

# Living In The Last Days

A Prophecy Seminar Presented By

Thomas J. Short

Elkhart East Christian Church  
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## Forward

As a Bible teacher I'm often asked, "*Do you think we're living in 'The Last Days'?*"

In response, I usually smile and give my standard short answer, "*Of course.*" But then, before the person can ask me his/her inevitable follow-up question of just how much longer I think we might have before Jesus comes back, I add, "*We've actually been living in 'The Last Days' for the past 2,000 years.*"

Technically speaking, "The Last Days" did, in fact, begin with the 1<sup>st</sup> Coming of Jesus (when He atoned for our sin), and they will end with His 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming (when He redeems our mortal bodies).<sup>1</sup> However, I don't want you to think I'm so dense as to misunderstand the real question being asked – the question which most likely brought you to this seminar.

Like generations of believers before you, you're looking around at a world that seems to be coming apart at the seams and you're wondering just how much longer it could possibly be before Jesus comes and puts an end to such sinfulness.

This seminar is my long answer to the real question(s) burning on the minds of so many Christians today - "*Are we the generation that will experience the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Jesus, and if so, what can we expect to happen?*"

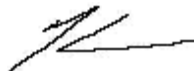
Let me warn you up front that this seminar won't strictly adhere to any of the prophetic systems with which you are probably familiar. If you're an ardent advocate of Pre-, Post-, or A-Millennialism who's come in hopes of finding further validation of your particular system of *eschatology*,<sup>2</sup> you're at the wrong seminar. Here's why.

In order to make an honest attempt to search out the Scriptural answer to the question at hand, I intentionally "threw out" everything I knew about existing, systematic approaches to *eschatology* and started from scratch. That doesn't mean I ignored centuries of scholarly work; I simply determined not to take what any of the "experts" within these *eschatological* systems asserted as "the indisputable truth." Instead, I went back and did my own research within the primary resources - particularly within the original language texts of the Bible itself – in order to see what I could find out on my own. It took time, but it was well worth it.

What I discovered surprised me. I found that each of the existing *eschatological* systems had significantly strong and weak points. By eliminating the weak (always man-made) points and embracing the strong (Bible-based) points, I ended up with something altogether different, and yet so amazingly familiar.

What did I end up believing? Well, that's the meat of this seminar. That's why I'm inviting you to leave behind your own *eschatological* presuppositions, open your Bible, and let me take you on the journey of discovery that completely transformed my own belief about "Living In The Last Days."

*Maran Atha!*



Thomas J. Short

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<sup>1</sup> Hebrews 9:27-28. Cf. Acts 2:14-21; 1 Timothy 4:1-5; 2 Timothy 3:1-9; 2 Peter 3:1ff; Hebrews 1:1-2; and 1 John 2:18.

<sup>2</sup> The technical term for the study of last things.

## INTRODUCTORY MATTERS

### Prophets

**A prophet is one who,  
on behalf of God,  
“speaks forth” (reveals information about past or present events)  
or  
“fore speaks” (makes predictions about future events)**

While there is some controversy regarding the exact meaning of the Hebrew word most commonly translated prophet,<sup>3</sup> the meaning of an even more ancient synonym is quite clear - “the Seer”<sup>4</sup> was the “see”er of divine visions. By God’s intervention in his life, a prophet “saw” things that others could not see, and subsequently spoke out about them.<sup>5</sup>

In effect, a prophet was an individual through whom God supernaturally communicated, most often in the form of visions and dreams, and quite frequently about future events.

Some of the famous patriarchs were prophets or divine dreamers/interpreters of dreams - Enoch,<sup>6</sup> Abraham,<sup>7</sup> Jacob<sup>8</sup> and Joseph.<sup>9</sup>

Perhaps the most significant prophet of the Israeli nation was Moses. In the process of leading them out of Egypt and toward the Promised Land, he saw many visions, acted as an intercessor between the people and God, and even predicted future events on several occasions. For forty years he was the prophet of Israel, writing what would become the foundational books for both the Old and New Testaments – the Pentateuch.<sup>10</sup> Before his death he revealed that God would one day raise another prophet like himself from among the Israelis; one who would speak the very words of God Himself.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Hebrew: נְבִיא *nah·bēy’*. Four views of derivation for this word seem to exist: A prophet is, 1) one who “speaks” for God; 2) one who “bubbles up” with words from God; 3) one “called” by God; or 4) in the opinion of some experts, the etymology of the word has been completely lost in antiquity.

<sup>4</sup> Hebrew: הַרְאָה *hah rō·’eh*. See 1 Samuel 9:9.

<sup>5</sup> This visual orientation can also be seen in Deuteronomy 13:1ff, where the prophet is paired closely with the “dreamer of a dream” (Hebrew: הַלֹּמֵם הַלֹּמֵם *hō·lām ha·lōm*).

<sup>6</sup> Jude 1:14-15.

<sup>7</sup> Genesis 20:7; cf. 12:7; 15:1; 17:1; 18:1.

<sup>8</sup> Genesis 28:12ff; 31:10ff; 46:2ff; 48:19ff.

<sup>9</sup> Genesis 37:5ff; 40:5ff.

<sup>10</sup> Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

<sup>11</sup> Deuteronomy 18:15-19.

## Purpose of Prophecy

**Prophecy,  
whether it takes the form of “revelation” or of “prediction,”  
establishes and validates Yahweh’s unique identity as the one and only Creator God.**

Ultimately, Moses’ prophecy about “The Prophet” who would mediate between God and Man was fulfilled in Jesus Christ.<sup>12</sup> However, during the intervening 1,500 years between Moses and Christ, many prophets arose in Israel - some genuine, others not.

According to the Law, every prophet had to meet two criteria in order to be considered genuine. First, the prophet’s message had to be in 100% agreement with the words of God already spoken (notice that this focuses upon “revelation”);<sup>13</sup> and second, everything the prophet said about the future had to take place with 100 % accuracy (notice that this focuses upon “prediction”).<sup>14</sup> If either condition was not met, the speaker was to be considered a “false prophet.” He was not to be heeded under any circumstances, and under ancient Israeli law, he was to be immediately executed without mercy.

Why so strict? The reason is fairly simple, but highly significant.

Prophecy, whether supernatural revelation about the past and present, or a prediction about the future, validates Yahweh’s identity as the one and only Creator God; the One who knows everything from beginning to end; a transcendent and eternal Being completely different from other so-called “gods.”<sup>15</sup> False testimony from those supposedly speaking on His behalf cannot and must not be tolerated.

For obvious reasons, we’ll be working primarily with “predictive” prophecy in this seminar.

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<sup>12</sup> 1 Timothy 2:5.

<sup>13</sup> Deuteronomy 13:1ff.

<sup>14</sup> Deuteronomy 18:20-22. On the basis of this standard alone, most (if not all) of those claiming to be prophets today should be completely disregarded.

<sup>15</sup> Isaiah 41:21-42:9. In John 13:19; 14:29; and 16:4, Jesus assigns a very similar reason to his prophetic revelations to the Apostles.

## Fulfilled Prophecies

**There are two types of predictive prophecy: “fulfilled” and “unfulfilled”.**

**“Fulfilled” prophecy can be broken into two subgroups:  
that which is specifically designated as “fulfilled” by Scripture and  
that which appears “fulfilled,” but without any specific Scriptural testimony.**

Fulfilled prophecies with Scriptural confirmation are fairly easy to spot, since they are always accompanied by some formula directly quoting, alluding to, or otherwise referencing the original prophecy. Unfortunately, fulfilled prophecies without Scriptural confirmation can be much harder to pin down simply because they depend entirely upon human application of known historical events to the prophecies they appear to fulfill. While such applications may seem completely obvious to the one making them, they are none-the-less human in origin and therefore cannot be given the same weight of certainty extended to prophecies that have Biblical testimony regarding their fulfillment. What one scholar considers “fulfilled,” another might classify as “unfulfilled.” Ultimately, they are matters of personal opinion and should never be used as tests of Christian fellowship.<sup>16</sup>

Thus, the only type of predictive prophecy that can be understood with an absolute level of certainty is one which has specific Bible testimony regarding its fulfillment. All the rest are subject to at least some level of conjecture and speculation. This is exactly why the treatment of predictive prophecy is rife with such a wide variety of opinions and guesses.

As a matter of fact, even dealing with fulfilled prophecies specifically supported by Scriptural testimony can be problematic.

For example, Hosea 11:1 appears to be a rather straightforward (albeit poetic) statement about Yahweh’s removal of Israel from Egyptian bondage. However, Matthew 2:15 specifically identifies it as a prophecy fulfilled via Jesus’ brief stay in Egypt during His infancy. Without Matthew’s inspired comment it is highly unlikely that the Hosea passage would have ever been applied in such a fashion.

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<sup>16</sup> I consider it a great tragedy that so many Christians are quick to argue dogmatically, viciously, and publicly against other Christians regarding prophetic passages that have no Biblical explanation regarding their fulfillment. Certainly we can agree civilly to disagree intellectually on such matters of opinion without assassinating the character and witness of our brothers and sisters in Christ, can’t we? Isn’t our joint mission of proclaiming the clear gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world more important than such petty arguments?

Additionally, consider the fact that 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jewish scholars had some fairly structured concepts regarding the literal fulfillment of Malachi's prophecies about the return of the very powerful prophet Elijah, who had been supernaturally spirited away over nine centuries earlier.<sup>17</sup> They expected Elijah to reappear immediately prior to the arrival of Messiah and the dawning of the judgmental "Day of Yahweh."<sup>18</sup> Yet, the inspired statements by the angel Gabriel,<sup>19</sup> as well as those made by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself,<sup>20</sup> make it clear that John the Immerser fulfilled Malachi's prophecy about Elijah,<sup>21</sup> effectively rendering four centuries of scholarly Jewish speculation wrong.<sup>22</sup> (Ironically, it was partly because of such *eschatological* expectations that the learned men of the Sanhedrin blew off their Scriptural responsibility to welcome Jesus as the prophesied Messiah, condemning Him to death instead as a blasphemer and a rabble-rouser.<sup>23</sup>)

These facts prompt me to extend a little friendly advice to all those "Prophecy Teachers" who promote their own speculations about "unfulfilled" Biblical prophecies as if they were absolute fact; condemning anyone and everyone who dares disagree with them – "STOP IT! You need to always leave room for the possibility you're wrong. Remember that grace is much more likely to be offered to those who freely extend it, than to those who don't."<sup>24</sup>

During this seminar I will obviously engage in some speculation of my own. I promise that I will never call your Christianity into question just because you disagree with me. During the course of this seminar, I may vigorously criticize key components of various *eschatological* systems that some of you hold dear. Please understand now that any such comments later will in no way be designed as personal attacks against you or your favorite prophecy teacher. I'm just expressing my opinion. It's up to you to decide if, in the light of inspired Scripture, my opinion has any validity.

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<sup>17</sup> 2 Kings 2.

<sup>18</sup> Malachi 3:1-7; 4:1-6; Matthew 17:10//Mark 9:11.

<sup>19</sup> Luke 1:16-17.

<sup>20</sup> Matthew 17:11-13//Mark 9:12-13.

<sup>21</sup> John's own response that he was not Elijah should be considered in the context of the literal expectations of the Jews who asked him pointblank if he was that ancient prophet (John 1:19-28). While he was certainly the fulfillment of the Malachi prophecy, this was because he came "in the spirit and power" (Luke 1:17) of Elijah and not because he was the prophet himself.

<sup>22</sup> At this point I need to acknowledge the very real possibility that Elijah may end up being one of the two witness-prophets during the final confrontation between God and Satan (Revelation 11), providing a dimension of fulfillment to the Malachi prophecy not too far removed from the literal expectations of the ancient Jewish scholars. Frankly, that is my personal expectation. However, we must never lose sight of the fact that this is prophetic speculation regarding Elijah's possible participation in future events, while the New Testament has specifically and repeatedly identified John the Immerser as the fulfillment of the prophecy in question.

<sup>23</sup> John 5:39-47; Luke 23:2,14.

<sup>24</sup> Matthew 7:1-5.

## Methodology for Understanding Predictive Prophecy

- 1. Study prophecies specifically cited in Scripture as “Fulfilled.”**
- 2. Study prophecies that seem to have been “Fulfilled” historically.**
- 3. Consider carefully how “Unfulfilled” prophecies might become “Fulfilled” in a similar fashion.**

In my prophetic studies, I have come to the conclusion that the safest way to prepare for speculating about “unfulfilled” prophecy is to make sure we understand “fulfilled” prophecy.

First, we should study the prophecies which are specifically cited elsewhere in Scripture as “fulfilled.” There is a two-fold benefit to this procedure:

- It will acquaint us with the inspired ways in which prophecies have already been fulfilled (i.e., literally or figuratively), providing additional depth to our thoughtful consideration of ways in which “unfulfilled” prophecies might become “fulfilled.”
- It will tend to remove from our active speculative process those prophecies which have already been identified as “fulfilled.”<sup>25</sup>

Next, we should tackle those prophecies that seem most likely to have been fulfilled (although without Scriptural testimony), remembering all the while that we are now working in the area of fallible human reasoning. As before, we will benefit in two ways from doing this:

- It will allow us to assess how these theorized fulfillments relate back to their supposed predictions (either literally or figuratively), further broadening our understanding of how prophetic fulfillment appears to work.
- It will permit us to conditionally classify these prophecies as “fulfilled,” so we can remove them from our active list of “unfulfilled” prophecies. (Although we ought to keep them at the back of our mind, just in case we run across something that would cause us to rethink their “fulfilled” status.)

Finally, having done our best to ground ourselves in Scripture,<sup>26</sup> we can seriously begin our thoughtful speculation on the unfulfilled prophecies that remain on our list.

Alright! Enough of introductory matters! Let’s get started with a look at Jesus’ most important prophetic discourse.

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<sup>25</sup> Such as the aforementioned prophecy about Elijah’s coming.

<sup>26</sup> Obviously the time we have set aside for this seminar is not nearly enough for us to accomplish the extremely important first two steps together. Much of what I present will be based on my own work in this area, without specifically citing it. I strongly suggest that each of you invest the personal study time in God’s Word to develop your own “feel” for how prophecy has already been “fulfilled.”

## THE OLIVET DISCOURSE OF JESUS

### Background Information

When dealing with the issue of “fulfilled” versus “unfulfilled” prophecy, a solid understanding of Jesus’ “Olivet Discourse”<sup>27</sup> is absolutely essential. Let’s begin by putting this prophetic discourse into its proper historical context.

As the time of the crucifixion drew near, Jesus made His way through various cities and villages, teaching as He traveled to Jerusalem one last time.<sup>28</sup> He spent the final Sabbath<sup>29</sup> of this journey (8 *Nisan*)<sup>30</sup> in the Perea territory of Herod, where some Pharisees tried to rattle Him by telling Him that the Tetrarch wanted to kill Him. Jesus replied,

Go tell this fox, “Behold! I expel demons and accomplish healings today and tomorrow; on the third I am fulfilled.” None the less, it is necessary for me to go on today, tomorrow, and the next, because it is not acceptable for a prophet to die outside Jerusalem.<sup>31</sup>

By these words Jesus predicted that He would arrive at Jerusalem in three days time, at the most appropriate time for His role as the ultimate Passover lamb,<sup>32</sup> i.e., 10 *Nisan*, the very day on which all Passover lambs were to be designated for sacrifice.<sup>33</sup> As He spoke so openly about His impending death, Jesus portrayed the depth of His emotion at facing yet another rejection by ethnic Israel. I say “another rejection” because He, being Yahweh incarnate, had already suffered innumerable rejections by the nation Israel; rejections that had culminated in the first desolation of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Babylonians.<sup>34</sup>

He knew that while a large number of the Passover pilgrims already assembling at Jerusalem in this momentous year would welcome Him with shouts of prophetic praise on the 10<sup>th</sup>, many of the same individuals would be clamoring for His crucifixion by the 14<sup>th</sup>. With His divine mind’s eye He could see the result of this rejection – another desolation of Jerusalem and the Temple, this time by the Romans.

Therefore He prophesied:

Jerusalem! Jerusalem! *You, the one* killing the prophets and stoning those sent to her, how many times have I wanted to gather your children in that way a bird gathers her chicks under her wings, and you didn’t want *it*?

Behold! Your house is being left to you *desolate*. I say to you, you will not see me until you say, “Blessed is the one coming in the name of Yahweh!”<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> So named because it was delivered on Mt. Olivet, overlooking Jerusalem on the east.

<sup>28</sup> Luke 13:22.

<sup>29</sup> As indicated by both the following (Luke 14:1) and preceding (Luke 13:10) contexts.

<sup>30</sup> Jesus resurrected on Sunday the 16<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, the third day since his death (Luke 22:21) on Passover, Friday the 14<sup>th</sup>. He entered Jerusalem on Monday the 10<sup>th</sup>, the day after (John 12:10) he had arrived at Bethany on Sunday the 9<sup>th</sup>, six days before the Passover (John 12:6).

<sup>31</sup> Luke 13:32-33.

<sup>32</sup> 1 Corinthians 5:7; cf. John the Immerser’s comments in John 1:29.

<sup>33</sup> Exodus 12:3-6.

<sup>34</sup> Daniel 9:1-19; cf. Jeremiah 25:1-11.

<sup>35</sup> Luke 13:34-35. Matthew’s account (23:37-38) is found - out of chronological order - just prior to his record of the Olivet Discourse, probably because of its close topical connection. While Luke implies the word “desolate,” Matthew explicitly records it.



Three days later, on the road leading into Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, a huge crowd of festival celebrants greeted Jesus with the traditional words of Psalm 118:25-26 - “Save us!”<sup>36</sup> and “Blessed is the one coming in the name of Yahweh!”<sup>37</sup> This was exactly when, where and how Jesus had said it would occur.

It was on that occasion that Jesus spoke once more to Jerusalem about her approaching desolation, lamenting her horrendous fate.

If you yourself had realized in this day the things *required* for peace...but now they have been hidden from your eyes. Days will come upon you *when* your enemies will erect fortifications against you, surround you, and press in on you from all sides; they will demolish *both* you and your children within you. There will not be stone upon stone left in you, because you did not recognize the time of your evaluation.<sup>38</sup>

Jesus wept over Jerusalem because His prophetic sight could already see the entire city demolished and her population decimated. He knew that many of the people currently cheering around Him did not recognize who He really was or why He had come. In just a few days they, their human High Priest and their Sanhedrin would completely reject Him as their rightful king,<sup>39</sup> condemn Him to execution as a criminal on a Roman cross, and thereby bring upon Jerusalem and the Temple a second divine desolation.

A couple days after Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem as the final Passover lamb, the apostles were pointing out to Jesus all the massive stones which King Herod had used in his extensive renovation of the Temple nearly 50 years earlier, along with the many impressive dedicatory gifts with which it had been adorned since. Jesus’ only response was to basically repeat what He had said on the 10<sup>th</sup> about the impending desolation of the city.

See these great buildings? There won’t be stone upon stone left here that will not be taken down.<sup>40</sup>

No doubt shocked to hear, not just once, but twice now within a matter days, that such an important site as the Temple would be completely razed to the ground, four of the Apostles – Peter, Andrew, James, and John – waited until later in the day, when Jesus had taken a seat on the Mount of Olives, overlooking the Temple complex, in order to inquire about this prophecy. It was their private question that prompted “The Olivet Discourse.”

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<sup>36</sup> Hebrew: הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא *hō-shēy-hāh Nah*; Greek: ὠσαννά *hō-san-na*.

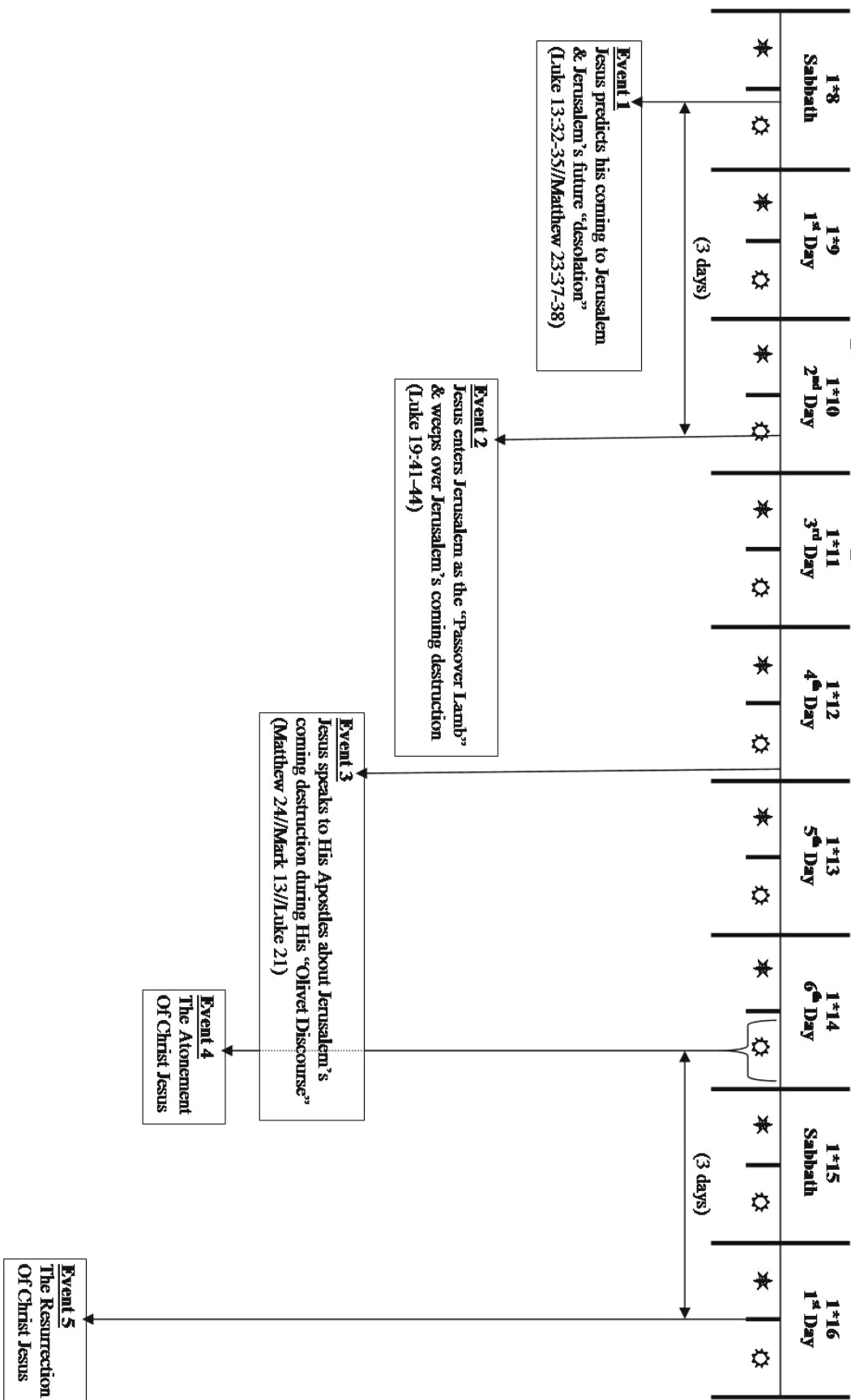
<sup>37</sup> Matthew 21:1-9//Mark 11:1-10//Luke 19:29-40.

<sup>38</sup> Luke 19:41-44.

<sup>39</sup> John 19:13-15 records the legal rejection of Jesus as king by the Jewish nation.

<sup>40</sup> Mark 13:2.

# Chronological Background For Jesus' Olivet Discourse



**THE OLIVET DISCOURSE OF JESUS**  
**The Apostles' Questions**

<b>MATTHEW</b>	<b>MARK</b>	<b>LUKE</b>
<p>24:3b <b>Tell us,</b>  <b>when will these things be?</b>  <b>What <i>will be</i> the sign</b>  of your arrival and  the <b>consummation</b> of the age?</p>	<p>13:4 <b>Tell us,</b>  <b>when will these things be?</b>  <b>What <i>will be</i> the sign</b>  <b>whenever all these things</b>  <b>are about to be consummated?</b></p>	<p>21:7 So, Teacher,  <b>when will these things be?</b>  <b>What <i>will be</i> the sign</b>  <b>whenever these things</b>  <b>are about to happen?</b></p>

As you can see for yourself,<sup>41</sup> the primary question of the apostles was “WHEN will THESE THINGS occur?” that is, “when will the Temple be destroyed in such a way that ‘there will not be stone upon stone left’?”

However, Matthew’s account makes it very clear that they included a secondary question regarding “WHAT SIGN” would precede Jesus’ “ARRIVAL”<sup>42</sup> as the final King of Israel, and His subsequent inauguration of the eternal kingdom.<sup>43</sup> As religious Jews, they quite naturally assumed that such an astonishing event as the total destruction of the Temple simply had to be associated with “the end of the world” as they knew it and the dawning of the long anticipated Messianic age.

Since we live after the destruction of the Temple in AD 70, but before the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Jesus as “King of kings and Lord of lords,”<sup>44</sup> we have the advantage of knowing that the apostles were actually asking about two different events. If we are very careful in our consideration of Jesus’ answer, we will be able to see that He precisely answered both questions, giving the bulk of His attention to the most pressing event chronologically - the destruction (or desolation) of the Temple.

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<sup>41</sup> Over the past twenty-plus years, to facilitate my own understanding of the gospels, I have developed a translation, arranged in parallel columns for easy comparison, identifying all the Greek vocabulary common to at least two of the accounts by means of bold print. I will be using this parallel arrangement throughout our consideration of the Olivet Discourse.

<sup>42</sup> This is his “Parousia” (**παρουσία** *par-u·sē·a*), sometimes translated “Presence” or “Coming.”

<sup>43</sup> Isaiah 9:6-7; Daniel 2:44; and 7:13-14, 27.

<sup>44</sup> Revelation 19:11ff.

## THE OLIVET DISCOURSE OF JESUS

### Precursors to the Temple's Desolation

MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE
<p>24:4 Replying, <b>Jesus said to them, “See that no one misleads you, 24:5 for many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Anointed!’ and will mislead many.</b></p> <p>24:6 <b>You are about to hear wars and reports of wars; see that you are not troubled, for it must happen, but it is not yet the end.</b></p> <p>24:7 <b>For nation will be raised up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places.</b></p> <p>24:8 <b>All these things are but the beginning of labor pains.</b></p>	<p>13:5 <b>Jesus began to say to them, “See that no one misleads you. 13:6 Many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am he!’ and will mislead many.</b></p> <p>13:7 <b>Whenever you hear wars and reports of wars, do not be troubled; it must happen, but it is not yet the end.</b></p> <p>13:8 <b>For nation will be raised up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places. There will be famines. These things are the beginning of labor pains.</b></p>	<p>21:8 <b>He said, “See that you are not misled, for many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am he!’ and, ‘The time has drawn near!’</b></p> <p>Do not go after them.</p> <p>21:9 <b>Whenever you hear wars and unrest, do not be terrified, for these things must happen first; but it is not immediately the end.”</b></p> <p>21:10 Then he was saying to them, <b>“Nation will be raised up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. 21:11 There will be great earthquakes and, in various places, famines, pestilences, and terrifying things. There will be great signs from heaven.</b></p>

Jesus began His discourse with a general warning that the apostles should not be fooled by the claims of false Messiahs, unsettled by news of political and social unrest, nor frightened by natural disasters. Such events would not be indicative, in and of themselves, that the end of the Temple was imminent, nor that the true Messiah was about to appear.

Josephus, a Jewish priest, soldier, and historian of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century, wrote extensively about the events leading up to and surrounding the war during which Jerusalem was laid waste by the Romans. He records examples of all the things mentioned by Jesus which took place during the 37-year period between the discourse and the desolation. There were false Messiahs and prophets.<sup>45</sup> Political and social unrest increasingly became the norm for the Jewish people.<sup>46</sup> Famines,<sup>47</sup> earthquakes<sup>48</sup> and supernatural signs also took place.<sup>49</sup>

But, as Jesus warned, these things were like the first twinges of labor. The really painful contractions of delivery were yet to come.

<sup>45</sup> Antiquities 20.5.1; 20.8.6//Wars 2.13.5.

<sup>46</sup> Antiquities 20.

<sup>47</sup> Antiquities 20.2

<sup>48</sup> Although Josephus cites only one specific incident of the earth quaking during the period AD 33-AD70, a quake which he directly connected to the desolation of the Temple (Antiquities 6.5.3), the New Testament itself provides some pretty significant examples with this time frame (Matthew 27:51-54; 28:2; Acts 16:26).

<sup>49</sup> Wars 6.5.3.

**THE OLIVET DISCOURSE OF JESUS**  
**Persecution During the Spread of the Gospel**

MATTHEW <sup>50</sup>	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE
<p>10:17 Beware of men, for <b>they will</b></p> <p><b>hand you over to councils and</b></p> <p><b>in their synagogues.</b></p> <p>10:18 <b>You will be led before governors and kings on account of me</b></p> <p><b>as a testimony to them</b></p> <p>and to the <b>nations.</b></p> <p>10:19 <b>Whenever they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you should say, for it will be given to you in that hour</b> what to say;</p> <p>10:20 <b>for it will not be you speaking, but rather the Holy Spirit.</b></p>	<p>24:9a At that time <b>they will</b></p> <p><b>hand you over to tribulation</b></p> <p>24:10 At that time many will stumble; they will hand over one other, and will hate one another.</p> <p>24:11 Many false prophets will be raised up, and they will mislead many.</p> <p>24:12 Because of the increase of lawlessness the love of many will be made cold.</p> <p>[Next verse taken out of sequence]</p> <p>24:14 This <b>good news</b> of the kingdom will <b>be proclaimed</b> in the whole inhabited world as <b>testimony to all nations;</b> then the end will arrive.</p> <p>[Return to sequence]</p>	<p>13:9 <b>But</b> watch yourselves! <b>They will</b></p> <p><b>hand you over to councils and</b> you will be beaten <b>in synagogues</b></p> <p>and <b>you will stand before governors and kings on account of me</b></p> <p><b>as a testimony to them.</b></p> <p>13:10 The <b>good news</b> must first <b>be proclaimed</b> among <b>all nations.</b></p> <p>13:11 <b>Whenever they lead you away for handing over, do not worry</b> ahead of time <b>about what you should say.</b> Instead, whatever is <b>given to you in that hour,</b> speak; <b>for it will not be you speaking, but rather the Holy Spirit.</b></p>	<p>21:12 <b>But</b> before all these things <b>they will</b> thrust their hands on you and will pursue <i>you</i>; <b>handing you over to synagogues</b> and jails</p> <p><b>leading you away before kings and governors on account of my name.</b></p> <p>21:13 It will be your opportunity <b>for a testimony.</b></p> <p>21:14 Therefore,</p> <p>decide in your hearts <b>not</b> to rehearse <i>how</i> to present a defense,</p> <p>21:15 <b>for I will give you</b> a mouth and wisdom which all your detractors will be unable to resist or contradict.</p>

<sup>50</sup> This alternate passage has too many parallels with the account of Mark to be ignored.

MATTHEW	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE
<p><sup>10:21</sup> Sibling will hand over sibling to death; a father <i>his</i> child; children shall rise up against parents and put them to death.</p> <p><sup>10:22</sup> You will be hated by everyone because of my name</p> <p>however, the one enduring to the end, he will be saved.</p>	<p>[Next verse taken out of sequence]</p> <p><sup>24:9b</sup> and they will kill you;</p> <p>you will be hated by all nations because of my name.</p> <p>[Return to sequence]</p> <p><sup>24:13</sup> However, the one enduring to the end, he will be saved.</p>	<p><sup>13:12</sup> Sibling will hand over sibling to death; a father <i>his</i> child; children shall rise up against parents and put them to death.</p> <p><sup>13:13</sup> You will be hated by everyone because of my name</p> <p>however, the one enduring to the end, he will be saved.</p>	<p><sup>21:16</sup> You will be handed over by parents, siblings, relatives, and friends;</p> <p><i>some of you they will put to death.</i></p> <p><sup>21:17</sup> You will be hated by everyone because of my name.</p> <p><sup>21:18</sup> Not a hair of your head shall be ruined.</p> <p><sup>21:19</sup> By your <b>endurance</b>, secure yourselves</p>

Having instructed His apostles not to be overly anxious about the frightening events that would soon turn their world upside down, Jesus went on to speak with them on a much more personal level. He informed them that as they obediently proclaimed the good news of the kingdom throughout their world they would undergo intense persecution on His account.

At first, this persecution would come from within Judaism itself, with trials and punishments carried out by Jewish councils and synagogues. Later, as the gospel began to spread among non-Israelis, they would find themselves arraigned before the ethnic kings and governors of the Roman Empire.

Regardless of the source of trouble, Jesus did not want them to “pre-worry” or rehearse their defense, because the Holy Spirit would supply them with the appropriate words - arguments so powerful that those hearing them would be flabbergasted.<sup>51</sup>

The New Testament record confirms that this was exactly what happened. Within days of the Church’s birth on Pentecost, AD 33, two of the apostles were arrested for healing a lame man in the name of Jesus.<sup>52</sup> During the Sanhedrin hearing that followed, the scholars on the council were shocked by the depth of Scriptural reasoning demonstrated by ordinary Galilean men without formal rabbinical training.<sup>53</sup> On this first occasion, the two men were let off with a warning; however, when they continued preaching Jesus as Messiah, they were rearrested. This time the Sanhedrin beat them severely before releasing them.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>51</sup> While a general principle of Holy Spirit assistance to persecuted Christians might be drawn from this passage, we must keep in mind that the promise was made specifically to the supernaturally inspired apostles.

<sup>52</sup> Acts 3 & 4.

<sup>53</sup> Acts 4:13.

<sup>54</sup> Acts 5:17ff.

When apostolic testimony about Jesus continued to gather adherents, the Sanhedrin took further steps to stop it from spreading among the general populous. An aggressive rabbinical student named Saul became their special agent in rounding up those who believed in Jesus as Messiah so that they could be tried and condemned on charges of blasphemy.<sup>55</sup> To escape Saul's dragnet, nearly everyone except the apostles fled from Jerusalem, spreading the good news as they went.<sup>56</sup> Only Saul's miraculous conversion on the road to Damascus stemmed this high tide mark of official Jewish persecution.<sup>57</sup>

To keep a long story short, within one decade of the Church's birth, the good news had been preached all along the eastern Mediterranean. From Cilicia all the way around to northern Africa, Jesus had been proclaimed as Messiah within Jewish, Samaritan, and Gentile communities, with tens of thousands embracing Him as such. However, there was some very serious opposition to the good news.

In AD 44, Herod Agrippa, a personal friend of the emperors Caligula and Claudius, and a prominent client king of the Romans, had the Apostle James executed as an enemy of the people, intending to do the same to Peter. It was only by lethal angelic intervention that Peter's own martyrdom was postponed.<sup>58</sup>

During the next 20 or so years, the remaining eleven apostles, plus two specially appointed apostles - James and Paul,<sup>59</sup> continued taking the good news throughout the balance of the Roman Empire. All along the way they had to deal with the misleading propaganda of false prophets and the opposition of official persecution. Both Jewish and Gentile authorities saw them as threats to the status quo and dealt with them harshly.

By AD 66, at the start of the Jewish uprising that culminated in the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, the apostles had presented their testimonies before various ranks of imperial officials, right up to the Emperor himself. One by one, almost to a man, they were martyred on account of the good news of Jesus Christ. Exactly as predicated by Jesus in His Olivet Discourse.

It seems obvious to me that what Jesus was really emphasizing in this section of the discourse was the supernatural inspiration that would assist His apostles in successfully laying the foundation of the New Testament Church throughout the Empire in only one generation, despite intense persecution from both Jews and Gentiles. That is why I consider Matthew 24:14//Mark 13:10 to be the first of several generally misunderstood and widely misapplied comments within the discourse.

When Jesus said the gospel of the kingdom would be proclaimed throughout "the world" before "the end," He meant the world of the Roman Empire and the end of the Jewish Temple - NOT the entire globe and the end of human history.

Thus, contrary to widely held opinion, this part of the discourse is a "fulfilled" prophecy and not an "unfulfilled" one.

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<sup>55</sup> Acts 8:1-3; 22:3-4, 19; 26:9-11.

<sup>56</sup> Acts 8:1, 4.

<sup>57</sup> Acts 9:1-31; 22:5-21; 26:12-18.

<sup>58</sup> Acts 12:1ff.

<sup>59</sup> James was the half-brother of Jesus, whom He had evidently appointed apostle to the Jerusalem believers. Paul, a.k.a. Saul, had been appointed apostle to the Gentiles by the resurrected Christ.

Now, before Pre-Millennial prejudice causes some of you to reject this assertion out of hand, let me show you how the inspired writing of Paul affirms this understanding.

Around AD 57, thirteen years before the desolation of the Temple, Paul used Psalm 19:4 to bolster his own conviction that ethnic Jews throughout the known world had already been given ample opportunity to hear and believe the gospel about Jesus, even though, to the apostle's great personal sorrow,<sup>60</sup> many of them had rejected it.

However, not everyone obeyed the good news, for Isaiah says, "Yahweh, who has believed our report?"

So then, faith *comes* out of hearing, and hearing via the word of Christ.

But *suppose* I say, "They have not heard, *have they?*"

Quite to the contrary. "Their sound went out into all the earth, and their words into the limits of the inhabited earth."<sup>61</sup>

A few years later, Paul portrayed the good news, not once, but twice within the same context, as having already been proclaimed throughout the known world.

[The good news] which is present among you, even as it is producing a crop and being made to grow in all the world. . . . [the good news] which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven; of which I, Paul, was made a servant.<sup>62</sup>

Perhaps this is a good place to remind ourselves of a preeminent principle of Biblical interpretation - Scripture is always its own best commentary.

Paul's inspired revelation that the good news of the kingdom had already been preached throughout the known world (i.e., the Roman Empire), as much as ten years prior to the Temple's destruction lends great weight to understanding Jesus' similarly phrased prophecy in exactly that manner.

Regardless of how great a missionary sermon it might make, this part of the Olivet Discourse can't really be used to support well-meaning assertions that the gospel must be preached to every person living on the globe before Jesus can return. I understand the sentiment, but exegetically, this passage is not available for that interpretation.

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<sup>60</sup> See Romans 9:ff.

<sup>61</sup> Romans 10:16-18.

<sup>62</sup> Colossians 1:6, 23.



**THE OLIVET DISCOURSE OF JESUS**  
**Daniel's "Abomination of Desolation"**

MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE
<p>24:15 <b>So whenever you see the abomination of desolation,</b> the thing spoken by Daniel the prophet, <b>standing</b> in the holy location," [let the reader understand], 24:16 <b>then let those in Judea escape into the hills.</b> 24:17 <b>Let not the one on the roof come down to take things from his house.</b> 24:18 <b>Let not the one in the field turn back to get his cloak.</b></p> <p>24:19 <b>Alas for those who are pregnant and those nursing in those days!</b> 24:20 <b>Pray that your escape might not happen in winter,</b> nor on a Sabbath.</p>	<p>13:14a <b>But whenever you see the abomination of desolation</b> <b>standing</b> where is should not be," [let the reader understand], 13:14b <b>then let those in Judea escape into the hills.</b> 13:15 <b>Let not the one on the roof come down nor go inside to take something from his house.</b> 13:16 <b>Let not the one in the field turn back to get his cloak.</b></p> <p>13:17 <b>Alas for those who are pregnant and those nursing in those days!</b> 13:18 <b>Pray that it might not happen in winter.</b></p>	<p>21:20 <b>But whenever you see</b> Jerusalem surrounded by military encampments, then you will know that her <b>desolation</b> had drawn near.</p> <p>21:21 <b>Then let those in Judea escape into the hills.</b> Let those in her midst withdraw.</p> <p>Let <b>not</b> those in the plots of land enter into her.  21:22 Because these are days of vengeance to fulfill all the things that have been written.  21:23a <b>Alas for those who are pregnant and those nursing in those days!</b></p>

Jesus provided His apostles with a specific "trigger event" that would indicate, beyond a shadow of doubt, that the end of Jerusalem, when "there will not be stone upon stone left" in the Temple, was about to occur. When they saw this event they would know it was time to abandon Jerusalem and Judea, and "head for the hills." This was the "abomination of desolation," prophesied in the book of Daniel.

I'm certain that the majority of you have read or heard plenty of speculation regarding this "abomination of desolation." Let's toss all those preconceptions aside for the moment and first try to establish the historical context of the prophet Daniel. After that we'll look at his prophecies (plural) about the abominations (plural) of desolation.<sup>63</sup> Then we'll bring all that information back to Jesus' discourse and see why He cites Daniel here.

In 605 BC, as part of a strategic plan to make Judea part of his growing empire, the newly-crowned King Nebuchadnezzar ordered that young, Judean noblemen of high potentiality be taken from Jerusalem to Babylon for training and incorporation into his royal court. One of these involuntary trainees was a young man named Daniel.

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<sup>63</sup> That's right, Daniel's prophecies include more than one "abomination of desolation!" Surprise!

Despite being young and barely out of training, Daniel was the only person in the entire Babylonian empire capable of giving King Nebuchadnezzar a satisfactory recounting of a troubling prophetic dream he had had. Thanks to Yahweh's gracious response to the prayers of Daniel and his friends, the young prophet was also able to provide an explanation of this dream's symbolic meaning. (We'll go over the meaning of this dream, in conjunction with two other dreams in just a moment.) Because of his unique prophetic gift, Daniel was immediately appointed as the chief wise man in Nebuchadnezzar's empire, a post that he held for many decades thereafter.<sup>64</sup>

In 587 BC, during Daniel's years of service, the Babylonians desolated the Temple and Jerusalem, exactly as predicted by the prophet Jeremiah.<sup>65</sup> When Nebuchadnezzar died in 562 BC, his long reign was followed by the brief reigns of a couple of fairly insignificant rulers. Then, in 555 BC, Nabonidus came to the throne as the empire's final ruler.

When Nabonidus appointed his son Belshazzar as regent in 549 BC, Daniel had been in Babylon for 56 years. At that time he was over 70 years of age and was evidently no longer in active service to the empire. It was around this time that he began experiencing prophetic dreams of his own.

In his first dream, Daniel saw a scenario similar to that which he had interpreted for Nebuchadnezzar a half century earlier – four successive kingdoms, replaced by the final, never ending kingdom of Yahweh.<sup>66</sup>

A few years later, a second dream revealed that the Medes and the Persians, who were now on the verge of overrunning the Babylonians, would themselves be overrun by a coming Macedonian kingdom. Furthermore, a future Macedonian ruler would put an end to the twice-daily<sup>67</sup> sacrifices in the Jewish Temple for a period of 1,150 days – being expressed as a total of 2,300 sacrifices<sup>68</sup> - bringing upon the holy place “the sinful thing of desolation.”<sup>69</sup>

Thankfully, because God ordered the angel Gabriel to explain this dream to Daniel, we have the exact interpretation of this particular dream, and know beyond a shadow of doubt that it was fulfilled during the Macedonian occupation of Judea in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century BC. Here's how it happened.

In the 143<sup>rd</sup> Year of the Seleucid kingdom of Syria (169 BC),<sup>70</sup> Antiochus IV raided the Jerusalem Temple on his way back from a military campaign against the Ptolemaic kingdom of Egypt.<sup>71</sup> Shortly thereafter, Antiochus IV decided to completely assimilate all Jews into Macedonian culture by decreeing an end to all uniquely Jewish customs, including the daily sacrifices in the Temple.<sup>72</sup> While some Jews resisted, there were also many who willingly, even gladly, collaborated.

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<sup>64</sup> Daniel 1-4 includes the story of Daniel's early days of service before King Nebuchadnezzar.

<sup>65</sup> Jeremiah 19:8; 22:5; 26:9.

<sup>66</sup> Daniel 7.

<sup>67</sup> Exodus 29:38-46

<sup>68</sup> Daniel 8.

<sup>69</sup> Daniel 8:13.

<sup>70</sup> 312 BC marks Year 1 of the Seleucid kingdom.

<sup>71</sup> 1 Maccabees 1:20-28.

<sup>72</sup> 1 Maccabees 1:41-51.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the 9<sup>th</sup> month of the 145<sup>th</sup> Seleucid Year,<sup>73</sup> the Macedonians erected “the sinful thing of desolation” or “an abomination of desolation”<sup>74</sup> - an altar dedicated to Zeus - right on top of the altar of burnt offering. On the 25<sup>th</sup> day of the 9<sup>th</sup> month<sup>75</sup> an official representing Antiochus IV further desecrated the altar with a pagan sacrifice.<sup>76</sup>

It took three years of armed resistance, but Judas “Maccabee”<sup>77</sup> was eventually able to force the Macedonians and their Jewish collaborators far enough away from the Temple area that he and other loyal priests were able to reestablish the twice-daily sacrifices on the very anniversary<sup>78</sup> of the desecration.<sup>79</sup>

The period between the desecration and the rededication accounts for 1,103 days without daily sacrifices. The remaining 47 days of the prophesied period is easily accounted for in the time that must have passed between Antiochus IV’s official decree that Jewish sacrifices should be halted and the actual day on which the altar was forcibly desecrated by his agents.

Thus, all of Daniel 8 appears to fall into the category of “fulfilled” prophecy. This is obviously not the “abomination of desolation” referred to by Jesus.

This temporary cessation of the sacrifices was not the only thing God revealed to Daniel about the upcoming Macedonian period. We’ll get back to that additional information in a little while. First, let’s consider the information we’ve gathered so far from Daniel.

When taken together, the dream of Nebuchadnezzar and the two dreams of Daniel provide an excellent outline of history from Daniel’s time onward.

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<sup>73</sup> TUE/WED 5/6 DEC 167 BC.

<sup>74</sup> The Greek of 1 Maccabees 1:54 includes the phrase “abomination of desolation” (βδέλυγμα ἐρημώσεως *bdel-ug-ma ēr-ā-mō-sē-ōs*), exactly as it appeared in the Greek texts of Daniel 11:31 and 12:11, and very similar to the texts of Daniel 8:13 and 9:27.

<sup>75</sup> FRI/SAT [*SABBATH*] 15/16 DEC 167 BC.

<sup>76</sup> 1 Maccabees 1:54-59.

<sup>77</sup> “The Hammerer.”

<sup>78</sup> MON/TUE 22/23 DEC 164 BC.

<sup>79</sup> 1 Maccabees 4:52-53.

### THREE PROPHETIC DREAMS FROM DANIEL

<u>Parallel Dream Symbols</u> (Additional Information)	<u>Kingdom Indicated (Respective Date Ranges)</u> (Interpretation of Additional Information)
<p><i>a. From Nebuchadnezzar's Dream (Daniel 2)</i>  <i>b. From Daniel's First Dream (Daniel 7)<sup>80</sup></i>  <i>c. From Daniel's Second Dream (Daniel 8)</i></p>	
<p><b>1a. Golden Head of Statue</b>  <b>1b. Winged Lion</b>                      (Wings plucked)                      (Given heart of a man)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>BABYLONIAN (605-539 BC)</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Loss of glory and/or power?)                      (Belshazzar's terminal pride?)</p>
<p><b>2a. Silver Chest &amp; Arms of Statue</b>  <b>2b. Bear</b>                      (Raised on one side)                      (Three ribs in mouth)  <b>2c. Ram with two horns</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MEDO-PERSIAN (539-330 BC)</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Lopsided alliance between Medes &amp; Persians)                      (Perhaps Cyrus' conquest of Lydia, Babylon &amp; Egypt)</p>
<p><b>3a. Bronze Belly &amp; Thighs</b>  <b>3b. Leopard</b>                      (Four heads &amp; four wings)  <b>3c. Goat with a single horn</b>                      (Four horns replace the single horn)                      (Horn growing from one of the four horns)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MACEDONIAN (330-63 BC)</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(The rapid conquests of Alexander the Great)                      (The division of Alexander's empire after his death)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(The division of Alexander's empire after his death)                      (The Seleucid king Antiochus IV [175-163 BC])</p>
<p><b>4a. (Two) Iron Legs</b>                      (Feet of Iron/Clay)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Ten Toes of Iron/Clay)</p> <p><b>4b. Iron-Toothed Beast</b>                      (Ten horns)                      (Three horns uprooted by one horn)                      (Horn wages war &amp; wins victory over Saints)                      (Horn killed &amp; thrown into fire)                      (Other beasts continue on, without authority)</p>	<p><b>ROMAN – Rome/Constantinople (63 BC- AD 395)</b>                      (Decayed into Medieval Kingdoms [AD 395-1492];                      developed into Modern Nations [AD 1492-Present])                      (Final Government [Final three and a half Years])</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A FINAL HUMAN EMPIRE</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Final Government [Final three and a half Years])                      (Final Dictator uproots three in coming to power)                      (Final Dictator wages war &amp; wins victory over Saints)                      (Dictator killed &amp; thrown into the Lake of Fire)                      (Some mortals continue into Messianic rule)</p>
<p><b>5a. Stone</b>                      (Not quarried by humans)                      (Destroys statue by striking feet)</p> <p><b>5b. Son of Man</b>                      (Arrives with clouds)                      (Accepts authority from Ancient of Days)                      (Saints receive eternal kingdom)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MESSIANIC (Eternal)</b>                      (Divine origin)                      (Defeats Final Government)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Jesus)                      (Throne given to Jesus by the Father)                      (Resurrected Saints reign with Jesus forever)</p>

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<sup>80</sup> See **Appendix A** (p. 104) for more information.

Since the book of Revelation makes use of Daniel's imagery, we'll be coming back to some of this information later in our study, so keep it in the back of your mind.

So far we haven't found Daniel's "abomination of desolation" to which Jesus was referring. It has to be in Daniel somewhere, so let's continue our search.

In 535 BC, three years after the Persian ruler Cyrus assumed full control of the city of Babylon, Daniel engaged in a prolonged fast in hopes of learning what the future held for the Israelites.<sup>81</sup> What God told him produced an amazingly precise outline of history starting in Daniel's time and continuing right through the Macedonian desecration of the Temple altar about which we learned earlier.<sup>82</sup>

Among other things, this section of Daniel accurately predicted that the fourth Persian king after Cyrus - the Xerxes to whom Esther was married - would manage to stir up the hornets' nest of the ethnic Greeks.<sup>83</sup> It predicted the subsequent rise of Alexander the Great and the division of his far-flung empire after his death.<sup>84</sup> It also predicted repeated interactions between the Ptolemaic (Egyptian) and Seleucid (Syrian) Macedonian rulers, referred to respectively as "the king of the south" and "the king of the north."<sup>85</sup> Finally, it predicted the rise and reign of Antiochus IV, including his prohibition of the daily sacrifices and the desecration of the Jewish altar with the "abomination of desolation," we've already discussed.<sup>86</sup> Obviously this "abomination of desolation" can't be the trigger event mentioned by Jesus, since this is the exact same "abomination of desolation" as "the sinful thing of abomination" in Daniel 8:13.

It is here in the text of Daniel that we run into a small problem with human opinions.

Most Pre-Millennialists believe and teach that Daniel's prophecies about Antiochus IV's abominations end in 11:35, and that his prophecies about the abominable actions of the world's final wicked ruler begin in 11:36. That's an abrupt jump of around 2,170 years (as of right now) without any contextual indicators whatsoever!

They hold this opinion (and let me stress, it's only their opinion) because they claim the balance of the chapter doesn't represent any known history of Antiochus IV. Additionally, they zero in on the English phrase "time of the end" (KJV, RSV and NIV) or "end time" (NASV) in verse 35, assuming that the final days before Jesus' 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming are intended.<sup>87</sup>

I disagree on both points.

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<sup>81</sup> Daniel 10:1-11:1 records Daniel's fast and the amazing events surrounding the arrival of an angel with an answer to his request.

<sup>82</sup> It is a history so accurate in its details that critics have used this section to bolster their claim that Daniel was written in the mid 2<sup>nd</sup> Century, long after these things had taken place. (That would be a rather difficult trick, since the complete book of Daniel was among the Jewish Scripture translated into Greek in the early 3<sup>rd</sup> Century BC.) See **Appendix B** (p. 106) for more information about the history predicted by Daniel 10-12.

<sup>83</sup> Daniel 11:2

<sup>84</sup> Daniel 11:3-4.

<sup>85</sup> Daniel 11:5-20.

<sup>86</sup> Daniel 11:21-35.

<sup>87</sup> We've already seen in our consideration of the Olivet Discourse that just because the word "end" is used in a prophetic passage doesn't necessarily mean the absolute end of history is intended. We need to carefully consider the context in order to understand what "end" is meant.

I believe that the rest of Daniel 11 is most likely about the Seleucid rulers who followed Antiochus IV, although it may possibly be a recap of Antiochus's abominable actions.<sup>88</sup> After all, the entire context up to this point has referred to the "king of the north" and "king of the south" as if they were the same pair of individuals, when we know for certain that they were a series of individual Macedonian rulers within the Seleucid and Ptolemaic dynasties over a period of 150 years. Why would the format shift so dramatically from that era without any indication whatsoever? I can think of no good reason. Therefore, in my mind, "the end" referred to in 11:35 is actually "the end" of Macedonian control over the Jews which came about in the days of the Maccabees, over 350 years after Daniel's final, recorded vision.

While I suppose we could engage in a prolonged discussion regarding these issues, our investigation into the "abomination of desolation" cited by Jesus really wouldn't benefit much from doing so. Ultimately, the information doesn't impact on that issue one way or the other. So let's move on.

A little farther on in the context (beginning at 12:5) the prophet overheard a discussion which provided more detail about the "abomination of desolation" first mentioned back in 11:31 – the one we already know took place during the time of Antiochus IV. This period of turmoil for the Jews would last for "a time, times and half a time;" an idiomatic Hebrew expression representing three and a half years.

Since Daniel already knew from a previous vision that a future Macedonian ruler, represented as a boastful "small horn," would violate the Temple and cause the daily sacrifices to cease for a period of 1,150 days<sup>89</sup> (a period approaching three and a half years), he asked for clarification on the matter. He was told that the period without sacrifices, during which the "abomination of desolation" would be set up, would be a period of 1,290 days, and that a special blessing would be upon those who made it through to the 1,335<sup>th</sup> day.<sup>90</sup>

While I don't think there is enough historical information to show exactly how these periods of time were fulfilled by the actions of Antiochus IV in every small detail, the context clearly indicates that this was when they would be fulfilled. This means that the lapse in Temple sacrifices, along with its attendant "abomination of desolation" (cited here in Chapter 12) and the lapse in sacrifices cited in Chapter 8 (an event called an "abomination of desolation" in 1 Maccabees 1:54), are actually one in the same. Both passages were fulfilled during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century BC and therefore cannot possibly be the "abomination of desolation" which Jesus was predicting in his Olivet Discourse 200 years later.

Consequently, we have no alternative but to move on to the only remaining passage in Daniel that mentions an "abomination of desolation" - Daniel 9:24-27. By the simple process of elimination this has to be the one Jesus was referencing.

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<sup>88</sup> I must confess I'm torn between identifying this final section of Chapter 11 as a recap of Antiochus IV's abominable actions, or alternatively, as an overview of the turmoil between his successors (who fought among themselves) and their interaction with the Hasmonians (Judas Maccabee's family), who continued their pursuit of freedom from Macedonian rule until they attained it a few years later. At the present I lean toward the latter, although I have previously leaned toward the former.

<sup>89</sup> Daniel 8:1ff.

<sup>90</sup> Daniel 12:11-12.

On the very eve of Babylon's capture in 539 BC, Belshazzar consulted Daniel about a supernatural event that portended the imminent transition of power. The old prophet's interpretation - unfavorable to the Babylonians - proved correct, and he thereby gained the favor of the incoming ruler, Darius the Mede. Unfortunately, Darius' trust in Daniel made him the immediate target of some very powerful, pro-Media/Persia leaders within Babylon, precipitating the famous lion's den episode.<sup>91</sup>

The following year, Daniel was drawn to the prophetic writings of Jeremiah. Sixty-eight years earlier, after Nebuchadnezzar first captured Jerusalem and deported Daniel and others to Babylon, Jeremiah had predicated Babylon's desolation of Judea would last for seventy years.<sup>92</sup> Jeremiah had repeated this prophecy about 10 years later, when another group of Judeans were deported to Babylon.<sup>93</sup>

When Daniel sought God's help in understanding these two prophecies, he was probably quite shocked by the answer he received. Instead of a simple clarification regarding the termination of the current seventy-year desolation, he was informed of a future desolation of Jerusalem; one following the arrival of "Messiah" - the Anointed One; an arrival that would adhere to a very specific timetable (Daniel 9:24-27).

Already, this seems to fit Jesus' comments much better than the other passages.

A lot has been written on this brief (but rather difficult-to-translate) passage, especially by Pre-Millennialists. The current, exceptionally widespread interpretation, even as it has been represented in many English Bible translations, favors the following key points:

- There would be 483 years from an official decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah would arrive.
- After Messiah was "cut off," Jerusalem would to be destroyed by the people of an as-yet-to-come leader.
- This future leader will be involved in some sort of covenant during a seven year period at the very end of earth's history.
- Mid-way through that final seven year period this evil leader will put a stop to the daily sacrifices being offered in a rebuilt Jewish Temple
- This evil leader will also desecrate the Jewish sanctuary with an "abomination of desolation," often specified as being an idolatrous image of the leader himself.

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<sup>91</sup> Daniel 5-6 includes the events surrounding the transition of power between the Babylonian and Median/Persian empires.

<sup>92</sup> Jeremiah 25:1ff; specifically verses 9-10.

<sup>93</sup> Jeremiah 29:1ff; specifically verse 10.

There are some problems which immediately arise from this understanding of the text, the most serious being the following:

- It separates the final seven years from the preceding 483 years with all the years of the Christian era. Contextually, this seems to be an arbitrary & forced interpretation.
- It resorts to mathematical manipulation in order to account for the passage of 483 so-called “prophetic years” (each reckoned as 360 days) during the actual 477 years that passed from the issuance of a specific Persian decree until the “Triumphal Entry.” This is a departure from the normal reckoning of time observed in other prophetic passages, forcing an externally conceived, absolutely unique meaning upon the text.
- It does not take into account a scholarly disagreement over which Hebrew homograph ought to be understood in verse 26. This huge difference in translation results in an important difference of opinion as to who the key actor in verses 26 and 27 truly is.

Here is my own translation of the passage:<sup>94</sup>

Seventy ‘sevens’ have been allocated for your people and your holy city to terminate the rebellion, to stop sin, to atone for iniquity, to bring in perpetual righteousness, to put a seal on vision and prophecy, and to anoint *the* most holy *one*.<sup>95</sup> You should know and understand that from the issuance of an order for Jerusalem to be restored and built until *the* Anointed<sup>96</sup> leader, *there will be* seven ‘sevens’ and sixty-two ‘sevens.’ It will be restored and built, *both* streets and wall, and the times will be poured out.<sup>97</sup>

After the sixty-two ‘sevens,’ the Anointed will be executed<sup>98</sup> without any *basis for* condemnation in him. The city and the holy place will be ruined, along with<sup>99</sup> the coming leader.<sup>100</sup> They will be cut off in a flood,<sup>101</sup> and until the end, desolating war is determined.

He<sup>102</sup> will strengthen a covenant with many *for* one ‘seven.’ Within half of the ‘seven’ my sacrifice and drink-offering will be removed. Upon the Temple *will come* an abomination of desolations. Until the end, the pouring out of desolation is determined.

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<sup>94</sup> My translation is based on the Hebrew, but takes into consideration some of the fine points of meaning brought out in the Greek texts, including that of Theodotion, whose translation of Daniel was extremely popular within the 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> Century Church.

<sup>95</sup> Contrary to what many English versions indicate, this anointing of the “most holy” (masculine) must be a reference to the “Anointed” leader (i.e., Messiah) whose coming is prophesied in the next verse, rather than to the “holy place” (always neuter in Greek) of the Temple specifically mentioned in verse 26.

<sup>96</sup> Anointing with scented olive oil was part of the ancient Israeli coronation ceremony. The Hebrew title for one so anointed, מָשִׁיחַ *Mah-shē-yāḥ*, came into Greek as Μεσσίας *Mē-sē-as*, and ultimately into English as “Messiah.” The parallel Greek title, Χριστός *Krēs-tos*, came into English as “Christ.”

<sup>97</sup> “Time will pass.” Think about how sand pouring through an hour glass marks the passage of time.

<sup>98</sup> I translated this future passive form of *ex-ol-eth-reu-ō* as “executed” and not simply “destroyed” because of its close connection to *krē-ma*, “a judicial decision,” often unfavorable, which I translated “condemnation.”

<sup>99</sup> This is where the homograph problem comes up. In ancient Hebrew, there were no written vowels; therefore, the preposition **עִם** (*hēm*, “with”) looked exactly like the noun **עָם** (*hām*, “people”), as you can see for yourself. Though I end up disagreeing with pretty much every English Bible version, I still believe that the preposition was the intended homograph. This understanding ties the fate of the city and the Temple to that of the “Messiah,” making him the key player in verses 26 and 27.

Lest anyone think my translation is unique and therefore completely invalid, there are ancient Greek texts which pursued this very same translation track. That is how I first became aware of the variant.

<sup>100</sup> This is the exact same word for “leader” that is applied to Messiah in verse 25.

<sup>101</sup> Swiftly, as in a flash flood.

<sup>102</sup> The Messiah.



First, let's deal with the time element of the seventy sevens. It seems fairly obvious that this represents a total of 490 years; however, I don't think it's just any sequence of 490 years.

Throughout their entire history as a nation, the Israelis had lived under a God-mandated cycle of six years of work followed by a seventh year of rest. In fact, the reason given for the seventy-year desolation of Jerusalem was to make up for those Sabbatical years not observed by Israel during their time in the land.<sup>103</sup> I am convinced that the seventy "sevens" being cited in Daniel are seventy "Sabbatical cycles" and not just a simple series of 490 years; so, let's keep our eyes open for any concurrence between that cycle and this prophecy.

The starting point for this 490-year time period is quite specific – it begins with the issuing of a decree to restore and build Jerusalem, including its streets and wall. This specificity helps pinpoint the exact time that the countdown to Messiah began.

The Jerusalem Decree of Cyrus the Great, issued sometime in early 537 BC, about a year after Daniel's vision, permitted any Jew living within Persian territory to return to Jerusalem in order to assist in rebuilding the Temple and reestablishing the worship ceremonies.<sup>104</sup> Tens of thousands of Jewish expatriates immediately traveled to Judea, where they rebuilt the altar of sacrifice and reestablished worship ceremonies prior to the Feast of Tabernacles in the fall of 537 BC.<sup>105</sup> The following spring they laid the foundation for the Second Temple, but soon suspended their rebuilding project due to the aggressive response of the non-Jews living nearby.<sup>106</sup> Everyone agrees that this cannot be the starting point of the Messianic countdown because there is no mention of rebuilding either Jerusalem or her walls.

Sixteen years later, in 520 BC, at the urging of the prophet Haggai,<sup>107</sup> the Jews resumed their rebuilding project. When the non-Jews complained to Darius, he reaffirmed Cyrus' original decree, adding that the cost of the construction would now be paid from regional assessments, and that anyone who hindered the project was to be executed.<sup>108</sup> But once again, because there is no mention of rebuilding Jerusalem or her walls, this cannot be the starting point for the countdown either.

Pre-Millennialists point confidently to the year 444 BC as the starting point for the countdown, for it was in that year that Nehemiah sought and received letters from Artaxerxes appointing him governor of Judea and permitting him to use lumber from the royal forests in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem and the governmental residence.<sup>109</sup> This decree certainly specifies the two things that the other decrees lacked – the rebuilding of Jerusalem and her wall – but it has another problem. If one begins the countdown to Messiah in 444 BC, the 483 years that need to tick off before Messiah arrives on the scene ends in AD 39. By any system of chronology, this is much too late for application to Jesus.

This led Pre-Millennial theorists to resort to a creative method for counting these years. They simply converted the 476 standard (365.25-day) years between Nehemiah and Christ into 483 "prophetic" (360-day) years.

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<sup>103</sup> 2 Chronicles 36:19-21, which fulfills the covenantal warning of Leviticus 26:31-35.

<sup>104</sup> Ezra 1:1-4.

<sup>105</sup> Ezra 1:5-3:7.

<sup>106</sup> Ezra 3:8-4:5.

<sup>107</sup> Haggai 1:8.

<sup>108</sup> Ezra 6:8-12.

<sup>109</sup> Nehemiah 2:7-8.

There is really no Biblical reason (or chronological need, as we shall soon see) for such mathematical gymnastics.

First of all, there is no such thing as a 360-day “prophetic year.” It is nothing more than an artificial construct designed to meet the perceived need of fitting this passage to a specific dating system. Its supposed biblical support is taken from chronological citations in Genesis 7 and 8, but I would contend that these passages indicate the existence of an actual 360-day solar year (with twelve 30-day lunar months) prior to the catastrophic changes brought on by the Flood.<sup>110</sup>

Second, there is another starting point for this countdown that has been completely ignored by chronologists simply because the associated decree by the Persian king involved doesn’t specifically mention the rebuilding of Jerusalem or her walls. Nonetheless, a decree to do both these things was issued by the king’s legitimate agent. Here’s how it occurred.

Thirteen years before Nehemiah successfully carried out his commission to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, Artaxerxes had given permission for a priest/scribe named Ezra to return to Jerusalem (accompanied by any Israelis, priests, or Levites within the Persian Empire who wished to do so) in order to perform the requirements of the Jewish law, a copy of which Ezra had in his possession.<sup>111</sup> While Artaxerxes’ primary intention in issuing this decree was offering appropriate sacrifices in the rebuilt Temple, he did include a line that effectively granted Ezra full authority to carry out the will of God at his own discretion.<sup>112</sup>

“Between-the-line” evidence indicates that Ezra used this *carte blanche* authority to order Jerusalem’s walls rebuilt. This is shown by Ezra’s prayer of confession offered on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of the 9<sup>th</sup> month,<sup>113</sup> when he spoke of God’s kindness demonstrated to the returnees, as evidenced by their raising of the house of God, and by Him giving them “a wall in Judah and Jerusalem.”<sup>114</sup> This reference to a wall is not some figure of speech (as some claim) since we know that the enemies of the Judeans filed a legal complaint with the king that specifically cites work being done on the walls.<sup>115</sup> Unfortunately for the Jews, King Artaxerxes responded by ordering that work on the walls be halted until he granted specific permission to re-wall the city, an order that the enemies of Judah gladly rushed to enforce.<sup>116</sup>

Thus, there is solid, Biblical evidence that it was Ezra, acting as the legitimate agent of Artaxerxes, who actually issued the prophesied decree to rebuild and re-wall Jerusalem.

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<sup>110</sup> Appeals for support of this 360-day “prophetic year” to eminent scholars, such as Sir Isaac Newton, who cited the use of a 360-day calendar by certain ancient cultures, totally ignore the fact that ALL these ancient cultures added additional days to their standard 360-day calendar, either by tacking on five special “holidays” each year or by adding a special “holiday” month every few years in order to keep their calendars in synch with their seasons. This means that they were aware of and effectively observed a 365.25 day year just like we do!

<sup>111</sup> Ezra 7:12-14.

<sup>112</sup> Ezra 7:18.

<sup>113</sup> FRI/SAT [SABBATH] 6/7 DEC in 457 BC.

<sup>114</sup> Ezra 9:9.

<sup>115</sup> Ezra 4:7-16.

<sup>116</sup> Ezra 4:17-23. It should be noted that Ezra 4:24 marks the resumption of a context interrupted at 4:5.

Interestingly enough, Ezra returned to Jerusalem in the summer of 457 BC, during the final months of the 137<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical Year.<sup>117</sup> Ezra ordered the walls rebuilt sometime between his arrival and when he offered his aforementioned prayer of confession. Since work could not have begun until after the end of the Sabbatical Year and the beginning of the next cycle of six work years, Daniel's countdown would have begun in the fall of 457 BC. This means that Daniel's "sevens" would coincide exactly with Jewish Sabbatical cycles, as I had earlier hypothesized. I think that is more than coincidental.

Let's see how Daniel's countdown would work out from this starting point.

The first series of seven Sabbatical cycles would have ended in the fall of 408 BC. By this time Jerusalem was completely rebuilt and repopulated. This matches the prophecy.

The second series of sixty-two Sabbatical cycles would have ended in the fall of AD 27, so that the first year of the final Sabbatical cycle (the seventieth "seven") would have been from the fall of AD 27 until the fall of AD 28. We know that John the Immerser definitely began to proclaim the imminent arrival of Messiah during the 15<sup>th</sup> Year of Tiberius Caesar,<sup>118</sup> which began at some point in AD 28.<sup>119</sup> This matches the prophecy as well.

John immersed Jesus just a few months before Christ began his three-year public ministry at Passover in AD 30. He was crucified three years later, during Passover, AD 33. Daniel was specifically told that Messiah would be unfairly executed after the sixty-two "sevens" which would place it during the seventieth "seven," exactly as it occurred. So we have a third match.

The prophet was also told that Messiah would strengthen the covenant with many during this final "seven." During their prophetic ministries, both John and Jesus called for Israelis to repent of sin and to prepare for the arrival of the kingdom of God. This would certainly qualify as strengthening the covenant of holiness that God wanted to have with humanity in general and with Israel specifically. That would make four matches.

Finally, Daniel was told that during this final "seven" the sacrificial system would be removed. According to the book of Hebrews, that's exactly what Jesus' atoning death and resurrection accomplished.

As a bonus match, we know that Jesus' ministry was three and a half years long, counting from His immersion in the winter of AD 29/30 to His ascension in the late spring of AD 33. Even this fits within the timeframe of the prophecy, since it highlights half of seven years.

But what about the rest of Daniel's prophecy - where exactly does the second desolation of the Temple fit?

Daniel simply says that "the abomination of desolation" would occur after the execution of the Messiah, that it would be connected to His death, and that it would end the Temple sacrifices. All these things were true prior to AD 70.

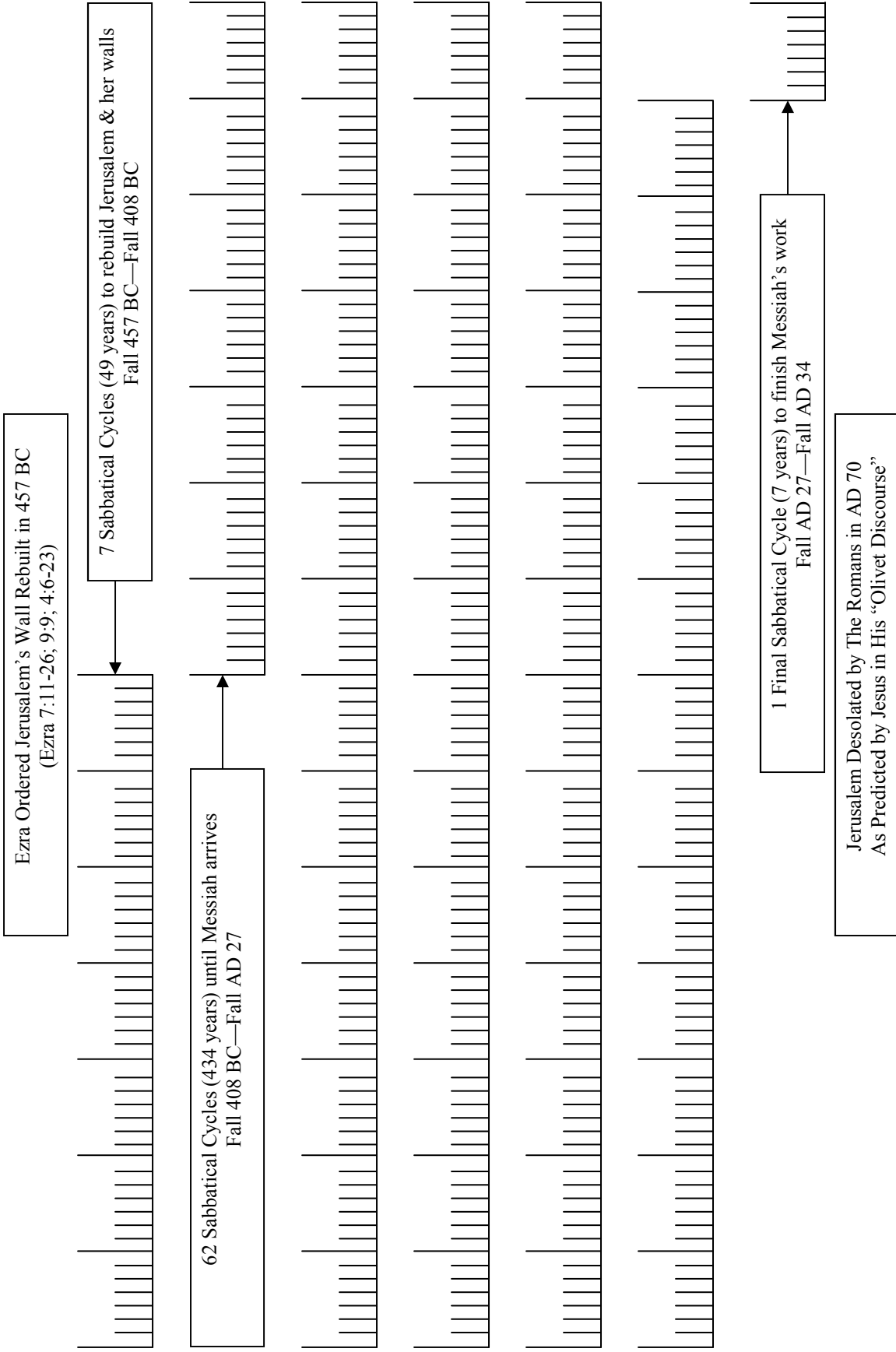
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<sup>117</sup> See **Appendix C** (p. 111) for details on the Israeli Seven-Year Sabbatical Cycle.

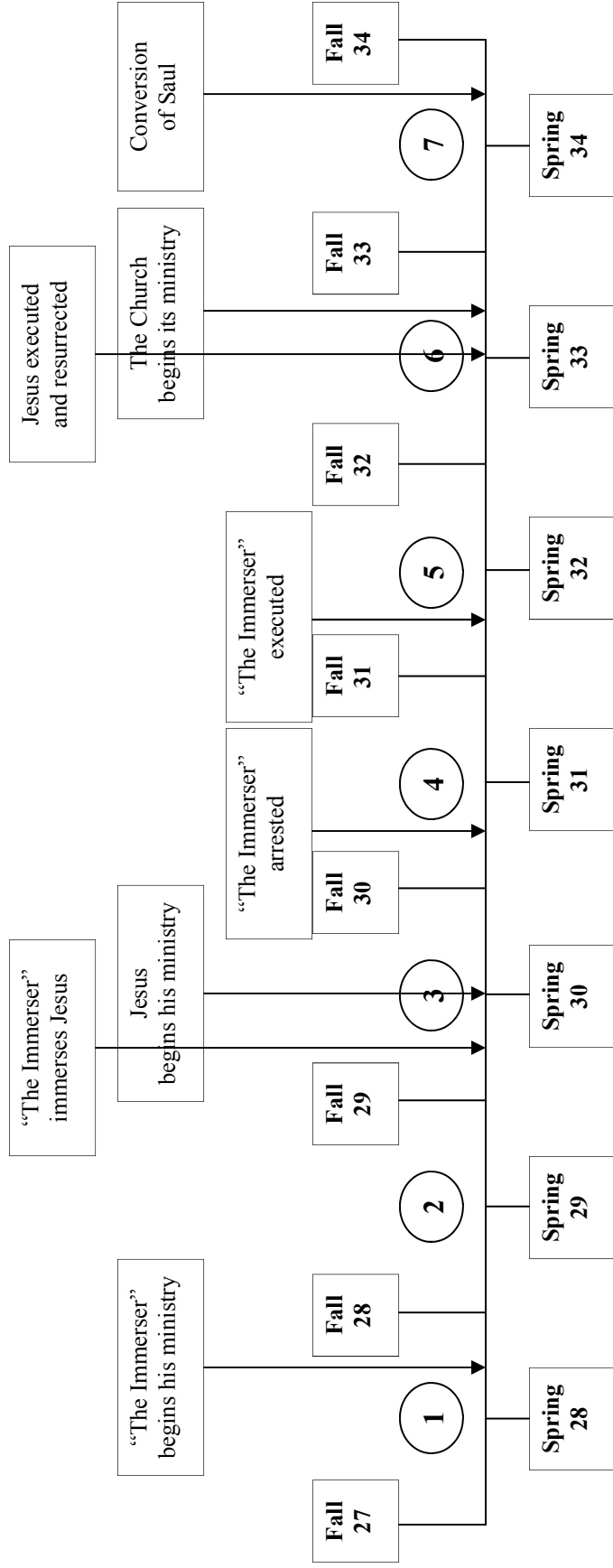
<sup>118</sup> Luke 3:1-3.

<sup>119</sup> Perhaps on 1 July, when his annual authority as Tribune was renewed.

## THE 70 SABBATICAL CYCLES OF DANIEL 9:24-27



**KEYS EVENTS WITHIN THE 70TH SABBATICAL CYCLE OF DANIEL 9:24-27**



You may remember that, as Jesus approached Jerusalem for His prophetic appointment with the cross, He had lamented that “stone would not be left upon stone” because ethnic Israel, as a nation, did not recognize His Passover-time arrival at Jerusalem as their final evaluation.<sup>120</sup> According to Him, the horrendous days coming upon the Temple and Jerusalem would be “days of vengeance to fulfill all the things that have been written.”<sup>121</sup>

I think we can safely conclude that “the abomination of desolation...spoken by Daniel the prophet,” which Jesus predicted in His Olivet Discourse, was the arrival of the Roman legions at the Holy City in AD 70 in order to carry out this act of divine vengeance. This seems to be further supported by the fact that Luke’s account states without ambiguity that the abomination would be the establishment of military encampments around Jerusalem.<sup>122</sup>

I find it interesting that this application of Daniel 9:24-27 seemed perfectly obvious to a non-Christian Jew like Josephus. As a Pharisee, a priest and a combatant during the early part of the war and an eyewitness of the Temple’s destruction later, Josephus goes into great detail about the circumstances underlying the conflict.<sup>123</sup> He concluded that both the Babylonian desolation of the 1<sup>st</sup> Temple and the Roman desolation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple came about because of Israel’s unrepentant sin. But more to the point at hand before us, he believed that both desolations were fulfillments of Daniel’s prophecies.

And indeed it so came to pass, that our nation suffered these things under Antiochus Epiphanes, according to Daniel’s vision, and what he wrote many years before they came to pass. In the very same manner Daniel also wrote concerning the Roman government, and that our country should be made desolate by them.<sup>124</sup>

This Roman desolation of the Temple has continued until today. Despite the secular reconstitution of an ethnic Israeli government within their ancient homeland, the Jewish people still have no real control over the site of the twice desolated Sanctuary. That may be part of Daniel’s prophecy as well - that the Temple would be desolate “until the end.”

Regardless, there is no real reason to anticipate some future “abomination of desolation” like that theorized in Pre-Millennial *eschatology*. Even if the ethnic Jews of Israel did build a 3<sup>rd</sup> Temple, doing so is not required for the fulfillment of any prophecy we have thus far seen. In truth, attempts by ethnic Jews who do not accept Jesus as Messiah to reestablish the Old Covenant sacrifices in a rebuilt Temple would further insult the once-for-all sacrifice made the Lord Jesus.<sup>125</sup> I would not want to be party to such things when He returns.

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<sup>120</sup> The fact of this evaluation couldn’t be made anymore clear than with the parable of the unproductive fig tree that Jesus told during the final year of His ministry (Luke 13:6-9). Israel as a whole had failed to produce the true fruit of repentance during the first three Passovers of His ministry (representing a total of two calendar years). His fourth and final Passover visit would determine their fate. If they had no fruit this time, they would be marked for destruction.

<sup>121</sup> A comment from the “Olivet Discourse” unique to Luke’s account (21:22). “All the things that have been written” is a clear reference to the sacred Scriptures of the Jews, including the book of Daniel.

<sup>122</sup> I think this passage alone really “blows to bits” the concept so widely taught in Pre-Millennial circles that the “abomination of desolation” will be some sort of image placed in a 3<sup>rd</sup> Jewish Temple by “Antichrist.”

<sup>123</sup> See **Appendix D** (p. 112) for my own synopsis of Josephus’s account of the desolation.

<sup>124</sup> Antiquities of the Jews 10.11.7 or 10.11.276. Josephus, F. (1996, c1987). *The works of Josephus : Complete and unabridged*. Peabody: Hendrickson.

<sup>125</sup> Read Hebrews 10, especially verses 29-31.

**THE OLIVET DISCOURSE OF JESUS**  
**The “Great Tribulation”**

<b>MATTHEW</b>	<b>MARK</b>	<b>LUKE</b>	<b>DANIEL</b>
<p>24:21 <b>For then</b></p> <p><b>there will be great tribulation</b></p> <p><b>such as has not occurred from the beginning of the world</b></p> <p><b>until the present, nor shall ever occur.</b></p> <p>24:22 <b>If those days are not curtailed, it is not likely that anyone would be saved; but because of the chosen</b></p> <p><b>those days will be curtailed.</b></p>	<p>13:19 <b>For those days</b></p> <p><b>will be tribulation</b></p> <p><b>such as has not occurred from the beginning of the creation that God created</b></p> <p><b>until the present, nor shall ever occur.</b></p> <p>13:20 <b>If Yahweh did not curtail the days, it is not likely that anyone would be saved; however, because of the chosen that He chose those days were curtailed.</b></p>	<p>21:23b <b>For</b></p> <p><b>there will be great</b> distress on the land and wrath to this people.</p> <p>21:24 Many will fall by the edge of the sword and will be taken captive among all the nations.</p> <p>Jerusalem will be dwnthrodden by the nations</p> <p><b>until</b> the times <b>of the nations</b> are fulfilled.</p>	<p>12:1 In that time, Michael shall arise - the great ruler standing over the sons of your people.</p> <p><b>There will be a time of tribulation;</b> tribulation</p> <p><b>such as has not occurred from the time at which</b> humanity came to be upon the earth</p> <p><b>until</b> this time.</p> <p>In that time</p> <p>your people will <b>be saved</b> – all those being found written in the scroll.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ROMANS</b></p> <p>11:25b ...a partial callusing has happened in Israel</p> <p><b>until</b> the <b>fullness of the nations</b> has come in.</p>

It would appear that everything Jesus said up to this point in His Olivet Discourse has related to the AD 70 destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. But what about the so-called “great tribulation” about which He next spoke? Certainly it can’t be related to the 1<sup>st</sup> Century desolation of Jerusalem, can it?

Once again, let’s let Scripture explain Scripture.

Luke’s parallel describes this “tribulation” in terms of two elements - “distress” directed toward the land of Judea and “wrath” directed against the Jewish people. By way of explanation, the passage goes on to describe the deaths of many Israelis, the forced removal of others, and the perpetual occupation of Jerusalem by nations other than Israel. This was exactly what happened, beginning in AD 70.

In total, 1.1 million ethnic Israelis perished during the final siege of Jerusalem. Many of these were Passover pilgrims from all over the known world who were trapped in the city when the Romans suddenly surrounded it for their final assault. Another 97,000 survivors were turned into slaves and scattered throughout the Empire.<sup>126</sup>

It is likely that even more would have died had Titus not been so committed to keeping non-combatant casualties to an absolute minimum. I count this extension of clemency, along with the escape of Jewish believers prior to the city's destruction, as the fulfillment of God's curtailing of the days so that not everyone would be killed; so that "the chosen" (those ethnic Israelis who had believed in Jesus as Messiah) might be saved amidst the desolation.

As for the city of Jerusalem, Titus ordered it demolished, with only a few towers in the upper city and a portion of the wall around that same area left as an example of just how great a city it had been before it was destroyed.<sup>127</sup> The remainder was basically erased, thereby fulfilling Jesus' words about there not being "stone upon stone left" within the Temple complex.

Since that time, also in fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy, Jerusalem has been occupied by various Gentile nations. Even though ethnic Israelis currently occupy parts of the ancient city, they have never regained full control of the Temple mount, indicating to me that the "times of the nations" have not yet been fulfilled.

But let's consider for a moment whether or not the destruction of Jerusalem and the removal of ethnic Israel from the land by the Romans can be considered an unprecedented and unparalleled "great tribulation."

The Jewish historian Josephus certainly thought so.

Accordingly it appears to me, that the misfortunes of all men, from the beginning of the world, if they be compared to these of the Jews, are not so considerable as they were;<sup>128</sup>

However, some might object that much worse things have happened since then. "More ethnic Israelis died in Hitler's death camps than in the Roman siege of Jerusalem," they would say. "Certainly the events of AD 70, as horrible as they were for the people of that day, cannot be considered as bad as or worse than Hitler's holocaust."

Actually, since the world had a much smaller population in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century, the ethnic Israelis killed in the AD 70 destruction of Jerusalem, when viewed as a percentage of the world population (about .0028 of a world population estimated at 400 million), was slightly higher than that perpetrated by the Third Reich during World War II (about .0024 of a total world population of 2.6 billion).

However, the AD 70 holocaust was much worse than the 1940's holocaust for something much more significant than "casualties versus total population."

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<sup>126</sup> Wars 6.9.3.

<sup>127</sup> Wars 7.1.1.

<sup>128</sup> Josephus, F. (1996, c1987). *The works of Josephus : Complete and unabridged*. Includes index. (Wars I 4). Peabody: Hendrickson.



The destruction of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple in AD 70 marked the divine termination point for the final remnants of the Old Covenant. The righteous requirements of the Old Covenant had been “fulfilled” by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ during Passover, AD 33, and the New Covenant was subsequently inaugurated by the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, AD 33.

While many ethnic Israelis embraced this prophesied New Covenant, a majority did not. Despite the fact that an entire generation of preferential preaching was provided “to the Jew first,”<sup>129</sup> many ethnic Israelis simply refused to believe that Jesus of Nazareth was Messiah. So, forty years after Jesus began His ministry, Yahweh permitted their Old Covenant world to come crashing down around their stubborn heads.

The animal sacrifices of the Temple (already rendered null and void by the final sacrifice of Christ) could no longer be offered once the Temple was gone. The city of Jerusalem (which had once again become a prideful stumbling block for ethnic Israelis) was no longer under their control. And finally, the ethnic Israelis (who had long enjoyed all the benefits of an exclusive relationship with Yahweh) were now scattered across the face the earth where they were forced to watch people from all the other ethnic groups embrace the blessings of the New Covenant relationship with Yahweh that they themselves had rejected.<sup>130</sup>

In all this we must remember that the destruction of Jerusalem and the desolation of the Temple was God’s doing. It came about because ethnic Israel had not only failed to keep the provisions of Old Covenant; they had also refused to accept the Messiah who came to fulfill the very purpose of that covenant by establishing a new and better one.

While Yahweh (because of sin) had once before abandoned “His people,” “His City” and even “His Temple” into the hands of Babylonian pagans, this impending destruction and desolation by the Roman pagans would NOT be a **temporary** time of divine wrath from which Israel could return by repenting before Yahweh under the conditions of the Torah. This Roman destruction and desolation would signify the **permanent** transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant. Never again would ethnic Israelis be accepted back into right relationship with Yahweh via the Mosaic sacrificial system, administered through the Temple at Jerusalem. The only acceptable means of restoration would be via embracing the atoning death and resurrection of the Messiah whom their nation had previously rejected.<sup>131</sup>

Since Yahweh was finished with the Old, and because most of ethnic Israel had rejected the New, they had effectively become a people without any covenant. They had the heritage of the Chosen People (the Israel of the Old Covenant), but of their own free will, they were not part of the Chosen People (the Church of the New Covenant). If that’s not the most horrendous situation in all of Israel’s history, I don’t know what would be.

Luke’s account included a unique representation of Jesus comments that leaves no doubt as to the seriousness of the situation.

“For there will be great distress on the land and wrath to this people.”<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Romans 1:16.

<sup>130</sup> It was this final situation that the Apostle Paul hoped would move ethnic Israelis to repent of their original rejection of Jesus as Messiah and to instead embrace Him as their resurrected King (Romans 11:13-14).

<sup>131</sup> This is a major thesis in the inspired New Testament letter to the Hebrews.

<sup>132</sup> Luke 21:23b.

This was not just any ordinary wrath. It was the wrath of Yahweh against ethnic Israelis who were unwilling to receive the prophesied kingdom on His terms; people such as the Pharisees and Sadducees, whom John rebuked for thinking they could be immersed into the kingdom without the requisite change of heart.<sup>133</sup> When they rejected the call to repent and be immersed, along with John's prophetic testimony about Jesus, they were rejecting God's will for them,<sup>134</sup> and, as Hebrews 12:25-29 states, it is a terribly unwise thing to refuse the call of the living God.

However, as a final note of hope, Paul's comments in Romans 11:25 seem to indicate his understanding that the "partial callusing" of ethnic Israel (i.e., their rejection of Jesus as Messiah), would continue up to the end of the New Covenant period. We will soon explore the possibility that this may prophetically signify the acceptance of Jesus as Messiah by many ethnic Israelis immediately prior to his 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming.

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<sup>133</sup> Matthew 3:7-12.

<sup>134</sup> Luke 7:29-30.

**THE OLIVET DISCOURSE OF JESUS**  
**The Unmistakable Nature of Jesus' Coming**

MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE
<p>24:23 <b>Then if anyone says to you, “Behold! Here is the Anointed One!” or “Here!” don’t you believe <i>it</i>,</b></p> <p>24:24 <b>for false anointed ones and false prophets shall be raised and shall give great signs and wonders so as to mislead, if possible, even the chosen.</b></p> <p>24:25 Behold!</p> <p><b>I have foretold you.</b></p> <p>24:26 Therefore, if you are told, “Behold! He’s in the wilderness!” don’t go out, <i>or</i> “Behold! In the inner rooms!” don’t you believe <i>it</i>,</p> <p>24:27 <b>for even as the lightning comes from the east and is seen unto the west, so shall the presence of the Son of Man be.</b></p> <p>24:28 <b>Where the corpse <i>is</i>, there the eagles shall be gathered.</b></p>	<p>13:21 <b>Then if anyone says to you, “Behold! Here <i>is</i> the Anointed One!” or “Behold! There!” don’t you believe <i>it</i>,</b></p> <p>13:22 <b>for false anointed ones and false prophets shall be raised and shall give signs and wonders so as to mislead, if possible, even the chosen.</b></p> <p>13:23 Watch yourselves!</p> <p><b>I have foretold you.</b></p>	<p>[Luke associated these comments with a question by some Pharisees about the coming of the kingdom.]</p> <p>17:23 <b>They will say to you, “Behold! There!” “Behold! Here!”</b></p> <p><b>You should <i>not</i> go after or pursue <i>them</i>,</b></p> <p>17:24 <b>for even as the lightning flashing out from under heaven shines into <i>another place</i> under heaven, so shall the Son of Man be.</b></p> <p>17:25 But first it is necessary for him to suffer many things and to be rejected by this generation.  <small>[There are intervening verses.]</small></p> <p>17:37 Responding, they said to him, “Where, Lord?”</p> <p>He said to them, <b>“Where the body <i>is</i>, there also the eagles shall be gathered.”</b></p>

Now we come to the very first mention of Jesus’ 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming within the Olivet Discourse. However, it should be carefully noted that it is presented simply as a point of contrast to the desolation of the Temple and is not the beginning of Jesus’ actual response to the apostles’ secondary question about the timing of His return.

He has already warned them once to be on their guard against those who will proclaim themselves Messiah in the years leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem. Now He repeats that warning, adding that these charlatans might even demonstrate their claims with all sorts of miracles, signs, and wonders in an effort to gain a following even from the most sincere believers. Regardless of these supernatural demonstrations, they are not to be believed,<sup>135</sup> for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Jesus, the true Messiah, will be as unmistakable as a bolt of lightning. No one is going to miss it for what it really is.

<sup>135</sup> Check out the ancient warning about miracle working false prophets in Deuteronomy 13.

In an alternate account from Luke regarding this point, Jesus followed up by saying that before the Son of Man could arrive in this unmistakable fashion, He would first have to suffer and be rejected by this generation. As I've mentioned before, this 1<sup>st</sup> Century generation of ethnic Israelis were being evaluated by means of Jesus' 1<sup>st</sup> Coming. Their rejection of Him as the prophesied Messiah would trigger the wrath of God upon them and the desolation of their worthless<sup>136</sup> Temple.

After some comments about the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming which occur later in Matthew and Mark's account of the Olivet Discourse, the alternate Luke account records that the disciples were moved by what they had heard so far to ask "where" all these horrible things would be taking place. Returning to the main question being answered – when will the Temple be made desolate and stone upon stone not be left – Jesus responds with something that sounds rather cryptic to people of our own era, but one which few in that era would have misunderstood: "Where the corpse is, there the eagles will gather."

The ancient Israelis did not draw all the fine lines of distinction between the large, hook-beaked birds with grasping talons which we modern Americans do – to them they were all "eagles." Everyone in 1<sup>st</sup> Century Judea knew that corpses attracted such carrion-eating birds. However, that was only the surface meaning upon which a deeper meaning was laid.

The eagle was also known to be the main battle standard of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century legions.<sup>137</sup> For the polytheist soldiers of the multi-cultural Roman army, the eagle was a powerful, unifying, religious totem. To lose or surrender the eagle standard was a horrendous disgrace, and there are records of military operations launched just to recover lost or captured eagle standards. Legions were even referred to as "Eagles," and everyone listening to Jesus knew this.

With this bit of cultural background, it is blatantly obvious what Jesus was really saying here. Since ethnic Israel was on the verge of rejecting Jesus as its Messiah, Jerusalem was on its deathbed. Soon, with the advent of the New Covenant, it would be nothing more than a corpse upon which the legions of Rome would alight in order to pick it clean. Everything He was telling them was about that transitional reality.



#### **A Roman Coin Depicting An Eagle Standard**

While archaeologists have yet to unearth a genuine *Aquila* – the eagle standard of a Roman legion - they have recovered many coins upon which the Eagle is portrayed. This coin depicts the Eagle of *Legio XII Fulminata* which was nearly wiped out by the Jewish Zealots at the start of the Jewish War in October 66 (Wars 2.19.9). After being reinforced, the XII avenged their losses by helping desolate Jerusalem in 70.

<sup>136</sup> "Worthless" in that after the death and resurrection of Jesus, animal sacrifices would be defunct.

<sup>137</sup> Wars 3.123; 5.48.

**THE OLIVET DISCOURSE OF JESUS**  
**At Last! The Second Coming of Jesus Christ!**

MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE
<p>24:29 Next,  <b>after the tribulation of those days,</b></p> <p><b>the sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not give her brightness, the stars shall fall from heaven,</b></p> <p><b>and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.</b></p> <p>24:30 <b>Then</b> the sign of the Son of Man shall be made to appear in heaven. Then all the tribes of the earth shall mourn.</p> <p><b>They will see the Son of Man coming upon the clouds of heaven with power and much glory.</b></p> <p>24:31 <b>He will send his angels</b> with a great trumpet <b>and they will gather</b> together his <b>chosen ones out of the four winds, from one extremity of the heavens unto other extremity of them.</b></p>	<p>13:24 However, in those days <b>after that tribulation,</b></p> <p><b>the sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not give her brightness, 13:25 the stars shall be falling from heaven,</b></p> <p><b>and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.</b></p> <p>13:26 <b>Then</b></p> <p><b>they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with much power and glory.</b></p> <p>13:27 <b>Then</b></p> <p><b>he will send the angels</b></p> <p><b>and they will gather the chosen ones out of the four winds, from the extremity of earth unto the extremity of heaven.</b></p>	<p>21:25 There shall be signs in <b>the sun, moon and stars;</b></p> <p>and upon the earth <i>the</i> distress of <i>the</i> nations in confusion <i>like</i> the noise and movement of the sea; 21:26 men fainting from fear and expectation of things coming upon the inhabited world; for <b>the powers of the heavens will be shaken.</b></p> <p>21:27 <b>Then</b></p> <p><b>they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and much glory.</b></p> <p>21:28 But as these things are beginning to happen look up and lift up your heads because your redemption nears.</p>

As indicated earlier, the “great tribulation” for ethnic Israel began in AD 70. Yahweh had stripped them of the last vestiges of the Old Covenant, including everything they held dear – their Temple, their religious system, their land, and their unique relationship with Him. Because they had rejected Jesus as their Messiah, they were now a people without a covenant; and so they would remain – unless & until they repented.

This was exactly what caused Paul all the intense, personal grief that he expressed in Romans 9:1ff. He acknowledged the unique spiritual and cultural heritage of ethnic Israel, the debt owed that heritage by the non-Israelis now being saved by embracing the Christ<sup>138</sup> of the New Covenant, and finally his own hope that unbelieving ethnic Israelis might be moved by envy to join their believing kinsmen and Gentiles in confessing Jesus as Messiah/Christ.

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<sup>138</sup> Since most Gentiles did not know Hebrew, they knew Jesus as “Christ,” the Greek equivalent to the Hebrew “Messiah.”

It is imperative that we all understand this sad, but undeniable New Testament truth: ethnic Israelis who reject Jesus as Messiah are **NOT** God's "Chosen People." This is not anti-Semitic rhetoric; it's a simple statement of fact. The entire New Testament, all but two books of which<sup>139</sup> were written by ethnic Israelis, testifies that the rejection of Jesus as Messiah by anyone (even by an ethnic Israeli who sincerely believes and adheres to Old Testament commands and precepts) is tantamount to the rejection of Yahweh Himself.<sup>140</sup> The period of "great tribulation" for unbelieving, ethnic Israel, brought on by their rejection of the Messiah, will finally come to a close in conjunction with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Jesus.

As we shall see later, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming will be preceded by the wrath of God being poured out on the sinful world in a manner similar to that done to Egypt immediately prior to the ancient exodus of the ethnic Israeli slaves. It will be a frightening time for humanity, full of signs and wonders, marking the climax of the great spiritual war that began with Satan's fall and his subsequent temptation of Eve. His fallen angels, the "powers of the heavens" – or as Paul calls them, "the rulers...the authorities...the world powers of this darkness...the spiritual *agents of evil* in the heavenly regions"<sup>141</sup> - will, in Jesus' words from the Olivet Discourse, "be shaken" as God prepares to judge them for their part in their long conflict with the men and women made in God's image.

At that time the "sign of the Son of Man" will appear in heaven; or, as it is alternately phrased, "all the tribes of the earth" will "see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and much glory."

During His trial before the High Priest, when He was forced to testify whether or not He was Messiah, Jesus replied that He would be seen coming in exactly this fashion, i.e., as the Messiah. It was this statement, a clear reference to the *eschatological* prophecy of Daniel 7:13-14,<sup>142</sup> that led the Sanhedrin to condemn Him to death for blasphemy. Forty days after the resurrection, when Jesus ascended into heaven, two angels appeared to the Apostles to tell them that he would return in the same way they had seen Him depart – amidst the clouds of heaven.<sup>143</sup>

According to Zechariah 12:10,<sup>144</sup> even among the ethnic Israelis on whom the Holy Spirit rests (i.e., repentant Messianic Jews), there will be great mourning over the One they pierced. It will be at this time that Jesus will dispatch His angels, with the sound of a great trumpet, to gather in His "chosen ones," regardless of ethnic origin, from all over creation.

When taken together, all these things preclude the idea of any sort of secret "rapture," as is so widely taught by Pre-Millennialists of the "Pre-Trib" and "Mid-Trib" variety. When He comes in the clouds as He departed, every eye will see Him, both sinner and saint.

We'll go into more detail on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming later. For now, let's wrap up the Olivet Discourse of Jesus.

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<sup>139</sup> Luke and Acts.

<sup>140</sup> For example: "Anyone denying the Son doesn't have the Father. The one confessing the Son also has the Father."1 John 2:24.

<sup>141</sup> Ephesians 6:12.

<sup>142</sup> Matthew 26:64//Mark 14:62//Luke 22:69.

<sup>143</sup> Acts 1:9-11.

<sup>144</sup> Alluded to in both Matthew 24:30 and Revelation 1:7.

## THE OLIVET DISCOURSE OF JESUS

### Wrapping Things Up

#### MATTHEW //MARK<sup>145</sup>

<sup>24:32//13:28</sup> Learn **a parable**  
from **the fig tree**:  
**When** its branches have already become tender and  
sprout leaves,  
**you know that the summer is near.**  
<sup>24:33//13:29</sup> **Thus shall it also be for you.**  
**Whenever you see all these things happening,**  
**know that it is near,** *even* at the door.  
<sup>24:34//13:30</sup> **Amen, amen, I say to you,**  
**this generation shall not pass away until all these**  
**things happen.**  
<sup>24:35//13:31</sup> **Heaven and earth may pass away,**  
**but my words shall never pass away.**  
<sup>24:36//13:32</sup> Regarding that day and hour, no one knows -  
neither the angels of the heavens, nor the Son, only the  
Father alone;

#### MATTHEW

<sup>24:37</sup> for even **as the days of Noah were,**  
**so the coming of the Son of Man shall be.**  
<sup>24:38</sup> For in the days prior to the Flood  
**they were eating, drinking, marrying and being**  
**married until the day Noah entered the ark.**  
<sup>24:39a</sup> They didn't realize until  
**the Flood came and took everyone.**

<sup>24:39b</sup> **So shall it be in the coming of the Son of Man.**

<sup>24:40</sup> Then **two will be in the field.**  
**One will be received and the other dismissed.**  
<sup>24:41</sup> **Two will be grinding at the millstone.**  
**One will be received and the other dismissed.**

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<sup>145</sup> With only a few, extremely minor differences  
in vocabulary and grammatical structure, the accounts  
are virtually identical.

#### LUKE

<sup>21:29</sup> He told them **a parable.**  
“Look at **the fig tree** and all the trees.  
<sup>21:30</sup> **When** they've already put out *leaves*,  
seeing *this* for yourselves,  
**you know that the summer is already near.**  
<sup>21:31</sup> **Thus shall it also be for you.**  
**Whenever you see all these things happening,**  
**know that the kingdom of God is near.**  
<sup>21:32</sup> **Amen, I say to you,**  
**this generation shall not pass away until all these**  
**things happen.**  
<sup>21:33</sup> **Heaven and earth may pass away,**  
**but my words shall never pass away.**

#### LUKE<sup>146</sup>

<sup>17:25</sup> But first it is necessary for him to suffer many  
things and to be rejected by this generation.  
<sup>17:26</sup> Just as it was in **the days of Noah,**  
**so shall it be in the days of the Son of Man.**

<sup>17:27</sup> **They were eating, drinking, marrying, and**  
**being married until the day Noah entered the ark.**

**The Flood came and destroyed everyone.**  
<sup>17:28</sup> Similarly, as it was in the days of Lot – they were  
eating, drinking, buying, selling, planting, and  
building; <sup>17:29</sup> but on the day Lot went out from Sodom  
fire and sulfur rained from heaven and destroyed  
everyone –  
<sup>17:30</sup> These same things  
**shall be in that day the Son of Man** is revealed.  
<sup>17:31</sup> In that day he who is on the roof *with* his things in  
his house should not go down to get them. Similarly,  
the one in the field should not return for things *left*  
behind.<sup>147</sup>  
<sup>17:32</sup> Remember Lot's wife.  
<sup>17:33</sup> Whoever seeks to secure his life will lose it, *while*  
he who loses it will save it.  
<sup>17:34</sup> I am telling you in this night  
**two will be in one bed.**  
**One will be received and the other dismissed.**  
<sup>17:35</sup> **Two will be grinding at the same millstone.**  
**One will be received and the other dismissed.**

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<sup>146</sup> Here we return to the alternate context of Luke,  
beginning with Jesus' use of the key phrase “this  
generation.”

<sup>147</sup> This verse sounds very much like some things  
said about events prior to the destruction of Jerusalem,  
but it is clearly applied to the 2nd Coming here.

There's ample opportunity for confusion in this latter section of the Olivet Discourse. However, if we are careful in our reading, we can avoid all that confusion.

If you haven't already seen it on your own, you should go back and take note of the fact that throughout the discourse the phrases "**these things**" and "**this generation**" serve as grammatical markers that distinguish Jesus' references to the desolation of the Temple from those referencing "**that day**" of His 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming. "**These things**" and "**this generation**" are very near chronologically to the time of the Olivet Discourse, while "**that day**" of His glorious return is chronologically distant.<sup>148</sup>

Regardless of this grammatical truth, some have still tried to connect this final mention of "these things" and "this generation" to the distant 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Jesus. They suggest that the word translated "generation" should be understood as the "genetic group" of the Jewish people, or that the generation referred to is the one that sees the "leafing out" of the "fig tree" known as national Israel.

In regard to the first suggestion, I can't find any authentic examples where the word used here is used elsewhere in the New Testament in the sense of a "genetic group."<sup>149</sup> More to the point, the contextual phrase used here - "**this generation**" - is used everywhere else in the Gospels as a specific reference to the 1<sup>st</sup> Century generation.<sup>150</sup>

As to the second suggestion, that the 1947 establishment of modern Israel is symbolized by the "leafing" of the "fig tree;" this ignores the fact that Luke's account says that it will be the leafing of all trees, and not just the fig, that serves as an indication of summer's arrival.<sup>151</sup>

These commentators also very often assert that the fig tree is THE Biblical symbol for Israel. Apparently they haven't checked the evidence for this claim (which I suspect is being made second-hand, without personal verification), because that is simply not the case. While figs have sometimes been used, the grapevine is a much more common symbol, and when Paul used a tree as the symbol for Israel in his Romans 11 discussion about incorporating Gentiles into the kingdom of God, he turned, not to the fig, but to the olive.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> In English the relative pronouns "this" and "these" relate to things near in time or space, while "that" and "those" relate to things more distant in time or space. This same rule applies in Greek and is reflected in my translation.

<sup>149</sup> Luke 16:8 is the commonly given example, but I don't really see the necessity for adopting that shade of meaning to make sense of the passage. It looks to me that it is used as a synonym for the word "age" earlier in the verse, which, of course, the word "generation" is.

<sup>150</sup> You can check it out for yourself. Matthew 11:16//Luke 7:31; Matthew 12:41-42//Mark 8:12//Luke 11:29-32; Matthew 23:36//Luke 11:50-51; and Luke 17:25.

<sup>151</sup> I have heard some who make this claim say that "all the trees" refers to the reestablishment of enemy nations which will persecute national Israel. Yet, I've heard some of these same teachers claim that Israel is the only ancient people who have been able to regain their national identity. That's double talk! They simply can't have it both ways; that the "leafing" of Israel is unique and that it will be accompanied by the "leafing" of other ancient nations.

<sup>152</sup> Don't take their word or my word on this assertion that the fig tree is or isn't THE Biblical symbol for Israel; get an exhaustive concordance and check it out for your self.



Let me be very plain on this point. As I have already mentioned several times, while God is certainly concerned with the salvation of ethnic Israelis, any one of them who has rejected God's New Covenant in Jesus the Son, is incapable of having a relationship with the Father until that rejection is reversed. The modern nation of Israel, which from its founding has been extremely secular in nature, must never be confused with the real chosen people of God's New Covenant – those who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, without regard to their ethnic heritage, i.e., members of His Church.

The real point of this final section in the discourse is this: the 1<sup>st</sup> Century generation of the apostles would be able to see “**these days**” of the Temple's desolation approaching; but none of them would know the exact timing of “**that day**” when Jesus would arrive to gather His own to Himself.

To illustrate the difficulty of pinning down “that day,” Jesus makes a comparison to some historical events. As it was in the days of Noah and Lot, life preceding the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming will be going on as normal. Here again, commentators have often overstated the point. While the eras of Noah and Lot were horrendously sinful, that's not Jesus' point. He was indicating that it will be “business as usual” for sinners right up to the end, just as it was for the people living in the two historical periods mentioned; then, suddenly, judgment will fall. Any application beyond this point, however valid, is superfluous.

In all three gospels,<sup>153</sup> although with some very divergent language, Jesus ends His discourse with a warning in the form of a parable. All those serving within God's household (those who profess Jesus as Messiah) who wish to maintain their positions within that choice household (the eternal kingdom) must remain sober and alert for their Master's return from a long business trip (the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming). Those who neglect their responsibilities and abuse their fellow servants will be subsequently caught off guard by the return of the Master and will suffer the consequences for their misbehavior.<sup>154</sup>

In summary, while the apostles obviously thought that the second desolation of the Temple and the glorious arrival of Messiah would occur simultaneously, Jesus clearly distinguished between these two events. He warned them that the “abomination of desolation” – Roman armies setting up camp around Jerusalem – would serve as a definitive sign that they should flee Jerusalem before the desolation in Daniel 9:24-27 took place. On the other hand, He also challenged them to remain ready at all times for His arrival, since absolutely no one would know with certainty when that would occur.

Since we have discovered, contrary to popular belief, that both “the 70<sup>th</sup> week” of Daniel, as well as the “the abomination of desolation” have already occurred, it won't be necessary for us to speculate how these two events might be fulfilled in the future.

So, let's move on to the book of Revelation and see what we can discover there.

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<sup>153</sup> Matthew 24:42-51//Mark 13:33-37//Luke 21:34-36.

<sup>154</sup> In Matthew's gospel, Jesus went on to tell three more parables, each intended to emphasize this same point of needing to always be ready for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming. In the first, members of a bridal party missed the festivities because they had not properly prepared themselves for a long wait prior to the beginning of said festivities. In the second, a servant lost everything, including his relationship with his Master, because he refused to invest even a minimal amount of effort during his Master's absence. In the third and final parable, Jesus pictured himself as a shepherd dividing sheep from goats, with the former being welcomed into the eternal kingdom and the latter being condemned to an eternity of separation.

## OUTLINING THE BOOK OF REVELATION

The book of Revelation is organizationally the last book of the Bible. According to the earliest traditions of the Church, it was also the final book of the Scriptural canon to have been written.<sup>155</sup> It is of intense interest to Christians because it reveals the outcome of Satan's long spiritual war with Yahweh's people.

### Content Outline for the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ

#### *Key Verse: Revelation 1:19*

#### **“The Things Which You Have Seen”**

- Cover Note (1:1-3)
- Salutation (1:4-8)
- Vision of Jesus as the High Priest of the Heavenly Sanctuary (1:9-20)

#### **“The Things Which Are”**

- Letters to the Seven Prominent Congregations of Roman Asia (2:1-3:22)

#### **“The Things Which Will Take Place After These Things”<sup>156</sup>**

- Vision of the Scroll<sup>157</sup>
  - The Throne Room of Yahweh (4:1-5:14)
  - Breaking of the Seven Seals (6:1-8:1)
  - Sounding of the Seven Trumpets (8:2-11:19)
- Vision of the War Between the “Seed of Woman” & the Dragon<sup>158</sup>
  - Survey of Events Culminating in Satan's Ejection from “Heaven” (12:1-17)
  - Satan's Use of the Final Beast Government (13:1-18)
  - “First Fruits” Martyrdom of the 144,000 (14:1-5)
  - God's Final Warnings to the Peoples of Earth (14:6-12)
  - Son of Man's “Harvest” of Martyrs (14:13-16)
  - God's Harvest of Wrath Begins (14:17-20)
  - Pouring Out of the Seven Bowls (15:1-16:21)
  - Explanation Regarding the Harlot (17:1-18:24)
- Vision of Jesus as the Returning King of Kings and Lord of Lords<sup>159</sup>
  - The 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming (19:1-21)
  - The Millennium & the Resurrected Saints (20:1-6)
  - The Final Judgment of Satan & the Resurrected Sinners (20:7-15)
  - The Presentation of the New Creation (21:1-22:5)
- Closing (22:6-21)

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<sup>155</sup> Early tradition says that the book of Revelation was written by the Apostle John toward the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century. Of course, this makes the Preterit application of its prophetic contents to the AD 70 destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans completely unworkable.

<sup>156</sup> John's main visions have some overlapping points. Each vision focuses upon a different aspect of the final period of history.

<sup>157</sup> This vision focuses upon Yahweh's overall control of the situation.

<sup>158</sup> This vision focuses upon the long war between Satan and Yahweh's people.

<sup>159</sup> This vision focuses upon Jesus' victorious arrival and the culmination of all things.

## INTRODUCING THE BOOK OF REVELATION

As prophecy, the book of Revelation<sup>160</sup> deals with matters normally hidden from human view – past, present and future. In the first three chapters the Apostle John “speaks forth” about the glorified Christ who appeared to Him on Patmos in the guise of Heaven’s High Priest, passing on the contemporary messages He wanted delivered to the assemblies of believers located in seven prominent cities of Roman Asia (now western Turkey).

The balance of the book is a “forespeaking” of things John saw in conjunction with the return of the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Since our time is limited, and since there are so many commentaries that have already provided excellent, in-depth treatments of the opening chapters, we are going to pass over them without comment.

Instead, let’s dive into the first of three main visions related to “Living in the Last Days.”

### WARNING

**Unfulfilled Prophecies Ahead!  
Prepare For Personal Speculation!**

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<sup>160</sup> Greek: Ἀποκάλυψις *apo-ka-lup-sis*, meaning “an uncovering” – the source of our word, apocalypse.

**BOOK OF REVELATION: VISION OF THE SCROLL**  
**The Apostle John's "Throne Vision"**

<sup>4:1</sup> After these things, I looked, and behold, a door had been opened in heaven. The first trumpet-like voice I heard speaking to me was *now* saying, "Come up here and I will show you what must happen after these things." <sup>4:2</sup> Immediately I was in spirit-form.

Behold, *there* was a throne setting in heaven, and someone was sitting on it. <sup>4:3</sup> The appearance of the one sitting resembled a jasper and carnelian stone. The appearance of a rainbow around the throne resembled an emerald.

<sup>4:4</sup> There were twenty-four thrones around the throne, and sitting on the twenty-four thrones were twenty-four elders, dressed in white clothing, with golden victor's wreaths on their heads.

<sup>4:5</sup> Streaks of lightning, sounds, and thunderclaps emanated from the throne. There were seven fiery torches burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God. <sup>4:6</sup> Before the throne *was* something like a glassy sea, resembling crystal.

In the midst of the throne and around the throne *were* four living beings with eyes front and back. <sup>4:7</sup> The first living being was like a lion, the second like a calf, the third had a face like a man, and the fourth was like a flying eagle. <sup>4:8</sup> Each of the four living beings had six wings *which were* covered all over and inside with eyes. They never rested from saying, "Holy, holy, holy is Yahweh Tsabaoth, who is, who was, and who comes!"

<sup>4:9</sup> Whenever the living beings give glory, honor, and thanks to the one sitting on the throne - to the one living into the ages of ages - <sup>4:10</sup> the twenty-four elders will fall before the one sitting on the throne and will worship the one who lives into the ages of ages, and will throw their victor's wreaths before Him, saying, <sup>4:11</sup> "You are worthy, Yahweh our God, to receive glory, honor, and power because you created all things, and by your will they exist and were created!"

<sup>5:1</sup> I saw in the right **hand** of the one sitting on the throne a **scroll**,  
**written upon front and back**, sealed with seven seals.

**Excerpt from EZEKIEL 2**

<sup>2:9</sup> I looked, and behold, a **hand** had been extended toward me, and in it a **scroll**. <sup>2:10</sup> He spread it before me. It had been **written upon back and front**. In it was written dirges, lamentation, and a woe.

<sup>5:2</sup> I also saw a strong angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?" <sup>5:3</sup> No one in heaven, on earth, or under the earth was able to open the scroll nor look at it. <sup>5:4</sup> I wept greatly because no one worthy was found to open the scroll nor look at it.

<sup>5:5</sup> One of the elders said to me, "Don't weep. Behold, the lion of the Judah tribe, the root of David, he overcome to open the scroll and its seven seals."

<sup>5:6</sup> I saw standing in the midst of the throne and the four living beings, and in the midst of the twenty-four elders, a lamb *that looked* like it had been slaughtered. It had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the spirits of God sent into all the earth. <sup>5:7</sup> He came and took *the scroll* from the right hand of the One sitting on the throne, <sup>5:8</sup> and when he took *it* the four living beings and the twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb. Each of them had a lyre and a golden bowl full of incense, which are the prayers of the Saints.

<sup>5:9</sup> They sang a new song, saying, "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain. You purchased for God, by your blood, *individuals* from every tribe, language, people, and nation, <sup>5:10</sup> and made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth."

<sup>5:11</sup> I looked, and I heard the sound of many angels around the throne (their number was ten thousands of ten thousands, and thousands of thousands), the living beings, and the elders, <sup>5:12</sup> saying in a loud voice, "The Lamb which was slaughtered is worthy to receive power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing!"

<sup>5:13</sup> I heard every creature which was in the sky, on land, underground, on the sea, and all the things therein saying, "Blessing, honor, glory, and strength *belong* to the One sitting on the throne, and to the Lamb, into the ages of ages!"

<sup>5:14</sup> The four living beings said, "Amen!" and the elders fell down and worshipped.

On rare occasions, certain prophets have been privileged to experience what I call “throne visions.” Moses (Exodus 24:1ff), Micaiah (1 Kings 22:19-22), Isaiah (Isaiah 6:1ff), Ezekiel (Ezekiel 1:4ff), and Daniel (Daniel 7:9ff) were all given glimpses of the heavenly throne during the Old Covenant period. In the New Testament, only two men had such a blessing; one was the unnamed man mentioned by Paul, who never revealed any details of what he experienced (2 Corinthians 12:2ff), and the other was John the apostle.

An in-depth study of these throne visions is fascinating; unfortunately, it is also outside our present consideration. So, without losing our focus on its introduction of God’s final wrath, let’s have a look at just a few of the details of John’s throne vision.

The One Whom John saw upon the throne was, from a New Covenant perspective, the “Father.” Around His throne were twenty-four other thrones on which sat twenty-four elders. From what Jesus said during his ministry,<sup>161</sup> twelve of these elders were probably the Apostles.<sup>162</sup> Perhaps the others were historically significant spiritual leaders as well. Whoever they were, each possessed a golden victor’s wreath like that given to victorious military leaders and athletes in public ceremonies throughout the ancient Roman Empire.<sup>163</sup>

Situated in front of the Father’s throne were seven burning torches, which may have taken the form of the great, seven-branched lamp stand that once stood in the Holy Place of the physical Sanctuary. Regardless, the text states that these seven torches represented the Holy Spirit of God. Thus, we have two of the three personages of the triune Godhead already represented in this throne vision.

Encircling the throne, John saw four, six-winged *sa-ra-fēm*,<sup>164</sup> as described previously by the prophet Isaiah.<sup>165</sup> As they had been doing over 800 years earlier, these creatures were still worshipping Yahweh *Tsa-ba-ōth*.<sup>166</sup> As they worshipped, the twenty-four elders also fell on their faces, throwing their victor’s wreaths before the throne in a personal act of worship.

It was at this point that John noticed something unusual in the Father’s hand. It was double-sided scroll sealed with seven seals. This well-secured scroll should be compared to the double-sided scroll of judgment seen by Ezekiel immediately prior to the desolation of the first Israeli temple - a scroll full of “dirges, lamentation, and woe.”<sup>167</sup> This time, however, the scroll is about the imminent desolation of the entire earth.

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<sup>161</sup> Matthew 19:28//Luke 22:30.

<sup>162</sup> That being the case, the mortal John of the past was actually standing in the presence of the immortal John of the future who was sitting upon one of the twenty-four thrones in the heavenly dimension.

<sup>163</sup> Paul wrote of this spiritual victor’s wreath, “I have competed in the great competition; I have completed the course; I have kept the Faith. As for the rest, there is reserved for me the victor’s wreath of righteousness, which the Lord – the righteous judge - will award to me in that day; not to me only, but to all those loving his appearance.” 2 Timothy 4:8.

<sup>164</sup> Plural of the Hebrew word *sa-raf*, from a root meaning “to burn;” probably a reference to the fiery appearance of this spirit creature.

<sup>165</sup> By the way, both John and Isaiah describe the throne of God from above the crystalline platform on which it rests, and make no mention of the four-faced, four-winged *kerubim*. Ezekiel described the throne as it was seen from below that same expanse, and made no mention of the single-faced, six-winged *sarafim*.

<sup>166</sup> Hebrew for “of the armies.” Yahweh *Tsaba-ōth* is a military title. Think “Commander-in-Chief” or “General Yahweh.”

<sup>167</sup> There is another double-sided roll of curses mentioned in Zechariah 5:1-4.

Immediately a problem arose. There was no one in heaven or on earth worthy to open this scroll of judgment. This meant that the final wrath of God could not fall upon the earth, and therefore the eternal kingdom of righteousness could not come fully into being. This prospect caused the aged apostle to weep.

This was the perfect moment for the revelation of the third personage of the triune Godhead – the “Son.” Jesus was now manifested as a lamb that had been sacrificed, but who lived – obvious symbols of the atonement and resurrection. As symbolized by the seven horns and seven eyes, He was full of the power and the Holy Spirit of God.

Without getting too far into an area of heated theological debate, allow me to state for the record that I believe that the perfect way in which Jesus lived His life as an ordinary human being forms the basis for His unique qualification to open this scroll of God’s wrath.

Although He was indisputably God, He never-the-less emptied Himself of His divine prerogatives so that He could live life as a man.<sup>168</sup> As such, He underwent every aspect of the human experience – conception, birth, growth, education, emotions, work, and ultimately death. This would have included the full range of temptations that provide opportunity for individual humans to exercise free will in either compliance with or in violation of God’s immutable, holy directives.<sup>169</sup> Unlike all the rest of us, Jesus never gave in to those temptations; He never sinned.<sup>170</sup> By this He proved, beyond the shadow of any doubt, that living a righteous life, even within a fallen world full of temptation, was actually possible for any human being. Sin is therefore an individual choice with an individual punishment.<sup>171</sup>

On the other hand, being God, Jesus was not subject to the limiting factors of ordinary humans (i.e., time & space), who, even if they were able to remain sinless, and somehow moved to do so, could only die in the place of one sinful person. On the cross, as the transcendent God, Jesus was able to offer Himself as the sinless sacrifice for an infinite number of sinful persons at one moment of time.<sup>172</sup>

Having overcome the temptation to sin, and having offered Himself as the atoning sacrifice for sins not His own, Jesus earned the exclusive right to open the seals that would begin God’s final wrath against all sin. No human could accuse Him of not knowing the power of temptation, nor could any human accuse Him of not caring about what happened to the individual sinner. As He Himself said, “For the Father judges no one, but has instead given all judgment to the Son.”<sup>173</sup> He alone has the capacity to judge everyone with the perfect mixture of justice and grace.

Of course, all this is borne out by what was said by the twenty-four elders, innumerable angels, and the *se-ra-fēm* when Jesus actually took the scroll from His Father’s hand.

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<sup>168</sup> Philippians 2:6-11.

<sup>169</sup> 1 Corinthians 10:13.

<sup>170</sup> Hebrews 4:15.

<sup>171</sup> Romans 6:23.

<sup>172</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 5:6ff; 1 Peter 3:18.

<sup>173</sup> John 5:22.

## BOOK OF REVELATION: VISION OF THE SCROLL

### The Breaking of the First Five Seals

<sup>6:1</sup> I looked when the lamb broke one of the seven seals. I heard one of the four living beings speaking like the sound of thunder, "Come!" <sup>6:2</sup> I looked, and behold, a white horse and the one sitting upon it had a bow. He was given a victor's wreath and he went out overcoming and in order to overcome. <sup>6:2</sup> He was given a victor's wreath and he went out overcoming and in order to overcome.

<sup>6:3</sup> When he opened the second seal I heard the second living being saying, "Come!" <sup>6:4</sup> There came another horse, a fire-colored one, and the one sitting upon it was permitted to remove peace from the earth, so that *people* might slaughter one another. A great sword was given to him.

<sup>6:5</sup> When he opened the third seal I heard the third living being saying, "Come!" I looked, and behold, a black horse and the one sitting upon it had a scale in his hand. <sup>6:6</sup> I heard *something* like a voice among the four living beings say, "A *koinits*<sup>174</sup> of wheat for a *denairius*,<sup>175</sup> and three *koinits* of barley for a *denairius*. Do not harm the olive oil and wine."

<sup>6:7</sup> When he opened the fourth seal I heard the fourth living being saying, "Come!" <sup>6:8</sup> I looked, and behold, a pale green horse and the one sitting upon it *whose* name was Death. Hades was following him. Authority was given to them over one-fourth of the earth, to kill by the sword, famine, death, and by beasts of the earth.

<sup>6:9</sup> When he broke the fifth seal I saw beneath the altar the individuals slain because of the word of God and because of the testimony which they were maintaining. <sup>6:10</sup> They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Until when, holy and true Master, will You *defer* judging and avenging our blood from those living on the earth?" <sup>6:11</sup> A white robe was given to each of them, and they were told they will rest a short period of time still until their fellow servants - their brothers and those about to be killed even as themselves - should be fulfilled.

In the breaking of the first four seals we are introduced to a bow-wielding conqueror riding a white horse.<sup>176</sup> This appears to be the final human agent of Satan in his war against the saints of Yahweh. The conqueror was followed by a warrior riding a fiery red horse, indicating the prosecution of a great war. The warrior was followed by a merchant riding a black horse, indicating a high price for bread (a necessity), but with little or no impact upon olive oil and wine (non-necessities). Finally, Death arrived riding a pale green horse, with Hades<sup>177</sup> right behind him, indicating the imminent deaths of one fourth of the population due to the actions of all the riders, which are in turn connected to the actions of Satan's agent.

With the breaking of the fifth seal, our view is refocused upon the heavenly throne room. From beneath the heavenly altar of incense, the place of petition before the Father's throne, the murdered saints of every age will be asking God when He intends to fully avenge their deaths. They will be told to be patient, for in a brief period of time, after a very specific number<sup>178</sup> of additional saints have been murdered for their faith, Yahweh's wrath will begin.

To keep this vision in its proper chronological perspective, we need to understand that all seven seals must be broken before any of the events revealed within the scroll can take place. What we have seen in the breaking of the first five seals is background information that will make much more sense when we begin dealing with more specific information in a parallel format later. We'll deal with the breaking of the sixth and seventh seals, and the sealing of the 144,000 at that time.

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<sup>174</sup> The *koinits* was an ancient measure equivalent to just less than a dry quart.

<sup>175</sup> The *denairius* was an ancient coin roughly equivalent to an average day's wage.

<sup>176</sup> Roman generals being honored for their successful completion of a significant military operation would ride white horses during their triumphal procession through the streets of Rome.

<sup>177</sup> The personification of Death causes death, while the personification of Hades collects the soul/spirits.

<sup>178</sup> Keep this promise by God in mind for when we come to the passages about the 144,000 saints later.

## **BOOK OF REVELATION: VISION OF THE “SEED OF WOMAN”/DRAGON WAR** **A Symbolic Overview of Satan’s War Against Yahweh’s Kingdom**

<sup>12:1</sup> A great sign was seen in heaven: A woman enveloped by the sun, the moon under her feet, and a victor’s wreath of twelve stars on her head. <sup>12:2</sup> She was pregnant and cried out, laboring and being tormented *by her effort* to give birth.

<sup>12:3</sup> Another sign was seen in heaven: Behold! A great, fire-colored, seven-headed, ten-horned dragon, *with seven diadems on his heads.* <sup>12:4</sup> His tail drew together a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. The dragon had taken position in front of the woman about to give birth so that when she did give birth he might consume her child.

<sup>12:5</sup> She gave birth to a son, a male who is about to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod, and her son was snatched away to God and His throne...

[<sup>12:6</sup> *is paralleled elsewhere*]

<sup>12:7</sup> A war took place in heaven. Michael and his angels made war with the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought *back.* <sup>12:8</sup> He was not strong enough, nor could a place be found for them in heaven any longer.

<sup>12:9</sup> The great dragon was ejected - the ancient serpent, the one called Accuser and Satan, the one misleading the entire inhabited earth - he was ejected to the earth, and his angels were ejected with him.

<sup>12:10</sup> I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, “The salvation, the power, the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ have now come into being, because the accuser of our brothers *and sisters* - the one accusing them before our God day and night - has been ejected. <sup>12:11</sup> They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony. They did not love themselves, even to the point of death.

<sup>12:12</sup> Therefore, celebrate, *O Heavens* and those of you camping in them. *But* woe to the land and the sea, because The Accuser has gone down to you with great vehemence, knowing he has little time.”

Revelation 12 is an absolutely amazing passage! It uses symbols to portray Satan’s enduring animosity toward “The Seed of Woman,”<sup>179</sup> along with his failure to defeat “The Seed”<sup>180</sup> when Jesus first came to earth in human form as an infant. It then predicts Satan’s eventual ejection from the spiritual dimension we humans call “heaven,”<sup>181</sup> thereby setting the stage for his post-ejection attempt to foment popular resistance against “The Seed” when Jesus returns to earth a second time as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Within the book of Revelation this passage provides the concise contextual background needed for believing readers to anticipate, rather than fear, the imminent arrival of the long-anticipated showdown between the saints and their archenemy, the Dragon.

The first major character in this cosmic drama is the pregnant woman. The sun, moon, and stars under her feet also appeared in one of Joseph’s dreams as a representation of his father Jacob’s family.<sup>182</sup> This is the reason why many (if not most) prophecy students see the woman as the ethnic Israelis who descended from Jacob - the nation of Israel.

However, I think it would be terribly unwise to automatically equate this lady with the secular state of modern Israel. Let’s not forget that the promise of the avenging “Seed of Woman” began with Eve, the mother of all ethnic groups, several millennia before the nation of Israel came into being. Remember too that Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, made a pretty big deal that God’s promise to Abraham was that all ethnic groups would be blessed through him and his “Seed.”<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Genesis 3:15.

<sup>180</sup> Galatians 3:16.

<sup>181</sup> Ephesians 6:12

<sup>182</sup> Genesis 37:9-10.

<sup>183</sup> Galatians 3:6-29.



This woman may very well be representative of “Israel,” but to paraphrase Paul, it is by faith, not flesh, that the descendants of Israel (via Abraham & Eve) are determined.<sup>184</sup> I think we ought to more clearly identify her as “Faithful Israel.” Before the ascension of Jesus, which is so clearly portrayed in verse 5, she consisted almost exclusively of ethnic Israelis who had remained faithful to Yahweh via the Mosaic covenant. After the ascension, she was made up both of ethnic Israelis who embraced Jesus as their promised Messiah and non-Israelis (Gentiles) who called Jesus their Christ.<sup>185</sup>

The advanced state of her pregnancy should be seen in light of the explicit prophecies that “The Seed of Woman” would eventually deal a decisive blow to Satan and thereafter establish an eternal kingdom of righteousness among the saints of God.<sup>186</sup> At the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century, due to a literal understanding of these prophecies, many faithful Israelis (and even some non-Israelis) were living in expectation of Messiah’s arrival.<sup>187</sup>

The fire-colored dragon is unmistakably identified as Satan. His symbolic appearance as a seven-headed, ten-horned dragon is indicative of the fact that he is the real power behind the seven-headed, ten-horned beast we are about to meet. His tail sweeping a third of the stars to earth probably represents the relative strength of his rebel angelic forces in comparison to the loyal angels under Michael’s command,<sup>188</sup> especially since a symbolic connection between “stars” and “angels” has already been established in Revelation 1:20.

Satan’s attempt to consume the newborn man-child (“The Seed of Woman”) immediately calls to mind Herod’s attempted assassination of the infant Jesus.<sup>189</sup> Yet, there were several other attempts to kill Jesus before His appointed time,<sup>190</sup> all of which should be included in this portrayal of the Dragon’s assault upon the child.

John understood that this child would grow up to fulfill Psalm 2:8-9. That particular Messianic Psalm was cited several times in reference to Jesus’ 1<sup>st</sup> Coming,<sup>191</sup> but it was also used in reference to the situation of His 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming.<sup>192</sup> His being snatched away to God is an obvious reference to the ascension of Jesus.<sup>193</sup> At that time He sat down on the right side of His Father’s heavenly throne,<sup>194</sup> marking the end of His 1<sup>st</sup> Coming and the beginning of preparation for His 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming.

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<sup>184</sup> Romans 2:28-29; 9:6ff.

<sup>185</sup> Paul portrays “all Israel” as a cultivated olive tree (its life-giving root no doubt a representation of Jesus) from which some natural branches (unbelieving ethnic Israelis) have been removed; among the remaining natural branches (the believing remnant of ethnic Israel) a wild olive branch (believing Gentiles) has been grafted (Romans 11:17ff). It might be noted that Paul seemed to expect some of the removed branches to be grafted back in at a later date.

<sup>186</sup> Genesis 3:15; 22:18; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6-7.

<sup>187</sup> Matthew 2:1ff; Luke 3:15; John 1:19ff; 4:25; etc.

<sup>188</sup> The date of this angelic rebellion is the time of Satan’s deception of Eve, for prior to that everything in Creation was “very good.”

<sup>189</sup> Matthew 2:1ff.

<sup>190</sup> Luke 4:28-30; John 8:59; 10:31.

<sup>191</sup> Acts 4:25-28; 13:33; Hebrews 1:5; 5:5.

<sup>192</sup> Revelation 19:6.

<sup>193</sup> Acts 1:9-11.

<sup>194</sup> Ephesians 1:20-23; Colossians 3:1; and Hebrews 8:1.

Due to the positioning of verse 6 in the chapter, most commentators limit the “war in heaven” in verse 7 to the final 1,260 day period mentioned in verse 6. I would suggest that verse 6 is actually an example of advance information, a kind of “getting ahead of the story.” In reality, the text does not explicitly state the length of this war in heaven. I think that it lasts quite a long time - from the ascension of Jesus in AD 33 until three and a half years before His 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming (a span of 1,973 years as of this year).

Let’s think for a moment about what this heavenly war represents.

While it is true that Jesus won a huge victory over Satan at his 1<sup>st</sup> Coming,<sup>195</sup> the New Testament writers indicated that the conflict with Satan was by no means over at that time. Christians, both then and now, need to be alert and faithful warriors in their ongoing war against Satan and his angels “in the heavenlies,” or as was meant by this phrase, in the unseen spiritual realm.<sup>196</sup> We also know for certain that the angels of *Yahweh* assist the saints in this ongoing supernatural struggle,<sup>197</sup> even as Revelation 12:7 portrays.

Michael, the high-ranking angel whose name appears in this text, was first identified to the prophet Daniel as the guardian angel of his people, or as we’ve identified the woman of Revelation 12, “Faithful Israel.”<sup>198</sup> Daniel was also told that Michael would be instrumental during the “time of trouble” we have already identified as starting around the time of the Temple’s destruction in AD 70.<sup>199</sup> He is evidently the angelic military leader who is now fighting the long war against Satan on behalf of all Saints, and who will eventually eject Satan and his rebel forces from the heavenly dimension.

That expulsion will mark the beginning of the final phase of Satan’s defeat and the rapid approach of Jesus’ return. Satan will no longer be allowed to do what he had done for millennia - accuse God’s people before His throne.<sup>200</sup>

We will deal with the remainder of this passage in parallel form later.

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<sup>195</sup> Hebrews 2:14-18.

<sup>196</sup> Ephesians 6:12; 1 Peter 5:8-9; James 4:7b.

<sup>197</sup> Hebrews 1:14.

<sup>198</sup> Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1.

<sup>199</sup> Daniel 12:1; cf. Matthew 24:21.

<sup>200</sup> Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6; Zechariah 3:1-3; Luke 22:31-32.

**BOOK OF REVELATION: VISION OF THE “SEED OF WOMAN”/DRAGON WAR**  
**Satan’s Human Agency in the Final Phase of His War Against Christians**

<sup>12:18</sup> He [The dragon] stood on the sand of the sea.

<sup>17:1</sup> One of the seven angels having the last seven bowls came and spoke with me saying, “Come here! I will show you the great prostitute who is sitting upon many waters <sup>17:2</sup> with whom the kings of the earth prostituted themselves, and by the wine of whose prostitution those living upon the earth were intoxicated.”

<sup>17:3a</sup> He carried me in spirit-form into a wilderness.

<sup>13:1a</sup> **I saw**  
**a ten-horned, seven-headed beast**  
<sup>13:1c</sup> and a **blasphemous name** upon its heads.

<sup>13:1b</sup> **rise out of the sea**, with ten crowns upon its horns

<sup>13:2</sup> The **beast** which I saw  
**was like a leopard**,  
 its feet **like those** of a bear,  
 and its mouth **like** the mouth of a lion.  
 The dragon gave it its power, its throne, and great authority.

<sup>17:4</sup> The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, gilded with gold, precious stones, and pearls, and had a gold cup in her hand full of abominations and the impurities of her prostitution. <sup>17:5</sup> Upon her forehead a name had been written, a secret – “Babylon the Great, the mother of prostitutes and abominations of the earth.”

<sup>17:6a</sup> I saw that the woman was drunk from the blood of the Saints and the witnesses of Jesus.

<sup>13:3</sup> One of its heads *looked* as if it had been slain to death, and its death-wound healed. The whole earth **marveled** after the beast.  
<sup>13:4</sup> They worshiped the dragon because he gave authority to the beast, and worshiped the beast, saying “Who is like the beast?” and “Who is able to make war with it?”

<sup>17:6b</sup> Seeing her,  
  
**I marveled** with great marvel.

<sup>17:7</sup> The angel said to me, “Why did you marvel? I will tell you the secret of the woman and the seven-headed,  
**ten-horned** beast carrying her.

<sup>17:8</sup> “The beast that you saw was, is not, and is about to ascend from the abyss and proceed into destruction. Those living upon the earth - *each* one whose name has not been written in the scroll of life from the foundation of the cosmos – will be made to marvel as they see the beast that was, is not, and will come.

<sup>17:9</sup> “Here is the mind having wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains, and the woman sits upon them. They are also seven kings; <sup>17:10</sup> five fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. Whenever he does come he must remain a little while. <sup>17:11</sup> The beast who was and is not, he is an eighth and is of the seven, and he proceeds into destruction.

<sup>17:3b</sup> **I saw** a woman sitting upon a scarlet **seven-headed, ten-horned beast**, full of **blasphemous names**.

**Excerpt from DANIEL 7**

<sup>7:3</sup> Four great beasts, *each* different from the others, **rose out of the sea**.

<sup>7:6</sup> After this, as I watched, behold, a third **beast**  
**was like a leopard...**

<sup>7:5</sup> Behold, a second **beast was like a bear...**

<sup>7:4</sup> The first **was like a lion...**

**Excerpt from DANIEL 7**

<sup>7:7</sup> After this, as I watched, behold, *there was* a fourth beast, fearful,

**marvelous**, and exceptionally strong. Its teeth *were* made of iron and great. It was eating and grinding, and it was trampling whatever was left under its feet. It was very different from all the beasts before it.

It also had **ten horns**.

<sup>17:12</sup> The **ten horns** you saw **are ten kings** who have not yet taken sovereignty, however they **will** take authority as kings with the beast

**for** one hour.

<sup>17:13</sup> These have one purpose, and the beast gives them their power and authority. <sup>17:14</sup> These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them because He is King of kings and Lord of lords. Those with Him *are* called, elect, and faithful.”

<sup>17:15</sup> He said to me, “The waters upon which you saw the prostitute sitting are peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages. <sup>17:16</sup> The ten horns that you saw and the beast will hate the prostitute, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh, and burn her with fire, <sup>17:17</sup> for God has placed into their hearts to carry out His purpose, to accomplish one purpose – to give their kingdoms to the beast until the word of God shall be completed.

<sup>17:18</sup> The woman that you saw is the great city that has sovereignty over the kings of the earth.”

#### Excerpt from DANIEL 7

<sup>7:24</sup> Its **ten horns are ten kings** that **will** arise.

After them will rise another, different than those previous, and he will subdue three kings. <sup>7:25</sup> He will speak words against the Most High, will wear out the Saints of the Most High, and will intend to alter times and custom. They will be given into his hand **for** a time, times and half a time.

Immediately after being cast from the heavenly dimension, Satan will transfer his “command and control authority” to a human agency symbolized by a red dragon with seven heads and ten horns, straddled by a prostitute. Thankfully, both Revelation and Daniel include enough explanation about this imagery that we can begin deciphering it with some measure of confidence.

John was specifically told that the seven heads of this beast represented both seven mountains and seven kings. In the Old Testament, mountains sometimes represented the seats of governmental power, even as kings represented the kingdoms over which they ruled. I think the best way to understand what John was told in Revelation 17:10 is as follows:

- The first five heads were the five historical kingdoms which persecuted Faithful Israel prior to John’s time - Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Media/Persia, and the Macedonians (specifically the Seleucids of Syria, from which the tyrant Antiochus IV arose).
- The sixth head represented the persecutor of Faithful Israel in John’s time – Rome.
- The seventh head represented a future and final persecutor of Faithful Israel.

Each of these seven heads bore a blasphemous name. This is probably indicative of the major point of contention that was common between all these kingdoms and Faithful Israel – a demand by the king(s) of each kingdom for worship and/or allegiance which genuine believers reserve only for “The Name,” i.e., *Yahweh*, the Creator of heaven and earth.

The beast which John saw appears to be a composite of the four beasts in Daniel 7 - Babylon (the winged lion), Media/Persia (the lop-sided bear), Macedonia (the winged, four-headed leopard), and Rome (the ten-horned, iron-toothed beast). This probably portrays the serial relationship we know existed between these four empires; each occupying a territory of ever-increasing size within the Mediterranean basin. I suspect John’s final beast kingdom will control the same parts of the world (Europe, the Middle East and northern Africa); perhaps even more.

John’s composite description also utilized some very specific aspects of Daniel’s four beasts. Certainly this was not coincidental.

The final beast had the body of a leopard (pointing back to Alexander's Macedonian expansion), perhaps signifying the speed with which it will expand its sphere of influence. Its feet were like those of a bear (pointing back to the inflexible legal system of the Medes and the Persians), perhaps indicating the way in which it will not tolerate deviation from its legal directives. Its mouth was like that of a lion (pointing back to the glory of Babylon, which was the pride of King Nebuchadnezzar), perhaps a sign of its unrestrained arrogance and braggadocio. Finally, it had iron teeth and an insatiable appetite (pointing back to the iron legions that first expanded, and then enforced, the "Peace of Rome"), perhaps showing the irresistible nature of its militaristic might.

There is another unusual feature about this final beast. One of its seven heads - the final enemy of Faithful Israel - appears to have died and been brought back to life; it had been to the abyss and back again. Even though this revitalized beast could be technically counted as an eighth kingdom, it will actually be a renewal or "resurrection" of the seventh.

It is widely believed that this final beast kingdom will be a revival of the Roman Empire. I tend to agree. It is, I think, quite legitimate to suggest that the whole of European history and the development of what we now call modern Western Civilization is basically the story of the collapse and attempted reorganization of the Roman Empire. As you are probably aware, the current European Union likes to style itself as a revival of that ancient empire. Because of this, we'll spend some time later speculating on just how the EU or some other Western Civilization organizations might fulfill this prophecy.

Along these same lines, we understand that the ten horns on the seventh head represent ten human kings or leaders at the top of this final beast government. Daniel was told that an eleventh leader would rise among these ten by subduing three of their number. There is little doubt that this leader is the same conqueror we saw on the white horse in the breaking of the first seal. He will be Satan's "point man" throughout this final phase of the war.

We understand that this final beast leader, supported by the other beast leaders from which he arose, will radically alter human society, changing both times and laws. I suspect that this means they will fully abandon the Christ-oriented, BC/AD calendar system, with its multitude of Christian holidays, along with what little remains of the Judeo-Christian ethic within the legal systems of western governments. In other words, genuine Christianity will be intentionally targeted for eradication by this final beast government. Thankfully they will only be in power for a brief period of time - three and a half years.

We next turn our attention to the "great prostitute" riding upon the back of this final beast government. Like many Protestants before me, I have reluctantly come to the conclusion that this prostitute must be - at least in her current form - the Roman Catholic Church (RCC).

I'm sorry if that statement and what I'm about to say to back it up comes across as an anti-Catholic diatribe. That is certainly not my intention. No doubt there are many individual Catholics who are very sincere in their faith. But sincerity is never really the issue; truth always is!

As a Bible teacher I am obligated to pass on the truth I find in the Bible. Those listening are then responsible to God for what they do with that information.<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Ezekiel 33.

Here are some of the specifics mentioned within the text which led me in the direction of seeing the RCC as the prostitute:

- ***The prostitute sat upon seven hills.***<sup>202</sup> The city of Rome, where the RCC is headquartered, sits upon seven hills.<sup>203</sup>
- ***The prostitute is also called by the code name “Babylon.”*** The Apostle Peter seems to have used “Babylon” as a designation for Rome.<sup>204</sup>
- ***The prostitute had prostitute daughters.*** All of the most liberal Protestant denominations in existence today have historical roots connecting them to the RCC.
- ***The prostitute sat upon a huge cross-section of humanity, even exercising authority over kings.*** Since its inception during the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Centuries,<sup>205</sup> the RCC has used its influence to control human society and government within its sphere.<sup>206</sup>
- ***The prostitute was clothed in purple and scarlet.*** RCC Bishops wear purple cassocks, while the 70 members of the College of Cardinals wear scarlet cassocks.
- ***The prostitute was adorned with gold, precious stones and pearls.*** Throughout the centuries, RCC buildings around the world have been extravagantly adorned, often at the expense of her impoverished parishioners.<sup>207</sup>
- ***The prostitute possessed a gold cup.*** A gold (or at the very least, a gold-lined) chalice is a necessary and prominent part of the RCC Eucharist.
- ***The prostitute was drunk with the blood of martyrs.*** The RCC, as an official organization, has persecuted, tortured and murdered many millions of true believers whose only crime was to challenge the authority of the RCC.

Like it or not, the Roman Catholic Church bears little or no resemblance to the genuine Church portrayed in the pages of the New Testament, and way too much resemblance to the prostitute riding the beast.

Now, what are you going to do with that information?<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> Remember that the seven hills also represented seven successive kingdoms in the region of the ancient “Fertile Crescent.” These kingdoms also happen to have shared a common myth which focused attention upon a female deity who did great deeds for her husband and son. She began as Inanna, “Queen of Heaven,” within the mythology of Sumer (the very first civilization after the Flood). In Egypt she was Hathor or Isis; in Assyria and Babylon (and in nearby Phoenicia and Canaan) she was Ishtar, Astarte, Ashtoreth or Ashera; in Persia she was Anahita; in Greece she was Aphrodite; in Rome she was Venus; and eventually she morphed into non-other-than the greatly venerated “Virgin Mary” of the RCC. [By the way, every one of these goddesses were associated with the planet Venus, which is called *Hey-lel* in Hebrew and *Lu·ki·fer* in Latin (Isaiah 14:12). Evidently Satan has no qualms about a little “cross dressing” in order to accomplish his goals.]

<sup>203</sup> Several centuries prior to John’s time, Rome was referred to as *Septimontium* (Latin: “Seven Hills”).

<sup>204</sup> 1 Peter 5:13. While some commentators try to place Peter in literal Babylon, the known movements of Peter, Silvanus, and John Mark all support his presence in Rome much better. The earliest Christian historians also cite Rome as the place from which this letter was written.

<sup>205</sup> I reject the RCC claim that she can trace her roots back to Peter, whom she calls the first “Pope.” The RCC was actually conceived with the Roman Emperor Constantine’s “conversion” and subsequent government meddling in matters of Christian faith during the early 4<sup>th</sup> Century. It came to full term in the mid-5<sup>th</sup> Century when Leo I (probably the real first “Pope”) aggressively asserted his universal authority as Bishop of Rome.

<sup>206</sup> There were times in history when the RCC actually appointed and/or removed European rulers.

<sup>207</sup> The 17<sup>th</sup> Century construction cost just for St. Peter’s basilica in Rome is estimated to have been in excess of \$48,000,000. Anyone who has traveled in Europe and visited the old cathedrals there knows first hand the massive amount of wealth incorporated into RCC architecture. In consideration of its real estate assets alone, the RCC is probably the richest organization on the face of the earth.

Beyond these evidences, the Papacy also fulfils all key aspects of the prophesied “man of lawlessness” mentioned by the Apostle Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-10.

<sup>2:3</sup> Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, because [the Day of Yahweh will not arrive] until the falling away<sup>2:9</sup> first *arrives* and the man of lawlessness is revealed - the son of destruction, <sup>2:4</sup> the one opposing and lifting himself over all things called god or object of worship, so that he will seat himself in the sanctuary of God, displaying himself to be God. <sup>2:5</sup> Don't you remember that I was telling you these things when I was with you? <sup>2:6</sup> You now know the restraining thing, so that he will be revealed in his time, <sup>2:7</sup> for the mystery of lawlessness already works; only until the current restraining one is out of the midst. <sup>2:8</sup> Then the lawless one will be revealed, the one whom Lord Jesus will take away by the breath of his mouth; *whom* he will render powerless by the appearance of his arrival; <sup>2:9</sup> whose own arrival will be in accordance with the work of Satan, with all *sorts* of miracles, signs and false wonders, <sup>2:10</sup> and with every deception of unrighteous to those perishing, since they are those who didn't accept the love of truth in order that they might be saved.

- The Papacy came into existence during a time of apostasy within the Church.
- The Bishop of Rome (a.k.a. The Pope) opposed all the so-called “gods” and “objects of worship” in Roman polytheism, exalting his own role above that of all those pagan deities and their representative priests.<sup>210</sup>
- The Pope claims to “sit”<sup>211</sup> within God's “sanctuary” (i.e., “The Church”).<sup>212</sup>
- Popes have even allowed themselves to be blasphemously equated with our God and Savior, Jesus Christ.<sup>213</sup>
- The Bishop of Rome's rise to supreme power as “The Pope” was inhibited by the authority structures of the Roman Empire with which Paul and the Thessalonians were familiar.<sup>214</sup> Once the western capital of the empire was abandoned to the advancing “barbarians” during the 5<sup>th</sup> Century, the Bishop of Rome added civil authority to his already extensive religious authority, giving birth to the Papacy.
- “The False Prophet” (a title we have not yet discussed) will be removed from power and thrown into the Lake of Fire at the time of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming,<sup>215</sup> exactly as happens to this Man of Lawlessness. I believe they are the exact same person. I think the final Pope will be this False Prophet/Man of Lawlessness.

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<sup>208</sup> Revelation 18:4.

<sup>209</sup> Greek: ἀποστασία (*apo-sta-sē-a*) from which we get our word “apostasy.”

<sup>210</sup> The Pope eventually took over the title of *Pontifex Maximus*, which had long been the designation for the official High Priest of the polytheistic Roman government, an office often held by the Emperor.

<sup>211</sup> The RCC even has the audacity to utilize the very language of this passage in its terminology; calling the territory of a bishop a *see* (French and Middle English for “seat”), designating the official throne of a bishop a *cathedra* (Latin for “chair”), referring to the building from which a bishop rules a *cathedral* (“of a chair”), and calling official proclamations by the Pope *ex cathedra* (“from the chair”).

<sup>212</sup> All the other places where Paul uses this word in his writings, he has the Church as a whole in mind (1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:21). I see no good reason for it to be understood otherwise here. By the way, this negates any need for a Jewish Temple to be rebuilt in Jerusalem, as is so widely taught in Pre-Millennial Dispensational circles.

<sup>213</sup> Saint Catherine of Sienna (14<sup>th</sup> Century) first addressed Pope Gregory XI as “sweet Christ on earth.” This term was still being used by Catholics in reference to the late Pope John Paul II, who apparently had no problem accepting such a blasphemous form of address.

<sup>214</sup> The Roman government and its emperor were therefore “the thing” (verse 6) and “the person” (verse 7) restraining the rise of this evil office.

<sup>215</sup> Revelation 19:20.

The leaders of the final beast government will “prostitute” themselves with the woman on its back. This probably means that they will ingratiate themselves with the RCC simply to gain control over the peoples under her influence; however, they won’t like having to do so. In reality, the leaders of the final beast government will hate the woman. When the opportunity presents itself, they will strip, devour and burn her with fire. This sounds like the RCC as an organization, its headquarters at Vatican City, and perhaps even the city of Rome itself, will be plundered and destroyed by her erstwhile ally before the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming.

Possibly this is the point of Revelation 18, which follows the angel’s explanation. It describes how the “Great City,” which once flourished, will be destroyed in one day. There will be a mixed response to this “Fall of Babylon.”

This might raise the question in your mind – how can the RCC be destroyed by the final beast government, and yet the False Prophet/Final Pope remain the partner of the final beast leader right up to time of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming? Apparently, at some point near the end, the RCC will come to the conclusion that the Pope has betrayed her; or alternatively, the Pope will have no need for the RCC to support his position of authority. In either case, I fully expect the Pope to be complicit with the leaders of the final beast kingdom in destroying “Babylon.” Oddly enough, there are some Catholics who seem to expect the final Pope to betray “The Mother Church.”

Additionally, the mystical, papal prophecies made by an Irish Catholic monk named Malachy in 1139 have caused quite a stir among Catholics and non-Catholics alike as of late. Based on these prophecies, some have come to believe that there will only be two more Popes after the late John Paul II. They expect the second and final Pope to take the name Peter II and think that Rome will be destroyed during his papal reign.<sup>216</sup>

Such things definitely cause one to pause for thought, especially with the recent ascension of Benedict XVI to the papal chair. The second to the last Pope in Malachy’s prophecies was code-named “Glory of the Olive.” Some took this to mean that the Benedictine order, known as the “Olivetans,” would be the source of this Pope; however, many others openly speculated that this Pope would merely take the name of the Benedictine founder, which is exactly what happened with the new Pope, Benedict XVI.

Does this mean that Malachy’s prophecies came from God? I don’t know for certain one way or the other. They do seem to be eerily accurate, and I know that God has sometimes delivered prophetic evidence of His activity via unusual persons;<sup>217</sup> but, since 100 % accuracy is required as evidence that God directed a prophecy, only time will tell.

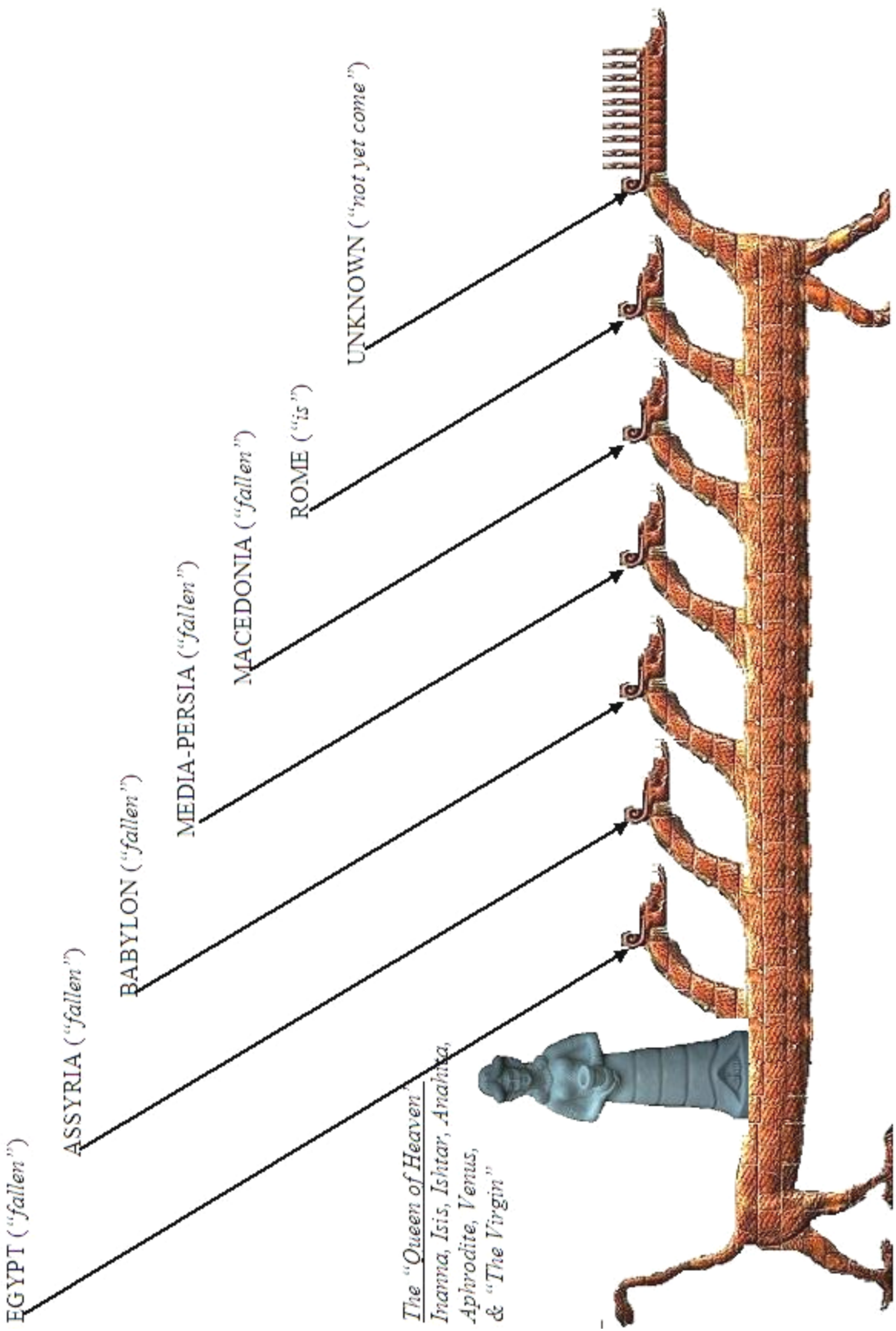
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<sup>216</sup> St. Malachy’s prophecies end in this fashion: “In extreme persecution, the seat of the Holy Roman Church will be occupied by Peter the Roman, who will feed the sheep through many tribulations, at the term of which the city of seven hills will be destroyed, and the formidable Judge will judge his people. The End.” (see [www.catholic-pages.com/grabbag/malachy.asp](http://www.catholic-pages.com/grabbag/malachy.asp))

<sup>217</sup> For example, He caused a demonized King Saul to prophesy before Samuel and David (1 Samuel 19:24) and a greed driven prophet named Balaam to predict the rise of Messiah’s star (Numbers 24:15-17).

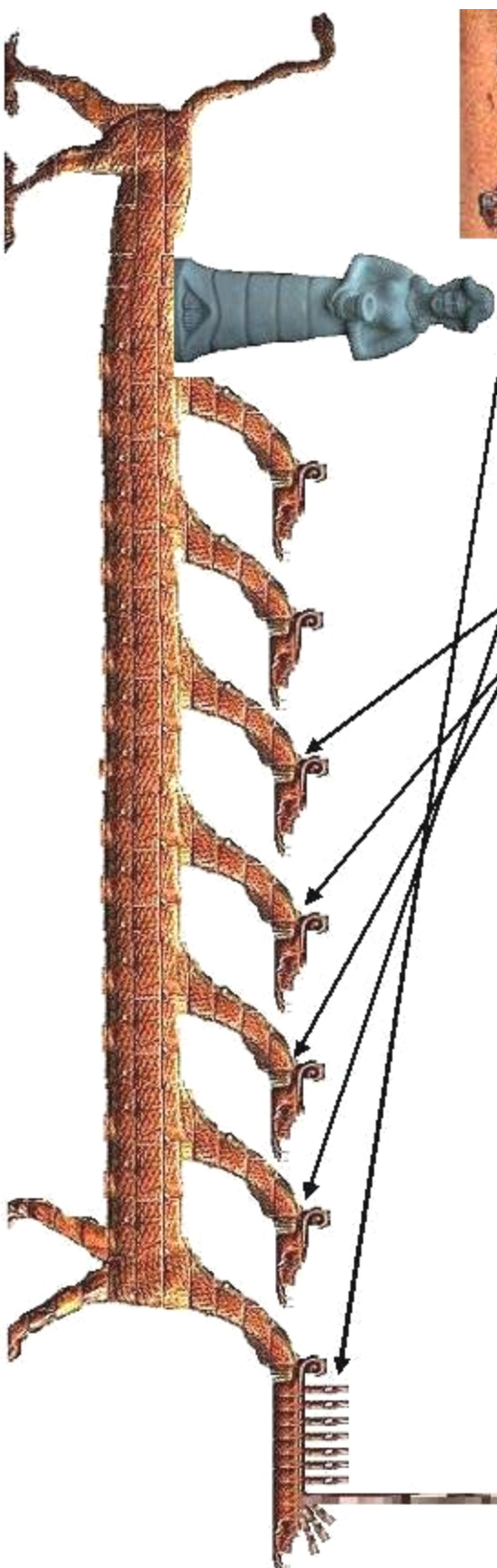


“THE PROSTITUTE” & “THE BEAST” FROM THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE APOSTLE JOHN



### FOCUS UPON "THE BEAST" FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE PROPHET DANIEL

1. The Babylonian empire was absorbed by the Median-Persian empire in 539 BC.
2. The Median-Persian empire was absorbed by the Macedonian empire in 330 BC.
3. The Macedonian empire was absorbed by the Roman empire c. 60 BC.
4. The Roman empire split into two empires—Western & Eastern—in AD 285.
5. The Western & the Eastern empires deteriorated into smaller kingdoms.
6. These smaller kingdoms, especially those in the West, competed viciously with one another, particularly after the discovery of the "New World" in AD 1492.
7. These western kingdoms gradually abandoned monarchical government in favor of various forms of democratic rule.
8. These new democratic governments formed alliances, resulting in "World Wars".
9. These "World Wars" prompted calls for "One World Governance." *[We are here.]*
10. My own speculation about the future:
  - A. A final world government will eventually bring about their idea of "peace."
  - B. A sudden, unexpected event will apparently "kill" this final world government.
  - C. This final world government "will be brought back to life" by 10 leaders ("Horns"), apparently with the help of "The Prostitute," whom they'll destroy later.
  - D. A final dictator ("The 11<sup>th</sup> Horn") will arise by co-opting 3 of these leaders.
  - E. This final dictator will specifically target Christians.
  - F. "The Beast" & its "The 11<sup>th</sup> Horn" will be defeated by Jesus' Coming.



**BOOK OF REVELATION**  
*Putting a Few Things in Parallel Format*

Brethren, you have no need to be written in regard to time periods and time events. For you know very well that the Day of Yahweh comes like a thief in the night. Even as they say, "Peace and stability!" then suddenly destruction will come upon them - like labor pains upon a pregnant woman. They will not escape.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-3

**Signs Connected with the Breaking of the Sixth Seal**

<p>6:12a I looked when he opened the sixth seal and there was a great earthquake, 6:12b <b>the sun</b> became black as hair sackcloth, <b>the whole moon</b> became like <b>blood</b>,</p>	<p><b>Excerpt from JOEL 2</b></p> <p>2:31 <b>The sun will be</b> turned into <b>darkness</b> and <b>the moon</b> into <b>blood</b> before the great and fearsome day of <i>Yahweh</i> comes.</p>	<p><b>Excerpt from MATT. 24</b> 24:29a Immediately after the tribulation of those days <b>the sun will be darkened</b>, <b>the moon</b> will not give her light,</p>	
<p>6:13 <b>the stars</b> of <b>heaven</b> fell <b>into the earth</b> like <b>a fig tree</b> tossing its unripe figs when being <b>shaken</b> by a great wind. 6:14a <b>Heaven</b> was parted as a <b>scroll</b> being <b>rolled</b>.</p>	<p><b>Excerpt from ISAIAH 34</b> 34:4b All <b>the stars</b> will <b>fall</b> like leaves off a vine and as leaves fall from <b>a fig tree</b>.  34:4a <b>Heaven</b> will be <b>rolled as a scroll</b>.</p>	<p><b>Excerpt from MATT. 24</b> 24:29b <b>the stars</b> will <b>fall from heaven</b>, and the powers of heaven will be <b>shaken</b>.</p>	<p>12:9 The great dragon... was ejected <b>into the earth</b>, and his angels were ejected with him...</p>
<p>6:14b Every mountain and island was moved from its place. 6:15 The kings of the earth, the great <i>leaders</i>, the <i>military</i> commanders, the rich, the powerful, every slave, and <i>every</i> free person hid themselves within the caves and within the bedrock formations of the mountains. 6:16 They said to the mountains and to the bedrock formations, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of the One sitting upon the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!" 6:17 For the great day of Their wrath came, and who is able to stand?</p>			

In my opinion, the breaking of the sixth seal officially marks the beginning of “The Day of Yahweh” or “The Last Days.”<sup>218</sup> It will mark the beginning of a three and a half year countdown culminating with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Jesus Christ.<sup>219</sup>

As you can see (now that we have begun putting a few passages in parallel format), there will be lots of activity at the onset of this brief period.

First, Satan and his rebel angels will be ejected by Michael and his loyal angels out of their native spiritual environment and into our own physical environment. I think this radical “shaking” of the “heavenly” *status quo* will result in the spectacular “signs” that Jesus said would occur after the period of great tribulation (which, once again, we know began with the destruction of the Temple in AD 70) but before His 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming.

No doubt many of these evil beings will be “flying” around the world, taking care of their nefarious business, when the sixth seal is broken. When they “materialize” in our physical atmosphere, they will leave behind whatever rules of “physics” apply to their own dimension and become subject to those of our dimension. Consequently, they will no longer be able to “fly.” Plummeting toward the earth, their angelic bodies glowing from atmospheric friction, they will appear to be “falling stars.”

I like to call this dramatic event “**Angel Fall.**”

The cumulative kinetic energy released when these myriad of angelic bodies hit the earth at terminal velocity might contribute to a planet-wide seismic event such as has not been seen since the Flood. We know that mountains and islands will dramatically move out of position as the earth’s tectonic plates shift. Some weak, man-made structures will collapse. Volcanic activity will probably spike. Landslides and avalanches will occur. Tsunamis will hit coastal regions. Military “hotspots” will most likely ignite into full-blown wars.<sup>220</sup> People at every level of society will panic, seeking shelter from the “end of the world” in caves and underground shelters. This will only be the beginning of the end.

Impact debris thrown into the atmosphere, mixed with ash from volcanic eruptions, will blot out the sun, moon and stars. Weather patterns will become chaotic. Crops will fail, driving up the price of food. Weeks, perhaps even months later, when most dust has settled back to earth, the moon will still look “blood red” through a lingering atmospheric haze.

Clearly, a lot of people are going to die in the breaking of the sixth seal. It seems likely that some significant portion of the 25 % population casualty figure cited in Revelation 6:8 (at the breaking of the fourth seal) will occur at this time.

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<sup>218</sup> As people commonly understand and use those terms.

<sup>219</sup> Many teach that this final countdown will actually be seven years long, based on their mistaken belief that the “70<sup>th</sup> Week of Daniel” has not yet taken place. We’ve already seen that this is not the case. In truth, Revelation never mentions a seven year period; only a single three and a half year period, variously expressed.

<sup>220</sup> Some nations might misinterpret the beginning stages of “Angel Fall” as a surprise missile or artillery attack by their enemy and decide to respond with a counter-attack. Other nations might see the resultant chaos as their best chance to launch a military operation they had been so-far hesitant to initiate. In a similar fashion, militant political and religious groups might be emboldened or frightened into action against their governments.

## The 144,000 – Marked for Martyrdom

### *Remember this passage?*

<sup>6:9</sup> When he broke the fifth seal I saw beneath the altar the individuals slain because of the word of God and because of the testimony which they were maintaining. <sup>6:10</sup> They cried out in a loud voice, saying, “Until when, holy and true Master, will You *defer* judging and avenging our blood from those living on the earth?” <sup>6:11</sup> A white robe was given to each of them, and they were told they will rest a short period of time still until their fellow servants - their brothers and those about to be killed even as themselves - should be fulfilled.

### *Well, here are those “brothers” who are “about to be killed.”*

<sup>7:1</sup> After this I saw four angels standing upon the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth so that they might not blow wind upon the land, the sea, or any tree.

<sup>7:2</sup> I saw another angel rise up from the east with the seal of the living God. He cried out in a loud voice to the four angels to whom it had been granted to harm the land and the sea, <sup>7:3</sup> saying, “Don’t harm the land, the sea, or the trees until we have sealed the slaves of our God upon their foreheads!”

<sup>7:4</sup> I heard the number of those sealed: 144,000 sealed from each tribe of Israel’s sons.

<sup>7:5</sup> 12,000 from the Judah tribe; 12,000 from the Reuben tribe; 12,000 from the Gad tribe;

<sup>7:6</sup> 12,000 from the Asher tribe; 12,000 from the Naphtali tribe; 12,000 from the Manasseh tribe;

<sup>7:7</sup> 12,000 from the Simeon tribe; 12,000 from the Levi tribe; 12,000 from the Issachar tribe;

<sup>7:8</sup> 12,000 from the Zebulun tribe; 12,000 from the Joseph<sup>221</sup> tribe; 12,000 from the Benjamin tribe.

Who exactly are these 144,000? That’s a very difficult question to answer. The figure could be symbolic,<sup>222</sup> but with Yahweh God involved, it could just as easily be literal. With the citation of twelve specific Israeli tribes, these future martyrs seem to be Messianic, ethnic Israeli believers. Yet, in view of Paul’s observation that Abraham’s true descendants are determined by faith, not flesh,<sup>223</sup> they could be Christian martyrs of any ethnic background.

Ultimately, whether or not we know who these believers are won’t really impact of our understanding of the role they play in the overall story. It is their martyrdom that triggers God’s wrath; we don’t really need to decipher their identity. That being said, I will admit that I lean toward the idea that these are ethnic Israelis who will die for their faith in Jesus. I’ll go into that issue more in a bit.

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<sup>221</sup> Ephraim, since the other tribe of Joseph, Manasseh, is already cited in verse 6.

<sup>222</sup> It is expressed as 12 x 12,000 [which is 12 x 1,000 (which is in turn 10 x 10 x 10, or 10<sup>3</sup>)].

<sup>223</sup> Romans 9:6-8.

## The Redeemed – Safe in God’s True Sanctuary

<sup>7:9</sup> After this I looked, and behold, a great crowd - which no one could number – from all the nations, tribes, peoples, and languages standing before the throne and before the Lamb, being clothed in white robes and palms in their hands. <sup>7:10</sup> They cried out in a loud voice, saying, “Salvation *belongs* to our God Who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb!”

<sup>7:11</sup> All the angels who had taken a stand around the throne, the elders, and the four living beings fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, <sup>7:12</sup> saying, “AMEN! Praise, glory, wisdom, thanks, honor, power, and strength *belong* to our God into the ages of ages. AMEN!”

<sup>7:13</sup> One of the elders responded, saying to me, “Who are these clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?”

<sup>7:14</sup> I said to him, “My lord, you know.”

He said to me, “These are those coming out of the great tribulation. They washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

<sup>7:15</sup> This is why they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His **sanctuary**. The One sitting upon the throne will tabernacle over them.

<sup>11:1</sup> A reed like a staff was given to me, saying, “Get up and measure the **sanctuary** of God, the altar, and those worshipping in it.

<sup>7:16</sup> They will no longer be hungry, and no longer will they be thirsty; neither may the sun nor any heat fall upon them, <sup>7:17</sup> since the Lamb at the center of the throne will shepherd them and will guide them springs of living water. God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

The identity of the incalculable, multi-ethnic group serving before God’s throne in heaven, described immediately after the sealing of the 144,000, is much easier to pin down. Revelation 7:14 tells us that they have come out of the “great tribulation” – the period between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Comings of Jesus. These are the deceased saints of the pan-ethnic Church era who are eagerly awaiting the resurrection of the righteous and the inauguration of the Millennium, especially now that Satan has been cast down.

**BOOK OF REVELATION: VISION OF THE “SEED OF WOMAN”/DRAGON WAR**  
**Meanwhile, Down on Planet Earth**

<sup>11:2a</sup> As for the court outside the sanctuary, cast it out and do not measure it because it has been given to the ethnic groups. They will tramp upon the holy city...

<sup>12:13</sup> When the dragon saw he had been ejected to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male.

(<sup>12:6</sup> **The woman** escaped into the wilderness where she had a **place** prepared by God in order that He might **nourish** her there for **1,260 days**.)

<sup>12:14</sup> The **two** wings of a great eagle were given to **the woman** so she could fly **into the wilderness**, into her **place**, where she was **nourished** there **a time, times, and half a time**, away from the serpent’s presence.

<sup>11:2b</sup> for **forty-two months**.

<sup>11:3</sup> I will give to my **two** witnesses

and they will prophesy **1,260 days**, having been clothed in sackcloth.

**Excerpt from Zechariah 4**

<sup>4:14</sup> He said to me, “**These are the two** sons of oil **standing** beside **the Lord of all the earth**.”

<sup>11:4</sup> **These are the two** olive trees and **the two** lampstands **standing** before **the Lord of the earth**.

<sup>11:5</sup> If anyone wants to harm them, fire comes out of their mouths and consumes their enemies. If anyone might wish to harm them, this is how they must be killed. <sup>11:6</sup> These have the authority to shut up the sky that rain might not rain during the days of their prophecy. They have the authority upon the waters to turn them into blood and to strike the earth with every blow as often as they might wish.

<sup>12:15</sup> From his mouth the serpent spat out waters like a river after the woman so she might be washed away, <sup>12:16</sup> but the earth aided the woman. The earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon spat out of his mouth. <sup>12:17</sup> The dragon was enraged over the woman. He went out to make war with the rest of her seed, *those* keeping the commandments of God and having the testimony of Jesus.

**Excerpt from REV. 2**

<sup>11:2</sup> Leave out the exterior court of the sanctuary that you might not measure it, because **it was given** to the nations and they will trample upon the holy city **forty-two months**.

**Excerpt from REV. 6**

<sup>6:2b</sup> He was given a victor’s wreath and he went out **overcoming** and in order to **overcome**.

**Excerpt from REV. 13**

<sup>13:5a</sup> It was given to **speak** great and blasphemous things...

<sup>13:6</sup> It opened its mouth in blasphemies **against** God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle – those dwelling in heaven.

<sup>13:5b</sup> **It was given** authority to act

**for forty-two months**.

<sup>13:7a</sup> It was permitted to **make war with the saints and to overcome them**.

**Excerpt from DAN. 7**

<sup>7:25</sup> He will **speak**

words **against** the Most High, will wear out the Saints of the Most High, and will intend to alter times and custom.

They will be **given** into his hand

**for a time, times and half a time**.

<sup>7:21</sup> As I watched, that horn was **making war with the saints and overpowering them**...



While transition to this final phase of the great spiritual war will be cause for celebration among the dead saints already serving Yahweh in the “Sanctuary of Heaven” (which John is ordered to measure), the same can not be said for the saints still living and serving Yahweh in “Heaven’s Courtyard” here on the earth (which John is told not to bother measuring),<sup>224</sup> where Satan has been marooned. Knowing that he now has “little time” to prepare for Jesus’ final invasion of his home territory, “the god of this world”<sup>225</sup> will begin persecuting (ultimately attempting to annihilate) the woman.

Thankfully, Faithful Israel will find supernatural protection from total annihilation when “two wings” of an eagle are given to help her flee to a prepared place of nourishment during this final three and a half year period. As you can see from my parallel format, I think these “two wings” are an intentional reference to the “two witnesses” representing Yahweh.<sup>226</sup>

While the Bible nowhere identifies these two men, I’m going to give you my personal opinion. It doesn’t really matter in the long run, but I think my idea is kind of “cool.”

There are only two men in all of Bible history who never died.

- Enoch, who lived about 1,500 years after Creation and about 1,000 years before the Flood, was a prophet who had something to say about life in “The Last Days.”<sup>227</sup> Because he was such a righteous man, God “took him” from the earth in the 365<sup>th</sup> year of his life so that he never died.
- Elijah, who lived in the 9<sup>th</sup> Century BC, was also a prophet who never died, being carried away by a fiery chariot.<sup>228</sup> Many Jews, past and present, expect Elijah to appear immediately before the Messiah establishes His Kingdom.<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> Unlike Pre-Millennial Dispensationalists, I don’t think the book of Revelation describes a 3<sup>rd</sup> Jewish Temple. Each and every reference to the “Sanctuary” is a reference to the genuine Sanctuary prefigured by the Tabernacle. Without going into too much detail, the Tabernacle design was a symbolic representation of the New Covenant (Hebrews 9 & 10). The Most Holy Place, where the Ark of the Covenant (Yahweh’s throne) was located, represented the genuine throne room in Heaven. Beyond the veil, the Holy Place, with its Incense Altar (prayer), Table of the Bread of the Presence (fellowship), and Menorah (spiritual illumination), represented life within the pan-ethnic Church. Only the High Priest (Jesus) had the right to enter the Most Holy Place. The ordinary priests (Christians) had the right to serve in the Holy Place. Non-priests (non-Christians) could come no closer to the Sanctuary than the Outer Courtyard (the world), until they had gone through the initiation ceremony for priests (Leviticus 8). During their ordination rites they had to come to the Altar of Burnt Offering (the sacrifice of Christ), be washed in the Bronze Sea (immersion into Christ’s death and resurrection), be anointed with the blood and the oil (the forgiveness of sin and the gift of the indwelling Spirit), and put on the priestly clothing (putting on the life of Christ).

<sup>225</sup> 2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 John 5:19.

<sup>226</sup> During the Exodus, Yahweh was represented by Moses and Aaron. Exodus 19:3 actually compares the Exodus of Israel to that nation being carried to Yahweh “on eagle’s wings.” Throughout the history of the Israeli kingdom, Yahweh was represented by the King and the High Priest. During the building of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple, He was represented by Governor Zerubbabel and the High Priest Joshua. I see the two witnesses of Revelation 11 as a continuation of this dual pattern of representation.

<sup>227</sup> Jude 14-15.

<sup>228</sup> 2 Kings 2:1-18.

<sup>229</sup> Malachi 4:5-6; John 1:19-28; Mark 6:14-16; Matthew 16:13-20; 17:1-13.



Here's what I think will happen. Yahweh, the Eternal Creator Who exists outside the space/time continuum which He created, is perfectly capable of relocating persons in time and space. I think He pulled Enoch and Elijah forward into "The Last Days," intending them to finish their earthly lives as His final witnesses to the world; especially to the ethnic Israelis who hold these two persons in very high regard.

I expect the Two Witnesses to arrive, presumably in or near the land of Israel,<sup>230</sup> on the very chaotic day of "Angel Fall". They will be dressed in the traditional mourning garb of their own times, and will immediately begin calling ethnic Israelis to repent of their foolish rejection of Jesus as Messiah.

Even as in Elijah's former days as a prophet,<sup>231</sup> anyone who tries to do harm to these two will die by fire falling from heaven in response to a simple command from their mouths. If they wish it to be so, there will be a repeat of the three and a half year drought of Elijah's time,<sup>232</sup> perhaps this time on a world-wide scale. Eventually, when the Scroll of Wrath is finally opened, they will orchestrate the "Trumpets"/"Bowls" of God's wrath in much the same way that Moses and Aaron orchestrated God's "Ten Plagues" against Egypt.

As anticipated by Paul,<sup>233</sup> many ethnic Israelis will finally accept Jesus as their genuine Messiah. This is the Faithful Israel whom Satan will attack shortly after his fall from heaven. Under the protective wings of the Enoch and Elijah, they will escape into a place of relative safety (Old City of Jerusalem?), where they will be nourished and protected throughout the remainder of the Two Witnesses' ministry.

Furious at being unable to touch this particular group of believers, Satan will put all of his efforts into trying to eradicate genuine Christianity throughout the rest of the world. Being "locked out" of the spiritual dimension, he will have to do this via his remaining human assets – the final beast government, its final beast leader and his false prophet.

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<sup>230</sup> I suppose they could show up anywhere in the world, either together or separately; but we know for a fact that they will eventually end up in Jerusalem, where they will be killed by the final beast leader.

<sup>231</sup> 2 Kings 1:1-16.

<sup>232</sup> 1 Kings 17:1- 18:46; cf. James 5:17-18.

<sup>233</sup> Romans 11.

## BOOK OF REVELATION: VISION OF THE “SEED OF WOMAN”/DRAGON WAR The Beast Leader and His False Prophet

<sup>12:17</sup> The dragon was enraged over the woman. He went out to make war with the rest of her seed, *those* keeping the commandments of God and having the testimony of Jesus. <sup>12:18</sup> He stood on the sand of the sea.

<sup>13:1</sup> I saw a ten-horned, seven-headed beast rise out of the sea, with ten crowns upon its horns and a blasphemous name upon its heads. <sup>13:2</sup> The beast which I saw was like a leopard, its feet like *those* of a bear, and its mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave it its power, its throne, and great authority.

<sup>13:3</sup> One of its heads *looked* as if it had been slain to death, and its death-wound healed. The whole earth marveled after the beast.

<sup>13:4</sup> They worshiped the dragon because he gave authority to the beast, and worshiped the beast, saying “Who is like the beast?” and “Who is able to make war with it?”

<sup>13:5</sup> It was given to speak great and blasphemous things. It was given authority to act for forty-two months.

<sup>13:6</sup> It opened its mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle – those dwelling in heaven. <sup>13:7</sup> It was permitted to make war with the saints and to overcome them.

*Authority* was given to it over all tribes, peoples, languages, and nations. <sup>13:8</sup> All who live upon the earth – the name of whom has not been written in the scroll of life of the Lamb having been slain from the foundation of the cosmos – shall worship it. <sup>13:9</sup> If anyone has ears let him hear!

<sup>13:10</sup> If anyone *is to go* into captivity, into captivity he goes. If anyone is to be killed by the sword, he by the sword is to be killed. Here is the patience and the faithfulness of the saints.

<sup>13:11</sup> I saw another beast rising from the earth. He had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.

<sup>13:12</sup> He acts with all the authority of the first beast in his presence. He made the earth and those living in it to worship the first beast, whose death-wound had been healed.

<sup>13:13</sup> He performed great **signs** - he could even make fire come down from the sky to the earth in the presence of men - <sup>13:14</sup> so he might **deceive** those living upon the earth by the signs that were given to him to do before the beast, telling those who live upon the earth to make an image of the beast who has a sword wound and lived.

### Excerpt from 2 THESS. 2

<sup>2:9</sup> The arrival of whom is by the working of Satan with all sorts of false power, **signs**, and wonders;

<sup>2:10</sup> and every **deception** of unrighteousness toward those being destroyed;

<sup>13:15</sup> He was permitted to give breath to the image of the beast so that the image of the beast might speak, and that as many as did not worship the image of the beast might be killed. <sup>13:16</sup> He made everyone – the small and the great, the rich and the poor, the free and the slave – that a mark should be given to them upon their right hand or upon their forehead, <sup>13:17</sup> so that no one might buy or sell except the one having the mark of the name of the beast or the number of his name. <sup>13:18</sup> Here is wisdom: the one having a mind should calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. His number is six hundred sixty-six.

The final beast kingdom will arise from the chaos brought on by “Angel Fall.” It would appear to be the resuscitation of some human agency that existed prior to the opening of the sixth seal; one with which we may already be familiar.

Perhaps it will be a reformation of the ten-member Western European Union, the security arm of the current EU. Maybe it will be a reincarnation of ten permanent members on the United Nations Security Council. It might even be a re-formulization of the G-10 economic group and their International Monetary Fund. Then again, it may be a completely new entity, forged in the fires of worldwide chaos.

To the apex of this organization will arise a powerful human leader. On his way to the top, he will either subvert or subdue three of his ten companions. Even as the final beast government will arise Phoenix-like from the ashes, so too this final beast leader may recover miraculously from a potentially fatal head-wound.<sup>234</sup> This would certainly add to his mystique.

Because he really has no other options, Satan will have to invest all his command and control authority into this one human and the government over which he rules. Here is how I think the scenario might play out.

I suspect that Satan will appear to the leadership of the final beast government in his true form; that of the four-faced, four-winged, former *κHe-rub* of Eden.<sup>235</sup> In doing so I fully expect him to portray himself and his earth-bound, angelic forces as “good” aliens engaged in a cosmic struggle, on behalf of humanity, against “bad” aliens (meaning Jesus, his angels and the deceased saints) who are preparing to invade the earth.<sup>236</sup> By this ruse, Satan, or the dragon, will convince those in authority of an urgent and immediate need to commit all of humanity’s resources to stopping this imminent invasion.

More than likely, the dragon will address the peoples of this world via mass media, promising all sorts of benevolent “good alien” assistance to the inhabitants of earth, once the “bad alien” invaders have been repelled, indicating his full support for the beast leader. Most of the public will swallow this lie whole, pledging their full allegiance to the dragon and to the final beast government in whom his authority has been placed; most, but certainly not all.

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<sup>234</sup> I can’t help but refer to Zechariah 11:17, right in the middle of a huge “Last Days” passage, which makes mention of “a worthless shepherd” (i.e., a wicked leader) whose arm & right eye will be harmed by “a sword” (i.e., military action). Might this be in reference to the final beast leader and some fatal blow to the head from which he will miraculously recover?

<sup>235</sup> Ezekiel 28:13-17; cf. Ezekiel 1 & 10.

<sup>236</sup> I think Satan has already laid the groundwork for this plausible lie, in the event that God actually does accomplish what is written in the Word about banishing him to the physical dimension. Hollywood (which is certainly under his sphere of influence) is constantly pumping out blockbuster movies on this very theme. The internet abounds with sites touting the reality of a great interstellar war between alien races, with the fate of earth hanging in the balance. More people now believe in extraterrestrial visitation of the earth than ever before. In fact, polls indicate that a substantial portion of Americans are convinced that the governments of the world are already in contact with alien entities; awaiting the appropriate time to reveal this astounding news.

In dealing with such “unbelievers,” the final beast leader will have a very effective accomplice. John saw another beast rise up from the earth, looking like a lamb but speaking like a dragon. This is obviously the false Christian<sup>237</sup> leader, whom John will later identify as the “false prophet.” He - not the final beast leader, as is so commonly taught - is the so-called “antichrist” that John said was coming.<sup>238</sup> He is the “man of lawlessness” whom Paul warned would come amidst all sorts of deceptive signs and wonders, including things that will appear to rival the work of God’s two witnesses at Jerusalem. He will probably be, as I have already asserted, the final Pope of the Roman Catholic Church.

I expect this man to reinterpret Christianity (and other world religions)<sup>239</sup> in the light of events since “Angel Fall.” He will promote a universal spirituality that is supposedly at the core of all religion. He will use his considerable influence to persuade all religious peoples, in particular “Christians,” and most especially Roman Catholics, to accept the dragon, the final beast leader, and the final beast government as the only real hope for mankind’s survival and expansion beyond this tiny globe within a vast, alien-populated universe.

As such, he will be the chief developer and administrator of an economic control system intended to coerce individuals into accepting the authority of the final beast leader. Here’s how I think he could use technology (most of which we already have) to pull this off.

The false prophet will probably commission the swift adaptation of existing technological systems into a global, interactive computer network driven by an artificial intelligence (AI) using the image and voice of the final beast leader. This will fulfill Revelation 13:15.

Tied into this “Image” AI computer system will be an embedded RFID (radio frequency identification) microchip system (or something similar) that will permit real time tracking of both people and products. This will fulfill Revelation 13:16-17.

When used with a network of strategically placed two-way computer/TV/surveillance network monitors in homes, businesses and public places, this “Image/Mark of the Beast”<sup>240</sup> system will allow the false prophet to simulate a personal relationship between the final beast leader and billions of “chipped” users, simultaneously, all along the global net. This illusion of fatherly concern will awe low-tech individuals, but it will be just as effective in controlling hi-tech persons who will understand all too well that “big brother” (or more accurately, “the beast”) is monitoring their every move.

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<sup>237</sup> He will be falsely associated with the lamb imagery of Christianity; the true lamb being Jesus.

<sup>238</sup> 1 John 2:18. Anti- is a Greek prefix that can mean either “opposite of” or “in place of.” This false Christian leader will pretend to represent or even be Christ, when in fact he is of Satan.

<sup>239</sup> Already, Christianity, Islam and Judaism are being presented as different facets of the same spiritual heritage. An abominable lie!

<sup>240</sup> The code number John gave for the final beast leader is 666. According to the early Christian scholar Irenaeus ([Against Heresies](#) 5.30.3, which was written in the 180’s), the numerical value of the Greek adjective “Lateinos” (“Roman”) is 666. If the final beast government does end up being a reincarnation of the ancient Roman Empire, this would certainly make good sense. However, as Irenaeus pointed out, and as we have seen many times since, there are just too many possibilities to become dogmatic over this issue. Suffice it to say that the numerical coding will make sense when the final beast leader is revealed, and that it will merely affirm what Christians already suspect in the midst of their persecution.

With the survival of *homo sapiens* on the line, extreme measures will be authorized by the final beast government (and tolerated by the citizens of Earth)<sup>241</sup> in order to deal with those unconvinced by the dragon's tale; those who resist taking the "Mark," and who consequently represent a societal threat.

Given past world history, unarmed resisters will most likely be rounded up and processed through "educational" facilities. Those who continue their resistance will be "euthanized" for the sake of humanity. Armed resisters will probably be hunted down and exterminated.

The deaths of these resisters will fill out what remains of the one fourth population casualty figure in Revelation 6:8.

Let's put some real numbers to this concept. Suppose that Earth had a global population of 8 billion when the sixth seal is opened. That means 2 billion, a large portion of whom will be conservative Christians, will be dead in a period of less than three years (since the wrath of God will take up about six months of the final three and a half years).

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<sup>241</sup> Think of the extensive, freedom curtailing actions taken in the United States since the 9/11 attack, then project that onto a world-wide scale.

**BOOK OF REVELATION**  
**Putting a Few More Things in Parallel Format**

<sup>14:1</sup> I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mt. Zion. With Him were 144,000 with His name and the name of His Father written upon their foreheads.

<sup>14:2</sup> I heard a sound from heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of a great thundering. The sound I heard was like lyrists playing on their lyres. <sup>14:3</sup> They sang a new song before the throne, and before the four living beings and the elders. No one could learn the song except for the 144,000 – those purchased from the earth.

<sup>14:4</sup> These are those who have not tarnished themselves with women (they are virgins) following the Lamb wherever He may go. These were purchased from among men as a firstfruit offering to God and to the Lamb. <sup>14:5</sup> No lie was found in their mouths. They are unblemished.

By the time that the false prophet is ready to bring his “Image/Mark” system on-line, the 144,000 will have already been martyred. John saw them after their deaths, standing on the real Mt. Zion that is located in the spiritual dimension of “heaven.”<sup>242</sup>

You’ll remember that I believe these young men will probably be Messianic Israelis who rise under the ministry of the two witnesses. Their deaths will likely occur when they leave the protective sphere around the two prophets in order to announce the “good news” about the returning King to the rest of the world.

As the “first fruits,” i.e., the first martyrs for this final three and a half year period, they will have a special place of the kingdom of heaven. They alone will have the right to sing a special song of praise in the presence of Yahweh.

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<sup>242</sup> Hebrews 12:22-24.

**BOOK OF REVELATION**  
**Putting a Few More Things in Parallel Format (continued)**

<sup>14:6</sup> I saw another angel flying in mid-heaven with an eternal proclamation to proclaim to those sitting upon the earth – every nation, tribe, language, and people – <sup>14:7</sup> saying in a loud voice, “Fear God and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come! Worship the One Who made the sky, land, sea, and the springs of water!”

<sup>14:8</sup> **Another**, second **angel** followed,  
  
saying, “**Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the great** –  
  
she who has made **all the nations drink the wine of her passionate prostitution!**”

<sup>18:1</sup> After this I saw **another angel** having come down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined by his glory. <sup>18:2</sup> He cried out in a loud voice, **saying, “Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the great!** She has become a dwelling for demons; a haven for every unclean spirit; every unclean bird; and every unclean, hated beast.  
<sup>18:3</sup> Because **all the nations have drunk of the wine of her passionate prostitution**; the kings of the earth have fornicated with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich from the power of her wantonness.

<sup>18:4</sup> I heard another voice from heaven, saying, “Come out, my people, out from her, so that you might not share in her sin and so that you might not receive of her blows, <sup>18:5</sup> because her sins are cemented together as far as heaven, and God kept account of her unrighteous acts.

<sup>18:6</sup> “Give her even as she has given; give her two times what her acts deserve; in the cup she mixed, mix her two times as much. <sup>18:7</sup> In as much as she glorified herself and lived wantonly, in that same way give her torture and mourning; because she is saying in her heart, ‘I am sitting as queen. I am not a widow. I will never see mourning.’”

<sup>17:16</sup> The ten horns that you saw and the beast will hate the prostitute, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh, and **burn her with fire**, <sup>17:17</sup> for **God** has placed into their hearts to carry out His purpose, to accomplish one purpose – to give their kingdoms to the beast until the word of God shall be completed.

<sup>18:8</sup> Therefore, in one day her blows will come – death, mourning, and famine. She will be **burnt with fire** because the Lord **God** Who judges her is strong.

<sup>18:9</sup> The kings of the earth, those fornicating and living luxuriously with her, will weep and will strike *themselves in grief* over her when they see the smoke of her burning. <sup>18:10</sup> They will stand at a distance in fear of her torture, saying, “Woe! Woe! The great city! The strong city Babylon! In one hour her judgment came.”

<sup>18:11</sup> “The merchants of the earth will weep and will mourn over here, because no one buys their merchandise anymore. <sup>18:12</sup> Merchandise of gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, fine linen, purple fabric, silk, scarlet fabric, every *kind of* fragrant wood, every *sort of* ivory container, every *type of* vessel made of precious wood, copper, iron, marble, <sup>18:13</sup> cinnamon, amomum, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, olive oil, fine wheat flour, wheat, work animals, sheep, horses, carts, and *the* bodies and souls of men. <sup>18:14</sup> The fruit of the desires of your soul went from you and all the dainty things and elegant things destroyed from you; none of these things shall be found.

<sup>18:15</sup> “These wealthy merchants will stand at a distance from her due to fear of her tortures, weeping and mourning, <sup>18:16</sup> saying, “Woe! Woe! The great city! The one wrapped in fine linen, purple, and scarlet; gilded with gold, precious stones and pearls! <sup>18:17</sup> In one hour the great wealth is desolated.

Each ship captain, each passenger and sailor, and as many as work the sea, stood far off <sup>18:18</sup> and were crying out, seeing the smoke of her fire, saying, “Who is like the great city?” <sup>18:19</sup> They threw dust on their heads and were crying out, weeping and striking *themselves in grief*, saying, “Woe! Woe! The great city! By whom all those having ships in the sea became rich from her excellence. In one hour she was desolated.

<sup>18:20</sup> “Be glad over her, heaven, saints, apostles and prophets! God has judged your judgment upon her.”

<sup>18:21</sup> A strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw *it* into the sea, saying, “In this violent fashion the great city Babylon shall be thrown and be found no more.

<sup>18:22</sup> “May the sound of lyre players, musicians, flutists and trumpeters no longer be heard in you. May each artisan and each craftsman no longer be found in you. May the sound of the mill no longer be heard in you.

<sup>18:23</sup> May the light of the lamp no longer be seen in you. May the sound of the groom and bride never be heard in you. Because your merchants were the great men of the earth. Because you mislead all the nations by your sorcery. In you was found the blood of prophets, saints and all those slaughtered on the earth.”

<sup>14:9</sup> Another, third angel followed them, saying in a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and takes the mark upon his forehead or his right hand, <sup>14:10</sup> he will drink the wine of God’s passion which has been mixed undiluted in the cup of His wrath, and he will be tortured in fire and brimstone before the angels and before the Lamb! <sup>14:11</sup> The smoke of their torture ascends into the ages of ages and they have no respite day and night – the ones worshipping the beast and his image, and anyone accepting the mark of his name!

<sup>14:12</sup> Here is the endurance of the Saints, the ones keeping the commands of God and the faith of Jesus.”

<sup>14:13</sup> I heard a voice from heaven say, “Write, ‘How blessed by God are the dead dying in the Lord from now on.’”

“Yes,” says the Spirit, “in order that they be given rest from their hard work, for their actions follow behind them.”



With the number of prophesied martyrs complete,<sup>243</sup> it will finally be time for Yahweh's wrath to be poured out. At this point several angel heralds will appear in Earth's atmosphere with explicit warnings for the people of the world.

The first angel will warn that final judgment is approaching and that everyone needs to worship the Creator (Yahweh) rather than creatures (Satan and his human minions).<sup>244</sup>

The second angel will warn of the imminent<sup>245</sup> fall of mystery "Babylon," i.e., the RCC headquartered out of Vatican City in Rome. I presume that once the "Image/Mark" system is operational, and the false prophet, i.e., the final Pope, is fully and irretrievably committed to the final beast leader, he and the ten leaders of the final beast kingdom will have no more use for the RCC. As prophesied earlier, it will only be a matter of time before they get around to destroying her, since they hate what (even in her perverse form) she stands for - Christianity.

Around this time there will be a clear call from heaven, "to come out from her, my people," giving one last opportunity to anyone with genuine faith in Jesus as Messiah to abandon any relationship with the doomed RCC.<sup>246</sup> Those that don't will suffer with her.

A third and final angel herald will pronounce an unambiguous and eternal curse upon anyone who worships the final beast leader and/or his "Image," taking his "Mark." There are a few things I think should be clearly understood from this passage.

- The "Image/Mark" won't be deployed until sometime during the final three and half year period. The "Mark of the Beast" doesn't exist at the moment.<sup>247</sup>
- No one will be able to take the "Mark" accidentally. The choice will be clear – one will take the "Mark" to be on the final beast leader's side or refuse it.<sup>248</sup>
- Those who accept the "Mark" will be eternally condemned. The choice will be so clear that there will be absolutely no opportunity for repentance.<sup>249</sup>
- The "Image/Mark" program will result in the deaths of many Christians. Even as a curse is pronounced upon those accepting the "Mark," a blessing is pronounced upon those who will die rather than accept it.

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<sup>243</sup> Remember that Yahweh told the martyrs of all ages who were asking for vengeance that they had to be patient until a specific number of additional martyrs had been reached (6:11).

<sup>244</sup> Romans 1:18ff.

<sup>245</sup> In one of those oddities of prophetic passages, there are past, present and future tenses used together here. The predominance of future tenses leads me to see the fall of Babylon as still being future at this point.

<sup>246</sup> This will probably be accomplished via the launch of the Beast Image/Mark system. No one with even the most rudimentary allegiance to Jesus Christ will be able to bring themselves to participate in that system.

<sup>247</sup> While the technology that will be used in the system may already exist, there is nothing intrinsically evil with any of it. Other than privacy issues that I think everyone should worry about, I wouldn't get too worked up over modern technological advances. I guarantee you that a microchip in your debit card, in your ID or in your can of corn isn't the "Mark of the Beast."

However, allowing a chip to be planted "in" your physical body is another matter entirely. I would advise everyone, but especially Christians, to refuse such implantations simply on principle. While the government now in power may guarantee that your privacy will be protected, remember that governments change. You can ditch inanimate objects like "smart cards" that contain traceable chips, but you can't ditch yourself.

<sup>248</sup> Lest you worry, I'm positive that forcibly implanted chips won't count; as in the case of minor children who are taken into custody when their Christian parents are arrested and executed. This is all about free will.

<sup>249</sup> Don't be naive. You won't be able to take the "Mark" just to utilize the "Image" system so as to survive the three and a half years, while staying true to Jesus "in your heart." Read (and memorize) Matthew 10:32-33.

## BOOK OF REVELATION: MORE PARALLELS

### The Breaking of the Seventh Seal & The Beginning of Yahweh's Wrath

8:1 When He opened the seventh seal there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

8:2 I saw seven angels who had taken a stand before God. Seven trumpets were given to them.

8:3 Another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer. Much incense was given to him so he could offer up the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar before the throne. 8:4 The smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints went up from the hand of the angel before God.

14:14 I looked, and behold, a white cloud and sitting upon the cloud one like a son of man, and in his hand a sharp sickle. 14:15 Another angel came out of the sanctuary, crying out in a loud voice to the one sitting on the cloud, "Send your sickle and harvest, because the hour to harvest has come, since the harvest of the earth has dried up!"

14:16 The one sitting on the cloud sent his sickle into the earth and the earth was harvested.

8:5 Having taken the censer, the **angel** filled it with **fire from the altar**

and **threw it into the earth.**

There were peals of thunder, sounds, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

14:17 Another angel came out of the sanctuary in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle.

14:18 Another **angel** (the one having authority over the **fire**) came **from the altar** and called out in a loud voice to the one with the sharp sickle, saying, "Send your sharp sickle and gather the clusters *from* the vine of the earth, because its grapes are at *their* prime.

14:19 The angel **sent** [literally "**threw**"] his sickle **into the earth** and gathered *from* the vine of the earth and **threw them** into the great wine vat of God's fury.

14:20 The wine vat was trod outside the city and blood went out from the wine vat as high as horses' bridles for 1,600 *stadia*.

19:1 After these things I heard *something* like the great voice of a crowd of many in heaven, saying, "Hallelu Yah! Salvation, glory, and power to our God, 19:2 for His judgments are true and righteous; for He has judged the great prostitute who was corrupting the earth with her immorality and He has avenged the blood of His servants *shed* from her hand."

19:3 A second time they said, "Hallelu Yah! Her smoke ascends into the ages of ages."

19:4 The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God Who sits on the throne, saying, "Amen! Hallelu Yah!"

19:5 A voice came out from the throne, saying, "Give praise to our God, all you His servants, those who fear Him, small and great."

15:1 I saw another great and marvelous sign in heaven: seven angels with seven final blows,<sup>250</sup> because in them God's wrath came to an end. 15:2 I saw something like a glassy sea mixed with fire; and those overcoming the beast, his image, and the number of his name standing on the glassy sea with the lyres of God. They were singing the song of Moses, God's servant, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are your works, Yahweh Tsabaoth. Righteous and true are your ways, King of nations. 15:4 Who should not fear you, Yahweh, and glorify Your name? Because you alone are holy; because all the nations will come and worship before you; and because your righteous actions have been made clear."

15:5 After these things I looked, and the sanctuary of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened.

15:6 The seven angels with the seven blows came out of the sanctuary dressed in bright, clean linen, and their chests wrapped with golden belts. 15:7 One of the four living beings gave to the seven angels, seven bowls filled with the wrath of the God who lives into the ages of ages.

15:8 The sanctuary was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power. No one could enter the sanctuary until the seven blows of the seven angels were completed.

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<sup>250</sup> The Greek word *plā·gā*, from which our English word "plague" is derived, actually refers to blows from a rod or whip given to criminals as a form of corporal punishment in John's day.

When the final, seventh seal is broken there will be a reverent hush of anticipation in heaven.<sup>251</sup> On earth, having been clearly warned, the people must soberly consider whether or not to take the “Mark.” At this point John’s two vision streams begin to coincide.

In the final portion of John’s Vision of the War Between the “Seed of Woman” and the Dragon, he saw Jesus as “the Son of Man,” sitting upon “clouds of glory,” the very form in which He will return to earth. John watched as the seated Jesus reaped the earth of a ripened “harvest.” Since we already know that the 144,000 martyrs were the “first fruits” of the final three and a half years, this “harvest” of souls will most likely be the blessed saints who will die rather than accept the “Mark.”<sup>252</sup>

In the corresponding section of the Vision of the Scroll, John saw the prayers of all saints being offered up with much incense by an angel ministering at the heavenly altar of prayer and incense. The prayers of these saints will probably be prayers for vengeance similar to those prayed by the martyred souls John saw under the same altar earlier. However, this time the prayers will be answered. The offering angel will take fire from the altar and throw it into the earth, causing great signs and wonders.<sup>253</sup>

Returning to the harvest imagery, a second angel will then be ordered to follow up the reaping of martyred souls accomplished by the “Son of Man” with a “harvest of wrath” to be processed in the “wine vat of God’s fury,” just “outside the city.” In view of the near context of “mystery Babylon,”<sup>254</sup> this city is probably Rome, and not Jerusalem, as so many teach.

John saw the “blood” from the trampled “grapes of wrath” proceed from a single focal point, as deep as horses’ bridles (about 4 feet deep),<sup>255</sup> for a distance of about 184 miles.<sup>256</sup> If this figure is used as the radius of a circle extending from the city of Rome, the area affected covers much of Italy. Since we know that the leaders of the final beast government will hate the prostitute and will end up burning her with fire, I think it’s possible that this imagery may refer to her destruction at their hands – the prophesied fall of mystery Babylon.

In the Vision of the Scroll John next saw “Trumpets” issued to seven angels, while in the Vision of the War Between the “Seed of the Woman” and the Dragon he next saw “Bowls” issued to seven angels. As the former prepare to sound their trumpets as the signal for the latter to pour out their bowls,<sup>257</sup> the Sanctuary of Heaven will be made “off limits.”

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<sup>251</sup> This brief silence may have paralleled the time of corporate prayer that happened in connection with the morning and afternoon incense/sacrifice ceremony at the Jewish Temple.

<sup>252</sup> If you haven’t already figured it out by now, I don’t support the notion of a secret rapture of believers prior to the final three and a half year period. I don’t see any Biblical support for the concept whatsoever. The only way out of this world for the majority of believers “living in the last days” will be death. It’s that simple.

<sup>253</sup> Something very similar happened in Ezekiel’s story of the impending desolation of Jerusalem by the Babylonians (Ezekiel 10 & 11).

<sup>254</sup> At Revelation 14:8.

<sup>255</sup> A similar reference to horses wading through the chest deep blood of sinners being punished in the last days can be found in the apocryphal Book of Enoch 100:1-4.

<sup>256</sup> 1600 *stadia* (@ 606.75 feet per *stadia*) = 970,800 feet (183.86 miles).

<sup>257</sup> Most aspects of the seven final trumpets/bowls are exactly parallel, as you will be able to see for yourself. Differences that do occur are probably due to the perspective of the vision; the Trumpets come at the end of the Vision of the Scroll and highlight Yahweh’s control of the overall situation, while the Bowls focus more upon the wrath itself.

**BOOK OF REVELATION: TRUMPET/BOWL PARALLELS**  
**The First Four Trumpets/Bowls of Yahweh's Wrath**

<sup>8:6</sup> The seven angels with the seven trumpets prepared themselves to trumpet.

<sup>8:7</sup> **The first** trumpeted, **and there came into being** hail and fire, having been mixed with blood, and was thrown **into the earth**. A third of the earth, a third of the trees, and all the green grass were burned up.

<sup>8:8</sup> **The second** angel trumpeted, and something like a great mountain blazing with fire was thrown **into the sea**. <sup>8:9</sup> A third of the sea **became blood**, and a third of the creatures **in the sea died - the things** having souls - and a third of the ships were destroyed.

<sup>8:10</sup> **The third** trumpeted, and a great star, blazing like a lamp, fell out of heaven upon a third of **the rivers and the springs of water**. <sup>8:11</sup> The name of the star was called "*Absinth*." A third of the waters **became absinth**, and many men died from the waters because they had been made bitter.

<sup>8:12</sup> **The fourth** angel trumpeted, and a third of **the sun**, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars

were **stricken**, so that a third of them might be darkened, and the day might not shine a third of it, and the night likewise.

<sup>8:13</sup> I looked, and I heard a single eagle flying in mid-heaven saying with a loud voice, "Alas! Alas! Alas for those living upon the earth due to the rest of the soundings of the trumpets of the three angels about to trumpet."

<sup>16:1</sup> I heard a loud voice from the sanctuary saying to the seven angels, "Proceed. Pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath into the earth."

<sup>16:2</sup> **The first** came and poured out his bowl **into the earth, and there came into being** an evil and hurtful ulcer upon the men having the mark of the beast and worshiping his image.

<sup>16:3</sup> **The second** came and poured out his bowl **into the sea**, and it **became** like a dead *man's blood*, and every *kind of* living **soul died - the things in the sea**.

<sup>16:4</sup> **The third** poured out his bowl into **the rivers and the springs of water** and it **became** blood.

<sup>16:5</sup> I heard the angel of the waters saying, "You are just, One Who Is And Who Was, the Holy One, because You have judged all things. <sup>16:6</sup> Since they poured out the blood of the Saints, you have given them blood to drink. You are holy."

<sup>16:7</sup> I heard the altar saying, "Yes, Yahweh Tsabaoth. True and righteous are your judgments."

<sup>16:8</sup> **The fourth** poured out his bowl upon **the sun**. He was given *the authority* to burn men with fire. <sup>16:9</sup> The men were burned with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God having authority over these **blows** and didn't repent to give him glory.

Before we get started with our survey of the Yahweh's final wrath as demonstrated in the Trumpets/Bowls, I want to assure Christians that, if you end up living through this period of time, you will not be harmed directly by any of these horrendous things. Remember that the "Ten Plagues" against Egypt were orchestrated by Moses and Aaron and never touched a single Israeli; as "God's People" they were immune. I expect these "Seven Plagues" to be directed against the final beast government and those who have unwisely taken the "Mark." They will be conducted very carefully by the two witnesses, and not one saint will be directly touched by them. However, even as the Egyptian government reacted negatively against the Israelis for the work of Moses and Aaron,<sup>258</sup> I expect that the final beast government will attempt to punish the saints for the work of the two witnesses.

Yahweh's first judgment will be directed "into the earth." There will be a world-wide hailstorm, with the hailstones consisting in part of blood and mixed in with "fire" (perhaps meteors or lightning). One third of the earth's vegetation will be destroyed by this storm. At the same time, everyone who has accepted the "Mark," despite the clear angelic warning not to do so, will develop a painful sore, most likely at the site of the "Mark."

Yahweh's second judgment will be directed "into the sea." John saw something that he described as a "great mountain burning" thrown into the sea. Some have suggested that this will be a huge meteorite or comet that will hit the ocean. This would certainly cause a great deal of death and destruction. There is another possibility that intrigues me.

Scientists are concerned that a volcanic eruption on the Canary Island of La Palma might cause a huge section of that island to slide into the Atlantic, triggering tsunamis that would cause a tremendous amount of damage throughout the northern Atlantic basin. Computer modeling predicts that waves resulting from such a collapse would be 300+ feet in height when they hit the coasts of NW Africa. Even after traveling for hours across the Atlantic, series of waves 30-75 feet high would inundate the coastlines of the Americas.

In such a scenario, damage from the tsunamis would extend several miles inland. Hundreds of port cities would be wiped out. Because the Atlantic is home to some of the world's most heavily trafficked shipping lanes, John's observation that a third of the ships at sea will be destroyed could very easily come true.

John also wrote that a third of the sea will become "blood" and that a third of its creatures will die.<sup>259</sup> With all the effluvia of human civilization that exists along thousands of miles of heavily populated shorelines being suddenly backwashed into the ocean in connection with a monster tsunami such as described above, it is possible that an unprecedented "red tide" would be triggered all along the Atlantic basin. The toxic output of such an event could easily kill off a significant minority of the world's total sea life in a matter of days.

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<sup>258</sup> Exodus 5.

<sup>259</sup> The presumed difference between the chapters 8 and 16 regarding the extent of this ocean die off can be explained by understanding that the former was focusing upon the totality of creatures while the latter was focusing upon the types of creatures affected. That is to say, every species experienced some die-off, but only about a third of the total sea creatures actually died.

Yahweh's third judgment will be directed against the fresh water sources. In the "Third Trumpet" account, a blazing star named Absinth<sup>260</sup> will turn the fresh water bitter. In the "Third Bowl" parallel, the waters will be turned to "blood."<sup>261</sup>

As is the case in most of these final plagues, we can only guess at the mechanism that will be used by God to bring about this particular one. Maybe the Lord will cause a comet or asteroid to graze the atmosphere or to strike the earth's surface, thereby releasing noxious particles that will adversely affect the fresh water supply. Regardless, the point of the plague is fairly obvious - a third of the earth's potable water will become very difficult to drink.

In heaven, the angel who poured out the bowl, together with the dead martyrs under the altar of incense, will approve of the poetic justice of this blow upon sinful mankind - since they'd poured out the blood of the saints, God was making them drink "blood."

Yahweh's fourth judgment will be directed against the light sources/timepieces created by God back on Day 4 of the Creation Week.<sup>262</sup> When the trumpet sounds and its attendant bowl is poured out, their brilliance will be diminished by a third. Since the light output of the sun, the moon and the stars are all affected equally, perhaps something will happen to the atmosphere, causing a third of their visible light rays to bounce back into space.<sup>263</sup> And yet, while the visible light of the sun will be decreased, its ultraviolet rays will apparently show a marked increase; burning the unrepentant population,<sup>264</sup> who will know beyond a shadow of doubt that Yahweh is the source of these punishments.

These first four blows could easily reach their peak effectiveness in a matter of days after the opening of the Scroll of Wrath.

At this point, an eagle will mourn for those who must undergo the remaining three blows of Yahweh's wrath. What will have happened up to this point is pretty bad, but the worst - believe it or not - is yet to come.

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<sup>260</sup> *Artemisia absinthium* is a bitter tasting plant native to Europe and the Middle East.

<sup>261</sup> This is reminiscent of Yahweh's "First Plague" against ancient Egypt (Exodus 7:14-25).

<sup>262</sup> Genesis 1:14-19.

<sup>263</sup> Perhaps the mechanism for this plague will be closely tied to that of the previous one. Wouldn't an unusually high amount of particulate matter within the upper atmosphere (such as might be shed by the grazing of a comet or be raised by an asteroid strike) cut down on the amount of light reaching the earth's service?

<sup>264</sup> Could this be the result of a complete collapse of the protective ozone layer brought on by the intrusion of a large celestial body within the atmosphere?

**BOOK OF REVELATION: TRUMPET/BOWL PARALLELS**  
**The Fifth Trumpet/Bowl of Yahweh's Wrath**

<sup>9:1</sup> **The fifth** angel trumpeted, and I saw a star having fallen from heaven into the earth, and the key to the well of the abyss was given to him. <sup>9:2</sup> He opened the well of the *Abyss*, and smoke went up out of the well like the smoke of a great furnace. The sun and the atmosphere were **darkened** by the smoke of the well.

<sup>9:3</sup> Locusts came out of the smoke into the earth. Authority was given to them like the authority the scorpions of the earth have. <sup>9:4</sup> They were told that they were not to harm the grass of the earth, nor any green *plant*, nor any tree – only the men not having the seal of God upon their foreheads. <sup>9:5</sup> They were given *authority*, not that they might kill them, but rather that they might torture them for five months. Their torture *was* like the torture of a scorpion when it stings a man.

<sup>9:6</sup> In those days the men will seek death, and not find it. They will desire to die but death will flee from them.

<sup>9:7</sup> The appearance of the locusts was like horses having been prepared for battle. On their heads were *things* like victory wreaths resembling gold. Their faces were like the faces of men, <sup>9:8</sup> their hair like the hair of women, and their teeth like the teeth of lions. <sup>9:9</sup> Their breastplates were like iron breastplates, and the sound of their wings was like many horse chariots running into battle. <sup>9:10</sup> They had tails like scorpions, including stingers. They had authority in their tails to harm men five months.

<sup>9:11</sup> They had as king over them the angel of the *Abyss*. His name in Hebrew was *A-bad-dōn*, while in Greek he had the name *Ap·ol·lu·ōn*.

<sup>9:12</sup> The first “Alas!” has gone. Behold, the second “Alas!” comes after these things.

<sup>16:10</sup> **The fifth** poured out his bowl upon the throne of the beast,

and his kingdom became **darkened**.

They were gnawing their tongues out of pain.

<sup>16:11</sup> They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pain and their ulcers, and did not repent of their actions.

Yahweh's fifth judgment will be directed against the people bearing the "Mark." One of the recently fallen "stars" - maybe even Satan himself - will be permitted to unlock a place called *Ab-ūs·sos*.<sup>265</sup>

Thick smoke will immediately pour out of the opening into the *Abys*s, plunging the dominion of the final beast leader into a horrible darkness similar to that which occurred during the Exodus<sup>266</sup> and the Crucifixion.<sup>267</sup>

The opening of this deep shaft will also result in a "parole" of sorts, permitting numerous demonic beings who had been banished throughout history to move freely about the earth, creating havoc under the leadership of "Destroyer."<sup>268</sup>

Yahweh will place several conditions of release upon these locust-like, human-faced, long-haired, lion-teethed, iron-armored, scorpion-tailed monstrosities.<sup>269</sup>

- They may not harm the remaining vegetation.
- They may only attack people bearing the "Mark" of the final beast leader.
- They are permitted only to torture, not kill, their victims.
- Their reign of terror will last only five months.<sup>270</sup> (By the way, this is the only wrath event that mentions a specific time period. The rest of the wrath events seem to take up much less time.

Perhaps this would be a good place for me to introduce information regarding the possible timing of events during the final three and a half years.

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<sup>265</sup> Literally, "without bottom." A word first applied to the unfathomable depths of the original ocean out of which all things were created (Genesis 1:1-2). It was later used in reference to the unfathomable depths of the earth where rebel spirits ("fallen angels" or "demons") were confined (Luke 8:31) and where the spirits of dead humans were kept prior to their redemption or condemnation by Christ. *Abys*s is therefore synonymous with the Hebrew word *She·ōl*, the Greek word *Hā·des*, and the English phrase "the grave." Compare this location with what Jesus said in Matthew 12:40 regarding His presence in the "heart of the earth" during the time between His death and resurrection.

I think it is possible that such a place of confinement may exist at or near the earth's center in the spiritual dimension (i.e., within the unseen world where spirit beings such as angels and demons naturally exist) where it intersects with the super-dense, super-heated, highly-magnetic, molten metal core that exists there within our own physical world. That would certainly be a nasty place of confinement for beings that cannot die.

<sup>266</sup> Exodus 10:21ff.

<sup>267</sup> Matthew 27:45

<sup>268</sup> This may be another name for Satan, although I suspect it might instead be the name given to the most ruthless of these demonic "parolees."

<sup>269</sup> I believe this is an accurate, literal description of what these "alien" demonic beings will look like. Perhaps they have "mutated" during their long internment in the abyss.

<sup>270</sup> Some might ask, "Why would these demons, which have already rebelled against Yahweh once, adhere to these restrictions on their activities?" More than likely, violation of the parole stipulations would result in the offender being immediately returned to the abyss.



First of all, you need to understand that all the key events of Jesus' Atonement and His subsequent establishment of the New Covenant were prophetically preprogrammed into the first two of the three annual observances that every adult Israeli male was required to attend – Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles.<sup>271</sup> Not only that, but the key event actually took place on the day of the symbolic observation which foretold it.

- 10<sup>th</sup> Day of 1<sup>st</sup> Month
  - The Passover Lambs were selected.
  - Jesus entered Jerusalem as the final Passover Lamb.
- 14<sup>th</sup> Day of 1<sup>st</sup> Month (Passover)
  - The Passover Lambs were sacrificed.
  - Jesus was crucified as the final Passover Lamb.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Day of the Week after Passover Sabbath
  - The “First Fruits” offering from the ripening grain was presented to Yahweh.
  - Jesus was resurrected as the “First Fruits” from the dead.
- 50<sup>th</sup> Day after Passover Sabbath (Pentecost)
  - A special ceremony marked the official beginning for the grain harvest.
  - The Church was born.

I doubt any honest person would dare claim the timing of these events was coincidental. God obviously wanted the fulfillment to take place on the exact day of the symbol.

So, here's the deal. The only mandatory observance left to be fulfilled is Tabernacles, along with its closely associated dates, all of which are very intriguing prophetically. I won't mince words here. I fully expect each of these prophetic events to be fulfilled on the exact day of the Jewish observance which foreshadowed them.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Day of 7<sup>th</sup> Month (*Rōsh Ha Sha-nah*<sup>272</sup> = Jewish New Year)
  - A trumpet was sounded to mark the end of one year & the beginning of the next.
  - A trumpet will mark the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Jesus; the end of one life & the beginning of the next for all His resurrected saints.
- 10<sup>th</sup> Day of 7<sup>th</sup> Month (*Yōm Kip-pūr* = Day of Atonement)
  - The people had to repent of their sins & accept the sacrifice of their High Priest; otherwise, they had to die for their own sin.
  - The unrepentant people of Earth will die in the bloody war of *Har Ma-gēd-dōn* because they refused to accept the sacrificial death of the High Priest Jesus.
- 15<sup>th</sup> Day of 7<sup>th</sup> Month (Tabernacles)
  - The people celebrated their blessed life in the Promised Land, thankful they were no longer in the wilderness.
  - The resurrected saints will celebrate their blessed life in the new earth, thankful they are no longer in the fallen world of sin.

On the next few pages I've provided an example Jewish calendar that reflects how things might occur chronologically. Please understand that this is not a prophecy; I am simply projecting how things might occur based on how they've already occurred. I won't be upset if it happens differently, but I would be a bit surprised.

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<sup>271</sup> Exodus 23:14-17; Deuteronomy 16:1-17.

<sup>272</sup> Hebrew for “Head of the year.”

**YEAR ONE (383days long)**

**KEY EVENTS**

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Month (MAR/APR)</b>							<b>7<sup>th</sup> Month (SEP/OCT)</b>							
						1		1	2	3	4	5	6	
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30					
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Month (APR/MAY)</b>							<b>8<sup>th</sup> Month (OCT/NOV)</b>							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
29	30						26	27	28	29				
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Month (MAY/JUN)</b>							<b>9<sup>th</sup> Month (NOV/DEC)</b>							
		1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29			
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Month (JUN/JUL)</b>							<b>10<sup>th</sup> Month (DEC/JAN)</b>							
				1	2	3						1	2	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
25	26	27	28	29			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Month (JUL/AUG)</b>							<b>11<sup>th</sup> Month (JAN/FEB)</b>							
					1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29							
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Month (AUG/SEP)</b>							<b>12<sup>th</sup> Month (FEB/MAR)</b>							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		1	2	3	4	5	6	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
29							28	29	30					
<b>13<sup>th</sup> Month (MAR/APR)</b>														
				1	2	3	4							
5	6	7	8	9	10	11								
12	13	14	15	16	17	18								
19	20	21	22	23	24	25								
26	27	28	29											

**1\*1 in Year One**

- “Angel Fall” occurs
- The “Two Witnesses” begin their ministry.
- The “Final Beast Leader” begins his rise to power.

**Starting early in Year One**

- The Final Beast Leader brings order out of chaos.
- One-fourth (¼) of the world’s population dies during this process.

**YEAR TWO (355 days long)**

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Month (APR/MAY)</b>							<b>7<sup>th</sup> Month (OCT/NOV)</b>						
				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
25	26	27	28	29	30		29	30					
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Month (MAY/JUN)</b>							<b>8<sup>th</sup> Month (NOV/DEC)</b>						
						1			1	2	3	4	5
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29				
30													
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Month (JUN/JUL)</b>							<b>9<sup>th</sup> Month (DEC/JAN)</b>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6				1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
28	29						26	27	28	29			
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Month (JUL/AUG)</b>							<b>10<sup>th</sup> Month (JAN)</b>						
		1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Month (AUG/SEP)</b>							<b>11<sup>th</sup> Month (FEB/MAR)</b>						
				1	2	3							1
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29			23	24	25	26	27	28	29
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Month (SEP/OCT)</b>							<b>12<sup>th</sup> Month (MAR)</b>						
					1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30					

**KEY EVENTS**

- Probably during Year Two*
- The “Two Witnesses” will continue their ministry.
  - The 144,000 will be testifying about Jesus as their Messiah.
  - One by one the 144,000 will die for their testimony about Jesus, becoming “First Fruit” martyrs.

**YEAR THREE (355 days long)**

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Month (MAR/APR)</b>							<b>7<sup>th</sup> Month (SEP/OCT)</b>						
		1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29					25	26	27	28	29	30	
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Month (APR/MAY)</b>							<b>8<sup>th</sup> Month (OCT/NOV)</b>						
			1	2	3	4							1
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
26	27	28	29	30			23	24	25	26	27	28	29
							30						
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Month (MAY/JUN)</b>							<b>9<sup>th</sup> Month (NOV/DEC)</b>						
					1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
24	25	26	27	28	29		28	29					
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Month (JUN/JUL)</b>							<b>10<sup>th</sup> Month (DEC/JAN)</b>						
						1			1	2	3	4	5
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30			
30													
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Month (JUL/AUG)</b>							<b>11<sup>th</sup> Month (JAN/FEB)</b>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
28	29	30					25	26	27	28	29		
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Month (AUG/SEP)</b>							<b>12<sup>th</sup> Month (FEB/MAR)</b>						
			1	2	3	4						1	2
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29				24	25	26	27	28	29	

**KEY EVENTS**

*Probably toward the close of Year Three*

- The final member of the 144,000 will be martyred.
- God’s angels will warn the people of the world not to accept the upcoming “Mark.”
- The “False Prophet” will initiate his “Image/Mark” system.
- Saints who refuse the “Mark” will be killed, becoming the “harvest” of the “Son of Man.”.

## YEAR FOUR

### 1<sup>st</sup> Month (MAR/APR)

						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Month (APR/MAY)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Month (MAY/JUN)

		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29				

### 4<sup>th</sup> Month (JUN/JUL)

			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

### 5<sup>th</sup> Month (JUL/AUG)

					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	

### 6<sup>th</sup> Month (AUG/SEP)

						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

### 7<sup>th</sup> Month (SEP/OCT)

	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29					

Year One	=
383	
Year Two	=
355	
Year Three	=
355	
½ Year Four	=
177	
<hr style="border-top: 3px double #000;"/>	
Total Days	
1,270	

## KEY EVENTS

### *Perhaps first half of Year Four*

- The Sixth Seal will be broken & “Babylon the Great” will fall.
- The Seventh Seal will be broken & the “Trumpets”/“Bowls” of Wrath will begin. (The “Fifth Trumpet” must last no longer than five months.)

### *6\*19 in Year Four*

- This will be Day 1,260 since “Angel Fall”.

### *6\*20 in Year Four*

- The Two Witnesses will be killed by the Final Beast Leader.

### *6\*23 (or 24) in Year Four*

- Three and a half days after being killed, the Two Witnesses will be resurrected and ascend into heaven.
- Earthquake will split Mt. Olivet.
- Saints still alive in Jerusalem will escape via the new valley.
- The Final Beast Leader will begin assembling his army.

### *7\*1 in Year Four*

- *Rosh Hashanah* will be fulfilled by the “Last Trumpet.”
- The Resurrection & Rapture of the Saints will occur.

### *7\*10 in Year Four*

- *Yom Kippur* will be fulfilled by the Battle at *Har Mageddon*.

### *7\*15-22 in Year Four*

Feast of Tabernacles will be fulfilled by the start of the Millennial Kingdom.

**BOOK OF REVELATION: TRUMPET/BOWL PARALLELS**  
**The Sixth Trumpet/Bowl of Yahweh's Wrath**

<sup>9:13</sup> **The sixth** angel trumpeted, and I heard one of the horns of the golden altar before God <sup>9:14</sup> saying to the sixth angel having the trumpet, "Release the four angels who have been bound **upon the great river Euphrates.**"

<sup>9:15</sup> The four angels – who had **been prepared** for the hour, the day, the month, and the year – were released so they could kill a third of men.

<sup>16:12</sup> **The sixth** poured out his bowl **upon the great river Euphrates,** and its water dried up so that the way of the kings of the east might **be prepared.**

**Excerpt from ISAIAH 11**

<sup>11:15b</sup> He will wave his hand over **the river** with his mighty wind and beat it into seven streams so that one crossed it in sandals.

<sup>9:16</sup> The number of cavalry units was two hundred million. I heard their number.

<sup>9:17</sup> This is how I saw the horses in my vision, including those sitting upon them: they had *fire-red*, *hyacinth-blue*, and *brimstone-yellow* breastplates; the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and from their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone.

<sup>9:18</sup> A third of men were killed by these three blows - by the fire, the smoke, and the brimstone coming out of their mouths, <sup>9:19</sup> for the authority of the horses was in their mouths and in their tails, since their tails were like serpents having heads by which they did harm.

<sup>9:20</sup> The rest of men – those not killed in these blows – did not repent of the actions of their hands, that they might not worship demons and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood which can't see, hear, or walk.

<sup>9:21</sup> They did not repent of their murders, their sorceries, their *acts of sexual immorality*, or their thefts.

<sup>10:1</sup> I saw another strong angel coming down from heaven, having been wrapped in a cloud. The rainbow was upon his head, his face was like the sun, his feet like pillars of fire, <sup>10:2</sup> and he had in his hand a little scroll that had been opened. He placed his right foot upon the sea and the left upon the land, <sup>10:3</sup> and cried out in a loud voice, as if a lion roared. When he cried out, the seven thunders spoke.

<sup>10:4</sup> When the seven thunders spoke, I was about to write when I heard a voice from heaven say, "Seal up what the seven thunders said, and do not write them."<sup>273</sup>

<sup>10:5</sup> The angel whom I saw standing upon the sea and upon the land raised his right hand into the sky, <sup>10:6</sup> and swore by the One who lives into the ages of ages – the One who created the sky and the things in it, the land and the things in it, and the sea and the things in it – that there would be no more time *given*.<sup>274</sup>

<sup>10:7</sup> Instead, in the days of the sound of the seventh angel, when he is about to trumpet, the secret of God was completed as it was proclaimed by His servants the prophets.

<sup>10:8</sup> The voice that I heard from heaven spoke to me again and said, "Go take the little opened scroll in the hand of the angel that is standing upon the sea and upon the land."

<sup>10:9</sup> I went to the angel, saying to him, "Give me the little scroll."

He said to me, "Take and eat it. It will be bitter in you stomach, but in your mouth it will be sweet like honey."<sup>10:10</sup> I took the little scroll out of the angel's hand and ate it. In my mouth it was sweet like honey, and when I ate it, it made my stomach bitter.

<sup>10:11</sup> They were saying to me, "You must again prophesy over peoples, nations, languages, and many kings."

<sup>273</sup> We know nothing about the seven thunders, so there's no reason to comment on them at all.

<sup>274</sup> I'm afraid the memorable line "*When the trumpet of the Lord shall sound and time shall be no more,*" which begins the marvelous 1894 hymn, When The Role Is Called Up Yonder, has led to a very widely held misunderstanding of this phrase. The angel is not saying that chronological reckoning will come to an end, but rather, that Yahweh's gracious patience (2 Peter 3:9) has finally come to an end.

Yahweh's sixth judgment will be directed "upon the great river Euphrates."

According to the information revealed in the "Trumpet" vision, there will be four angels "having been bound" at the Euphrates. While I'm not certain as to whether these are rebel angels who have been "secured" as criminals<sup>275</sup> or loyal angels who have been "restricted" in their activity,<sup>276</sup> I tend to lean more toward them being the loyal executioners of Yahweh.

Regardless, I am absolutely positive that these angels will be the leaders of the 200 million cavalry unit army which John described. Furthermore, I am convinced that they are the "kings of the East" mentioned in the "Bowl" vision, based on the following:

- The "Trumpets" & "Bowls" are obviously parallel visions.
- The Euphrates River is prominent in both visions.
- The Euphrates River is located in "The East."<sup>277</sup>
- The word "king" is a synonym for the word "ruler," and we know that angels have been described in such terms.<sup>278</sup>
- The "Trumpet"/"Bowl" event will permit these "angels"/"kings" to take action.

John's detailed description of these units also indicates that they are supernatural, not natural in form, and that their military commanders are angelic, not human. Finally, their task is very specific – the swift<sup>279</sup> and systematic execution of a third of humanity still living<sup>280</sup> and following the final beast leader despite repeated, crystal-clear warnings from Yahweh not to do so.

Following these executions, another angel will announce that time is up; that the long-term plan of Yahweh to effectively deal with the angelic/human rebellion against His rule that began in Eden (i.e., the gospel<sup>281</sup>) was about to come to its climax. It was this "bitter-sweet" gospel message that the Apostle John was to ingest<sup>282</sup> and pass on to the people of his time. This is the same gospel that we ought to be sharing with the people of our time.

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<sup>275</sup> As Satan will be in Revelation 20:1-3.

<sup>276</sup> Such as the four angels of God mentioned in Revelation 7:1-3. (Perhaps they are these four angels.)

<sup>277</sup> I know that it is fairly common for "prophecy experts" to associate these 200 million cavalry units with a Chinese-led invasion of the Middle East, but that simply doesn't make sense. "The East" is the normal Bible term for the Mesopotamian region, not the Orient.

<sup>278</sup> Daniel 10:13 and Ephesians 6:12.

<sup>279</sup> Their work will be accomplished during a divinely appointed hour, day, month and year.

<sup>280</sup> This means that in less than three and a half years, half of the world's population will have died – a fourth of the original population will die under the rise and rule of the final beast leader, with a third of those remaining (a fourth of the original population) perishing on this day.

<sup>281</sup> So well defined by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:1ff.

<sup>282</sup> This sounds very much like what happened with Ezekiel (Ezekiel 2:8-3:11).

**BOOK OF REVELATION: TRUMPET/BOWL PARALLELS**  
**The Death, Resurrection & Ascension of the Two Witnesses**

<sup>11:7</sup> When they [the two witnesses] finished their testimony, the beast rising out of the *abyss* did battle with them, overcame them, and killed them. <sup>11:8</sup> Their corpses *were* upon the street of the great city that is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where also their master was crucified.

<sup>11:9</sup> The corpses were seen by peoples, tribes, languages, and nations for three and a half days. Their corpses were not allowed to be placed in a tomb, <sup>11:10</sup> and those living on the earth celebrated over them, were merry, and gave gifts to one another, since these two prophets had tortured those living on the earth.

<sup>11:11</sup> After three and a half days the spirit of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet. Great fear fell on those who were watching them. <sup>11:12</sup> They heard a great voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here.” They ascended into heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched them.

<sup>11:13</sup> In that hour a great earthquake occurred and a tenth of the city fell. Seven thousand men were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

<sup>11:14</sup> The second “Alas!” has gone. Behold, the third “Alas!” comes quickly.

**Excerpt from ZECHARIAH**

<sup>14:4b</sup> The Mount of Olives will be split by a huge chasm, from the east to the west; half of the mountain will slope toward the north and half of it will slope toward the south.

**REVELATION**

<sup>16:13</sup> I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *come* out of the mouth of the dragon, the mouth of the beast, and the mouth of the false prophet, <sup>16:14</sup> for these are the demonic spirits that perform signs which go out upon the kings of the entire inhabited earth to gather them together to the battle of the great day of God *Tsabaoth*.

<sup>16:15</sup> (Behold, I come like a thief. How blessed is the one who is watching and keeps his clothing, so that he might not walk naked and his shame be seen.)

**Excerpt from ZECHARIAH**

<sup>12:10b</sup> They will look to me whom they pierced

and they **will mourn** for him as one mourns for the only son and weep for him as one weeps for the firstborn.

**Excerpt from ZECHARIAH**

<sup>12:11</sup> In that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning at the pomegranate orchard in the plain of **cutting**.

**Excerpt from ZECHARIAH**

<sup>14:2a</sup> I will **gather** all the nations to Jerusalem for war...

**Excerpt from ZECHARIAH**

<sup>14:5a</sup> You will escape *via* the valley of My mountain (for the valley of the mountains will extend to Azel); you will escape just as you escaped in the face of the earthquake during the days of Uzziah, King of Judah...

**Excerpt from MATTHEW**

<sup>24:30a</sup> Then the sign of the Son of Man shall be made to appear in heaven.

Then all the tribes of the earth **will mourn**.

**REVELATION**

<sup>16:16</sup> He **gathered** them together into the place called in Hebrew

*Har Ma-gēd-dōn* [Mount **Cutting**].



As you can tell from the sample calendar provided earlier, the 1,260 days set aside for the work of the two witnesses is just 10 days short of three and a half years.<sup>283</sup> Yahweh's two prophets will be killed at Jerusalem<sup>284</sup> after they finish their work. Their deaths will set off worldwide celebration among the peoples of the world, since these two godly men will be seen as the cause for all the mayhem of the recent past. Like infamous criminals their bodies will be displayed for all to see; more than likely broadcast on live television. It will appear as if the dragon, his human agents and followers had won.

Then, three and a half days later, they will suddenly be resurrected and will ascend into heaven. Their ascension will be associated with an earthquake that will destroy a tenth of Jerusalem and kill an estimated 7,000 persons in the affected area.

I have come to believe that this earthquake will also result in the splitting of Mt. Olivet and the formation of a brand-new valley leading to the Dead Sea region, as described by the prophet Zechariah.<sup>285</sup> The few remaining saints in Jerusalem will escape down this valley toward the east. Presumably they will then head south toward the vicinity of the ancient city of Bozrah, located approximately 25 miles SE of the Dead Sea in the modern Kingdom of Jordan. We'll come back to this information later.

Meanwhile, at the demonic instigation of the dragon and his human minions, the armies of the world will begin gathering to Jerusalem in order to repel the imminent invasion of Jesus. They will assemble in the valley formed by the splitting (or "cutting") of Mount Olivet – now called "Mount Cutting" or "Mount Gash." This is the true location of "Armageddon" and not near the city of Megiddo some 56 miles north of Jerusalem.<sup>286</sup>

Everything will then be in place for the sounding of the seventh and final "Trumpet" and the pouring out of its attendant "Bowl." This will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Jesus Christ.

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<sup>283</sup> The ancient Jewish calendar used twelve 29 or 30 day lunar months, resulting in a 354 or 355 day short year. Every few years, in order to keep these months falling within their proper seasonal boundaries as reckoned by the solar year, an extra month was added, resulting in a 384 or 385 day long year. Therefore, any three and a half year period will be around 1,270 days in length. (By way of comparison, 3.5 years of 365.25 days adds up to 1278 days.)

<sup>284</sup> Jeremiah 23:14 specifically likens Jerusalem to Sodom.

<sup>285</sup> Eventually the east flowing branch of the "River of Life" will run through this valley, bringing life to that region (Zechariah 14:8; Ezekiel 47:1-12; Joel 3:18; cf. Revelation 22:1-2).

<sup>286</sup> I stumbled across this information when I was doing some translation work in Zechariah 12. I noticed that the Hebrew scholars who translated this passage into Greek during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century BC didn't use the proper noun "Megiddo" in verse 11 like our English versions do. Instead, they actually translated the Hebrew with a Greek participle meaning "of being cut out". When I started looking more closely at the Hebrew, I discovered that the word in question actually had a different ending than that which was used every other time the city of Megiddo appears in the text, which would certainly explain why the Septuagint translators chose not to treat it as if it were a reference to the city – it wasn't. In Revelation 16:16, John used a Greek transliteration of this same Hebrew word, simply prefixing it with the Hebrew word for mountain - *Har Ma-gēd-dōn*. By using the Septuagint's translation of the Hebrew word, and keeping in mind it was John's inspired designation for a specific site, I came up with the name "Mount Cutting" or "Mount Gash."

**BOOK OF REVELATION: TRUMPET/BOWL PARALLELS**  
**The Seventh Trumpet and Bowl = 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Jesus**

<p><b>MATTHEW</b> 24:30c They shall see</p> <p>the <b>Son of Man coming</b> upon the <b>clouds of heaven</b> with power and much glory.</p>	<p><b>DANIEL</b> 7:13b <b>and behold,</b></p> <p>there was <b>coming</b> with the <b>clouds of heaven, one</b> like a <b>son of man.</b></p>	<p><b>ZECHARIAH</b> 14:5c Yahweh my God will <b>come</b>, and all his saints with him.</p>	<p><b>REVELATION</b> 19:11a I saw heaven opened, <b>and behold,</b> a white horse and sitting upon it</p> <p><b>one</b></p>	<p><b>1 THESS.</b> 4:16a The Lord himself will come down with a shout;</p>
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**REVELATION**

19:11b called Trustworthy & True. In righteousness he judges and wars. 19:12 His eyes were like flames of fire and upon his head *were* many diadems, with a name written upon *them* which no one knew but himself.

**Excerpt from ISAIAH**

63:1 Who is this coming from Edom; from Bozrah with red **garments**; this One clothed gloriously with great strength? "I am the One declaring righteousness and judgments of salvation.

63:2 "Why are your garments red?"

63:3 "I am treading the wine vat alone. There is not a man from the nations with me. I trod them in my fury, and trampled them in wrath. Their **blood** spattered on my clothes, and all my garments were defiled. 63:4 For the day of vengeance is in my heart and the year of my redemption has arrived.

**1 THESSALONIANS**

4:14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, *we* also *believe* that God will bring those who have fallen asleep in Jesus with him.

**REVELATION**

19:13a He was wrapped in a **garment**

dipped in **blood.**

His name had been called the Word of God.  
19:14 The armies in heaven were following him upon white horses, having been clothed in clean white linen.

<p><b>REV.</b> 11:15a <b>The seventh angel</b> trumpeted,</p>	<p><b>MATT.</b> 24:31a He will send his <b>angels</b> with a great <b>trumpet,</b></p>	<p><b>1 COR.</b> 15:52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, <b>with the last trumpet,</b> for the <b>trumpet</b> will sound,</p>	<p><b>1 THESS.</b> 4:16b with <i>the</i> voice of the <b>archangel;</b> <b>With the trumpet</b> of God,</p>	<p><b>REV.</b> 16:17a <b>The seventh</b> poured out his bowl upon the air,</p>
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**1 CORINTHIANS**

15:52c **and the dead will be raised** incorruptible, and we will be transformed, 15:53 for this corruptible must put on incorruptibility and this mortality must put on immortality.

**MATTHEW**

24:31b and they will gather together his chosen ones from one extremity of the heavens unto the other of them.

**1 THESSALONIANS**

4:16b **and the dead** in Christ **will rise** first, 4:17 thereafter, we who are still living

will simultaneously be caught up with them into clouds in a meeting with the Lord in the atmosphere.

## REVELATION

<sup>11:15b</sup> and there were **great voices** in heaven **saying**, “The kingdom of the world has become *the kingdom* of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign into the ages of ages.”

<sup>11:16</sup> The twenty-four elders sitting before God on their thrones fell down upon their faces and worshiped God, <sup>11:17</sup> saying, “We thank you, Yahweh Tsabaoth, Who is and was, because you have taken your great power and ruled. <sup>11:18</sup> The nations were made angry, and the time for your wrath has arrived; *the time* for the dead to be judged, *the time* to give wages to your servants – the prophets, the saints, and those who revere you name, both small and great, and *the time* to defile those who have defiled the earth.”

<sup>11:19a</sup> The Sanctuary of God in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen in his Sanctuary,

<sup>11:19b</sup> and **there occurred flashes of lightning, noises, thunders, an earthquake,**

and **great hail.**

## REVELATION

<sup>16:17b</sup> and there came a **great voice** from the Sanctuary, *that is*, from the throne, **saying**, “It has happened.”

<sup>16:18</sup> **There occurred flashes of lightning, noises, thunders**; and there was a great **earthquake**, it was so great an earthquake, that such has not occurred since man came to be upon the earth. <sup>16:19</sup> The great city fell into three parts and the cities of the nations fell. Babylon the Great was remembered in God’s presence, to give her the cup of the wine of his wrath. <sup>16:20</sup> Every island fled and mountains could not be found.

<sup>16:21</sup> **Great hail**, about a *talentos* [a weight somewhere between 50 and 100 pounds] *each*, fell from heaven upon men. Men blasphemed God from the blow of hail, because the blow of hit was so very great.

<sup>19:6</sup> I heard *something* like the sound of a great crowd and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of strong thunder saying, “Hallelu Yah! Yahweh Tsabaoth ruled. <sup>19:7</sup> Let us rejoice; let us celebrate; and let us give Him glory, because the wedding of the Lamb has arrived and His bride has prepared herself. <sup>19:8</sup> She was given *the ability* to clothe herself in white, clean linen, for the linen is the righteous activities of the Saints.

<sup>19:9</sup> He said to me, “Write, ‘Blessed are those who have been called to the wedding dinner of the Lamb.’” He also said to me, “These are the true words of God.

<sup>19:10</sup> I fell before his face and worshipped him. He said to me, “See you don’t *do that!* I am a fellow slave with you and your siblings that have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God, for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

<sup>19:15</sup> A sharp sword came from his mouth so that by it he might strike down the nations. He treads the wine vat of God Tsabaoth’s furious wrath. <sup>19:16</sup> He has upon his garment, *that is* upon his thigh, a name written, “King of kings” and Lord of lords.”

<sup>19:17</sup> I saw one angel standing in the sun, shouting in a loud voice, saying to all the birds flying in the midst of the heavens, “Come, gather together for the great dinner of God, <sup>19:18</sup> so that you may eat the flesh of kings, commanders, mighty men, horses, and those sitting upon them; the flesh of everyone, free, slave, small, and great.” <sup>19:19</sup> I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, their armies having been gathered together to make war with the one sitting upon the horse and with his army.

When the “Seventh Trumpet” sounds and the “Seventh Bowl” is poured out, Jesus will arrive as the victorious King of kings and Lord of lords. In keeping with the symbolism of the ancient Israeli calendar previously discussed, I personally believe that He will come on the first day of the seventh Jewish month – a date sometimes called the Feast of Trumpets.

In the prophecy of Isaiah, He is pictured as “coming from Edom; from Bozrah,” covered in the blood of His enemies. This makes me suspect that Jesus will re-enter our world in the sky above that vicinity; either rescuing the remnant of believers who escaped from Jerusalem a few days earlier, or possibly avenging their recent massacre by the peoples of that region.

Interestingly enough, Edom is specifically cited as the object of Yahweh’s extreme wrath in Isaiah 34, where Yahweh’s “day of vengeance” is also mentioned. In that passage Edom is described as being turned into a place of eternal burning and desolation as “payback” for actions taken against Zion.

The seventh trumpet is also called the “last trumpet.” By it He will dispatch His angels to gather believers to Himself. First, the bodies of the righteous dead will be resurrected and their spirits, which returned with Jesus, will be placed inside.<sup>287</sup> At that same time, the bodies of the righteous living will be transformed instantaneously. Afterward, all these “Immortals” will be caught up to meet Jesus “in the air” above the Middle East.

With the terminal wrath of God coming to a close, the heavenly Sanctuary will be opened once again. Inside will be the Ark of the Covenant – the earthly throne of Yahweh.<sup>288</sup>

Meanwhile, on Earth, there will be absolute chaos. The people will be terrified by the sudden appearance of Jesus in the sky, amidst great sights and sounds similar to those that occurred when Yahweh descended upon Mt. Sinai. The resurrection and transformation of millions upon millions of saints around the globe and their subsequent flight *en masse* to the Middle East will certainly unnerve the assembling armies at *Har Ma·gēd·dōn*.

All these things will be attended by an unprecedented global earthquake and hailstorm that will destroy cities all over the world. At this time, whatever remains of mystery Babylon after it had been burned earlier by the leaders of the final beast government will be split into three parts.

Earth will be getting its long-anticipated<sup>289</sup> makeover.

The Day of Yahweh will come like a thief. During [that day] the sky will disappear with a whistling sound, the basic elements will disassemble<sup>290</sup> amidst intense heat, and Earth and the things accomplished in her will be found out. Since all these things will be released in this way, what sort of *people* ought you be in holy behavior and piety, anticipating and urging on the arrival of the Day of God by which the blazing heavens will be loosed and the basic elements will dissolve amidst intense heat? But we are anticipating new heavens and a new earth according to his promise; one in which righteousness dwells.<sup>291</sup>

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<sup>287</sup> Perhaps Ezekiel 37 describes this resurrection of the righteous.

<sup>288</sup> Regardless of unsubstantiated stories to the contrary, the Ark hasn’t been seen since around 620 BC. It simply vanished. Is it possible that the reason it disappeared shortly before the 1<sup>st</sup> Temple was destroyed was so that it could be kept on reserve in the heavenly Sanctuary until Jesus could use it as His Millennial throne?

<sup>289</sup> Romans 8:19.

<sup>290</sup> The Greek word so often translated into English as “destroy” literally means “loose” or “release.”

<sup>291</sup> 2 Peter 3:10-12.

It appears that Earth and its atmosphere will be renewed on a subatomic level. Whatever entropic “code” Yahweh “programmed” into its elemental structure as “The Curse” upon Creation for the sin of Adam and Eve will be removed.<sup>292</sup> The elements will disassemble and reassemble with a sudden burst of energy, expressed as heat. More than likely, this will take place so fast and so smoothly that it will appear instantaneous; even as the transformation of the mortal bodies of the living saints will take place in the “twinkling of an eye.”

Major geological changes will happen in the Middle East around this time.

Zechariah wrote that when Yahweh becomes King of the whole earth, “living waters” will flow out of Jerusalem, splitting into two branches - one into the eastern (Dead) sea and one into the western (Mediterranean) sea; flowing all year round.<sup>293</sup>

In a vision of the glorious Temple that should have been built after the Israelis returned from Babylonian captivity (but wasn’t),<sup>294</sup> Ezekiel saw a river flowing from the vicinity of the Sanctuary on Mt. Zion. Lining its banks will be various fruit trees, producing a crop of fruit each month and continually putting out leaves which have healing qualities.<sup>295</sup>

I fully expect to see this river of life begin flowing around the time of 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming. It will originate beneath the area on Mt. Zion where Jesus’ throne will sit, flowing directly eastward (apparently through the new *Har Ma-gēd-dōn* valley) into the valley where the Dead Sea is currently located, giving life to that body of water.

In order for the Dead Sea to become (and remain) fresh, it will need an outlet southward into the Gulf of Aqaba arm of the Red Sea. This will necessitate the entire Jordan Valley being raised as much as 1,400 feet. In my opinion, this will be the reversal of what happened when it was “overturned” during the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Prior to that catastrophic event, it was described as being like the Nile Delta, or the Garden of Eden, with absolutely no mention of the Dead Sea.<sup>296</sup>

If, as I have proposed, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming ends up fulfilling the remaining observances of ancient Israeli calendar, then there will be a total of ten days between the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Jesus on 7\*1, and the final bloody battle at Jerusalem on 7\*10. I imagine that the resurrected saints will pass the time in a celebration<sup>297</sup> referred to as the “Wedding Dinner of the Lamb.”<sup>298</sup>

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<sup>292</sup> Genesis 3:17-19 and Romans 8:18-25.

<sup>293</sup> Zechariah 14:8-11.

<sup>294</sup> During the reconstruction of the Temple, after the Israel’s return from Babylonian Captivity, the prophet Haggai said that the Second Temple seemed like “nothing” when compared to the First Temple (Haggai 2:3). 500 years later, when Herod the Great laid out his plans for renovating the Second Temple, he gave as one of his reasons the fact that the reconstruction was considerably inferior to the First Temple (*Antiquities* 15.11.1).

If the detailed plans given in Ezekiel 40-48 had been followed to the letter, this would not have been the case. Yahweh’s glorious presence would have filled the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple after the Israelis returned from Babylon and reestablished the theocracy (43:1-5) and the chronology of events culminating in the coming of Messiah, His Atonement for sin and the subsequent presentation of the gospel to the Gentiles of the world would have been considerably different.

<sup>295</sup> John described a very similar scene in New Jerusalem (Revelation 22:1-2).

<sup>296</sup> Genesis 13:10; 19:29. We’ll catalog more of these changes when we come to the Millennium.

<sup>297</sup> I think that Isaiah 25:6-9 has a very interesting description of this celebration.

<sup>298</sup> In a sardonic twist of scene, the scavenger birds will be invited by an angel of God to a feast of their own; a feast of corpses to be served when the Battle of *Har Ma-gēd-dōn* takes place.

**BOOK OF REVELATION: THE 2<sup>nd</sup> COMING OF JESUS**  
**The Battle of *Har Ma·gēd·dōn***

**ZECHARIAH**

<sup>14:4</sup> His feet will stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is opposite Jerusalem on the east.

**REVELATION**

<sup>19:14</sup> The armies in heaven were following him upon white horses, having been clothed in clean white linen.

**2 THESSALONIANS**

<sup>2:8b</sup> Yahweh will destroy him by the breath of his mouth and put an end to him by the appearance of his arrival.

**DANIEL**

<sup>7:11b</sup> [As I was watching]  
**the beast was killed**

and its body given  
**into the burning fire.**

**REVELATION**

<sup>19:20</sup> **The beast was** apprehended, and with him the false prophet who had performed the signs before his presence, *the signs* by which he had deceived those taking the mark of the beast and worshipping his mage. The two were thrown alive **into the lake of fire burning** with brimstone.

<sup>19:21</sup> The rest were killed by the sword that came from the mouth of him sitting upon the horse, and all the birds were satiated with their flesh.

<sup>20:1</sup> I saw an angel, coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and a great chain in his hand.

<sup>20:2</sup> He overpowered the dragon – the ancient serpent who is Diabolos and Satan – and bound him for one thousand years. <sup>20:3</sup> He threw him into the Abyss, shut it, and sealed it over him, in order that he might not deceive the nations until the thousand years were completed. After these things, it will be for him to be released for a short time.

We know that Jesus and His army of immortal saints will “touch down” in the area formerly called Mount Olivet. The assembled armies of the final beast government will be wiped out by Jesus in the “Valley where Yahweh Judges.”<sup>299</sup> Zechariah 14:12-14 describes how the soft tissue of these soldiers will begin to liquefy. Blind and mute, they’ll panic and begin attacking one another.<sup>300</sup> Scavenger birds will begin feasting on the bodies strewn upon the ground. After Yahweh’s victory the battlefield will be littered with stinking corpses.<sup>301</sup> These remains will be gathered into an open, mass grave not far from Jerusalem (in Edom?<sup>302</sup>), where maggots will continually consume and fire will constantly burn.<sup>303</sup> This location will serve as a vivid reminder to the remaining mortals (who have to regularly visit Jerusalem in order to pay tribute) of the fate awaiting anyone who opposes the King of kings and Lord of lords.<sup>304</sup> Jesus will consign the final beast leader and his false prophet to this Lake of Fire.

<sup>299</sup> Joel 3. The name “Jehoshaphat,” which appears in many versions is not a reference to the king of that name, but rather to the literal meaning of that name: *ye-hō-sha-fat* “Yah judges.”

<sup>300</sup> Zechariah 14:12-13. This reminds me of how Yahweh gave victory to the Judean people in the days of Jehoshaphat, when they needed only stand by and offer praise while God caused the invaders to attack one another (2 Chronicles 20:22-25).

<sup>301</sup> Isaiah 34:1-3.

<sup>302</sup> Isaiah 34 and Ezekiel 35. Will “Hell” be located in Edom?

<sup>303</sup> Isaiah 66:24; Mark 9:42-48.

<sup>304</sup> Isaiah 66:23-24.

Afterwards, according to Isaiah 11:11-16, the army of the immortal saints gathered by Jesus when He comes, will spread out into the ancient Promised Land, taking over the territory once held by ancient Assyria (modern Iraq) to that once held by ancient Egypt (including modern Sudan). [After the first celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles in the new earth, I expect this “Holy Zone” will be parceled out by King Jesus to His holy saints in appropriate allotments, fulfilling His prophecy “the meek...will inherit the earth.”<sup>305</sup>]

Meanwhile, an angelic soldier will track down and capture Satan. Presumably, other angel soldiers will be doing the same with the rest of the rebel angels. Satan (and his angels) will then be bound and thrown into the *Abyss*, which will then be resealed.<sup>306</sup> This marks the beginning of the period generally called the Millennium.

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<sup>305</sup> Matthew 6:5.

<sup>306</sup> Remember that it was unsealed during the fifth wrath event.

**BOOK OF REVELATION: THE MILLENNIUM**  
**The Administration of the Surviving Mortals**

**DANIEL**

<sup>7:12</sup> *As for* the rest of the beasts, their rule was transferred, and an extension of life was given to them until the appropriate time.

**PSALM**

<sup>2:9</sup> He will shepherd them with an iron rod,

**DANIEL**

<sup>7:9</sup> I was watching until **thrones** were set up. The Ancient of Days was sitting. His clothing was snow white and the hair of his head like processed wool. His throne was a blaze of fire and its wheels were blazing with fire.  
<sup>7:10</sup> A river of fire was being drawn out before him. Thousands of thousands were serving him, and ten thousands of ten thousands were standing before him. A court **sat** and books were opened.

**MATTHEW**

<sup>8:10</sup> I tell you, many **will come from the east and west** and will be reclined with **Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom** of the heavens, <sup>8:11</sup> while the sons of the kingdom will be **thrown out** into outer darkness.

**in that place there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.**

**EZEKIEL**

<sup>34:23</sup> I will set over them **one shepherd** and he will shepherd them – **my servant David; he will be their shepherd.**

**EZEKIEL**

**REVELATION**

<sup>19:15b</sup> He will shepherd them with an iron rod.

**MATTHEW**

<sup>19:28b</sup> In the restoration, whenever the Son of Man sits upon the throne of his glory, you who have been following me

**will yourselves sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**

**LUKE**

<sup>22:28</sup> You are those who have remained with me during my tests, <sup>22:29</sup> even as my Father appointed me a kingdom, I am appointing you <sup>22:30</sup> to eat and drink with me at my table in the kingdom.

**You will also sit upon twelve thrones judging the tribes of Israel.**

**LUKE**

<sup>13:28</sup> **In that place there will be weeping and grinding of teeth,**

whenever you see **Abraham, Isaac, Jacob,** and all the prophets **in the kingdom,** but with you being **thrown outside.**

<sup>13:29</sup> They **will come from the east, west, north, and south,** and will be reclined in the kingdom of God.

<sup>37:24</sup> **My servant David** will rule in their midst, and **he will be one shepherd** for all.



There will apparently be some sort of hierarchical structure during the Millennium.

Obviously Jesus will be the “High King” of the eternal kingdom. Those martyred on His behalf will have a special place in His kingdom. As promised by Jesus, the twelve apostles will sit upon twelve thrones exercising some sort of administrative leadership over resurrected Israelis. They would therefore be half of the twenty-four enthroned elders we saw throughout John’s visions. Perhaps Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are three of the remaining twelve, since Jesus connects them prominently to the eternal kingdom. While it’s possible that the mention of David as the shepherd of Israel may be symbolic of Jesus, the “Son of David” and the “Shepherd of Israel,” I see no reason to rule out the possibility that the resurrected King David may be literally intended, as Jesus’ chief administrator of the resurrected Israelis.

As for those of Gentile extraction among the resurrected righteous, I’m of the conviction that we Gentile believers will have place within the resurrected Israeli nation.<sup>307</sup> After all, Jesus did say that many from outside ethnic Israel would be welcomed at the table of the covenant while many ethnic Israelis will be exiled for their disbelief.<sup>308</sup>

But why would the structure of government, which God formulated to keep chaos under control,<sup>309</sup> be needed in Paradise? The answer to that question brings us to the very puzzling impression that not every aspect of the old creation will pass away at the time of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming. Some parts of the final beast government will be granted an “extension of life” that runs parallel to the millennial kingdom.

Zechariah informs us that the mortal survivors of the final beast kingdom will be required to present themselves before Yahweh Tsabaoth each year during the Feast of Tabernacles. If they do not do so, God will withhold rain from their region of the world as punishment for their disobedience.<sup>310</sup> These are the nations which Jesus will shepherd with a rod of iron and over which the resurrected saints of the millennial government will reign.

Here are some possibilities:

- We know that at least 50 % of the original population will die during the final three and a half years. More will die at The Battle of *Har Ma-gēd-dōn*. At any given moment, about 30 % of the world population is under 15 years of age. Perhaps the “Millennial Mortals” will be young people whom God gives the opportunity to grow up in a perfect world under the perfect reign of Jesus.<sup>311</sup>
- It is possible that many non-Christians living on Earth during the final three and a half years will refuse to worship the final beast leader for reasons of their own. Yet, they may not appreciate Jesus’ reign either. Perhaps the “Millennial Mortals” will be people whose sinful, self-centered independence needs to be highlighted.
- Perhaps the “Millennial Mortals” will be a mixture of these two groups.

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<sup>307</sup> Galatians 3:29.

<sup>308</sup> Matthew 8:11-12.

<sup>309</sup> Romans 13.

<sup>310</sup> Zechariah 14:16-19.

<sup>311</sup> Is it possible that Jesus might resurrect all those who, throughout history, died in the womb or in childhood without a chance to choose for themselves and then let them do so during the Millennium?

**BOOK OF REVELATION: THE MILLENNIUM**  
**A Selection of Old Testament Passages about Life in the Millennium**

The Old Testament has lots of prophecies about Yahweh's final, perfect kingdom. Here are just some of them.<sup>312</sup>

**Amos 9:11-15 (8<sup>th</sup> Century BC)**

- The context begins with a prophecy that Gentiles<sup>313</sup> will be part of a renewal of the Davidic Kingdom.<sup>314</sup>
- An extremely prosperous agricultural system will exist.
- Faithful Israel will be returned permanently from captivity to an inheritance in the land.

**Hosea 1:10-11 (8<sup>th</sup> Century BC)**

- This is the source of the prophecy that those, both Jew and Gentile, of whom God once said, "You are not My people," will later be called "sons of the living God."<sup>315</sup>
- Faithful Israel "will be gathered together" (Heb: *q·bts*<sup>316</sup> Gr: *sun·ag·ō*<sup>317</sup>) as described in Mark 13:27 and 2 Thessalonians 2:1.
- The two kingdoms of Hosea's day will acknowledge a single leader over both.
- They will "go up from the earth."<sup>318</sup>

**Hosea 2:14-23 (8<sup>th</sup> Century BC)**

- Agriculture mentioned.
- The animals will become tame and people will cease all warfare.
- Faithful Israel will be married forever to Yahweh.

**Micah 4:1-8 (8<sup>th</sup> Century BC)**

- This passage begins with a prophecy about righteous Gentiles.
- Implements of war will be converted into implements of agriculture; warfare training will become obsolete and an easy agricultural lifestyle will become the norm.
- "Gathered together" mentioned.
- Yahweh will reign forever from Mt. Zion.

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<sup>312</sup> This list is intended to be illustrative, not exhaustive. There are other "Millennial" texts that can be found by using these passages as a starting point.

<sup>313</sup> Where the Masoretic text has "remnant of Edom" in verse 12, the Septuagint has "remnant of Man." This is because Edom and Man look exactly the same in ancient Hebrew. Man makes much more sense.

<sup>314</sup> Quoted by James during the so-called 1<sup>st</sup> Jerusalem Council on Gentile inclusion (Acts 15:13-29).

<sup>315</sup> Romans 9:22-33 and 1 Peter 2:9-10.

<sup>316</sup> Compare the modern word **Kibbutz**, an Israeli community and/or the houses of which it is comprised.

<sup>317</sup> Compare the modern word **Synagogue**, an Israeli congregation and/or the building where it meets.

<sup>318</sup> The original language wording in this passage struck me as odd. Is this a reference to the resurrection? Furthermore, the name "Jezreel" (Yiz·ra·h El) means "God sows." Read how Paul described the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15:42-49.

### **Isaiah 11:1-12:6 (8<sup>th</sup> Century BC)**

- A Davidic leader mentioned.
- Peaceful animals mentioned; carnivores will become herbivores.
- Gentiles becoming part of the kingdom.
- “Gathering together” mentioned.
- There will be major geologic events
  - If the Jordan Valley does rise up as I suggested earlier, the Gulf of Aqaba,<sup>319</sup> which is part of the same fault line, (perhaps the Gulf of Suez, too) may just simply disappear.
  - The Euphrates will become a shallow system of seven streams.
  - Together, these two topographical changes will permit the establishment of an Assyria-Egypt highway (the “Highway of Holiness”).

### **Isaiah 25:6-27:13 (8<sup>th</sup> Century BC)**

- Yahweh will prepare a great feast on Mt. Zion.
- This is the source text for death being “swallowed up”<sup>320</sup> forever.
- The judgments of Yahweh mentioned.
- Here is an unambiguous prediction of the resurrection of the righteous.
- Yahweh will punish Satan, a.k.a. “Leviathan” (*Liw·yah·than*), the Dragon.
- “Gathering together” mentioned; specifically by the sound of a trumpet.

### **Isaiah 35:1-10 (8<sup>th</sup> Century BC)**

- Water will begin flowing in the Arabah,<sup>321</sup> bringing it to life.
- Blindness, deafness and lameness will be removed.
- The “Highway of Holiness” will be traveled by saints heading to Jerusalem.
- There will be no “wild” animals.

### **Isaiah 43:1-44:8 (8<sup>th</sup> Century BC)**

- “Gathering together” mentioned.
- A “desert highway” and “streams in a desert” mentioned.

### **Isaiah 65:8ff (8<sup>th</sup> Century BC)**

- Faithful Israel will inherit the Promised Land, while the unfaithful will be punished.
- Yahweh will create a new heavens and a new earth, in which sorrow and death are completely unknown.
- Peaceful animals mentioned.
- “Gathering together” mentioned.

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<sup>319</sup> I think this is probably what is meant by the “tongue of Egypt.” The Gulf of Aqaba separated ancient Egypt’s Sinai territory from the land of Midian (later southern Edom).

<sup>320</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:50-57.

<sup>321</sup> This region stretches along the entire Jordan Valley/Dead Sea depression, from just south of the Sea of Galilee to the Gulf of Aqaba (the very area I expect to be raised above sea level), as well as throughout the entire Sinai Peninsula, south of Israel.

**Joel 3:17-21 (7<sup>th</sup> Century BC)**

- This text follows an extensive passage about the “Day of Yahweh” (3:1-16).
- Agriculture mentioned.
- A spring on the Temple (which waters the region of the Dead Sea) mentioned.
- Judah and Jerusalem will be inhabited forever after Yahweh avenges Faithful Israel.

**Jeremiah 30:18-31:14 (7<sup>th</sup> Century BC)**

- Faithful Israel will be led by one of her own.
- Agriculture mentioned.
- “Gathering together” mentioned.

**Jeremiah 32:36-33:26 (7<sup>th</sup> Century BC)**

- “Gathering together” mentioned.
- A Davidic leader mentioned.
- Faithful Israel restored forever.

**Ezekiel 40:1ff (6<sup>th</sup> Century BC)**

- The Temple described in this text was to be built by those returning from Babylon, if they had repented of their rebellion; they had not, so it was not (43:1-12).
- Presumably, if it had been, Messiah would have come sooner; dealt with sin in a manner different than what actually happened; the gospel would have gone out to the Gentiles; and the Millennium would have started much earlier.
- The river of life originating from Mt. Zion will flow during the Millennium (47:1-12).

**Zechariah 14:1-21 (6<sup>th</sup> Century BC)**

- Water flowing from Mt. Zion mentioned.
- Reign of Yahweh mentioned.
- There will be mortals left after a great war against Jerusalem who must attend the annual Feast of Tabernacles.

**Zephaniah 3:8-19 (6<sup>th</sup> Century BC)**

- Reign of Yahweh mentioned.

**“THE HIGHWAY OF HOLINESS”  
&  
The Rebellious Regions Of Ezekiel 38**



**BOOK OF REVELATION: THE MILLENNIUM**  
**Satan's Final Coup Attempt**

**REVELATION**

<sup>20:7</sup> Whenever the thousand years has been completed,

Satan will be released from his detention.

<sup>20:8</sup> Going out, he will deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth – *Gōg* and *Magōg* – in order to gather them for war; their number being as the sand of the sea.

<sup>20:9</sup> They went up upon the wide expanse of the land surrounding the encampment of the saints, the beloved city.

**Fire** came down from heaven and devoured them.

<sup>20:10</sup> The slanderer misleading them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *had also been thrown*, and they will be tortured day and night into the ages of ages.

**Excerpts from EZEKIEL 38-39**

<sup>38:8a</sup> After many days you will be summoned; in later years you will come into a land that has put away the sword, having been gathered from all the nations into the land of Israel.

<sup>38:2a</sup> Son of man, set your face against *Gōg*, the land of *Ma-gōg*...

<sup>38:9</sup> You will go up like a rainstorm. You will arrive like a cloud obscuring the land; you and all those with you – the many nations with you.

<sup>38:18</sup> "It will be in that day, when Gog comes upon the land of Israel," says Yahweh God, "My anger will arise in My face."

<sup>38:22</sup> I will judge him by pouring upon him and those with him – the many nations with him - death, blood, torrential rain, hail stones, **fire** and brimstone.

Many prophecy teachers (particularly Pre-Millennial dispensationalists) turn the invasion of the Promised Land described in Ezekiel 38 and 39 into a Russian-led invasion by Gentiles into the modern nation of Israel which culminates in the Battle of *Har Ma-gēd-dōn*. Even after hearing and reading their many explanations for doing so, I am still dumbfounded that anyone with even a minimal skill in reading would not come to the blatantly obvious conclusion that this Old Testament Scripture is perfectly parallel to Revelation 20:7-20!

Let's go over just a few of these obvious points.

- Both prophets write about a war centering on the actions of *Gōg* and *Magōg* against Israel. What are the odds they're writing about two different wars 1,000 years apart?
- Modern Israel must never be confused with Faithful Israel. Modern Israel is a secular government with some Jewish religious elements; it does not acknowledge Jesus as Messiah. Even though Paul makes it clear that God loves and is concerned about ethnic Israelis, he and other New Testament (Jewish) writers also make it plain that anyone, Jew or Gentile, who rejects the Son is left without the Father as well. God has no covenantal relationship with or obligations toward the modern state of Israel.
- Modern Israel has only been around since 1947 and it has had to fight or be on the defensive nearly every day of its existence. In no way does it resemble the people of Israel in Ezekiel 38, "living securely" (vs. 8) in "unwalled villages" (vs. 10). To the contrary, modern Israel is wisely building a security barrier to keep terrorists out.

Without going in to a huge amount of detail, this is what I think will happen.

As the Millennium continues, many of the mortals (whoever they are) will tire of honoring Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords. It won't matter to them how perfect the world around them is; they will chaff just at the thought of not being their own boss.<sup>322</sup>

They will already be living outside the "Holy Zone," defined by the "Highway of Holiness" as being from the territory of ancient Assyria (modern Iraq), down through the modern countries of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Israel, and into the territory of ancient Egypt (which included modern Sudan). Because they must present themselves before King Jesus each year at the Feast of Tabernacles, perhaps paying Him tribute from their agricultural produce, they will have to live within a couple weeks journey of Jerusalem as accomplished by the low-tech means of transportation seen in Millennial passages.

This would locate them exactly where Ezekiel 38 locates them – in the ancient territories of Magog, Mesech and Tubal (in the Caucasus region between the Black and Caspian Seas); in the ancient territories of Persia (modern Iran), Ethiopia (same name) and Put (modern Libya); in the ancient territories of Gomer and Beth-togarmah (modern Turkey and Armenia); and with allies located in the ancient territories of Sheba (modern Yemen) and Dedan (western part of modern Saudi Arabia) and among the famed merchants of Tarshish who once operated nautical trade routes in the eastern Mediterranean and in the Red Sea.

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<sup>322</sup> Remember that the fool has said in his/her heart, "There is no God!" i.e., an ultimate authority figure to whom they have to give an account for their actions (Psalm 14:1; 53:1).

Over time I expect some of the more radical individuals to quit making the annual trip to Jerusalem altogether. As more and more rebels refuse to make their mandatory presentation before King Jesus, Yaweh will start invoking the negative conditions of Zechariah 14:17-19. The perfectly lush homelands of these sinners will begin drying up from lack of rain. While they might be able to overcome such effects in the short-term, via irrigation and trade, in the long-term it will become a matter of survival. If Satan were to come to them at such a time, they would certainly be ripe for his suggestion that they invade the bountiful lands of the saints, overthrowing King Jesus in the process.

Of course their plans will come to nothing. Yahweh will destroy them without effort, tossing Satan into the lake of fire, where he will remain for eternity.



**BOOK OF REVELATION: THE MILLENNIUM**  
**What Happens After The Millennium?**  
**Revelation 20:11ff**

For the sake of brevity, and since we've already covered our target topic of "Living in the Last Days," I want to just touch on the remainder of the book of Revelation.

After God has decisively put down Satan's attempted, Post-Millennial coup, the saints will clean up the mess left behind. According to Ezekiel 39:9-16, it will take the saints seven months to clean up the bodies and seven years to burn up all the war equipment. Presumably the perfect Earth will regenerate itself and reverse the drought affects brought on by the rebellion of the Millennial mortals.

Yahweh will then resurrect the unrighteous dead in order for Jesus to judge them. Their damnation is already certain, otherwise they would have been resurrected in the previous resurrection - the resurrection of the righteous. This "white throne" judgment is much more like a sentencing hearing. They'll be assigned a specific place in the eternal lake of fire based on what the records reveal. But they will be sent there primarily because they have no relationship with the Son.

Who really knows how long this process will take. With potentially billions of sinners from all ages being hauled before the tribunal of King Jesus it may take many thousands of years.<sup>323</sup> But since everyone has eternity before them, what difference does it make?

After all this, the city of New Jerusalem will descend from heaven. The descriptions of the city seem to refer back to Old Testament prophecies.

- The eternal presence of God's "sanctuary" among His people comes from, among other places, Ezekiel 37:26-28.
- The city being built of precious materials goes back to Isaiah 54:11-17.
- The arrangement of gates sounds like Ezekiel 48:30-35.
- The River of Life will flow through the city as described in Ezekiel 47:1-12.

Obviously Yahweh will make some adjustments to the new earth in order to make room for this massive structure. It is so large that it will completely cover the entire eastern end of the Mediterranean basin. This fact alone emboldens me to state with great confidence that the New Jerusalem will not be put in place until after the Post-Millennial coup attempt, for its presence would not leave space for the territories from which the rebels will come.

The most natural reading of the text would make the city a perfect cube, as was the Holy of Holies, towering well above the reaches of our current atmosphere.<sup>324</sup> The city will be the capital for the eternal Kingdom of Yahweh. In and out of it will move the Immortal Saints, doing whatever they will do for all eternity.

And what will that be? Well, that's so speculative that even a lifetime of seminars would not be sufficient to exhaust the subject. Let us simply be satisfied to say, "We shall see."

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<sup>323</sup> Just by way of illustration, let's use our current time reckoning. If Jesus pronounced judgment on one person per minute, 24 hours each day, year round, He could deal with 525,600 sinners per year. Even at that rate it would still take over 19,000 years to judge 10 billion people.

<sup>324</sup> Some have suggested that it will be a pyramid with its height measured at the apex. I could see that.

**APPENDIX A**  
**ANCIENT IMAGES RELEVANT TO UNDERSTANDING DANIEL 7<sup>325</sup>**



**Winged Lion = Babylonian Empire**

The winged lion was a very ancient Mesopotamian symbol associated with the goddess Inanna/Ishtar. In this Sumerian depiction, Inanna is standing upon one of her winged lions.

This second winged lion (the wings extend backward from its front shoulder and mane) is one of many that lined the walls of “Processional Avenue,” just north of the “Ishtar Gate,” in Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylon.



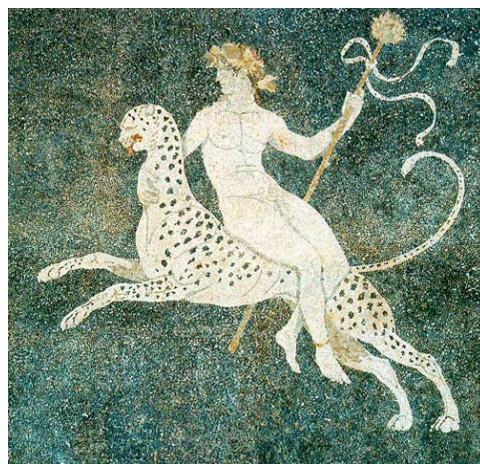
**Lopsided Bear = Median/Persian Empire**

As shown in this ancient Iranian artwork, the brown bear (*ursus arctos*, a species better known to us Americans as the “Grizzly”) has been hunted as sport for thousands of years. Its huge size and tremendous strength were perceived as the perfect challenge for Median and Persian warrior/hunters.

**Four-headed Leopard = Macedonian Empire**

Alexander the Great is figuratively portrayed as Dionysius in this late 4<sup>th</sup> Century BC floor mosaic from his hometown of Pella, Macedonia. His whirlwind conquest of the East made him like Dionysius in the minds of his subjects.

Dionysus was the Greek god of wine production (a.k.a. the Roman Bacchus), who supposedly traveled into “The East” (Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Persia and India), spreading his art of vintage making, while amassing many followers and great wealth. He then returned home in an ivy-covered chariot pulled by leopards.



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<sup>325</sup> One popular “prophecy teacher” has claimed that the images of Daniel 7 only make sense when applied to modern nations rather than the traditionally applied ancient ones. I think he needed to do his homework.

## Ten-Horned, Iron-Toothed Beast = Roman Empire



The dragon often appears in ancient Mesopotamian mythology.

The patron god of the city of Babylon was Marduk [a.k.a. “Bel” or “Master” (cf. the Canaanite “Ba’al”)]. He supposedly slew Tiamat, the great dragon of Chaos (the primeval ocean out of which everything was created), creating the world from her corpse.

He is shown here, on this 9<sup>th</sup> Century BC cylinder seal, accompanied by his own horned dragon.



During the 6<sup>th</sup> Century BC, the horned dragon of Marduk was incorporated into Babylonian wall decorations by King Nebuchadnezzar.

Through a long series of contacts between Mesopotamia (the world of the Babylonians, Medians and Persians) and southern Europe (the world of the Greeks and Romans), the dragon imagery eventually attached itself to the Roman Empire.



Trajan’s Column in Rome includes this image of a captured *draco* – a dragon-headed windsock apparently used by the horse archers of the western Asian peoples (whom Trajan defeated) in order to gauge wind speed and direction.

The Roman cavalry of the early 2<sup>nd</sup> Century very quickly adopted the use of the *draco* as their own military standard. By the 4<sup>th</sup> Century, the *draco* had all but displaced the Eagle as the military standard of the entire Roman army. In fact, army standard bearers were simply called “dragon-bearers.”



The dragons found in European literature, art, architecture, etc. (such as this Welsh flag), are merely vestiges of the Roman Empire’s symbolic dragon heritage.



**APPENDIX B**  
**The King James Text of Daniel 10-12**  
**{With embedded (primarily chronological) notes by Thomas J. Short}**

<sup>10:1</sup> In the third year {535 BC} of Cyrus, king of Persia, a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing *was* true, but the time appointed *was* long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.

<sup>10:2</sup> In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. <sup>10:3</sup> I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.

<sup>10:4</sup> And in the four and twentieth day of the first month {April 535 BC}, as I was by the side of the great river, which *is* Hiddekel {**The Tigris**}; <sup>10:5</sup> Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins *were* girded with fine gold of Uphaz: <sup>10:6</sup> His body also *was* like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.

<sup>10:7</sup> And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. <sup>10:8</sup> Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. <sup>10:9</sup> Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground.

<sup>10:10</sup> And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and *upon* the palms of my hands. <sup>10:11</sup> And he said unto me, “O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent.” And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.

<sup>10:12</sup> Then said he unto me, “Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. <sup>10:13</sup> But the prince of the kingdom of Persia {**the fallen angel in control of Persia**} withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes {**God’s loyal angels**}, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. <sup>10:14</sup> Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision *is* for *many* days.

<sup>10:15</sup> And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb. <sup>10:16</sup> And, behold, *one* like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, “O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. <sup>10:17</sup> For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me.”

<sup>10:18</sup> Then there came again and touched me *one* like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me, <sup>10:19</sup> And said, “O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace *be* unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong.”

And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, “Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me.”

<sup>10:20</sup> Then said he, “Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia {**the fallen angel in control of Persia**}; and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia {**the fallen angel in control of Greece**} shall come. <sup>10:21</sup> But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and *there is* none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince {**God’s loyal angel responsible for the righteous Jews**}.”

<sup>11:1</sup> “Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede {538 BC}, *even* I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him. <sup>11:2</sup> And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia {**Cambyses (537-530 BC); Pseudo-Smerdis (522 BC); and Darius (521-486 BC)**}; and the fourth {**Xerxes (485-465 BC)**} shall be far richer than *they* all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia {**Xerxes attempted a miserably failed invasion of Greece in 479 BC**}.

<sup>11:3</sup> “And a mighty king {**Alexander the Great (336-323 BC)**} shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. <sup>11:4</sup> And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those. **{After the death of Alexander, his empire was divided between four of his generals. Cassander took Macedonia and its related territories; Lysimachus took Thrace and its related territories; Seleucus took Syria and its related territories; and Ptolemy took Egypt and its related territories}**

<sup>11:5</sup> “And the king of the south {**Ptolemy I (323-285 BC) – hereafter in the text, “king of the south” always references a Ptolemaic ruler**} shall be strong, and *one* of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion {**Seleucus I (311-280 BC) started out as a subordinate of Ptolemy I – hereafter in the text, “king of the north” always references a Seleucid ruler**}; his dominion *shall be* a great dominion.

<sup>11:6</sup> And in the end of years {**In the passage of time**} they shall join themselves together; for the king’s daughter of the south {**Bernice, daughter of Ptolemy II (285-246 BC)**} shall come to the king of the north {**Antiochus II (261-246 BC)**} to make an agreement: but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in *these* times. **{Laodice, whom Antiochus II had divorced in favor of Bernice, conspired to have both Bernice and Antiochus II killed.}**

<sup>11:7</sup> But out of a branch of her roots shall *one* stand up in his estate {**Bernice’s brother, Ptolemy III (246-222 BC)**}, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north {**Seleucus II (246-226 BC)**}, and shall deal against them, and shall prevail {**Ptolemy III got rid of Laodice**}: <sup>11:8</sup> And shall also carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, *and* with their precious vessels of silver and of gold; and he shall continue *more* years than the king of the north.

<sup>11:9</sup> So the king of the south {**Ptolemy III**} shall come into *his* kingdom, and shall return into his own land.

<sup>11:10</sup> But his {**Meaning Seleucus II**} sons {**Seleucus III (226-223 BC) & Antiochus III (223-187 BC)**} shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and *one* shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through: then shall he return, and be stirred up, *even* to his fortress.

<sup>11:11</sup> And the king of the south {**Ptolemy IV (221-203 BC)**} shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him, *even* with the king of the north {**Antiochus III**}: and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand. **{Ptolemy IV defeated Antiochus III in 217 BC}**

<sup>11:12</sup> *And* when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down *many* ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened *by it*. <sup>11:13</sup> For the king of the north {**Antiochus III**} shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches.

<sup>11:14</sup> And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south {**Ptolemy V (203-181 BC)**}: also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall. **{A rebellion was crushed in 200 BC}**

<sup>11:15</sup> So the king of the north {**Antiochus III**} shall come, and cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities: and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither *shall there be any* strength to withstand. <sup>11:16</sup> But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land {**Judea**}, which by his hand shall be consumed. **{Antiochus III gained control of the region which included Judea by 197 BC}**

<sup>11:17</sup> He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do: and he shall give him the daughter of women {**Antiochus III’s daughter, Cleopatra I, was married to Ptolemy V in 194 BC**}, corrupting her: but she shall not stand *on his side*, neither be for him.

<sup>11:18</sup> After this shall he turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many: but a prince for his own behalf shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease; without his own reproach he shall cause *it* to turn upon him. <sup>11:19</sup> Then he shall turn his face toward the fort of his own land: but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found. **{Antiochus III died in 187 BC while trying to plunder a pagan temple treasury}** <sup>11:20</sup> Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes *in* the glory of the kingdom: but within few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle. **{Seleucus IV (187-175) died in a conspiracy carried out by his finance minister}**

<sup>11:21</sup> And in his estate shall stand up a vile person { **Seleucus IV's brother, Antiochus IV (175-164 BC)** }, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries. { **Antiochus IV seized the throne because his nephew, Demetrius I, was too young to oppose him** } <sup>11:22</sup> And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflowed from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant { **Perhaps a reference to the Jewish High Priest Onias III, who was murdered in 170 BC** }.

<sup>11:23</sup> And after the league *made* with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people. <sup>11:24</sup> He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do *that* which his fathers have not done, nor his fathers' fathers; he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches: *yea*, and he shall forecast his devices against the strong holds, even for a time.

<sup>11:25</sup> And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south { **Ptolemy VI (181-146 BC)** } with a great army; and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand: for they shall forecast devices against him. <sup>11:26</sup> Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him, and his army shall overflow: and many shall fall down slain. { **Antiochus IV invaded and conquered Egypt in 170 BC** } <sup>11:27</sup> And both these kings' hearts *shall be* to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table; but it shall not prosper: for yet the end *shall be* at the time appointed.

<sup>11:28</sup> Then shall he return into his land with great riches; and his heart *shall be* against the holy covenant { **In 169 BC, Antiochus IV plundered the Jewish Temple & killed many Jews as he was passing through Judea on his way back to Syria** }; and he shall do *exploits*, and return to his own land.

<sup>11:29</sup> At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south { **In 168 BC, Antiochus IV reinvaded Egypt** }; but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter. <sup>11:30</sup> For the ships of Chittim { **Roman ships within the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea** } shall come against him: therefore he shall be grieved, and return { **Antiochus IV chose to withdraw after a Roman ultimatum that he do so** }, and have indignation against the holy covenant { **Antiochus IV began his systematic elimination of Judaism in 168 BC** }; so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant { **Secular Jews willingly assisted Antiochus IV in his anti-Judaism campaign** }.

<sup>11:31</sup> And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily *sacrifice* { **The twice-daily sacrifice in the Jewish Temple was stopped early in 168 BC** }, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate { **An altar to Zeus was erected on the site of the Jewish altar in December of 168 BC** }. <sup>11:32</sup> And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries { **Describing Antiochus IV's relationship with the secular Jews** }: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do *exploits* { **Describing the resistance movement led by religious Jews** }. <sup>11:33</sup> And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, *many* days. <sup>11:34</sup> Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. <sup>11:35</sup> And *some* of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make *them* white, *even* to the time of the end: because *it is* yet for a time appointed. { **The religious Jews captured & rededicated the Jewish Temple in December of 165 BC. Eventually, the leaders of that movement established an independent Jewish dynasty that combined the kingship & high priesthood.** }

{ **Antiochus IV died in 164 BC, after naming his young son, Antiochus V (164-162 BC), as his successor, but leaving the actual administration of the kingdom to a trusted officer. Another officer attempted to seize control and a mini civil war broke out.** }



**{Many commentators teach that the following verses cannot be applied to past events, insisting they will be carried out by some future persecutor of Israel. I disagree.}**

<sup>11:36</sup> And the king shall do according to his will **{Demetrius I (162-150 BC), whom Antiochus IV had usurped 13 years earlier, upon learning of the death of his uncle and the subsequent turmoil regarding the matter of succession, came to Syria from Rome (where he had been sent as a hostage) in order to claim the throne for himself}**; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. <sup>11:37</sup> Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. <sup>11:38</sup> But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. <sup>39</sup> Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge *and* increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain. **{Demetrius I, like his uncle before him, aggressively opposed religious Judaism, making use of secular Jews.}**

<sup>11:40</sup> And at the time of the end **{The end of anti-Jewish persecution?<sup>326</sup>}** shall the king of the south **{Ptolemy VI}** push at him **{Demetrius I}**: and the king of the north **{Alexander (153-145 BC), the son of Antiochus IV}** shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships **{Alexander defeated & killed Demetrius I in 150 BC}**; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. <sup>11:41</sup> He shall enter also into the glorious land **{Alexander honored Jonathan the Jewish High Priest as “First Friend” at the port city of Ptolemais in 150 BC }**, and many *countries* shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, *even* Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. <sup>11:42</sup> He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. **{Alexander married Cleopatra, daughter of Ptolemy VI, in 150 BC}** <sup>11:43</sup> But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians *shall be* at his steps.

<sup>11:44</sup> But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. <sup>11:45</sup> And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain **{In 145 BC, while Alexander was in Phoenicia, Demetrius II (145-138 BC), the son of Demetrius I, came from Crete to Syria in order to take the throne for himself}**; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him. **{Ptolemy VI originally marched to Syria in order to assist his son-in-law Alexander; however, when he discovered a plot by Alexander to have him assassinated, he immediately divorced Cleopatra from him & offered her in marriage to Demetrius, promising a military alliance as well. Seeing that his kingdom was lost, Alexander fled to Nabataea, where he was killed and his head sent to Ptolemy VI.}**

<sup>12:1</sup> And at that time **{During the post-Macedonian period}** shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people **{God’s loyal angel responsible for the righteous Jews}**: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation *even* to that same time **{This is the passage quoted by Jesus in his “Olivet Discourse” in reference to the impending destruction of Jerusalem}**: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. **{The Atonement took place}**

<sup>12:2</sup> And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life **{This verse jumps ahead to the “First Resurrection” of the righteous dead}**, and some to shame *and* everlasting contempt **{Then it jumps ahead another thousand years to the “Second Resurrection” of the remaining dead}**. <sup>12:3</sup> And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

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<sup>326</sup> The official end of the Macedonian oppression of the Jews came in 142 BC, during the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Demetrius II and the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the Simon Maccabaeus (142-135 BC), which marks the beginning of the independent Hasmonean Kingdom of Israel (142-37 BC).

<sup>12:4</sup> But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, *even* to the time of the end **{The time of the First Coming of Jesus}**: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

<sup>12:5</sup> Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. <sup>12:6</sup> And *one* said to the man clothed in linen, which *was* upon the waters of the river, How long *shall it be* to the end of these wonders?

<sup>12:7</sup> And I heard the man clothed in linen, which *was* upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that *it shall be* for a time, times, and an half **{Hebrew idiom for 3 ½ years}**; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these *things* shall be finished.

<sup>12:8</sup> And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what *shall be* the end of these *things*?

<sup>12:9</sup> And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words *are* closed up and sealed till the time of the end. **{Until the events actually transpire.}** <sup>12:10</sup> Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand. **{The righteous Jews would recognize what was happening as it unfolded.}**

<sup>12:11</sup> And from the time *that* the daily *sacrifice* shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, *there shall be* a thousand two hundred and ninety days. **{This is roughly equal to 3 ½ years.}** <sup>12:12</sup> Blessed *is* he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days. **{Perhaps this timing referenced the actual death-date of Antiochus IV}** <sup>12:13</sup> But go thou thy way till the end *be*: for thou shalt rest, and stand **{Be resurrected}** in thy lot at the end of the days.



**APPENDIX C**  
**Israeli Seven-Year Sabbatical Cycle**  
Detailed in Leviticus 25 and Deuteronomy 15

Shortly after Israel entered the land of Canaan in the spring of 1416 BC, the *manna* on which they had subsisted for the past forty years ended (Joshua 5:12), necessitating the planting of their very first crops during the fall of that year. This meant that the 1<sup>st</sup> Sabbatical Year began on 7\*1 in the 47<sup>th</sup> Year of the Exodus.

Subsequent Sabbatical Years began in the 7<sup>th</sup> Month of the following years:

1410	1403	1396	1389	1382	1375	1368	Jubilee 1 =	1367
1361	1354	1347	1340	1333	1326	1319	Jubilee 2 =	1318
1312	1305	1298	1291	1284	1277	1270	Jubilee 3 =	1269
1263	1256	1249	1242	1235	1228	1221	Jubilee 4 =	1220
1214	1207	1200	1193	1186	1179	1172	Jubilee 5 =	1171
1165	1158	1151	1144	1137	1130	1123	Jubilee 6 =	1122
1116	1109	1102	1095	1088	1081	1074	Jubilee 7 =	1073
1067	1060	1053	1046	1039	1032	1025	Jubilee 8 =	1024
1018	1011	1004	997	990	983	976	Jubilee 9 =	975
969	962	955	948	941	934	927	Jubilee 10 =	926
920	913	906	899	892	885	878	Jubilee 11 =	877
871	864	857	850	843	836	829	Jubilee 12 =	828
822	815	808	801	794	787	780	Jubilee 13 =	779
773	766	759	752	745	738	731	Jubilee 14 =	730
724	717	710	703	696	689	682	Jubilee 15 =	681
675	668	661	654	647	640	633	Jubilee 16 =	632
626	619	612	605	598	591	584	Jubilee 17 =	583
577	570	563	556	549	542	535	Jubilee 18 =	534
528	521	514	507	500	493	486	Jubilee 19 =	485
479	472	465	458	451	444	437	Jubilee 20 =	436
					<b>*327*</b>			
430	423	416	409	402	395	388	Jubilee 21 =	387
381	374	367	360	353	346	339	Jubilee 22 =	338
332	325	318	311	304	297	290	Jubilee 23 =	289
293	276	269	262	255	248	241	Jubilee 24 =	240
234	227	220	213	206	199	192	Jubilee 25 =	191
195	178	171	164	157	150	143	Jubilee 26 =	142
			<b>*328*</b>					
136	129	122	115	108	101	94	Jubilee 27 =	93
<b>*329*</b>								
97	80	73	66	59	52	45	Jubilee 28 =	44
38	31	24	17	10	<b>3</b>	<b>AD 5</b>	Jubilee 29 =	6
<b>*330*</b>					<b>BC</b>			
12	19	26	33	40	47	54	Jubilee 30 =	55
61	68	75	82	89	96	103	Jubilee 31 =	104

**F.Y.I.**<sup>331</sup>

1972	1979	1986	1993	2000	2007	2014	Jubilee 70 =	2015
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<sup>327</sup> Indicated by the public reading of Deuteronomy during the 7<sup>th</sup> Month (Nehemiah 8:1ff; cf. 2:1; 6:15ff).

<sup>328</sup> Specifically cited in 1 Maccabees 6:49,53 (cf. 1 Maccabees 6:20-63).

<sup>329</sup> Specifically cited in 1 Maccabees 16:14ff and Antiquities 13.8.1-2.

<sup>330</sup> Specifically cited in Antiquities 14.16.

<sup>331</sup> If, like me, you're curious as to where we're at on this cycle today, here's the information.

## APPENDIX D

### My Synopsis of the AD 70 Destruction of the Temple

Josephus tells us that things blew up in Jerusalem during the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> Jewish month<sup>332</sup> in 66.<sup>333</sup> Eventually, the Roman Legate of Syria could ignore the situation no longer. Cestius marched south from Antioch with the XII Legion and a multitude of other military forces to quash the rebellion. On 7\*27,<sup>334</sup> the Romans erected an encampment on a hill less than a mile north of the city. From this base, they systematically advanced against the Jewish insurgents barricaded within the Temple complex. Just when it seemed he was on the verge of capturing the city, Cestius inexplicably ordered a retreat to the Scopus encampment, amidst major casualties. During the next few days, his attempts to withdraw even farther from the city nearly resulted in the capture of his entire army. Finally, on 8\*8,<sup>335</sup> the Legate tried to sneak the bulk of his remaining forces to the coast under cover of darkness, an operation that resulted in an absolute rout of the Romans by the pursuing insurgents.<sup>336</sup>

Prominent Jews, who knew the Romans well, immediately abandoned the city, as Josephus so colorfully put it, “like swimmers from a sinking ship.”<sup>337</sup> They knew that the Roman troops would return, and they knew that they would come with more than enough military force to finish the job left undone by Cestius. Of course, they were not the only ones who knew what was coming next. Most of the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem and Judea, who knew Jesus’ Olivet Discourse via the three gospels already circulating among them,<sup>338</sup> had headed for the hills after they saw Cestius’ Roman encampment pop up over night. Tradition holds that, thanks to Jesus’ prophetic warning, not one Jewish Christian died in the tragic final siege of Jerusalem.

After receiving reports about the Jewish rebellion, Nero authorized Vespasian, a well-seasoned veteran of campaigns in Germany and Britain, to pacify the entire region. Vespasian, assisted by his son Titus, put together a military force many times the size of Cestius’, and moved against all the outlying areas of Jewish unrest, eventually bottling up the rebellion within the city of Jerusalem itself. However, he postponed his final push against Jerusalem when he learned of the death of Nero in the summer of 68. He kept the rebellion contained throughout the next year, but made no move to finish his campaign against the city until the matter of imperial succession had been settled.

In the summer of 69, the legions of Egypt hailed Vespasian as Emperor, setting him on a collision course with Vitellius, the most recent claimant to the throne. As the winter of 69/70 drew to a close, the victorious Vespasian headed for Rome, while his son Titus turned his attention back to the seething pot that was Jerusalem.<sup>339</sup>

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<sup>332</sup> Early July.

<sup>333</sup> Wars 2.17.2-2.18.8.

<sup>334</sup> SUN/MON 5/6 OCT in 66.

<sup>335</sup> THU/FRI 16/17 OCT.

<sup>336</sup> Wars 2.18.8-2.19.9.

<sup>337</sup> Wars 2.20.1

<sup>338</sup> Matthew had been written specifically for the Jews some twenty years earlier. Mark, compiled for Roman readers, and Luke, addressed to a believer of some prominence, had only been around for a few years.

<sup>339</sup> Wars Books 3 & 4.

Marching beneath their eagle emblems, two legions encamped at Cestius' former site at Scopus, with another legion digging in not far north of them. A fourth set up its camp on Mt. Olivet to the east of the city. From these camps they proceeded to besiege Jerusalem in exactly the way Jesus had tearfully predicted in Luke 19:41-44.<sup>340</sup>

Once these final siege camps were established, very few of the hundreds of thousands of Jews who had come to Jerusalem in order to celebrate the Passover of 70<sup>341</sup> escaped unscathed. For the next three and a half months, the Romans pushed in on the Jews, systematically seizing more and more of the city, killing those who resisted their advance and capturing those who surrendered.

On 5\*8<sup>342</sup> the Romans finally reached the inner wall that enclosed the Temple Sanctuary. Up to this point, Titus had hoped to protect the sacred site from the ravages of war, but in view of the ferocity of the Jewish resistance holed up inside, he realized that such extraordinary efforts would result in unacceptable losses among his own troops. To quickly breach this final barrier, he ordered the silver-plated gates leading into the inner courtyard torched. This blaze quickly spread to the cloisters surrounding the Sanctuary.

For two days the fire consumed the wooden structures within the sacred enclosure. Titus ordered his men to do their best to put out the portico fire, despite repeated attacks on them by the Jews barricaded within the Sanctuary. Meanwhile, the Roman general consulted his advisors regarding final disposition of the holy building once the area was secured. Some thought it best to demolish it, since it was the unifying symbol for the rebels. Others, like Titus himself, saw no real purpose in destroying such a marvelous building. In the end, Titus decided that his troops would storm the area on the following morning, quickly surrounding the Sanctuary in an effort to spare it further damage.

Sometime during the hours of darkness on 5\*10,<sup>343</sup> a group of Jews from within the Sanctuary attacked a small Roman unit still fighting the portico fire. The attackers were immediately pushed all the way back into the Sanctuary, where a couple of the Roman soldiers, no doubt caught up in the passion of the action, but with no specific orders to do so, inserted some burning debris through the window of one of the storage rooms surrounding the Sanctuary. As the flames spread rapidly from room to room, the Jews were forced outside, where the Romans, who were rapidly being reinforced by their comrades, began slaughtering them.

Upon receiving a report that the Sanctuary was ablaze, Titus came to assess the situation and determined that the interior could still be saved if the fire were immediately put out. Unfortunately, due to the battle lust of his troops and the difficulty of communicating above the roar of the inferno, Titus was unable to carry out his intentions. Thus the Sanctuary was burned beyond repair.<sup>344</sup>

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<sup>340</sup> Wars 5.2.1-5.3.5

<sup>341</sup> 1\*14 = FRI/SAT 13/14 APR in 70.

<sup>342</sup> FRI/SAT 3/4 AUG in 70.

<sup>343</sup> SUN/MON 5/6 AUG in 70.

<sup>344</sup> The torching of the Sanctuary is detailed in Wars 6.4.

In retrospect, Josephus wrote of this day:

...as for that house, God had for certain long ago doomed it to the fire; and now that fatal day was come, according to the revolution of ages; it was the tenth day of the month Lous [Ab], upon which it was formerly burnt by the king of Babylon;<sup>345</sup>

...one cannot but wonder at the accuracy of this period thereto relating; for the same month and day were now observed, as I said before, wherein the holy house was burnt formerly by the Babylonians.<sup>346</sup>

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<sup>345</sup> Wars of the Jews 7.4.5 or 7.4.250. Josephus, F. (1996, c1987). *The works of Josephus: Complete and unabridged*. Peabody: Hendrickson.

<sup>346</sup> Ibid. 7.5.8 or 7.5.268.