was burnt up, and a third of the trees were burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.⁸ The second angel blew his trumpet, and something like a great mountain, burning with fire, was thrown into the sea; ⁹ and a third of the sea became blood, a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.¹⁰ The third angel blew his trumpet, and a great star fell from heaven, blazing like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the fountains of water. ¹¹ The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died of the water, because it was made bitter.¹² The fourth angel blew his trumpet, 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 their light was darkened; a third of the day was kept from shining, and likewise a third of the night.¹³ Then I looked, and I heard an eagle crying with a loud voice, as it flew in midheaven, "Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, at the blasts of the other trumpets which the three angels are about to blow!"

- The Scriptures tell us of the judgments of Egypt, which are very similar to what we're about to see unfold with the Angelic trumpet blowing...we're about to see the Jericho walls come down.
- Israel had become a nation of Egyptians and Canaanites destined for destruction. All of these trumpets unleash judgments that lead up to a devastating war, which Josephus records in his Jewish Wars.
- **The first trumpet blows and Hail and Fire, mixed with Blood came down upon the land**
 - Very similar to the seventh plague of Israel, this judgment takes out a third of the trees and grass...burning them.
 - If we see the green trees and green grass as representing people, even the elect of God, one can interpret generally that even many, a 1/3, of the elect would be killed or martyred in the aftermath of judgment, or severe trial.
 - However, since Christians are not destined to wrath, but to salvation, they had a hope of eternal life even though they had to endure physical suffering and mental torment during this Great Tribulation.
 - The wicked, on the other hand, have only wrath, tribulation and distress to look forward to.

2 Thess 1:3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other, 4 so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, 5 *which is* manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer; 6 since *it is* a righteous thing with God to repay with **tribulation** those who trouble you, 7 and to *give* you who are troubled rest

with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, 10 when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

- The righteous wrath of God is poured out symbolized by this Angel's blow of the first trumpet
A very difficult time for the faithful to live, while the Romans executed a scorched earth policy
READ: The Jewish War vi.i.1
- **The Second Trumpet is blown and the Destroying Mountain is cast into the Sea causing Devestation**
 - The readers would be reminded of Jesus' words in Mark 11:23 regarding their prayers of faith removing mountains, removing the troubling Israel from their mission of living the Gospel in every place and of preaching the Gospel in every place.
 - Very similar to the Egyptian plague in which the Nile River was turned to blood and the fish died, we remember that Israel was God's holy mountain of His inheritance. The Law and example was to roar forth from Zion, instead, the Word of God is blasphemed because of the lawless Jews, therefore they had become a stumbling block and an offense that extended death to the world vs. life.

Romans 2: 17 Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on the **law**, and make your boast in God, 18 and know *His* will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the **law**, 19 and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the **law**. 21 You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? 22 You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23 You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? 24 For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," as it is written.

Israel had become a Destroying Mountain against whom God's wrath had turned.

God now uses a proclamation against Babylon to describe the Land, the Kingdom of Apostate Israel. We shall see this Babylonian imagery as the Revelation unfolds further:

Jeremiah 51:25 "Behold, I *am* against you, O destroying mountain, Who destroys all the earth," says the LORD. "And I will stretch out My hand against you, Roll you down from the rocks, And make you a burnt mountain...42 The sea has come up over Babylon; She is covered with the multitude of its waves.

Then, Jesus, after a lengthy discourse about the destruction of Jerusalem (Matthew 20-25), cursed an unfruitful fig tree (symbolizing barren Israel), and then disciplined his apostles in praying that this mountain, this kingdom of the apostate Jews be thrown into the sea. As we shall see in the words of Josephus, many died in the events leading up to the great war of AD 66-70, and many deaths occurred in the Sea of Galilee in the north.

Matthew 21:21 So Jesus answered and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done. 22 "And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."

- **The Third Angel brought down Wormwood to make the land bitter with death.**
 - Like the Egyptian plague that made the Nile bitter and undrinkable, wormwood would be a name known to the Jewish Christian hearers of this prophecy...a name that stands for, pure and simple, **apostasy, turning one's back on Yahweh, on Christ, on the faith**

Deut 28:14 " I make this covenant and this oath, not with you alone,15 "but with *him* who stands here with us today before the LORD our God, as well as with *him* who *is* not here with us today 16 (for you know that we dwelt in the land of Egypt and that we came through the nations which you passed by, 17 and you saw their abominations and their idols which *were* among them -- wood and stone and silver and gold); 18 "so that there may not be among you man or woman or family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the LORD our God, to go *and* serve the gods of these nations, and that there may not be among you a root bearing bitterness or wormwood;

Jeremiah 9:13 And the LORD said, "Because they have forsaken My law which I set before them, and have not obeyed My voice, nor walked according to it, 14 "but they have walked according to the dictates of their own hearts and after the Baals, which their fathers taught them," 15 therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, I will feed them, this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink. 16 "I will scatter them also among the Gentiles, whom neither they nor their fathers have known. And I will send a sword after them until I have consumed them."

Amos 5:6 Seek the LORD and live, Lest He break out like fire *in* the house of Joseph, And devour *it*, With no one to quench *it* in Bethel -- 7 You who turn justice to wormwood, And lay righteousness to rest in the earth!"

- Israel is apostate, and has become an Egypt; Jerusalem has become a Babylon; and the covenant-breakers will be destroyed, as surely as Egypt and Babylon were destroyed.
- **Like the ninth Egyptian plague of darkness, this de-creation imagery of the fourth angel's trumpet depicts the fall of nations and national rulers**
 - As depicted in the Scriptures we seen before, rulers are falling...as Farrar observes, "ruler after ruler, chieftain after chieftain of the Roman Empire and the Jewish nation was assassinated and ruined. Gaius, Claudius, Nero, Galba, Otho, Vitellius, all died by murder or suicide; Herod the Great, Herod Antipas, Herod Agrippa, and most of the Herodian Princes, together with not a few of the leading High Priests of Jerusalem, perished in disgrace, or in exile, or by violent hands. All these were quenched suns and darkened stars." The Early Days of Christianity.

Babylon: Isaiah 13:9 Behold, the day of the LORD comes, Cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, To lay the land desolate; And He will destroy its sinners from it. 10 For the stars of heaven and their constellations Will not give their light; The sun will be darkened in its going forth, And the moon will not cause its light to shine. 11 "I will punish the world for *its* evil, And the wicked for their iniquity; I will halt the arrogance of the proud, And will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

Egypt in Ezekiel 32:7 When *I* put out your light, I will cover the heavens, and make its stars dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, And the moon shall not give her light. 8 All the bright lights of the heavens I will make dark over you, And bring darkness upon your land,' Says the Lord GOD. 9 I will also trouble the hearts of many peoples, when I bring your destruction among the nations, into the countries which you have not known.

Jerusalem: Joel 2:10 The earth quakes before them, The heavens tremble; The sun and moon grow dark, And the stars diminish their brightness.

- Then, we see the eagle, the messenger of life, on the one hand (Deut 32:9-11), and the messenger of death, a fearsome bird of prey, a scavenger, on the other (Job 39:30).
 - The pronouncement is not one of good news, to the contrary, it is one of three consecutive woes about to be unleashed on the Land...dooming sinners from the Jews and Gentiles alike.
- **Like the original plagues on Egypt, the curses are becoming intensified, and more precise in their application.**
 - That Jesus Christ may inherit the kingdoms of this world and bring them into His temple

Revelation 9 And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star^[a] fallen from heaven to earth, and he was given the key of the shaft of the bottomless pit; ² he opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke from the shaft. ³ Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth; ⁴ they were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green growth or any tree, but only those of mankind who have not the seal of God upon their foreheads; ⁵ they were allowed to torture them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torture was like the torture of a scorpion, when it stings a man. ⁶ And in those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, and death will fly from them. ⁷ In appearance the locusts were like horses arrayed for battle; on their heads were what looked like crowns of gold; their faces were like human faces, ⁸ their hair like women's hair, and their teeth like lions' teeth; ⁹ they had scales like iron breastplates, and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle. ¹⁰ They have tails like scorpions, and stings, and their power of hurting men for five months lies in their tails. ¹¹ They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit; his name in Hebrew is Abad'don, and in Greek he is called Apol'lyon.^[b]
¹² The first woe has passed; behold, two woes are still to come.

- As the three WOES are ready to be unleashed on the earth, one must see that this is not only judgment upon the wicked and apostates, but that these WOES are also brought upon mankind by God so that men would take advantage of His longsuffering and Repent.
- **The call to repentance during the Great Tribulation: 2 Peter 3:7** But the heavens and the earth *which* are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. ⁸ But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not **willing** that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.
- The first Woe is that of locusts, which come forth for a period of five months...the 5 months that locusts appear in this part of the world, namely from May through September. Here, they are appearing the entire time period.
- A woe very similar to the eighth plague of Egypt. The locusts devour everything. THESE LOCUSTS are demons from the Abyss, also known as the Bottomless Pit spoken of 7 times in Revelation:

- The Abyss, a place of the dead, and a place where demons DO NOT want to go...it is a cage to them. Luke 8: 30 Jesus asked him, saying, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion," because many demons had entered him. 31 And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the **abyss**. Romans 10:6 But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' " (that is, to bring Christ down *from above*) 7 or, " 'Who will descend into the **abyss**?' " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).
- Tradition and Scripture refer to the Abyss (the deep) as Sheol, the netherworld, as the furthest extreme from heaven (Deut 33:13), where Satan and the fallen angels are kept for a thousand years, to be cast afterwards into the pool of fire; cf. **Rev 20:7–10**. The abyss was conceived of as a vast subterranean cavern full of fire. Its only link with the earth was a kind of passage or mine shaft, which was kept locked.
- NOTE: Jonah's repentant cry to God from the Abyss for salvation:
Jonah 2:1 Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the fish's belly. 2 And he said: "I cried out to the LORD because of my affliction, And He answered me. "Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, *And* You heard my voice. 3 For You cast me into the deep, Into the heart of the seas, And the floods surrounded me; All Your billows and Your waves passed over me. 4 Then I said, 'I have been cast out of Your sight; Yet I will look again toward Your holy temple.' 5 The waters surrounded me, *even* to my soul; The deep closed around me; Weeds were wrapped around my head.
- We See the words Bottomless Pit in the Revelation only, where the Beast the arises out of the Bottomless Pit is king of the demons. Recall in Matt 9:24, how the Pharisees said that Jesus cast out demons by the power of the Ruler of the demons...inferring that Jesus was filled with the power of the Beast, which was blasphemous. This beast will make war against the powerful witness of the Church, and overcome and kill many...perhaps nearly all of them (Rev 11:7). The Beast manifests himself through the wicked ruler of the time of AD 66, Caesar Nero, (Rev 17:8) as we shall see. We shall also see that Satan himself will be grabbed and chained by Christ and bound during Christ's reign, which continues today, symbolized as a thousand years. During this Thousand Years (symbolic of a complete reign of Christ until all of His enemies are made a footstool for His feet), Satan was and is shut up in the Bottomless Pit, with a seal set upon him that he should not deceive the nations NO MORE UNTIL the thousand years are finished...then he will be released for a little while to be destroyed and cast away forever.
- The message to Israel now is that ALL HELL and ITS INHABITANTS WILL BREAK LOOSE to cast them out of the Land...to excommunicate them from the Temple and the Presence of God by unleashing demonically inspired enemies upon the inhabitants of the land.
- This picture of the demon locusts manifested itself perhaps in the actions of Gessius Florus, the Procurator of Judea, who for five months, beginning in May of AD66 with the slaughter of 3600 peaceful citizens, terrorized the Jews, deliberately seeking to incite them to riot and rebel against the Emperor....Josephus records this as the beginning of the Jewish War: Jewish War ii.xiv.9-xix.9
 - By God's direction, Israel was to be attacked by a demonic army from the Abyss.
 - Regarding sinners and sinning nations, as we've seen already, God can take his hand off of their peace, allow their enemies to be demonically inspired to attack, and then let them do their work of oppression...to call the sinners to repentance, or to execute final judgment upon them.

- Jesus spoke of this occurrence, pronounced 3 woes upon cities of the Jews, gave his disciples power over demons, told them to preach the Kingdom of God, and after the return of disciples his words help us to understand the correlation between the preaching of the Kingdom of God and the subduing of demonic host:

Luke 10:3 "Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves...." 9 "And heal the sick there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'" 10 "But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, 11 'The very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you.'" 12 "But I say to you that it will be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city. 13 " Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14 "But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. 15 "And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades. 16 "He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me." 17 Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." **18 And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.** 19 "Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. 20 "Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." 21 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. 22 "All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."

- This woe of the Revelation is about demons being released and the King of the Demons leading them to execute God's wrath. Jerusalem and the Land of Judea was about to be infested and glutted with demonic activity that will cause rebellion among the Jews that will ultimately, during this 3 ½ year Jewish War, bring the wrath of the Roman Emperors armies to Jerusalem to destroy the Old Covenant world, including the burning of the Temple itself in AD70.
- Jesus first came and preached the Kingdom and cleared the land of demons, but Jerusalem's leaders and peoples, for the most part rejected Messiah's ministry...the act that revealed that the people loved death, vs. life. Note Jesus' words

Matthew 12:24 Now when the Pharisees heard *it* they said, "This *fellow* does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." 25 But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. 26 "If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? 27 "And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? Therefore they shall be your judges. 28 "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. 29 "Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. 30 "He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad. 31 " Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy *against* the Spirit will not be forgiven men. 32 "Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the *age* to come. 33 " Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by *its* fruit. 34 "Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. 36 "But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. 37 "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." 38 Then some

of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You." 39 But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40 "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41 "The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah *is* here. 42 "The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon *is* here. 43 " When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. 44 "Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds *it* empty, swept, and put in order. 45 "Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation."

- The demons released from the Bottomless Pit were only given power by God to affect their oppression upon those who were NOT Christian, those who DID NOT have the mark of God on their foreheads. Christ's sheep were protected:
- Isaiah 51:16 "Behold, I have created the blacksmith Who blows the coals in the fire, Who brings forth an instrument for his work; And I have created the spoiler to destroy. 17 No weapon formed against you shall prosper, And every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, And their righteousness is from Me," Says the LORD.
- Luke 21: 14 "Therefore settle *it* in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; 15 "for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist. 16 "You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put *some* of you to death. 17 "And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. 18 "But not a **hair** of your head shall be lost. 19 "By your patience possess your souls. 20 " But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. 21 "Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. 22 "For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. 24 "And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. 25 " And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; 26 "men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. 27 "Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28 "Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near."
- While carrying his cross down the Via D'I'Rosa, he reminded the inhabitants of the city of their impending doom

Luke 23: 26 Now as they led Him away, they laid hold of a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, who was coming from the country, and on him they laid the cross that he might bear *it* after Jesus. 27 And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him. 28 But Jesus, turning to them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. 29 "For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, 'Blessed *are* the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!' 30 "Then they will begin 'to say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" and to the hills, "Cover us!" ' 31 "For if they (the Jewish Rulers and Pilate, and the people) do these things in the green wood (AD 30), what will be done in the dry (a nation of ravenous men filled with demons motivated only to that which is evil, and then miserably destroyed)?"

READ Jewish War: iv.ix.10.560-565 The invading heathen armies of the Roman riders on their horses (Rev 9:7-10)

- They sound like the sound made by wings of angels, only this time they are fallen angels
- The King over the demons is in Hebrew: Abaddon and in Greek Apollyon. R.H.Charles says that John writes in Greek, but thinks in Hebrew
 - The word means destruction or destroyer...Job 26:6; so, John is saying that the Destroyer is the very personification of death itself.
 - We see the Destroyer, who can be deduced as Satan himself, who is on the leash of God to only perform what he permits. God used this in Scripture to warn His people then and now
 - 1 Corinthians 10:1 Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, 2 all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 3 all ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. 5 But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. 6 Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. 7 And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." 8 Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; 9 nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; 10 nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

Revelation 9: ¹³ Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God, ¹⁴ saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates."^[c] ¹⁵ So the four angels were released, who had been held ready for the hour, the day, the month, and the year, to kill a third of mankind. ¹⁶ The number of the troops of cavalry was twice ten thousand times ten thousand; I heard their number. ¹⁷ And this was how I saw the horses in my vision: the riders wore breastplates the color of fire and of sapphire^[d] and of sulphur, and the heads of the horses were like lions' heads, and fire and smoke and sulphur issued from their mouths. ¹⁸ By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed, by the fire and smoke and sulphur issuing from their mouths. ¹⁹ For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; their tails are like serpents, with heads, and by means of them they wound.

²⁰ The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot either see or hear or walk; ²¹ nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their immorality^[e] or their thefts.

- **The Sixth Angel blows a Trumpet that unleashes four angels that bring a vast and fierce army upon those destined for judgment**
 - The Altar of Incense that stands before the presence of Yahweh in Heaven has four horns, one at each corner.
 - The sins of the nations were atoned for here at the altar after the blood was spilled at the brazen altar that stood in front of the Holy Place. The blood of the sacrifice for the polluted

nation would be brought forth into the Holy Place and smeared on the horns of the altar of incense.

- Israel as a nation had apostatized and mingled herself with the pagan nation of Rome. She persecuted the true Israel of God, the followers of Yahweh, the Church, who had prayed the imprecatory prayers for deliverance.

Leviticus 18: 24 ' Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you. 25 'For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants. 26 'You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit *any* of these abominations, *either* any of your own nation or any stranger who dwells among you 27 '(for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who *were* before you, and thus the land is defiled), 28 'lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that *were* before you. 29 'For whoever commits any of these abominations, the persons who commit *them* shall be cut off from among their people. 30 'Therefore you shall keep My ordinance, so that *you* do not commit *any* of these abominable customs which were committed before you, and that you do not defile yourselves by them: I *am* the LORD your God.' "

- The defiled and polluted land had come against the Lord's anointed. The Lord's people prayed, and now the wrath of God shall come upon the Church's enemies.

Psalms 138:1 *A Psalm of David.* I will praise You with my whole heart; Before the gods I will sing praises to You. 2 I will worship toward Your holy temple, And praise Your name For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word above all Your name. 3 In the day when I cried out, You answered me, *And* made me bold *with* strength in my soul. 4 All the kings of the earth shall praise You, O LORD, When they hear the words of Your mouth. 5 Yes, they shall sing of the ways of the LORD, For great *is* the glory of the LORD. 6 Though the LORD *is* on high, Yet He regards the lowly; But the proud He knows from afar. 7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me; You will stretch out Your hand Against the wrath of my **enemies**, And Your right hand will **save** me. 8 The LORD will perfect *that which* concerns me; Your mercy, O LORD, *endures* forever; Do not forsake the works of Your hands.

- The Church, by way of the blood of Christ smeared on the true Altar in heaven as access into the Most Holy Place where Yahweh God resides (Hebrews 10:19). But that same blood of Christ now resides on the hands of the rulers and the nation that continued to reject the Christ. See Psalm 2.

Psalms 9:9 The LORD also will be a refuge for the oppressed, A refuge in times of trouble. 10 And those who know Your name will put their trust in You; For You, LORD, have not forsaken those who seek You.

Psalms 10:17 LORD, You have heard the desire of the humble; You will prepare their heart; You will cause Your ear to hear, 18 To do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, That the man of the earth may oppress no more.

Psalms 145:18 The LORD is near to all who call upon Him, To all who call upon Him in truth. 19 He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He also will hear their cry and save them. 20 The LORD preserves all who love Him, But all the wicked He will destroy. 21 My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD, And all flesh shall bless His holy name Forever and ever.

- The Euphrates River was the boundary between Israel and her fearsome pagan neighbors across which the enemies from the lands of Babylon, Assyria, and Persia came. The Great Army of the

North is God's army raised up for this hour, day, and month.

- Myriads of fierce, heavily armed, directed by the Lord, but motivated and inspired by the devil himself. Psalm 68: 17 The chariots of God are twenty thousand, Even thousands of thousands; The Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the Holy Place.
- An innumerable army, assembled by Rome, and coming from the pits of Hell itself, is advancing upon Jerusalem from the Euphrates, the origin of Israel's original enemies; it is a fierce, hostile, demonic force sent by God in answer to his people's prayers for vengeance. The horrors of this army is what the curses in God's Law warned about.

Deuteronomy 28:32 "Your sons and your daughters *shall be* given to another people, and your eyes shall look and fail *with longing* for them all day long; and *there shall be* no strength in your hand. 58 " If you do not carefully observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, THE LORD YOUR GOD,... 33 "A nation whom you have not known shall eat the fruit of your land and the produce of your labor, and you shall be only oppressed and crushed continually. 34 "So you shall be driven mad because of the sight which your eyes see. 3 "And it shall be, *that* just as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good and multiply you, so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you and bring you to nothing; and you shall be plucked from off the land which you go to possess. 64 " Then the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you shall serve other gods, which neither you nor your fathers have known -- wood and stone. 65 "And among those nations you shall find no rest, nor shall the sole of your foot have a resting place; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes, and anguish of soul. 66 "Your life shall hang in doubt before you; you shall fear day and night, and have no assurance of life. 67 "In the morning you shall say, 'Oh, that it were evening!' And at evening you shall say, 'Oh, that it were morning!' because of the fear which terrifies your heart, and because of the sight which your eyes see. 68 "And the LORD will take you back to Egypt in ships, by the way of which I said to you, 'You shall never see it again.' And there you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy *you.*"

READ Jewish War: 2:18.9—19.7 Heavy casualties from Cestius' invasion of Jerusalem

- The Jews had so given themselves over to apostasy and sins that after the famines, the mass murders, the cannibalism, and the crucifixion of their fellow Jews at about 500 souls per day.
- The murders and calamity seemed insane and ravenous...Josephus says that the Jews paid no attention to the warnings of God. READ Jewish War 6.v.3

Luke 16: 27 "Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, 28 'for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.' 29 "Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' 30 "And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' 31 "But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.' "

The apostates even saw the warning signs in the heavens, as the apostolic warning in Luke 21:11

READ Jewish War 6.v.3 and 6.v.3: Light shining around the altar of the temple for ½ an hour on the Feast of Unleavened Bread; the opening of the East Gate; (Talmud records in AD30 the gates of the Temple opened themselves due to the collapse of the overhead lintel, a stone weighing about 30 tons: Yoma 39b, and Alfred Edersheim, Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, and Ernest Martin, The Place of

Christ's Crucifixion; Second Passover in AD66—chariots were seen in the air over the whole country Jewish War 6.v.3 (Tacitus in Histories v, 13 reports the same) "In the sky appeared a vision of armies in conflict, of glittering armour, A sudden lightning flash from the clouds lit up the temple. The doors of the holy place abruptly opened, a superhuman voice was heard to declare that the gods were leaving it, and in the same instant came the rushing tumult of their departure."; at Pentecost same year, priest enter the temple and hear a violent commotion and a din, then a voice as of a host crying, "we are departing hence."

- Josephus Jewish Wars v.i.3, v.ix.4: "Jerusalem was no longer the dwelling place of God."
- Did Israel worship demons? The apostate Jews did not cleave to an Old Testament religion apart from Christ, because there was NO such thing, and never was, for Abraham believed in the Christ to come...and saw Jesus' day and believed. See John 8:56-58
- Schlossberg, Idols for Destruction: "Idolatry in its larger meaning is properly understood as any substitution of what is created for the creator." By rejecting Jesus the Christ, the Jews became idolatrous worshippers of Caesar. War of Jews v.vi.3, v.x.5; v.xiii.6-7
Josephus saw his own people an insanely bent toward evil and self-destruction, and ripe for Yahweh's judgment as was Sodom and Gomorrah.
- See the burnout of idolatry

Psalm 115: 4 Their idols are silver and gold, The work of men's hands. 5 They have mouths, but they do not speak; Eyes they have, but they do not see; 6 They have ears, but they do not hear; Noses they have, but they do not smell; 7 They have hands, but they do not handle; Feet they have, but they do not walk; Nor do they mutter through their throat. 8 Those who make them are like them; So is everyone who trusts in them.

- The Jews idolatry led to their sins, from which they did not repent. The armies of the heathens were raised up against these idolaters to come against them and destroy many of them, and for all of this, they did not look up, repent, and turn to Christ.
- Israel has become a land of confusion, a Babylon, a destroying mountain that is on fire and being cast away into the sea...eventually into the abyss...but now, she is being attacked from the Abyss. She is blindly committing murders, sorceries, fornication, and thefts.
- Instead of repenting, Israel's heart is growing harder and harder, as was Pharaoh's. Cestius' army did its initial damage, and then retreated for a season, leading some to believe that Jesus' words of destruction were, perhaps, untrue. Cestius did retreat back to the Euphrates with his tail between his legs and the Jews fighting them...the Jews grew confident that God was with them, not knowing that greater and more powerful armies were being mustered beyond the Euphrates. When these armies would descend upon Jerusalem, dispatched and empowered by Domitian, and led by his son Titus, there would be no retreat. Judea would be forever turned into a desert, the Israelites would be slaughtered and enslaved, and the Temple would be razed to the ground, without, as Jesus said, one stone left upon another. The Arch of Titus in Rome forever is a monument of the victory of God's armies against the apostates.

Revelation 10 ¹ Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head, and his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire. ² He had a little scroll open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the land, ³ and called out with a loud voice, like a lion roaring; when he called out, the seven thunders sounded. ⁴ And when the seven thunders had sounded, I was about to write, but I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up what the seven thunders have said, and do not write it down." ⁵ And the angel whom I saw standing on sea and land lifted up his right hand to heaven ⁶ and swore by him who lives for ever and ever, who created heaven and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it, that there should be no more delay, ⁷ but that in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God,^[a] as he announced to his servants the prophets, should be fulfilled.

- A mighty angel wrapped in the glory of the presence of God (note the cloud of the presence of God, the bow above his head, his face shining like the sun [indicating the glory of God], and the pillars of fire...seen by the Children of Israel as they passed through the desert by day)...is none other than the Son of Righteousness, with arising with healing in His wings, the Angel of Yahweh that led the Children of Israel through the desert

Psalm 104:1 Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, You are very great: You are clothed with honor and majesty, ² Who cover *Yourself* with light as *with* a garment, Who stretch out the heavens like a curtain. ³ He lays the beams of His upper chambers in the waters, Who makes the clouds His chariot, Who walks on the wings of the wind, ⁴ Who makes His angels spirits, His ministers a flame of fire. ⁵ *You who* laid the foundations of the earth, So *that* it should not be moved forever,

- Christ here is clothed with the glory cloud of God, has the bow (see Rev 4) above his head, and his face shines as the sun. This Angel can almost conclusively be interpreted as either the Lord Jesus, or His representative...bringing rest to the judgment and judgment to the wicked.
- 2 Thess 1: 6 since *it is* a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, ⁷ and to *give* you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, ⁸ in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, ¹⁰ when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.
- His feet are posted on the Sea (representing the Gentile nations) and on the Land (Israel and Jerusalem). This expanse of posture shows his Lordship over all.
- The Lord of the Covenant stands as a witness to the righteousness and judgments of God as depicted in the Book. Note the very similar stance and sense from the prophet Zechariah...there is judgment upon those who fight against the covenant nation...and final rescue and peace for the Jews (c.f., when you see the armies surround Jerusalem, then flee to the mountains...). Now, the judgments are upon national Israel for fighting against the New Jerusalem, the true Jews...those from among the Jews who follow Jesus Christ, and those from among the Gentiles who follow him.
 - Zechariah 14:1 Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, And your spoil will be divided in your midst. ² For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled,

And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. 3 Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle. 4 And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, Making a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south. 5 Then you shall flee through My mountain valley, For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee As you fled from the earthquake In the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the LORD my God will come, And all the saints with You. 6 It shall come to pass in that day That there will be no light; The lights will diminish. 7 It shall be one day Which is known to the LORD -- Neither day nor night. But at evening time it shall happen That it will be light. 8 And in that day it shall be That living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, Half of them toward the eastern sea And half of them toward the western sea; In both summer and winter it shall occur. 9 And the LORD shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be -- "The LORD is one," And His name one. 10 All the land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be raised up and inhabited in her place from Benjamin's Gate to the place of the First Gate and the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananeel to the king's winepresses. 11 The people shall dwell in it; And no longer shall there be utter destruction, But Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited. 12 And this shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, Their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, And their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths.

- We see the "sea" representing the churning world of the Gentiles from which comes the Caesars of Rome, the Beast of Rome manifesting in the Beast, Ceasar Nero. The other beast coming forth from the Promised Land, represented by the earth, looks like a Paschal Lamb, but speaks the words of Rome. Note this in Revelation 13:1 Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name...11 Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.
- Meredith Kline, Images of the Spirit, says that He cried out with an arrestingly loud voice that towers above the roaring waves of the sea. It is the noise of war, the thunders of chariots...in worshipful response, the seven peals of thunder uttered their voices.
Psalm 29:1 A Psalm of David. Give unto the LORD, O you mighty ones, Give unto the LORD glory and strength. 2 Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness. 3 The voice of the LORD is over the waters; The God of glory thunders; The LORD is over many waters. 4 The voice of the LORD is powerful; The voice of the LORD is full of majesty. 5 The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars, Yes, the LORD splinters the cedars of Lebanon. 6 He makes them also skip like a calf, Lebanon and Sirion like a young wild ox. 7 The voice of the LORD divides the flames of fire. 8 The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; The LORD shakes the Wilderness of Kadesh. 9 The voice of the LORD makes the deer give birth, And strips the forests bare; And in His temple everyone says, "Glory!" 10 The LORD sat enthroned at the Flood, And the LORD sits as King forever. 11 The LORD will give strength to His people; The LORD will bless His people with peace.
- John was about to write the words of the Seven Thunders, but learned that what he heard was a secret thing to God and was not to be revealed...as in the days of Daniel.
Deuteronomy 29: 29 "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law."
- "Man is more often prompted by curiosity than by obedience." R.J.Rushdoony, Salvation and Godly Rule.

- These thunderous words were to be sealed, however, the words of the prophecy of this book...the Revelation of Jesus Christ, was NOT to be sealed
 Rev 22: 8 Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. 9 Then he said to me, "See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God." 10 And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.
 - The sealing away of the words of the peals of thunders indicates that there is MORE to time and earth than the immediate sense of this prophecy.
 - The Revelation had an immediate sense for the first century church and apostate Israel; however, the Fall of Jerusalem, although indicating a coming of the Lord, DID NOT constitute the Second Coming of Christ (which we hold to in the Creeds), the end of this world (although it was the end of the Old Covenant world referred to as the Old Heaven and Earth), and the final resurrection (when Christ returns when all of his enemies are made a footstool for his feet.
 - Max King, purports a realized eschatology stating that all things, including the Second Coming took place in AD70. Although King has good, even great points, about this event, he becomes a heretic when stating that the Second Coming occurred with Christ's appearing/coming in AD70. See his Parousia, and the Spirit of Prophecy

- The reason the vision of this Angel becomes apparent as we see Him raise his right hand to heaven swearing an oath before God...and this oath can be sworn by the name of no one higher, and there would be no dispute whatsoever regarding the oath that invokes the name of Yahweh Most High
 - There should be No Delay. The Angel is a divine witness of the New Creation, the New Heavens and the New Earth wherein righteousness dwells.
 - We see the truth of this proclamation in that the world is much better, more Christian, more peaceful than ever before...and is growing more so during this reign of Christ.
 - Preeminent language: covenant, oath, creation, testimony, witness
 - The Mystery of God is accomplished...as presented in the New Testament in Ephesians and Colossians (Eph 3:5; Col 1:26). A mystery is something formerly hidden that is now revealed, and that revelation is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs of the body. Believing Jews and Believing Gentiles now constitute, in Christ, one new man, one Church, one Body of Christ, in the one New Covenant.

- Revelation 10 affirms the announcement of the destruction of Jerusalem. The promised New Creation, the New Covenant, as presented in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Chapters 7-12) is an accomplished fact ready to be executed and realized in the earth
- Now, that the New Jerusalem is to be established, all men will flow into the Mountain of the Lord's house to hear the word of the Lord, and to walk in his ways (c.f., Isaiah 2, Micah 4)

Concluding Chapter 10 in Revelation 10: 8 Then the voice which I had heard from heaven spoke to me again, saying, "Go, take the scroll which is open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." 9 So I went to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll; and he said to me, "Take it and eat; it will be bitter to your stomach, but sweet[b] as honey in your mouth." 10 And I took the little scroll from the hand of the angel and ate it; it was sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it my stomach was made bitter. 11 And I was told, "You must again prophesy about many peoples and nations and tongues and kings."

- Like Ezekiel was commanded to eat the book that contained the denunciation of Israel, so John is commanded to do the same. Ezekiel 2:8 "But you, son of man, hear what I say to you. Do not be rebellious like that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you." 9 Now when I looked, there was a hand stretched out to me; and behold, a scroll of a book was in it. 10 Then He spread it before me; and there was writing on the inside and on the outside, and written on it were lamentations and mourning and woe. Ezekiel 3:1 Moreover He said to me, "Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel." 2 So I opened my mouth, and He caused me to eat that scroll. 3 And He said to me, "Son of man, feed your belly, and fill your stomach with this scroll that I give you." So I ate, and it was in my mouth like honey in sweetness.
- R.J.Rushdoony: "Salvation and judgment are two aspects of the same event." The book containing the covenantal lawsuit was sweet to the taste, but, as judgment is, bitter in the gut.
- Although John could rejoice of the Church's victory over her enemies, it would still be wrenching to see:
 - Holy city leveled to rubble
 - Temple torn down and burned
 - Hundreds of thousands of relatives tortured, murdered, or sold into slavery
- The Day of the Lord, like in Amos 5:18-20, would bring immeasurable blessing and woe
- St. John's prophecy regarding the destruction of Jerusalem and the establishing of the New Covenant will encompass the nations of the world. The Roman Empire itself is ultimately an instrument of God's will (Rev 17:16-17), eventually to be crushed and cast away when its usefulness has ceased (19:17-21; Dan 2:44). The kingdoms of the world, says Thomas Moore (a commentary on Haggai and Malachi), are but the scaffolding of God's spiritual temple, to be thrown down when their purpose is accomplished."

Revelation 11 ^[a]Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told: "Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there, ² but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample over the holy city for forty-two months.^[b] ³ And I will grant my two witnesses^[c] power to prophesy for one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."⁴ These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands which stand before the Lord of the earth. ⁵ And if any one would harm them, fire pours from their mouth and consumes their foes; if any one would harm them, thus he is doomed to be killed. ⁶ They have power to shut the sky, that no rain may fall during the days of their prophesying, and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they desire. ⁷ And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that ascends from the bottomless pit will make war upon them and conquer them and kill them, ⁸ and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city^[d] which is allegorically^[e] called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified. ⁹ For three days and a half men from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations gaze at their dead bodies and refuse to let them be placed in a tomb, ¹⁰ and those who dwell on the earth will rejoice

over them and make merry and exchange presents, because these two prophets had been a torment to those who dwell on the earth. ¹¹ But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood up on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. ¹² Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up hither!" And in the sight of their foes they went up to heaven in a cloud. ¹³ And at that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven. ¹⁴ The second woe has passed; behold, the third woe is soon to come.

- The Christians hearing the words of the Revelation may have been reminded of Daniel's words in Daniel 25 "...MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. 26 "This is the interpretation of each word. MENE: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it; 27 "TEKEL: You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting; 28 "PERES: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians."
- These were the words of God's notable measuring of the Beltashazzar's kingdom and finding it wanting, so it was therefore destroyed. Here, God is having John measure the heavenly temple, but is not permitting the measurement of the court that is outside the temple, the unclean Court of the Gentiles, which here signifies apostate Israel...the domain of the unclean. God is associating apostate Israel with that which is unclean.
- This passage of prophecy is very similar to the passage in Ezekiel 40-43, where one sees the measuring of the New Testament Church, the New Jerusalem. We recall the picture of the dry, dead bones of Israel being filled with the Spirit of God and turned into One Great Kingdom of God with one Great King over her (Ezek 37), the rise and defeat of Israel's attackers (38-39), and then the New City and New Temple from which waters go forth bringing healing to the nations.
 - Ezekiel gives us a vision of the Church, the New Jerusalem, of which Peter speaks of that is being measured.

1 Peter 1 Peter 2: 4 Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame." 7 Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone," 8 and "A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. 9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

- The Epistle to the Hebrews spends considerable space speaking of the true tabernacle in the heavens as being the pattern from which the earthly temple was built. Hebrews 8:5; 9:24;

and that Christ ministers in the real heavenly temple as our High Priest. Heb 10:19;12:22.

- Hebrews 9:23 states that the heavenly sanctuary was cleansed with Christ's blood, made fit for use (Numbers 7:1). Hebrews 12:23 refers to this heavenly Jerusalem, that is clean, that is Mount Zion, as the Assembly of the Firstborn...this temple that John is told to measure is the Church Triumphant...the Heavenly Temple. R.I.McKelvey, Temple in J.D.Douglas' The New Bible Dictionary, p. 1249
- Those worshipping within that Temple in the heavenlies are the great cloud of witnesses, the people of God who came before and are now glorified and worshipping. John sees what the writer to the Hebrews describes as "the general assembly of the firstborn who are registered in heaven."
- **DO NOT MEASURE THE COURT OUTSIDE THE TEMPLE: CAST IT OUT**
 - Measuring can be a precursor of judging
 - Just as we've seen the 144,000 sealed of Israel were counted and protected, here we see a measuring of the Church in heaven, that which is eternally clean, so as to set up a boundary between the clean and the unclean.
 - We also note the casting out, the EXCOMMUNICATION of that which is unclean, namely apostate Israel, who is here likened unto the Court of the Gentiles, which was not considered clean as to the temple on earth.
 - Cast out is the Greek words: Ek Ballo...out, to throw. Ballo is the word from which we derive ballistics.

Isaiah 1:2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth! For the LORD has spoken: "I have nourished and brought up children, And they have rebelled against Me; 3 The ox knows its owner And the donkey its master's crib; But Israel does not know, My people do not consider." 4 Alas, sinful nation, A people laden with iniquity, A brood of evildoers, Children who are corrupters! They have forsaken the LORD, They have provoked to anger The Holy One of Israel, They have turned away backward.

- This casting out is a word normally used in the Gospels for casting out devils and for Christ's ejection of the moneychangers in the temple
- Jesus warned the Jews that they would be cast out of the Kingdom should they not believe and obey:
Luke 13: 24 "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. 25 "When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,' 26 "then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' 27 "But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.'

28 "There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out. 29 "They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God.

- God does not want the Outer Court measured for it has been given over to the Gentiles, who will trample it during the Great Tribulation of 3 ½ years
 - 42 months, equal to 1260 days (42 lunar months times 30 days per month), equal to 3 ½ years
 - During which time the wicked seem to triumph in the earth, hence the writing and reading of this Revelation, to reveal that the time is at hand.
 - This also calls to mind Daniel's prophecy of the fierceness of Rome, and the eventual judgment of the same and the triumph of the Church.

Daniel 7:23 " Thus he said: 'The fourth beast shall be A fourth kingdom on earth, Which shall be different from all other kingdoms, And shall devour the whole earth, Trample it and break it in pieces. 24 The ten horns are ten kings Who shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; He shall be different from the first ones, And shall subdue three kings. 25 He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time. (a time=1year; times=2 years; and ½ a time=1/2 years = 3 ½ years) 26 ' But the court (in heaven under Christ's Lordship) shall be seated, And they shall take away his dominion, To consume and destroy it forever. 27 Then the kingdom and dominion, And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.'

- Daniel (in Daniel 9:24-27) spoke of the times at hand for Israel, where she would be brought to an end:
Daniel's 70 Weeks = 70 7s, or 490 years for the Holy City of Jerusalem that would begin with a decree to build the city after the captivity and end with the destruction of the city in AD 70

457 BC Ezra's receives decree from God through Artaxerxes to go to Jerusalem as prophesied by Daniel (Dan. 9)

Add 483 years (69 weeks) (62 + 7 weeks until Messiah comes)= Anno Domini (AD) 26: Year of the Lord 26

AD 26 Beginning of Messiah's ministry—Anointing by God at His baptism.

Add 3 ½ years (First half of last week {week 70, or 7 year cycle) = Ministry of Christ and His being cut off through crucifixion.

AD 30 Death of Messiah for His people's sins

Add 3 ½ years (Last half of last week {week 70}) The exact time, according to Josephus and The Revelation (e.g., time, times, and a half of times; 42 months, 1260 days) (c.f., Dan 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 12:14. No one knew the time of Christ's coming in judgment, but the signs were there. His Kingdom came in power on 1st of Tishri AD 70, the same day the temple was destroyed in 586 by the Babylonians.

AD 70 70 weeks were completed for the Jews and their city.

- We see a series of broken 7s, for example the middle of Daniel's week is broken. Chilton says that 3 ½ is a number that stands for sadness, death, and destruction.
- Apostate Israel, the Land, the nation that was to be the salt of the earth, had lost its savor, and, as Jesus said in Matthew 5:13, is good for nothing but to be "thrown out" and trampled underfoot by men.
- Interestingly, the Roman siege of Jerusalem under Vespasian and Titus, did last a literal 3 ½ years between AD67-70...ending the first of Tishri in AD70
- **Before Jerusalem is destroyed, power is granted to two witnesses to bear witness of the truth.**
 - Clothed in sackcloth, the typical garb of the prophets, from Elijah through to John the Baptizer. The clothing of fasting, mourning, and in this case, for apostasy
 - Genesis 37:34 Then Jacob tore his clothes, put sackcloth on his waist, and mourned for his son many days.
 - 2 Kings 1:8 So they answered him, "A hairy man wearing a leather belt around his waist." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."
 - Nehemiah 9:1 Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, in sackcloth, and with dust on their heads.
 - These two witnesses preliminarily represent the line of the prophets, up to and including John the Baptizer, and including those who bear witness to the truth by preaching the word of righteousness during the Great Tribulation

Luke 16: 16 "The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it.

- The two olive trees bring to mind the prophecy of Zechariah 4:1-5.
 - The connection between the lampstands and these two olive trees show the work of the endless supply of the Holy Spirit filling the leaders of the Church who bear witness of Christ and His Kingdom
 - Zechariah 4:1 Now the angel who talked with me came back and wakened me, as a man who is wakened out of his sleep. 2 And he said to me, "What do you see?" So I said, "I am looking, and there is a lampstand of solid gold with

a bowl on top of it, and on the stand seven lamps with seven pipes to the seven lamps. 3 "Two olive trees are by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left." 4 So I answered and spoke to the angel who talked with me, saying, "What are these, my lord?" 5 Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." 6 So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts. 7 'Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he shall bring forth the capstone With shouts of "Grace, grace to it!" ' " 8 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying: 9 "The hands of Zerubbabel Have laid the foundation of this temple; His hands shall also finish it. Then you will know That the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. 10 For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see The plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the LORD, Which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth." 11 Then I answered and said to him, "What are these two olive trees -- at the right of the lampstand and at its left?" 12 And I further answered and said to him, "What are these two olive branches that drip into the receptacles of the two gold pipes from which the golden oil drains?" 13 Then he answered me and said, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." 14 So he said, "These are the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth."

- In Zech's day, these two were Joshua the priest and Zerubbabel the king (see Zech 3-4)
- Those two anointed ones filled with, ablaze with the power of the Spirit, bear witness, as does the Spirit, of righteousness, judgment, and truth.
- As Jesus said of the Holy Spirit: John 16: 8 "And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 "of sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 "of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; 11 "of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. 12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. 15 "All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.
- The vision is that these two witnesses (of the priestly and kingly order) give powerful witness through the saints, the Church, during this time. All representing the Spirit-inspired prophetic testimony of the kingdom of the New Testament priesthood of believers who are, indeed, kings in the earth unto our God.

- Being filled with the Spirit, the saints indeed have the power to prophesy, to heal, to cast out devils, and to pray that mountains be removed...nothing would be impossible unto them—as Zechariah said, the mountain shall become a plain.

- Fire proceeds from their mouths...typical of the Old Testament prophets:

Jeremiah 5: 14 Therefore thus says the LORD God of hosts: "Because you speak this word, Behold, I will make My words in your mouth fire, And this people wood, And it shall devour them.

- Very similar to the fire that came down from heaven on behalf of Elijah to consume the prophets of Baal and the children who mocked Elijah. As the scriptures teach, "Do my prophets no harm."

- Some interpret this passage of the Two Witnesses as summarizing all of the witnesses of the Old Covenant, culminating in the witness of John...I see it including the witness of the New Testament prophets, too, as Jesus said:

Matthew 23: 33 "Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? 34 "Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: *some* of them you will kill and crucify, and *some* of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, 35 "that on you may come all the righteous **blood** shed on the earth, from the **blood** of righteous Abel to the **blood** of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. 36 "Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. 37 " O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing! 38 "See! Your house is left to you desolate; 39 "for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed *is* He who comes in the name of the LORD!' " [then immediately, knowing this would be the end of Jerusalem, the disciples ask when will these things be and what will be the sign of your coming (appearing) and the end of the age—Matthew 24]

- **NOW, the two witnesses seem to be defeated when they finish their testimony** by the Beast that ascends from the Bottomless pit
 - First time Beast is mentioned in the Book. The Beast wars against the witness of the Church, conquers its leaders, and then kills them.
 - Familiar theme of the beast in Scripture, from Adam and Eve who listened to the beast and instead of turning into gods, they became as beasts, wearing the skins of beasts. We see Nebuchadnezzar, who was king of kings, yet through pride he becomes a beast and repents. (Dan 4:33). Then the psalmist speaks of the dogs and beasts who murdered our Lord (Ps 22:12-13, 16)
 - James Jordan: the serpent is a beast that is unclean, and all unclean animals: eat dirt, rotting carrion, manure, garbage; they move in contact with the dirt, crawling on their bellies, fleshy pads of their feet in touch with the ground; and they revolt against human dominion. To eat unclean animals was to partake of death and rebellion.
 - The enemy of God and the Church is thus always the beast.
 - The Church knew that the Beast coming out of the Abyss was Leviathan, the Dragon, the Serpent of Old, who comes out of his prison of the sea and attacks God's people
 - The Abyss, the dark, raging Deep, is where Satan and his evil spirits are kept imprisoned except for periodic releases
 - The devils within the Gadarene demoniac pleaded to be kept OUT of the abyss
 - The persecution of the Covenant people is never a merely "political" contest, regardless of how evil states attempt to color their wicked actions. It always originates in the pit of

hell.

- **The culmination of the murders of the prophets is in the murder of Jesus Christ.** The Jews conspired to frame Christ, the Romans washed their hands of any responsibility to save him.

Mark 6:14 Now King Herod heard of Him, for His name had become well known. And he said, "John the Baptist is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him." 15 Others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is the Prophet, or like one of the prophets." 16 But when Herod heard, he said, "This is John, whom I beheaded; he has been raised from the dead!" 17 For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her. 18 For John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." 19 Therefore Herodias held it against him and wanted to kill him, but she could not; 20 for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just and holy man, and he protected him. And when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly. 21 Then an opportune day came when Herod on his birthday gave a feast for his nobles, the high officers, and the chief men of Galilee. 22 And when Herodias' daughter herself came in and danced, and pleased Herod and those who sat with him, the king said to the girl, "Ask me whatever you want, and I will give it to you." 23 He also swore to her, "Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half of my kingdom." 24 So she went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask?" And she said, "The head of John the Baptist!" 25 Immediately she came in with haste to the king and asked, saying, "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." 26 And the king was exceedingly sorry; yet, because of the oaths and because of those who sat with him, he did not want to refuse her. 27 Immediately the king sent an executioner and commanded his head to be brought. And he went and beheaded him in prison, 28 brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl; and the girl gave it to her mother. 29 When his disciples heard of it, they came and took away his corpse and laid it in a tomb.

Acts 17:5 But the Jews who were not persuaded, becoming envious, took some of the evil men from the marketplace, and gathering a mob, set all the city in an uproar and attacked the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. 6 But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here too. 7 "Jason has harbored them, and these are all acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying there is another king -- Jesus." 8 And they troubled the crowd and the rulers of the city when they heard these things. 9 So when they had taken security from Jason and the rest, they let them go.

1 Thess 2:14 For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they did from the Judeans, 15 who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men, 16 forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up the measure of their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

- WHERE do the bodies of the witnesses of God and of His Christ lay? In Jerusalem, where the witnesses' Lord was crucified
 - Israel called Sodom:
 - Deut 29:22-28: 22 "so that the coming generation of your children who rise up after you, and the foreigner who comes from a far land, would say, when they see the plagues of that land and the sicknesses which the LORD has laid on it: 23 'The whole land is brimstone, salt, and burning; it is not sown, nor does it bear, nor does any grass grow there, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in His anger and His wrath.' 24 "All nations would say, 'Why has the LORD done so to this land? What does the heat of this great anger mean?' 25 "Then people would say: 'Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them

out of the land of Egypt; 26 'for they went and served other gods and worshiped them, gods that they did not know and that He had not given to them. 27 'Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against this land, to bring on it every curse that is written in this book. 28 'And the LORD uprooted them from their land in anger, in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day.'

- Deut 32:32 For their vine *is* of the vine of Sodom And of the fields of Gomorrah; Their grapes *are* grapes of gall, Their clusters *are* bitter.
- Isaiah 1:8 So the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, As a hut in a garden of cucumbers, As a besieged city. 9 Unless the LORD of hosts Had left to us a very small remnant, We would have become like Sodom, We would have been made like Gomorrah. 10 Hear the word of the LORD, You rulers of Sodom; Give ear to the law of our God, You people of Gomorrah:...21 How the faithful city has become a harlot! It was full of justice; Righteousness lodged in it, But now murderers.
- Ezekiel 16:46 "Your elder sister *is* Samaria, who dwells with her daughters to the north of you; and your younger sister, who dwells to the south of you, *is* Sodom and her daughters. 47 "You did not walk in their ways nor act according to their abominations; but, as *if that were* too little, you became more corrupt than they in all your ways. 48 "As I live," says the Lord GOD, "neither your sister Sodom nor her daughters have done as you and your daughters have done. 49 "Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. 50 "And they were haughty and committed abomination before Me; therefore I took them away as I saw *fit*.
- Israel called Egypt
 - Scripture many times speaks of Israel in terms of Egypt: Jesus is the new Moses, the church is the New Israel, Jesus spoke with Moses and Elijah, who called his death and resurrection in Jerusalem an "Exodon"
 - Apostate Israel has joined with the Beast of Rome to snuff the witness of Christ in the Land and Sea, in Israel and throughout the Roman Empire.
 - It is Apostate Israel, the Jews who rejected Christ who killed the prophets and would pay the price of Yahweh's vengeance.

Matthew 21:33 " Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. 34 "Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. 35 "And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. 36 "Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. 37 "Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 38 "But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' 39 "So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. 40 "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?" 41 They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons." 42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD's doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes'? 43 "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. 44 "And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder." 45 Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them. 46 But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitudes, because they took Him for a prophet.

Matthew 23:34 "Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, 35 "that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. 36 "Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. 37 " O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! 38 "See! Your house is left to you desolate; 39 "for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' "

Luke 13: 33 "Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem. 34 " O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing! 35 "See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' "

- **The world shows their contempt for God's people having died by leaving them, both spiritually and literally uncared for, unburied, dead in the street as food for animals...an accursed position to be in as one who is dead. (Exodus 13:19; Hebrews 11:22)**
- **Moreover, Apostate Jews and the Gentile world rejoice at setbacks and death within the Church**
 - Like the behavior at Herod's party (Matthew 14:3-12) the world of unbelievers rejoice and work toward the snuffing out of the witness of Jesus Christ, which is the witness of God
 - Chilton: "The price of the world's peace was the annihilation of the prophetic witness; Israel and the heathen world united in their evil gloating at the destruction of the prophets. This was especially true in the murder of Christ."
 - Luke 23: 12 That very day Pilate and Herod became friends with each other, for previously they had been at enmity with each other.
 - John 18: 5 But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!"
 - The progressive war against the Word reached its climax with the murder of Christ; this was the ultimate crime that brought on Jerusalem's destruction.
 - Moses warned of the curse that would come if Israel would reject the Prophet Jesus, and Saint Stephen quoted this prophecy and concluded:

Deut 18: 15 " The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, 16 "according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.' 17 "And the LORD said to me: 'What they have spoken is good. 18 'I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. 19 'And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.

Acts 7: 51 " You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you. 52 "Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, 53 "who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it." 54 When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with their teeth.

- **After the symbolic 3 ½ days...the 3 ½ years of Great Tribulation, the Lord exalted his elect and made a show that His Church was the victor, and that it was made up of those who gave their lives**

for their witness of Christ...the Church was made up of those regenerate ones who called upon the name of the Lord and maintained their righteous deeds and confession...they partook of the spiritual and ethical First Resurrection.

- A resuscitation of, and a breathing of life into the witnesses come from God. These words bring to light the 3 days that Jesus was in the tomb prior to the resurrection...God's plan of justification, vindication, and glorification was not considered by the plotters of evil...so they are panicking in great fear
 - 1 Cor 2: 7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, 8 which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.
 - Schlossberg says, "we are not the lords of history and do not control its outcome, but we have assurance that there is a lord of history and he controls its outcome. We need a theological interpretation of disaster, one that recognizes that God acts in such events as captivities, defeats, and crucifixions. The Bible can be interpreted as a string of God's triumphs disguised as disasters.
 - God calls the martyred witnesses to "Come up here!" The Lord vindicates those martyred saints whose blood was pooled under the altar of heaven.
 - This resurrection of the witnesses from Abel to Zechariah took place at the end of the Great Tribulation...it was the calling forth to those who paid the ultimate price to join the Lord in the heavenlies...then, the final installment of wrath would be poured out upon the apostates.
 - Paul writes of this first resurrection that took place symbolically prior to the final wrath of God being poured out on Jerusalem in AD70. I will read the entire context, including the words after the first resurrection passage to prove its first century relevance and context
 - Note the Trumpet of God, as we have read...no doubt the 7th trump about to blow. Paul is talking to THEM THEN...at THAT TIME..."the Time is at Hand."
 - Those dead in Christ and the living in Christ partook of regeneration, the First Resurrection, and those who were alive and remained were seated in heavenly places in Christ, as are we.
 - We have been resurrected to eternal life and rule with Christ now in this age. The First Resurrection is taking place now, in this age...and this means of necessity the Millennium is taking place now as well.
 - None of this negates that there will be a general and final resurrection at the end of Christ's reign, when ALL of his enemies are made a footstool for his feet.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.[e] 14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. 15 For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first; 17 then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so we shall always be with the Lord.[f] 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 5:1 But as to the times and the seasons, brethren, (c.f. Matt 24) you have no need to have anything written to you. 2 For you yourselves know well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 3 When people say, "There is peace and security," (c.f., Jews believing God was with them) then sudden destruction will come upon them as travail comes upon a woman with child, and

there will be no escape. 4 But you are not in darkness, brethren, for that day to surprise you like a thief. 5 For you are all sons of light and sons of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. 6 So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. 7 For those who sleep sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. 8 But, since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. 9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us so that whether we wake or sleep we might live with him. 11 Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

- Note the powers of heaven shaking so as to crumble the Old Covenant world and its temple by a consuming fire, and clear the path for the manifestation of Zion, the New Testament Church of Jesus Christ...as Paul wrote in Hebrews 12: 25 See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, 26 whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven." 27 Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God is a consuming fire.
- A tenth of the city fell at this time (perhaps under Cestius' siege), however, at the end of the War in AD 70, all of the city would fall.
- Just as in the days of Elijah during his discouragement, God told his prophet that (1 Kings 19:18) there were 7000 in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal; now we are told that there were 7000 people killed, a small number indicating that there were a whole lot of righteous Jews who believed in Christ and escaped to the mountains of Pella when the armies surrounded Jerusalem.

The Close of the Sixth Trumpet is the close of the Second Woe...the first being the unleashing of the demonic army against Israel, the second being the attack of the Romans under Cestius.

- It is possible to take the third woe as the fall of Jerusalem itself.
- The 3rd woe can also be taken as the consequence of the seventh trumpet
- The first and second woes correspond to the 5th and 6th Trumpet...and now we move to the blowing of the Seventh.

The Blowing of the Seventh Trumpet means God's Plan is fulfilled.

¹⁵ Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." ¹⁶ And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, ¹⁷ saying,

"We give thanks to thee, Lord God Almighty, who art and who wast,
that thou hast taken thy great power and begun to reign.

¹⁸ The nations raged, but thy wrath came,
and the time for the dead to be judged,
for rewarding thy servants, the prophets and saints,

and those who fear thy name, both small and great,
and for destroying the destroyers of the earth.”

¹⁹Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple; and there were flashes of lightning, loud noises, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail.

- With the blowing of the seventh trumpet, definitively speaking, the kingdom of this world have become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ and He will reign forever and ever.
 - This is the day when the little rock hewn from Daniel’s visionary statue would crush the entire statue beginning with its feet. The Kingdom of Christ is now the kingdom that is filling the whole earth...every other nation must unconditionally submit to Christ and His Kingdom...His Church and its ethical claims.
 - Kiss the Son, lest he be angry...the fulfillment of the Mystery of God is complete in a definitive way that will be worked out in time and on the earth progressively until FINALLY, all of Christ’s enemies are made a footstool for his feet...then comes the Second Coming of Christ as we all must believe.
 - A new temple, a New Jerusalem, the Church, the Church Militant is now unveiled to the world unencumbered by the Old Testament scaffolding that pointed toward her. There are no longer Jews and Gentiles, but Believers in Christ, Christians, and they are all ONE in Christ. There are Christians and there are unbelievers and Pagans.
 - The judgment of Jerusalem was THE SIGN of the fact that the Son of Man was reigning in heaven
 - Daniel’s Fifth Kingdom is the Kingdom of Christ, which is now universalized.
- The Elders in heaven worshipped God, the dead were vindicated, and the Temple of God in heaven was opened...the Church was vindicated and empowered now to fill the earth and make disciples of all nations beyond the Roman Empire.
- This seventh trumpet was typically blown on Tishri 1, Rosh Hashanah, the Day of Trumpets, the first day of the civil year...every one in Judaism considered this their birthday.
 - Some considered the first day of creation was on the first of Tishri
 - Now we have the birth of the New Church with this trumpet in AD70
- This Day of Trumpets with the Seventh Trumpet’s sound is the Beginning of the New World, the New Creation, the coronation-day of the King of Kings, when He is enthroned as supreme Judge over the whole world.
- The trumpet launches the choral declaration of Christ’s Lordship and the worldwide triumph of His Lordship.
 - We give Thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty...to give thanks is Eucharistia, a sacrament of praise that certainly points us to the Lord’s Supper celebration.
 - The confession of faith...You have taken your great power and have begun to reign!

- We see now that all believers have access to the Ark of God, the presence of God...entrance to his presence privileges is what being a saint is.
- The promised age of Messiah's reign had arrived and what the believers in the first century were about to witness in the Fall of Israel was not the end of the world, but the end of the Beginning.

Irenaeus, Against Heresies, The Early Christian Fathers, 83:

We receive our faith from the Church and keep it safe; and it is as it were a precious deposit stored in a fine vessel, ever renewing its vitality through the Spirit of God, and causing the renewal of the vessel in which it is stored. For this gift of God has been entrusted to the Church, As the breath of life to created man, to the end that all members by receiving it should be made alive. And herein has been bestowed upon us our means of communion with Christ, namely the Holy Spirit, the pledge of immortality, the strengthening of our faith, the ladder by which we ascend to God, the Apostle says, "God has set up in the Church Apostles, prophets, teachers and all the other means of the Spirit's working. But they have no share in this Spirit who do not join in the activity of the Church...for where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church and every kind of grace. The Spirit is truth. There those who have no share in the Spirit are not nourished and given life at their mother's breast; nor do they enjoy the sparkling fountain that issues from the body of Christ.

St. Athanasius: On the Incarnation:

When the sun has come, darkness prevails no longer; any of it that may be left anywhere is driven away. So also, now that the Divine epiphany of the Word of God has taken place, the darkness of idols prevails no more, and all parts of the world in every direction are enlightened by His teaching.

The First half of the Revelation is complete, and now from chapters 12-22 we will see a progressive development toward a climax, we will also see both a repetition of familiar concepts and a diversity in portraying them...a device often used by the prophets.

Compare:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. The Great Dragon (12:3) | the Angel from the Abyss (9:11) |
| 2. 144,000 on Mt. Zion (14:1) | the Sealed Israelites (7:4-8) |
| 3. Seven last plagues (15 and 16) | Seven Trumpets |
| 4. Babylon the Great | the Great City where our Lord was crucified (11:8) |

The Seed of the Woman in Combat with the Devil and his seed.

12 ^[a]And a great portent [sign] appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; ² she was with child and she cried out in her pangs of birth, in anguish for delivery. ³ And another portent appeared in heaven; behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems upon his heads. ⁴ His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear a child, that he might devour her child when she brought it forth; ⁵ she brought forth a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, ⁶ and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which to be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

- Now, John sees a Great Sign appearing in heaven. The word “sign” appears seven times in chapters 12-19...three are in heaven and four are on earth. St. John is telling his readers to think carefully about this sign.
- We see the Woman, not a woman, but THE WOMAN who gave birth to a ruler
 - The word, Woman, is used 19X in the Revelation prompting some to suggest that she is almost as important as the Lamb.
 - First century readers would understand the prophetic use of the Woman as that of the Church, the Assembly in the Wilderness, Israel the covenant nation, stemming back from the very first prophecy of the Woman, her Seed, and the Serpent:
 - Isaiah 26, 49-50, 54, 66; Jeremiah 3-4; Micah 4
 - The Woman here is the Church, the Old Covenant assembly preparing to give birth to Messiah, the Christ.
 - Recall the Proto-evangelicium that spoke of the woman who would give birth to the conquering one.

Genesis 3: 14 So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. 15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel." 16 To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children;

- Clothed with the Sun...Isaiah 60:1 Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. 2 For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the LORD will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you. 3 The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising. 4 " Lift up your eyes all around, and see: They all gather together, they come to you;

Your sons shall come from afar, And your daughters shall be nursed at your side.

- The moon under her feet and crown of seven stars depict a picture of glory and dominion. The virgin would be seen by the Magi, who would seek to know astronomical signs, as the constellation of Virgo.
- The Woman-Church image is a glorious vision of the Church in her purity, as the wife of God, she is the image of her husband.
 - Psalm 104:1 Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD my God, You are very great: You are clothed with honor and majesty, 2 Who cover Yourself with light as with a garment, Who stretch out the heavens like a curtain.
 - Isaiah 60:1 Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. 2 For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the LORD will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you. 3 The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising. 4 " Lift up your eyes all around, and see: They all gather together, they come to you; Your sons shall come from afar, And your daughters shall be nursed at your side. 5 Then you shall see and become radiant, And your heart shall swell with joy; Because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, The wealth of the Gentiles shall come to you.

Solomon says the Bride is lovely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners:

- Song of Solomon 6: 4 O my love, you are as beautiful as Tirzah, Lovely as Jerusalem, Awesome as an army with banners!

The Woman is seen with Child: and she is indeed a kingdom and the culmination of all of the woman of God in the Scripture who played a part in bringing forth the Messiah, most importantly, our blessed mother.

- Beginning with the Proto-evangelicum, one sees the motif in scriptures of the **woman and her seed**
- Jael and Sisera, the story in Judges 4:9, 17-22; 5:24-27 where the woman shatters the head of Israel's enemy
- Death of Abimelech in Judges 9: 52 So Abimelech came as far as the tower and fought against it; and he drew near the door of the tower to burn it with fire. 53 But a certain woman dropped an upper millstone on Abimelech's head and crushed his skull.
- Rahab saved the spies
- Esther saved the Children of Israel
- **...the definitive fulfillment of the prophecy in Genesis 3:15 is our BLESSED MARY, EVER VIRGIN:**
 - Luke 1: 51 He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. 52 He has put down the mighty from their thrones, And exalted the lowly. 53 He has filled the hungry with good things, And the rich He has sent away empty. 54 He has helped His servant Israel, In remembrance of His mercy, 55 As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and to his seed forever."
 - The sign IS NOT drawn from an ancient Babylonian myth, but from Isaiah 7: 10 Moreover the LORD spoke again to Ahaz, saying, 11 "Ask a sign for yourself from the LORD your God; ask it either in the depth or in the height above." 12 But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, nor will I test the LORD!" 13 Then he said, "Hear now, O house of David! Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary my God also? 14 "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.
 - St John is therefore announcing the birth of the male child, the warrior king foretold by Isaiah. The woman imagery of the Bible...this woman is the culmination of:
 - She is Eve, the Mother of All Living, whose seed will crush the dragon's head

- She is Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Jochebed [Num 26: 59 The name of Amram's wife was Jochebed {his father's sister} the daughter of Levi, who was born to Levi in Egypt; and to Amram she bore Aaron and Moses and their sister Miriam., Hannah, and others who gave birth to deliverers who foreshadowed the Christ...the Seed.
- The imagery cannot be simply identified with any one of these women...but with all culminating in the totality of the Church. From the protevangelicum to the flood, from the Abrahamic covenant through the slavery in Egypt, the exodus, the settling of Canaan, the Babylonian captivity, the return from exile, and the suffering under the Greeks and the Romans, Israel was laboring to give birth to the Christ, to bring in the Messianic age.
- The Woman CRIES OUT and then gives birth...we hear not only the prophesies of the Deliverer Child being cried out from the rooftops, but also that proclamation that came from John the Baptizer:

Matthew 3:1 In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, 2 and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" 3 For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.' " 4 And John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. 5 Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him 6 and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. 7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 "Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, 9 "and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. 10 "And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 11 "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12 "His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

The Kingdom was present in Jesus Christ, the Deliver-Child: Matthew 12: 28 "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.

- John 5:39 "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me...45 "Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you -- Moses, in whom you trust. 46 "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. 47 "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"
- Luke 24:25 Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26 "Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" 27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.
- Acts 3:24 "Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days. 25 "You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' 26 "To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities."
- Acts 13: 27 "For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not know Him, nor even the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath, have fulfilled them in condemning Him.

- The word St. John uses for SIGN was the term used in the ancient world to describe the constellations of the zodiac (this is NOT astrology):
 - The constellation is VIRGO, which has a crown of seven stars: Pi, Nu, Beta, Sigma, Chi, Iota, (southern hemisphere around the head of virgo), then Theta, Star 60, Delta, Star 93, Beta (the second magnitude star), Omicron (northern hemisphere around the head of Virgo).
 - 12 stars, perhaps the twelve tribes of Israel...recall Joseph's dream in Gen 37:9 where he sees his father, mother, and twelve brothers were the sun, moon, and 12 stars.
 - The 12 tribes around the tabernacle in the wilderness, the 12 churches around the Lord, the 12 churches around the woman, her crown.
 - The seventh trumpet blowing brought us to Rosh Hashannah, the first day of the 11th month as we saw in Rev 11:15...the Day of the enthronement of the King of Kings in the New Creation...Virgo is the one among the 12 zodiac signs that reigns at this time (the seventh month) in the sky. **Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews speaks of the 12 stones in the breastplate of the priests symbolize the 12 tribes and the 12 signs of the zodiac...iii.vii.7
 - Farrer, The Revelation of St. John, says, just as the "Scorpion's claws seem about to catch the Virgin." She gives birth to the Child...the King...the birth of Messiah Jesus takes place on the Day of Trumpets. (most place his birth at September of 3BC, because that's when the sun would have been placed between the neck and the knees of Virgo so as to "clothe" the virgin...the sun would have entered that phase between 27 Aug and 15 Sep.
 - The Magi would have followed this prophecy from this standpoint so as to show up in Bethlehem at the time of the birth. Astrologers today recognize that Virgo stands for the messianic birth of the Child from the virgin.
 - With the moon located under her feet, to pinpoint Messiah's birth, the sun has to be located in a manner to clothe the virgin and the moon had to be situated under the feet of the virgin...in 3BD, this occurred during a less than 2hr period on September 11 between 6:15pm (sunset) and until 7:45pm (moonset). This was also a time during which the climate would have been right for shepherds to be in the field watching their flocks by night...this wouldn't have occurred in the winter.
 - BONUS: sundown on 11 Sep in 3BC represented Tishri 1, Rosh Hashannah, the day of Trumpets. Christ was born on this day of Trumpets announcing the birth and reign of a new king...Jesus

- We turn to the adversary, the Devil, whose sights are on the Child's destruction.
 - This is, as stated in verse 9, that Serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, then enemy of God and His people
 - Daniel 2:31-45: Daniel reveals to the king the Kingdoms through which satan sought to establish an illicit empire over the world and crush the Seed, namely, Babylon, Medo-Persian, Greece, Rome, then Rome working with apostate Judea, then the Kingdom of God, which will break all other kingdoms, and then fill the earth.
 - The Devil wore the diadems of the persecuting empires...none had succeeded to snuff the Christ, and none ever will

- Why is Satan like a dragon?
 - Bible speaks of land dinosaurs (terrible lizards) like Behemoth (Job 40:15-24), focus here seems to be on dragons and sea serpents: In July 2014, scientists discover/conclude that predatory reptiles called Nothosaurs, who seemed to paddle along the ocean floor. Nothosaurs include both Nothosaurus, which could reach 13 feet in length, to the 2-ft long Iariosaurus. Creatures found in the great fossil area of the Chinese Yunnan province, shed light on the ecosystem after the end-Permian extinction, as known as the Great Dying, when about 96% of marine species and 70 percent of terrestrial animals perished. Believe caused by the Great Flood (JT).
 - Job 7: 12 Am I a sea, or a sea serpent, That You set a guard over me?

the One who dried up the sea, The waters of the great deep; That made the depths of the sea a road For the redeemed to cross over?

Speaking of the Exodus as a salvation from Leviathan...the attacker of God's people:

Psalm 74: 13 You divided the sea by Your strength; You broke the heads of the sea serpents in the waters. 14 You broke the heads of Leviathan in pieces, And gave him as food to the people inhabiting the wilderness.

- Everytime the dragon's head was crushed when God saved his people from, for example, Egypt, the Gen 3:15 protoevangelicum was being fulfilled. This happened again with Babylon, Medo-Persia, and others, now, including against this Beast of Rome and the Beast of Apostate Jerusalem.
- Isaiah 27:1 In that day the LORD with His severe sword, great and strong, Will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan that twisted serpent; And He will slay the reptile that is in the sea.
- Daniel, as well as John, sees and notes that the seeming reign of these Satan-inspired, is only for a short season.
- **The Casting out of Satan from the heavens to the earth, along with a third of his angels...this is the Dragon and his stars being cast out**
 - During the ancient days, Satan, as we see in Job, roamed the heavens, and went to and fro on the earth...he seemed free to roam, free to accuse the righteous, and was even permitted to enter the throne room of God as the sons of God, the elect angels, were giving their briefs to God. Job 1: 6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. 7 And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it."
 - Yet, during the ministry of Jesus, this domain of Satan, the prince and power of the air, seemed to change...a change that Jesus saw as he gave his disciples power over devils: Luke 10: 3 "Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves. 4 "Carry neither money bag, knapsack, nor sandals; and greet no one along the road. 5 "But whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.' 6 "And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you. 7 "And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not go from house to house. 8 "Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. 9 "And heal the sick there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' 10 "But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, 11 'The very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you.' 12 "But I say to you that it will be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city. 13 " Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14 "But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. 15 "And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades. 16 "He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me." 17 Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." 18 And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 "Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. 20 "Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

- We see the condemned angels were cast out long before and were reserved in chains until judged, perhaps others were cast out and then released during the final days of Jerusalem as the Revelation says...Note the earlier condemned angels in 2 Peter 2: 4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; Jude 6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;
 - The Dragon, Satan, sweeps away 1/3 of the angels with him...leaving 2/3 of the elect angels to bear true witness to God and all...for every demonic angel with a false testimony, there are 2 elect angels speaking the truth of all mankind before God...2 witnesses trump a lying witness to a just judge.
- **The work and goal of the Dragon is to abort Christ, to devour and kill him**
 - The conflict between Christ and Satan was announced in Genesis 3:15...and carried on from this first book of the Bible to the last.
 - Throughout redemptive history, we see Satan either trying to stop the Seed from being born, or to kill him after he was born
 - Cain kills Abel...but Seth is born
 - Satan then tried to corrupt the race of men, but Noah was righteous and bore Shem...God destroyed the rest of mankind because Satan was on a mad rage to attack the Seed.
 - The attempt to have Sarah raped by heathen kings
 - The murderous relationship between Jacob and Esau
 - In Egypt, the Dragon via Pharaoh tried to snuff the Seed by having all male children killed
 - The Seed was being carried in a shepherd boy, David, who dodged the attack of the Dragon via a giant named Goliath and an insane King's Javelin (Saul).
 - Wicked Queen Athaliah "destroyed all the seed royal of the House of Judah, yet the Seed was preserved in Joash.
 - Haman, Prime Minister of Persia, would have destroyed the Seed if it weren't for God's work through Queen Esther
 - Add to this the Children of Israel's continual temptation to sacrifice their own children...the insanity of such an idea: Lev 18:21; 2 Chron 28:3; Psalm 106:37-38
 - The battle comes to a dramatic climax when the Dragon possesses the Edomite King Herod and inspires him to slaughter all of the children 2 years old and younger to snuff the King of the Jews.
 - The Dragon then tempts the Seed Christ Jesus to sin and bow to him (Matt 4), incites the Jews to murder him (Luke 4), has a chosen disciple betray Christ (John 13:2, 27)
 - Yet, Christ overcame the temptations and the Devil...Through the CROSS, God tricked Satan into fulfilling His purpose (See 1 Cor. 2:7-8).
In wounding the Seed's heel, the Serpent's head was definitively CRUSHED!
- **Jesus, the Male Son, to be Ruler of the Nations was Born, Lived, and was Exalted to Rule the Nations with a Rod of Iron, which he does at this very moment...**an encouraging word to the terrified Christians at this time prior to the Great Tribulation...and encouraging to us as He rules the nations and is head over the Church...His mission shall not fail!
 - Christ is raised from the dead and declared "Kurios" Lord over all nations! The ascension was the goal of Christ's advent.

Psalm 2:6 "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion." 7 "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. 8 Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.' " 10 Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth. 11 Serve the

LORD with fear, And rejoice with trembling. 12 Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish in the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.

Hebrews 8:1 Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, 2 a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.

Hebrews 10: 12 But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, 13 from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.

- **The Church flees from the domain of wrath and rests in her God-given place for 3 ½ years**

- The Christians escaped from the coming judgment upon Jerusalem, for they remembered the warnings of Jesus...Also, the Jews in Jerusalem would have know this end was coming, and it was a reason they sold their lands and laid the proceeds at the apostle's feet Luke 19:43 "For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, 44 "and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

To those with an ear to hear, Jesus said:

- Luke 21:20 " But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. 21 "Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. 22 "For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. 24 "And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.
- The Church would be in exile, being protected for 1260 days, equivalent to the "time, times, and half a time," the 42 months of the war, and the 3 ½ years of verse 14. Just as Israel's flight from the Egyptian Dragon, this flight was for her protection.
 - God gave his messengers charge over her, as did God for the Children of Israel when coming out of Egypt (manna in the wilderness), and God did for Elijah when he was on the run from Jezebel, and as God did for Joseph and Mary as they engaged in their flight into Egypt away from Herod. Jesus even spoke from Psalm 91 to the Devil to overcome temptation...as should we today: Psalm 91: 11 For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways. 12 In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone. 13 You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, The young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot.
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Eusebius Quotes (325)

"But the people of the church in Jerusalem had been commanded by a revelation, vouchsafed to approved men there before the war, to leave the city and to dwell in a certain town of Perea called Pella. " (History of the Church 3:5:3)

"The whole body, however, of the church at Jerusalem, having been commanded by a divine revelation, given to men of approved piety there before the war, removed from the city, and dwelt at a certain town beyond the Jordan, called Pella. Here those that believed in Christ, having removed from Jerusalem, as if holy men had entirely abandoned the royal city itself, and the whole land of Judea; the divine justice, for their crimes against Christ and his apostles finally overtook them, totally destroying the whole generation of these evildoers from the earth. (Eusebius, 3:5.)

"After all those who believed in Christ had generally come to live in Perea, in a city called Pella of the Decapolis of which it is written in the Gospel and which is situated in the neighborhood of the region of Batanaea and Basanitis, Ebion's preaching originated here after they had moved to this place and had lived there." (Panarion 30:2)

"For when the city was about to be captured and sacked by the Romans, all the disciples were warned beforehand by an angel to remove from the city, doomed as it was to utter destruction. On migrating from it they settled at Pella, the town already indicated, across the Jordan. It is said to belong to Decapolis (de Mens. et Pond., 15).

"Now this sect of Nazarenes exists in Beroea in Coele-Syria, and in Decapolis in the district of Pella, and in Kochaba of Basanitis-- called Kohoraba in Hebrew. For thence it originated after the migration from Jerusalem of all the disciples who resided at Pella, Christ having instructed them to leave Jerusalem and retire from it on account of the impending siege. It was owing to this counsel that they went away, as I have said, to reside for a while at Pella" (Haer 29:7).

"For when all who believed in Christ had settled down about that time in Perea, the majority of the emigrants taking up their abode at Pella, a town belonging to the Decapolis mentioned in the Gospel, near Batanea and the district to Basanitis, Ebion got his excuse and opportunity. At first their abode was Kochaba, a village in the district of Carnaim, Arnem, and Astaroth, in the region of Basanitis, according to the information we have received. But I have spoken, in other connections and with regard to other heresies, of the locality of Kochaba and Arabia (Haer 30:2)... "[The Ebionites] spring for the most part from Batanea ... and Paneas, as well as from Moabitis and Cochaba in Basanitis on the other side of Adraa" (Haer 30:18).

Geneva Bible Notes

"Revelation 12:14 {18} And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her {c} place, where she is nourished for a {19} time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

(18) That is, being strengthened with divine power: and taught by oracle, she fled swiftly from the assault of the devil, and from the common destruction of Jerusalem and went into a solitary city beyond Jordan called Pella as Eusebius tells in the first chapter of the third book of his ecclesiastical history: where God had commanded her by revelation.

(c) Into the place God had prepared for her.

(19) That is, for three and a half years: so the same speech is taken in see Geneva (q) "Da 7:25". This space of time is reckoned in manner from that last and most grievous rebellion of the Jews, to the destruction of the city and temple, for their defection or falling away, began in the twelfth year of Nero, before the beginning of which many signs and predictions were shown from heaven, as Josephus wrote, lib.7, chap.12, and Hegesippus lib.5, chap.44, among which this is very memorable. In the feast of Pentecost not only a great sound and noise was heard in the Temple, but also a voice was heard by

many out of the Sanctuary which cried out to all, Let us depart from here. Now three and a half years after this defection by the Jews began, and those wonders happened, the city was taken by force, the temple overthrown, and the place forsaken by God: and the length of time John noted in this place. "

Ernest Renan Quote (1873)

'And the serpent cast out of his mouth after the woman (the Church of Jerusalem) water as a river, that he might cause her to be carried away by the stream. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the river which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon waxed wroth with the woman: (Revelation 12:15-17).

"Perhaps the Zelotes tried to drive the holy band into the Jordan, and the latter succeeded in crossing the river at a place where the water was shallow; it may be that the troop sent in pursuit went astray, and thus lost the traces of those whom it was chasing.

"The place selected by the heads of the community to serve as the principal asylum for the fugitive Church was Pella, one of the towns of Decapolis, situated near the left bank of the Jordan in an admirable position, overlooking on one side the whole plain of Ghor, and having on the other precipitous cliffs, at the foot of which runs a torrent. No wiser choice could have been made. Judaea, Idumaea, Peraea, and Galilee were in insurrection; Samaria and the coast were in a very unsettled state owing to the war. Thus Scythopolis and Pella were the nearest neutral cities to Jerusalem. Pella, by its position beyond the Jordan, must have offered much more tranquillity than Scythopolis, which had become one of the Roman strongholds. Pella was a free city like the other towns of Decapolis, but apparently it had given allegiance to Agrippa 11. To take refuge there was openly to avow horror of the revolt. The importance of the town dated from the Macedonian conquest. A colony of Alexander's veterans had taken up their quarters there, and changed the Semitic name of the place into another, which recalled their native land to the old soldiers. Pella was captured by Alexander Jannaeus, and the Greek inhabitants, who refused to be circumcised, suffered much from Jewish fanaticism. The pagan population doubtless took new root, for, in the massacres of 66, Pella was considered a Syrian town, and was once more sacked by the Jews. It was in this anti-Jewish town that the Church of Jerusalem found refuge during the horrors of the siege. Here it was at ease, and looked on its tranquil abode as a sure place, a desert prepared by God, where, far from man's tumultuous strife, the hour of the coming of Jesus might be awaited in peace. The community lived on their savings; it was believed that God himself took it upon him to feed them, and many saw in such a lot, so different from that of the Jews, a miracle predicted by the prophets. No doubt the Galilean Christians had for their part betaken themselves to the east of the Jordan and the lake into Batanaea and Gaulonitis. The territories of Agrippa 11, thus formed an adoptive country for the JudeoChristians of Palestine." (Renan, pp. 150-152).

Michael Defeats the Dragon

⁷ Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, ⁸ but they were defeated and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. ⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. ¹⁰ And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our

God. ¹¹ And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. ¹² Rejoice then, O heaven and you that dwell therein! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!"

- **SUMMARY:** God nourished those who fled the city and obeyed Christ's words. They left their lives, their souls behind, and in doing so, they saved themselves and their children...and the Church lived and grew.

On the Return to Jerusalem in AD73: "(Hadrian) found the entire city devastated and the temple of God trampled down, except for a few houses and the church of God, which was small, where the disciples, after they returned when the savior was taken up from the Mount of Olives, went up to the upper room. For there it had been built, that is, in the part of Zion that was kept from the destruction, and the blocks of houses around Zion itself, and seven synagogues, which stood alone like huts, one of which remained until the time of Maximona the bishop and Constantine the king, "like a booth in a vineyard," as it is written. Therefore Hadrian decided to build the city, but not the temple." (Koester 1989:93. - On Weights and Measures)

The War in Heaven

Revelation 12:13 And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had borne the male child. ¹⁴ But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time.^[b] ¹⁵ The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with the flood. ¹⁶ But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river which the dragon had poured from his mouth. ¹⁷ Then the dragon was angry with the woman,^[c] and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and bear testimony to Jesus. And he stood^[d] on the sand of the sea.

- This passage is interesting in that it is not a vision of what occurred after Dragon could not devour the child, but what occurred after the Child was born (vs 5) leading to what caused the woman to flee into the wilderness (vs 6).
- One should note that it is Michael and His elect Angels, the guardian of Israel, who launches this battle in the heavens...at this time representing the Woman and Her Seed.
 - Michael (Who is like God), the Warrior-Protector of the People of God, and captain of the angelic hosts.
 - Michael is portrayed in Daniel as the great Prince. Gabriel (Dan 10:12-13, 20-21) is unable to overcome the demons over principalities until Michael came to his aid.
 - Daniel saw Michael (Dan 10:5-6): 5 I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz!

- 6 His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude.
- Michael is portrayed in Daniel 12:1 as the one saving all who are written in the Book of Life. We don't see his name appear again until Jude 9, in which he is referred to as The Archangel meaning ruling angel. Many see Michael as the Angel of the Lord (Yahweh), a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ, and the Archangel, as does Christ SHOUT.
- **Michael and his angels Throw the Dragon OUT of the Heavens, and DOWN to the Land of Israel.** Michael leads the armies of heaven against Satan, the Great Dragon. There is a war in heaven, and the Serpent's opponent THROWS (CASTS) HIM OUT OF THE HEAVENS.
 - Terrible news for the apostates and sinners...if it took Michael and his angels to throw this army out of heaven, what will be the lot when this depraved and condemned angelic hosts get thrown down to Rome and Jerusalem...and their target will be the Seed and His seed...Jerusalem is doomed and anyone caught remaining in her.
- **A Loud VOICE in heaven DECLARES a chorus of praise**
 - **As a result of Christ's atoning death on the cross,** God's intervening care for Christ's Church through His elect angels, and God's Spirit applying Christ's atoning blood and His power to the saints...the tables NOW TURN to favor the Church, Zion, the saints of the most high:
 - Salvation: the message that is preached
 - Power: the manner in which the message is proclaimed
 - The Kingdom of God: that which is coming daily on earth, the rule of God in Christ
 - The Authority of Christ: the Lord and King of all...the Church proclaims His reign and terms of unconditional surrender. As St. Paul says, these times of ignorance God has overlooked, but now commands men everywhere to REPENT!
- **Christ is the Conqueror, the Victor, the Lord**
 - He proclaimed on the cross, It is finished! Satan is definitively defeated. That is why the Church now grows unhindered by Satan and any other power...the gates of Hell shall not prevail against the building of the Church. For evil, the battle is lost.
 - Jesus pictures the church NOT as a city under siege, but rather as a great army, besieging the capital city and headquarters of the enemy; and it is the forces of evil that succumb to the onslaught of the Church. Zion is the place where nations come to hear the Word of the Lord...The Church is to disciple nations, and not vice versa, beginning with each one of us I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!
 - **The Serpent of Old, the Devil (slanderer), the Liar, the Deceiver is DEFEATED**
 - Those who were in bondage to the fear of death...are loosed and set free.
 - Satan no longer floats in the heavens accusing the saints...as we shall see in Rev 20, he is bound during this reign of Christ until all of Christ's enemies are made a footstool for his feet.
 - It was Satan that stood as the inciter in the Garden of Eden, the accuser of Job, the tempter of the saints of old, and the infant New Testament Church...having them taken before courts and kings and accused of being apostates, atheists, ritual murderers, cannibals, social revolutionaries, and haters of mankind (Wilken, The

Christians as the Romans Saw Them)

- The outcome of the war in heaven is **The Kingdom of God has Arrived!**
 - The martyrs DID NOT die in vain as their blood pooled below the altar crying out “How Long”
 - They were rewarded with the Kingdom for their overcoming by virtue of:
 - The Blood of Christ
 - The faithful word of their testimony (see Hebrews 11)
 - And they DID NOT LOVE their LIFE unto death.
John 12: 23 But Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. 24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. 25 "He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

- **This Battle and Its Victory ALREADY HAS TAKEN PLACE in the FIRST CENTURY**
 - This has NOTHING to do with the Second (or Final) Coming as it is known, but with the First Coming of Christ and His Appearance to transfer the Kingdom to the believing Jews and Gentiles...the Church, culminating in the destruction of the City of Jerusalem and its Temple
 - When did Satan fall from heaven?
 - Definitely during the ministry of Jesus. Jesus was the manifested Child who cleaned the House of Israel from the demon infestation...the New Testament is rife with demons and death everywhere.
 - Jesus and His Church went on the OFFENSIVE against the enemy and WON, CONQUERED.
Hebrews 2: 14 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.
 - Recall Jesus' words in John 12 after God His Father assured Christ of victory for Christ's obedience. 27 " Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. 28 "Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." 29 Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to Him." 30 Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake. 31 "Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world [Satan implied] will be cast out. 32 "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." 33 This He said, signifying by what death He would die.
 - Even St. Paul comforted the Roman Christians with the words in Romans 16: 20 And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.
 - Matthew 28: 18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

- **The definitive defeat of Satan doesn't mean inactivity by Satan at THIS TIME.** Prior to his being bound by Christ and locked in the Abyss, he may wrack final havoc upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the nation destined to be a kingly nation, but instead has become a whore called Confusion...Babylon.
 - The seventh trumpet has blown, the third woe is upon Israel, the Land, and the people of the empire, the Sea
 - The dragon shall now come forth in the form of Two Great Beasts...like a cornered rat becomes frantically vicious, Satan's rage became increasingly vehement...his snarling rage increasing due to his frustration, impotence, and very short time period to lie and destroy.
 - The VOICE is warning that Israel and the Empire will become demonized in Satan's mad fury to hold on to the decayed, withering remnants of his illicit rule
 - Satan now only has 3 ½ years to unleash all he can before he is held in the Abyss, chained. Time is running out, and he will get his pound of flesh out of the pagans, the unbelievers, and, sad-to-say, some believers who must pay the price for their powerful testimony of the Lord of Life.

Revelation 12:13 And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had borne the male child. 14 But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time.[b] 15 The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with the flood. 16 But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river which the dragon had poured from his mouth. 17 Then the dragon was angry with the woman,[c] and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and bear testimony to Jesus. And he stood[d] on the sand of the sea.

- **The Dragon persecutes the Church PRECISELY because Christ defeated Him.** All of his attacks on the Church (the woman) are rooted in the fact that he has already been conquered...It WAS finished.
- Realizing he's been thrown to the Land of Israel, the final vicious fight begins to snuff the life the Church, the believers, the seed of the Seed of God.
- The Church, as we learned migrated quickly at the surrounding of Jerusalem to the mountains of Pella in Pyria and were nourished there by those who could not stand the Jews, but were accepting of Christians.
 - The language used is that of the theophany of God as that of an eagle who gathers her children, places them under her wings, and ensures they are feed, cared for, and protected
 - Deut 32: 9 For the LORD's portion is His people; Jacob is the place of His inheritance. 10 "He found him in a desert land And in the wasteland, a howling wilderness; He encircled him, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye. 11 As an eagle stirs up its nest, Hovers over its young, Spreading out its wings, taking them up, Carrying them on its wings, 12 So the LORD alone led him, And there was no foreign god with him. 13 "He made him ride in the heights of the earth, That he might eat the produce of the fields; He made him draw honey from the rock, And oil from the flinty rock; 14 Curds from the cattle, and milk of the flock, With fat of lambs; And rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, With the choicest wheat; And you drank wine, the blood of the grapes.

- The Church flees to the wilderness, much like Israel went into the desert after Egypt, where she was nourished in every way by God...the hidden manna promised the Church of Pergamum...Recall in Revelation 2: 17 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it." ' '
- Israel has always had the protection of the Lord, and this protection was portrayed in the psalms...that God's people would mount up with wings like eagles, walk and not be weary, and run and not faint. Ex 19:4;
- The Church would be nourished and hid from the final blazing battle for 3 ½ years, depicted as a time, times, and half a time
- The Dragon will want to come after her and destroy the Church, but it shall not be.
 - The persecution will not overcome the Church, to the contrary, those who were washed in the blood of the Lamb, maintained their testimony, and did not love their lives unto death, would receive the hidden manna and blessings, and the KINGDOM OF GO
 - Those who did not and would not follow the Lord Jesus would see their house, and the House of Old Testament Israel FALL GREATLY.

Luke 6:46 " But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say? 47 "Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: 48 "He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. 49 "But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great."

- This Pursuit of the Dragon is not unlike Pharaoh's pursuit of Moses and the Children of Israel out of Egypt
 - We see the children of God trapped by the wicked ruler at the Red Sea, but by God's grace, a sign vouchsafing Moses and saving the children...the sea was split in half and the Children of Israel went through on dry land
 - Pharaoh, on the other hand, was submerged.
 - The LAND is mentioned in this passage so as to stand for apostate Jerusalem...meaning that it wasn't the Church that was hit by the streams of violence from the dragon, on the contrary, it was Israel, the Promised Land, that took the brunt and force of the attacking armies...apostate Israel was she who drank and swallowed up that river from the Dragon.
 - Chilton "The Church is divinely protected and preserved through all of her tribulations. No matter what the Dragon does in his attempts to destroy the Church—even bringing about the Jewish Revolt, causing the Edomites and the Romans to slaughter the inhabitants of Israel—the Church escapes his power. By the time Rome attacks, the Woman is long gone; the Land of Israel swallows up the river of wrath, absorbing the blow in her place. The destruction of Jerusalem left the true city and temple unharmed, for they were safe with the woman under the shadow of the almighty.

The First Beast

- The beasts that are now introduced are presented by John only in terms of the Covenant of God and the history of redemption. The Beast is not a symbol of Rome, but of the great Roman World Power, conceived as the organ of the old serpent, the Devil, to persecute the scattered saints of God. (Milton Terry).
- The Roman Empire, coming out of the Sea of humanity and time, is not seen in terms of itself, but in terms of 1) the Land (Israel), and 2) the Church.

Revelation 13: 1 And I saw a beast[a] rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems upon its horns and a blasphemous name upon its heads. 2 And the beast that I saw was like a leopard, its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority. 3 One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth followed the beast with wonder. 4 Men worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?"

5 And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months; 6 it opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. 7 Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them.[b] And authority was given it over every tribe and people and tongue and nation, 8 and all who dwell on earth will worship it, every one whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain. 9 If any one has an ear, let him hear:

10

If any one is to be taken captive,
to captivity he goes;
if any one slays with the sword,
with the sword must he be slain.

Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.

- God, by His spirit, places John on the sand of the sea, the vantage point from where the beast of the Roman Empire seems to arise out of the Mediterranean Ocean. The beast imagery takes us to Daniel's prophecy where the legs of iron (the strength of the Roman Empire) and that of partly iron and partly clay (apostate Israel) arise, yet is shattered by the stone, the Kingdom of God that is now filling the whole earth. Daniel 2:31-35
- The sea should also be seen as the Abyss, the "Deep" of Genesis 1:2, without form and void. When men apostatize, the demons are released. The sea is a place of life prior to the fall, however, after the fall, it is a raging deep. Isaiah 57:20: 20 But the wicked are like the troubled sea, When it cannot rest, Whose waters cast up mire and dirt. 21 "There is no peace," Says my God, "for the wicked." Out of the chaotic mass of humanity emerged Rome, an entire empire founded on the premise of opposition to God.

- Also, Daniel 7:7 a dreadful beast, terrible, exceedingly strong, huge iron teeth, devouring, trampling residue with its feet and it had 10 horns. Dan 7:24-25 reveals that this little horn, a king, who arose and spoke against God most high...Nero...and he persecuted the saints of the most high, and the saints shall be given into his hand for a time, times, and ½ a time. And then, the kingdom of God comes and crushes the beast and saves the saints.
- Ten horns and seven heads, like in Rev 12:3, the 10 crowned horns (powers) of the Beast are explained in 17:12. 1 Sam 2:1, 10 reveal that Hannah's horn, her strength, is exalted; and verse 10 speaking of the King Messiah: "He will give strength to His king, And exalt the horn of His anointed."

Revelation 17: 9 "Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. 10 "There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time. 11 "And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition. 12 "The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. 13 "These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. 14 "These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful." 15 Then he said to me, "The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.

- In the historical context, the ten horns are the ten imperial provinces of Rome, whereas the seven heads are indeed the line of the Caesars, which includes Nero.
- In a parody regarding the High Priest who wore the divine Name on his forehead (Ex. 28:36-38), the beast displays on his heads blasphemous names. Caesars were considered gods, were called Augustus or Sebastos, meaning One to be worshipped, they took on the name divus (god) and even Deus and Theos (God). Temples were erected to them, especially in Asia Minor in the realm of the seven churches as we've noted.
- Nero commanded absolute obedience and erected a 120 ft. image of himself. For this reason, Paul called him the "man of sin", "the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God (2 Thess 2:3-4). This one persecuted the saints of the most high.
- The beast is like a leopard, with feet like a bear and the mouth of a lion, as Moses Stewart says, the three animals symbolize swiftness and ferocity in springing on prey, holding it, and dragging it away in preparation to satisfy its ravenous appetite. Rome embodies all of the strength of the former empires of Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece, and adds an order of magnitude of ferocious strength.
- The Empire of Rome was embodied in the man, the Emperor Nero. Both Nero and the Empire were sunk in degrading, degenerate, bestial activities. Nero, murdered members of his own family, including his pregnant wife. He was a homosexual; whose favorite aphrodisiac consisted of watching people suffer the most horrifying and disgusting tortures. Rome was the moral sewer of the world.
- One of the heads was killed, Nero, after which some thought he would arise from the dead, though he never did; however, when Nero died, it was shocking, and the Empire was reeling. The beast of

the Roman Empire did not die at that moment, but continued on until the cup of the wrath of God was filled up toward those who had apostatized in Jerusalem.

- Tiberius Caesar even formally requested that the Roman Senate officially acknowledge Christ's divinity, however, even though the Gospel was spreading throughout the Roman world (the Empire), the tides turned against Christianity and the Christ.
 - The line of the Caesars: Julius, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero, Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian.
- The Beast resembles the Dragon, and he receives a head wound (recall Genesis 3:15). Christ Kingdom would break the other kingdoms and replace them. Christ had definitively defeated the dragon, however, the defeat had to be worked out in time and on earth.
 - Seeing that the Roman Empire was still strong and alive, the peoples, especially apostate Israel, were emboldened to worship the emperors. Nero was loved all over the Roman world as the benevolent provider of welfare and entertainment. Israel declared, "we have no king but Caesar," with this cry Judaism was in the person of its representatives, guilty of denial of God, of blasphemy, of apostasy. It committed suicide.
 - The Beast blasphemes against God and against His people, who are citizens in heaven (Phil 3:10), and a part of the festal assembly, the Church of the First born, Zion...Hebrews 12:22-23.
 - The Church engaged in this "liturgy of ascension," into the throne room of God and then went forth when the Mass had ended reflecting the glory of heaven in their thoughts, words and deeds.
 - The Beast was given by God authority to act for 42 months and to make war with the saints and to overcome them. Three and a half years of Great Tribulation, which if it were not cut short, Jesus said, none of the elect would be saved. Matthew 24: 21 "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.
 - The Beast is given a powerful authority, legally by God, to test the Church, to manipulate, tempt, and persuade the world, to destroy the wicked, and to pave the way for the Kingdom of God's breaking forth. The Church Fathers make much of the fact that the Second Adam won back the world from Satan's dominion by just and lawful means, and not by force.
 - Since many of the Jews and Gentiles would not have Christ, they would be given over to the Lordship of the Beast, the Destroyer, for a time of unsettling tribulation that the world had never seen, nor would see again.
 - The unbelieving Jews in the Land would worship the Beast: The Bible speaks of worship in both an official liturgical manner, and an "everyday" practical allegiance and obedience.
 - The unbelievers, whose names have NOT been written in the Lamb's Book of Life from the foundations of the world, are marked...their allegiance, which is the thoughts of their mind and the works of their hands show forth their allegiance and obedience to the Beast. *God's heavenly Church Membership Roll has existed from the foundations of the world, eternal, and immutable. From the viewpoint of God's eternal decree, there, these circumcised covenant-breakers who worship the Beast have never been included in the Book of Life. Those who seek to excommunicate followers of the Lamb are themselves locked out*

of the Covenant instead. [Prov 16:4; Matt 11:25; Mark 4:11-12; John 12:37-40; Rom 9:13; 11:7-10; 1 Pet 2:7-8; Jude 4; Rev 17:8, 17]

- God and Devil mark their own...Believers were to be marked by God by virtue of their thoughts and works:
- Deut 6:4 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! 5 "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. 6 "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8 "You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 "You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.
- Deut 13 'And it shall be that if you earnestly obey My commandments which I command you today, to love the LORD your God and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, 14 'then I will give you the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil. 15 'And I will send grass in your fields for your livestock, that you may eat and be filled.' 16 "Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them, 17 "lest the LORD's anger be aroused against you, and He shut up the heavens so that there be no rain, and the land yield no produce, and you perish quickly from the good land which the LORD is giving you. 18 "Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 19 "You shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 20 "And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, 21 "that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, like the days of the heavens above the earth. 22 "For if you carefully keep all these commandments which I command you to do -- to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, and to hold fast to Him --
- Anyone who has an ear to hear, let him hear: probably referring to the circumcision or boring open of the ear of the home-born slave representing covenantal death and resurrection, rebirth and renewed obedience to the word of the Master.
- John as a prophet speaks words very similar to Jeremiah's words to unbelieving Jerusalem and Judea, when they had wandered astray and prior to their ultimate captivity to Babylon is 586BC...there is no remedy for Jerusalem's destruction.
- Jeremiah 14:10 Thus says the LORD to this people: "Thus they have loved to wander; They have not restrained their feet. Therefore the LORD does not accept them; He will remember their iniquity now, And punish their sins." 11 Then the LORD said to me, "Do not pray for this people, for their good. 12 "When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and grain offering, I will not accept them. But I will consume them by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence." 13 Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, the prophets say to them, 'You shall not see the sword, nor shall you have famine, but I will give you assured peace in this place.' " 14 And the LORD said to me, "The prophets prophesy lies in My name. I have not sent them, commanded them, nor spoken to them; they prophesy to you a false vision, divination, a worthless thing, and the deceit of their heart.

- Jeremiah 15:1 Then the LORD said to me, "Even if Moses and Samuel stood before Me, My mind would not be favorable toward this people. Cast them out of My sight, and let them go forth. 2 "And it shall be, if they say to you, 'Where should we go?' then you shall tell them, 'Thus says the LORD: "Such as are for death, to death; And such as are for the sword, to the sword; And such as are for the famine, to the famine; And such as are for the captivity, to the captivity." ' 3 "And I will appoint over them four forms of destruction," says the LORD: "the sword to slay, the dogs to drag, the birds of the heavens and the beasts of the earth to devour and destroy...5 " For who will have pity on you, O Jerusalem? Or who will bemoan you? Or who will turn aside to ask how you are doing? 6 You have forsaken Me," says the LORD, "You have gone backward. Therefore I will stretch out My hand against you and destroy you; I am weary of relenting! 7 And I will winnow them with a winnowing fan in the gates of the land; I will bereave them of children; I will destroy My people, Since they do not return from their ways. 8 Their widows will be increased to Me more than the sand of the seas; I will bring against them, Against the mother of the young men, A plunderer at noonday; I will cause anguish and terror to fall on them suddenly. 9 "She languishes who has borne seven; She has breathed her last; Her sun has gone down While it was yet day; She has been ashamed and confounded. And the remnant of them I will deliver to the sword Before their enemies," says the LORD.
- Confidence in God's providence and government is the essence of the patient faith to which God's people are called. Hebrews 6:11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises...19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast,
- James 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.
- James 5:10 My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. 11 Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord -- that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.
- And Jesus' words: Luke 21:16 "You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. 17 "And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. 18 "But not a hair of your head shall be lost. 19 "By your patience possess your souls.

The Second Beast

Revelation 13:11 Then I saw another beast[c] which rose out of the earth; it had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. 12 It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed. 13 It works great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in the sight of men; 14 and by the signs which it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast, it deceives those who dwell on earth, bidding them make an image for the beast which was wounded by the sword and yet lived; 15 and it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast so that the image of the beast should even speak, and to cause

those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain. 16 Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, 17 so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name. 18 This calls for wisdom: let him who has understanding reckon the number of the beast, for it is a human number, its number is six hundred and sixty-six.

- This next Beast comes from the Land...He is the false prophet, and speaks as and aligns himself with the Dragon. Jesus spoke of false prophets coming in the Last Days of Israel. This Beast speaks errors regarding God and His Christ and causes those who reject Christ to be deceived. Yet, with the definitive victory of Christ on the cross, these Beasts are doomed in the end to the Lake of Fire.
 - Rev 16: 13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.
 - Rev 19: 20 Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.
 - Jesus' words in Matthew 24: 5 "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many... 11 "Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.
 - Moses warned the Children of Israel that false prophets would arise from their midst leading many astray from Yahweh through lying signs and wonders...the key is that signs would indeed occur, but the message these false prophets would preach would be damning
 - Deuteronomy 13:1 "If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, 2 "and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods' -- which you have not known -- 'and let us serve them,' 3 "you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. 4 "You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice, and you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him. 5 "But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order to turn you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of bondage, to entice you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall put away the evil from your midst.
 - Elymus in Acts 13: 5 And when they arrived in Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had John as their assistant. 6 Now when they had gone through the island to Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name was Bar-Jesus, 7 who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. This man called for Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. 8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so his name is translated) withstood them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. 9 Then Saul, who also is called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him 10 and said, "O full of all deceit and all fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord? 11 "And now, indeed, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a time." And immediately a dark mist fell on him, and he went around seeking someone to lead him by the hand. 12 Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had been done, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

sought to bring them out to the people. 6 But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here too. 7 "Jason has harbored them, and these are all acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying there is another king -- Jesus." 8 And they troubled the crowd and the rulers of the city when they heard these things. 9 So when they had taken security from Jason and the rest, they let them go.

Acts 6:8 And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. 9 Then there arose some from what is called the Synagogue of the Freedmen (Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and those from Cilicia and Asia), disputing with Stephen. 10 And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke. 11 Then they secretly induced men to say, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." 12 And they stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes; and they came upon him, seized him, and brought him to the council. 13 They also set up false witnesses who said, "This man does not cease to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law; 14 "for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs which Moses delivered to us." 15 And all who sat in the council, looking steadfastly at him, saw his face as the face of an angel. Concluding Quote: Schaff, Volume 1, Page 862-863

- The first beast represents the Dragon, and the second beast is the agent of the first beast (says, Lenski, The Interpretation of St. John's Revelation, p. 404)
- The true prophet would stand before the face of Yahweh and speak the words of Yahweh, but the false prophet, apostate Judaism, became completely subservient to the Roman State
 - Note: Judaism IS NOT Old Testament religion AT ALL; rather, it is a rejection of the Biblical faith altogether in favor of the Pharisaical, Talmudic heresy. Like Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, the Unification Church, and other cults, it claims to be based on the Bible; but its actual authority comes from the traditions of men (In Matthew 15:2-6: Jesus condemned the Jews for exalting their traditions above the Word of God)
 - Judaism DENIES Christ because it denies Moses (John 5:45-47)
 - Orthodox Christianity ALONE is the true continuation and fulfillment of Old Testament religion...
 - The true prophets, sometimes referred to as angels due to their standing in the presence of God, take orders from Him and do His pleasure, whereas the false prophet stands before the beast, whose interpreter and servant he is. These false prophets, making up the False Prophet nationally, led Israel in the worship of the Emperor...making apostate Israel rest her hope in the Roman Empire, who had just witnessed the death blow of Caesar Nero, yet the rise of subsequent emperors to worship...for if they did not worship the beast, the Jews may not be able to get jobs, they may lose their community standing, they may lose their houses, they may not be able to buy food in the community. This counterfeit resurrection of Rome after Nero's suicide served as Israel's false testimony, their "proof" that Christ was NOT the Messiah.
- The false prophet's deception and power to lead astray from Yahweh worked mightily through the apostate Jewish leadership...and Caiaphas the High Priest, who showed his mark of the beast on his forehead and hands when he said, "We have no king but Caesar."

- These false prophets did their works before and for men and not for the glory of God
- They did these lying signs and wonders before the Romans, the Beast that gave them authority and legitimacy
- The Jewish rulers encouraged the Jewish people to make an image to the Beast, as did the people when Moses went up Mt Sinai to visit with Yahweh, as did Daniel saw in his visions about the Kingdoms upon the earth and the Kingdom of God.
- The Jews were not so much worshipping the Roman Emperor in a temple, per se, the fact is that the Jews were worshipping and serving an alien God.
- Herbert Schlossberg in his *Idols for Destruction* says, "Idolatry in its larger meaning is properly understood as any substitution of what is created for the creator. People may worship nature, money, mankind, power, history, or social and political systems instead of the God, who created them all...the relationship need not be explicitly one of cultic worship; a man can place anyone or anything at the top of his pyramid of values, and that is ultimately what he serves. The ultimacy of that service profoundly affects the way he lives.

- **The prophets of old certainly recognized the idolatry of the Jews who lived during their days**

Zechariah 13:1 "In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. 2 " It shall be in that day," says the LORD of hosts, "that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they shall no longer be remembered. I will also cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to depart from the land. 3 "It shall come to pass that if anyone still prophesies, then his father and mother who begot him will say to him, 'You shall not live, because you have spoken lies in the name of the LORD.' And his father and mother who begot him shall thrust him through when he prophesies. 4 " And it shall be in that day that every prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies; they will not wear a robe of coarse hair to deceive.

Malachi 3: 5 And I will come near you for judgment; I will be a swift witness Against sorcerers, Against adulterers, Against perjurers, Against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans, And against those who turn away an alien -- Because they do not fear Me," Says the LORD of hosts. 6 "For I am the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob. 7 Yet from the days of your fathers You have gone away from My ordinances And have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you," Says the LORD of hosts. "But you said, 'In what way shall we return?'

- The Jewish leaders and nation were to proclaim the truth of Yahweh's words to the nations: Duet 4: 5 "Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should act according to them in the land which you go to possess. 6 "Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' 7 "For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the LORD our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him? 8 "And what great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law which I set before you this day? 9 " Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And teach

them to your children and your grandchildren,

Isaiah 2:1 The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. 2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. 3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore. 5 O house of Jacob, come and let us walk In the light of the LORD.

- But Israel and now Jerusalem played the Harlot with the nations and compromised the Word of the Lord, thus deceiving the nations. They were to call men to hear the word of the Yahweh and to worship Him alone, instead, Jerusalem called men to worship and give their allegiance to the Roman Empire and to its King, its Caesar, the reigning one at the time of the writing would have been Christianity's greatest persecutor, namely Caesar Nero.
- The False Prophet gives life/breath to the Image of the Beast...the Personification of the Beast.
 - The Jewish synagogues enforced submission to the Emperor...note how John spoke of the "Synagogues of Satan" in Chapters 2 and 3, and how that some of the Christians would be thrown into prison for their testimony.
 - Austin Ferrar says that the Jews organized economic boycotts against those who refused to submit to Caesar as Lord, the leaders of the synagogues "forbidding all dealings with the excommunicate." *The Revelation of Saint John the Divine*
 - The Jews worked with Rome to ensure that everyone paid their allegiance to the King vs. the King of Kings, Jesus. The Book of the Acts of the Apostles is studded with incidents of organized and persistent Jewish persecution of the Church
 - Acts 4:1-3, 15-18; 5:17-18, 27-33, 40; 6:8-15; 7:51-60; 9:23, 29; 13:45-50; 14:2-5; 17:5-8, 13; 18:17; 20:3; 22:22-23; 23:12, 20-21; 24:27; 26:21; 28:17-29; cf. 1 Thess 2:14-16
 - St Paul ran into these wild beasts of Ephesus (1 Cor 15:32) under the plotting of the Jews (Acts 20:19). These were Paul's thorn in the flesh (2 Cor 12), about whom he prayed to the Lord for removal, and about which the Lord Jesus said that his grace was sufficient for Paul. The Jews spread traditions, legalism, and myths as opposed to proclaiming the truth as they were missioned to do. See Titus 1:14, 16)
- The "Mark of the Beast" is the Satanic parody of the "Seal of God" on the foreheads and hands of the righteous, the mark of wholehearted obedience to the Law in thought and deed, the mark of blessing and protection (Ezek 9:4-6), the sign that one is HOLY TO THE LORD (Ex 28:36).
- Israel has rejected Christ, and is "marked" with the seal of Rome's total lordship; she has given her allegiance to Caesar, and is obedient to his rule and law. Israel chose to be saved by the pagan state, and persecuted those who sought salvation in Christ.

- The False Prophet of Revelation represents none other than the leadership of apostate Israel, who rejected the Christ and worshipped the Beast.
- The Image of the Beast
 - Divine order: Father, Son (Image of the Father), Angels/Bishops, Church (Image of the Son)
 - Satanic parody: Dragon, Beast (Image of the Dragon), False Prophet, and Synagogue of Satan (Image of the Beast)
 - It is clear to John's readers that the Sea Beast is the Roman Empire
 - Now, we see the identification of the Image of the Beast in a different form
 - His number is 666, written in Greek, however, when the Hebrew value of the letters in Nero Caesar are added, one obtains 666. If the beast is to be identified with the Roman Empire, then the image must personify that Empire, and within the context of the most fierce persecution of the Church, only one emperor comes to mind within the context: NERO
 - God created man and beast on the sixth day, a slave was in bondage for 6 years before release, 6 cities of refuge to run if one slayed a man accidentally, and Goliath (defiant against God) was 6 cubits tall (1 Sam 17:4), his spear weighed 600 shekels, he was a Seed-seeking and destroying beast. So, 6 is referred to by theologians as the number of man, as opposed to 7, which is perfection, and 8, which is the number of Christ, who rose on the 8th day of the week...namely on Easter Sunday
 - In greek letters: Chi = 600; Sechs = 60; and stigma ("s" at end of word) = 6. Cross is stauros.
 - The first letter is the first letter in Christ, the last letter was the first double letter of the cross
 - Three 6s were the ultimate sign of accursed toil and imperfection (Chilton).
 - John didn't expect anyone, including Roman authorities, who may be hearing or reading The Revelation to figure the name by reading it in Greek, however, the number had to be worked out in Hebrew...reading from right to left the name: Neron Kesar: The consonants in the name add to 666. No other name fits the context of the first century readers. John is saying Nero is the Image of the Beast.
 - Ferrar: No Jew would have thought of Nero as anything other than Neron Kesar.
 - Alternate spellings of names were common in those days
 - This is the correct Hebrew form of the words
 - Is the form of the name found in the Talmud
 - Was used by the Hebrews in the 1st Century as archeology has shown
 - Some manuscripts have 616, which some say is the Latin variation of the numbered name, or which some say could have arisen over confusion of the "n" at the end of Neron's name...only adding Nero vs. Neron. The "n" in Hebrew was worth 50, therefore $666 - 60 = 616$.

The Beast is only a series of 6s, not a 7, and certainly not the number of our Lord, the 888, who conquered on the Eighth Day and is still conquering this day until all of his enemies are made a footstool for his feet.

- The Hebrew number of Daniel and his three friends who would not bow to the King was 888
- The Number of letters in Jesus in Greek is 888

Revelation 14 Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (RSVCE)

14 Then I looked, and lo, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. 2 And I heard a voice from heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder; the voice I heard was like the sound of harpers playing on their harps, 3 and they sing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who had been redeemed from the earth. 4 It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are chaste;[a][b] it is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes; these have been redeemed from mankind as first fruits for God and the Lamb, 5 and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are spotless.

- Back on top of Mount Zion, Psalm 2, where the Lord God has set His King upon the top. We also see the elect and ransomed from Israel and the nations, the 144,000 who are known by God and sealed by God. These are those who are arrayed for battle by tribes. Not necessarily those saints from Jerusalem alone, but perhaps representing a special group; the Remnant-Church of the first generation who gave their lives for their witness of Christ in word and deed.
- Further, Just as the beasts are rising from the sea and from the land, the Christ is seated as the reigning king over them both...the battle is real, but the outcome is already determined: Christ wins, the Kingdom wins, the Church wins...and He shall reign forever and ever, the Kingdom of God will fill the earth as the waters covers the seas, and all shall know Christ from the least to the greatest.
- The nations are raging against the Christ, as seen in Psalm 2, yet the King, Jesus the Christ, is in control and ruling with a rod of iron, and his saints are seated with him and ready for liturgical battle as the stage is now being set for the displacement of God's final wrath against apostate Israel.
- Mount Zion is mentioned 7X in the New Testament as the phrase for God's special place of presence with His people...it is the church, it is the Kingdom of God, it is the place where Jesus rules as King from the heavens, as he rules over all of the nations on earth...especially during this time of Great Tribulation and shaking as the Kingdom of God and the power of Christ breaks forth in the earth during the first century...as spoken to the Christians, formerly Jews, in Hebrews 12: 22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. 25 See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, 26 whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven." 27 Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God is a consuming fire.

- In the midst of the heavenly throne room, John hears a voice in the midst of that realm, the voice of the Lord that sounds like many rivers, the sound of music from harpists. While hearing the voice, John hears the voice of the Army of the Lord, the Lord's Hosts who are privileged to sing a song of the New Testament that only they were privileged to learn and to sing
- Those, who are in the heavenlies singing in the presence of the Lord Jesus and the four living creatures of the presence, are they who were redeemed from the Land of Israel, those whose souls were sealed with the seal of God
 - The SING A NEW SONG, which is a song of Christ's victory over enemies, a song of redemption, a song of gladness, and a song that depicts the victory of the Kingdom's spread all over the world...note the Psalmists and prophets have spoken this for millennia:

Psalm 33:1 Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous! For praise from the upright is beautiful. 2 Praise the LORD with the harp; Make melody to Him with an instrument of ten strings. 3 Sing to Him a new song; Play skillfully with a shout of joy. 4 For the word of the LORD is right, And all His work is done in truth. 5 He loves righteousness and justice; The earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.

Psalm 40:1 To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David. I waited patiently for the LORD; And He inclined to me, And heard my cry. 2 He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, Out of the miry clay, And set my feet upon a rock, And established my steps. 3 He has put a new song in my mouth -- Praise to our God; Many will see it and fear, And will trust in the LORD. 4 Blessed is that man who makes the LORD his trust, And does not respect the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

Psalm 96:1 Oh, sing to the LORD a new song! Sing to the LORD, all the earth. 2 Sing to the LORD, bless His name; Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. 3 Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples. 4 For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. 5 For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the LORD made the heavens.

Psalm 98:1 A Psalm. Oh, sing to the LORD a new song! For He has done marvelous things; His right hand and His holy arm have gained Him the victory. 2 The LORD has made known His salvation; His righteousness He has revealed in the sight of the nations. 3 He has remembered His mercy and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. 4 Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth; Break forth in song, rejoice, and sing praises.

Ps 144:9 I will sing a new song to You, O God; On a harp of ten strings I will sing praises to You, 10 The One who gives salvation to kings, Who delivers David His servant From the deadly sword. 11 Rescue me and deliver me from the hand of foreigners, Whose mouth speaks lying words, And whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood -- 12 That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; That our daughters may be as pillars, Sculptured in palace style; 13 That our barns may be full, Supplying all kinds of produce; That our sheep may bring forth thousands And ten thousands in our fields; 14 That our oxen may be well-laden; That there be no breaking in or going out; That there be no outcry in our streets. 15 Happy are the people who are in such a state; Happy are the people whose God is the LORD!

Psalm 149:1 Praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD a new song, And His praise in the assembly of saints. 2 Let Israel rejoice in their Maker; Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. 3 Let them praise His name with the dance; Let them sing praises to Him with the timbrel and harp. 4 For the LORD takes pleasure in His people; He will beautify the humble with salvation. 5 Let the saints be joyful in glory; Let them sing aloud on their beds. 6 Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, And a two-edged sword

in their hand, 7 To execute vengeance on the nations, And punishments on the peoples; 8 To bind their kings with chains, And their nobles with fetters of iron; 9 To execute on them the written judgment -- This honor have all His saints. Praise the LORD!

Isaiah 42:10 Sing to the LORD a new song, And His praise from the ends of the earth, You who go down to the sea, and all that is in it, You coastlands and you inhabitants of them! 11 Let the wilderness and its cities lift up their voice, The villages that Kedar inhabits. Let the inhabitants of Sela sing, Let them shout from the top of the mountains. 12 Let them give glory to the LORD, And declare His praise in the coastlands. 13 The LORD shall go forth like a mighty man; He shall stir up His zeal like a man of war. He shall cry out, yes, shout aloud; He shall prevail against His enemies. 14 " I have held My peace a long time, I have been still and restrained Myself. Now I will cry like a woman in labor, I will pant and gasp at once. 15 I will lay waste the mountains and hills, And dry up all their vegetation; I will make the rivers coastlands, And I will dry up the pools. 16 I will bring the blind by a way they did not know; I will lead them in paths they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, And crooked places straight. These things I will do for them, And not forsake them. 17 They shall be turned back, They shall be greatly ashamed, Who trust in carved images, Who say to the molded images, 'You are our gods.' 18 " Hear, you deaf; And look, you blind, that you may see. 19 Who is blind but My servant, Or deaf as My messenger whom I send? Who is blind as he who is perfect, And blind as the LORD's servant? 20 Seeing many things, but you do not observe; Opening the ears, but he does not hear." 21 The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness' sake; He will exalt the law and make it honorable. 22 But this is a people robbed and plundered; All of them are snared in holes, And they are hidden in prison houses; They are for prey, and no one delivers; For plunder, and no one says, "Restore!" 23 Who among you will give ear to this? Who will listen and hear for the time to come? 24 Who gave Jacob for plunder, and Israel to the robbers? Was it not the LORD, He against whom we have sinned? For they would not walk in His ways, Nor were they obedient to His law. 25 Therefore He has poured on him the fury of His anger And the strength of battle; It has set him on fire all around, Yet he did not know; And it burned him, Yet he did not take it to heart.

- These are called “virgins,” but the sense is not that they have not been with women, but that they have not defiled themselves with women...meaning they have not sinned, or fornicated with them, not that they have not married...they are chaste
 - Chastity here is perhaps a symbolic reference to the requirement of sexual abstinence by soldier-priests during holy war
 - Fornication and harlotry, throughout the Bible, are potent metaphors for apostasy and idolatry (Ezekiel 16:115-43)
- These follow the Lamb, the King, wherever he directs, wherever he goes.

Matthew 16: 24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 25 "For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 "For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works. 28 "Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

- The redeemed believers from among the Jews in Israel, were considered the first fruits unto God with regard to regeneration and martyrdom. These believers who gave their lives first, were as a wave offering before the Lord, a sacrifice of the first fruits of redemption
 - Like the Church in Achaia: Romans 16: 5 Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Greet my beloved Epaphroditus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia to Christ.
 - James 1:1 James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings...18 Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.
 - Milton Terry, "The confessors and martyrs of the apostolic Church, who overcame by reason of their testimony and the blood of the Lamb, are thus declared to be a first fruits, a choice selection out of the innumerable company of saints. The purpose of this Apocalypse was to give special encouragement to these virgin spirits."

Jeremiah 2:1 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 2 "Go and cry in the hearing of Jerusalem, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "I remember you, The kindness of your youth, The love of your betrothal, When you went after Me in the wilderness, In a land not sown. 3 Israel was holiness to the LORD, The firstfruits of His increase.

- Contrary to the Beast of the Land, and the Dragon, these redeemed speak no lies and are blameless.
 - Israel was to speak the truth to the nations, but deceived
Romans 2: 17 Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God,
 - 18 and know His will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, 19 and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the law. 21 You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? 22 You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23 You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? 24 For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," as it is written. 25 For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. 26 Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision? 27 And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills the law, judge you who, even with your written code and circumcision, are a transgressor of the law? 28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; 29 but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.
 - The first fruits of the Church speak and bear witness of the truth. The spirits of just men made perfect...
James 1:1 James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings...18 Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.
 - We see that saints "dwelling in heavenly places (says Terry) in Christ Jesus' are all one in spirit and triumph, no matter what physical locality they may occupy. For St. John, Zion, says Carrington, "is neither in Jerusalem nor above the clouds; it is the whole assembly of

the saints living and departed.

The Messages of the Three Angels

6 Then I saw another angel flying in midheaven, with an eternal Gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; 7 and he said with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come; and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water."

8 Another angel, a second, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon[c] the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of her impure passion."

9 And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If any one worships the beast and its image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he also shall drink the wine of God's wrath, poured unmixed into the cup of his anger, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 And the smoke of their torment goes up for ever and ever; and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name."

12 Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!"

- John now sees three angels in order proclaiming a message of **Hope** (that is, the Gospel of God), **Judgment** (Jerusalem, Babylon the Great is doomed), and **warning** (turn from alignment with the Beast and his image and takes their marks).
- Even though judgment is coming, God's merciful arm of salvation is extended as the first angel proclaims with a LOUD VOICE: FEAR GOD, and give HIM GLORY....why?...because the hour of judgment has come...
 - Jesus taught his closest disciples in Luke 12 to: "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. 2 "For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known. 3 "Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops. 4 " And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. 5 "But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!
 - The Gospel of the Kingdom of God is what's to be preached...The time is NOW, REPENT from all of your unbelief, your sins, your wayward and self-absorbed ways, your false religions, your idolatries, and believe the Christ...Hear His Words and Follow Him even unto death! Matthew 3:1 In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, 2 and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

- Mark 1:14 Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the Gospel."
- This is not a "invite Jesus into your heart and make him your personal and private savior" message...this is not a "there are many ways to get to God" message.
Jesus Christ was the Son of the Living God who although God, became man, and went about doing good and healing ALL who were oppressed of the devil. He was obedient to his father God unto death, yes, even unto the humiliating and ignoble death of being nailed to a cross. For this obedience, God justified and glorified his Son Jesus by raising him up from the dead on the third day, EASTER, and declared Him to be Lord over all, so that every knee shall bow and every tongue will confess of those on the earth above and under the earth, that Jesus the Christ, the Messiah, is Yahweh Lord of All.

There is NO OTHER NAME under heaven whereby a man can be saved other than through belief and obedience to Jesus Christ. He is the ONLY way to God.

- God has shown the way to righteousness from the days of Adam, to Abraham, to Moses, to David, to the prophets, to John the Baptizer, and to Jesus...The Seed of the Woman was always pointing to Jesus. The seed of the serpent was always trying to destroy the way to Jesus, but his attempts failed, and Jesus is Lord and the only way to God.
- Belief in the Christ before and after the Advent, which is the religion of Yahweh is the only true religion that ever was that would save mankind. In essence, Christianity was and is the only true religion.
- This Gospel of the Kingdom is targeted toward the Land...the Land of Israel, Jerusalem, and her rulers and unbelieving people. A final opportunity is given to those who "would not have Christ reign over them."
Luke 19: He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. 12 Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. 13 "So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.' 14 "But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.' 15 "And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. 16 "Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.' 17 "And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.' 18 "And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned five minas.' 19 "Likewise he said to him, 'You also be over five cities.' 20 "Then another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. 21 'For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.' 22 "And he said to him, 'Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. 23 'Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?' 24 "And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.' 25 ("But they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas.')
 26 'For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken

away from him. 27 'But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.' "

- The Gospel of the Kingdom was INDEED preached throughout the Roman world prior to the end coming as Jesus commanded and as Paul verified

Matthew 24:14 "And this Gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. (the end of Israel and Jerusalem in AD70)

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- Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.
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- The whole world was evangelized by the faithful
- Romans 1:8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.
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- Rom 10:18 But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed: "Their sound has gone out to all the earth, And their words to the ends of the world."
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- Col 1:3 We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, 4 since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints; 5 because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the Gospel, 6 which has come to you, as it has also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as it is also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth;... 21 And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled 22 in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight -- 23 if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the Gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.
- A Second Angel makes the determined proclamation that Babylon the Great is Fallen.
 - First time the term is presented 287 times in the Bible, 276 times in the Old Testament, and 11 times in the New Testament with 6 of those being in Revelation, namely Babylon the Great, and 1 time outside of addressing the Babylonian captivity in the Gospels and Acts. 1 Peter 5: 13 She who is in Babylon, elect together with you, greets you; and so does Mark my son.
 - Most say traditionally that this is a code name for the city of Rome where Peter was crucified and perhaps had lived and served as bishop for some time. However, other scholars, as well as I, say that the evidence points toward Babylon being a representation of Jerusalem, where the Lord was crucified.
 - Babylon sacked Jerusalem in 586 BC under King Nebuchadnezzar, was known for its brutality, defiance against God, and, from the word "babel" it had a connotation of confusion, based on the Tower of Babel in Gen. 11.

- Peter sent greetings from Mark and Silas (Silvanus) both of whom lived in Jerusalem. 1 Peter 5:12 By Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God in which you stand. 13 She who is in Babylon, elect together with you, greets you; and so does Mark my son.

- Acts 12:12 So, when he had considered this, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying.

- Note the references to the fact Peter was ministering in Jerusalem: Acts 12:1 Now about that time Herod the king stretched out his hand to harass some from the church. 2 Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword. 3 And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was during the Days of Unleavened Bread.

- Gal. 1:18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days.

- Gal 2: when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, 16 to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. 18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. 19 But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother. 20 (Now concerning the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie.) 21 Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. 22 And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which were in Christ. 23 But they were hearing only, "He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy." 24 And they glorified God in me.

- NKJ Galatians 2:1 Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me. 2 And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain. 3 Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. 4 And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), 5 to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you. 6 But from those who seemed to be something -- whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man -- for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me. 7 But on the contrary, when they saw that the Gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the Gospel for the circumcised was to Peter 8 (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), 9 and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we

should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

- Jerusalem was certainly the confusing False Prophet to the world and was brutal toward the Lord and to His saints. Peter lived and exercised his ministry in Jerusalem.
- In Revelation 17 and 18, Babylon is referred to as Sodom and Egypt. The prophets have used both names to tag Israel when she had apostatized. Sodom referring to her playing the harlot and fornicating with the nations at the expense of her relationship with her betrothed, the Lord himself. Egypt referring to a place of sin and bondage. Samaria in Israel was also referred to as unfaithful Sodom in Ezekiel 16.
 - Note in Revelation 8 John spoke of the prophets in the city called Sodom and Egypt: 8 And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.
 - Note how the prophet speaks of Babylon the Great, which will add to our case that this is apostate Jerusalem, her leaders and her people.
 - Revelation 17:1 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, 2 "with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication." 3 So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. 5 And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. 6 I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.
 - Revelation 18:1 After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. 2 And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! 3 "For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury." 4 And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. 5 "For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities...21 Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore. 22 "The sound of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore. No craftsman of any craft shall be found in you anymore, and the sound of a millstone shall not be heard in you anymore. 23 "The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore, and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore. For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were

deceived. 24 "And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth."

- Jerusalem is Babylon the Great, for she has become a replica of the proud, idolatrous, persecuting oppressor of God's people.
 - The Harlot City has made ALL the nations drink of the wine of the heat (wrath) of her fornication.
 - Israel abused her privilege of being a guide to the blind and a leader of the blind from darkness to light, to being a nation that inflames men's passions to league with Rome and the Caesars, her kings.
 - Jerusalem was to be Lady Wisdom, but instead became Madam Folly.

Proverbs 9:1 Wisdom has built her house, She has hewn out her seven pillars; 2 She has slaughtered her meat, She has mixed her wine, She has also furnished her table. 3 She has sent out her maidens, She cries out from the highest places of the city, 4 "Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!" As for him who lacks understanding, she says to him, 5 "Come, eat of my bread And drink of the wine I have mixed. 6 Forsake foolishness and live, And go in the way of understanding....13 A foolish woman is clamorous; She is simple, and knows nothing. 14 For she sits at the door of her house, On a seat by the highest places of the city, 15 To call to those who pass by, Who go straight on their way: 16 "Whoever is simple, let him turn in here"; And as for him who lacks understanding, she says to him, 17 "Stolen water is sweet, And bread eaten in secret is pleasant." 18 But he does not know that the dead are there, That her guests are in the depths of hell.

- Prior to it all going down, the second angel speaks that apostate Jerusalem is doomed.
- The third angel says with a final voice and warning that those who worship the beast, or align in allegiance with him and its image, with Rome and its Caesar, will receive the unhindered and merciless wrath of God.
 - There is the sanction of torment and banishment from God forever.
 - The officers of the Church, the angels, the bishops must preach the unadulterated Lordship of Jesus Christ over all...and do so without reserve.
 - The Church must warn all not to turn back to apostate Judaism or Jerusalem (the Land Beast), and must certainly warn all not to give their thoughts, words, and deeds to the idolatrous State of Rome and to its murderous Emperor.
- Those who refuse the message of the Church to turn away from allegiance to the Beast will drink of God's cup of wrath poured full strength on the sinners. The point is clear, you cannot drink of the cup of the Empire and its Emperor without drinking the cup of God's wrath.
- God speaks in the prophets of giving his cup of inflammation or indignation to nations with whom he is ready to judge (e.g., Isaiah 51:17). This is the proverbial wine that is given to those condemned to death so as to dull the pain of the execution. Jesus refused the wine mingled with myrrh so as to accept the whole cup unmixed. John is saying that Jerusalem, Babylon the Great, will be reeling with intoxication prior to receiving the executioner's blow of death.
- The wrath of God manifesting in fire will consume Jerusalem, and the smoke of her destruction will ascend forever and ever. And those perishing in the city in their sins will forever be tormented from

the presence of the Lord never to be consoled. They are tormented day and night forever, just as forever the four living creatures shout to God in adoration Day and Night.

- The imagery here should remind the hearers/readers of Sodom and Gomorrah whose fire ascended before God after the destruction of judgment for their sins...Gen 19:28
 - Genesis 19: 24 Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens. 25 So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.
- The saints must have faith in God through Christ and persevere in this faith until death to receive the promised Kingdom; however, now that the end of the ages have come upon this first century generation, those who die in the Lord from this time on, who have kept the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, shall never die again.
The wicked will have no rest forever; however, the righteous and followers of the Lamb, shall have peace and blessing forever...God will not be mocked. What a man sows, that will he reap.
- The saints of the most High God must persevere in their faith under hardship...this has been a clarion call to the church of God's people since Yahweh first called them to himself.
 - See Hebrews 11 the names of God's people who inherited the promises through faith and patience
 - See the resolve of David on this issue
Psalm 37:1 A Psalm of David. Do not fret because of evildoers, Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity. 2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, And wither as the green herb. 3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. 4 Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart. 5 Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass. 6 He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday. 7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass. 8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret -- it only causes harm. 9 For evildoers shall be cut off; But those who wait on the LORD, They shall inherit the earth. 10 For yet a little while and the wicked shall be no more; Indeed, you will look carefully for his place, But it shall be no more. 11 But the meek shall inherit the earth, And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. 12 The wicked plots against the just, And gnashes at him with his teeth. 13 The Lord laughs at him, For He sees that his day is coming. 14 The wicked have drawn the sword And have bent their bow, To cast down the poor and needy, To slay those who are of upright conduct. 15 Their sword shall enter their own heart, And their bows shall be broken. 16 A little that a righteous man has Is better than the riches of many wicked. 17 For the arms of the wicked shall be broken, But the LORD upholds the righteous. 18 The LORD knows the days of the upright, And their inheritance shall be forever. 19 They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, And in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. 20 But the wicked shall perish; And the enemies of the LORD, Like the splendor of the meadows, shall vanish. Into smoke they shall vanish away. 21 The wicked borrows and does not repay, But the righteous shows mercy and gives. 22 For those blessed by Him shall inherit the earth, But those cursed by Him shall be cut off. 23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, And He delights in his way. 24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; For the LORD upholds him with His hand. 25 I have been young, and now am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread. 26 He is ever merciful, and lends; And his descendants are blessed. 27 Depart from evil, and do good; And dwell forevermore. 28 For the LORD loves justice, And

does not forsake His saints; They are preserved forever, But the descendants of the wicked shall be cut off. 29 The righteous shall inherit the land, And dwell in it forever. 30 The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom, And his tongue talks of justice. 31 The law of his God is in his heart; None of his steps shall slide. 32 The wicked watches the righteous, And seeks to slay him. 33 The LORD will not leave him in his hand, Nor condemn him when he is judged. 34 Wait on the LORD, And keep His way, And He shall exalt you to inherit the land; When the wicked are cut off, you shall see it. 35 I have seen the wicked in great power, And spreading himself like a native green tree. 36 Yet he passed away, and behold, he was no more; Indeed I sought him, but he could not be found. 37 Mark the blameless man, and observe the upright; For the future of that man is peace. 38 But the transgressors shall be destroyed together; The future of the wicked shall be cut off. 39 But the salvation of the righteous is from the LORD; He is their strength in the time of trouble. 40 And the LORD shall help them and deliver them; He shall deliver them from the wicked, And save them, Because they trust in Him.

- See the reiteration of St. James, who ministered in Babylon the Great regarding perseverance, here translated “patience.” James 5: 7 Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. 8 You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. 9 Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! 10 My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. 11 Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord -- that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.
- The patience of the saints is bound in the fact that they “keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus”
 - Christianity demands adherence to the faith delivered to the saints (Jude 3), and it demands obedient and faithful perseverance to that faith of Christ
- **Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!**
 - The afterlife abode of the Old Testament faithful (the Bosom of Abraham-Luke 16:22), the Limbus Patrum, has been unlocked and freed (1 Peter 3:19; 4:6).
 - Christ has made DEATH the entrance to communion in glory with Christ and the departed saints
 - John Donne’s Death be not Proud: One short sleepe past, wee wake eternally. And death shall be no more; death, thou shalt die
 - Death was destroyed by Christ...Hebrews 2: 14 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.
 - READ: St Athanasius, On the Incarnation, regarding Christians despising the fear of death and how they trampled it underfoot. And Eusebius, and St. Ignatius in Chilton, Vengeance, pp 367-368

Alexander Schmemmann: For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy: “Christianity is not a reconciliation of death. It is the revelation of death, and it reveals death because it is a revelation of Life.

Christ is this Life. And only if Christ is Life is death what Christianity proclaims it to be, namely the enemy to be destroyed, and not a “mystery” to be explained.”

- Finally, we see a contrast between the followers of the Lamb and the followers and worshippers of the Beast. Those who follow the Lamb indeed ‘rest from their labors and their deeds follow them into eternal rest,’ HOWEVER, for the wicked, they find themselves in torments day and night forever.

Reaping the Earth’s Harvest

14 Then I looked, and lo, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand. 15 And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat upon the cloud, “Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe.” 16 So he who sat upon the cloud swung his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.

17 And another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. 18 Then another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has power over fire, and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, “Put in your sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe.” 19 So the angel swung his sickle on the earth and gathered the vintage of the earth, and threw it into the great wine press of the wrath of God; 20 and the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the wine press, as high as a horse’s bridle, for one thousand six hundred stadia.

- We see the picture now of the sign of the Son of Man in heaven...Christ’s appearing, His active presence, His Parousia, in the Clouds as he reaps those destined for the wrath of God
- We’ve seen the three angels over the land proclaim judgments, and we will see three more coming with chalices of judgment shortly in the next chapters.
- We see Christ Jesus wrapped in the cloud of glory in his role as universal king as he is ready to exercise his deserved dominion... as noted in the prophet Daniel
Daniel 7: 13 " I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. 14 Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed. 15 " I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. 16 "I came near to one of those who stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: 17 'Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth. 18 'But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.'
- When the temporary dominion of the Beast is accomplished, then the Kingdom of God breaks forth in the earth in VICTORY, and the saints, the Christians, the Church possess that Kingdom of God, which has been growing and conquering ever since that first century judgment against Jerusalem

and the Roman Empire portrayed in our passage.

- Let the Beasts do their preordained worst, but the Kingdom of God and God's Christ are definitively victorious and will conquer progressively and FINALLY.
 - The Son of Man reigns NOW and was reigning at the time of the prophecy.
 - John does NOT show Jesus "coming in the clouds," but reveals him already seated on the cloud, and installed on his heavenly throne.
 - Hence, Jesus' words in Matthew 24: 29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Psalm 2:1 Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, 3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." 4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The LORD shall hold them in derision. 5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: 6 "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion."

- Another angel comes forth from the presence of God and gives the go-ahead to reap the HARVEST of God.
 - The Church, which were really Christian synagogues in the beginning, with synagogue meaning to gather together, was awaiting the disinheritance of apostate Israel, the Synagogue of Satan. At the same time, the Church was awaiting its gathering together unto the Lord to be with him and live with him in peace forever (as seen in verses 14-16)...not to be taken to heaven away from the Great Tribulation, but to be gathered in a victory gathering to build and live upon the earth in blessed peace...as the saints inherit the earth for Christ's dominion.

2 Thessalonians 2:1 Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, 2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. 3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. 5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?
 - This first angel is telling the Christ to reap the harvest that has been evangelized, and who has believed and persevered in the faith of Christ—reap them now and gather them to safety and salvation. Those living were gathered away from Jerusalem, as we've learned earlier, and all those who were reaped lived, and even if many of them died for the faith, they would be reaped to die no more in heaven.

- This reaping would have made the sowers and reapers glad, as Jesus said in John 4: 35 "Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! 36 "And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. 37 "For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.'
- **The Land is RIPE. The King, the Lord is now calling his apostolic messengers to gather in his elect.**
 - The harvest of blessing is what's in view here, for the Lord is gathering in His elect as the first fruits of the Kingdom of God. This is the picture of Pentecost, the Feast of Weeks and Feast of First Fruits in which the first fruits of the harvest are harvested prior to the final harvest.
 - This harvest of first fruits was to be offered to the Lord.
 - This is a first fruits harvest of all of the saints up to the time of the casting out of apostate Israel in AD70...the rest of the harvest will be at the end of this age, the reign of Christ, which will take place when all of Christ's enemies are made a footstool for his feet
- The angel reaped that harvest of the righteous at the end of the last days of Israel, and those saints who persevered and who were marked with the mark of God, are still with our Lord this day in the heavens
- Now, another angel comes to reap a harvest of the grapes of wrath that was manifested, not in their salvation like that of the elect, but in their death wherein the blood flowed wide and deep during the final wrath of God on the apostates and their accomplices.
- We see again the warring factions: the Seed of the Woman and the Seed of the Serpent as we have seen throughout redemptive history
 - Abraham and Sarah and Isaac (son of promise) against Hagar and Ishmael (Gal 4:23-31)
 - Jerusalem of Old
 - The capital city of apostasy, a persecutor, and now, an excommunicated unbelieving people
 - New Jerusalem from above
 - The Church of Jesus Christ, the legitimate heir of the promise, born of the Spirit of God, are the true children of the heavenly Jerusalem
 - Therefore, Cast out the Bondwoman and her son, for she shall not have an inheritance with the son of promise.
- Now, the harvest of the apostates, the persecutors, and the wicked takes place...gathered by the angel with a sharp sickle...another angel appears who has power over fire, and he says to the angle with the sickle to reap, for God's wrath is filled to the brim.
 - The imprecatory prayers of the saints praying "how long, Oh Lord, till you avenge our blood," the last of the martyrs' blood being spilled in Jerusalem, the faith of the saints to say to this mountain of apostate Israel, "be removed and be thou cast into the sea," now are all answered by God's causing these two angels to begin the end
 - The angel who has power over fire comes from the heavenly Altar.

- Note the judgment of nations prior to Judah's captivity to Babylon:
 Joel 3: 1 "For behold, in those days and at that time, When I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem, 2 I will also gather all nations, And bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; And I will enter into judgment with them there On account of My people, My heritage Israel, Whom they have scattered among the nations; They have also divided up My land. 3 They have cast lots for My people, Have given a boy as payment for a harlot, And sold a girl for wine, that they may drink. 4 " Indeed, what have you to do with Me, O Tyre and Sidon, and all the coasts of Philistia? Will you retaliate against Me? But if you retaliate against Me, Swiftly and speedily I will return your retaliation upon your own head; 5 Because you have taken My silver and My gold, And have carried into your temples My prized possessions. 6 Also the people of Judah and the people of Jerusalem You have sold to the Greeks, That you may remove them far from their borders. 7 "Behold, I will raise them Out of the place to which you have sold them, And will return your retaliation upon your own head. 8 I will sell your sons and your daughters Into the hand of the people of Judah, And they will sell them to the Sabeans, To a people far off; For the LORD has spoken." 9 Proclaim this among the nations: "Prepare for war! Wake up the mighty men, Let all the men of war draw near, Let them come up. 10 Beat your plowshares into swords And your pruning hooks into spears; Let the weak say, 'I am strong.' " 11 Assemble and come, all you nations, And gather together all around. Cause Your mighty ones to go down there, O LORD. 12 "Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; For there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. 13 Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; For the winepress is full, The vats overflow -- For their wickedness is great." 14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. 15 The sun and moon will grow dark, And the stars will diminish their brightness. 16 The LORD also will roar from Zion, And utter His voice from Jerusalem; The heavens and earth will shake; But the LORD will be a shelter for His people, And the strength of the children of Israel. 17 "So you shall know that I am the LORD your God, Dwelling in Zion My holy mountain. Then Jerusalem shall be holy, And no aliens shall ever pass through her again." 18 And it will come to pass in that day That the mountains shall drip with new wine, The hills shall flow with milk, And all the brooks of Judah shall be flooded with water; A fountain shall flow from the house of the LORD And water the Valley of Acacias. 19 "Egypt shall be a desolation, And Edom a desolate wilderness, Because of violence against the people of Judah, For they have shed innocent blood in their land. 20 But Judah shall abide forever, And Jerusalem from generation to generation. 21 "For I will acquit them of the guilt of bloodshed, whom I had not acquitted; For the LORD dwells in Zion."

- **God's vineyard, apostate Israel is ripe for the harvest of judgment.**

- Isaiah prophesied about this event:

Isaiah 5:1 Now let me sing to my Well-beloved A song of my Beloved regarding His vineyard: My Well-beloved has a vineyard On a very fruitful hill. 2 He dug it up and cleared out its stones, And planted it with the choicest vine. He built a tower in its midst, And also made a winepress in it; So He expected it to bring forth good grapes, But it brought forth wild grapes. 3 " And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, Judge, please, between Me and My vineyard. 4 What more could have been done to My vineyard That I have not done in it? Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, Did it bring forth wild grapes? 5 And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. 6 I will lay it waste; It shall not be pruned or dug, But there shall come up briars and thorns. I will also command the clouds That they rain no rain on it." 7 For the vineyard of the

LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, And the men of Judah are His pleasant plant. He looked for justice, but behold, oppression; For righteousness, but behold, a cry for help.

- Jesus spoke of it: Luke 13: 6 He also spoke this parable: "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. 7 "Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, 'Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?' 8 "But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. 9 'And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.' "
- And now the vineyard, which did not bear the godly expected fruit, is thrown into the winepress of God to be destroyed forever.
- This is the language used by the prophets to describe only one particular nation and people--- fruitless and apostatized Israel and Jerusalem and her unbelieving people.
 - This is what John the Baptizer and Jesus spoke of when they said that the "ax is now laid to the base of the tree."
 - Isaiah spoke again the words of Yahweh against his beloved: Isaiah 63:1 Who is this who comes from Edom, With dyed garments from Bozrah, This One who is glorious in His apparel, Traveling in the greatness of His strength? -- "I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save." 2 Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like one who treads in the winepress? 3 " I have trodden the winepress alone, And from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, And trampled them in My fury; Their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, And I have stained all My robes. 4 For the day of vengeance is in My heart, And the year of My redeemed has come. 5 I looked, but there was no one to help, And I wondered That there was no one to uphold; Therefore My own arm brought salvation for Me; And My own fury, it sustained Me. 6 I have trodden down the peoples in My anger, Made them drunk in My fury, And brought down their strength to the earth."
- The bloodshed was for 1600 stadia, which is slightly more than the length of Palestine.
 - The whole Land of Israel is thus represented as overflowing with blood in the coming nationwide judgment...the bloodshed becomes a great Red Sea reaching up to the horses bridles...which was certainly what one could think was happening when seeing all of the bloodshed, the 500 crucifixions per day, and the slaughter in and around Jerusalem.
 - The bloodshed covers the land during this great harvest of judgment...yet the bloodshed is "outside the city" as "Galilee was all over filled with fire and blood" as the troops of Vespasian and Titus overran the country. The whole land, except for Jerusalem was covered with death and devastation. (Jewish War, Book iii).

The stadion, a Greek unit of measurement, was about 607 feet in length, approximately the length of a furlong.

- In AD70, the Vine of Israel is cut down...the fig tree of Israel is dug up and tossed out...excommunicated and trampled in the winepress of God...but this destruction is the culmination of a process which has lasted over 40 years; it began outside the city, when one whom they despised, namely Jesus, was rejected, and who trod the winepress alone, and of

the people there was none with Him. It was in that moment that Jerusalem fell.
(Carrington).

Revelation 15 Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (RSVCE)

Now, St. John presents the Angels with the Seven Last Plagues

15 1 Then I saw another portent in heaven, great and wonderful, seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is ended. 2 And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands. 3 And they sing the song of Moses,[a] the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying,

“Great and wonderful are thy deeds,
O Lord God the Almighty!
Just and true are thy ways,
O King of the ages![b]

4 Who shall not fear and glorify thy name, O Lord?
For thou alone art holy.
All nations shall come and worship thee,
for thy judgments have been revealed.”

5 After this I looked, and the temple of the tent of witness in heaven was opened, 6 and out of the temple came the seven angels with the seven plagues, robed in pure bright linen, and their breasts girded with golden girdles. 7 And one of the four living creatures gave the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives for ever and ever; 8 and the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were ended.

- As we now see the Revelation’s final section between chapters 15-22, and we will see Jezebel, the False Bride (noted in the discourse earlier regarding Thyatira), the economically wealthy, yet spiritually wretched church (Judaism and Jerusalem), which Christ is about to cast out and spit out of his mouth.
 - We will see the wrath of God poured out of chalices upon the apostate nation who played the whore and confused and placed a stumbling block before the world.
 - We’re about ready to see the continuity of the Covenant in the form of the New Covenant, and the DISCONTINUITY and the DISINHERITENCE of the ILLIGITIMATE MEMBERS.
 - We must take Covenant seriously, for it defines the relationship we have with God, which is through Christ alone.

Deuteronomy 32:1 "Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak; And hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.
2 Let my teaching drop as the rain, My speech distill as the dew, As raindrops on the tender herb, And as showers on the grass. 3 For I proclaim the name of the LORD: Ascribe greatness to our God. 4 He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He. 5 "They have corrupted themselves; They are not His children, Because of their

blemish: A perverse and crooked generation. 6 Do you thus deal with the LORD, O foolish and unwise people? Is He not your Father, who bought you? Has He not made you and established you? 7 "Remember the days of old, Consider the years of many generations. Ask your father, and he will show you; Your elders, and they will tell you: 8 When the Most High divided their inheritance to the nations, When He separated the sons of Adam, He set the boundaries of the peoples According to the number of the children of Israel. 9 For the LORD's portion is His people; Jacob is the place of His inheritance. 10 "He found him in a desert land And in the wasteland, a howling wilderness; He encircled him, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye. 11 As an eagle stirs up its nest, Hovers over its young, Spreading out its wings, taking them up, Carrying them on its wings, 12 So the LORD alone led him, And there was no foreign god with him. 13 "He made him ride in the heights of the earth, That he might eat the produce of the fields; He made him draw honey from the rock, And oil from the flinty rock; 14 Curds from the cattle, and milk of the flock, With fat of lambs; And rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, With the choicest wheat; And you drank wine, the blood of the grapes. 15 " But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked; You grew fat, you grew thick, You are obese! Then he forsook God who made him, And scornfully esteemed the Rock of his salvation. 16 They provoked Him to jealousy with foreign gods; With abominations they provoked Him to anger. 17 They sacrificed to demons, not to God, To gods they did not know, To new gods, new arrivals That your fathers did not fear. 18 Of the Rock who begot you, you are unmindful, And have forgotten the God who fathered you. 19 " And when the LORD saw it, He spurned them, Because of the provocation of His sons and His daughters. 20 And He said: 'I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end will be, For they are a perverse generation, Children in whom is no faith. 21 They have provoked Me to jealousy by what is not God; They have moved Me to anger by their foolish idols. But I will provoke them to jealousy by those who are not a nation; I will move them to anger by a foolish nation. 22 For a fire is kindled by my anger, And shall burn to the lowest hell; It shall consume the earth with her increase, And set on fire the foundations of the mountains. 23 ' I will heap disasters on them; I will spend My arrows on them. 24 They shall be wasted with hunger, Devoured by pestilence and bitter destruction; I will also send against them the teeth of beasts, With the poison of serpents of the dust. 25 The sword shall destroy outside; There shall be terror within For the young man and virgin, The nursing child with the man of gray hairs. 26 I would have said, "I will dash them in pieces, I will make the memory of them to cease from among men," 27 Had I not feared the wrath of the enemy, Lest their adversaries should misunderstand, Lest they should say, "Our hand is high; And it is not the LORD who has done all this." ' 28 " For they are a nation void of counsel, Nor is there any understanding in them. 29 Oh, that they were wise, that they understood this, That they would consider their latter end! 30 How could one chase a thousand, And two put ten thousand to flight, Unless their Rock had sold them, And the LORD had surrendered them? 31 For their rock is not like our Rock, Even our enemies themselves being judges. 32 For their vine is of the vine of Sodom And of the fields of Gomorrah; Their grapes are grapes of gall, Their clusters are bitter. 33 Their wine is the poison of serpents, And the cruel venom of cobras. 34 ' Is this not laid up in store with Me, Sealed up among My treasures? 35 Vengeance is Mine, and recompense; Their foot shall slip in due time; For the day of their calamity is at hand, And the things to come hasten upon them.' 36 "For the LORD will judge His people And have compassion on His servants, When He sees that their power is gone, And there is no one remaining, bond or free. 37 He will say: 'Where are their gods, The rock in which they sought refuge? 38 Who ate the fat of their sacrifices, And drank the wine of their drink offering? Let them rise and help you, And be your refuge. 39 'Now see that I, even I, am He, And there is no God besides Me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; Nor is there any who can deliver from My hand. 40 For I raise My hand to heaven, And say, "As I live forever, 41 If I whet My glittering sword, And My hand takes hold on judgment, I will render vengeance to My enemies, And repay those who hate Me. 42 I will make My arrows drunk with blood, And My sword shall devour flesh, With the blood of the slain and the captives, From the heads of the leaders of the enemy." ' 43 "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people; For He will

avenge the blood of His servants, And render vengeance to His adversaries; He will provide atonement for His land and His people." 44 So Moses came with Joshua the son of Nun and spoke all the words of this song in the hearing of the people. 45 Moses finished speaking all these words to all Israel, 46 and He said to them: "Set your hearts on all the words which I testify among you today, which you shall command your children to be careful to observe -- all the words of this law. 47 "For it is not a futile thing for you, because it is your life, and by this word you shall prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to possess."

- During this outpoured wrath, the end is near, and the judgment is about to be consummated. The temple is opened, and from the throne room comes the Chalice-judgments
 - The lawsuit is against the Harlot, Apostate Jerusalem, the Great City, for she has accosted the Bride, the Church of Christ.
 - God guarantees the covenantal succession through the New Testament Church
 - And, unlike the prophecies of doom above in Deut 32 about Israel, the New Israel of God, the New Jerusalem, the Church of Jesus Christ, will be exalted and eventually will indeed be the dread of her enemies, as opposed to the attacked one as she is during the first century Great Tribulation. Note the words of Moses in Deut 33.

Deut 33: 26 "There is no one like the God of Jeshurun, Who rides the heavens to help you, And in His excellency on the clouds. 27 The eternal God is your refuge, And underneath are the everlasting arms; He will thrust out the enemy from before you, And will say, 'Destroy!' 28 Then Israel shall dwell in safety, The fountain of Jacob alone, In a land of grain and new wine; His heavens shall also drop dew. 29 Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD, The shield of your help And the sword of your majesty! Your enemies shall submit to you, And you shall tread down their high places."

- Chilton: "Christians, as "bond-servants" like Moses are not inferior event to angels in their sanctuary privileges, but have complete access to God, exercising the same outspoken freedom of speech (Heb 10:19) that he enjoyed. Before God's heavenly Throne "His bond-servants shall serve Him, and they shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads" (Rev 22:4).
- NOW, another sign in heaven is revealed to John that could be quite terrifying, namely Seven Angels with the last seven plagues...terrifying because with these last plagues, the Wrath of God is Finished.
 - These final acts of judgment initiate the climax of the Book
 - These are not the final plagues of the entire world and universe, but as they are specifically scoped toward this Revelation of Jesus Christ
 - Abolishing the Old World, the Old Heaven and Earth, the Old Testament economy
- The beautiful and awesome blue Sea of Glass, is now mixed with FIRE
 - Reminding us of the blood in the Red Sea, or the blood running up to the horses bridles of the last Chapter...wrath and blood restitution
 - We now note the estate of the righteous and that of the wicked
- The righteous are at rest beside the Sea with harps in their hands, at peace, singing the song of deliverance...the Song of Moses, and the Song of the Lamb:
 - These are the OVERCOMERS who held firm to the faith and to the Christ to the end

- These Overcame by the blood of the Lamb, the word of their true testimony, and they did not love their lives unto death
- These Overcame the Beast of the Sea, the Land and the False Prophet without turning back from Christ or fainting. They persevered in the faith of Christ.
- The Song of Moses was sung by the Children of Israel after passing through the Red Sea, which Moses referred to as a “baptism” of God’s people (1 Cor 10:1-2).
- This Great Tribulation was indeed a baptism of fire for the Church, the Israel of God.
- These saints are standing beside the cleansing Laver...the Sea...regarding this laver image we recall Solomon’s Bronze laver where he humbly prayed a prayer of dedication (2 Chron 6:12-13...he stood on the sea before the altar and offered supplication, which included petitions for all of the nations (2 Chron 6:14-42). When Solomon had finished, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, then the glory of the Lord filled the place so that the priests were unable to minister due to God’s presence. (2 Chron 7:1-2).
- In this same manner as Solomon’s temple, when the seven angels come forth with their chalices, the glory of the Lord fills the temple in heaven and no one is able to enter until the sacrifice is consumed...in this case, it would be Israel. What we see in Revelation 15 is the Sea, the fiery laver...the Lake of Fire...while the Church, having passed through the holocaust, inherits salvation.
- Now, we read that the Church Triumphant in heaven is singing the Song of Witness, which Moses and Joshua (Jesus) taught the children of Israel at the border of the Promised Land (Deut 31-32). We see excerpts again in Isaiah 12 and Habakkuk 3)
 - The saints sing this song because they are the Overcomers through Christ...the victory is theirs
 - Rushdoony: “The earth is the Lord’s, and the area of His victory. The issue of the kingdom’s battle will be no more a flight from history than was the incarnation and the atonement. God the Son did not enter history in order to surrender it. He came to redeem His elect, assert His crown rights, make manifest the implications of His victory, and then to re-create all things in terms of His sovereign will.” They Kingdom Come.
 - Alfred Edersheim notes that this is being seen and sung on the Lord’s Day, “...the Sabbath of the Church; and as on the Sabbath, besides the psalm for the day [Ps 92] at the ordinary sacrifice, they sang at the additional Sabbatic sacrifice [Num 28:9-10], in the morning, the Song of Moses in Deut 32, and in the evening that in Exodus 15, so the victorious Church celebrates her true Sabbath of rest by singing this same “Song of Moses and of the Lamb” only in language that expresses the fullest meaning of the Sabbath songs in the Temple.”

“Great and wonderful are thy deeds,
O Lord God the Almighty!
Just and true are thy ways,
O King of the ages![b]

4 Who shall not fear and glorify thy name, O Lord?
For thou alone art holy.

All nations shall come and worship thee,
for thy judgments have been revealed.”

- One reads in the psalms and proverbs how that men walk by the judged and hiss, or shake a head at the destruction brought on by the wrath of God when they see it, and we certainly not to gloat over the wrath outpoured, however, we can know in heaven and speak in alignment with those in heaven that God’s judgments are true and just, for He, God, alone is Holy.
 - Recall the incident with Aaron’s sons for offering strange fire:

Leviticus 10:1 Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. 2 So fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD. 3 And Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD spoke, saying: 'By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; And before all the people I must be glorified.' " So Aaron held his peace.

- Finally, note in verse 4, that the ultimate goal of judgment is the conversion of the nations. They see the sanction for long-run disobedience and repent, amend their ways, and follow the Lord, the Lamb, and receive his blessings for faithful and obedient service.
- John is reiterating what St. Paul has said, namely that Israel’s fall must therefore produce fruits of salvation for the nation, and ultimately Israel’s own restoration to the New Covenant in Christ. We see this fulfilled in the 144,000 from the Land of Israel, the elect Jews finally embracing Christ Jesus prior to the city’s destruction. Romans 11:11-12, 15, 23-32. Some see this Romans passage and say we may see an ultimate ingrafting of Jews into the Covenant of Christ, beyond this first century fulfillment, in time and on earth at a later time.

Revelation 15:5 After this I looked, and the temple of the tent of witness in heaven was opened, 6 and out of the temple came the seven angels with the seven plagues, robed in pure bright linen, and their breasts girded with golden girdles. 7 And one of the four living creatures gave the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives for ever and ever; 8 and the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were ended.

- The Tabernacle in the heavens containing the Testimony (The Commandments of God) was opened. This language shows a legal record of requirements and disobedience.
 - Hebrews 8, 9, and 10 present the fact that the earthly Mosaic Tabernacle or Davidic Temple is a type and shadow of the real Temple in the Heavens
 - The picture in Revelation 15:5 is that of the Heavenly Temple with the New Covenant Testimony.
 - The picture is that of the Heavenly Tabernacle and the New Testament Church (the Temple of God) coalesce in the New Covenant Age...and the Tabernacle of God is now with men.
- In the likeness of the Lord, the Seven Angels come forth, while the four living creatures who stand before the Lord give them seven “bowls” of the wrath of God

- David Chilton calls these containers **Chalices** (rather than *vials* (KJV) or *bowls* (NASV) to characterize their character as a “negative sacraments.”
- Sacraments because Apostate Israel (as in Rev 16:6) poured out the blood of the prophets and saints, so they shall now drink this bloody libation as judgment...a cup of wine in his fierce wrath (Rev 16:19)
- Matthew 23: 35 "that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. 36 "Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. 37 " O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! 38 "See! Your house is left to you desolate;

- The substance within the chalices is the HOT wrath of God...some commentators see the contents as FIRE contained in Incense Bowls. As in Rev 14:10 to “drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger.”
- The bowls are libation bowls, which during the temple services were poured out at the daily sacrifice after the trumpets began to sound...John is depicting this sequence. This drink offering was the last official act before the altar of sacrifice. Note the sequence of Jesus’ death and sacrifice as recorded in Philippians 2:17.
- Farrer says because there is no bloody sacrifice in heaven, the angels pour their libations upon the terrible holocaust of vengeance which divine justice makes on earth.
- Also, in the temple ceremony, the blood was sprinkled seven times toward the veil before the Holy of Holies, then smeared on the four horns of the altar, and the remainder poured out at the foot of the altar. Lev 4:13-21
- The blood in our passage does not bring atonement and reconciliation, but vengeance and judgment. The blood is no longer sprinkled toward the veil or altar, for Jesus’s blood atoning sacrifice has ALREADY been offered. Jesus Christ’s offering was the ONCE AND FOR ALL SACRIFICE for sin. Even the Mass is a re-enactment of the one and only sacrifice of Christ...Jesus is NOT being sacrificed again.
 - The act of Israel’s apostasy that is being condemned is their rejection of Christ’s sacrifice for their sins...here the warning of the writer to the Hebrews:

 - Hebrews 10:26 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people." 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

- Blood and fire are being poured out upon the Land of Israel...the Angels bear in their chalices the CURSES of the Covenant of God...See them in Deut 28:15-68, which also came upon Jerusalem.
- God's presence was mighty during this time of judgment and salvation, thus we see the glory cloud that fills the heavenly tabernacle.
 - As St. Peter said on the Day of Pentecost at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit...a sign that affirmed that Israel was in the prophesied Last Days prior to breaking forth of the New Covenant and Jerusalem's destruction (in AD70)

Acts 2:16 "But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 17 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. 18 And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy. 19 I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. 21 And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.'

- God's people looked forward to the near and coming day of their enemies, apostate Jerusalem being consumed as told by the prophets and by Jesus himself. E.W. Hengstenberg "So long as Israel was the people of the Lord, the pillar of cloud exclaimed to all his enemies, "Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm." So here, that the temple is full of smoke and nobody can get into it, this is a 'sign for believers, that the Lord in love to them, was now going to complete the destruction of their enemies."
- Isaiah had to become silent when seeing the presence of the glory of God as he records in Isaiah 6. Bengel and Hengstenberg: "When God pours out his fury, it is fit that even those who stand well with Him should withdraw for a little, and should restrain their inquiring looks. All should stand back in profound reverence, till by and by the sky become clear again.

The Bowls of God's Wrath

16 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple telling the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God." 2 So the first angel went and poured his bowl on the earth, and foul and evil sores came upon the men who bore the mark of the beast and worshiped its image.3 The second angel poured his bowl into the sea, and it became like the blood of a dead man, and every living thing died that was in the sea. 4 The third angel poured his bowl into the rivers and the fountains of water, and they became blood. 5 And I heard the angel of water say,

"Just art thou in these thy judgments,
thou who art and wast, O Holy One.

6 For men have shed the blood of saints and prophets,
and thou hast given them blood to drink.
It is their due!”

7 And I heard the altar cry,

“Yea, Lord God the Almighty,
true and just are thy judgments!”

8 The fourth angel poured his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to scorch men with fire; 9 men were scorched by the fierce heat, and they cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues, and they did not repent and give him glory.

- The wrath is about to fall upon Jerusalem...no more warning. The City of Jerusalem was called the Great City, which is called Sodom and Egypt.
 - Sodom due to is sensual, luxurious apostasy (Eze 16:49-50)
 - Regarding Egypt, St. John has shown us an Egyptian dragon chasing a Woman into the wilderness (Chapter 12); a revived Balak and Balaam seeking to destroy God’s people by war and by seduction to idolatry (Chapter 13); the sealed armies of the New Israel gathered on top of Mt. Zion to celebrate the feasts (Chapter 14); and the saints standing in triumph at the Red Sea singing the Song of Moses (Chapter 15). Now in Chapter 16, seven judgments corresponding to the ten Egyptian Plagues are to be poured out on the Great City.
 - The trumpets were but warnings; but now, with the chalices, the destruction is total.
- A visitation of the Lord, or presence (a coming), as He visits the Land of His People with blazing wrath in response to the prayers of the saints, whose blood is pooled and crying out from under the altar. Israel, Jerusalem
 - Is fornicating with the nations around them vs. standing out as the way to Yahweh (Ezek 16:36)
 - Is shedding innocent blood through oppression and idolatry (Ezek 22:3-4, 6, 9, 12, 27)
 - “Pour out” is the same word used for the priests pouring out the blood of the sacrifice around the base of the altar, or of Israel’s pouring out, or shedding of innocent blood due to her idolatrous oppression.
 - This is about the OUTPOURING of plagues onto the Promised Land of Israel, whose capital is Jerusalem. We see these chalices of wrath ready to poured.
 - Jerusalem has spilled the blood of Christ and His witnesses. This is a people who have with stiff-necked resistance, rejected the Spirit of God and His Christ:
 - **The old wineskins of Israel are about to split open!**
- **Chalice #1:** as the sixth of the Egyptian plagues of old (Exo 9:8-12), the first chalice of fiery wrath brings disgusting and deadly sores upon the apostates who aligned their love and obedience to the Beast of Rome and worshipped His image, the Emperor.
 - A hideous stamp avenging the mark of the Beast—as if the mark had broken out into a deadly infection (Austin Ferrar, and J.P.M. Sweet)

- This plague was specifically mentioned by Moses (to those of you who think the Law of God and its blessings and cursings are 'done away' with the New Testament)
Deut 28:27 "The LORD will strike you with the boils of Egypt, with tumors, with the scab, and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed...35 "The LORD will strike you in the knees and on the legs with severe boils which cannot be healed, and from the sole of your foot to the top of your head.
- **Chalice #2:** as the first of the Egyptian plagues (Exo 7:17-21), we see the wrath of God poured out upon the sea, which then turns to the coagulating blood of a dead man...so that everything living in the sea dies
 - Blood is mentioned 4 times in this chapter indicating that blood is poured over the four corners of the land of Israel...the four corners of the Land.
 - While this passage is shows this symbolic plague referring to the uncleanness of the contact with blood and death (Lev 7:26-27-death, Lev 15:27-menstrual), it has a very literal sense regarding the deadly and bloody battles between the apostate Jews and the Romans during the Great Tribulation as recorded by Josephus. One such battle was a merciless slaughter of Jewish rebels who fled to the Sea of Galilee after the Roman massacre of Tarichaeae.
READ Jewish War account: iii.x.9
- **Chalice #3:** as was again from the 1st Egyptian plague, this chalice of wrath caused the rivers and the living water fountains to be polluted and made unclean by blood—an extremely loathsome plague to the Jews.
 - All drinking water would be turned to blood due to the death that occurred during this timeframe of the Great Tribulation.
 - Water is a symbol of life and blessing...living water was a great blessing that denotes rivers and streams of pure, fresh water good for drinking pleasure—Yet, this judgment of God brings a curse upon the water so that no joy can be extracted from it...only death and uncleanness.
 - The blessing that was destined to make Jerusalem a promised paradise of God, is reversed, due to apostasy...to a loathsome thing
- To Chalices 2 and 3, the Angle of the Waters responds by praising God for his justice.
 - Heaven praises the just judgments of the wicked and we should not be embarrassed about it.
 - The just and divine law...Lex Talionis...an eye for an eye. The apostates poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and thou has given them blood to drink
 - Because the Christ purchased the saints with his own blood and became worthy to open the seals of the Covenant; so they, the persecutors are worthy of this judgment that they are receiving.
 - Isaiah 49: 26 I will feed those who oppress you with their own flesh, And they shall be drunk with their own blood as with sweet wine. All flesh shall know That I, the LORD, am your Savior, And your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob."
 - During the siege of Jerusalem, the Israelites became cannibals due to the persecution against the church. Deut 28: 53 "You shall eat the fruit of your own body, the flesh of your sons and your daughters whom the LORD your God has given you, in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you. 54 "The sensitive and very refined

man among you will be hostile toward his brother, toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the rest of his children whom he leaves behind, 55 "so that he will not give any of them the flesh of his children whom he will eat, because he has nothing left in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates. 56 "The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground because of her delicateness and sensitivity, will refuse to the husband of her bosom, and to her son and her daughter, 57 "her placenta which comes out from between her feet and her children whom she bears; for she will eat them secretly for lack of everything in the siege and desperate straits in which your enemy shall distress you at all your gates.

- The voice from the Altar where the blood of the saints cries out for vengeance rejoices, "Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Thy judgments."
 - Ironically, just as God himself is preparing for the Whole Burnt Sacrifice of A.D. 70, the very angels of heaven were singing apostate Israel's own liturgy against her.
- **Chalice #4:** interesting that this chalice of wrath, somewhat like Exodus 10:21-23 regarding darkness over the land, was given to scorch men with fire. The fiery pain was so extensive that men blasphemed God, and, furthermore, would not repent of their unbelief and sin...they would not look up to the Creator and give him the glory due his name.
 - Israel was blessed with being shielded from the scorching sun by virtue of being overshadowed by the Almighty.
Psalm 91:1 He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. 2 I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust." 3 Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler And from the perilous pestilence. 4 He shall cover you with His feathers, And under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler. 5 You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, Nor of the arrow that flies by day, 6 Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, Nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday.

Psalm 121: 5 The LORD is your keeper; The LORD is your shade at your right hand. 6 The sun shall not strike you by day, Nor the moon by night. 7 The LORD shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your soul. 8 The LORD shall preserve your going out and your coming in From this time forth, and even forevermore.
 - And, the Church of Jesus Christ who had persevered through the Great Tribulation and did not faint would have this blessing of not being smitten by the sun by day, as it is written in Revelation 7: 14 And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and 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. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them. 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 them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."
 - The sinners blasphemed God, who has power over these plagues. They know from whence they came, and they do not repent and give him glory.

- Recall St. Paul in Athens preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom and telling them of God's command to REPENT!
 Acts 17: 24 "God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. 25 "Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. 26 "And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, 27 "so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; 28 "for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.' 29 "Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising. 30 "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, 31 "because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead." 32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, while others said, "We will hear you again on this matter." 33 So Paul departed from among them. 34 However, some men joined him and believed, among them Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

- God is sovereign over the blessings and judgments of this world...both then and now. There is no such thing as a Natural Law, or a Deism, that believes God is separate from this world, for he orders all events by his own will.
 Augustine: (On the Trinity): The whole creation is governed by its Creator, from whom and by whom and in whom it was founded and established. And thus the will of God is the first and supreme cause of all corporal appearances and motions. For nothing happens in the visible and sensible sphere which is not ordered, or permitted, from the inner, invisible, and intelligible commonwealth of the whole creation, according to the inexpressible justice of His rewards and punishments, graces and retributions.

- They DID NOT REPENT...the blasphemers aligned to the Beast, whose head is crowned with "names of blasphemies."
- Apostate Israel became like Pharaoh, whose heart was hardened because of his continued unbelief...and like Egypt, Jerusalem will be destroyed.

10 The fifth angel poured his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom was in darkness; men gnawed their tongues in anguish 11 and cursed the God of heaven for their pain and sores, and did not repent of their deeds.

12 The sixth angel poured his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, to prepare the way for the kings from the east. 13 And I saw, issuing from the mouth of the dragon and from the mouth of the beast and from the mouth of the false prophet, three foul spirits like frogs; 14 for they are demonic spirits, performing signs, who go abroad to the kings of the whole world, to assemble them for battle on the great day[a] of God the Almighty. 15 ("Lo, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is he who is awake, keeping his garments that he may not go naked and be seen exposed!") 16 And they assembled them at the place which is called in Hebrew Armageddon.[b]

- The Chalice judgments are intensifying and the loud blasphemies are increasing in volume toward the One in heaven who is governing them all...
- The symbolic targets of the first four chalice judgments were elements of the physical creation: Land, sea, waters, and the sun
- The symbolic targets for the last three plagues, the consequences of angelic attack are more "political" in nature: the disruption of the Beast's kingdom; the War of the great Day of God; and the Fall of "Babylon."
- **Chalice #5:** This chalice of wrath is one of darkness being poured out on the Beast, the throne, the seat of the Roman Empire's power and authority, much, again, like we see having been spread over Egypt in Exo 10:4-20...the Locusts, which spread a kind of darkness over the land.

Note: these chalice judgments are a recapitulation of the Trumpet judgments except toward a deeper level of catastrophe.

- The judgments of God poured out during the Great Tribulation would test the entire world (Rev. 3:10—the whole world...the Roman Empire).
- Darkness shrouds the Empire depicting, as we've seen in past portions of the Revelation, the fall of authorities and powers
The Fall of Babylon in Isaiah 13:9 Behold, the day of the LORD comes, Cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, To lay the land desolate; And He will destroy its sinners from it. 10 For the stars of heaven and their constellations Will not give their light; The sun will be darkened in its going forth, And the moon will not cause its light to shine.
- **The Fall of Israel before the Assyrian invasion in Amos 8:2 And He said, "Amos, what do you see?" So I said, "A basket of summer fruit." Then the LORD said to me: "The end has come upon My people Israel; I will not pass by them anymore. 3 And the songs of the temple Shall be wailing in that day," Says the Lord GOD -- "Many dead bodies everywhere, They shall be thrown out in silence." 4 Hear this, you who swallow up the needy, And make the poor of the land fail, 5 Saying: "When will the New Moon be past, That we may sell grain? And the Sabbath, That we may trade wheat? Making the ephah small and the shekel large, Falsifying the scales by deceit, 6 That we may buy the poor for silver, And the needy for a pair of sandals -- Even sell the bad wheat?" 7 The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob: "Surely I will never forget any of their works. 8 Shall the land not tremble for this, And everyone mourn who dwells in it? All of it shall swell like the River, Heave and subside Like the River of Egypt. 9 "And it shall come to pass in that day," says the Lord GOD, "That I will make the sun go down at noon, And I will darken the earth in broad daylight; 10 I will turn your feasts into mourning, And all your songs into lamentation; I will bring sackcloth on every waist, And baldness on every head; I will make it like mourning for an only son, And its end like a bitter day. 11 " Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord GOD, "That I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine of bread, Nor a thirst for water, But of hearing the words of the LORD. 12 They shall wander from sea to sea, And from north to east; They shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the LORD, But shall not find it.**
- **The Fall of Egypt in Ezekiel 32:5 I will lay your flesh on the mountains, And fill the valleys with your carcass. 6 'I will also water the land with the flow of your blood, Even to the mountains; And the riverbeds will be full of you. 7 When I put out your light, I will cover**

the heavens, and make its stars dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, And the moon shall not give her light. 8 All the bright lights of the heavens I will make dark over you, And bring darkness upon your land,' Says the Lord GOD. 9 'I will also trouble the hearts of many peoples, when I bring your destruction among the nations, into the countries which you have not known.

- This chalice, although being poured out upon the Empire, is still very much focused on Israel, the seat and throne of the Beast with regard to their rejection of the New Covenant, THIS BECAUSE apostate Israel gave herself to the authority and power of Roman rule above that of Yahweh. We shall see in subsequent chapters how the Harlot Israel rides upon the Dragon, the Beast of Rome, therefore, there is an intertwinement between the two in this effort
- We also see that this outpouring of Chalice 5 corresponds, as Cornelius Tacitus (The Histories) and F.W.Ferrar calls the wars, revolutions, riots, and “world-wide convulsions,” that occurred after Nero committed suicide (the darkening of the powers of Rome). Ferrar: “...the horrors inflicted upon Rome and Romans in the civil wars by provincial governors—already symbolized as the horns of the Wild Beast, and here characterized as kings yet kingdomless. Such were Galba, Otho, Vitellius, and Vespasian.”
 - Vespasian and Mucianus deliberately planned to starve Rome (Tacitus, Histories, iii.48; Jewish War, iv.x.5)
 - During fierce struggle between the Vitellians against Sabinus and Domitian, the massacre which followed, there occurred the event which sounded so portentously in the ears of every Roman, namely the burning to the ground of the Temple of the Capitoline Jupiter on Dec 19th AD 69 (Tacitus, Histories iii.71-73; Jewish Wars iv.xi.4)
 - To depict the sign of the times, in the space of 2 years, the world saw wrapped in flames the two most hallowed shrines of the ancient world: the Jerusalem Temple and the Temple of the great Latin god. (Ferrar, The Early Days of Christianity, pp 555)
 - Darkness and chaos in Rome, the city capital of the Beast and His image: during the temple burning, the soldiers desired bloodshed and massacre, while the mobs took the loot. Anyone caught hiding, was drug out into the street and killed by the mobs.
 - The whole city presented a caricature of its frightful and normal self: fighting and casualties at one point, baths, restaurants and pleasures on the other. The spilling of blood, prostitution, and pleasures...vice, idleness, and pleasure wrapped into one.
READ Chilton, page 406-407 citing Tacitus, Histories, iii.83.
- One can see the disease, distress, and dangers of this time as a result of this judgment, AND, the judgments come without breathing space
- **Many think that suffering and the judgments of God bring repentance, however, as in this case, the opposite is true. Only by God's grace does repentance come to an individual.** The character of these apostates has not been transformed. They remain blasphemous, unbelieving persecutors and haters of God, His Christ, and His Church. In their misery, they gnash their teeth and gnaw their tongues at the God who created them...they reject wisdom and the Gospel of the Kingdom of God...they, therefore, according to Proverbs 8:36, wrong there own soul and love death...and it is death that they will get.

- **Chalice #6:** The vengeance of the Lord makes way for Israel's demon-filled enemies to come from the north and attack the Holy City...known as the area of Mount Megiddo, or Har Megiddo (Armageddon).



- The Euphrates River is the northern frontier of the Promised Land. Just as Cyrus the Persian dammed and redirected the Euphrates to sack Babylon (Herodotus, History, i.191), God would dry the Euphrates with this Chalice Judgment #6 making way for **the armies of the north and east to join Titus to besiege Jerusalem**. This would be a second attack on the city, but a definitive and powerful one (Jewish War iii.i.3; iii.iv.2; v.i.6; vii.i.3).
- Israel is the New Babylon and Titus the New Cyrus who will sack the city and destroy it.
- From the mouths of the Dragon, the Devil himself; the Beast of the Rome Empire, his pawn; and the False Prophet

Israel and Jerusalem come forth three (3) demonic spirits, like unto frogs.

- This is like the invasion of the frogs in Egypt (the second plague—Ex 8:2-4).
- Also, like the judgment of the 6th Trumpet blast in Rev 9:13-21 wherein the armies come from the Euphrates and kills 1/3 of the men of Israel...the armies then backed off, but now, they are returning for final vengeance.
- The frogs, an unclean animal of the rivers (Lev 11:9-12, 41-47) are symbolic of the multitude of demons that were released from the Abyss...these are the multitude that targeted the people of Jerusalem and the whole empire after Jesus and the apostles had swept these areas clean through their ministry of the Gospel of the Kingdom...having rejected the message, the people, the apostates and unbelievers are ripe targets for demonic infestation and possession...making them mad...making them gather for a self-destructive, God-ordained war in Jerusalem.
- **These demons are going forth to incite the governors of the nations of the Roman Empire to fight against the God who dwells in Jerusalem.** These kings think they are going to destroy the pestiferous people of the Jews and that off-shoot known as Christianity. They DO NOT realize that God is gathering them together under his sovereign control to cause them to surround and destroy the Old Covenant Jerusalem once and for all, so that Christ and His Church would be preeminent from that day forth and forever more.
- Micah the prophet gave a similar message regarding the wicked King Ahab...see how the angelic host did the bidding of God from the throne room of God, yet what was manifested in the earth took out the evil king and saved the Seed of Israel:
1 Kings 22: 19 Then Micaiah said, "Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by, on His right hand and on His left. 20 "And the LORD said, 'Who will persuade Ahab to go up, that he may fall at Ramoth Gilead?' So one spoke in this manner, and another spoke in that manner. 21 "Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, and said, 'I will persuade him.' 22 "The LORD said to him, 'In what way?' So he said, 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And the LORD said, 'You shall persuade him, and also prevail. Go out and do so.'

- Note that the devils will work through wicked people so that they deceive their audiences, thus leading them astray from Yahweh. Wicked and false prophets, clergy, rulers, and other leaders can certainly perform lying signs, that indeed come to pass...that is what was happening during that Great Tribulation time (AD66-70), however, one can discern the false prophets because they will NOT confess Jesus as Lord and they will not lead men to Christ and to the One True God...they lead men astray...that is why it is a judgment upon unbelief and apostasy.

Deuteronomy 13:1 "If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, 2 "and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods' -- which you have not known -- 'and let us serve them,' 3 "you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. 4 "You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice, and you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him. 5 "But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order to turn you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of bondage, to entice you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall put away the evil from your midst.

2 Thess. 2: 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. 8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. 9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

- **The War of that Great Day of God:** A day of judgment, of calamity for the wicked (Joel 2:1-2)
 - This is the day, when the Lord, the Great King would send his armies upon the murderers and those who would not answer his call to Christ.

Luke 19: 11 Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. 12 Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. 13 "So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.' 14 "But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.' 15 "And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. 16 "Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.' 17 "And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.' 18 "And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned five minas.' 19 "Likewise he said to him, 'You also be over five cities.' 20 "Then another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. 21 'For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.' 22 "And he said to him, 'Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. 23 'Why then did you not put my

money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?' 24 "And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.' 25 ("But they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas.')

26 'For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. 27 'But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.' "

Matthew 22:1 And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: 2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, 3 "and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. 4 "Again, he sent out other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding." ' 5 "But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. 6 "And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. 7 "But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. 8 "Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. 9 'Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' 10 "So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests.

- This was to be the day of Israel's execution. This was to be the Day of God of Hosts...which means God of Armies. Lord of Hosts means Lord of Armies of heaven and earth. The armies coming forth to attack and destroy Israel are, regardless of their motivations, God's armies.
- The demons go forth to the kings of the earth to persuade them and to gather them to execute God's judgment upon apostate Israel.
- The narrative is interrupted by Jesus' words: "Lo, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is he who is awake, keeping his garments that he may not go naked and be seen exposed!"
 - Seemingly based on the first warning in Revelation 3: 2 "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. 3 "Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. 4 "You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. 5 "He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.
 - And Jesus' words during his ministry: Matthew 24: 42 "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. 43 "But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 44 "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.
 - And the Apostle Paul: 1 Thessalonians 5:1 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. 5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others do,

but let us watch and be sober. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. 8 But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. 9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. 11 Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

- Jesus warns John’s hearers that in the midst of this harrowing gathering around Jerusalem for war, BE PREPARED for my appearance...my coming for salvation and judgment...Stay AWAKE and ALERT.
- St John is stating in subjunctive mood that the Blessed Man should be watching and keeping his garments [white], lest he should walk naked and they should see his shame.
 - NOT THAT the sinner would be caught with his “pants down” in a momentary lapse, BUT that he should be caught walking around without pants at all...habitually sinning during this time during the coming of the Lord.
 - Recall John’s words that they who are sinning should remain sinning...their hearts will be hardened due to continual sin and blindness.
 - Philip Carrington speaks of the temple guard who ensured officers were awake at their posts: “There was an officer on duty at the Temple whose business it was to walk around and see that those who were on watch kept awake; if he found them asleep he beat them; if he found them a second time, he burnt their clothes. This is the only possible explanation of this passage. It means, Now is the time for those who are guarding the Temple to keep awake. The whole symbolism of the Sixth Bowl, therefore, of which this is a part, has to do with an attack on the Temple.
- With judgment approaching, there is no time to waste...for the redemption of the saints is drawing near, and the Lord Jesus, the reigning and sitting King in Heaven, wants to continue the warning to John’s hearers, lest they forget as the saga of coming events are apocalyptically told.
- **God controls demonic spirits manifested through Rome, the Caesars, and Jerusalem to gather the kings of the earth together where false prophets and their dupes meet their doom.**
 - Gathered to Har (Mount), Megiddo (a city on a plain)...a problem for the literalists. “Mount Meggido” is NOT a place, it is a city on a plain.
 - The mountain nearest to Megiddo is Mount Carmel. John obviously wants to bring Megiddo and Mount Carmel into the same breath.
 - Carmel because of the ancient defeat of Jezebel’s false prophets
 - Megiddo because of its military conquests...e.g., Joshua (Joshua 12:21), Deborah defeated the kings of Canaan (Judges 5:19); and MOST IMPORTANT: Judah’s King Josiah defied Yahweh’s words to the Egyptian king Neco in battle at Megiddo and was mortally wounded. (see plain of Megiddo in Zech 12:10-11) AGAIN, God draws the players to the plain and executes His will and his judgments upon them.

- So, again, one sees the Har Megiddo (Armageddon) is the place where believers of the lie are gathered for their defeat...on the plain...where kings and their armies are misled to their destruction; and where all the tribes of the earth mourn (see Zech 12), to see Him in power, whom in weakness they had pierced. (Farrer) The Roman armies were gathering to Jerusalem to destroy the False prophetic nation, with hopes of destroying the Church, too, but she would be caught away to the mountains...safely.

17 The seventh angel poured his bowl into the air, and a great voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, "It is done!" 18 And there were flashes of lightning, loud noises, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as had never been since men were on the earth, so great was that earthquake. 19 The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered great Babylon, to make her drain the cup of the fury of his wrath. 20 And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found; 21 and great hailstones, heavy as a hundredweight, dropped on men from heaven, till men cursed God for the plague of the hail, so fearful was that plague.

- **Chalice #7:** the judgment is finished to the great pleasure of the Living God in heaven.
- John told us in Rev 15:1 that in the 7 chalices the wrath of God would be finished. It is done! Is one word in the Greek being said in a LOUD VOICE. Yelled loudly as many words throughout this Revelation of Jesus Christ.
- The great earthquake and other phenomenon depict covenant and the presence of Yahweh. THIS WAS the SHAKING that was prophesied in Haggai 2, and reiterated in Hebrews 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. 25 See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, 26 whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven." 27 Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God is a consuming fire.
 - After the great shaking and the Great City had received the full wrath of God and met its doom, the saints of the most high received the Kingdom of God. And that Kingdom was taken from the Jews and given to the true Jews...the Christians, the saints of the Most High God. Josephus notes the reality of earthquakes at this time: Jewish Wars 3.1.3.3.4.2; 5.1.6.7.1.3.
 - This was the greatest alteration that God made on the heavens and the earth...the Old Covenant City and its Temple were the heavens and earth to the Old Covenant people,

and it would now be wrapped and burned with fire, NEVER to resurface again.

- All of things that could be shaken and brought down, WERE, so that that which cannot be shaken would remain...Christ's Church, the manifestation of God's heavenly Kingdom and liturgy upon the earth.
- The Great City was divided into three parts due to the great earthquake...Old Jerusalem, where the Lord was crucified (Rev 11:8; 14:8). Originally to be a city set on a hill, and a light to the world...Jerusalem is now an apostate murderess, condemned to perish. Under the judgment of this 7th Chalice, the city is split, much a fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy regarding the dividing of the hair shaved from his head into 3 piles...here, captivity to Babylon was only a foretaste of her final and complete destruction.

Ezekiel 5:1 "And you, son of man, take a sharp sword, take it as a barber's razor, and pass it over your head and your beard; then take scales to weigh and divide the hair. 2 "You shall burn with fire one-third in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are finished; then you shall take one-third and strike around it with the sword, and one-third you shall scatter in the wind: I will draw out a sword after them. 3 "You shall also take a small number of them and bind them in the edge of your garment. 4 "Then take some of them again and throw them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire. From there a fire will go out into all the house of Israel. 5 " Thus says the Lord GOD: 'This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the midst of the nations and the countries all around her. 6 'She has rebelled against My judgments by doing wickedness more than the nations, and against My statutes more than the countries that are all around her; for they have refused My judgments, and they have not walked in My statutes.' 7 "Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Because you have multiplied disobedience more than the nations that are all around you, have not walked in My statutes nor kept My judgments, nor even done according to the judgments of the nations that are all around you' -- 8 "therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Indeed I, even I, am against you and will execute judgments in your midst in the sight of the nations. 9 'And I will do among you what I have never done, and the like of which I will never do again, because of all your abominations. 10 'Therefore fathers shall eat their sons in your midst, and sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments among you, and all of you who remain I will scatter to all the winds. 11 'Therefore, as I live,' says the Lord GOD, 'surely, because you have defiled My sanctuary with all your detestable things and with all your abominations, therefore I will also diminish you; My eye will not spare, nor will I have any pity. 12 'One-third of you shall die of the pestilence, and be consumed with famine in your midst; and one-third shall fall by the sword all around you; and I will scatter another third to all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them. 13 ' Thus shall My anger be spent, and I will cause My fury to rest upon them, and I will be avenged; and they shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken it in My zeal, when I have spent My fury upon them.

- Carrington says the 3 divisions of the city were a division into three factions within the city. While Titus was besieging the city from without, the three faction leaders were destroying the city from within. See also Josephus, War, v.v.1-5
Since there was no water and food within the city, the faction fighting lasted on a few days and

drove the War to a quick end and into the hands of Titus.

- This Great City is indeed Jerusalem in contrast to the “cities of the Gentiles” that were also destroyed, too.
- The Old Covenant system and its city WAS a world order, the foundation on which the whole world was organized and maintained in the world...even redemptively with the 70 bulls sacrificed for the nations annually during the Feast of Ingathering---Feast of Tabernacles, a foretaste of the gathering of the nations into the light of the Kingdom of God.
Revelation 21: 22 But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 23 The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. 24 And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. 25 Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). 26 And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. 27 But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.
- The remembrance of Jerusalem, Babylon the Great, was remembered before God that judgment was due her.
 - She did not repent of her murders and unbelief
 - All of the foretold plagues of Egypt were brought upon her, and her fall was final
 - Her fall was a blessing to the nations.
 - Every false refuge disappears...every island and mountain flees before the presence of the Lord and His Christ, and His Church.
 - The large hailstones come down upon men as they continued their blasphemies, as in the days of Joshua while Deborah sang
Joshua 10: 11 And it happened, as they fled before Israel and were on the descent of Beth Horon, that the LORD cast down large hailstones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died. There were more who died from the hailstones than the children of Israel killed with the sword.
 - Judges 5: 19 "The kings came and fought, Then the kings of Canaan fought In Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo; They took no spoils of silver. 20 They fought from the heavens; The stars from their courses fought against Sisera.
- Rocks from heaven, referred to as hailstones may have been referring to the large stones hurled by the Roman catapults. Those inside the city were heard yelling, “The Son is coming,” seeking to mock the Christians who were awaiting the Son of God’s appearing. The Christians, prior to their leaving the city, were known to have been speaking about and awaiting the Son of Man’s appearance for deliverance. See Jewish War: v.vi.3
- The judgments of the chalices are finished, BUT, the END, the Last Day of the End of the Ages is not yet upon the world and Jerusalem at this time. But, we know from these words and chalice judgments:
 - Christ will be victorious on earth before this destruction of Jerusalem is over
 - The doom alike of Jew and Gentile is immanent
 - Old things are rapidly passing away
 - The Old Dispensation is vanishing and fading into dimness

- The New and Final Covenant is to be established amid terrible judgments, which will render impossible the continuation of the Old...The Lord is at Hand....Even so come, Lord Jesus...were the words of the persevering saints.

The Evil Conspiratorial Relationship and then Violent Break-off between the Great Whore and the Beast

- **The vision of the Seventh Chalice continues...the sense is the Destruction of Jerusalem-the Harlot**
- The term Harlot or Whore would be used in the Old Testament to describe the virgin or married woman who had left her betrothed or married spouse respectively for another...the term on a broader level describes the nation who had left its covenant relationship with Yahweh...the term is ALWAYS used for faithless Israel. "To play the harlot?"
- Deut 31:16 And the LORD said to Moses: "Behold, you will rest with your fathers; and this people will rise and play the harlot with the gods of the foreigners of the land, where they go to be among them, and they will forsake Me and break My covenant which I have made with them. 17 "Then My anger shall be aroused against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide My face from them, and they shall be devoured. And many evils and troubles shall befall them, so that they will say in that day, 'Have not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us?' 18 "And I will surely hide My face in that day because of all the evil which they have done, in that they have turned to other gods. 19 "Now therefore, write down this song for yourselves, and teach it to the children of Israel; put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for Me against the children of Israel. 20 "When I have brought them to the land flowing with milk and honey, of which I swore to their fathers, and they have eaten and filled themselves and grown fat, then they will turn to other gods and serve them; and they will provoke Me and break My covenant. 21 "Then it shall be, when many evils and troubles have come upon them, that this song will testify against them as a witness; for it will not be forgotten in the mouths of their descendants, for I know the inclination of their behavior today, even before I have brought them to the land of which I swore to give them."

Harlotry: Lev 19:29 ' Do not prostitute your daughter, to cause her to be a harlot, lest the land fall into harlotry, and the land become full of wickedness.

- Priests were not to marry harlots: Lev 21:7 'They shall not take a wife who is a harlot or a defiled woman, nor shall they take a woman divorced from her husband; for the priest is holy to his God...**Note this important judgment of a priest's daughter who plays the harlot or whore...**9 'The daughter of any priest, if she profanes herself by playing the harlot, she profanes her father. She shall be burned with fire.

Revelation 17:1 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot[a] who is seated upon many waters, 2 with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and with the wine of whose fornication[b] the dwellers on earth have become drunk." 3 And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and bedecked with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of

abominations and the impurities of her fornication; 5 and on her forehead was written a name of mystery: "Babylon the great, mother of harlots and of earth's abominations." 6 And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

When I saw her I marveled greatly. 7 But the angel said to me, "Why marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries her.

- The Harlot here is clearly the False Church...apostate Israel...who left Yahweh and rejected her Messiah, and then aligned against him with the Rulers and designated authorities of Rome. It was interesting to note that Israel HATED the Romans...obviously, they hated God more.
 - Many have ventured inadequate interpretations of the Harlot, the Whore: The 4th Century Donatists called the Catholic Church was the Whore; the Greek Orthodox and Protestants see her as the Roman Papacy, while some have seen the World Council of Churches as the Whore...HOWEVER, St John sets our hermeneutical boundaries here within the context of the Revelation, and when one interprets Scripture with Scripture, the answer becomes not only obvious, but helpful in interpreting the Book as well.
 - **The Revelation presents us with two Great Cities in antithesis with each other: Babylon and the New Jerusalem.**
 - The New Jerusalem: Paradise consummated; the community of saints, the City of God...the seed of promise from Abraham and Sarah...the Jerusalem from above filled with the children of God who are joint heirs with Christ of all the promises.
 - Babylon: meaning "Gate of God," the Old Jerusalem, unfaithful to God; filled with apostates, persecutors of the sons of promise; murderers of the Christ and His faithful people; Should have been a true Gate of God-a Gate of Heaven; as Jacob saw the stairway to heaven in Babel, called it Beth-El (House of God) for it pointed to Christ (Gen 28:10-22); but instead the Gate of God became: "Confusion," filled with the seed of Hagar, the bondwoman...only to be ultimately CAST OUT with her children.

Galatians 4:22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. 23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, 24 which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar -- 25 for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children -- 26 but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. 27 For it is written: "Rejoice, O barren, You who do not bear! Break forth and shout, You who are not in labor! For the desolate has many more children Than she who has a husband." 28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. 29 But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now. 30 Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman." 31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.

- How did Israel become the Harlot? She was led astray by her Pharisee priests and scribes:

Causing others to stumble away from the Kingdom of God: Matthew 23:13 "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.

Hypocrisy: Matthew 23:14 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation. 15 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.

Casuistry substituting Traditions for God's Commands: Matthew 23:18 "And, 'Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged to perform it.' 19 "Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift? 20 "Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by all things on it. 21 "He who swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who dwells in it. 22 "And he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it. 23 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. 24 "Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel! 25 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. 26 "Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.

Murder of the Righteous: Matthew 23: 27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. 28 "Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. 29 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, 30 "and say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.' 31 "Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. 32 "Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' guilt. 33 "Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? 34 "Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, 35 "that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. 36 "Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. 37 " O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! 38 "See! Your house is left to you desolate; 39 "for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' "

Betrayal of Messiah to the False Prophet and to the Beast of Rome: Matthew 26:14 Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests 15 and said, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver im to you?" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. 16 So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.

False Witness: Matthew 26: 59 Now the chief priests, the elders, and all the council sought false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, 60 but found none. Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none. But at last two false witnesses came forward 61 and said, "This fellow

said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.' " 62 And the high priest arose and said to Him, "Do You answer nothing? What is it these men testify against You?"

- The rulers of the Jews DID NOT bring the Bridegroom to Israel, and the Bride became a Harlot. The Bride became a Harlot, searching for other Lovers
 - We saw how the False Prophet (apostate Israel) operated back in Revelation 13:11-17, under the figure of the Beast from the Land.
 - This vision of the Harlot is shown by one of the Angels who bore the chalice judgments
 - This vision opens the meaning of the Seventh Chalice, the destruction of Jerusalem.
- We see the Harlot-City named "Babylon the Great." John takes this vision from that of Jeremiah 50-51.
 - She sits on many waters...by the waters of the Euphrates when referred to in Jeremiah 51:13).
 - The waters prophetically speaking is defined in Revelation 17: 15 Then he said to me, "The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues."
 - Christ's voice is like the voice of many waters, the voice of God in heaven, too.
 - This woman is a Whore: she has committed fornication with the kings of the earth. Speaking of Israel, Ezekiel says:
Ezekiel 16: 6 " And when I passed by you and saw you struggling in your own blood, I said to you in your blood, 'Live!' Yes, I said to you in your blood, 'Live!' 7 "I made you thrive like a plant in the field; and you grew, matured, and became very beautiful. Your breasts were formed, your hair grew, but you were naked and bare. 8 "When I passed by you again and looked upon you, indeed your time was the time of love; so I spread My wing over you and covered your nakedness. Yes, I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you, and you became Mine," says the Lord GOD. 9 "Then I washed you in water; yes, I thoroughly washed off your blood, and I anointed you with oil. 10 "I clothed you in embroidered cloth and gave you sandals of badger skin; I clothed you with fine linen and covered you with silk. 11 "I adorned you with ornaments, put bracelets on your wrists, and a chain on your neck. 12 "And I put a jewel in your nose, earrings in your ears, and a beautiful crown on your head. 13 "Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your clothing was of fine linen, silk, and embroidered cloth. You ate pastry of fine flour, honey, and oil. You were exceedingly beautiful, and succeeded to royalty. 14 "Your fame went out among the nations because of your beauty, for it was perfect through My splendor which I had bestowed on you," says the Lord GOD. 15 " But you trusted in your own beauty, played the harlot because of your fame, and poured out your harlotry on everyone passing by who would have it. 16 "You took some of your garments and adorned multicolored high places for yourself, and played the harlot on them. Such things should not happen, nor be.

Romans 2: 17 Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God, 18 and know His will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, 19 and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the law. 21 You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? 22 You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?

23 You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? 24 For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," as it is written.

- Other nations were accused by Yahweh for committing harlotry with the nations:
 - Tyre (Isaiah 23:15-17); Nineveh (Nahum 3:4);
- Israel's past harlotries:
 - Isaiah 1: 21 How the faithful city has become a harlot! It was full of justice; Righteousness lodged in it, But now murderers.
 - Isaiah bringing a lawsuit against Israel's unfaithfulness:

Jeremiah 2: 20 " For of old I have broken your yoke and burst your bonds; And you said, 'I will not transgress,' When on every high hill and under every green tree You lay down, playing the harlot. 21 Yet I had planted you a noble vine, a seed of highest quality. How then have you turned before Me Into the degenerate plant of an alien vine? 22 For though you wash yourself with lye, and use much soap, Yet your iniquity is marked before Me," says the Lord GOD. 23 "How can you say, 'I am not polluted, I have not gone after the Baals'? See your way in the valley; Know what you have done: You are a swift dromedary breaking loose in her ways, 24 A wild donkey used to the wilderness, That sniffs at the wind in her desire; In her time of mating, who can turn her away? All those who seek her will not weary themselves; In her month they will find her... 30 "In vain I have chastened your children; They received no correction. Your sword has devoured your prophets Like a destroying lion. 31 "O generation, see the word of the LORD! Have I been a wilderness to Israel, Or a land of darkness? Why do My people say, 'We are lords; We will come no more to You'? 32 Can a virgin forget her ornaments, Or a bride her attire? Yet My people have forgotten Me days without number. 33 "Why do you beautify your way to seek love? Therefore you have also taught The wicked women your ways. 34 Also on your skirts is found The blood of the lives of the poor innocents. I have not found it by secret search, But plainly on all these things....Jeremiah 3:1 "They say, 'If a man divorces his wife, And she goes from him And becomes another man's, May he return to her again?' Would not that land be greatly polluted? But you have played the harlot with many lovers; Yet return to Me," says the LORD. 2 "Lift up your eyes to the desolate heights and see: Where have you not lain with men? By the road you have sat for them Like an Arabian in the wilderness; And you have polluted the land With your harlotries and your wickedness. 3 Therefore the showers have been withheld, And there has been no latter rain. You have had a harlot's forehead; You refuse to be ashamed.

- Israel's harlotries were written as an admonition to the Church...remain faithful to God
 - Hosea said Israel's harlotries took place on every threshing floor (Hosea 9:1)
 - Israel was apostatizing into Baal worship, seeking harvest blessing and fertility from false gods vs. seeking them from Yahweh, the one true God
 - The Temple was built on a threshing floor (2 Chron 3:1)
 - Ezekiel portrays apostate Israel's harlotries as consisting of religious-political alliances with powerful heathen kings. Ezekiel 16:26-29
Although Israel considered the alliances as purely political, and that in her own interests, the prophets saw these alliances as religious in nature.
Ezekiel degrades Israel as a wanton whore: Ezekiel 16:25, spreading her legs to every passerby...very detailed language, which some translators don't translate in their commentaries. Ezekiel 23 depicts her as inflamed by pornographic pictures as she masturbates to the male images.

Ezekiel's prophecy was crude and offensive to the readers, however, this was to depict how offensive Israel's behavior was to God.

- We see the same behavior in the first century... Israel was fornicating with Caesar...rejecting Christ's kingship (c.f. 1 Sam 8:7-8), the chief priests cried, "We have no king, but Caesar!" John 19:15
 - The apostasy of Jerusalem, the residing leadership of Israel, plunged the entire nation into religious and political fornication. Those who dwell on the Land were made drunk with the wine of her fornication...drunk into such a spiritual stupor that they did not recognize their own Messiah foretold by their prophets.
 - Israel was also so intoxicated by their apparently successful relationship with the State, that they did not realize it was a trap; they were being dragged in preparation for their own execution.
- St. John is now taken away into the Wilderness where he sees the woman, the Harlot, sitting on a scarlet beast, which was full of blasphemous names.
 - The woman cannot be Rome sitting on the Beast of Rome...this woman is sitting, placed upon the empire of Rome...riding upon the influence and power of the Empire, if you will.
 - This harlot lives in the wilderness, WILD, and doesn't live in the Promised Land
 - The wilderness is her heritage and her destiny (c.f., Jer 2-3; Hosea 2)
 - Chilton says, "Apostate Jerusalem is a Harlot, plying her obscene trade alongside wilderness roads like a wild ass in heat.
 - The woman sits on a scarlet Beast, with, like the Sea Beast (Rev 13:1), blasphemous names; and like the Dragon, it has seven heads and ten horns (Rev 12:3). The order is reversed for the Sea Beast, which has 10 heads and seven horns.
 - The woman is sitting on the sea of peoples and nations, as well as upon the Beast, so she seems to be sitting atop the Beast that has risen out of the waters.
 - Jerusalem's apostasy seems to connect with both Satan and the Empire.
Rome was the Devil's reigning political incarnation
 - Jerusalem was dependent upon Rome for her political existence. She was in bed politically and religiously with institutionalized paganism, cooperating with Rome in the crucifixion of Christ and the murderous persecution of Christians.
 - The harlot is seated on the Beast...so, the Harlot is not Rome, for she is distinct from it.
 - She is seated on the Beast, supported by it...the Seven heads are the seven hills of Rome upon which she rides. The throne of the Harlot Queen is supported by a Beast who is full of blasphemous names.
 - The Woman is clothed in purple and scarlet
 - Garments of splendor and royalty for one who sits as a queen. Revelation 18: 'I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.'

- She is gilded with gold, jewels, and pearls...which is interesting, because God, via Isaiah says that he will bedeck his bride, Covenant-keeping Israel with colorful gems, precious stones, and crystal, but the Harlot, apostate Israel, has the same look, but is NOT the same Bride.
- These garments and jewels were to be the clothing of the righteous woman...not the harlot. Note the same also in Ezekiel 16.

- St. John wants us to see that this degenerate whore...apostate Jerusalem...is lying and wearing the clothes of Yahweh's bride...she's a deceiver.
One should note that the enormous veil covering the temple gate (over 80' high and 24' wide, was a 'Babylonian tapestry, embroidered with blue, and fine linen [c.f., 18:16] and scarlet, and purple.' Josephus, Jewish War, v.v.4

- She holds in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and impurities of her fornication
 - Old Jerusalem was to bring the sacramental blessing of the Cup of the Lord Jesus to the whole world, but instead she offered a cup of intoxicating drink meant to deceive and to lead men astray from the Lord, moreover, leading them to death and destruction.
 - One should be reminded of the Eucharist and the Cup of the Lord's Blood, now exchanged for a chalice of uncleanness and abominations—a word used to describe the worship of false gods.
 - The Pharisees, priests, and scribes prided themselves on their compliant excellence in ceremonial observance, cleanliness, and regulation, not realizing they and their services were radically unclean, defiled from within by its apostasy and fornication.
 - A picture of the High Priest, as Ford says, on the Day of Atonement wearing the vestments specially reserved for that occasion and holding the libation offering. However, instead of the sacred name upon his brow, the priest-harlot bears the name Babylon, mother of harlots and the abominations of the earth.

- Her name is a name of Mystery, namely Babylon the Great, mother of harlots and of earth's abomination.
 - The mystery of godliness is in 1 Tim 3: 16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.
 - The mystery of lawlessness is (2 Thess 2:7) is at work in this first century world deceiving all toward the Beast and leading all astray from the King of Righteousness
 - She was created to be the true Gate of God, but instead, she has followed the path of Old Babylon and is now identified with confusion.
 - Corresponding to Jezebel...she is the Mother of Harlots...and her children are harlots who always go astray from God.

Jerusalem was the persecutor of the prophets and saints par excellence: Matthew 21: 33 " Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. 34 "Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. 35 "And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. 36 "Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. 37 "Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 38 "But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' 39 "So they took him and

cast him out of the vineyard and killed him. 40 "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?" 41 They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons." 42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD's doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes'?" 43 "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. 44 "And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder." 45 Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them.

St. Stephen agreed: Acts 7:51 " You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you. 52 "Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, 53 "who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it." 54 When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with their teeth.

- So, as we put all of these themes together in Revelation, we note that the Great Harlot, Babylon the Great, is led by the harlot Jezebel and her fornications, that are sending Jerusalem to destruction, and, seemingly in some ways are seeping into the congregations, leading men astray from God.
- The harlot offers the demonic communion chalice: filled with the blood of the saints...a combination of unclean food and unclean marriage.
- At the moment of the harlot's glory, she is beautiful, alluring, and seductive...be not deceived, to turn away from her was very difficult...but God did not allow that to be an excuse for the Jews or the Romans...to follow her and align with her meant death.
- Even St. John wondered, even marveled (gaped, perhaps even admired), at the Harlot...to which the Angel replies, "why did you marvel." John is sending the message that this Harlot is alluring, and he does not want his readers/listeners to be deceived. She is beautiful and impressive...when one sailed toward Jerusalem, one could clearly see the bright and shining golden dome of the Temple reflecting brilliantly when the sun would reflect off of it.
- There is no hope for reform at this point for Jerusalem. Jerusalem is implacably at war with Jesus Christ and His people. The once Holy City is now a Whore...and now, the Angel tells John the MYSTERY—the Hidden Truth—of this woman.

8 The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is to ascend from the bottomless pit and go to perdition; and the dwellers on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will marvel to behold the beast, because it was and is not and is to come. 9 This calls for a mind with wisdom: the seven heads are seven hills on which the woman is seated; 10 they are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when he comes he must remain only a little while. 11 As for the beast that was and is not, it is an eighth but it belongs to the seven, and it goes to perdition. 12 And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received royal power, but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast. 13 These are of one mind and give over their power and authority to the beast; 14 they will make war

on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.”

15 And he said to me, “The waters that you saw, where the harlot is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues. 16 And the ten horns that you saw, they and the beast will hate the harlot; they will make her desolate and naked, and devour her flesh and burn her up with fire, 17 for God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by being of one mind and giving over their royal power to the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. 18 And the woman that you saw is the great city which has dominion over the kings of the earth.”

- The beast here, as well as the other beast, the False Prophet, and the Image of the Beast all are successive manifestations of Satan himself, HENCE, the understanding of the beast that was and is not is that he was:
 - The Great Red Dragon in Rev 12:3
 - The King of the Abyss in Rev 9:11
 - The Beast that killed the witnesses in Rev 11:7
 - He is the one appearing for a season while murdering and persecuting, and then is cast out.
 - He then finds some other venue to manifest within...seeking rest...and finding none until he discovers his old house, empty, swept, and garnished, as if to invite his return...Milton Terry addressing Luke 11: 24 " When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' 25 "And when he comes, he finds it swept and put in order. 26 "Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first."
- The Beast WAS: in full power and momentum from Caesar to Nero; WAS NOT during the turmoil that occurred at Nero's suicidal death...causing the reign of 3 substandard emperors within a 2 year period of time (Galba, Otho, Vitellius); and WHO IT TO COME: this is Vespasian, who was a contemporary of Nero, had his favor, and then lost it, was subdued for a season and then came forth as the mighty Caesar who restored Rome's vigor and then, through his son Titus, ordered the sacking of Jerusalem.
 - Ford in his work on the Revelation, says that Vespasian was restored to the throne with the help of the 'men of the pit,' an epithet for perverse men from Qumran.
 - The Beast could be in a specific sense Vespasian: who was in favor, who was not, and then was again, however, the overarching sense is the power and momentum of the Caesars of Rome as mentioned above
- **John does remind us that the Beast ascends from the Abyss only to go to destruction!**
 - The Koine Greek word 'destruction, or to destroy,' is apolein, the root of Apollyon, the king of the Abyss in Rev 9:11...are we seeing the connections now?...
 - God is sovereign and has the Beast on a tether to only permit the Beast to do God's will...and God's will is that the Church NOT be destroyed EVER.
- The Dragon/Beast will, however, destroy apostate Israel by carrying her off upon his idolatrous cult...the Roman Empire led by its Image, the Caesars.

- In contrast to Christ's rising from the dead never to die again, the Beast arises in imitation of Christ's coming in power and glory to bring judgment and salvation.
 - Christ's coming/appearing, or Parousia against Jerusalem occurred in AD70.
 - Just as the Christians were awaiting Christ's coming for salvation and deliverance, the apostate Jews and the world were awaiting the salvation and deliverance that would come in no other name, but Caesar.
 - This second arising of the Beast, after the defeat of Nero, was astounding to the Jews and to all...and a reason for them to rejoice over the Beast.
- Why did the apostate Jews follow the Beast? Contrary to the elect, whose names were written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world (See Rev 13:8); these apostate's names WERE NOT THERE. These rejoiced over Rome, but mocked the Christians and their Christ
 - 2 Peter 3:1 Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), 2 that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, 3 knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." 5 For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, 6 by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. 7 But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.
 - Hebrews 10: 35 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 37 "For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him." 39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.
 - Phil 1: 27 Only let your conduct be worthy of the Gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel, 28 and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God. 29 For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, 30 having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me.
 - The Church has inherited the former status of Old Israel...1 Peter 2: 4 Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame." 7 Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone," 8 and "A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. 9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own

special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

- John Brown of Edinburgh says Israel disbelieved this declaration from Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16; disobeyed the command, rejected the Stone; they would not build on it; they would not receive Jesus Christ; on the contrary, they took Him, and with wicked hands they crucified and slew Him.
- The False Bride, the Whore, sits upon the Beast
 - The Whore Babylon, which is Jerusalem, is supported by Rome, described here as the city famous for its Seven Hills:

1. Aventine Hill (Latin, Aventinus; Italian, Aventino)
2. Caelian Hill (Caelius, Celio)
3. Capitoline Hill (Capitolium, Campidoglio)
4. Esquiline Hill (Esquilinus, Esquilino)
5. Palatine Hill (Palatinus, Palatino)
6. Quirinal Hill (Quirinalis, Quirinale)
7. Viminal Hill (Viminalis, Viminale)

The Vatican Hill (Latin Collis Vaticanus) lying northwest of the Tiber, the Pincian Hill (Latin Mons Pincius), lying to the north, and the Janiculum Hill (Latin Ianiculum), lying to the west, are not counted among the traditional Seven Hills.

- Apostate Jerusalem also rests on the power of Seven Kings, or Caesars:
 - Five of whom have died: Julius, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, and Claudius
 - Some do not count Julius in the line of Caesars historically, BUT, to the first century reader that argument is irrelevant. They say the Empire began with Augustus, not Julius (cf. Tacitus, The Annals, i.1.), an irrelevant technicality in the exegesis of the Revelation.
 - Julius Caesar claimed the title of Emperor, and the most early Roman, Christian, and Jewish writers claim him as first Emperor. Suetonius' Lives of the Twelve Caesars; Dio Cassius, Roman History; Book 5 of the Sibylline Oracles calls Julius "the first king" and 4 Ezra 12:15 speaks of Augustus as the "second" of the emperors. Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, xix.i.11 speaks of Julius as the first king, and Augustus and Tiberius as 2nd and 3rd in xviii.ii.2.
 - One is...he is Nero, the sixth Caesar, was on the throne at the writing of St. John
 - The other has not yet come: Galba, who would be named Caesar, and only remain a little while...less than 7 months to be exact.
- The END of the Julian line with Nero DOES NOT mean the end of the Church's problems, for the real enemy of the Church is the BEAST...namely the Dragon, not those in whom he manifests.
 - The Eighth King, Galba, is of the seven...so, the Church was NOT to think that things would be good after the death of the seventh, for the eighth is OF the seven...
 - Eight is the number of resurrection (Christ arose on the eighth day), and it seems that with Galba, the Roman Empire revived, or was resurrected to power...even though she will go to destruction.

- The 10 horns are 10 kings: Rome had 10 imperial provinces: Italy, Achaia, Asia, Syria, Egypt, Africa, Spain, Gaul, Britain, and Germany. F.W.Ferrar, *The Early Days of Christianity*. 1882, p. 532.
- The Harlot has aligned herself with these kings, regardless of their specific names, so as to align with Rome, the Beast...these are the ones with whom she committed political and religious fornication.
- These 10 Kings align themselves against the Lord God and His Christ as we've read in Psalm 2. They would be of one mind and one accord to persecute the Christians for a short period of time, and that very heatedly.
 - They wage war against the Lamb (as in Revelation 12:7—the Dragon and Michael)
 - To UNSEAT God and His Christ as Lord over all, has always been the motive of reprobate man through Government.
 - Note the apostles words in their prayer to God after being released from persecution with arrest in Jerusalem:
 Acts 4: 24 So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: "Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, 25 "who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: 'Why did the nations rage, And the people plot vain things? 26 The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the LORD and against His Christ.' 27 "For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together 28 "to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done. 29 "Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, 30 "by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus." 31 And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Note how enemies can align when their common enemy is Christ and his Kingdom coming: Luke 23: 10 And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him. 11 Then Herod, with his men of war, treated Him with contempt and mocked Him, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him back to Pilate. 12 That very day Pilate and Herod became friends with each other, for previously they had been at enmity with each other.

- The Lamb's victory is assured...the Church can have confidence in this victory, for Christ Jesus is Lord of all Lords, and King of all kings and he will reign forever and ever. St. John comforts the saints by assuring them that their Lord knows them, for they are the called, the chosen, or elect ones, and the faithful ones.
 - Jesus wondered about finding faithful ones upon his parousia, His return at the end of the Age [of the Old Testament]: Luke 18: 7 "And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? 8 "I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith [faithfulness] on the earth?"
 - Christ Church, who were following him were those called from the foundations of the world, elect according to the foreknowledge of God, and faithful to follow

the Christ, not even loving their lives and following Jesus even unto death.

- The Harlot sits upon the roaring and rumblings of many peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.
 - Isaiah 57: 20 But the wicked are like the troubled sea, When it cannot rest, Whose waters cast up mire and dirt. 21 "There is no peace," Says my God, "for the wicked."
 - The Jews were engaged in every part of the empire, and there were synagogues in every city to the extent their colonization could be seen in the record of the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:5-11). "...9 "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 "Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, 11 "Cretans and Arabs -- we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."

Therefore, the Harlot Israel rode upon the Roman Empire's infrastructure, idolatry, and influence. At the same time, there were the called Jews who were devout men from every part of the empire...so, there were more forces at work than just evil via the Beast and False Prophet.

- During the height of the Great Tribulation, Rome, thinking that Christianity was simply a *pesty* offshoot of Judaism, TURNED and RAGED AGAINST the Harlot Israel...thinking that if the City of the Jews were destroyed, then the Christians would be snuffed out also.
- The nations frolicked in the fornication with this Harlot nation of Israel, and loved the trade and connection with the great Temple City of Jerusalem, UNTIL, God's wrath was filled to the brim...then, he placed it into the hearts of the nations to vehemently HATE the Jews and to attack them and destroy them, including the Christians. God was now exposing this Whore as he did once before the nation of Babylon.

Jeremiah 13: 26 Therefore I will uncover your skirts over your face, That your shame may appear.

Lamentations 1: 8 Jerusalem has sinned gravely, Therefore she has become vile. All who honored her despise her Because they have seen her nakedness; Yes, she sighs and turns away. 9 Her uncleanness is in her skirts; She did not consider her destiny; Therefore her collapse was awesome; She had no comforter. "O LORD, behold my affliction, For the enemy is exalted!"

A Fourfold Hatred:

- To make her DESOLATE
 - Rome and its uncleanness, and its idolatrous emblems (the Eagle Shields brought into the Temple and then worshipped) were indeed the Abomination the Makes DESOLATE.
 - *Matthew 24:15 " Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), 16 "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 17 "Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. 18 "And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. 19 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 "And pray that your*

flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. 21 "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 "And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened

- *Daniel 9:26 "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined. 27 Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."*
- To Strip her Naked: which is one of the punishments of a harlot in the ancient world...bring her forth publicly and strip her naked for her shame to be seen...this was done to punish the acts as well as to strike fear into the hearts of others not to perform such acts.
 - The nation of Babylon shamed because she was once enlightened (under Nebuchadnezzar—see Daniel 2), but then she turned away from the true and living God: Isaiah 47:1 "Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; Sit on the ground without a throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans! For you shall no more be called Tender and delicate. 2 Take the millstones and grind meal. Remove your veil, Take off the skirt, Uncover the thigh, Pass through the rivers. 3 Your nakedness shall be uncovered, Yes, your shame will be seen; I will take vengeance, And I will not arbitrate with a man."
- To Eat her Flesh: as the dogs did rightly so to Jezebel for her murder of the prophets. (1 Kings 21:23-24; 2 Kings 9:30-37)
- To Burn her with fire: The just judgment of Yahweh upon a convicted harlot Leviticus 21: 9 'The daughter of any priest, if she profanes herself by playing the harlot, she profanes her father. She shall be burned with fire.
 - Israel was a priestly nation who played the harlot, and therefore was due the punishment of the convicted harlot daughter of a priest...also, recall that she was to be the priestly daughter of the Great High Priest Jesus Christ, after the order of Melchizedek.
 - God would use demons to assemble her former lovers to go up and attack her and then burn her to the ground

Jeremiah 4:11 At that time it will be said To this people and to Jerusalem, "A dry wind of the desolate heights blows in the wilderness Toward the daughter of My people -- Not to fan or to cleanse -- 12 A wind too strong for these will come for Me; Now I will also speak judgment against them." 13 "Behold, he shall come up like clouds, And his chariots like a whirlwind. His horses are swifter than eagles. Woe to us, for we are plundered!".... 30 "And when you are plundered, What will you do? Though you clothe yourself with crimson, Though you adorn yourself with ornaments of gold, Though you enlarge your eyes with paint, In vain you will make yourself fair; Your lovers will despise you; They will seek your life.

31 "For I have heard a voice as of a woman in labor, The anguish as of her who brings forth her first child, The voice of the daughter of Zion bewailing herself; She spreads her hands, saying, 'Woe is me now, for my soul is weary Because of murderers!'

Ezekiel 16:37 "surely, therefore, I will gather all your lovers with whom you took pleasure, all those you loved, and all those you hated; I will gather them from all around against you and will uncover your nakedness to them, that they may see all your nakedness. 38 "And I will judge you as women who break wedlock or shed blood are judged; I will bring blood upon you in fury and jealousy.

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

40 "They shall also bring up an assembly against you, and they shall stone you with stones and thrust you through with their swords. 41 "They shall burn your houses with fire, and execute judgments on you in the sight of many women; and I will make you cease playing the harlot, and you shall no longer hire lovers.

Ezekiel 23:22 " Therefore, Oholibah, thus says the Lord GOD: 'Behold, I will stir up your lovers against you, From whom you have alienated yourself, And I will bring them against you from every side:...25 I will set My jealousy against you, And they shall deal furiously with you; They shall remove your nose and your ears, And your remnant shall fall by the sword; They shall take your sons and your daughters, And your remnant shall be devoured by fire. 26 They shall also strip you of your clothes And take away your beautiful jewelry. 27 'Thus I will make you cease your lewdness and your harlotry Brought from the land of Egypt, So that you will not lift your eyes to them, Nor remember Egypt anymore.' 28 "For thus says the Lord GOD: 'Surely I will deliver you into the hand of those you hate, into the hand of those from whom you alienated yourself. 29 'They will deal hatefully with you, take away all you have worked for, and leave you naked and bare. The nakedness of your harlotry shall be uncovered, both your lewdness and your harlotry. 30 'I will do these things to you because you have gone as a harlot after the Gentiles, because you have become defiled by their idols.

- Russel speaks of Cornelius Tacitus, Histories, v.1 writings (See also Jewish War, ii.xviii): "Tacitus speaks of the bitter animosity with which the Arab auxiliaries of Titus were filled against the Jews, and we have a fearful proof of the intense hatred felt towards the Jews by the neighboring nations in the wholesale massacres of that unhappy people perpetrated in many great cities just before the outbreak of the war. The whole Jewish population of Caesarea were massacred in one day. In Syria every city was divided into two camps, Jews and Syrians. In Scythopolis upwards of thirteen thousand Jews were butchered; in Ascalon, Ptolemais, and Tyre, similar atrocities took place. But in Alexandria, the carnage of the Jewish inhabitants exceeded all the other massacres. The whole Jewish quarter was deluged with blood, and fifty thousand corpses lay in ghastly heaps in the streets.

This is a commentary regarding Revelation 17:16 wherein the 10 kings would arise and hate the Harlot.

- As far as the Romans knew, they were not aware their war was against Christ, but against the Jews and the Christians as mentioned by the Sacred History of Sulpitius Severus, in A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church...Second Series, Vol ii, p. 111. "Titus is said, after calling a council, to have first deliberated whether he should destroy the temple, a structure of such extraordinary work. For it seemed good to some that a sacred edifice,

distinguished above all human achievements, ought not to be destroyed, inasmuch as, if preserved, it would furnish an evidence of Roman moderation, but, if destroyed, would serve for a perpetual proof of Roman cruelty. But on the opposite side, others and Titus himself thought that the temple ought specially to be overthrown, in order that the religion of the Jews and of the Christians might more thoroughly be subverted; for that these religions, although contrary to each other, had nevertheless proceeded from the same authors; that the Christians had sprung up from among the Jews; and that, if the root were extirpated, the offshoot would speedily perish.

- The Beast thought he could kill the Whore and the Bride with one fell swoop...but he was wrong. Chilton: ...But when the dust settled, the scaffolding of old apostate Jerusalem lay in ruins, and the Church was revealed as the new and most glorious Temple, God's eternal dwelling place.
- God was directing all of the parts of this final act of the Old Testament world, and that without violating the freewill of any of the actors. His will was done on earth as it was accomplished in heaven.
 - God is not the Author of Sin...yet, the text says that God places these purposes into their hearts to carry out his will, until God's will is completely fulfilled.
 - Psalm 145: 17 The LORD is righteous in all His ways, Gracious in all His works.
 1. God is NOT responsible for sin
 2. Nothing happens in spite of Him, or in opposition to his purpose (this seems contradictory because we are creatures and cannot see, think, and operate as does God.
 - Cornelius Van Till: Human knowledge can never be completely comprehensive knowledge. Every knowledge transaction has in it somewhere a reference point to God. Now since God is not fully comprehensible to us we are bound to come into what seems to be contradiction in all our knowledge. Our knowledge is analogical and therefore must be paradoxical." Defense of the Faith.
 - To those who continue to fight God's decrees, or His words, God says very bluntly: Romans 9: 20 But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, "Why have you made me like this?" 21 Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor? 22 What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, 23 and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, 24 even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? 25 As He says also in Hosea: "I will call them My people, who were not My people, And her beloved, who was not beloved." 26 "And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' There they shall be called sons of the living God."

Augustine, Anti-Pelagian Works: It is therefore in the power of the wicked to sin; but that in sinning they do this or that is not in their power, but in God's, who divides the darkness and regulates it; so that hence even what they do contrary to God's will is not fulfilled except it be God's will.

- God has placed it into the hearts of the pagan kings to ensure the desolation and destruction of the Great Harlot...so that God's will would be accomplished, and his judgment sure.
 - The curses of Deut 28 were executed upon Israel
 - The whole purpose for the pagan kings' wrath, their joining in the conspiracy against the Whore and the Bride, for their surrendering their kingdoms to the Beast, and receiving power for one hour (a very short period of intensity) was to fulfill God's purpose against the Harlot, the Great City, Babylon the Great...Apostate Jerusalem.

- The Great City is identified as Jerusalem, where the Lord was crucified (Rev 11:18; 16:19), which has dominion over the kings of the earth.
 - How can Jerusalem be a great city OVER the kings of the earth?
 - ANSWER: The Revelation IS NOT a book about politics; it is a book about Covenant.
 - Jerusalem DID REIGN over the nations...She did possess a Kingdom which was above every kingdom of the world, covenantally speaking...She was lifted high as the only nation that knew Yahweh personally, and who could disciple the nations and atone for their sins.
 - Jerusalem was a priestly nation (Exo 19:6), a kingdom of priests who were to serve all nations the truth of the One True God...she would be the sacramental servant of all, and thus the Greatest of All!
 - She was to execute the ministry of guardianship, instruction, and intercession on behalf of the nations of the world...that's why 70 bulls were offered during the Feast of Tabernacles for the 70 nations of the world
 - When Israel was obedient, the world was at peace and atoned for
 - When Israel broke covenant, the world was in turmoil
 - The Gentile nations recognized this: Solomon in 1 Kings 10: 24 Now all the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.
 - Yet, it would seem the nations were always trying to seduce Israel to commit fornication with them politically and religiously...which led Israel's leaders and Israel astray.

 - Josephus pointed out many times the sanctity and centrality of the Temple. "This celebrated place...was esteemed holy by all mankind" Jewish War, v.i.3

 - The action of the Jewish rebels in the summer of AD66 of halting the daily sacrifices for the Emperor (in violation, of long-standing practice) was the single event which finally precipitated the Roman war against the Jews (ii.xvii.2-4). Even at the very end, as Titus prepared to raze the city to the ground, he was still pleading with the Jewish priests to offer up the sacrifices, which by now had been entirely discontinued. (vi.ii.1).

- Israel's FINAL EXCOMMUNICATION from the Covenant of God took place at her burning in AD70.
 - The desolation of the Harlot was God's final sign that the Kingdom of God had been transferred to His new people, the Church...The Kingdom over the Kingdoms will never again be possessed by National Israel.

The Prophetic Fall of Babylon...the Lament.

Revelation 18: 1 After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority; and the earth was made bright with his splendor. 2 And he called out with a mighty voice,

**“Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!
It has become a dwelling place of demons,
a haunt of every foul spirit,
a haunt of every foul and hateful bird;**

**3 for all nations have drunk[a] the wine of her impure passion,
and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her,
and the merchants of the earth have grown rich with the wealth of her wantonness.”**

**4 Then I heard another voice from heaven saying,
“Come out of her, my people,
lest you take part in her sins,
lest you share in her plagues;**

**5 for her sins are heaped high as heaven,
and God has remembered her iniquities.**

**6 Render to her as she herself has rendered,
and repay her double for her deeds;
mix a double draught for her in the cup she mixed.**

**7 As she glorified herself and played the wanton,
so give her a like measure of torment and mourning.
Since in her heart she says, ‘A queen I sit,
I am no widow, mourning I shall never see,’**

**8 so shall her plagues come in a single day,
pestilence and mourning and famine,
and she shall be burned with fire;
for mighty is the Lord God who judges her.”**

- Knowing that there are NO CHAPTER BREAKS in the original Greek manuscripts, we read that John sees, immediately after describing the Whore Babylon—apostate Israel—God himself, Jesus Christ, the Lord of Lords manifested coming down from heaven in all of His glory. Although described here as an Angel, the word is Messenger.
 - Ezekiel 43:1 Afterward he brought me to the gate, the gate that faces toward the east. 2 And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east. His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory.
 - Christ Himself, who was directly and indirectly persecuted by apostate Israel (the Harlot)...directly (the betrayal, rejection, and the cross) and indirectly (the martyrdom of the prophets of old and the saints, the apostles), NOW proclaims definitively and prophetically the fall of Jerusalem with a LOUD VOICE...speaking as the Almighty Lord.

- Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!

- This lament is familiar from the days of the Babylonian captivity as recorded in Amos 5:1 Hear this word which I take up against you, a lamentation, O house of Israel: 2 The virgin of Israel has fallen; She will rise no more. She lies forsaken on her land; There is no one to raise her up.
- Contrasting the Old Jerusalem (Babylon the Great) with the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:27):
 - **Old Jerusalem:** a haunt, or wilderness made desolate by her sins. The word 'desert' means a an arid place of sin and demons (Matthew 12:43). Note also the arid nature of the earth that the curse brings about in the garden: Genesis 3: 17 Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. 18 Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field.
NOTE: on the Day of Atonement, the scapegoat was literally said to be sent to or for Azazel (word for wilderness, desert, desolation, desolate):
Leviticus 16:8 "Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat...10 "But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make atonement upon it, and to let it go as the scapegoat into the *wilderness*... 7 "They shall no more offer their sacrifices to demons, after whom they have played the harlot. This shall be a statute forever for them throughout their generations." '
 - Whoever touched the scapegoat going to Azazel was unclean...Lev 17:26 "And he who released the goat as the scapegoat shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp.
 - Jeroboam forced the Israelites to sacrifice to Azazel, which was the name of the Goat-demon who inhabited the wilderness: 2 Chron 11:15 Then he appointed for himself priests for the high places, for the demons, and the calf idols which he had made. 16 And after the Levites left, those from all the tribes of Israel, such as set their heart to seek the LORD God of Israel, came to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the LORD God of their fathers.
 - Regarding the Fall of Babylon the nation in Isaiah 13: 21 But wild beasts of the desert will lie there, And their houses will be full of owls; Ostriches will dwell there, And wild goats [goat demons] will caper there. 22 The hyenas will howl in their citadels, And jackals in their pleasant palaces. Her time is near to come, And her days will not be prolonged."
 - Note God's wrath against Israel's neighbor, Edom in Isaiah 34:
10 It shall not be quenched night or day; Its smoke shall ascend forever. From generation to generation it shall lie waste; No one shall pass through it forever and ever. 11 But the pelican and the porcupine shall possess it, Also the owl and the raven shall dwell in it. And He shall stretch out over it The line of confusion and the stones of emptiness. 12 They shall call its nobles to the kingdom, But none shall be there, and all its princes shall be nothing. 13 And thorns shall come up in its palaces, Nettles and brambles in its fortresses; It shall be a habitation of jackals, A courtyard for ostriches. 14 The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the jackals, And the wild goat shall bleat to its companion; Also the night creature shall rest there, And find for herself a place of rest.

- God’s dwelling place, has now become a dwelling place of demons and all that is unclean
 - **New Jerusalem:** nothing unclean ever enters it. God is there dwelling in it and the light of His glory is its light.

- Verse 3 depicts Jerusalem’s wretched stewardship of her position as the priestly daughter nation that was to disciple the nations:
 - Israel prostituted her gifts, confused Yahweh’s teachings, and led men astray from the truth
 - **NOTE:** Jesus’ cleansing the demon-infested temple to restore it to a House of God’s presence and healing
Matthew 21: 12 Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. 13 And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.' " 14 Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them.
 - Chilton: “The corruption of Temple commerce affected the liturgy of the nation. All of life flows from the religious center of culture. If the core is rotten, the fruit is worthless.”
 - Josephus refers to the high priest Ananias as “the great procurer of money.” Ford says that “the court of the Gentiles appears to have been the scene of a flourishing trade in animal sacrifice, perhaps supported by the high priestly family.”

- **KNOWING** that Israel and Jerusalem was to be destroyed, the apostles preached that the followers of Christ were to separate themselves from this generation of apostate Jews.
 - Acts 2:37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" 38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." 40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."
 - Acts 3:19 "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, 20 "and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, 21 "whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. 22 "For Moses truly said to the fathers, 'The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. 23 'And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.' 24 "Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days. 25 "You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' 26 "To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities."

- Acts 4:8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: 9 "If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, 10 "let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. 11 "This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' 12 "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." 13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus. 14 And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. 15 But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, 16 saying, "What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them is evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. 17 "But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name." 18 And they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. 20 "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." 21 So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way of punishing them, because of the people, since they all glorified God for what had been done. 22 For the man was over forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed. 23 And being let go, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. 24 So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: "Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, 25 "who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: 'Why did the nations rage, And the people plot vain things? 26 The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the LORD and against His Christ.' 27 "For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together 28 "to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done. 29 "Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, 30 "by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus." 31 And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. 32 Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. 33 And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all.

- Acts 5: 27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest asked them, 28 saying, "Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man's blood on us!" 29 But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men. 30 "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree. 31 "Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. 32 "And we are His witnesses to these things,

and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him." 33 When they heard this, they were furious and plotted to kill them.

- Although the Christians would certainly be rejoicing over the prophesied overthrow of apostate Jerusalem...it would be a horrifying and sad event to see the Old World burned.
- The Lord Jesus would not permit the Christians to stay and reform the apostates...they were to immediately come out of her so that they would NOT share in her sins and judgment/plagues.
 - Recall the writer to the Hebrews who warned the Christians not to turn back, but to persevere in the faith...Those who turned back were doomed...the message to the Christians regarding the apostates in Hebrews 6: 4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame. 7 For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; 8 but if it bears thorns and briars, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned. 9 But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. 10 For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. 11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.
 - It is IMPOSSIBLE to turn back to another covenant with God
 - There is nothing and no Savior to turn back to---only death and eternal doom
 - EVEN the Old Testament fathers, with the foremost being Abraham believed in Christ and looked forward to him...and SAW HIM: 1 Cor. 10: 1 Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, 2 all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 3 all ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.
- The END OF THE AGES is at hand, and Christ's people must come out from Jerusalem and the Old Testament system and cleave to Christ.
 - For the wrath of God is filled...Matthew 23: 32 "Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' guilt. 33 "Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? 34 "Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, 35 "that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. 36 "Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. 37 " O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! 38 "See! Your house is left to you desolate; 39 "for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' "

The apostates would indeed note the active presence/the appearing of Christ as he comes in judgment upon Jerusalem bearing the name of Yahweh!

- 1 Thess 2:14 For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they did from the Judeans, 15 who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men,
- Luke 21: 23 "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. 24 "And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. 25 " And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; 26 "men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. 27 "Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. 28 "Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near." 29 Then He spoke to them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. 30 "When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near. 31 "So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near. 32 "Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place. 33 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. 34 " But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. 35 "For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36 "Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."
- "Pay her back DOUBLE!" A message spoken either to the angels in general, or to the Roman armies, who were led to perdition by her.
 - Ex 21:23-25: Life for Life, Eye for Eye, Tooth for Tooth, Hand for Hand, Foot for Foot, Burn for Burn, Wound for Wound, and Bruise for Bruise.
 - A Hebraic duplication—pay her back double...double restitution is the Law of God: Exodus 22:4 "If the theft is certainly found alive in his hand, whether it is an ox or donkey or sheep, he shall restore double...7 " If a man delivers to his neighbor money or articles to keep, and it is stolen out of the man's house, if the thief is found, he shall pay double. Jeremiah 16:18 "And first I will repay double for their iniquity and their sin, because they have defiled My land; they have filled My inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable idols."
 - Jeremiah 17:18 "And first I will repay double for their iniquity and their sin, because they have defiled My land; they have filled My inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable idols."
- Even as God is ready to repay her double: Old Israel's attitude is one of arrogance and non-repentance. She says IN HER HEART: "I sit as a queen and am not a widow, and will never see mourning." This heart attitude is what the Lord Jesus rebuked the Laodicean church about, "I have become rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing."

- The current pronouncement upon Babylon is like unto Isaiah's pronouncement on national Babylon about 700BC for being called to chasten God's people, but not unduly so, therefore, God's wrath would come upon Babylon for excessive punishment they enacted upon God's people, Israel.

Isaiah 47: 6 I was angry with My people; I have profaned My inheritance, And given them into your hand. You showed them no mercy; On the elderly you laid your yoke very heavily. 7 And you said, 'I shall be a lady forever,' So that you did not take these things to heart, Nor remember the latter end of them. 8 " Therefore hear this now, you who are given to pleasures, Who dwell securely, Who say in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one else besides me; I shall not sit as a widow, Nor shall I know the loss of children'; 9 But these two things shall come to you In a moment, in one day: The loss of children, and widowhood. They shall come upon you in their fullness Because of the multitude of your sorceries, For the great abundance of your enchantments. 10 "For you have trusted in your wickedness; You have said, 'No one sees me'; Your wisdom and your knowledge have warped you; And you have said in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one else besides me.' 11 Therefore evil shall come upon you; You shall not know from where it arises. And trouble shall fall upon you; You will not be able to put it off. And desolation shall come upon you suddenly, Which you shall not know. 12 " Stand now with your enchantments And the multitude of your sorceries, In which you have labored from your youth -- Perhaps you will be able to profit, Perhaps you will prevail. 13 You are wearied in the multitude of your counsels; Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, And the monthly prognosticators Stand up and save you From what shall come upon you. 14 Behold, they shall be as stubble, The fire shall burn them; They shall not deliver themselves From the power of the flame; It shall not be a coal to be warmed by, Nor a fire to sit before!

- Jerusalem has committed the same sin as Eve, who committed fornication with the Dragon, if you will (Gen 3:5).
- The Day of the Lord will come upon Jerusalem quickly...This would be the Last Day of the Last Days of Israel...the end of the Old Covenant, and the breaking forth of the Kingdom of God.
 - Josephus, War, vii.i.1: After that awful Day came, "there was left nothing to make those who came there believe it had ever been inhabited."
 - 2 Peter 3: 7 But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. 8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. 11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? 13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.
 - Jerusalem and its temple, the entire heavens and earth to the Jews was in the glidepath for destructions...the Christians were to align their behavior and faithfulness toward the One who could through body and soul into hell.

9 And the kings of the earth, who committed fornication and were wanton with her, will weep and wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning; 10 they will stand far off, in fear of her torment, and say,

**“Alas! alas! thou great city,
thou mighty city, Babylon!
In one hour has thy judgment come.”**

11 [b]And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her, since no one buys their cargo any more, 12 cargo of gold, silver, jewels and pearls, fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet, all kinds of scented wood, all articles of ivory, all articles of costly wood, bronze, iron and marble, 13 cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and slaves, that is, human souls.

14 “The fruit for which thy soul longed has gone from thee, and all thy dainties and thy splendor are lost to thee, never to be found again!”

15 The merchants of these wares, who gained wealth from her, will stand far off, in fear of her torment, weeping and mourning aloud, 16“Alas, alas, for the great city that was clothed in fine linen, in purple and scarlet, bedecked with gold, with jewels, and with pearls! 17 In one hour all this wealth has been laid waste.” And all shipmasters and seafaring men, sailors and all whose trade is on the sea, stood far off 18 and cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning,

“What city was like the great city?”

19 And they threw dust on their heads, as they wept and mourned, crying out,

**“Alas, alas, for the great city
where all who had ships at sea grew rich by her wealth!
In one hour she has been laid waste.**

**20 Rejoice over her, O heaven,
O saints and apostles and prophets,
for God has given judgment for you against her!”**

- Three classes of men mourn Jerusalem’s destruction, yet stand in awe and fear of the judgment against her: kings of the earth, merchants, shipmasters and sailors
 - They mourn her inability to give them a business market with a flow of revenue and riches
 - They mourn there is no more luxury and wealth to enjoy in the city—there is no more prime vacation and play spot
 - There was no more port worth docking at, so, no more merchants hiring the ships to take them to Jerusalem
 - Kings of the Earth: they fornicated with her, aided and abetted her apostasy from Yahweh, aligned with her against God’s Christ and his people, then turned on her, burned her, and now they mourn her—madness

- They see the smoke of her burning as did the mourners of Sodom and Edom
Gen 19:28 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.
Isaiah 34: 10 It shall not be quenched night or day; Its smoke shall ascend forever. From generation to generation it shall lie waste; No one shall pass through it forever and ever.
 - They also must drink of God’s wrath, as did the kings who sacked Jerusalem during the Babylonian captivity
Jeremiah 25: 28 "And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink, then you shall say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "You shall certainly drink! 29 "For behold, I begin to bring calamity on the city which is called by My name, and should you be utterly unpunished? You shall not be unpunished, for I will call for a sword on all the inhabitants of the earth," says the LORD of hosts.'
 - The lament of each group begins with, “Woe, Woe, the Great City!”
 - These laments of “Woe” would have a significance to the inhabitants of Jerusalem based on the crier, whose name was “Jesus” READ JOSEPHUS, WAR, vi.v.3.301-309.
 - This largest group of mourners, the kings, are astounded at how relatively quickly the city has fallen...it is to be a lesson to all that faithful obedience and perseverance is what secures blessings, but prolonged and obstinate disobedience will not escape judgment. Recall John the Baptizer’s words in Matthew 3: 5 Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him 6 and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. 7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 "Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, 9 "and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. 10 "And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 11 "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12 "His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”
- The Merchants are weeping because no one buys their cargo here any longer.
 - First century Jerusalem was indeed wealthy, obviously religious and filled with it, beautiful, desirous to visit, and a great market to buy, sell, and make a profit.
 - God had bless her, for His presence was there.
 - All Jews visited Jerusalem 3X per year during the feasts of Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles.
 - Ford says the primary merchandise was food supplies, precious metals, luxury goods, and clothing materials.
 - There was luxurious wealth on the Temple’s façade (Luke 21:5), and READ JOSEPHUS: WAR, v.v.4,6
 - Note the luxurious temple items given over to Titus by high priests...READ WAR, vi.viii.3

- Also interesting is Edersheim’s description of Jerusalem: READ The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Vol 1, p. 116
 - Note that slaves, human souls were also trafficked in Jerusalem
 - The merchandise of purple, silk, scarlet, gold, incense and such are indicative of Jerusalem—the Great City—SHE IS GREAT due to her being Yahweh’s city, His covenantally blessed city—the city of truth and righteousness, and from which comes the Law of God, arrayed in the glory of the temple as a bride for Christ—this is greatness. This IS NOT a description of Rome, for that would be out of context.
- Again, the judgment was swift upon Jerusalem. Many were still awaiting a miraculous deliverance from God that never came. As God rolled up the Old Heavens and Earth of the Old Covenant redemptive system (which pointed to Christ), apostate Judaism was stunned at the desolation of its City and Temple. The fall of Jerusalem was a shock to the system from which it has never recovered.
 - The third group of men: the Shipmasters and sailors weep because their wealth from her has now ceased coming forth due to her swift judgment.
 - Sea farers were known to call upon the Lord in the distress of their vocation (Psa 107:23-32). They would sail to Jerusalem, the Great City, to be instructed in the ways of Yahweh and to engage in commerce—both blessings from the Lord.
 - Jerusalem taught all in the ways of God (Isaiah 2, Micah 4)
 - Jerusalem was a mecca of commerce with God’s blessing
Deut 28: 12 "The LORD will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.
1 Kings 10: 23 So King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom. 24 Now all the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom [c.f. Queen of Sheba], which God had put in his heart. 25 Each man brought his present: articles of silver and gold, garments, armor, spices, horses, and mules, at a set rate year by year.
 - When Israel was in fellowship with God, the nations would come, be taught, and then trade and prosper according to the blessings of God—the earth was well and stable at this time due to covenantal obedience and sacrificial redemption going on in the temple
 - When Israel failed to steward Yahweh’s doctrine and His blessings righteously, then the nations came and fornication between Israel and the nations took place at the expense of discipling the nations.
 - Israel, the False Prophet, aligned with the Beast of Rome and his image, Caesar, and played the Harlot and displayed and presented confusion...instead of being the Gateway of God to the kings, the merchants, and the sea captains, she became the Gate to the Lake of Fire.
 - Isaiah’s words of Babylon: Isaiah 14: 13 For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.' 15 Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit.
 - Severe mourning by all of Jerusalem’s lovers...even to the extent of throwing dust on their heads as if mourning and repent in sackcloth CRYING OUT: “Alas, alas, for the great city where all who had ships at sea grew rich by her wealth! In one hour

she has been laid waste.

- Finally, we hear the voice of the Angel say to the saints, apostles, and prophets: REJOICE! For God has given judgment for you against her!
 - **Christ won the lawsuit against the False Witness, and the judgment and spoils now go to the saints. NOTE this definitive act in Daniel's prophetic passage. We see the ascendance of Rome, her league with apostate Israel, Nero's war against the saints, Jesus' appearance, and the Victory of the Lord and his saints, and the time for the Kingdom to be possessed by the saints of the God Most High:**

Daniel 7:19 "Then I wished to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, which devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet; 20 "and the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, before which three fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance was greater than his fellows. 21 "I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, 22 "until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom. 23 " Thus he said: 'The fourth beast shall be A fourth kingdom on earth, Which shall be different from all other kingdoms, And shall devour the whole earth, Trample it and break it in pieces. 24 The ten horns are ten kings Who shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; He shall be different from the first ones, And shall subdue three kings. 25 He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time. 26 ' But the court shall be seated, And they shall take away his dominion, To consume and destroy it forever. 27 Then the kingdom and dominion, And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.'
 - The judgment of the Harlot is YOUR [the saints'] judgment!
 - Suffering during this Great Tribulation was to be endured while remaining active in the faith of Christ
 - The judgment of the Roman Empire and its people, and apostate Jerusalem for their persecutions and murders of the saints is JUST, a just judgment from God.

1 Thess 2:14 For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they did from the Judeans, 15 who killed both the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men, 16 forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up the measure of their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

2 Thess 1: 3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other, 4 so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, 5 which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that

you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer; 6 since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, 7 and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, 10 when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

- Chilton: "If the Church in our age is to proceed from victory to victory as did the Church in the apostolic age, she must recover the triumphalistic perspective of the early saints. The Church must pray for her enemies' defeat—a defeat that must come either by conversion or destruction. We are at war, a war in which the definitive victory has been won by our King [Jesus]. All of history is now a mopping-up operation in terms of that victory, looking forward to the conversion of the world and the final overcoming of Death itself. Our opposition is doomed to perish, and the Church is called to rejoice in the certain knowledge of her earthly vindication and ultimate triumph."

**21 Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying,
"So shall Babylon the great city be thrown down with violence,
and shall be found no more;**

**22 and the sound of harpers and minstrels, of flute players and trumpeters,
shall be heard in thee no more;
and a craftsman of any craft
shall be found in thee no more;
and the sound of the millstone
shall be heard in thee no more;**

**23 and the light of a lamp
shall shine in thee no more;
and the voice of bridegroom and bride
shall be heard in thee no more;
for thy merchants were the great men of the earth,
and all nations were deceived by thy sorcery.**

**24 And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints,
and of all who have been slain on earth."**

- The picture here is of the millstone being thrown into the sea...earlier, we saw the Second Angel in Revelation 8:8 and the burning mountain tossed into the sea
 - Both are pictures of apostate Israel being judged and destroyed
 - Israel: the nation who caused the world to Stumble—she was an offense to God, therefore, she was destroyed
- Matthew 18: 2 Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, 3 and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 "Therefore whoever

humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5
"Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me. 6 " But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. 7 "Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!

- Israel, the oppressor of the little ones, the disciples of Christ the Lord, who was the target of the imprecatory prayers of the saints, who have WON!

Matthew 17:19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" 20 So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. 21 "However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

Matthew 21:18 Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was hungry. 19 And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again." Immediately the fig tree withered away. 20 And when the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, "How did the fig tree wither away so soon?" 21 So Jesus answered and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done. 22 "And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."

Mark 11:20 Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. 21 And Peter, remembering, said to Him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away." 22 So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God. 23 "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. 24 "Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

- This is the dramatic action of a Strong Angel (3X in Revelation). The first strong angel is calling for someone to open the Scroll of the New Testament; the second mighty angel (Rev 10:1) is the witness to the New Creation, and the third strong angel casts a great millstone into the sea.
 - One can be reminded here of Pharaoh's armies being thrown into the sea (Neh 9:9-10)
 - Seraiah, Jeremiah's messenger of judgment in Jer. 51:61-64, showing Babylon's fall.
 - Jerusalem was not destroyed forever any more than Egypt, Babylon in Iraq, Edom, or Egypt were destroyed forever from existing.
 - Edom, for example, was made desolate, and became an untrodden wilderness, but it still exists, but it have not had enough inhabitants to prosper.
- Edom was the epitome of heathenism, arrogance, and oppression, and God prophesied against her for disturbing his people. Obadiah prophesies of her doom in Obadiah, AND NOW, apostate Israel is likened unto the terrible nation of Edom (from Esau's line), and will be left in ruin and burnt stubble, while the Kingdom of God becomes a brightly burning flame to the earth:
 - Edom was a cause, according to Patrick Fairbairn, bitter and unrelenting hostility to the cause and people of God. When Edom cooperated and blessed Israel, the people of God, then she was blessed with peace and prosperity...this blessing and heritage now belongs to the New Israel of God, the Church, Zion, the New Jerusalem, as we shall see at the end of the Revelation.

15 " For the day of the LORD upon all the nations is near; As you have done, it shall be done to you; Your reprisal shall return upon your own head. 16 For as you drank on my holy mountain, So shall all the nations drink continually; Yes, they shall drink, and swallow, And they shall be as though they had never been. 17 "But on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance, And there shall be holiness; The house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. 18 The house of Jacob shall be a fire, And the house of Joseph a flame; But the house of Esau shall be stubble; They shall kindle them and devour them, And no survivor shall remain of the house of Esau," For the LORD has spoken.

- Babylon HAS Fallen—this means that Jerusalem, over in the middle east...the Great City, the Holy City...IS NO LONGER.
 - In Christ Jesus, believers in God from the Jews and the Gentiles ARE NOW ONE in Christ
 - Christians make up the Church with Christ as Head and his ministry through the bishops.
 - There is ONE salvation through Christ, and ONE church, in which ALL believers, regardless of their ethnic heritage, become children of God and heirs of the promise to Abraham. Eph 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, 15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, 16 and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.
 - Galatians 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.
- Along with the rank and title of Yahweh's city taken away from Old Jerusalem through apostasy, the **blessings of the people of God are also taken away...forever:**
 - Jeremiah 7:34 "Then I will cause to cease from the cities of Judah and from the streets of Jerusalem the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride. For the land shall be desolate.
 - Jer 16:9 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, I will cause to cease from this place, before your eyes and in your days, the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride.
 - Jer 25:10 'Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp.
 - Isaiah 24:7 The new wine fails, the vine languishes, All the merry-hearted sigh. 8 The mirth of the tambourine ceases, The noise of the jubilant ends, The joy of the harp ceases. 9 They shall not drink wine with a song; Strong drink is bitter to those who drink it. 10 The city of confusion is broken down; Every house is shut up, so that

none may go in. 11 There is a cry for wine in the streets, All joy is darkened, The mirth of the land is gone. 12 In the city desolation is left, And the gate is stricken with destruction

- 1st: The Loss of music and joy: NOTE the fourfold loss of music: Harpists, minstrels, flautists, trumpeters
 - 2nd: The vocational productivity of the land: This time, the four craftsmen will not save Israel as they did in Zechariah's time (Zech 1:18-21)...judgment has come to its completion.
 - 3rd: No sound of production milling...it ceases..
The image of the mill was throughout the ancient world a symbol of the foundation of the cosmos grinding out peace and prosperity; the Mill's destruction signifies [not only the end of productivity and commerce, but also] the end of the Age. (Santillana and Dechend, Hamlet's Mill: An Essay on Myth and the Frame of Time)
 - 4th: The Light of the Lamp: the life, Israel suffers the loss of God's Word and the understanding thereof...no further prophecy, no further eschatological hope.
 - 5th: The joy of marriage is gone: reflecting that Israel's has left her estate as a faithful wife and played the Harlot...this good heritage has been passed to Christ and the Church, and his people.
- All of these losses can be seen in the loss of the Temple in Jerusalem:
 - Music: the Levitical orchestra and choir (1 Chron 25)
 - Craftsmen: c.f., Bezalel, Oholiab, Hiram (Ex 31:1-11; 1 Kings 5)
 - Mill: the Temple itself built on the "threshingfloor" 2 Chron 3:1
 - Lamp: the Lampstands (Ex 25:31-40)
 - Marriage: the marriage of the Lord and Israel (Ezekiel 16:1-14)
 - The merchants of Israel were great in the earth due to their prosperity...and as merchants, they were to let their light so shine before the nations that men could see Yahweh's goodness in them:

Deut. 4: 5 "Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should act according to them in the land which you go to possess. 6 "Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' 7 "For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the LORD our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him? 8 "And what great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law which I set before you this day?

Instead of being a blessing in the earth for righteousness, 15 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves. (Matthew 23)

Deception via rebellion from Yahweh, which is as the sin of witchcraft and sorcery. 1 Sam 15: 23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He also has rejected you from being king."

- First, through her sorceries, and Second through her shedding of innocent blood...she must be judged
 - Christ's condemnation of Israel
Matthew 23: 34 "Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, 35 "that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. 36 "Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. 37 " O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! 38 "See! Your house is left to you desolate;
- This language regarding the shedding of the blood of the prophets and saints CANNOT be used of any other nation, but Jerusalem and Judea...certainly NOT ROME:
 - God exacted ALL of the martyrs' blood from Jerusalem...from righteous Abel onward to Zechariah
 - Historically, it had ONLY been Jerusalem who persecuted the prophets (Acts 7:51-5)
 - It CANNOT be that a prophet should perish OUTSIDE OF JERUSALEM (Luke 13:33-34)
- Jerusalem was found GUILTY as charged, and from AD 67-70 she suffered the "days of vengeance," the outpouring of God's wrath for her age long shedding of innocent blood.

The Rejoicing in Heaven

Chapter 19: 1 After this I heard what seemed to be the mighty voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying,

"Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,

**2 for his judgments are true and just;
he has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication,
and he has avenged on her the blood of his servants."**

3 Once more they cried, "Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up for ever and ever."

4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who is seated on the throne, saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!" 5 And from the throne came a voice crying,

**"Praise our God, all you his servants,
you who fear him, small and great."**

6 Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunderpeals, crying,

"Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns.

**7 Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory,
for the marriage of the Lamb[a] has come,
and his Bride has made herself ready;**

**8 it was granted her to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure”—for the fine linen is the righteous
deeds of the saints.**

**9 And the angel said[b] to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper
of the Lamb.” And he said to me, “These are true words of God.” 10 Then I fell down at his feet to
worship him, but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your
brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus. Worship God.” For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of
prophecy.**

- Three strong Hallelujah’s come forth from heavenly sources at the destruction of Whore Babylon. Three high praises come from a great multitude, and one comes from the 24 elders and the four living creatures.
 - They rejoice over the righteous judgment of God of the Harlot
 - They rejoice over the Lord’s REIGN and VICTORY
 - They rejoice over the Marriage of the Lamb of God to his Bride, the Church
- We note the similarities between this passage of Revelation and that of Rev 11:15-19 wherein the announcement of the 7th angel of the completion of the Mystery of God: the opening of the Kingdom and the heavenly Temple to the whole world in the New Covenant. We see that the passage her in Revelation 19 is an extension, or elaboration of that which is in Rev 11.

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|--|--|
| 11:15—loud voices in heaven | 19:1—a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven |
| 11:15, 17—He will reign forever and ever...Thou has taken Thy great power and didst reign | 19:1,6—Hallelujah! Salvation and power and glory belong to our God...Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty reigns. |
| 11:16—The twenty-four elders...fell on their faces and worshipped God | 19:4—the twenty-four elders...fell down and worshipped God |
| 11:18—The time came for the dead to be vindicated, and the time to give their reward to Thy servants the prophets and to the saints. | 18:24-19:2—in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints...His judgments are true and righteous; for...He has avenged the blood of His servants |
| 11:18—Thy servants...those who fear Thy name, the small and the great. | 19:5—All you His servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great. |
| 11:19—there were lightnings, noises, and thunderings... | 19:6—The voice of a great multitude and as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty peals of thunder. |

- The appearance of the Bride, prepared for marriage, is thus the equivalent to the opening of the Temple and the full establishment of the New Covenant...the Kingdom of God come—definitively...which will continue coming progressively until ALL OF CHRIST’S ENEMIES ARE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET.

- When viewing Revelation 21:2-3, the readied Bride is prepared for her husband, Christ. The Bride is also the Church, noted in 21:9 as the Lamb's wife...she is also the New Jerusalem, the City of God, coming down out of heaven...the tabernacle of God made up of living stones (the church members) in which God now dwells by His Spirit.
 - Ephesians 5:31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.
 - The Church is Christ's body and bride—the faithful bride who has persevered through the trial of fire...the Great Tribulation...without giving up her testimony of her Lord

- The Revelation is a prophecy intended for “edification and exhortation and consolation.” 1 Cor 14:3 Its readers were commanded to heed those things written in the Book (Rev 1:3)
 - The Church is NOT TO MOURN the harlot's passing, but rejoice!
 - Hallelujah! Praise to Yahweh!
 - The Song of Praise is a Battle Hymn
 - **Beginning with PRAISE:** like the Old Test. Hallel-psalms (Ps. 113-118)
Psalm 104: 35 May sinners be consumed from the earth, And the wicked be no more. Bless the LORD, O my soul! Praise the LORD!
 - **Salvation and power and glory belong to our God**
2 Chronicles 29: 11 Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, The power and the glory, The victory and the majesty; For all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, And You are exalted as head over all. 12 Both riches and honor come from You, And You reign over all. In Your hand is power and might; In Your hand it is to make great And to give strength to all. 13 " Now therefore, our God, We thank You And praise Your glorious name.
 - **God's judgments are true and righteous:** Israel's destruction showcases God's righteous judgment because he has avenged Himself upon His own people, rejecting those who had been called by His name.

The Great Harlot corrupted the earth with her fornication, and the innocent blood she shed of the saints is now avenged. We see Yahweh's just judgment as was accomplished via Jehu against the wicked Jezebel

- Due to Ahab marrying her and letting her rule...Jezebel the harlot queen (2 Kings 9:22) steered Israel away from Yahweh's worship to the worship of statism and idolatry: 1 Kings 16: 29 In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab the son of Omri became king over Israel; and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty-two years. 30 Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, more than all who were before him. 31 And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him. 32 Then he set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. 33 And Ahab made a wooden image. Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him. 34 In his days Hiel of Bethel built Jericho. He laid its foundation with Abiram his firstborn, and with his youngest son Segub he set up its gates, according to the word of the LORD, which He had spoken through Joshua the son of Nun.
- She persecuted and murdered the prophets (1 Kings 18:4, 13)
- She raised up false witnesses to slander the righteous in court (1 Kings 21:1-16)

- Jehu was raised up to avenge the prophets and the name of Yahweh. Elisha spoke to Jehu, “2 Kings 9:7 'You shall strike down the house of Ahab your master, that I may avenge the blood of My servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD, at the hand of Jezebel.
- Jezebel’s harlotries and witchcraft made for NO PEACE in Jerusalem (2 Ki 9:22)
- God took her out: 2 Kings 9: 30 Now when Jehu had come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she put paint on her eyes and adorned her head, and looked through a window. 31 Then, as Jehu entered at the gate, she said, "Is it peace, Zimri, murderer of your master?" 32 And he looked up at the window, and said, "Who is on my side? Who?" So two or three eunuchs looked out at him. 33 Then he said, "Throw her down." So they threw her down, and some of her blood spattered on the wall and on the horses; and he trampled her underfoot. 34 And when he had gone in, he ate and drank. Then he said, "Go now, see to this accursed woman, and bury her, for she was a king's daughter." 35 So they went to bury her, but they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands. 36 Therefore they came back and told him. And he said, "This is the word of the LORD, which He spoke by His servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 'On the plot of ground at Jezreel dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel; 37 'and the corpse of Jezebel shall be as refuse on the surface of the field, in the plot at Jezreel, so that they shall not say, "Here lies Jezebel." ' ' "
- Israel during Messiah’s day played the harlot and was likewise destroyed...note the words of Jeremiah the prophet against Jerusalem: Jeremiah 4: 30 "And when you are plundered, What will you do? Though you clothe yourself with crimson, Though you adorn yourself with ornaments of gold, Though you enlarge your eyes with paint, In vain you will make yourself fair; Your lovers will despise you; They will seek your life.
 - Nothing short of repentance could have saved Jerusalem, but she would not
 - Vengeance is the Lord’s in these days of Vengeance.

Deut 32:23 ' I will heap disasters on them; I will spend My arrows on them. 24 They shall be wasted with hunger, Devoured by pestilence and bitter destruction; I will also send against them the teeth of beasts, With the poison of serpents of the dust. 25 The sword shall destroy outside; There shall be terror within For the young man and virgin, The nursing child with the man of gray hairs. 26 I would have said, "I will dash them in pieces, I will make the memory of them to cease from among men," 27 Had I not feared the wrath of the enemy, Lest their adversaries should misunderstand, Lest they should say, "Our hand is high; And it is not the LORD who has done all this." ' 28 " For they are a nation void of counsel, Nor is there any understanding in them. 29 Oh, that they were wise, that they understood this, That they would consider their latter end! 30 How could one chase a thousand, And two put ten thousand to flight, Unless their Rock had sold them, And the LORD had surrendered them? 31 For their rock is not like our Rock, Even our enemies themselves being judges. 32 For their vine is of the vine of Sodom And of the fields of Gomorrah; Their grapes are grapes of gall, Their clusters are bitter. 33 Their wine is the poison of serpents, And the cruel venom of cobras. 34 ' Is this not laid up in store with Me, Sealed up among My treasures? 35 Vengeance is Mine, and recompense; Their foot shall slip in due time; For the day of their calamity is at hand, And the things to come hasten upon them.' 36 "For the LORD will judge His people And have compassion on His servants, When He sees that their power is gone, And there is no one remaining, bond or free. 37 He will say: 'Where are their gods, The rock in which they sought refuge? 38 Who ate the fat of their sacrifices, And drank the wine of their drink offering? Let them rise and help you, And be your refuge. 39 'Now see that I, even I, am He, And there is no God besides Me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; Nor is there any who can deliver from My hand. 40 For I raise My hand to heaven, And say, "As I live forever, 41 If I whet My glittering sword, And My hand takes hold on judgment, I will render vengeance to My enemies, And repay those who hate Me. 42 I will make My

arrows drunk with blood, And My sword shall devour flesh, With the blood of the slain and the captives, From the heads of the leaders of the enemy." ' 43 "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people; For He will avenge the blood of His servants, And render vengeance to His adversaries; He will provide atonement for His land and His people."

- The second division of this praise to God, the Hillel is for her smoke rising up forever and ever...much like the smoke arising from Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19:28). The punishment was eternal...she will never be resurrected.
- The 24 elders and the four living creatures, then fell before Yahweh and worshipped. This also shows the godly fear in the public liturgy in that men fall down before God, who sits on his throne as King. As Solomon says in Ecclesiastes 5:1 Walk prudently when you go to the house of God; and draw near to hear rather than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they do evil. 2 Do not be rash with your mouth, And let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. For God is in heaven, and you on earth; Therefore let your words be few. 3 For a dream comes through much activity, And a fool's voice is known by his many words.
- Finally, we read of the voice coming from the throne, which could be the elders, or could more possibly be the Lord Jesus Christ calling upon his brethren to praise our God.
- After we see the destruction of the Harlot, we see the marriage of the Lamb to His Bride
 - The Marriage of the Bride and Bridegroom signifies the Coming of the Kingdom of God. God was not taking believers into the Old Covenant system as in ages past; God was bringing in the Age to Come, which was awaited:
Matthew 12:32 "Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.
 - Mark 10:29 So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the Gospel's, 30 "who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time -- houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions -- and in the age to come, eternal life.
 - Eph 1:17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, 18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power 20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.
 - Hebrews 2:5 For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels; Heb 6:5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,

- Pentecost was the inception of a New Covenant. With the final divorce and destruction of the unfaithful wife in AD 70, the marriage of the Church to her Lord was firmly established; the Eucharistic celebration of the Church was fully revealed in its true nature as “the Marriage Supper of the lamb.”
 - The duty of the apostles was to prepare the Church for her nuptials.
Ephesians 5: 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. 28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. 30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.
 - 2 Corinthians 11:1 Oh, that you would bear with me in a little folly -- and indeed you do bear with me. 2 For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. 3 But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

- Third century bishop St. Cyprian: “The spouse of Christ cannot be adulterous; she is uncorrupted and pure. She knows one home; she guards with chaste modesty the sanctity of one couch. She keeps us for God. She appoints the sons whom she has born for the kingdom. Whoever is separated from the Church and is joined to an adulteress, is separated from the promises of the Church; nor can he who forsakes the Church of Christ attain to the rewards of Christ. He is a stranger; he is profane; he is an enemy. He can no longer have God for His Father, who has not the Church for his mother. If anyone could escape who was outside the ark of Noah, then he also may escape who shall be outside of the Church. The Lord warns, saying, “He who is not with me is against me, and he who gathereth not with me scattereth (Matt 12:30). He who breaks the peace and concord of Christ, does so in opposition to Christ; he who gathereth elsewhere than in the Church, scattereth the Church of Christ...He who does not hold this unity does not hold God’s law, does not hold the faith of the Father and the Son, does not hold life and salvation.” On the Unity of the Church, 6; Vol 5, p 423

- An important point to make from verse 8 is that God, by his grace, his unmerited favor, grants the Church, He grants us as members, to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure, which is the genesis and motivating capability to perform righteous deeds.
Ephesians 2: 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.
 - Our sanctification is due wholly to the gracious work of God’s Spirit in us as we acquiesce to His work
 - YET: it is granted to her to “clothe herself” as in some versions...meaning that although grace is given to us, we must work out that salvation in our lives over time, and through many trials, faults, and failures.
Philippians 2: 12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and

trembling; 13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

- St. John writes the FOURTH and CENTRAL beatitude of the Book of Revelation: *Blessed are those who are invited to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.*
 - Having been saved from the whoredoms of the world and from the Great Tribulation and from outer darkness, it is a blessed calling to be bid to come to this Eucharist. One can now see why the King was angered beyond measure at those who spurned the blessedness of his feast...please NOTE the symbolic and literal connections between these parables and the Revelation of Jesus Christ that we are studying:

Matthew 22:1 And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: 2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, 3 "and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. 4 "Again, he sent out other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding." ' 5 "But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. 6 "And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. 7 "But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. 8 "Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. 9 'Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' 10 "So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. 11 "But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. 12 "So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. 13 "Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' 14 "For many are called, but few are chosen." 15 Then the Pharisees went and plotted how they might entangle Him in His talk.

Luke 14:1 Now it happened, as He went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath, that they watched Him closely. 2 And behold, there was a certain man before Him who had dropsy. 3 And Jesus, answering, spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" 4 But they kept silent. And He took him and healed him, and let him go. 5 Then He answered them, saying, "Which of you, having a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?" 6 And they could not answer Him regarding these things. 7 So He told a parable to those who were invited, when He noted how they chose the best places, saying to them: 8 "When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him; 9 "and he who invited you and him come and say to you, 'Give place to this man,' and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place. 10 "But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, 'Friend, go up higher.' Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you. 11 "For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." 12 Then He also said to him who invited Him, "When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid. 13 "But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. 14 "And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just." 15 Now when one of those who sat at the table with Him heard these things, he said to Him, "**Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!**" 16 Then He said to him, "A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, 17 "and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, 'Come, for all things are now ready.' 18 "But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I

have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.' 19 "And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.'

20 "Still another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' 21 "So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.' 22 "And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.' 23 "Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. 24 'For I say to you that **none** of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.' " 25 Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, 26 "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. 27 "And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. 28 "For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it -- 29 "lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, 30 "saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' 31 "Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? 32 "Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. 33 "So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple. 34 " Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? 35 "It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

- Humility, and saying YES to this invitation to the Eucharist is the proper and only salvific response, for the Eucharist, this Marriage Supper of the Lamb, is the center of Christian worship; the Eucharist is what we're commanded to do when we assemble on the Lord's Day.
 - The teaching of the Word and Doctrine is very important, but it leads us to oneness with the Christ who is the Word of God made flesh
 - Christians gathered on the first day of the week to "break bread." To partake of the Eucharist. Acts 20:7; Didache, the Teaching of the Twelve Disciples, xiv.1
 - Justin Martyr The First Apology, chap 67: On Sunday, all gather in one place, listen to the memoirs of the apostles for as long as time permits, the president verbally instructs and exhorts to mimic these good things, then wine and bread is brought, blessed, and partaken of.
 - Good to partake of the Eucharist weekly, for from it life flows out of this central liturgy.
 - Jesus: took bread and wine, gave thanks, broke the bread, distributed the bread and wine naming it his body and blood; then, the disciples tasted and evaluated it, eleven approving and one rejecting it, and finally, the faithful rested and enjoyed it.
 - James Jordan: it is because the act of Thanksgiving is the central difference between the Christian and non-Christian that the liturgy of the Christian churches is called the Holy Eucharist, which means Thanksgiving. It is the restoration of true worship, the Holy Eucharist, that restores the work of man (the six-fold action of all of life). This is why the restoration of true worship takes primacy over cultural endeavors.
- Twice, John falls at the angel's feet to worship him, but is stopped (See Rev 22:8-9), "Don't do that!"
 - First glance, it seems that the angel is wanting John to avoid idolatry
 - Second, the angel's reason is not regarding idolatry, but addresses the fact that he is aligned as a peer with John as a fellow servant of Christ. The angel's answer seems strange if it were an idolatry issue...the angel could have repeated the Commandment regarding having false gods before him.

- One has to view redemptive history for the answer. The term “worship” includes the sense of bowing down before a superior to give reverence, even kissing one’s feet and the hem of their garment. Those saints seeing angels prior to Pentecost (after Jesus’ resurrection) did indeed worship angels, such as Lot; and Jacob’s sons did bow down before Joseph in Egypt.
 - John WAS NOT offering divine worship to an angel, but reverence to a superior.
 - And, since One greater than the angels is here, namely Jesus Christ, who is higher than the angels, one must now be directed to worship and pay homage to God alone, to Christ alone. In other words, redeemed mankind and angels are now peers since the resurrection and Pentecost.
 - The angels and members of the Church hold to the testimony of Jesus Christ...thereby showing forth that the Spirit of God...the Spirit of Prophecy is among them all.
 - Hengstenberg quotes Bossuet, “that the angel rejects the worship in order to place the apostolical and prophetic ministry on the footing of that of angels.”
 - Austin Farrer states that John wanted to bow before the angel due to the angel’s proclamation regarding the Marriage Supper...the Eucharist...the angel’s proclamation was making real the foretaste they were about to receive in His sacramental body and blood. St. John falls to adore, and every intermediary (which were Moses and the angels in the Old Testament) vanishes between himself and Christ.
- This begins the final section of seven visions each one opening with the phrase, “And I saw.”

11 Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. 12 His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems; and he has a name inscribed which no one knows but himself. 13 He is clad in a robe dipped in [c] blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. 14 And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, followed him on white horses. 15 From his mouth issues a sharp sword with which to smite the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron; he will tread the wine press of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. 16 On his robe and on his thigh he has a name inscribed, King of kings and Lord of lords.

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

- John having seen the invitation to the Church of Communion with Christ, he now sees heaven open to the Church, and the revelation of her Lord. We will then take an eerie turn from the Marriage Supper of the Lamb between Christ and His Church (see in the last chapter) to the Feast of Judgment between the birds those who died in the War against Jerusalem and in the Great Tribulation.

- The White Horse comes forth with his rider, Christ Jesus the victorious Lord—the Faithful One and the True one (the Faithful and True Witness-Rev 3:14)—Truth itself—the Word of God (19:13)...the recapitulation of his visionary appearance before:
Revelation 6:1 Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, "Come and see." 2 And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.
Revelation 14:14 Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.
- Christ on the white horse here is not a vision of the end of the world, but the progress of the Gospel in discipling the nations, and more specifically and relevantly for our text, Christ's coming in salvation for his saints and in judgment upon His enemies—His parousia—his coming in the first century in the judgment of apostate Israel and the nations who came against his people—and we see the subsequent aftermath...the vanquishing of his enemies the Beast, the False Prophet, and their armies...and the call to the fowl of the air to feast on their flesh.
 - Note his heavenly armies are with him...the saints...arrayed in the white clothing...the righteousness of saints...this in contrast to the colorful and boastful Jezebel, who has been defeated and burned.

- The figure on the white horse is the same as the Son of Man, the First and the Last, the Living One of John's earlier visions. He goes forth as the cry of the 17th century Westminster divines proclaimed...riding forth to do battle subduing us to himself, ruling and defending us, "restraining and conquering al His and our enemies" WSC Q26

Psalm 72:1 A Psalm of Solomon. Give the king Your judgments, O God, And Your righteousness to the king's Son. 2 He will judge Your people with righteousness, And Your poor with justice.

- Psalm 96:11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; Let the sea roar, and all its fullness; 12 Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it. Then all the trees of the woods will rejoice before the LORD. 13 For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with His truth.
- Isaiah 11:1 There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. 2 The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. 3 His delight is in the fear of the LORD, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears; 4 But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. 5 Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, And faithfulness the belt of His waist.
- Jeremiah 23:5 " Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. 6 In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

- The Lord Jesus, whose eyes are as a flame of fire, judging the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb 4:12). The multiple diadems represent the multiple victories of the King of Kings.
 - Christ's robe is dipped in blood, the blood of his enemies, and perhaps a reference to his own crucifixion.
- Only Jesus possesses this name (only he knows it; possesses it; owns it): The Word of God. Christ's pre-incarnate name from John 1:1: In the beginning, was the Word...and the Word was made flesh. So, we see here the totality now of Christ's Incarnation, Atonement, Resurrection, Ascension, and Enthronement. The heavens are opened and Christ wins!
- Christ is followed in victory by his saints: as in Rev 17:14: the Called, Chosen, and Faithful who are with him in battle. The Church triumphant in heaven fighting against the enemies of Christ and the Church militant, namely the Church on earth. Heb 12: the Church of the Firstborn who are enrolled in heaven
- From Christ, the Word of God proceeds from his mouth, smiting the nations, and chastening his Church.
 - Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account. 14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.
 - Isaiah 49:1 "Listen, O coastlands, to Me, And take heed, you peoples from afar! The LORD has called Me from the womb; From the matrix of My mother He has made mention of My name. 2 And He has made My mouth like a sharp sword; In the shadow of His hand He has hidden Me, And made Me a polished shaft; In His quiver He has hidden Me."
 - Hosea 6:5 Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets, I have slain them by the words of My mouth; And your judgments are like light that goes forth. 6 For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.
- After Christ smites the nations with his rod of iron (Psalm 2) upon the end of the Great Tribulation, he sends his angels forth to gather his elect people.
 - Matthew 24:29 " Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.
 - This smiting can also allude to the preaching of the gospel...which converts the nations and turns them from their wickedness.
 - The Wisdom of Solomon 18: 15 Thine Almighty word leaped down from heaven out of thy royal throne, as a fierce man of war into the midst of a land of destruction, 16 And brought

thine unfeigned commandment as a sharp sword, and standing up filled all things with death; and it touched the heaven, but it stood upon the earth.

- The whole course of the expansion of the Kingdom of God and the conversion of the world to Christianity is here: the conversion of the empire, the conversion of the east and west which rose from the ruins of the empire, the conversion of the south, and the far East, still working itself out in history, for He must reign until all of his enemies are made a footstool for his feet. The nations are to be reduced to obedience, and then brought under the discipline of Christ by the Spirit through the Church

Psalm 2:1 Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, 3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." 4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The LORD shall hold them in derision. 5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: 6 "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion." 7 "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. 8 Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.' " 10 Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth. 11 Serve the LORD with fear, And rejoice with trembling. 12 Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish in the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.

Isaiah 63:1 Who is this who comes from Edom, With dyed garments from Bozrah, This One who is glorious in His apparel, Traveling in the greatness of His strength? -- "I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save." 2 Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like one who treads in the winepress? 3 "I have trodden the winepress alone, And from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, And trampled them in My fury; Their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, And I have stained all My robes. 4 For the day of vengeance is in My heart, And the year of My redeemed has come. 5 I looked, but there was no one to help, And I wondered That there was no one to uphold; Therefore My own arm brought salvation for Me; And My own fury, it sustained Me. 6 I have trodden down the peoples in My anger, Made them drunk in My fury, And brought down their strength to the earth."

As Isaiah 60:12 says, those nations that will NOT serve God and His Christ, will be utterly wasted away.

- Christ conquers the nations with the Word of God...the Gospel of Jesus Christ...the Gospel of the Kingdom...which includes the discipline of the nations according to His laws...the moral Law of God.
- Christ's message to His Church throughout the Revelation is *to overcome, and to conquer!* Now, his Church sees that despite the fierce persecution of apostate Israel and that of pagan Rome, Christ and his people will in fact be victorious over all enemies.

Chilton, "All nations are absolutely required to be Christian, in their official capacity as well as in the personal character of their individual citizens. Any nation that does not submit to the all-embracing rule of King Jesus will perish; all nations shall be Christianized someday. It is only a matter of time. Jesus Christ is the universal Sovereign, and he will be recognized as such throughout the earth, in this world as well as in the next, in time as well as in eternity. He has promised: "I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth" (Psalm 46:10)

- We now open the second of the final seven visions: “And I saw...”
 - We saw the Great Supper of the Lamb, and now, the Great Supper of God where the birds of the air glut themselves on the flesh of men. This is the great curse of the covenant to be eaten by birds of prey (Deut 28:26, 49)...Israel and others become the sacrificial corpse and there is no longer anyone to drive away the scavengers (Gen 15:11)

Symbolism and Relevance of Gog of Magog of Ezekiel

This passage has similarity to Ezekiel’s description of the armies and Gog and Magog that attack Israel, the Covenant people in Ezekiel 38 and 39

- Gog the Prince of Magog (nomads, Scythians (renowned horsemen) of the north: Magog seen in Jewish Wars 7.4.3, always known as Gentile nations, along with Edomites and others who attack Israel...in our context it symbolizes those who attack the Church of Christ. Jewish Talmud always connected Magog with Gentile nations. SEE OLD FIRST BIBLE FOR NOTES
 - Rosh means “head” so, Gog is either head prince of Magog, or is prince of the head province of Magog
 - Meshech is Cappadocia
 - Tubal is Thobal in which the Thobalites lived in what is now called (?) Iberos...very closely connected to Togarmal—Iberians, Hispania, Spain
- God takes Gog, as he allowed the Beast to do with the nations, and places in his heart to attack the covenant people Israel
- God is vicious and rebellious and does his work on Israel of attacking (symbolically) as in the Revelation is done upon the Church
- God then judges Gog and Magog, and leaves their bodies for the birds of the air...a prophetic picture of the Great Tribulation and what happened to apostate Israel and the armies who worked with her against the Church.

Ezekiel 39: 17 " And as for you, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Speak to every sort of bird and to every beast of the field: "Assemble yourselves and come; Gather together from all sides to My sacrificial meal Which I am sacrificing for you, A great sacrificial meal on the mountains of Israel, That you may eat flesh and drink blood. 18 You shall eat the flesh of the mighty, Drink the blood of the princes of the earth, Of rams and lambs, Of goats and bulls, All of them fatlings of Bashan. 19 You shall eat fat till you are full, And drink blood till you are drunk, At My sacrificial meal Which I am sacrificing for you. 20 You shall be filled at My table With horses and riders, With mighty men And with all the men of war," says the Lord GOD. 21 " I will set My glory among the nations; all the nations shall see My judgment which I have executed, and My hand which I have laid on them.

- The birds make a sacrificial cleansing of the land from the Beasts and their armies
- Finally, we see the defeat of Leviathan and Behemoth in their war against the Kingdom of Christ. The two beasts are seized and thrown ALIVE into the Lake of Fire...the fiery Laver, which burns with brimstone.
 - Like Sodom and Gomorrah (fire and brimstone from heaven) destroyed and buried under the sea
 - Like Pharaoh’s armies, buried under the sea

- Like the rebels of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, who with their households were swallowed by the earth. Num 16:31-33
- The Lake of Fire here is the symbol of the utter and definitive defeat and fall...the complete destruction of these enemies in their attempt to seize the Kingdom: The evil personification of pagan Rome and apostate Israel are ruined and overthrown. Rom is destroyed by fire and brimstone, while Israel's false prophets are swallowed alive. Even though Rome would stand until 410 or 476, the fact is, her power against the church ended in this first century...the tide would now turn toward humility toward the Christ and tolerance and then acceptance of his people.
- The conquering Lord Jesus defeated the powers of pagan Rome and the False prophet, whore of apostate Israel...they were cast into the Lake of Fire and the rest of the apostate armies were consumed...slain by the sword.
- The nations raged; but God laughed, and does laugh. Christ reigns and commands men everywhere to repent, believe the Gospel, and be disciple in the ways of Messiah Jesus

Matthew 28: 18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 "[while] Go[ing] therefore [into the world] and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Martin Luther, "He must win the battle."

Chilton: "As the Gospel progresses throughout the world it will win increasing victories, until all kingdoms become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever. We must not concede to the enemy even one square inch of ground in heaven or on earth. Christ and His army are riding forth, conquering and to conquer, and we through Him will inherit all things.

Revelation Chapter 20 1Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain. 2 And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, 3 and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years were ended.[a] After that he must be loosed for a little while.

- When our Lord Jesus began his ministry, the Jews were expecting the Messiah to usher in the 6th Millennium (1000 years). Jews had believed that the earth, when calculating from Adam using the Book of Genesis, had completed 4000 years, and that Messiah would usher in the next 1000 years.
 - They believed this would be an era of Jewish supremacy, and according to the Apocalypse of Baruch, the earth would be full of fruit, one producing 10,000, and in the vine there would be a thousand branches—in other words, great abundance, blessing, prosperity.
 - The Book of Enoch: the whole earth would be tilled in righteousness, the vine planted on it would yield wine in abundance, and of all seed which is sown thereon will each measure bear 10,000.

- The Jews held to a literal 1000 year Messianic kingship with their nation at the top ruling over others. It was man-centered, and Rushdoony says, humanistic to the core
- Since the time of the first century was known by the Jews as being the time of Messiah, expectations of his appearing were feverish, and led to many false messiahs. The reality of the Kingdom of God coming in Jesus the Messiah was bypassed for something more political and exciting.
- All present-day millennial thinking is a revival of the ERRONEOUS Jewish hope (including its sacrifices and its temple—thus seeing the Israel of Scripture as only Old Testament Israel in Palestine), which has never been accepted by the Catholic Church. Modern Pre-millennial Dispensationalist hold to portions of this teaching (which one finds in the teachings of Darby and Schofield), which we will address in this section.
 - The Dispensationalist see multiple covenants running simultaneously with God. They fail to see that the Church is the Israel of God and this called-out group embraced the Messiah Jesus and was made into a New Covenant in Christ. There is NO LONGER Jew nor Greek, but believers from both are NOW ONE and called Christians. Abraham awaited Jesus' day and saw it and was glad, as did Moses, so any Jewish man who did not embrace Christ, was literally no longer a true Jew, but outside the covenant of God...Note:
Romans 9:1 I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, 4 who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; 5 of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen. **6 But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, 7 nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called."** 8 That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed. 9 For this is the word of promise: "At this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son." 10 And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac 11 (for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls), 12 it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger." 13 As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated."
 - Schofield, whose Schofield Bible notes see the Jewish Plan restored at the expense of any legitimacy of the New Covenant Church. He does not see that apostate Judaism, as judged by Christ in AD70, is gone forever, and its expectations will never come to pass.
 - This Dispensational system on the whole denies the essence of the New Covenant as the entirety of the Christian faith, as they see Christianity as an "add-on" to a continuing Old Covenant relationship with ethnic Jews. But since the passing away of the Old Covenant with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, there is neither Jew, nor Gentile, but one Church, the New Jerusalem, and one people, which is One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.
- The Kingdom of God came with Christ, AND, this was the inaugurated eschatology...the Kingdom of God having come...and with the judgment of Jerusalem, the Kingdom of God, the New Heavens and

New Earth was fully INAUGERATED. The Kingdom now continues to expand to fill the entire earth...the Mountain of the Lord's House...His Church...is NOW filling the whole earth in time until all of Christ's enemies are made a footstool for his feet.

- Jesus preached that the Kingdom of God and his coming WERE IMANENT...speaking of his post-resurrection coming...which was his coming in AD70, which would usher in the 1000 year reign of Christ (to be symbolically taken as a complete reign of the Lord Jesus until all things be subdued under him. Note that he told his disciples that some would not die before his coming and the kingdom...Jesus WAS NOT MISTAKEN. He came as did the inauguration of the Kingdom in AD 70.

Mark 9:1 And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."

- Matthew 16:28 "Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."
- Luke 9:26 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels. 27 "But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the kingdom of God."

...and this was not to be confused with the end of time, or what many call his second, or final coming, for final judgment of all.

- 1000 years in Latin is *millennium*.
 - Amillennialists have historically believed that the millennium is symbolical in nature and not to be taken as a literal 1000 years. The historic orthodox church has maintained this Amill belief system, which means no literal 1000 years, hence the name A (no) Millennium (1000 yrs).
 - The distinctions in Amillennialism come in when schools of thought believe Christ will return for the final judgment.
 - Postmillennialists hold that Christ returns after this symbolic, yet effective 1000 year reign of Christ—retuning when all of his enemies are made a footstool for his feet.
 - Some A-mills holds that the saints are reigning in heaven, but not on the earth and that there will be no visible victory of Christ and the Church on earth. This is not a biblical position, but one of pessimism, which came about after WWII when hope for a Christianized world was lost due to worldwide conflict.
 - Many A-mills, as do I, hold that Christ and his Church will have progressive and ultimate victory in the earth—that the nations will submit to Christianity—in time and on earth over the long-run...see Micah 4 and Isaiah 2.
Isaiah 11: For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea.
 - Postmillennialists have historically believed that Christ return to earth in judgment takes place after “post” the 1000 year reign of Christ, and that the reign of the saints takes place in heaven and on earth—on earth progressively in time that reign covers the earth.

- Some post-mills believe the reign is literal and politically based, like Hitler, who would hold that a Christian regime will take over the earth...much like the Jewish Messianic hope...and that Christ would return after this Reign/Reich.
- Most post-mills believe the reign of Christ and the saints is symbolic, yet present on the earth and will end when all of Christ's enemies are made a footstool for his feet, in the earth.
- The Postmillennialist is OPTIMISTIC and NOT PIETISTIC. We believe that the reign of Christ extends beyond the heart acceptance of Christ to the practical and real world being transformed to glorify God in Christ. The blessings of Deut 28 abound along with those items of the lion lying down with the lamb and the child playing with the adder/snake, and the age of individuals growing to greater heights, and the beating of weapons of war into implements of production (plowshares).

Millennium Blessings:

Isaiah 65:19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem, And joy in My people; The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, Nor the voice of crying. 20 " No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, Nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; For the child shall die one hundred years old, But the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed. 21 They shall build houses and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. 22 They shall not build and another inhabit; They shall not plant and another eat; For as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, And My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. 23 They shall not labor in vain, Nor bring forth children for trouble; For they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the LORD, And their offspring with them. 24 " It shall come to pass That before they call, I will answer; And while they are still speaking, I will hear. 25 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, The lion shall eat straw like the ox, And dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain," Says the LORD.

Isaiah 11:6 " The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them. 7 The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8 The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. 9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea. 10 " And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; For the Gentiles shall seek Him, And His resting place shall be glorious."

Isaiah 2:2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. 3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.

Micah 4:3 He shall judge between many peoples, And rebuke strong nations afar off; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war any more. 4 But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, And no one shall make them afraid; For the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken. 5

- Orthodoxy has believed Christ's reign began at his Resurrection/Ascension and continues until all things are thoroughly subdued under Christ's feet.
Acts 2:30 "Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, 31 "he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. 32 "This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. 33 "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. 34 "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, 35 Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." ' 36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."
- This reign of Christ, this symbolic 1000 years, is simply the Kingdom of Christ and it has been in existence for over 2000 years. Christ will return to judge the world AFTER this Millennium. THEREFORE, orthodox Christianity has always been Postmillennial. The orthodox position is Amillennial Postmillennialism. Outside of Rev 20, a highly symbolic and complex passage in the most highly symbolic and complex book of the Bible, the Bible doesn't speak of a thousand-year reign of the saints.
- The Church has always rejected the heresy of Millenarianism (in past centuries), this was called Chiliasm, meaning thousand-year-ism. Chiliasm can take the form of either Premillennialism or Postmillennialism (with social revolution as the cataclysm).
 - The notion that the reign of Christ is to be brought in by some great social cataclysm, is NOT a Christian doctrine.
 - PREMILLENIALISM: the notion that Christ returns to earth prior to his millennial reign and reigns for a literal 1000 years with glorified saints with him ruling over the human nations of the earth.
 - Ebionite Archheretic Cerinthus, a false apostle who was an opponent of John and Paul. Cerinthus claimed that his doctrine of the Millennium had been revealed by an angel...possible reason Paul wrote in Galatians 1: 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.
 - St. Irenaeus records that St. John ran out of a public bathhouse upon encountering Cerinthus, and cried, "Let us flee, lest even the bath-house fall, because Cerinthus, the enemy of truth, is within!"
 - Modern Dispensational Movement: Began with Scofield-Ryrie school. A literal reign of Christ on the earth after his physical return. Purported strongly by modern evangelicalism, all Pentecostals, and by flagship Baptist Seminaries—feeder schools to most Baptist, Evangelical, Pentecostal/Charismatic, and Fundamentalist churches. Funny that no other place in the Scriptures speak of such a thing and a cataclysmic event like this. This doctrine leads to Thresholdism...I just feel like Jesus is coming soon...Escapism: Jesus will take us out of here...Pessimism: no use to Christianize this world, for you're just polishing brass on a sinking ship---all of which are destructive to the reign and work of Christ.

- Heretical Postmillennialism: Social revolt to begin the 1000 year reign of Christ on earth, or some cataclysmic event to begin the reign, which then ends with Christ's return
 - Munster Revolt of 1534: In 1534, Anabaptists took control of the German town of Münster. John of Leiden, a Dutch Anabaptist disciple of Matthys, and a group of local merchants, summoned Jan Matthys to come. Matthys identified Münster as the "New Jerusalem", and on January 5, 1534, a number of his disciples entered the city and introduced adult baptism. Reformer Bernhard Rothmann apparently accepted "rebaptism" that day, and well over 1000 adults were soon baptized. They saw the reign of Christ to begin at that time. They declared war on Franz von Waldeck, its expelled bishop, who in turn besieged their fortified town. In April 1534 on Easter Sunday, Matthys, who had prophesied God's judgment to come on the wicked on that day, made a sally forth with thirty followers, under the idea that he was a second Gideon, and was cut off with his entire band. He was killed, his head severed and placed on a pole for all in the city to see.
 - Nazism: the Third Reich. Although the term "Third Reich" is still in common use to refer to this historical period, the terms "First Reich" and "Second Reich" for the earlier periods are seldom found outside Nazi propaganda. To use the terms "First Reich" and "Second Reich", as some commentators did in the post-war years, is generally frowned upon as accepting Nazi historiography.[citation needed] During and following the Anschluss (annexation) of Austria in 1938 Nazi propaganda also used the political slogan Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer ("One people, one Reich, one leader"), in order to enforce pan-German sentiment. The term Altes Reich ("old Reich"; cf. French ancien regime for monarchical France) is sometimes used to refer to the Holy Roman Empire. The term Altreich was also used after the Anschluss to denote Germany with its pre-1938 post-WWI borders. Another name that was popular during this period was the term Tausendjähriges Reich ("Thousand-Year Reich"), the millennial connotations of which suggested that Nazi Germany would last for a thousand years to come; in reality it was ousted after a mere 12 years.
 - Marxism: (whether Christian or otherwise)
- Christians have always seen the growth of the Kingdom of God in the earth as a leavening process with the preaching of the Gospel, the obedience and witness of the saints, and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit working a leavening influence. The definitive cataclysm has already taken place in the work of Jesus Christ on the cross and his judgment upon apostate Jerusalem.
 - Matthew 13: 24 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; 25 "but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. 26 "But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. 27 "So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' 28 "He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' 29 "But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. 30 'Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn." ' ' 31 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, 32 "which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches." 33

Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened." 34 All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them, 35 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: "I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world."

- 36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field." 37 He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. 38 "The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. 39 "The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. 40 "Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. 41 "The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, 42 "and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 "Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear! 44 " Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. 45 " Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, 46 "who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. 47 " Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, 48 "which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. 49 "So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, 50 "and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth." 51 Jesus said to them, "Have you understood all these things?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." 52 Then He said to them, "Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old."
- The saints who embraced this eschatology of Christ's victory were also OPTIMISTIC about the future and Christ's claim over it.
 - Athanasius, On the Incarnation [55]: When the sun has come, darkness prevails no longer; any of it that may be left anywhere is driven away. So also, now that the Divine epiphany of the Word of God has taken place, the darkness of idols prevails no more, and all parts of the world in every direction are enlightened by His teaching.
- Christians have always believed that their high calling was to press the crown rights of Christ Jesus into every area of life all over the world, NOT to work for détente with the Enemy—the Beast
 - Pluralism was not the goal of the Church
 - The Church believed God sent his only begotten Son into the world to redeem the world, and that God will be satisfied with nothing less than what he has paid for.
 - St Boniface chopped down the ancient sacred oak tree of Thor and built a chapel from the wood. Thousands of Thor worshippers were astounded Boniface was NOT struck down. Boniface was unruffled since he knew that there was only one true God of thunder—the Triune Yahweh.
 - The attitude of hope, the expectation of victory is an absolute fundamental characteristic of Christianity. Nothing will stop the growth of the Church or the progressive blessings prophesied by the prophets...neither global warming, global cooling, overpopulation

resource rundown, or comets or asteroids. The fact is that Christianity, by producing the science and technology of the West, has vastly increased the earth's resources.

- The Book of Common Prayer: IDs holy days through the year A.D. 8400...no expectation of a secret rapture in these circles.

- Now, all of our pieces are coming together in this Revelation...the victorious Christ, the Devil, the Kingdom...all of the players in this play. We see the Binding of Satan for a thousand years during the reign of Christ is a very significant event that paves the way for the preaching of the Gospel and discipling of the nations during this thousand year reign of Christ.
 - The binding of Satan occurs after the Great Tribulation we've just seen in the Revelation.
 - The Angel coming down is the same powerful angel we saw in 10:1 and 18:1...this is the Lord Jesus Christ, who as Mediator is the Angel (Messenger) of the Covenant (Mal 2:7; 3:1).
 - This one is Jesus for he has all authority over the Abyss...having the key and the great chain. All AUTHORITY has been given to me on heaven and on earth.

- Christ lays hold of the Dragon, now identified as the Devil...the deceiver of the whole world. Jesus renders the devil's deceiving power as impotent...binding him for a thousand years and throwing him into the Abyss, shutting it up and sealing it.
 - This does not mean that the devil and demonic activity is all gone and non-existent, BUT it does mean that the covering, the veil, is OFF of the nations so that they cannot know and understand, and embrace the Gospel of Christ and His kingdom.
 - Jesus is NOW PLUNDERING Satan's house and taking the spoil
Matthew 12:24 Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, "This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." 25 But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. 26 "If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? 27 "And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. 28 "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. 29 "Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.

 - Luke 11:20 "But if I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. 21 "When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. 22 "But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils.

- Christ's victory over Satan at the cross was the definitive defeat of the Devil and his hosts, and, as we see in the Revelation, the beginning of the end of the eternal struggle between the Seed of the Woman and the Seed of the Serpent...Christ and the Kingdom of Heaven and the Devil and the demonic hosts. This vision depicts the intense final struggle that will end with the final release of Satan for a season, and his final juridical doom after the thousand years are done.
 - Jesus overcame the Devil's temptations during his 40 days in the wilderness, and the devil left him (e.g., Matthew 3:17)

- Jesus saw the Ruler of this world cast out: John 12: 31 "Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. 32 "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." 33 This He said, signifying by what death He would die.
- Jesus the Messiah makes no arbitrary use of power, but relies upon God's grace and his obedience to His Laws. This is why his rejection of the Devil's temptations were already the beginning of victory.
- Jesus approaches the demon possessed and they cry out his name: "the Holy One of God," "the Son of God," "the Son of the Most High." They consider his coming their destruction, their torment, and they feel powerless and find themselves begging Christ to lengthen their existence away from the Abyss.
- All of this SHOWS that in Jesus' person and coming...the Kingdom has become a present reality...recall Matthew 12: 28 "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. 29 "Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.
FOR the exercise of God's power over the devil and his rule has the coming of the Kingdom for its foundation.
- After the sending out of the 72 disciples to cast out devils, upon their return as recorded in Luke 10: 17 Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." 18 And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 "Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. 20 "Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." 21 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. 22 "All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him." 23 Then He turned to His disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see; 24 "for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it."
- Jesus' work, his death, and his resurrection definitively judged the Ruler of this World...God cast the Devil from the heavens, the Accuser was cast out, and Jesus saw it...this was Jesus' dismantling of the Kingdom of darkness, and now, Jesus rides in victory to complete the work. Hebrews 2:1 4 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.
- The Devil is NOW BOUND, as the church has understood it, referring to his inability to prevent the message of the Gospel from achieving success. Demons have been disarmed, but they are still active, especially where men either haven't heard the Gospel or have heard and reject it.

- Before the coming of Christ, there was a veil over the nations regarding access to God. They could not know the truth at the time, but in Christ, the light had come.

Isaiah 9:1 Nevertheless the gloom will not be upon her who is distressed, As when at first He lightly esteemed The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, And afterward more heavily oppressed her, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, In Galilee of the Gentiles. 2 The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined. 3 You have multiplied the nation And increased its joy; They rejoice before You According to the joy of harvest, As men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

Isaiah 42:1 "Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. 2 He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, Nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. 3 A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth. 4 He will not fail nor be discouraged, Till He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands shall wait for His law." 5 Thus says God the LORD, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, Who gives breath to the people on it, And spirit to those who walk on it: 6 "I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness, And will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the Gentiles, 7 To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the prison, Those who sit in darkness from the prison house. 8 I am the LORD, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images. 9 Behold, the former things have come to pass, And new things I declare; Before they spring forth I tell you of them." 10 Sing to the LORD a new song, And His praise from the ends of the earth, You who go down to the sea, and all that is in it, You coastlands and you inhabitants of them!

- Isaiah 60:1 Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. 2 For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the LORD will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you. 3 The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising. 4 " Lift up your eyes all around, and see: They all gather together, they come to you; Your sons shall come from afar, And your daughters shall be nursed at your side. 5 Then you shall see and become radiant, And your heart shall swell with joy; Because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, The wealth of the Gentiles shall come to you.
- The death grip over the nations to deceive them has been shattered. All things in the earth...all nations have been given to Christ as he said prior to his ascension. Romans 15: 8 Now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers, 9 and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy, as it is written: "For this reason I will confess to You among the Gentiles, And sing to Your name." 10 And again he says: "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people!" 11 And again: "Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples!" 12 And again, Isaiah says: "There shall be a root of Jesse; And He who shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, In Him the Gentiles shall hope."

- The activity of the demons are RESTRICTED, and as the Gospel is preached in all the world, their activity will become even more limited. Christians will overcome the world (1 Jo 4:4), and the Gentiles WILL LISTEN and OBEY the Gospel.
Colossians 2:13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

Read: St. Irenaeus, "The Word of God, the Maker of all things, conquering him (the devil) by means of human nature, and showing him to be an apostate, has put him under the power of man. Luke 10: 8 And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 "Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. 20 "Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

St Paul in Acts 26: 14 "And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' 15 "So I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. 16 'But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. 17 'I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, 18 'to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.' 19 " Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, 20 "but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance. 21 "For these reasons the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. 22 "Therefore, having obtained help from God, to this day I stand, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said would come -- 23 "that the Christ would suffer, that He would be the first to rise from the dead, and would proclaim light to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles."

Augustine, Sermons, recorded in Chilton Days...pp504: The devil was conquered by his own trophy of victory. The devil jumped for joy, when he seduced the first man and cast him down to death. By seducing the first man, he slew him; by slaying the last man, he lost the first from his snare. The victory of our Lord Jesus Christ came when he rose, and ascended into heaven; then was fulfilled what you have heard when the Apocalypse was being read, "the Lion of the Tribe of Judah has won the day [Rev 5:5]...the devil jumped for joy when Christ died; and by the very death of Christ the devil was overcome; he took, as it were, the bait before him. The Lord's cross was the devil's mousetrap; the bait which caught him was the death of the Lord."

- 2 Peter 2:3 By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber. 4 For if God did not

spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;

- Jude 6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;
- The Devil can deceive the nations and gather them for war...this is a goal of the Devil to prematurely cause a premature eschatological cataclysm. He would have wanted the Final Judgment then, or NOW!, however, the leaven of the Kingdom of God and the Spirit of grace must work its work in time and on earth, and then the end will come. Wheat grows up with the Chaff...then and now.
- The Kingdom of God is like leaven. Christianity is the yeast, and it has a leavening affect upon pagan, satanic cultures around it. The Bread of God produced by this leaven is the preferred bread. "Give us this day our daily bread." Christians have eaten leavened bread at their tables. It produces a fine bread for all to eat. Chilton: "Christianity makes life a joy for godly men. It provides men with the very best." The end fire will fall during God's timing, and not the Dragon's...at every point, God is controlling events for His own glory.
 - Men can wait for the leaven to do its work. It will take time and several poundings as does the rising (leavening) of dough. But the END RESULT IS GUARANTEED!
 - Leaven is a symbol of historical continuity with the Kingdom of God growing and filling the earth
 - The baker even pounds the dough to get the leaven worked in.
 - But, the baker cannot turn on the over prematurely hot lest the dough perish.
 - During the first century, the leaven of the Kingdom had gone throughout the earth, and then the end of apostate Israel had come.
 - The final heat (2 Peter 3:9-10) comes at the end, when all of Christ's enemies are made a footstool for his feet.
- Satan remains bound for a Thousand Years.
 - Thousand...to be taken symbolically, just like the passage in Psalms, "God owns the cattle on a thousand hills" (Psalm 50:10)...the number stands for manyness, vastness, "a day is as a thousand years, is as a day..." If God owns all of the cattle, then his owning cattle on a thousand hills means he owns them all...the number stands for completeness, denoting many hills and much cattle.
 - If the Devil is bound for a thousand years, and Christ reigns for a thousand years, then this means that Christ reigns for an undetermined, and very lengthy period of time that is a complete reign...until his enemies are subdued under him.
 - This thousand year reign of Christ has been going on for about two thousand years now. It could take one million years for this thousand year symbolic period to be fulfilled.
- Christ reigns and proclaims his crown rights and authority through the Church while his adversary the devil is bound during this reign. More and more, progressively, we see that through the preaching of the Gospel and through righteous living, Satan and his demons are rendered destroyed and righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit fills the earth.

Revelation 20:4 Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom judgment was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony to Jesus and for the word of God, and who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and they shall reign with him a thousand years.

- This passage is in parallel with the vision that Daniel saw and recorded in Daniel 7: 21 "I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, 22 "until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.
- The "those" who were seated on the thrones and who would judge are indeed the martyred saints...perhaps John's 24 elders, who are representatives of the assembly of the church...they are reigning as priests with Christ, wearing crowns, possessing kingly authority over the nations, and seated with Christ. These could be the disciples to whom Jesus spoke in

Matthew 19: 27 Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?" 28 So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.

Luke 22: 28 "But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. 29 "And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, 30 "that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

- Through evangelism, preaching and living Christ in the midst of a perverted generation, the conquered...they did not conquer through political or social action. Chilton: "It must be stressed, however, that the road to Christian dominion does not lie primarily through political action. While the political sphere, like every other aspect of life, is a valid and necessary area for Christian activity and eventual dominance, we must shun the perennial temptation to grasp for political power. Dominion in civil government cannot be obtained before we have attained maturity in wisdom—the result of generations of Christian self-government. As we learn to apply God's word to practical situations in our personal lives, our homes, our schools, [our churches], and our businesses...then Christians will be able to be trusted with greater responsibilities.
- These enthroned ones could indeed be elders of the Church, or the Church—they represent the Church that bore the brunt and gave their lives during the Great Tribulation. It is now given to them, as a reward, to judge the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Further, these martyrs had NOT aligned themselves with Imperial Rome or Apostate Israel. They were given life...caught up with the Lord to be with him during the thousand years.
1 Thess 4: 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are

alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

- These dead in Christ came to life at the end of the Tribulation at the Lord's appearing, his parousia...
 - This being raised to new life is the First Resurrection
 - These martyred saints have been NOW CONFIRMED IN RIGHTEOUSNESS in this FIRST RESURRECTION...first fruits to God...and over such final condemnation has no power, for it is appointed for men to die and then the judgment....these gave their lives, never to die again, and they shall minister on behalf of God and of Christ during Christ's reign
 - There are some who add that the First Resurrection is spiritual in nature and that it refers to all who have been baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Over such, the second death has no power and they will reign with Christ, too...however, the immediate sense that corresponds to the passage is that these were the martyred baptized who were faithful to Christ during the Great Tribulation.
- The first resurrection and the interrelationship with ceremonial cleansing
 - Num 19:13 depicts the man who touches an unclean body is unclean, or ceremonially dead, however a resurrection from the dead is accomplished by the sprinkling of holy water on both the third and the seventh day...in other words a first and second resurrection
 - This is a double resurrection patten, as written about by James Jordan in The Law and the Covenant: An Exposition of Exodus 21-23, is REPEATED in the New Testament:
 - Jesus is inaugurating the Age of the Resurrection, and all who are in Christ are partakers of this resurrection.

Colossians 2: 11 In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

- 1 Corinthians 15: 20 But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. 23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming. 24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. 27 For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under Him," it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. 28 Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.
- There will be indeed a general resurrection at the end of Christ's reign...what we know as the end of history, at which time we will see the Second Coming of Christ on the Last Day,

BUT, before that final resurrection, there is this First Resurrection of those who died for the testimony of Jesus Christ during the Great Tribulation.

John 6:38 "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. 39 "This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. 40 "And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."...44 "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day....54 "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day...

Acts 24:15 [Paul speaking] "I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. 16 "This being so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men.

- **Allegorically speaking, many see Baptism as the First Resurrection.** Christ's resurrection was a definitive resurrection on the Third Day. We participate in Christ's resurrection through baptism, so that we walk in newness of life (Rom 6:4). We are alive in Christ and seated with him in heavenly places (Eph 2:5-6; Col 3:1)
 - Norman Shepherd: *The Resurrections of Revelation 20*, Revelation 20 "does not even describe the bodily resurrection of the just expressly as the second resurrection...baptism is even more properly resurrection than is the resurrection of the body. The just who are alive at the return of the Lord will not be resurrected in the body but will be transformed [a glorified body vs. the one sown in the earth 1 Cor 15]. The righteous dead who do rise bodily at the last day do not again assume mortality but immortality. Not resuscitation but transformation is the leading feature of resurrection, and the foundational transformation and transition takes place at baptism, the first resurrection.
 - St. Gregory of Nyssa: "It is necessary for us to undergo, by means of water, this preparatory rehearsal of the grace of resurrection, so that we may realize that it is as easy for us to rise again from death as to be baptized with water."
- This Millennial reign of Christ speaks of the present realities of the Christian life NOW! Through baptism, we have been resurrected to eternal life and now rule with Christ in this age. Spiritually, the First Resurrection is taking place now, and that means the Millennial reign of Christ is taking place NOW.

Acts 2: 29 "Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 "Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, 31 "he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. 32 "This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. 33 "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. 34 "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, 35 Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'" ' 36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

7 And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be loosed from his prison 8 and will come out to deceive the nations which are at the four corners of the earth, that is, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. 9 And they marched up over the broad earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city; but fire came down from heaven[b] and consumed them, 10 and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

- After the wonderful and present reign of Jesus Christ is DONE, when the thousand years are complete, the timetable for the enemy, Satan, comes to its completion...the enemy's final defeat.
 - Christ and His Church have been conquering and filling the earth, leaving behind those who fear God, believe in Christ, and do good. The wheat and the tares are growing together, however the wheat will be dominant in world culture.
 - Even though Christianity fills and dominates the earth, there will still be the marshes and the swamp land where those who do not fear God and humble themselves to Christ will lay. Ezekiel 47:1 Then he brought me back to the door of the temple; and there was water, flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east, for the front of the temple faced east; the water was flowing from under the right side of the temple, south of the altar...9 "And it shall be that every living thing that moves, wherever the rivers go, will live. There will be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters go there; for they will be healed, and everything will live wherever the river goes. 10 "It shall be that fishermen will stand by it from En Gedi to En Eglaim; they will be places for spreading their nets. Their fish will be of the same kinds as the fish of the Great Sea, exceedingly many. 11 "But its swamps and marshes will not be healed; they will be given over to salt.
- The Dragon is released for a SHORT TIME, to deceive the nations in his last-ditch attempt to overthrow the Kingdom of God.
- The nations that remain that refuse to humble themselves to the Christ (Psalm 2) will be deceived by the Devil and persuaded one last time to attack the Seed of Abraham, the Church. The attackers, the nations from the four corners of the earth are many, for they are identified as having a number like the sand of the sea.
 - This is one of Satan's long goals to incite a battle between God and His rebellious creatures so as to "spike" God's work and prevent it from attaining fruition and maturity.
- Satan, when loosed, as was his custom will go out and deceive the pagan unbelieving nations, vividly portrayed here as the pagan nations of Gog and Magog...Recall Ezekiel 38-39. These are the names given to the ungodly forces that would come against God's people...they are blind and being led blindly into a battle that will be their doom.
 - These nations are assembled from the four corners of the earth, and they come up against the Church of Christ.
 - They surround the camp of the saints...the church...and the NEW JERUSALEM...recall that this is AFTER THE REIGN OF CHRIST. Old Jerusalem was destroyed back in AD70...this battle

would take place in the far off future when all of Christ's enemies are made a footstool for his feet.

- Examination of Ezekiel's Gog and Magog
 - Gog plunders Israel for her gold and cattle (38:11-13).
 - All of Gog's soldiers are on horseback
 - All of Gog's soldiers are carrying swords, wooden shields and such
 - Gog and Magog are never used in the Bible to depict Russia or any such contemporary nation contra the Dispensationalists
 - Gog is prince of Rosh...and Rosh means Head, such as Rosh Ha Shannah—Top of the Year, or New Year, vs. Rosh sounds like "Russia" so it must mean Russia...Insane.
 - Gog and Magog, says G. B. Caird, was a frequent, standard expression for the rebellious nations of Psalm 2, which gather together against the Lord and against His anointed.
 - The Gog and Magog of Ezekiel stand for the uprising of pagan nations against Old Testament Israel, whereas the Gog and Magog of the Revelation come against the New Testament Church at the end of the thousand year reign of Christ.

| In Ezekiel | In Revelation |
|--|--|
| 1. Gog is a prince | Gog is a nation |
| 2. Gog pictured as coming with other nations | God and Magog gather nations from 4 corners of the earth |
| 3. Gog comes against unwallled city of Jerusalem | Gog and Magog surround the City of the Saints |
| 4. Gog of land of Magog | Gog and Magog |
| 5. Gog's troops are defeated in Israel | Gog and Magog destroyed by God's fire |

In prophecy, one cannot identify one-to-one comparisons from one reference in the Old Testament to the New Testament: for example, the Jezebel in the OT is not the Jezebel in the NT; OT Jerusalem is not the New Jerusalem; and Sodom of the OT is not the Sodom of the NT; HOWEVER, the former are indeed types and shadows of the latter...this is how we learn to see and interpret prophecy systematically and correctly using the analogy of Scripture.

- Don't think it strange that the Church would come forth, saved by God, and unscathed while attacked by so many.
 - Same hyperbolic message describing the Canaanite nations conquered by Joshua (Joshua 11:4), and the Midianites overthrown by Gideon (Judges 7:12).
 - God permits the nations to be incited into a concerted opposition, so that they may be finished off quickly, in one fell swoop.
- The Church must embrace the confidence of Isaiah as he prophesied when the king and everyone else were panicking regarding the onslaught of the Assyrians...Isaiah 8: 7 Now therefore, behold, the Lord brings up over them The waters of the River, strong and mighty -- The king of Assyria and all his glory; He will go up over all his channels And go over all his banks. 8 He will pass through Judah, He will overflow and pass over, He will reach up to the neck; And the stretching out of his wings Will fill the breadth of Your land, O Immanuel. 9 " Be shattered, O you peoples, and be broken in pieces! Give ear, all you from far countries. Gird yourselves, but be broken in pieces; Gird yourselves, but be broken in pieces. 10 Take counsel together, but it will come to nothing; Speak the word, but it will not stand, For God is with us."

- God is NOW WITH THE CHURCH, and not With OT Israel, who was apostate, and now is cut off; however, God's hand of goodness is still stretched out to any and all who will call upon the name of Yahweh.
- The camp of the saints is of course the Church, the beloved city of the New Jerusalem, which will be elaborated upon in this prophecy very soon in Revelation 21:9-22:5. From our current passage, we can conclude the following about the City, the Church, the New Jerusalem, Zion.
 - The City exists during the Millennium, which means the New Heavens and New Earth exist during the Millennium, that time period between Christ's coming in judgment upon Jerusalem, and his second coming at the end of this Age.
 - The New Heavens and New Earth are present realities. Christ's appearing, his active presence, his coming in AD70 was the definitive coming of the Kingdom of God, the definitive start, or the inauguration of the New Heavens and New Earth, which progressively fills the earth and is realized, and will have a culmination at the Second Coming of Christ. 2 Corinthians 5: 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.
- The Fire of God came down from heaven and consumed them...as in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah. Many believe it will be a literal fire that devours the enemies at the end...a foretaste of the Lake of Fire. Augustine presents (in the City of God xx.12) the case of the fire being the firmness of the saints as they refuse to yield to those who rage against them.
 - All opposition to the Kingdom of God is completely eliminated
 - The Dragon's release from the Abyss went nowhere...it was a trap for his final doom.
- Legitimate Question: Why would the nations rebel after a Christianized world is set forth?
 - Read excerpts from Gary North, "Common Grace, Eschatology, and Biblical Law" in Vengeance, pp 527-528.
- Satan receives the same fate as the False Prophet and the Beast and its Image...The Lake of Fire and brimstone.

11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who sat upon it; from his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Also another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, by what they had done. 13 And the sea gave up the dead in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead in them, and all were judged by what they had done. 14 Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire; 15 and if any one's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

- Christ Jesus, the Lord of all, to whom is the kingdom, the glory, the dominion, forever and ever sits on the white throne of judgment at the end of all time.
 - Christ is previously seated on the white cloud (14:14)
 - Christ is previously seated on the white horse (6:2, and 19:11)

- Christ, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, sits in the “bishop’s chair” as John’s readers might have known it, ready to render the eternal decision of all—the Final Judgment.
- Christ will be final judge as witness the Apostle’s Creed “from thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead.” The Nicene Creed: “And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead.” The Te Deum: “We believe that thou shalt come to be our Judge...” along with the Athanasian Creed, “He ascended into heaven; He sitteth on the right hand of the Father, God Almighty; from whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead...This is the catholic faith; which except a man believe faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved.”
- Matthew 25:31 " When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 "All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. 33 "And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.
- John 5:27 "and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. 28 "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 "and come forth -- those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation. 30 "I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.
- 2 Timothy 4:1 I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom
- The scope of this resurrection, contrary to what you might have thought, is that of the wicked dead. Those who, as we read of in Rev 20:5-6, who were those who came up against Jerusalem, died, and did not “live again” until the “thousand years were finished.” We add to this number of wicked dead, those who during the reign of Christ rebelled and were incited to come against the Church as the embodiment of Gog and Magog. RECALL:
 - In light of Revelation Chapters 19 and 20:
 - The righteous ones who had the mark of Christ lived and reigned, and are reigning with Christ for a thousand years. They are the Church Triumphant in heaven who live and reign with the Church Militant on earth. The members of the Church Triumphant of that first century were partakers of the First Resurrection, and their names were written in the Lamb’s Book of Life...and over such, this second death, the Final Judgment, has no power.
 - NOTE: this is not so regarding those who died righteously afterward the Coming of Christ in AD70, for they are still reliant on grace and sacramental and moral obedience for their hope of salvation in Christ.
 - The wicked, who donned the mark of the Beast in that Great Tribulation (the context of Revelation), died and remained so, and do remain so, during the reign of Christ, are raised up to be judged and cast into outer darkness. They are in torment awaiting this judgment now, but the scope of the dead being discussed are those who were associated with the Beast.

- The reason for including the reference to the Book of Life is to show that the wicked are not written therein.
- All of the areas where the dead could reside are emptied. They then are assembled to stand before the Judge of all...Christ:

Romans 14:7 For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. 8 For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. 9 For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living. 10 But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:1 For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, 3 if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. 4 For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. 5 Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. 6 So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. 7 For we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. 9 Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. 11 Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.

- The last enemy to be destroyed will be death itself (1 Cor. 15:26). Death and Hades are thrown into the Lake of Fire.
 - Milton Terry, Biblical Apocalypics: "the entire picture of judgment and perdition is wrapped in mystic symbolism, and the one certain revelation is the final overthrow in remediless ruin of all who live and die as subjects of sin and death.
 - Leon Morris, the Revelation of St. John, "death and Hades are ultimately as powerless as the other forces of evil. Finally there is no power but that of God. All else is completely impotent."

John 15: 5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.

- "The rest of the dead" will NEVER live, for there is no life outside of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 21 Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (RSVCE)

The New Heaven and the New Earth

21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.[a] 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; 3 and I heard a great voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people,[b] and God himself will be with them;[c] 4 he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away."

5 And he who sat upon the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." 6 And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water without price from the fountain of the water of life. 7 He who conquers shall have this heritage, and I will be his God and he shall be my son. 8 But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the polluted, as for murderers, fornicators, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their lot shall be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."[d]

- John begins this last and most lengthy vision with the eighth (8th) "and I saw," which in this case is the number for resurrection...the eighth day; and is the number for covenant inauguration, for males were circumcised on the eighth day of their lives.
- In this passage looking at verses 1-8, we see John seeing the New Heaven and New Earth. Earlier in this study, we noted that the New Heaven and New Earth was inaugurated after the destruction of Jerusalem, when she was torn down. The New Testament saints were awaiting this inauguration of the New Heavens and New Earth—synonymous with the inauguration of the Thousand Year reign of Christ, which began with the destruction of the Old Order—the first heaven and first earth [of Israel]—and the salvation and deliverance of the Christians, made up of both Jews and Greeks—**NOW ONE PEOPLE.**

The First Century Christians were awaiting this inauguration of the New Heavens and New Earth, which would occur after the conflagration of Jerusalem by fire.

2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. 11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? 13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. 14 Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; 15 and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation -- as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you,

The partakers of the New Heavens and Earth...the New Jerusalem...in which righteousness dwells are the Overcomers: Revelation 3:12 "He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name. 13 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." '

- Recalling that the Old Testament Redemptive System: its temple, its sacrifices, its Great City of Jerusalem was the WHOLE WORLD to the Covenant People of the Old Covenant; however, the New Heavens and New Earth includes:
 - A NEW COVENANT
 - A NEW PRIESTHOOD
 - A NEW AND BETTER SACRIFICE: CHRIST
 - A NEW AND BETTER KINGDOM OF ISRAEL—THE KINGDOM OF GOD
 - EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS
 - A NEW CITY: THE NEW JERUSALEM, ZION
- The New Heavens and New Earth John sees does not just appear chronologically after the Thousand Year Reign of Christ
 - He sees this as a vision taking place after he saw the destruction of Jerusalem, namely, the “first heaven and the first earth.” This old order was shaken and burned until nothing was left to remember, or weep over.
 - It is not wholly future, for the unclean and abominable live outside of it, so there is the sense in which this NEW/RENEWED estate has been inaugurated and is growing and filling the earth.
 - We are not just to look forward to the blessings of
- The First Century saints were preparing for the coming of the Kingdom and the New Jerusalem in that timeframe of AD70.

Hebrews 12: 18 For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and darkness and tempest, 19 and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore. 20 (For they could not endure what was commanded: "And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned or shot with an arrow." 21 And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.") **22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.** 25 See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on **earth**, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from **heaven**, 26 whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven." 27 Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since **we are receiving a kingdom** which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God is a consuming fire.

- The Revelation and the rest of the New Testament writings enable us to see the sameness and congruency of these eschatological concepts, all of which came in the first century in powerful inauguration:
 - The Unshakeable Kingdom of God come in power
 - The New Heavens and New Earth wherein righteousness dwells
 - Zion

- The New Jerusalem having come from heaven...the Heavenly Jerusalem
 - The City of the Living God: The New Testament Church being declared the Tabernacle of God
 - The Festal Gathering—General Assembly—of the Church of the First Born
 - To Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant
 - The Bride of the Lamb, Christ, who has made herself ready
- St John was telling the early church of what blessings currently exist for the Overcomers...them...He was NOT just telling them about things they would never be able to partake of because “I come quickly” meant something wholly future and multiple millennia away.
 - We also see in this passage, RECREATION. The definitive new creation occurred with the First Advent of Christ...and His Parousia, his coming, in the first century. God spoke through Isaiah about the coming of Christ’s Kingdom...and note the progressive blessing of the age of men in this passage, meaning that they die very old...so, this can’t be meant as only occurring at the end of time, for there will be no death there. We never see salvation being depicted as a complete destruction of everything to make room for the new, but a recreation.

Isaiah 65: 17 " For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. 18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, And her people a joy. 19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem, And joy in My people; The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, Nor the voice of crying. 20 " No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, Nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; For the child shall die one hundred years old, But the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed. 21 They shall build houses and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. 22 They shall not build and another inhabit; They shall not plant and another eat; For as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, And My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. 23 They shall not labor in vain, Nor bring forth children for trouble; For they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the LORD, And their offspring with them. 24 " It shall come to pass That before they call, I will answer; And while they are still speaking, I will hear. 25 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, The lion shall eat straw like the ox, And dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain," Says the LORD.

- This cannot be speaking of heaven due to death being a part of this scenario. This speaks of the age right now during the thousand year reign of Christ. As the gospel permeates the earth and is believed and obeyed, God’s blessing shall rest upon the earth and in ever increasing blessing
 - Even the enemies of Christ will feign obedience to the Church
 - The errors of overpopulation will be snuffed as God ensures we know that resources WILL NOT run out...God is able to make the PIE BIGGER contra the doctrines that say everyone will take smaller pieces of the same pie of resources.
- John saw the great blessings of salvation in his seeing a New Heavens and a New Earth
- The Last Days of Israel culminate in the New Heavens and New Earth.
 - The wicked were destroyed along with the Harlot City of Jerusalem
 - The righteous get to see and experience the New Jerusalem, the Church of Jesus Christ

- St Peter spoke in his day of the current heaven and earth being reserved for the entrance of the new recreated heavens and earth. 2 Peter 3: 2 Peter 3:1 Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), 2 that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, 3 knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." 5 For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, 6 by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. 7 But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. 8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance...13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. 14 Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; 15 and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation

Isaiah 51: 15 But I am the LORD your God, Who divided the sea whose waves roared -- The LORD of hosts is His name. 16 And I have put My words in your mouth; I have covered you with the shadow of My hand, That I may plant the heavens, Lay the foundations of the earth, And say to Zion, 'You are My people.' "

- This passage of heavens and earth being foundationally laid is relevant and John Owen makes this clear from his works Vol 9, p. 134: "The time when the work here mentioned, of planting the heavens, and laying the foundation of the earth, was performed by God, was when he 'divided the sea' and gave the law and said to Zion, 'Thou are my people'—that is, when he took the children of Israel out of Egypt, and formed them in the wilderness into a church and state. Then he planted the heavens, and laid the foundation of the earth—made the new world; that is, brought forth order and government, and beauty, from the confusion wherein before they were. This is the planning of the heavens, and laying the foundation of the earth in the world.
 - Owen says that when the Lord God says he will destroy heavens and earth, God is saying he will destroy state and government of Israel, and it is in that language that it seems God is destroying the whole world.
- St Peter calls the destruction of the old heavens and earth the destruction of elements, translated as first principles (the Redemptive and Moral Law, Israel herself) upon which secondary principles are laid. The word is used in Hebrews 6 as "elements," which means Old Covenant truths.
- Owen adopted the AD70 interpretation and fulfillment of the destruction of the Old heavens and earth (the destruction of Babylon, Old Test. Israel, and the Harlot nation) and the inauguration of the new heavens and earth.
 - The apostate men living during that first century generation were the sinners to be destroyed...Jesus' words, "this generation shall not pass away until all is fulfilled." Matt 24:34
 - The first century saints were awaiting a PROMISE. WHAT WAS THIS PROMISE:

Isaiah 65: 17 " For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.

- The “new heavens and new earth” promised to the Church comprise the age of the gospel’s triumph, when all mankind will come to bow down before the Lord.

Isaiah 66:22 " For as the new heavens and the new earth Which I will make shall remain before Me," says the LORD, "So shall your descendants and your name remain. 23 And it shall come to pass That from one New Moon to another, And from one Sabbath to another, All flesh shall come to worship before Me," says the LORD.

Isaiah 2:2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. 3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore. 5 O house of Jacob, come and let us walk In the light of the LORD.

- John sees the beginning of the age of the Reign of Christ, the Kingdom of God having come, the New Jerusalem, Zion, prospering and filling the earth like a mustard seed unhindered by the deception of Satan and the attack from apostate Judaism...Old Covenant Israel, the Old heavens and earth.
- This is why the apostles always spoke of the ends of the ages as beginning with Christ.

Acts 3: 12 ... "Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? 13 "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go. 14 "But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, 15 "and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses. 16 "And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. 17 "Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers. 18 "But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. 19 "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, 20 "and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, 21 "whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.

- To the saints of the Great Tribulation (AD 67-70), they were about to see the excommunication of Old Jerusalem. Those Christians and we have now become citizens of the New Jerusalem, which came down, and as John sees, comes down out of Heaven from God
 - Depicts the origin of the New Jerusalem...from Heaven.
- The Bride that has made herself ready is the City...the New Jerusalem, the Church

- The bride is the Church of Jesus Christ...John the Baptist spoke of the Bridegroom's bride...the Church. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb we heard of in Rev 19. Was speaking of Christ and His Bride the Church. This "bride" language is also used by St Paul in Ephesians

Ephesians 5: 23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. 24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. 28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. 30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

- God now tabernacles with His people within His Church. The Church is his Temple, his New Jerusalem, His Zion in which his spirit dwells bodily...within His living stones, his people.
 - As seen in the next verse 9, this passage is the conclusion of the chalice section of prophecy
 - Another LOUD VOICE says, "the Tabernacle of God is among men." All of this speaking of the True Bride, the New Jerusalem, the New Testament Church of Jesus Christ.
 - Tears are wiped away from the eyes of those who have lost much due to the covenantal transfer to the New Church. This also speaks futuristically of all of those who overcome and find themselves in the Kingdom of God through faith.
 - This is a New Creation, as St Paul says in 2 Cor 5:17: "old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."
 - St Paul speaks of the redeemed individual; while St John speaks of the redeemed nation, the Church.
 - This is the beginning of the Christianization of the world in every way.
READ Vengeance: Philip Schaff pp 547-548.
- And he said, "It is Done!"
 - Babylon, the apostate nation was finished, DESTROYED.
 - The inauguration of the New Heavens and Earth, the New Jerusalem IS DONE!
 - Christ's blood purchased this blessing...and from this death, we all have life...His body and His blood, the Eucharistic feast to enjoy in the New Jerusalem NOW

John 6:47 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life. 48 "I am the bread of life. 49 "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50 "This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. 51 "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world." 52 The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?" 53 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. 54 "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 "For My flesh is food

indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. 56 "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. 57 "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. 58 "This is the bread which came down from heaven -- not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever."

1 Peter 1:18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

John 4:14 "but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

- The Overcomers will inherit all these things, as the Meek will inherit the earth. God reveals this closest of communions with us, a message for now and for the future: I will be his God and he shall be my son...There is no room for a universalism in Christianity.
 - Only believers in Christ receive this blessing
 - Only overcomers receive this blessing
 - The followers of the Dragon DO NOT receive this blessing, they receive the judgment of the Lake of Fire that burns with fire and brimstone—the Second Death. They are joined with these:
 - Cowardly, as opposed to the overcomers
 - Unbelieving, as opposed to the faithful, those who HAVE NOT DENIED the Faith of our Lord
 - Sinners
 - Abominable
 - Fornicators
 - Sorcerers: pharmakoi, the word meaning “poisonous magicians or abortionists
 - Idolaters
 - And ALL LIARS
 - This is why we in the Church today seek to sanctify ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit and perfect holiness in the fear of God...adding to our faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. 10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never tumble; 11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (2 Pet 1)

Revelation 21:9 Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, and spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.” 10 And in the Spirit he carried me away to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. 12 It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve

angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed; 13 on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15 And he who talked to me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. 16 The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its breadth; and he measured the city with his rod, twelve thousand stadia;[e] its length and breadth and height are equal. 17 He also measured its wall, a hundred and forty-four cubits by a man's measure, that is, an angel's. 18 The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, clear as glass. 19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every jewel; the first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, 20 the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. 21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, transparent as glass.

22 And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. 23 And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. 24 By its light shall the nations walk; and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it, 25 and its gates shall never be shut by day—and there shall be no night there; 26 they shall bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. 27 But nothing unclean shall enter it, nor any one who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

- The Bride, the wife of the Lamb, is indeed the Church made up of living stones, which the prophets, including John depict as an architecture of precious stones and jewels. Note St Peter's words about the Church members as being Living Stones.
- 1 Peter 2:1 Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, 2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, 3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious. 4 Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame." 7 Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone," 8 and "A stone of stumbling And a rock of offense." They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. 9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.
- The prophetic judgments are over, and now we see the glorious Church, having been born from above (John 3:3), born of the Spirit of God. "coming down out of heaven from God" depicts the origin of the Church, not something that is floating down in the sky from the heavens. This is the City which has foundations, whose Architect and Builder is God (Heb 11:10).

- The Spouse of Christ is Zion, the Great High Mountain of the Lord's House...His dwelling place...God tabernacling among men and within them as a Body of Christ.
- The Bride is in great contrast to the Harlot of apostate Israel. The glory of God is upon the Holy City Jerusalem, the Church, and has departed from Old Testament Jerusalem.
 - Ezekiel saw the Glory-Cloud depart from the Temple and travel east, to the Mount of Olives: Ezekiel 10:18 Then the glory of the LORD departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim. 19 And the cherubim lifted their wings and mounted up from the earth in my sight. When they went out, the wheels were beside them; and they stood at the door of the east gate of the LORD's house, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them....Ezekiel 11:22 So the cherubim lifted up their wings, with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel was high above them. 23 And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain, which is on the east side of the city.
 - Later we see the Glory-Cloud returning to dwell in the new Temple, the Church:
 - Ezekiel 43:Ezekiel 43:1 Afterward he brought me to the gate, the gate that faces toward the east. 2 And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east. His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory. 3 It was like the appearance of the vision which I saw -- like the vision which I saw when I came to destroy the city. The visions were like the vision which I saw by the River Chebar; and I fell on my face. 4 And the glory of the LORD came into the temple by way of the gate which faces toward the east. 5 The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple.
 - Jesus ascended to His Father from the Mount of Olives in Luke 24:50-51.
 - Recall Josephus' recording of the glory of God departing from the Jerusalem Temple on Pentecost of AD 66. As the priests were going about their duties, there was heard "a violent commotion and din" followed by "a voice as of a host crying, "We are departing hence!"'" War vi.v.3
 - The Shekinah Glory at this time left the Temple and remained over the Mount of Olives for 3 ½ years. During this period a voice was heard to come from the region of the Mount of Olives asking the Jews to repent of their doings (Midrash Lam. 2:11).
 - Jesus was crucified and resurrected from the dead on the Mount of Olives—the exact region the Jewish records say the Shekinah Glory of God remained for the 3 ½ years after its departure from the Temple on Pentecost AD66: Ernest Martin: The Place of Christ's Crucifixion. The Jewish reference states that the warning from the Shekinah Glory (which they called Bet Kol—the voice of God), continued until just before the final siege against Jerusalem in AD70...it then left the earth, retreated back to heaven.
 - Ernest Martin says this departing of the Glory-Cloud from the Temple at Pentecost of AD66 was exactly 36 years (to the very day) after the Holy Spirit was first given in power to the apostles and the others at the first Christian Pentecost recorded in Acts 2. And now, on the

same Pentecost Day, the witness was given that God himself was abandoning the Temple at Jerusalem.

- This meant the Temple was just now a common thing no more sacred than any other building
 - Records show no one serious about the Covenant at the time of AD 67 believed that God still resided in his temple. Josephus even records that the people came to believe that God “had turned away even from his temple.” War II.539 | and that the Temple was no longer the dwelling place of God. War V.19 | “The Diety has fled from the Holy Places. War, V.412
- The New Jerusalem had a radiance...a star or light-bearer...Greek word, “Phoster.” Same word is used by St Paul (Phil 2:15) regarding how Christians shine as a light in the world. The Brides glory shines with the glory of God himself...shining as crystal clear jasper.
 - This picture of the Bride parallels with the Woman with the stars around her head in the heavens (Rev 12).
 - She reflects the glory of God, the glory of her Lord, for she reflects the glory of the image of Him who was “like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance” Rev 4:2-3
 - NOTE and READ C.S. Lewis on the glory of God in the Church members themselves, in Vengeance, p 554.
 - The Bride, the Woman, previously wore a 12-star crown, and now we see her in a crown that is made up of jeweled walls. The prophets of old have always depicted the New Jerusalem as a beautifully adorned city made up of jewels, gold, silver, and such...jewels that represented the 12 stones in the High Priest’s breastplate, jewels, as St Peter and Paul would teach, which are the saints of the most high God.
 - Now we see the crown as a 2-ringed crown with 24 gates, numbered for the foundations of the New Jerusalem: the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles of the lamb, as the 24 elders of the Church upon which Christ’s Church is built. This is the foundational description upon which doctrine and all that is righteous was revealed from God and thereupon built.
 - Austin Farrer says that “The transition from a crown on the lady’s brows to a ring of city walls was mere routine for St. John’s contemporaries; the standing emblem for a city was the figure of a lady with a battlemented crown.” The Revelation of St John the Divine
 - Ezekiel 40-48 describes the same New City of Jerusalem after having been filled with God’s glory...it is a great mountain of a city (c.f., Zion), lavishly adorned and gated, and the final words of the prophet are, “...the name of the city from that day shall be THE LORD IS THERE.”
 - East, North, South, and West Gates on the city named after the 12 patriarchs as we’ve seen depicted in the earlier portion of the Revelation. And the foundational stones upon which the Church is built with the Lamb being the Chief Cornerstone:

Ephesians 2:19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,

22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

- John is given a gold measuring rod...gold is the color of the glory of God.
- Every kind of precious stone was aligned in 4 rows of three stones just as they were upon the priest's breastplate. The Bride has become adorned for her husband Christ.
- Attempts to describe the arrangement of the stones have brought about propositions that they are connected to signs of the zodiac (Philo [Special Laws I.87] and Josephus [Antiquities III.186]) that are then linked to the high priest's breastplate, but the comparison can go no further. Others simply link the stones to the high priest, with Farrer adding that the Jasper is first because it stands for Judah, which is the Tribe of Christ, the Lion from the Tribe of Judah (Rev 7:5). Any other explanations lead us into the abyss of uncertainty.
- The street was pure gold. Gold has always been good, scarce, and highly valued by men. God has built into us a desire for gems, but he has shown us that wealth is a by-product of seeking the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Those who obtain it otherwise eventually see that wealth laid up and given to the righteous as Solomon says.
- The Harlot was adorned with jewels and she perished, but the Bride thusly adorned remains. Eight centuries prior to John, Isaiah wrote:
Isaiah 54: 11 " O you afflicted one, Tossed with tempest, and not comforted, Behold, I will lay your stones with colorful gems, And lay your foundations with sapphires. 12 I will make your pinnacles of rubies, Your gates of crystal, And all your walls of precious stones.
- This is the picture Isaiah sees of the Church, the New Jerusalem, in the age in which we now live...the Thousand Year reign of Christ.

Isaiah 54: 13 All your children shall be taught by the LORD, And great shall be the peace of your children. 14 In righteousness you shall be established; You shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; And from terror, for it shall not come near you. 15 Indeed they shall surely assemble, but not because of Me. Whoever assembles against you shall fall for your sake. 16 "Behold, I have created the blacksmith Who blows the coals in the fire, Who brings forth an instrument for his work; And I have created the spoiler to destroy. 17 No weapon formed against you shall prosper, And every tongue which rises against you in judgment You shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, And their righteousness is from Me," Says the LORD.
- St John is not speaking about a physical, or material city coming down out of heaven like a spinning spaceship 1500 miles square, on the contrary, this is the sanctuary of God, made of living stones, CHRISTIANS, OVERCOMERS: Revelation 3: 12 "He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name. 13 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."'
 - Revelation 7: 13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" 14 And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and 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. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them. 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 them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

- Farrer: God is temple to the city, and the city is temple to God
- The Glory of God, the Spirit of God, fills the city and gives it light...as the Covenant People of old used to say, "let us walk in His light."
Isaiah 60:1 Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. 2 For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the LORD will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you. 3 The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising. 4 " Lift up your eyes all around, and see: They all gather together, they come to you; Your sons shall come from afar, And your daughters shall be nursed at your side. 5 Then you shall see and become radiant, And your heart shall swell with joy; Because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, The wealth of the Gentiles shall come to you....19 " The sun shall no longer be your light by day, Nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; But the LORD will be to you an everlasting light, And your God your glory. 20 Your sun shall no longer go down, Nor shall your moon withdraw itself; For the LORD will be your everlasting light, And the days of your mourning shall be ended. 21 Also your people shall all be righteous; They shall inherit the land forever, The branch of My planting, The work of My hands, That I may be glorified. 22 A little one shall become a thousand, And a small one a strong nation. I, the LORD, will hasten it in its time."
- The nations shall come to the House of the Lord, the Christ, the Kingdom, for the glory of God will be seen upon her. Upon Zion the blessing will reside Micah 4:1 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And peoples shall flow to it. 2 Many nations shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion the law shall go forth, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 3 He shall judge between many peoples, And rebuke strong nations afar off; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war any more. 4 But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, And no one shall make them afraid; For the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.
 - This is symbolically speaking the Feast of Ingathering—the ingathering of the nation—the Feast of Tabernacles, which the Feast of Trumpets launched at the Head of the Year...Rosh Hashanah. In these days, during this thousand year reign of Christ, the nations are coming to the Lord, the Devil is bound, and we can expect VICTORY.
- The Church is the "City set upon a Hill" whose light can be seen by all.
 - The Gentiles bring their honor and wealth to her, but they CANNOT bring their abominations to it.
 - Kings of the earth honor the Church, the Bride, because they honor the Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - So, yes, we want the State to leave the Church alone with regard to her mission of discipleship, however, we must accommodate the prophecy that they will come to the

Church...as the nations, including the Queen of Sheba, came to Solomon. Here is the prototype of what we would expect to see:

1 Kings 10:1 Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to test him with hard questions. 2 She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue, with camels that bore spices, very much gold, and precious stones; and when she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart. 3 So Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing so difficult for the king that he could not explain it to her. 4 And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, 5 the food on his table, the seating of his servants, the service of his waiters and their apparel, his cupbearers, and his entryway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit in her. 6 Then she said to the king: "It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. 7 "However I did not believe the words until I came and saw with my own eyes; and indeed the half was not told me. Your wisdom and prosperity exceed the fame of which I heard. 8 "Happy are your men and happy are these your servants, who stand continually before you and hear your wisdom! 9 "Blessed be the LORD your God, who delighted in you, setting you on the throne of Israel! Because the LORD has loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness." 10 Then she gave the king one hundred and twenty talents of gold, spices in great quantity, and precious stones. There never again came such abundance of spices as the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon. 11 Also, the ships of Hiram, which brought gold from Ophir, brought great quantities of almug wood and precious stones from Ophir. 12 And the king made steps of the almug wood for the house of the LORD and for the king's house, also harps and stringed instruments for singers. There never again came such almug wood, nor has the like been seen to this day. 13 Now King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba all she desired, whatever she asked, besides what Solomon had given her according to the royal generosity. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants. 14 The weight of gold that came to Solomon yearly was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold, 15 besides that from the traveling merchants, from the income of traders, from all the kings of Arabia, and from the governors of the country.

**Revelation 22 Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition (RSVCE)
The River of Life**

22 Then he showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb 2 through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life[a] with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 There shall no more be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall worship him; 4 they shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads. 5 And night shall be no more; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.

- In the history of redemption, we come full circle back to Eden in which the river flows forth from the garden outward to the nations. In Genesis 2:10-14, springs bubbled up from the ground and formed a river, and parted into four heads and went out to water the earth.

- Here we see the river of life that brings blessing...Living Water...as Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman. Jesus speaks to her of the coming time when the Tabernacle of God would be within men...by the Spirit of God...and that living water would come forth not only to the Jews, but to all nations:

John 4: 9 Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. 10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." 11 The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? 12 "Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?" 13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, 14 "but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." 15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." 16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." 17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' 18 "for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly." 19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. 20 "Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship." 21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. 22 "You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. 23 "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. 24 "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

- This living water, the blessing and presence of the life-giving Lord is portrayed marvelously in Ezekiel 47:

Ezekiel 47:1 Then he brought me back to the door of the temple; and there was water, flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east, for the front of the temple faced east; the water was flowing from under the right side of the temple, south of the altar. 2 He brought me out by way of the north gate, and led me around on the outside to the outer gateway that faces east; and there was water, running out on the right side. 3 And when the man went out to the east with the line in his hand, he measured one thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the water came up to my ankles. 4 Again he measured one thousand and brought me through the waters; the water came up to my knees. Again he measured one thousand and brought me through; the water came up to my waist. 5 Again he measured one thousand, and it was a river that I could not cross; for the water was too deep, water in which one must swim, a river that could not be crossed. 6 He said to me, "Son of man, have you seen this?" Then he brought me and returned me to the bank of the river. 7 When I returned, there, along the bank of the river, were very many trees on one side and the other. 8 Then he said to me: "This water flows toward the eastern region, goes down into the valley, and enters the sea. When it reaches the sea, its waters are healed. 9 "And it shall be that every living thing that moves, wherever the rivers go, will live. There will be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters go there; for they will be healed, and everything will live wherever the river goes.

- These waters in Ezekiel are seen to be so powerful, deep, and therapeutic that they heal even the dead sea...beneath which Sodom and Gomorrah are buried.
- One sees the abundance of the Tree of Life on BOTH SIDES OF THE RIVER. What Adam forfeited, being confirmed in Life, Christians now receive in great abundance. We see the fulfillment of God's blessings in Christ, yea, the blessings of Abraham, resting upon the Church and the nations...every man having his vine and fig tree, and every man blessed who is in Christ:

Psalm 1:1 Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. 3 He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. 4 The ungodly are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind drives away. 5 Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

- Paradise is not only restored, it is consummated: In Christ, we see life abounding more and more through righteousness: Romans 5: 15 But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. 16 And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification. 17 For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.) 18 Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous. 20 Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, 21 so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
 - All of creation groans and awaits this consummate blessing to fill the earth, for the coming of the Kingdom sets all creation free to glorify God and enjoy Him: Romans 8: 19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; 21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. 23 Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.
- St Irenaeus saw the cross of Christ as the Tree of Life contrasting it with the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Against Heresies). Early Christians art indicates a close relationship between the tree of life and the cross. The cross is the wood of suffering and death and is for Christians a tree of life.
 - It is depicted in the 2nd Century as victory over death...the idea is that the living trunk of the cross bears twigs and leaves.

- The blessings accrue to those who overcome and keep God's commands
- The blessings and healings come to the nations in this world in this life in this age of the reign of Christ. This is the time we need the blessings...not in heaven.
 - The Tree of Life is sustaining believers now as they partake of Christ...Christians partake of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb...the Eucharist: John 5:24 " Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. 25 "Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.
 - Hear the words of the prophet Zechariah on the same topic of the blessedness of the Kingdom of God having come in Christ: First, Zechariah sees the Old Jerusalem attacked and judged, and then, as in Revelation and Ezekiel, a vision of the New Jerusalem and its blessings:
 Zechariah 14: Zechariah 14:1 Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, And your spoil will be divided in your midst. 2 For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. 3 Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle. 4 And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, Making a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south. 5 Then you shall flee through My mountain valley [description of when the Christians depart from the city prior to its siege], For the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee As you fled from the earthquake In the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the LORD my God will come, And all the saints with You. 6 It shall come to pass in that day That there will be no light; The lights will diminish. 7 It shall be one day Which is known to the LORD -- Neither day nor night. But at evening time it shall happen That it will be light. 8 And in that day it shall be That living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, Half of them toward the eastern sea And half of them toward the western sea; In both summer and winter it shall occur. 9 And the LORD shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be -- "The LORD is one," And His name one. 10 All the land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be raised up and inhabited in her place from Benjamin's Gate to the place of the First Gate and the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananeel to the king's winepresses. 11 The people shall dwell in it; And no longer shall there be utter destruction, But Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited. 12 And this shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, Their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, And their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths. 13 It shall come to pass in that day That a great panic from the LORD will be among them. Everyone will seize the hand of his neighbor, And raise his hand against his neighbor's hand; 14 Judah also will fight at Jerusalem. And the wealth of all the surrounding nations Shall be gathered together: Gold, silver, and apparel in great abundance. 15 Such also shall be the plague On the horse and the mule, On the camel and the donkey, And on all the cattle that will be in those camps. So shall this plague be. 16 And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 17 And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to

worship the King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain. 18 If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they shall have no rain; they shall receive the plague with which the LORD strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 19 This shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. 20 In that day "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" shall be engraved on the bells of the horses. The pots in the LORD's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. 21 Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the LORD of hosts. Everyone who sacrifices shall come and take them and cook in them. In that day there shall no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.

- There shall be no more curse upon the Covenant people of God...note the blessings on the city: Ezekiel 36: 33 ' Thus says the Lord GOD: "On the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will also enable you to dwell in the cities, and the ruins shall be rebuilt. 34 "The desolate land shall be tilled instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass by. 35 "So they will say, 'This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden; and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.'
- The era of the Old Covenant was the era of the world's dark night, however, with the Advent of Christ, the age of light has come.
 - The New Testament age is definitively and progressively an age of light. The blessings of the Lord should be more and more realized in time and on earth as men obey Christ and honor His Church
 - Idolatry will be smashed and light fills the earth and all of its crevices.
 - The light of Christ is upon us and our Church

Isaiah 60:1 Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. 2 For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the LORD will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you. 3 The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising.

Malachi 4:1 "For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven, And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," Says the LORD of hosts, "That will leave them neither root nor branch. 2 But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings; And you shall go out And grow fat like stall-fed calves.

Luke 1:68 "Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited and redeemed His people,...78 Through the tender mercy of our God, With which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; 79 To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, To guide our feet into the way of peace." 80 So the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel.

John 8:12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

2 Cor 4:4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. 5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. 6 For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Colossians 1:12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. 13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

- The Lord will be our light...a great encouragement...not just in the age that is, but forever and ever!

6 And he said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place. 7 And behold, I am coming soon."

Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.

Epilogue and Benediction

8 I John am he who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me; 9 but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brethren the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."

10 And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. 11 Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy."

12 "Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense, to repay every one for what he has done. 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

14 Blessed are those who wash their robes,[b] that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. 15 Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and fornicators and murderers and idolaters, and every one who loves and practices falsehood.

16 "I Jesus have sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star."

17 The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come." And let him who hears say, "Come." And let him who is thirsty come, let him who desires take the water of life without price.

18 I warn every one who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if any one adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, 19 and if any one takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints.[c] Amen.

- M.D. Goulder states in his *The Apocalypse as an Annual Cycle of Prophecies*, that St John wrote the Book of Revelation as an annual cycle of prophecies, meant to be read to the congregation (coinciding with Old Testament readings, especially Ezekiel from one Easter to the next. Verses 6-21 were to be read one year after Revelation Chapter 1 was read.
- This last chapter contained much of what we read in the first chapter.
 - The Lord Jesus comes quickly
 - The Lord's reward is with him
 - The Invitation to overcome and come to Him
 - Blessings on those who obey his commandments
- The Blessed One, who is faithful and true, the one who is the God of the spirits of the prophets, utters these final words of the prophecy, which cannot fail to be fulfilled.
 - God gives these words to His Son to give to John...John gives these infallible words to the Twelve Churches, which will then go to all of God's people, all of whom have an anointing from the Holy One to know all things.
- I come QUICKLY:
 - Out interpretation of the New Testament is askew if we fail to see the account of the apostolic expectation of an imminent Coming of Christ (not the Second Coming) which would destroy "this generation" of Israel and fully establish the New Covenant Church.
 - A sixth beatitude: "Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this Book. All were awaiting this Revelation: 1 Corinthians 1: 4 I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, 5 that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, 6 even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, 7 so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, 8 who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- St John again as before falls at the angel's feet to pay homage to God, but the angel does not permit it. The angel speaks to John as to a peer...a mere servant messenger who directs all worship to God!
- Unlike the angel's message in Daniel to "seal up the vision" (Dan 12:4), this angel tells John NOT TO SEAL UP THE WORDS OF THE PROPHECY OF THIS BOOK, FOR THE FULFILLMENT OF WHAT'S WRITTEN IS NEAR TO COMING TO PASS.
 - These are the VERY DAYS about which Daniel wrote.
- Since the Great Tribulation was ready occur and the end of the Old Testament order was near, the angel, as Dr. Gary North says, calls for the attainment of "epistemological self-consciousness." Let the wicked remain wicked, and let the righteous continue to do righteously.

- The Lord Jesus warns of his coming very soon...quickly...and his reward is with him as annotated to the angels of the churches in Chapters 2 and 3.
- Christ Jesus, the Lamb of God worthy to open the seals of the Book, pronounces his SEVENTH BEATITUDE of the Revelation: Blessed are those who do his commandments...a Greek present participle meaning who continue doing his commandments...denoting on-going work.
 - 1 John 2: 3 Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. 6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked. 7 Brethren, I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning. 8 Again, a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining. 9 He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. 10 He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. 11 But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.
 - Those obedient and persevering OVERCOMING ones are blessed, for they are walking uprightly...having washed their robes through baptism and continual sanctification of their hearts and deeds...to have a right to the Tree of Life and entrance into the City. As St. Peter has said: 2 Peter 1: 2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, 3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. 10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; 11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- Again, the clear warning is that outside the City, and apart from the Tree of Life, are the reprobate and sinners:
 - The dogs: scavengers that are regarded with disgust and revulsion through the Bible. Sodomites are called dogs in Deut 23:18. Christ equated dogs with unclean nations. Paul referred to the false circumcision, or apostate Judaizers as dog, or the mutilation.
 - Sorcerers, fornicators, murderers, idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying
 - Christians have renounced these works of the devil and do continue to do so.
- Jesus, the Root, the source, the Culmination of the Davidic line, the One in whom alone the race is preserved says that he sent his angel to John to speak these salvific words to the Churches.

- The Spirit and the Bride say: COME!
 - This is a prayer to Jesus, the Spirit inspiring the Bride to call for Him (c.f., Cant. 8:14: “Hurry, my Beloved.”)
 - The liturgical response: Let him who hears say, “Come!”
 - Let him who is thirsty COME, and take the Water of Life without cost
 - This grace of God is a gift to all
 - This grace is freely given as unmerited favor from God on high

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Romans 10:8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): 9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. 13 For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

- Jesus now speaks the most solemn and terrifying words of the entire prophecy: verse 18: I warn every one who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if any one adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, 19 and if any one takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.
 - Rushdoony, “In a very real sense, Revelation concludes Scripture. It speaks deliberately as a final word. Moses in Deut 4:2 declared, “Ye shall not add unto the work which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it...” Words were to be added by others, but the revelation would be one unchanging word. Now, with the conclusion of Scripture, adding or removing the works of the book is forbidden; words can no longer be added. The self-conscious parallel and alteration are too obvious to be accidental. The last words have been given of the unchanging word. *Thy Kingdom Come: Studies in Daniel and Revelation*
- Yes, I come quickly, Amen! Come, Lord Jesus. The Church prays her Lord come...bringing Anathema for all His enemies: Paul’s similar prayer in 1 Corinthians 16: 22 If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come! 23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. 24 My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.
 - “Amen” is an oath, a calling down upon oneself the curses of the covenant, and a solemn recognition that we would have no grace at all but for the fact that Jesus Christ is our “Amen” who underwent the Curse for us. Therefore, as St. Ambrose exhorted, “What the mouth speaks, let the mind within confess; what the tongue utters, let the heart feel. *On the Mysteries, 54.*

CHRITUS REGNAT
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