

Revelation

By Steve Kirkpatrick

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THIS WORK IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED
TO MY WIFE, TRICIA, WHO HAS FAITHFULLY STOOD
BY ME AND ENCOURAGED ME FOR THE PAST 30 YEARS.

The Front Cover is a depiction of the glorious throne room scene given
in Revelation Chapter. 4. Vs 3 “and there was a rainbow around
about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald”
Vs. 5 “and out of the throne proceeded lightnings”.

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Jesus Christ will rule and reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords!!!
By the time the book of Revelation closes, Christ will receive the glory due Him from man which, up until now, has been withheld by the multitudes.

This book begins (Rev. 1:3) and closes (Rev. 22:7) with a promised blessing to all who read, hear and keep that which is taught in this wonderful, closing portion of God's inspired word. God further states in Rev. 22:10 that the contents of this book are not to be sealed, that is, God wants those things open and known by the church of today. Dear friend, based on the above, as we begin this study of Revelation, I want every person to have set in your mind that God wants you to know the book and that you can know it.
Rev. 1:1.

Remember that this Book was written for the common believer (servants of vs. 1) and not just for the scholarly, scientific or elite. Knowledge and understanding of all the word of God, including the Book of Revelation, comes from diligent, prayerful reading and studying. Read and consider carefully the following: II Timothy 2:15; I Corinthians 2:13-14; Revelation 1:1-3.

We should be thrilled and excited as we study this amazing portion of scripture. The science fiction writers of the day could not possibly come up with things that are as amazing and out of this world as the many fantastic truths that are presented in this final book of the inspired canon of scripture. As each chapter of the Revelation progresses, God's plan for the ages will be brought to its conclusion and Jesus Christ will reign supreme.

Remember this!!! Our Blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, is to be seen as preeminent in all the Book of Revelation. The word declares in Revelation 19:10 "*for the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy.*" In every chapter, in every judgment and in every teaching we should see Christ first and foremost.

I believe it is important at this point to let you know this writer's position in offering this outline of the Book of Revelation. While this is not being given in a full narrative or commentary form, it is my desire to present it in a complete enough manner as to accomplish some "stand alone value" to this volume. However, this outline will be much more valuable when used in conjunction with our verse by verse messages on the Book of Revelation.

I am also offering this layman's outline of the Book of Revelation based on the following foundation:

- I believe wholeheartedly and without reservation in the Divine Inspiration (II Tim. 3:16) and Supernatural Preservation (Psalm 12:7) of the Word of God. It is my firm conviction that the authorized King James Version of the Holy Scriptures is God's Word to English speaking people and is preserved for us in a pure, complete and inerrant form.
- I believe that the Book of Revelation, along with all the rest of the Bible, lends itself to be understood using a literal method of interpretation. When viewed in a logical, normal and literal manner the Book of Revelation is not nearly as difficult as some have supposed. The literal method of interpretation recognizes that figures of speech, symbols, etc. are used in everyday language and are clearly understood as such. These figures and symbols, when used in the Bible, are not left up to the imagination of individual readers to determine what they mean. They are always explained in the immediate context or in the broader context of historical and prophetic scriptures. Consider the following "safe rule" of Bible interpretation as given by Dr. M. R. Dehaan.

A SAFE RULE

Let me mention a simple rule of interpretation which applies not only to the book of Revelation but to the entire Bible. Always interpret every statement in the Word of God literally as meaning exactly what it says, unless it is definitely stated otherwise or the structure and context are such that you can plainly see that the passage concerns a figure and a symbol. This is the most important rule to follow when interpreting Scripture. When a verse in Scripture states plainly that what follows is a parable, then we need not interpret the passage literally, or when the grammatical structure indicates that a passage is not a literal fact, for example, this statement, "The kingdom of

heaven is like unto a merchantman,” we know it is a parable or a figure. A case in point is found in Revelation 8:8 where we read:

And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea.

This verse does not say that it was a mountain but “as it were a great mountain,” that is, it looked like a mountain. It may have been a meteor or another heavenly body, but if this verse had said that it was a great mountain then I should believe this literally. It is, therefore, not difficult to know when we are to interpret statements literally and when they are figures of speech. Our speech in daily life is filled with figures, metaphors and symbols, but we have no difficulty in knowing what they mean and when we are to interpret literally or figuratively. When we say that an athlete is a “star,” we know that the word is a figure and does not refer to a literal star. We know how to distinguish in ordinary conversation between the literal and the figurative, but when we interpret Scripture we become confused. Instead of applying the simple rule, “Always interpret literally unless definitely indicated otherwise,” we insist upon making a star mean an emperor, a dignitary or something else. An example is the sounding of the fifth trumpet. We are told in Revelation 9:

And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven into the earth.

The context tells us that the reference is to a figure, not to a literal star, for we read:

And to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

This star is a being, a person, for personality is ascribed to him. Revelation 9:2 declares that he opened the bottomless pit and a great swarm of locusts issued forth to torment men upon the earth. Here again the context tells us that in this instance the locusts were not literal insects but fallen demon-beings, for we read concerning them:

And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon.

- It is this writer’s view that Revelation must be approached from a futuristic (Futurist) point of view if we are to achieve any valuable understanding at all from the book. This view maintains, and I believe, that all of Revelation Ch. 4-22 is yet future. Other schools of interpretation including the Preterist, Historical and Idealist do not hold the same position.

- Doctrinally, it is my position that the Book of Revelation must be studied and understood from a Pre-Tribulational and Pre-Millennial point of view. I have included a detailed outline study of these two doctrinal positions at the end of this manuscript.

With our foundation laid upon which to proceed, I would now like to address two difficulties associated with the Book of Revelation.

I believe the greatest difficulty concerning this Book is not what is going to happen but rather when it is going to happen. Time references are to be taken literally. Revelation 9:5 & 10 mention “*forty and two months*”; Revelation 11:3 and 12:6 deal with “*a thousand two hundred and three-score days*”; Revelation 20:2, 3, 5, 7 declares satan to be bound for “*a thousand years*”. These are all literal time periods. While I am on this subject, there is no scriptural justification whosoever for saying that “*tribulation ten days*” (Revelation 2:10) is anything other than a literal time period!!!

Remember, most of the difficulty with time deals with when things happen within the seven year tribulation. While there is some importance attached to this, the saved of the church age will be in Heaven with the Lord Jesus Christ. It’s not something you should stress over!!!

The second difficulty deals with knowing what nations are involved in which war. We will help you with this as much as our knowledge and understanding will allow us to. Keep in mind, however, that what is going on is more important than who is involved.

CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Revelation 1:19 gives a divinely inspired outline that divides the book into three distinct sections.

1st Section Revelation 1:1-20

“The things which thou hast seen”

vs 1- 9 Introductory thoughts

vs 10-20 The vision of the glorified Christ

2nd Section Revelation Ch. 2 – 3

“The things which are”

These two chapters contain the message to the seven churches.

3rd Section Revelation Ch. 4 – 22

“things which shall be hereafter”

The information and events presented in these chapters is yet future.

Chapters 4 – 19 deal primarily with the seven year tribulation period.

Chapter 20 is action packed and brings before us the 1000 year (millennial) reign of Christ, the binding of satan, the release of satan and final conflict and the great white throne judgment.

Chapters 21 – 22 are spectacular and deal with the new Heaven, the new Earth, the new Jerusalem, and the Eternal State.

THE THREE SETS OF JUDGMENTS IN THE TRIBULATION PERIOD

It is this writer's belief that the three sets of seven judgments during the tribulation period are in chronological order. They take place successively, one after the other, beginning with the opening of the first seal. The judgments are also progressive as to their severity of judgment.

The seven seal judgments are found in Revelation Ch. 6 and Ch. 8:1-2. You will note that the trumpet judgments issue forth from the seventh seal.

The seal judgments take place in the first 3½ years of the tribulation period. The first seal will be opened at the very beginning of the tribulation period. My best estimate is that the final seal is opened no later than the end of the second year of the tribulation.

The seven trumpet judgments are found in Revelation Ch. 8:6 thru all of Chapter 9. The seventh trumpet is found in Ch. 11:15-19. The last three trumpet judgments are also referred to as the three "woe" judgments because of their increased severity. The seventh trumpet is the third woe and from this issues forth the final seven vial or bowl judgments,

The trumpet judgments span the time between the seal and vial judgments. There are definite time periods associated with the fifth and sixth trumpet that aid in all time determinations in the tribulation period.

The 6th trumpet in Revelation 9:13-21 brings us to the middle of the tribulation period. This war lasts 13 months one week and one day and ends at mid-tribulation.

The seven vial or bowl judgments are found in Revelation Ch. 16. These judgments take place in rapid succession in the latter part of the last 3½ years of the tribulation. My best guess is that they start around the beginning of year seven. When the last one is given it is very near the end of the tribulation.

The three sets of judgments create the time line for us in Revelation Ch. 6-19. All portions of scripture within these chapters that are not giving one of the judgments represent important details of events within the tribulation. With this in mind, chapters 7, 10, much of chapter 11, chapters 12 – 15 and

17 – 19 represent pauses in time or a parenthesis where details of some aspect of the tribulation period are given.

CHAPTER BY CHAPTER CONTENT AND CHRONOLOGY OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION

- Chapter 1** – Introductory thoughts and the glorious vision of the risen Christ. This chapter also introduces the seven churches and shows Christ in the midst of those churches.
- Chapters 2-3** – The message to the seven churches. These churches are historical and representative. They are historical in that they all actually existed at the time of writing (95 – 96 A.D.). The seven churches in combination present conditions in all churches then and now!
- Chapters 4-5** – These chapters begin by showing a magnificent throne room scene with God the Father upon the throne. They end with the glorified Christ taking the seven sealed book from the Father to open the seals. Chapter 4:1 is the rapture of the church but time, during the tribulation, does not move forward until we get to Chapter 6.
- Chapter 6** – This chapter records the opening of the first 6 seal judgments. The opening of the first seal begins the movement of time in the tribulation period.
- Chapter 7** - Tribulation time does not continue to progress in this chapter. God here inserts a pause or parenthesis in order to give us important details about certain events. Verses 1-8 deal with the 144,000 Jewish evangelists and is placed time wise in the first 3½ years of the tribulation. Verses 9-14 deal with those who were slain for Christ in the last 3½ years of the tribulation and is placed time wise in Revelation Ch. 19.
- Chapter 8** – In verse 1 of this chapter the seventh seal is opened and tribulation time starts moving forward again. Out of the seventh seal comes the seven trumpet judgments. In verses 6-13 we have the first four trumpet judgments.

Chapter 9 – Tribulation time is continuing to move in this chapter. Verses 1-12 record the fifth trumpet judgment. Verses 13-21 record the sixth trumpet judgment. This sixth trumpet brings us to the middle of the tribulation.

Chapter 10 – This chapter is concerned with a mighty angel and a little book. We have in this chapter another pause or parenthesis where time is not moving forward in the tribulation period. The setting here is around the mid point of the tribulation period.

Chapter 11 – Verses 1-13 are a pause in the progression of tribulation time but definite time periods are in view. Verses 1-2 bring before us the measuring of the temple and other events that take place in the last 3½ years of the tribulation. Verses 3 – 13 teach concerning the two witnesses who minister in the first 3½ years and are then killed at the middle of the tribulation period. Verse 15 brings us to the seventh and final trumpet judgment. This judgment continues the complete last 3½ years as the vial or bowl judgments issue forth from it.

Chapter 12 – Tribulation time is not progressing in this chapter but both historical and prophetic themes are presented. This chapter shows Israel in the last 3½ years of the tribulation, when satan is persecuting the nation and God is protecting her. This chapter also brings before us the casting of satan out of heaven at the middle of the tribulation.

Chapter 13 – Two important players in the end time are presented in this chapter. Verses 1-10 introduces the beast out of the sea who is the Antichrist. Verse 11 brings before us the beast out of the earth who is the false prophet. It is the false prophet who compels men and women to take the infamous “*mark of the beast*” as revealed in verses 16-18. The setting of this chapter is from the middle of the tribulation thru the last 3½ years.

Chapter 14 – Tribulation time is not progressing in this chapter but two separate settings at the end of the tribulation are revealed. Verses 1-5 give additional information on the 144,000 Jewish evangelists who have ministered throughout the seven year tribulation and are seen here with Christ (Lamb) at Jerusalem. Verse 6 details the doom of those who have taken the mark of the beast. Their final judgment will be at the battle of Armageddon at the end of the tribulation period.

Chapter 15 – The awesome heavenly scene of this chapter anticipates the final set of judgments that are about to break forth upon the earth. The Temple of heaven is open and the angels are getting ready!!!

Chapter 16 – Tribulation time leaps forward in this chapter and when all is completed it will be near the end of the tribulation. Here we see that the wrath of Almighty God is full and poured out on lost men in the form of the seven vial judgments.

Chapter 17-18 - Chapter 17 deals with the destruction of mystery (ecclesiastical) Babylon which takes place at the middle of the tribulation. Chapter 18 deals with the destruction of political and commercial Babylon which takes place at the end of the tribulation period.

Chapter 19 – Verses 1-10 bring before us the marriage supper of the lamb. This involves the saints in heaven during the tribulation period. Verses 11-21 reveal the battle of Armageddon which takes place on Earth at the end of the tribulation period. The tribulation period has ended with this chapter.

Chapter 20 – Many intriguing things are brought before us in this chapter.

- The binding of satan for 1000 years in verses 1-3
- The millennial reign in verses 4-6
- The final conflict in verses 7-9
- The final judgment of satan in verse 10
- The final judgment of the lost dead in verses 11-15

Chapter 21-22 – These last two chapters taken together give an absolutely thrilling glimpse of the eternal state. Brought before us are the new Heaven, the new Earth, the new Jerusalem and the Eternal State.

REVELATION NARRATIVE

Jesus Christ will indeed rule and reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The great God of the creation of all things is also the great God of the culmination of all things. The Christ of the opening chapter of Revelation is no longer the meek and quiet lamb of Isaiah's prophecy. He now appears to us as the Great Priest-Judge in this picture of His Resurrection Glory. His white head and hair show that He is complete in knowledge, wisdom and purity. His blazing eyes and brazen feet speak of piercing judgment and resistless strength. His voice is as clear as a trumpet and as strong as a mighty river or the raging sea. The word proceeds from His mouth as a two edged sword and performs the work of judgment and division. All the while, His divine countenance glows as the sun in a display of omnipotent deity.

He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending. He is the one which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. He is the first and the last. He is the one that liveth and was dead and is alive for evermore. He is both the morning star and the bright and morning star. He is the one who is holy and true and that has the key of David. He is the Amen, the faithful and true witness. He is the one who is worthy because He is the Lion of the Tribe of Juda, the Root of David and the Lamb that had been slain. He is the one who will appear riding on a white horse, with His vesture dipped in blood, His name will be called the Word of God and the army of the redeemed saints will follow him. He is the one who will come quickly with His reward with Him. He is indeed our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Above all else, Jesus Christ must be seen as preeminent in the Book of Revelation.

Jesus is the one walking in the midst of the churches in Rev. 2-3 taking note of all that is going on, and He still does the same today. The churches' responsibility then and now is to bear light in the midst of a sin darkened world so that Christ may be seen and the Gospel received. All churches have strengths and weaknesses but when all is complete what will really matter is did we glorify Christ by pointing others to Him. This task is made all the more urgent and important when we realize that His coming is imminent and God's judgment is about to be poured upon the lost!!

For over two thousand years the church has been awaiting the return of our blessed Lord and Saviour. Some times that wait has been an eager expectancy flowing forth from an obedient heart. Other times it has perhaps been accompanied by a feeling of hesitancy or dread because we know our walk and fellowship with Him is not all it should be. Whatever our spiritual condition, Christ comes in Rev. 4:1 and catches away the church.

After the rapture takes place, John beholds wondrous scenes in heaven in Rev. 4-5. There's God the Father upon the throne and a brilliant display of His magnificent glory. There's the four beasts or seraphim as well as the 24 elders. There's also great anxiety and weeping for John when the universe wide search seems to be unable to find anyone worthy to take the seven sealed book and open the seals. The twenty four elders break forth in song as Christ, who is worthy in all things, steps forward and takes the book from the Father to start the redemption and judgment process. The tribulation period on earth will now begin.

Events will now unfold with blinding speed. The first four seal judgments are opened in rapid succession. Four horses with their riders are seen here. All four riders are angelic beings that represent Christ and the will of Christ in the carrying out of the seal judgments. The colors of the horses are white, red, black, and pale or greenish yellow. They represent war, bloodshed, famine, pestilence and death. The world has broken out in anarchy and there are race wars and ethnic cleansings and armies fighting armies. Man is displaying the blood lust of demons as they operate under the influence of satan and his hordes who are no longer restrained by God. Even the beasts of the earth have turned vicious and in unprovoked attacks kill untold numbers of people. In short order, one fourth of the world's population is killed!!!

Those who have been saved since the rapture have not gone unnoticed. The opening of the fifth seal reveals a vast multitude who have been martyred for their faith. It seems that the new blood sport of the unregenerate is the murder of believers. The leading killer of God's people in the early tribulation will be the godless religious system referred to as the great whore and mother of harlots.

The mind of man could not imagine the things that take place with the opening of the sixth seal. A great earthquake moves every mountain and island world wide. The sun becomes black and the moon shows the color of

blood. The entire earth is rocked by a great meteor shower. In the midst of this devastation, the heavens part and God Himself is seen sitting on the throne in Heaven. How sad, that in the face of all the death and chaos from the natural catastrophes sent from God, that man wants to hide from God rather than turn to Him.

Now for the unthinkable, it gets worse!!! The seventh seal is opened and the trumpet judgments issue forth from it and begin to sound. In the first four trumpets the land, sea, fresh water and the heavens are affected with multitudes losing their life. Hail and fire mingled with blood rain down upon the earth burning a third of the trees and grass. A great burning mass is cast into the sea turning a third part of the sea to blood and killing a third of all creatures in the sea. A third of all ships are also destroyed. The third trumpet sees the star "wormwood" poison a third of the earth's freshwater killing many men in the process. Now the sun, moon and stars are smitten so that a third of the day and night is darkened.

Now hell will be unleashed upon earth. The fifth trumpet sees satan given the key to open the bottomless pit that houses the vilest of fallen angels. These are demons, looking somewhat like locusts that swarm in countless numbers out of the abyss. They have a leader who has been housed with them whose name is Abaddon and Apollyon which means destruction and destroyer. Their mission is to torment man five months and for these five months lost man cannot die. At the end of the five months, their mission complete, their physical bodies fall to the ground dead where they decay, stink and pollute the earth.

Another third of the world's population will now be killed as four fallen angels are loosed from the Euphrates River to lead 200 million demon soldiers on a gruesome mission of blood lust and death. This is the sixth trumpet. This demon army will continue for 13 months and finish their mission at the middle of the tribulation period.

Over half the world's population has now been killed and this is only the "Beginning of Sorrows". The worst is yet to come in the "Great Tribulation".

Now we must go back to the beginning and fill in so much that has been left out. Even though the tribulation is a time of God pouring His wrath on Godless man, He has at the same time fulfilled the words of the prophet who said He would “in wrath remember mercy”.

God seals two special witnesses, at the beginning of the tribulation period, who will prophesy for the first 3 ½ years. These have power to show authority from God by turning water to blood, causing it not to rain on the earth and to smite the earth with plagues at will. They are unkillable for the time of their ministry and have power to destroy any who would harm them with fire or “retribution in kind”.

144,000 Jewish evangelists will also be sealed during the very early part of the tribulation. They will be brought to Christ by the two witnesses, the supernatural manifestations of God and no doubt from the silent witness of Bibles, etc. that remain after the rapture. Those, like the two witnesses, cannot be killed and will minister for the entire tribulation period. God will use all of His human witnesses, some angels and other supernatural manifestations to bring multitudes to Christ during this time.

Back to the beginning, we must now document the rise and power of an infamous evil entity. He is a satan controlled man known as the antichrist and the beast as well as numerous other names. He rises to power talking peace but never really producing it. The means of his rise to power is twofold: The first is political and military. He becomes the leader of a ten nation confederacy that represents a revived Roman empire. His acquisition of power over these nations was not easy as warfare with three of them was necessary.

The second means to his rise to power is an unholy alliance with a godless, Christ hating religious system referred to as “mystery Babylon the great, the mother of harlots” and as the “great whore”. Just imagine, the man of sin in the religion business!!! In this satanic alliance both the antichrist and the “scarlet harlot” are using one another to try to hold sway over the entire earth. One will destroy the other, after a while, and God is in control of it all.

According to Daniel 9, the seven year covenant that the antichrist signs with Israel actually marks the beginning of the tribulation period. The signing of this covenant was prompted by a threat to Israel by the King of the North

(Russia and her many allies) and by the King of the South (Egypt and her many allies). The threat materializes as Russia, Egypt and their allies move their armies into position for an invasion of Palestine. In keeping with the terms of the covenant signed, antichrist moves his army into position to do battle. This war is the battle of God and Magog referred to in Ezekiel 38-39. The slaughter of this battle is so great that it takes seven months to bury the dead!!!

A miraculous thing now happens; God supernaturally destroys all but 1/6 of the Russian army by a great earthquake. The antichrist fights with and destroys the King of the South and is left in position to occupy Jerusalem. The destruction of Jerusalem that occurs with this war provides the opportunity for Israel to rebuild their temple which they do in record time. They are seen worshipping in it by the middle of the tribulation.

There is still much more that we must see as there are other great events that we have not touched upon. A great rebuilding program goes on during the early years of the tribulation period, as the literal city of Babylon is rebuilt to be the center of world trade, banking, commerce and politics during the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation. In heaven an angelic warfare is going on between good angels and fallen angels. The Archangel Michael leads the Holy angels of God against satan and his demon spirits. Satan, the prince of the power of the air, had tried to disrupt the rapture. The great warrior, Michael, shouted as he attacked the evil forces. Church age saints are in heaven attending two events while the tribulation unfolds on earth. The first is the Judgment Seat of Christ and the other is the marriage supper of the lamb. After weeping at the judgment seat, the rafters of the universe will quiver with the praise and rejoicing of the people of God at the marriage supper.

We have now arrived at the middle of the tribulation period. Can you believe all that has happened in just the first 3 ½ years? Now judgments will get worse and redemption will get closer!!!

For days now, the still living portion of the world's population has been glued to their television and computer screens. Every station of all nations has carried it live since it first happened. After watching his meteoric rise to power, they just can't believe their matchless leader, the antichrist, has been assassinated. They saw the ceremonious pomp of his funeral and then felt great anguish as their prospects for economic prosperity and world peace is

dashed. The latest news flash has taken them all by surprise though. Carried live on television the antichrist has been resurrected! Now will begin the reign of the beast.

Satan, lacking the power to create life, had staged the whole thing in a completely convincing manner. A powerful demon, from the abyss, has now indwelt the physical body of the antichrist. The antichrist, now the beast, has totally given his emotion, intellect and will over to satan. All he does from this day forward is in the power of and obedience to satan.

We will shortly look at what the beast does to propel himself from a regional leader to the world dictator. But first, we should realize that the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation is much more severe than the first 3 ½ years because satan has been cast out of heaven, the devil's reign as "prince and power of the air" has ended. The Bible declares that his fury is great because he knows his time is short. Of course, it was Michael and the Holy Angels who won the angelic war that had started at the rapture.

The newly empowered beast, now goes on a killing spree to consolidate his world power and stimulate his satanic ego. He kills God's two witnesses which until now could not be done. He destroys the great harlot church that he no longer needs to achieve his purpose. He fulfills the prophecy of Daniel concerning "the abomination that maketh desolate" when he sets his image up in the Temple of Jerusalem and proclaims himself to be God and he vows the death of the nation of Israel in order to keep God's program of the ages from being fulfilled. Through all these things, God is using satan and the beast to fulfill His purposes on this earth.

The two witnesses could be killed only because their appointed ministry had been fulfilled. The world had rejoiced over their death and were distressed when after 3 ½ days they were resurrected by God and caught up into heaven. The harlot church had used the antichrist and all the nations of the world to fulfill her christless goals, all the while empowered by satan. God then used the beast and his armies to destroy the religious harlot who had slaughtered the true people of God during her short reign.

The nation of Israel, unwilling to worship the image of the beast, has to flee in great haste out of Jerusalem. This is a miraculous flight where God gives her "two wings of a great eagle" that she uses to flee to "her place" in the

wilderness. Israel is supernaturally nourished in this place for the duration of the tribulation.

We should now introduce the final member of the unholy trinity. He is referred to as the beast out of the earth or the false prophet. It is he who compels the world to worship the first beast under penalty of death. He is able to perform miracles and give pseudo life to the image of the first beast. In short order he institutes a system of world wide registration in order for anyone to, buy or sell. He decrees the “mark of the beast” be worn on their right hand or in their forehead.

This unholy trinity, satan, the beast and the false prophet convince the lost masses that they can defeat God Almighty. They imitate the Holy Trinity by their number, their miracles and their seal. They will lead the masses of men to eternal destruction with themselves.

The last 3 ½ years of the tribulation sees the beast as the world dictator with his headquarters being in the rebuilt city of Babylon. Satan persecuted the remnant of Israel and true believers with a vengeance unseen in history. Untold numbers of Jews and gentiles are murdered by an enraged and unrestrained devil.

Man has plunged to the depths of depravity in a world where satan and his demons have free course.

The earth is a dark and frightful place. Men and women in mass have turned to drugs as part of their satan worship and as an escape from reality. Moral impurity is unrestrained in daily life with prostitution and flesh peddling being big business. Murder, theft and other sin's are so common place that they go almost unnoticed. For most, these sins are all they have to live for, because their eternal doom was sealed when they received the mark of the beast. O, that men and women would flee to Christ now and avoid the wrath to come!

All is not well with the beast and his world empire. As is always the case, the devil works for the harm of all and the good of none. Reports begin to come in that the “Kings of the East” are preparing for war. The beast knows that this will be a formidable enemy that must be faced. However, his worst concern is going to be the judgments of God that will now resume.

The seventh and final trumpet judgment sounds and from it issues forth the seven vial judgments. These are the most severe of all the plagues that have come upon men for they represent the fullness of the wrath of Almighty God that is going to be poured out upon lost men.

The first vial causes painful open, running sores to come upon the bodies of all who have taken the mark of the beast. The second causes the seas of the world to become as the blood of a dead man and all life in the sea dies. The third sees all fresh water turn to blood so that any who are thirsty are forced to drink blood to sustain life!!! The fourth vial causes the sun to send forth blasts of heat that scorch the lost who respond by blaspheming God. The seat of the beast is stricken with painful darkness as the fifth vial is poured out. How awful, the combination of the running sores and the pain of supernatural darkness cause lost men to gnaw their tongues in pain. Between the cries of pain and shouts of anguish, they continue to blaspheme the God of Heaven.

God is close to ending this tribulation now, He dries up the Euphrates River to prepare the way for the Kings of the East to come to Armageddon. The sixth vial also sees demon spirits come from the mouth of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet. These demon spirits will cause every nation of the earth to gather themselves to be slaughtered by Christ at the Battle of Armageddon.. Ominous sounds are heard at the pouring out of the seventh vial. The people on earth hear voices from heaven. Thunder and lightening are sounding and flashing in the heavens when the earthquake hits. Every city of the earth is totally destroyed with the exception of Jerusalem. As men wept and lamented over the destruction of Babylon, that took place in one hour, hail stones weighing a hundred pounds each began to rain down crushing, mangling and killing vast numbers of lost men.

The stage is now set for the conflict of Armageddon. The armies of all nations have gathered together. What a spectacle! The armies extend for almost 200 miles starting north of Jerusalem and encompassing the Mount of Megiddo, the plains of Esdraelon and on down through the valley of Jehoshaphat and finally ending at Edom.

The 144,000 Jewish men who have been preaching throughout the tribulation are encamped now around Jerusalem awaiting the return of Christ. The gentile armies, gathered and deceived by the demon spirits, are

probably intent on destroying Jerusalem, the 144,000 and even Christ Himself!

The nations lose courage before the battle is even joined. Immediately upon seeing the “sign of the Son of Man in heaven” the Bible declares that the nations “mourn”. Looking heavenward they see the magnificent glory of the resurrected Christ riding upon a white horse and the vast army of the saints following him. Christ’s slaughter of the armies does not start immediately. The nations watch in horror, their hearts melting with fear, as the Great Commander Christ casts the beast and false prophet alive into the lake of fire. Now, with the sharp sword that goeth out of His mouth, Christ slays the armies of the world. Bodies burst open as over ripe fruit and the blood gushes forth until it flows down the valley to the depth of the horses’ bridles. In the days that follow, the birds gorge themselves on the rotting corpses whose soul and spirit is already in hell. The tribulation period closes with the finish of the Battle of Armageddon.

Now the armies of the world are dead and the beast and false prophet are writhing in unyielding torment in the lake of fire. As John is contemplating the maze of events that he has already witnessed, a strong angel descends from heaven with the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hands. With resistless force he lays hold on satan, binds him with the chain, casts him into the bottomless pit and seals him in. The devil’s mission of deception has ended for now. He will remain chained and sealed in the bottomless pit for 1000 years.

The Lord Jesus Christ is about ready to establish the glorious millennial kingdom, however, one more judgment must first take place. On this event, the book of Revelation is silent but Christ Himself spoke of it in Matthew 25. It is the judgment of the living nations. Some two thirds of the world’s population has died in the last seven years. All who remain will be gathered before Christ. The nation of Israel, who was protected and nourished by God in the last 3 ½ years, will be present. They are the brethren. The sheep, saved gentiles, will enter into the millennial kingdom in their physical bodies. The goats, lost gentiles, will be cast into hell. The basis for this judgment is really quite simple. How did you treat the Jewish people during the tribulation period!! Friends, never forget, God judges nations today on how they treat the nation of Israel.

John has to this point witnessed judgment so sever and carnage so horrible that I am sure he would rather blot it from his remembrance. Now he will witness glories so wonderful that the human mind can hardly fathom them. The millennial reign of Christ has now begun.

Jesus is here on earth!!! He will rule and reign over the nations seated upon the Throne of David in Jerusalem. This righteous kingdom will continue for 1,000 years with no war, no sickness and no physical lack for any living person. Israel will be the head of nations during this time. Once a year each nation will make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to pay honor to Christ. The earth will be restored to its Edenic condition and animals will all be tame. While the children who are born will have a sin nature, there will be no open sin of any type. There will be a 100 year period of grace for those who are born to get saved, after which they will be cut off. There will be labor, industry and world wide prosperity. This will be a time of universal knowledge of Christ, perfect justice, fullness of joy and absolute holiness.

Just before the eternal state, there will be a final revolt against God and one further demonstration of the sinful heart of man. Satan is loosed from his prison for a period of time and quickly achieves a vast following. This army will be destroyed by the fire of God which comes down out of heaven. The devil will deceive no more, for he is cast into the lake of fire where the beast and false prophet are, to be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

It is a solemn time when all the lost dead of all ages are summoned, even from hell itself, to stand before the Great White Throne Judgment. This scene provides no hope, for their eternal fate has already been determined. Based upon their works, the degree of their punishment is determined and each is cast into the lake of fire. As unspeakable horrible as it is, this scene is just as real as every other that John has been shown. Of a truth, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God!!

The bible declares that “the elements shall melt with fervent heat” as God purges the old sin tainted earth and heaven and creates the new which will be in place for the eternal state. The earth will not only be “new” but it will also be vastly different for the word declares that on this new earth there will be “no more sea”.

Closely related to John’s view of the eternal state is the description of the “new Jerusalem”. One only has to read the description of it in Revelation 21

and 22 to know that the beauty and splendor of this city is beyond human imagination. In appearance it will radiate with brilliant light continually because Christ is the eternal light thereof. Two descents of this city are seen in Revelation. I believe the new Jerusalem will hover above the earth throughout the millennium and is the dwelling place of the redeemed. It will then be removed to some far place in the universe for the purging and recreation of the heaven and earth. The new Jerusalem will return to set upon the new earth during the eternal state. In eternity, you and I who are saved will dwell with Christ in the new Jerusalem.

Christ Himself tells us three times in the closing chapter of Revelation that He is “coming quickly”. Let us live in the light of His soon return and make sure our life glorifies Him in all things.

REVELATION CHAPTER 1

Vs. 1 The first statement of this verse tells us that this book is the Revelation of Jesus Christ not of John. This is a revelation of Christ and by Christ. The revelation came from the Father to the Son. Christ then used an angelic messenger to signify the things to John.

Revelation is singular not plural. Our English word apocalypse comes from this Greek work and means an appearing, a manifestation, a coming or unveiling. This is in contrast to an apocryphal or hidden book.

There is a sevenfold Revelation in this book that makes up the complete Revelation of Christ.

1. 1:13-20 Christ as Priest Judge
2. 5:5 Christ the Lion of the Tribe of Judah
3. 19:7-10 Christ the Lamb of God as Bridegroom
4. 19:11-16 Christ the returning King
5. 20:4 Christ Heir to the throne of David
6. 20:11-15 Christ as Judge on the Great White Throne
7. 22:3 Christ on a permanent throne with the Father, a dual throne

The purpose of the book as stated in this verse is to “shew unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass”. These servants are bondsmen or bondslaves. This is the key to understanding the book. It was written for the common believer.

Notice that these things “must” come to pass. They are all a part of the plan of God and will happen.

“Shortly” does not mean shortly after they are revealed to John. It is a time period to be judged in the light of God’s reckoning not ours. Luke 18:8; 2 Peter 3:4,8; Rom. 16:20. We get our word tachometer from this Greek word. It means speedily. Three things are implied from the word shortly.

- imminence - can start any moment
- speed - once it starts it will be speedily executed
- completeness – it will be completely fulfilled.

“Signified” - This word is sometimes used in the sense of “identify” or “specify” (Acts 25:27). However, the word is also closely related to “sign” or “miracle” and I believe it is used here to refer to the miraculous nature of the marvelous prophetic visions which John was enabled to see.

The penman of this book is John the son of Zebedee and brother of James. Mark 1:19-20; 14:40. John also wrote the Gospel of John and the books of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John.

I would close my comments of this first verse of the book with the following observation: It is unquestionably clear from this verse that God intends church age saints to understand the contents of this Book. The promised blessings of Ch. 1:3 and Ch. 22:7 coupled with the command of 22:10 not to seal or hide the contents should allow every saint to approach this Book from an attitude of faith and not with an attitude of doubt. As we go forward, no position will be accepted which cannot be arrived at based on a literal interpretation of the scriptures or that would have been unknowable to the earliest readers.

Vs. 2 John, as one of the original disciples was an eye witness to Christ. Also notice the threefold nature of the record that John wrote according to this verse.

1. “the word of God,” - Brings before us the fact that this entire book is inspired by God.
- 2, “the testimony of Jesus Christ” - This statement refers to the many statements made by Christ Himself throughout the book.
3. “things that he saw” - We are being told by this statement that throughout the book of Revelation, John is recording the great future events in heaven and on earth which he has been permitted to “see” through the special ministry of the angel who miraculously “signified” them to him. Look also at notes on Vs. 10.

Vs. 3 This “Blessed” is the first of seven beatitudes in the book of Revelation. See also 14:3; 16:15; 19:9; 20:5-6; 22:7; 22:14.

The message contained in the book is important and public proclamation of it was to be made, note that one reads and many hear.

We should also gain from this verse that the very “words” of scripture are important and not just themes, principals or ideas.

Vs. 4 This book is written and sent to the seven churches of chapters two and three.

The reference in this verse is to God the Father. “Which is’ means constantly is. “Which was” means constantly was. “Is to come” means constantly coming. These three phrases bring before us the Eternality and Immutability of God.

“Seven Spirits” is a reference to God the Holy Spirit. You will note that John brings before us the Trinity in verses 4 & 5, with the Father mentioned first, the Holy Spirit second and then the Lord Jesus Christ. This title for the Spirit of God is probably a reference to the sevenfold ministry of the spirit as given in Isaiah 11:2.

The standard salutation of grace and peace is because of the work of the entire Trinity. The only person who knows true peace is the one who has first experienced the saving grace of the Almighty God.

Vs. 5 “Faithful Witness” - This is from Christ’s baptism to Calvary. Faithful means trustworthy. He faithfully carried out the will of the Father. John 12:49-50; 10:17-18.

It is of great interest to note that the word “witness” is the source of our word martyr.

“first begotten of the dead” is a reference to Christ’s resurrection. By virtue of resurrection Christ is given a name above every name. Priority, Esteem, Authority. Colossians 1:18; Psalm 89:27

“Prince of the Kings of the earth” - This is Christ’s key title in Revelation from the Rapture of the church onward.

Had we, which are saved, not been washed by the blood of Christ we could not be saved and would be as doomed as the unregenerate of book of Revelation. Thank God for the precious blood!! Acts 20:28; Rom. 3:25; Rom. 5:9; Eph. 1:7, Eph. 2:13; Col. 1:14 & 20; Heb. 9; I Peter 1:2 & 19; I John 1:7

Vs. 6 Concerning kings and priest see I Peter 2:5-9.

“glory and dominion” - Christ will enter into this aspect at the millennial reign. Dan. 7:13-14.

Vs. 7 This is the return of Christ to earth at the end of the Tribulation. Clouds represent His majesty and glory. Psalm 18:11; 97:1-3; Is. 19:1.

Vs. 8 Christ is described the same way here as the Father is in verse 4. “Almighty” is the name of God which appears some 48 times in the Old Testament and is here applied to Christ. It is Shaddi which means sufficient one. Note also that this is the first of many times that Christ speaks directly to John.

Vs. 9 Patmos is an island 25 miles off the coast of Asia Minor in the Aegean Sea. Note also the “crime” committed by John that resulted in him being exiled to this penal island. I wonder if there would be enough evidence to convict us?

Vs. 10 “In the Spirit” means controlled by the Spirit. However, there is also much more to it. He was miraculously translated in time and space, by the omnipotent creator who made time and space, to show us events that were (and are yet) future. Others in the Bible had similar supernatural experiences. Ezekiel in Ezek. 2:2; 3:12,14, Peter in Acts 10:19ff; Paul in Acts 22:17-21 and II Cor. 12:1ff.

The Lord’s Day is Sunday which is the first day of the week.

“Voice as a trumpet” - That is loud, clear and unmistakable.

Vs. 11 John in here commanded to write and send. This command comes from Christ who is “Alpha and Omega, the first and the last”.

Vs. 12 From verse 20 we know that this is a reference to the seven churches.

V. 13-16 This scene shows Christ as Priest-Judge. Here Christ is seen in judgment not in a fellowship aspect. There is no mention here of the articles

of the priest's clothing which spoke of intercession. This scene reminds of Daniel's description of the "ancient of days" in Daniel 7:9.

Vs. 14 "His head and His hairs were white like wool" - This speaks of dignity and the profound wisdom of age as well as the purity of holiness. Prov. 20:29.

Eyes speak of keen penetrating judgment which seeks out, exposes and judges everything. See I Cor. 3:13.

Vs. 15 Feet speak of the resistless strength which shall trample down and crush in judgment all that is contrary to His word.

"His voice as the sound of many waters" - We had already seen His voice loud and clear like a trumpet (vs. 10). Here it is broad and deep like the sea. Remember Christ is no longer the meek lamb of Calvary's cross. As the Priest Judge He has a commanding presence and a powerful voice that commands the attention of all.

"O, the authority of his voice" - This is the voice that brought order out of chaos in Genesis 1 and that stilled the sea in Matthew 8.

Vs. 16 We know from verse 20 that the seven stars are the pastors of the seven churches. Some prefer to think of these as guardian angels who are assigned to the churches. I find this to be a most interesting thought even though I don't hold that position.

Vs. 17 John could not bear to stand before such an awesome display of God's glory. See Ezekiel 1:28; Is. 6:5; Job 42:5-6; Daniel 10:8-9

Vs. 18 Keys are a symbol of authority and a token of office. See 3:7. In this verse death is the condition and hell is the place. Because Christ died and arose victorious over death and the grave, He now has the keys (authority) over who lives and who dies and who ultimately goes to hell. See Rom. 6:9; Rev. 4:9; Ps. 68:20

Vs. 19 This verse is very important because it contains Divinely inspired outline of the book of Revelation.

“The things which thou hast seen” is the vision of the Glorified Christ in chapter 1.

“The things which are” is the message to the seven churches in chapter 2 and 3.

“The things which shall be hereafter” is the rest of the book beginning with chapter 4.

Vs. 20 We have already noted that this verse gives us the interpretation of the “candlesticks” of verse 12 and the “stars” of verse 16.

The candlestick is symbolic of light bearing local churches. The church is to show forth the light of Christ to a dark and sinful world.

REVELATION CHAPTER 2

Chapters 2 and 3 make up the second section of the book of Revelation as stated in the Divinely inspired outline of 1:19

The churches of Ch. 2-3 are historical churches that existed at the time of the writing of the book of Revelation. The seven churches are also representative of conditions that exist in all churches in that day and right up to this day. There were, of course, other churches that existed in that day such as Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Corinth, Rome, Troas, Colossae and others.

One very popular teaching concerning the seven churches, which I am in disagreement with, is that these churches represent periods of church history. I offer the following arguments against this view.

- The churches fall under the non prophetic section of the inspired outline of 1:19.
- There is no indication of this teaching in the immediate context of Revelation 2-3.
- There is no indication of this teaching anywhere else in all of scripture that I am aware of!!! Remember, anything that cannot be proven by the Word of God has been effectively disproven.
- It would have been impossible for the people to whom the Book was originally given to have understood it as such.
- It does not fit with the doctrine of the imminent return of Christ.
- It serves to discourage the people of God of this day to work for and experience revival, church growth and zeal in the work of God.
- It is incompatible with the fact that the Bible is clearly teaching that all the churches mentioned were in existence at the same time. All conditions given in these churches have always existed in every day!!!

- If this teaching had not been brought in from a source wholly outside the Word of God, you would never have it enter your mind as you read Revelation ch. 2-3.

Vs. 1-7 Message to Ephesus

Vs. 1 Remember that the stars and candlesticks are identified for us in 1:20. The word Ephesus means desirable.

Vs. 2 “I know thy works” – This phrase is used in reference to all the churches addressed in chapters 2 and 3. This church had many commendable qualities about it. In order to possess the spiritual insight shown in this verse this church had to be sound in doctrine. II Tim. 2:15

They “tried” those who said they were apostles and were not. Church discipline is in view here. I Cor. 5:5; Matt. 18:17. They had been warned about these false apostles. Acts 20:30-38.

Vs. 3 This church had stayed busy working for the Lord.

Vs. 4 “left thy first love” – Notice that it was not taken from them, they left it. Their laxity was not in the performance of duties but rather in their devotion.

Lack of love but love of duty and discipline pictures the cold dead fundamentalism of today.

Vs. 5, “and will remove thy candlestick out of his place” – The threat here is that the Lord will come and remove Himself from the church and as far as He is concerned it would cease to be a church.

Vs. 6 “deeds of the Nicolaitanes” – These were followers of Nicolaus of Antioch, a Jewish proselyte who apostatized. Verses 14-15 show that what Balaam did to Israel, Nicolaus was doing to the New Testament church. Numbers 25; II Peter 2; Jude 7-13

There are actually quite a number of views on exactly what this false teaching is. I would simply add here that in a broad sense, there is no place within the local church for any false teachers or false teaching. II Cor. 11:13-15; Matt. 7:15; 24: 5 & 24; I John 4:1 & 3; II Peter 2:1,3,18

Vs. 7 “Overcomers” – These are all true believers. I John 5:4-5. “Eat of the tree of life” is a promise of eternal life with Him.

Vs. 8-11 Message to Smyrna

Vs. 8 Smyrna was a beautiful city 37 miles north of Ephesus. It was first in size, beauty and prosperity in this part of Asia Minor.

The word translated Smyrna is translated this way only here in the New Testament. The same word is used 3 other times in the New Testament and is translated myrrh. Matt. 2:11; Mark 15:23; John 19:39. Myrrh is associated with suffering and death.

There is no condemnation of this church. They were going through severe tribulation and needed encouragement not rebuke.

Vs. 9 They were poor materially but rich in other ways.

- Rich in Faith - James 2:5; Heb. 11:6
- Rich in good works - I Tim. 6:18
- Spiritually prosperous - 3 John 2

See also Matthew 6:20; Luke 16:11, II Cor. 6:10

“synagogue of satan” – This is a reference to unsaved Jews who falsely claimed to be true worshippers of God. Acts 13:50; 14:1-5,19; John 8:44; 16:1-2; Romans 2:28-29

Vs. 10 I take the “tribulation ten days” to be a literal ten day period. I see no scriptural justification for making this symbolic, as many do, of the major persecutions the church has gone through historically. Dan. 1:12,15; Matt.4

“Crown of Life” – This is one of the six crowns which may be won by Christians. These crowns are as follows:

- Incorruptible Crown (I Cor. 9:25) – For endurance and patience in the Christian Life
- Crown of Rejoicing (I Thess. 2:19) – For winning souls
- Crown of Righteousness (2 Tim. 4:8; 1 John 3:2-3) – For looking for His return.

- Crown of Life (James 1:12; Rev. 2:10) – For enduring temptation and martyrs
- Crown of Glory (I Peter 5:4) – For faithful pastors
- Crowns of Gold (Rev. 4:4) – An evidence of redemption. Every believer will receive this crown

Vs. 11 “second death” – Refer to our detailed study in 20:11-15

Vs. 12-17 Message to Pergamos

Vs. 12 Pergamos was 40 miles north of Smyrna.

“sharp sword with two edges” – This is a reference to the Word of God and judgment by the Word. Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12; Rev. 2:16

Vs. 13 “where satan’s seat is” – The word seat means throne. Pergamos had four gorgeous impressive temples to four famous Greek gods: Zeus, Dionysius, Athenia and Aesculapiuis (pronounced Es-ca-lay-pian). This last one was god of healing. This emblem was a serpent. This pictures satan. Pergamos was the stronghold of satan, the base of his evil operation in that day. It was satan’s capital!!! Where is his capital today? In the tribulation it will be in either Jerusalem or Rome! Rev. 16:10

We don’t know anything more about Antipas than is stated here.

Vs. 14 “Balaam” – It was a teaching of compromise that brought corruption to the children of God. Num. 22:1-25:9.

Vs. 15 See verse 6

Vs. 16 This verse further carries out the thought of judgment based on the word of God.

Vs. 17 “hidden manna” –

- God gave manna in Exodus 16:4-15 as a sign His provision
- A pot of manna was hidden in the Ark so that future generations would be reminded of God’s provision. Ex. 16:32-35; Heb. 9:4
- Manna was a type of Christ. John 6:48,51

A spiritual application to be made here is that many believers are feeding on the husks of the world rather than on the plenteous provision of God that is available through Christ.

Many thoughts have been set forth concerning the “White Stone” of verse 17. One such thought is as follows: *“The meaning of the white stone with the new name written is derived from either or both of two customs of the day. The first was that of judges, who determined a verdict by placing in an urn a white and a black pebble. If the white one came out, it meant acquittal; thus the white stone would mean the assurance that there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. The other custom was the wearing of amulets as good luck charms around the neck. If this is the reference, then the stone is the Lord’s way of reminding the people that they had Him and needed no other thing.”*

I prefer to think of this as a sign of security, ownership and the certainty of dwelling eternally with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Vs. 18-29 Message to Thyatira

Vs. 18 This city was southeast of Pergamos and about halfway between Pergamos and Sardis.

The description of Christ’s eyes and feet speak of judgment.

Vs. 19 This is the first of the churches to be commended for their love.

This verse refers to those of verse 24 and is the first time a group has been singled out as being the true remnant.

Vs. 20 “that woman Jezebel” – This is an actual woman living at the time of the writing of this book. She was given the name Jezebel by the Holy Spirit as a symbolic name of reproach. She is mentioned to connect that which was happening in the church at Thyatira with what happened to Israel during the time of Jezebel. See I Kings 21:25; 2 Kings 9:22. She introduced idolatry of the most satanic and immoral sort.

Vs. 21-23 Judgment will come on all who follow the wicked doctrine. Please note that this passage contains much symbolism.

Vs. 24 “depths of satan” – This is the title given to the teaching of Jezebel.

Vs. 25 This is the first mention of the second coming in the letters to the seven churches.

Vs. 26-27 Here we have a brief mention of the millennial reign. See chapters 20-22

Vs. 28 “I will give him the morning star” – Christ promises to give Himself to the overcomers. He is the Bright and Morning Star. Rev. 22:16.

REVELATION CHAPTER 3

Vs. 1-6 Message to Sardis

Vs. 1 Sardis was 30 miles southeast of Thyatira. This church was “dead”. It is like a ghost town. It is still a popular attraction but the thing that made it famous is gone!

“seven spirits” – This is a reference to God the Holy Spirit. This is the seven fold administration of the Holy Spirit. Isaiah 11:2. We see in this phrase the fullness and completeness of the power of the Spirit of God. See also 1:4.

“dead” – Scripture associates death with sin. Sin in one or more forms had gotten into the church. Ez. 18:4; Rom. 6:13,23; Eph.2:5; I Tim. 5:6; James 1:15. This sin may have been active or inactive. James 4:17

Vs. 2 “perfect” means finished, complete or fulfilled.

Vs. 3 This is a similar language to the second coming. Judgment is in view and the action of Christ to break up the fellowship of the church.

Vs. 4 Those with defiled garments are not true believers. True believers have white garments. Rev. 7:14; Phil. 3:9; Matt. 22:11-14

There is a ray of hope even in this church. In verses 2 and 4 Christ exhorts the church to “be watchful and strengthen the things which remain”. Matt. 26:42; Rom. 13:11; I Cor. 16:13; I Thess. 5:6; I Peter 5:8

Vs. 5 “I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life” – Some think or are afraid that this is referring to unfaithful Christians. It is not!! Note the following thoughts:

- Every person has his name in the book of life, both saved and lost
- As unbelievers die, their names are removed from the book; thus, at the final judgment, the book contains only the names of believers. Rev. 20:12-15

- Moses was aware of a book in which the names of forgiven and unforgiven were written. Ex. 32:32-33. What Moses asked was no more possible than what Paul asked in Romans 9:3. See also Psalm 69:28.
- Some believe that the Lamb's Book of Life is a different book containing only the name of the saved. Rev. 13:8; 21:27; However, it is actually the final completed copy of the book of life. Luke 10:20; Phil. 4:3

Vs. 7-13 Message to Philadelphia

This church and Smyrna are the only of the seven churches which received no condemnation. They had two things in common.

- Both had to contend with the same enemies. Compare 2:9 and 3:9
- Both were insignificant in eyes of the world. Compare 2:9 and 3:8

Vs. 7 “Key of David” – This speaks of Christ’s sovereignty and authority over the church. Isaiah 22:20-22

Vs. 8 “open door” – This refers to the opportunities to minister. Acts 14:27; I Cor. 16:9, 2 Cor. 2:12; Col. 4:3

“Little strength” – It is important for all of us to remember that a “little strength” is all God needs to be able to do great things thru us. II Cor. 12:9

“Kept my word” – Unfortunately this cannot be said of many supposed fundamental churches of this day. Many individuals and churches have succumbed to the pressure to repudiate, distort or dilute the Word of God. If this fails effort is made to allegorize or ignore it. See I Tim. 6:20; II Tim. 1:13; Jude 3; Col. 1:23

Vs. 10 “I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation” – This is a promise that the church will not go through the tribulation period. This is the time described in chapters 6-19. See also I Thess. 5:9.

Vs. 11 “That no man take thy crown” – This is a warning to believers to stay faithful and steady so that our reward will not be lessened. 2 John 8; I Cor. 3:14-15

Vs. 12 Ancient geographers said that the city was shaken daily by earthquakes. This may be the background for the words “pillar in the temple”. The thought is that the true believers would stand when all else falls.

“go no more out” – Means to no longer be exposed to the temptations and trials of this present life.

There are three thoughts of the writing of names in this verse.

- I will write upon him the name of my God” – This shows the overcomers belong to God.
- “the name of the city of my God” – This shows they hold citizenship in the New Jerusalem.
- “I will write upon him my new name” – This shows they are related to Christ in a special way.

We will study the New Jerusalem in much detail in chapters 21 and 22.

Vs. 14-22 Message to Laodicea

Vs. 14 Laodicea was a wealthy city noted for commerce, fine wool garments and eye medicine.

25 years before Revelation was written, the seeds of corruption had already been planted in this church. See Col 2:1; 4:16.

“Beginning” – means origin. See Col. 1:16-17

Vs. 15-16 These verses show a unnatural transition. Spiritually the transition is from cold to hot. Look at the life of Paul, Matthew or Zacchaeus.

Lukewarm is a lethargic condition from which it is almost impossible to bring one out of. The cold feel conviction and realize their need.

The hot are sensitive and serving.

The lukewarm do not feel conviction, do not realize need and don't respond to warning.

Vs. 16 This is a condition that makes God sick.

Vs. 17 These people were blind concerning their need.

Vs. 18 Christ counsels spiritual restoration in these areas:

1. Spiritual values – “gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich”
2. Spiritual virtues – “white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed”
3. Spiritual vision – “anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see”

The purchase price of these things is not material, it is spiritual. I Peter 1:18-19

Vs. 19 Compare this verse with Hebrews 12:5-11.

Vs. 20 This verse is often applied to unbelievers. The interpretation is that of Christ trying to get back into the church at Laodicea.

Vs. 21 This is another promise to reign in the millennial kingdom.

REVELATION CHAPTER 4

This chapter begins the third and final section of the Divinely inspired outline of 1:19.

Chapters 4 and 5 taken together form a prologue to the entire last section of the book of Revelation. These chapters also give John a heavenly perspective of the earthly events that are going to take place. This perspective will be much needed in light of the horrific judgments that will take place.

“The grandeur of the setting is incomparable and the theme is nothing less than the very destiny of the world” is the way Dr. Henry Morris describes the scene in these chapters. I agree! Allow the Spirit of God to control your mind’s eye so that you can see what John saw!!!

Vs. 1 This open door to Heaven is the Rapture of the Church. There are five reasons why I hold this view.

1. 3:22 is the last mention of the church until after the tribulation
2. The outline of 1:19 places this in the third section of the book
3. Chapter 4 begins with the words meta-tauta which have chronological significance.
4. Daniel 7:9-14 associates this scene with Israelitist time not church time.
5. God is seen on a throne of judgment not grace.

Vs. 2 This throne is set for judgment.

Vs. 3 In the book of Revelation the Father is described by precious stones. In Daniel 7, He is described by fire, pure wool, holiness and judgment. The jasper is clear as crystal (21:11) the color of light and speaks of the Holiness of God. The sardine is blood red and speaks of judgment. The jasper and sardine together speak of judgment based on God’s Holiness.

The rainbow takes our minds back to the Old Testament promise God made to man. This rainbow shows mercy in the midst of judgment. Genesis 9:13-16.

Vs. 4 The elders are redeemed, glorified human beings. They have been raptured. They represent church age Saints.

The white raiment speaks of the righteousness of Christ.

The crowns are the victory crown and is an evidence of redemption.

Vs. 5 These powers are indicative of judgment processes and are intended to strike terror into the hearts of those who witness them.

Vs. 6 This sea of glass speaks of the purity and holiness of God. 15:2; Ex. 24:10; 30:18-21

These four beasts are Seraphim. The same as seen in Isaiah 6.

Vs. 7 This description of the beasts equates them with the character of Christ as presented in the four Gospels.

Matthew – Lion – Royalty

Mark – Ox or Calf – Laborious Endurance

Luke – Man – Compassion

John – Eagle – Divine Word, Deity

Note that one of these beasts will be associated with each of the first four seals of chapter 6.

Vs. 8 It seems that this order of angels called Seraphim is responsible to continually ascribe holiness to God.

In these closing verses the four beasts and the 24 elders render honor and glory to God.

Vs. 10 This verse is where we get the Bible concept of casting our crowns before God.

Vs. 11 As simple as it may seem, this verse tells us why God created all that He created. See also Proverbs 16:4; Is. 43:7; Rom. 9:20-23. Christ must be acknowledged as creator before He will ever be known as our Redeemer. The creative work of God is the foundation of all Christian faith. If a person has no trouble believing Genesis 1:1, they will have no trouble accepting the rest of the Word of God.

REVELATION CHAPTER 5

This chapter is a continuation of the great heavenly throne room scene which began in Chapter 4.

Vs. 1 Here a book is introduced. We will see another little book in chapter 10. These are the two books by which the beast, false prophet and satan are judged.

Right now we have a temporary situation where satan is the god of this world. II Cor. 4:4. However, Christ is going to rectify this situation for “the earth hath He given to the children of men”. Ps. 115:16

“written within and on the back side” – This shows that this book is complete, full, nothing more could be added.

This book is the title deed to the inheritance. The title Adam lost, Christ will regain. Phil. 2:6-9; Ps. 2; Heb. 1

This book contains the successive steps by which Christ will recover the earth from the usurper, satan. As the seven seals of this book are opened, we have the revealing of the seven seal judgments of chapter 6.

The one who can open the book is the rightful ruler of the kingdom.

Vs. 2 A strong angel is mentioned in reference to this book and the one of chapter 10.

Vs. 3 Here we see the search for someone worthy to open the book. This threefold characterization of the universe is the same as Phil. 2:10.

Vs. 4 John wept because the search had been unsuccessful till this point.

Vs. 5 It is of great interest that one of the elders steps forth to comfort and assure John. This verse and the next give three credentials that show Christ is worthy to open the book.

“Lion of the tribe of Judah” – In this phrase, Christ claims title as the rightful King coming from the tribe of Judah. Gen. 49:8-10; Num. 10:14; Judges 1:1.

“Root of David” – This shows Christ is worthy because He is God. Compare Is. 11:1,10; Matt: 22:41-45.

Vs. 6 “stood a Lamb as it had been slain” – This shows Christ is worthy because He had paid the price. He is no longer the meek lamb of Is. 53. “horns” are an emblem of power. Deut. 33:17; I Sam. 2:1
“eyes” express perfect knowledge.

Vs. 7 When you compare verses 5-7 with Daniel 7:13-14 you will see that Christ taking the book is the same as Him receiving His Kingdom. There is a beautiful type of the owner’s return, after long absence, to claim His land in Jeremiah 25:11; 32:10-15.

Vs. 8 Incense is a symbol or emblem of prayer. Ps. 141:2; Ex. 33:7

Vs. 9 This verse shows us that the 24 elders had been redeemed by the blood of Christ. Redemption is by blood. It always has been and always will be. Lost modernist of our day are embarrassed by the blood but true born again people of God still rejoice and sing about His precious cleansing blood.

Vs. 10 This verse brings before us the idea of reigning with Christ in the millennium. We will study this in detail in Chapter 20-22.

Vs. 11 There was an uncountable number around the throne.

Vs. 12-14 Here is a universal acknowledgment by the heavenly host that Christ is worthy. Compare Matt. 21:9-22:6.

Vs. 12 We saw a threefold doxology in 4:11 which related to creation. Here we have a sevenfold anthem related to His work of redemption.

Vs. 13 What an interesting and enjoyable thought! Even the animals take part in praise. See Ps. 148:7-14.

REVELATION CHAPTER 6

While we saw the Rapture of the church in 4:1, time does not progress in the tribulation period until the first seal is opened in this chapter. These seals are the first of three sets of judgments that take place in the tribulation period. The others are the Trumpets and the Vials of God's wrath.

This seven year tribulation period is the same as Daniel's famous "seventieth week". Daniel 9:24-27. As it relates to the unbelieving nation of Israel, it is to be "the time of Jacob's trouble". Jeremiah 30:7. For unbelieving gentiles, it is the time of "the indignation of the Lord upon all nations". Isaiah 34:2

Let's open the seals now and the King will begin the process of taking control of His Kingdom.

Vs. 1-2 THE FIRST SEAL JUDGMENT

Vs. 1 Christ is now going to begin opening the seven sealed book or scroll of 5:1. "noise of thunder" – Thunder precedes an approaching storm. The first mention of thunder in the bible is in connection with God's judgment in Egypt in Ex. 9:23.

Note again that the first four seals are announced by the beasts of chapter 4.

Vs. 2 "White horse" – The horse is the Old Testament emblem of war. Job 39:18-25; Ps. 76:6; Prov. 21:31; Ez. 26:10

White is the emblem of victory. The triumphant Roman generals rode white horses.

The popular view is that the rider here is the antichrist; however, some believe it is Christ Himself.

I do not hold either of the above views. I believe that the riders of the first four seal judgments are created beings (angels) representing Christ. Christ is going to redeem the earth and uses agents to accomplish this. Zech. 1:7-11; 6-5.

War and all the hardship that comes with it is the judgment of this seal.

Vs. 3-4 THE SECOND SEAL JUDGMENT

The horse seen here is red which is the color of blood. Blood shed is indicated here. “take peace from the earth” – This is in relation to the Gentile nations because Israel is protected by the covenant confirmed by the antichrist until the middle of the tribulation. Dan. 7:8

“that they should kill one another” – This phrase indicates war within each nation, such as class war, religious war and race wars.

Vs. 5-6 THE THIRD SEAL JUDGMENT

“black horse” – Black is the color of mourning and famine. Jer. 4:28; 8:21, Mal. 3:14; Zech. 6:2; Lam. 5:10

The judgment of this seal is scarcity and famine of which the balance is a symbol. Lev. 26:26; Ez. 4:16. Famine always follows war.

“measure” is about one quart. This is the amount of food allotted for one man for one day. You can get three times as much barley as wheat. Barley was eaten by slaves.

“penny” – This is the denarius (Matt. 20:2) which was the pay of a soldier or common laborer for one day.

Note that the famine is so bad that a man works a full day to obtain enough food for himself. How does he get enough food for his family?

We should also point out that this is a different time period than chapter 12 when money will be useless unless you have the mark of the beast. The seals, trumpets and vials do not overlap time wise.

“see thou hurt not the oil and the wine” – Proverbs 21:17 shows that oil and wine were regarded as luxuries on the table of the rich. James 5:1-5 which is prophetic shows that the rich will enjoy their riches right up until the end regardless of the suffering of the poor.

Vs. 7-8 THE FOURTH SEAL JUDGMENT

“pale horse” – This horse is greenish yellow the color of death. It looks livid and corpse like.

The angelic rider of this horse has been given the name of “Death”. Death applies to the body, hell applies to the soul. While death is reaping, hell is receiving them.

One fourth of the people of earth are killed in this judgment. These are killed by the sword which is warfare, by hunger which is famine, by death which is pestilence (Jer. 14:12; 21:7), and by wild beasts. One fourth would equal some 1-2 billion people!!!

Vs. 9-11 THE FIFTH SEAL JUDGMENT

Those seen here were saved in the first half of the tribulation period and gave their life for their testimony.

Their prayer is the Jewish imprecatory prayer for vengeance. Ps. 74:9-10; 79:5; 89:46; 94:4 A vast number of the martyrs killed in the first half of the tribulation are killed under the authority of the vast godless religious system of that day. Rev. 17:6

In verse 10 we see that they are slain by those still alive on earth.

They were given “white robes” in this intermediate state until they get their glorified bodies in chapter 20.

Vs. 12-17 THE SIXTH SEAL JUDGMENT

This seal is early in the tribulation period, perhaps even in the first year. The middle of that period is the sixth trumpet in chapter 9.

I believe it probable that this earthquake destroys all but 1/6 of the armies of the north. Gog and Magog Ezekiel 38-39. See especially Ezekiel 38:18 – 39:1-6. If this is not the earthquake that destroys the Russian army and many of its allies then there is yet another devastating earthquake even earlier in the tribulation than the sixth seal. More detailed thoughts on Gog and Magog are found at the end of this chapter.

The events of verse 12 remind us of the prophecies of Joel 2:30-31 and Zephaniah 1:15.

Compare verse 14 to Isaiah 34:4.

Verse 16 brings before us a sad and tragic picture. Their greatest fear comes from the vision of God in heaven rather than from all the death and devastation around them. God would gladly forgive and save if only repentance and faith were present in their hearts. Alas!! their belief was as James 2:19.

The six catastrophic events of this seal show God's displeasure over the death of His martyrs in the fifth seal.

There are three "great" earthquakes in this book. Chapters 6,11,16.

The six events of this seal are:

1. A great earthquake – vs. 12
2. Sun becomes darkened so that it becomes black as sackcloth. Note words which introduce symbolism such as, like, as it were – vs. 12
3. Moon becomes as blood – vs. 12
4. Meteor shower on earth – vs. 12
5. Heaven will open for a moment so that men will get a glimpse of the awesome scene of God on the throne – vs. 14
6. Every mountain and island will be moved to some extent. Notice there is no as in this sentence – vs. 14

The latter verses of this chapter show that these events strike terror in the hearts of men and they cry out to be hidden from the mighty judgment of God. Vs. 15-17.

One popular view of the tribulation judgments, which I do not hold, is that the first six seal judgments survey the entire 7 year period and that the trumpets and vials lap back over that time. This would mean that the time period of the sixth seal would be the same, or close to the same, as the last vial judgments. The attitude of man in these judgments is one of the things that disprove this position. Compare Rev. 6:15-17 with 16:9 & 21.

We need to take time at this point to set up a general picture of the movement of nations and armies during the tribulation. We will accomplish this by examining a number of different issues and then putting them together into an overall perspective.

1. The Major Military Powers of the Tribulation: It must be emphasized that at some point during the tribulation, every nation in existence will be involved in military conflict. With that understood, there will be four major power groups that are specifically mentioned in scripture.

- The beast or antichrist will rise to power as the head of a 10 nation confederacy that represents a revived Roman empire. Some have referred to this alliance as a United States of Europe. Warfare will be necessary with three of these ten before he is firmly in control. See Dan. 7:8 & 24; Rev. 13:1-10; Rev. 17:13 According to Daniel 7:23 the beast will ultimately have a world wide empire but this will not be until the middle of the tribulation.
- The King of the South. This is the nation of Egypt. Daniel 11:40
- The King of the North. This is Russia and a vast array of other nations that are allied together. These nations include Persia (Iran), Germany, Ethiopia, Libya and “many people with thee”. See Ezekiel 38:2-6; Daniel 11:40
- The “Kings of the East” which is China and other oriental nations. See Daniel 11:44; Rev. 16:12

2. The Battle of God and Magog: Ezekiel chapters 38-39 detail information concerning this battle which is said to take place in “the latter years” (38:8) but the big question is when in the latter years?

It is this writers position that this battle takes place very near the beginning of the tribulation period. The following will detail the basis for this position.

- There are four widely held views on the timing of this war that based on my understanding of the Word of God cannot be correct.
 - a. God and Magog of Ez. 38-39 is the same as God and Magog in Rev. 20:8. This Revelation reference is to the final conflict at the

end of the millennial reign of Christ. There are numerous reasons why these two are not the same. One is that comparisons of Rev. 20:9 with Ezekiel 39:2 shows that in one battle all are killed and in the other 1/6 escape. Another inescapable difference is that one army is killed by fire that came down from God out of heaven and the other was destroyed by a supernatural earthquake. Compare Rev. 20:9 with Ezekiel 38:19-22.

- b. A second widely held view is that the battle of God and Magog is the same as the battle of Armageddon and therefore takes place at the end of the tribulation period. Again there is a multitude of reasons why this cannot be correct.
 - A comparison of Ezekiel 38:19-22 and Rev. 19:21 show that they are defeated in different ways.
 - Revelation 19:21 says that all were slain whereas Ez. 39:2 shows that 1/6 survived.
 - Rev. 7:4-17 gives a description of a multitude of Jews and gentiles who are saved in the tribulation period. The supernatural destruction of God and Magog is shown to be so obviously from the Hand of God that the Lord will use this event to bring many to the knowledge of the Lord. See Ez. 38:23; Ez. 39:21-22 This war could not accomplish the above results during the tribulation if it happened at the end of the tribulation.

- c. A third view is that it takes place just before the rapture. I do not hold this view because it cannot be reconciled with the Doctrine of the Imminent Return of Christ. A Bible Prophecy of this detail would surely be a “sign” to everyone that Christ was coming at that particular time

- d. A fourth view is that this Battle takes place at the middle of the Tribulation period. This position does not allow for Ezekiel 39:8-13 to be fulfilled.

3. A brief look at the major battles.

- Shortly after the rapture, the Antichrist will sign a protective covenant with Israel that is suppose to last seven years. Daniel 9:26-27

- Soon thereafter the “King of the South” (Egypt and her allies) and the “King of the North” (Russia and her allies) will invade Israel. This is the Battle of Gog and Magog. Ez. 38-39; Dan. 11:40.
- According to Eze. 38:13 the other nations protest this action but are able to accomplish nothing. I guess the United Nations will still be alive and well!!!
- The Antichrist keeps his promise and takes his army to Palestine to fight. However, God supernaturally defeats Russia on the mountains of Israel (Ezekiel 39:1-4&12). And so the Antichrist fights with and defeats the King of the South. Daniel 11:40-45.
- The Antichrist is kept busy for the next few years dealing with plagues and consolidating his power. Finally at the middle of the tribulation a startling series of events propels him to world power.
- Right after the mid tribulation point, the swords of war again begin to rattle. The “King of the East” begin the movement of their armies (Daniel 11:44; Rev. 16:12) to fight with the beast and his armies. All are destroyed at Armageddon. Rev. 19:11-21.

I close my thoughts here by inserting the following: It is the battle of Gog and Magog that gives Israel the opportunity to rebuild the Tribulation Temple of Revelation 11:1-2. Much of Jerusalem will be destroyed in the Battle. Zechariah 12:2ff. The Jewish people will take that opportunity to raze the “Dome of the Rock” (or what is left of it) and build their temple.

REVELATION CHAPTER 7

This chapter represents a pause in the progression of time in the tribulation period. Time will begin to move forward again when the seventh seal is opened in chapter 8.

The events of verses 1-8 of this chapter take place in the first 3 ½ years of the tribulation. Verses 9-17 take us to the last of the tribulation.

Vs. 1 “four corners” – The earth is round but has four extensions or high places that make it resemble having corners. The four points of the compass are referred to here, north, south, east and west.

“four winds” is the judgment process of God. Wind as an instrument of judgment in the affairs of men is seen often in the Bible. Job 1:19; 38:24; Is. 41:16; Jer. 4:11-12; 18:17; 49:32,36; Ez. 5:2; 12:14; Jonah 1:4,10-12

Stopping the wind is a pause in judgments.

Vs. 2 “east” – East in scripture points toward the glory of God. Num. 2:3; Ez. 43:1-2; 47:1. The “seal” here refers to Divine possession, protection and preservation.

Vs. 3 There are many precedents in scripture of God sealing and preserving His people.

- Noah and his family
- Rahab and her house in the destruction of Jericho

The seal includes the idea of salvation but I believe much more is involved. It also includes giving them supernatural protection from anyone who would kill them and from the plagues that God sends. When we get to the trumpet judgments they do not affect those who have the seal of God!!

It is interesting to note that this procedure would soon be blasphemously imitated by the coming world dictator, the beast, who would require all his followers “to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads”. Rev. 13:16

Another wonderful thought covering a seal is that the saved will have a similar badge of identification throughout eternity. The Bible declares “His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads”. Rev. 22:3-4

Vs. 4 Here we see the sealing of the 144,000 Jewish men to be the evangelist of the tribulation period. Read the description of these men in 14:1-5.

Vs. 5-8 These verses tell us the 12,000 were sealed from each of the twelve tribes of Israel.

As you read this portion you will see that it is not the same as the list of tribes as given in the Old Testament. Dan and Ephriam are missing. There are several possible explanations for this. Some believe that they were left out because of sin. Deut. 29:18-29; Hosea 4:17; 6:5; Judges 18.

Another view is that Dan being small was absorbed in Neptalim, and that Ephriam is represented in Joseph. Under this view no tribe is actually left out. This is the position I take.

These Jewish evangelists are sealed at the beginning of the tribulation period and minister throughout, entering into the millennium in their physical bodies as the first fruits. 14:4

They will be a perpetual thorn in the side of satan and the anti-christ through the tribulation. These men are sealed by God and cannot be killed!

Vs. 9-17 These verses show the great multitude that are saved as the result of the testimony of the 144,000. This is a scene at the end of the tribulation.

From the awfulness, fear and chaos of the sixth seal, you would have thought it impossible for anyone to be saved. Not so!!! O, the Grace of God, that in the wrath of tribulation, God remembers mercy. (Habakkuk 3:2) and multitudes are saved. That makes this parenthesis both logical and needful. We would not expect less of the omniscience God we serve.

Vs. 14 identifies these as coming out of “great tribulation”. Remember, the first 3 ½ years is called the “beginning of sorrow” in Matt. 24:8. The last 3 ½ years is called “great tribulation” in Matt. 24:21.

The palm is connected with the Feast of Tabernacles which was the last and closing joyous feast of Israel. Lev. 23:40.

They gave their life for Christ, but verse 17 tells us that all their tears are over.

Verse 17 represents one of the most beautiful sentences and most gracious promises in all the Word of God. The promises of verse 16-17 apply to all believers.

REVELATION CHAPTER 8

Vs. 1 This silence emphasizes the solemnity and seriousness of the situation. Thirty minutes of pleasure is fleeting. However, thirty minutes of intense, dark anticipation is nerve racking.

Vs. 2 These are the seven trumpet angels. Trumpets, more than any other wind instrument, were used in the national life of Israel. Their use is outlined in Numbers 10:1-10. Their two most prominent uses were for assembly and for alarm or war.

These trumpet judgments are to arouse Israel that the false covenant with antichrist is not secure and that they are about to be directly involved in the judgments on earth.

The phrase “third part” is used in verses 7-12 and references Israel. We know this from Old Testament passages such as Ezekiel 5:12 and Zechariah 13:8-9.

It is also interesting to note the similarities between the trumpet judgments and the plagues in Egypt.

- Hail and fire (Ex. 9:18-26) - Vs. 7
- Water and blood (Ex. 7:19) - Vs. 8
- Darkness (Ex. 10:21) – Vs. 12
- Locusts (Ex. 10:12) – Ch. 9:3

In Egypt the plagues were to save Israel, here they are to trouble her.

Vs. 3-5 This scene is another indication that Israel is in the mind of God. All of this is Jewish related.

In the fifth seal (6:9-11) the martyrs are told to wait awhile for vengeance. Here they are no longer waiting but judgment begins.

Vs. 3 “incense” in Revelation 5:8, the prayers are the incense. Here they are offered along with the incense. The point of emphasis here is that the prayers of saints are given efficacy (power to bring results) through the

incense added by the angel. Concerning the prayers as incense = see Phil 4:18; Gen. 8:21; Exodus 30:1 & 8; Ps. 141:2.

Note that the angel does not provide the incense; it is given to him by Christ.

The ingredients used to make incense and the use of the incense speak of Christ. See Exodus 30:34-38 and Numbers 16:46. The incense represents the perfection of Christ's character and His person and work on Calvary.

Vs. 4 “ascended up before God” – This phrase indicates acceptance of the prayers by God.

Vs. 5 The casting of the fire into the earth is a token judgment indicating that the sound of the trumpets will follow.

Notice the frightful scene before the trumpets begin. Remember, there is an increase in severity from seals to trumpets to the vials.

Put yourself on earth to observe this frightful display!

Vs. 6 The angels make ready to unleash the seven trumpet judgments upon the earth.

Vs. 7 FIRST TRUMPET JUDGMENT

The word does not say life was taken. However, I believe it miraculous if this could take place without anyone being killed.

“were cast” – This implies irresistible power behind the judgment.

The major purpose of this judgment is not the taking of life, but rather to affect the conditions on the earth and the condition of individual lives.

Vs. 8-9 SECOND TRUMPET JUDGMENT

This is a great fire mass giving the appearance of a mountain. Note the words **as it were** which denote symbolism. We see man's quality of life, food source and commerce affected by this judgment.

Vs. 10-11 THIRD TRUMPET JUDGMENT

This is a literal star that affects the fresh water sources of the earth. In Rev. 1:20, we saw that star can refer to human beings. In Rev. 9:1, we see that stars can refer to angelic beings. In this portion stars means literal stars.

“Wormwood” means bitterness. See Jeremiah 9:14-15; 23:15.

Look up the following passages in the order given to see God’s relationship to the stars. Genesis 1:14-16; Psalm 147:4; Job 9:9-10.

Many men die as a result of this judgment.

Vs. 12 FOURTH TRUMPT JUDGMENT

This judgment affects the sources of light and heat. Read Isaiah 13:9-11 which relates to this period.

Allow you mind to see the scene on earth at this time. The conditions of the seals are still in force and the trumpets are being added!

News cameras are rolling non-stop, scientist and politicians are trying desperately to find naturalistic and humanistic explanations for the catastrophes and emergency remedies for their effects. Yet, before their theories are even complete and communicated another supernatural act takes place as another trumpet sounds.

Remember, our Lord Himself spoke of these very things. Luke 2:11; 25-26

Vs. 13 The intensity of the judgments is about to increase! The angel introduces the last three trumpets as the “woe” judgments.

The fifth trumpet is the First Woe

The sixth trumpet is the Second Woe

The seventh trumpet is the Third Woe

Remember, John is actually seeing and hearing what is going on.

The people on earth are seeing and hearing the angel also!!!

REVELATION CHAPTER 9

As you look at this chapter, there are three realities that stand out.

1. The reality and power of the unseen world of demons and satan. (whole chapter)
2. The reality of a God who judges (whole chapter)
3. The reality of the hardness of sinful human hearts. vs. 20 & 21

It is also worthy of note that the first four trumpets affected man indirectly as they were aimed at natural things. With the fifth trumpet that changes. These will be aimed directly at man.

Vs. 1-12 FIFTH TRUMPET JUDGMENT & FIRST WOE JUDGMENT

Vs. 1 The star referred to here is a personality, an angelic being.

The verb “fall” is in the past tense indicating action that took place and was completed in the past.

This angel is probably satan himself. See Luke 10:18; Isaiah 14:12-15. If this is not satan, then it is another demonic angel of high rank. Note that this being is given the key to the pit by Christ, because He, Christ, has the keys. Rev. 1:18.

“bottomless pit” – This is the holding cell for demonic angels which cannot be allowed to roam the earth.

- Demons feared to go there (Luke 8:31)

- Vile demons are imprisoned there now (Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4)

Apparently the “bottomless pit” is at the very center of the earth. This being the case, it’s boundaries in every direction would be ceilings and thus it would truly be bottomless.

Vs. 2 Note the scene on earth. The smoke is so thick that the earth has become a dark, frightful place.

Vs. 3 These are locusts in that they are numerous. They certainly don't look like normal locusts. The prophet Joel saw these same diabolical creatures in his vision. Joel 1:6; 2:2-11

Vs. 4 Unlike locusts, they do not eat grass or green plants. Their mission is to torment those who do not have the seal of God in their foreheads.

REMEMBER!

The three sets of judgments in Revelation cover different time periods and affect different groups of people.

- Seal judgments affect all men.
- Trumpet judgments do not affect those who have the seal of God
- Vial judgments affect primarily those who have taken the mark of the beast.

Vs. 5 These demonic locusts do not kill, but rather they torment men for five months. The lifespan of a locust is five months, from May through September. This is referring to demon possession.

We should take note of the restraint that God places on these creatures. He has limited who they may strike, how far they may go and how long they may continue.

Vs. 6 Men will not and cannot die during this time period!!!

Vs. 7-10 These verses give a vivid description of these demonic beings. We see from these verses that they are unnatural and diabolical.

The "breastplates of iron" indicate that they cannot be killed, at least until their time is up!

Vs. 11 Both the Hebrew and Greek words used here mean destroyer.

The language used in this verse would seem to indicate that the angel referenced here is not the same as in vs. 1 & 2. Satan is at this time "prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2) not the angel of the bottomless pit.

Dr. Henry Morris states the following:

"That he and his angels were already locked in Hades at the time of Job, soon after the great Flood, is implied in Job 26:6: "Hell [ie. "Hades"] is

naked before him, and destruction [i.e. “abaddon”] hath no covering.” Abaddon is evidently the chief of those fallen spirits already in prison (I Peter 3:19, 2 Peter 2:4), but even he can only be “uncovered” when God so orders.”

The name being given in both Hebrew and Greek indicates that the judgment will come upon both Jew and Gentile.

What happens to the locusts? It is possible that their host bodies die when the 5 months are up (Joel 2:20). Do you remember what the demons did to the host swine in Mark 5:13?

We know that the final destruction of satan and all fallen angels is everlasting fire (Matthew 25:41). It is likely that the demons themselves are sent there at this time.

Can you imagine? An untold number of devilish carcasses litter the earth rotting and stinking (Joel 2:20).

Man will probably take credit for their demise. Perhaps the best scientist on earth had been working on a deadly pesticide and when the demon locust died at the end of their five months man thought he had won.

Vs. 12 As horrible as the first Woe judgment has been, there are two more yet to come that will be even worse!

Vs. 13-21 SIXTH TRUMPET JUDGMENT & SECOND WOE JUDGMENT

Several thoughts need to be brought before us at this point in time. The sixth trumpet brings us to the middle of the tribulation period. Many events take place at this midway point and include the following.

- Breaking of the covenant by the antichrist.
- Invasion of Palestine
- Expulsion of Jews out of Jerusalem
- Setting up the beast in the temple as God
- Wounding and resurrection of the beast.
- Casting of satan out of heaven
- Slaying of the two witnesses
- The destruction of the great whore

Vs. 13 This is the same altar as in 8:3 and is the last time it is mentioned in Revelation. The inference is that this judgment like those preceding is partially an answer to the prayers of the persecuted saints on earth and a token of Divine response and preparation for their deliverance.

Vs. 14 These are four demonic angels. Holy angels are not bound. Euphrates is one of four rivers which flowed from the river in Eden. See Genesis 2:10-14. It is in this region of the world that satan began his diabolical work against man

Vs. 15 There is much disagreement as to whether this time period refers to when the four angels were loosed or how long they continue. I believe it is both. They are loosed at the precise time God has determined and they continue for the exact time God has determined. When this judgment is complete more than half the world's population will have been killed. Compare Rev. 6:8 with 9:18.

Vs. 16 An army of 200 million strong! Who are they? One popular view is that this is the army of China. Another view holds that this is the combined army of China, Japan, Indonesia, India and possibly others.

Your view on who the army is will largely determine how you view the following verses.

Remember, supernatural armies are not unknown in scripture. See 2 Kings 2:11; 6:13-17. I believe this is a supernatural army led by four demonic angels.

Vs. 17-19 Note that it is not the horsemen but rather the demonic horses that kill. Many see these verses as symbolic of modern warfare.

I do not hold this view. I take this to be literal destruction by a supernatural army of demonic beasts.

Vs. 20-21 Even in the light of God's Divine judgment, men will still not repent.

At this point men and women, although, in the tribulation, have had numerous opportunities to repent. They have had the testimony of the two

witnesses, the ministry of the 144,000, the great divine judgments on earth, all the silent witness of Bibles and Christian literature left behind at the rapture. The sad truth is that many simply hardened themselves more against God. Romans 9:22; Romans 2:5-6; John 3:20; Eph. 4:17-19.

Rev. 9:20-21; 21:8; 21:27, 22:11; 22:15 give a list of prevalent sins of that day. They are:

- Devil worship (9:20)
- Idol worship (9:20; 21:8; 22:15)
- Murders (9:21; 21:8; 22:15)
- Sorceries (9:21; 21:8; 22:15)
- Fornication (9:21)
- Thefts (9:21)
- Fearful (21:8)
- Unjust (22:11)
- Filthy (22:11)
- Unbelieving (21:8)
- Abominable (21:8; 21:27)
- Whoremongers (21:8; 22:15)
- Liars (21:8; 21:27; 22:15)
- Those who defileth (21:27)
- Dogs (22:15)

DEVIL WORSHIP AND IDOL WORSHIP are both specifically forbidden in the Word of God and are often the same in actual practice. I am giving many references so that you might study this subject on your own. I Tim. 4:1; II Tim. 3:13; Eph. 6:12; I John 5:19; I Cor. 10:20; Deut. 4:28; Ps. 115:1-8; 135:16-17; Is. 40:19-20; 44:8-20; Jer. 10:3-5; Dan. 5:23; Rom. 1:18-32; Deut. 32:17; Ps. 106:37

MURDERS - This is the unlawful and malicious taking of human life. According to John 8:44 murderers are exhibiting their likeness to their father the devil.

SORCERIES - See information later in this chapter on this

FORNICATION - This is a word that refers to sexual impurity among unmarried people. However, it is also used in a general way to refer to all

physical impurity. John 8:41; I Cor. 5:1; 6:13 & 18; II Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19

THEFTS - The meaning of this word is obvious but Matt. 15:19 and Mark 7:22 tell us that this issues forth from the heart of the unregenerate. See also I Cor. 6:10.

FEARFUL - This is not physical fear but rather a lack of trusting faith in Christ (Mark 4:40). Se also John 14:27; II Tim. 1:7-8.

UNJUST - Any person who has never trusted Christ as Saviour has a life characterized as unjust. Rom. 5:1

FILTHY - This word has reference to those who are morally filthy, depraved. It is a word that stands in contrast to all that is morally pure and clean. Eph. 5:4; James 2:1; II Cor. 7:1.

UNBELIEVING - “Final, unchanging refusal to believe on Christ as Son of God and personal Saviour is the only ultimately unforgivable sin. John 3:18

ABOMINABLE - This refers to all things that are considered detestable and impure. It also carries the idea of polluted and wholly caught up in wickedness and evil. It is a word often associated with blasphemous and licentious practices associated with idol worship. This would be a study for you to do on you own. All you need is a King James Bible and a good concordance!!

WHOREMONGERS - This word is used to refer to all who participates in immoral sexual activity.

LIARS - Those who have a life characterized by lies are those who are unregenerate. John 8:44

THOSE WHO DEFILETH - Those who are defiled as a characteristic of life do, in turn, defile those around them.

DOGS - The figure of “dogs” is used multiple times in scripture. Phil. 3:2; Isa. 56:10-11; Deut. 23:17-18. I believe this term is used for particularly vile lost men and women who practice unnatural sexual behavior. Notice it is associated closely with witchcraft and idolatry in Revelation 22:15. In Deut.

23:17-18 the term “dog” is used as a synonym for “sodomite”, and indeed the word was used in ancient Israel as a euphemism for a male prostitute in the licentious temple worship of the heathen.

The post rapture earth will be a horrible and frightful place. The true church is gone as is the restraining influence it had on evil. Even God the Spirit no longer exercises His restraining ministry on lost man or demon spirits as He once did.

There are no atheists now!!! They saw God on His throne in Heaven (Rev. 6:16) and have seen and heard angels in the sky pronouncing woe and judgment and preaching the everlasting Gospel. (Rev. 8:13; 14:6-7). In spite of all the evidence that God is real and powerful, they have cast their lot with satan who has convinced them that they can win over God.

The harlot church of the day kills believers and promotes demon worship with sexual impurity as part of that worship. The past religious restraints on sexual freedom had been removed, so that adultery, fornication, orgiastic revelries, sodomy, and lesbianism, and every other form of sexual perversion had become commonplace.

Associated with all these forms of wickedness, and helping to dull any pangs of conscience which they might bring, there has been a tremendous upsurge in the use of drugs. The word translated “sorceries” is the Greek “pharmakeia”, which basically means “druggings”. It is the source of our English word “pharmacy” and “pharmaceutical”. This same Greek word is translated “witchcraft” in Galatians 5:20. Stupefying and hallucinatory drugs have always been associated with sorcery and witchcraft. They divest their users of the control of their own minds, making them easily available for possession and control by evil spirits.

The selling of “slaves, and souls of men” (Rev. 18:13) in that day is no doubt mostly for sexual purposes with the money used to buy drugs!!

What a tragic plight. Lost man, encouraged by satan and his demons and unrestrained by almighty God has plunged to the depths of depravity. Now he neither cares about sin nor does he desire to change.

Rom. 2:5-6; 9:22; Eph. 4:17-19

If you are reading this and have never been saved, the Bible declares “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb. 10:31).

REVELATION CHAPTER 10

Beginning with chapter 10:1 through chapter 11:14, we have another interlude or pause in time. The seventh trumpet will sound in chapter 11:15.

Vs. 1 There was another mighty angel associated with a book in chapter 5:2. The description of this angel leads us to believe it could be Christ Himself. Many are troubled at the thought of calling Christ an angel. However, there are many pre-incarnate appearances of Christ in the Old Testament. These are called Theophanies. See Is. 63:9; Ex. 3:2; Judges 2:4; 6:11-12; 2 Sam. 24:16.

“clothed with a cloud” – God is often identified with clouds. See Ex. 24:15 ff; 34:5; Psalm 104:3; Acts 1:9; Rev. 1:7. The cloud is a garment of divine presence and was associated with divine movements.

“rainbow was upon his head” – This indicates divine mercy in the midst of judgment. See Genesis 9:12-13; Habakkuk 3:2.

“face was as it were the sun” - This reminds us of the earlier description of Christ. See Rev. 1:16; Matt. 17:2; Acts 9:3; 26:13; Malachi 4:2

“feet as pillars of fire” – This speaks of judgment. See Rev. 1:15

There are two reasons why this is probably not Christ.

- First, the word “another” in the first verse means another of the same kind.
- Second, Christ is not seen on earth in the middle of the tribulation.

This is an angel acting as a Divine representative and bearing the appearance of Deity.

Vs. 2 “little book” – This is not the same as the seven sealed book of chapter 5. This book contains divinely revealed truth which pertains to the final judgments and the ultimate redemption of Israel. Verse 7 indicates this truth was revealed to the Old Testament prophets and leads me to believe this is the same book as Daniel 12:9.

“set his right foot upon the sea and his left foot on the earth” – In this action all of creation is claimed for God including the two beasts of chapter 13.

Vs. 3 “lion roareth” – This is a sound of imminent judgment. See Hosea 11:10; Joel 3:16.

“seven thunders uttered their voices” – Thunder is a recognized type of God’s voice in judgment. See I Samuel 7:10; Psalm 18:13

Vs. 4 We do not know anything about what he saw. This is not unknown in scripture. Paul was not permitted to write all he saw. 2 Cor. 12:4. Read Deut. 29:29. Other than here, all in Revelation is supposed to be revealed. Rev. 22:10.

Vs. 5-6 Concerning God swearing or taking an oath. See Hebrew 6:13; Gen. 22:16; Psalm 89:3&35.

“that there should be time no longer” – The thought here is that there would no longer be delay. This is explained in verse seven.

Vs. 7 This mystery of God is what is revealed when the seventh angel sounds his trumpet: His final dealings and judgments on man, His redemption of Israel and the earth.

Vs. 8-10 “eat it up” – This phrase means to appropriate it and make it a part of you. It carries the idea of meditating on the word. The symbolism of the word of God as food is seen often in the Bible. See Matt. 4:4; Jer. 15:16; Psalm 119:103; I Peter 2:2

The book was sweet in that it told of final and absolute redemption of the earth, Israel and man in general. It was bitter in that severe judgment would precede that redemption.

Every preacher or teacher of the Word of God must assimilate the word and make it a part of them if they are going to minister it to others.

Vs. 11 John was now responsible to minister to many more people concerning what he had received.

Final note concerning the angel in this chapter: Many very knowledgeable commentators do see this angel as being the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. They do a good job of paralleling this description in Rev. 10 with the description of Christ in chapter 1 and with Old Testament passages such as Daniel 10:5-8; 12:7.

REVELATION CHAPTER 11

Vs. 1-2 These verses reference a restored Temple worship by Israel. Here Israel is worshipping in that restored Temple which was built under the protection of the antichrist. The true character of the antichrist has not yet been revealed, but soon will be.

Vs. 1 This verse brings before us a purging of the Temple and those who worship therein. The rod is an instrument of judgment while the reed is an instrument of measurement. That which is measured is accepted and that which is not measured is cast off.

The act of measuring is language that indicates God's approval of the Temple, the form of worship therein, and of those who are worshipping.

The worshippers here are faithful believing Jews of the tribulation period.

There are many prophecies of a rebuilt Temple. Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:3-4.

There have been three Temples in Jerusalem.

1. Solomon's Temple described in I Kings 8 and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in 583 B.C. See 2 Kings ch. 24-25
2. Zerubbabel's Temple described in Ezra 3 and destroyed by Antiochus Epiphanes in 168 B.C.
3. Herod's Temple referred to by our Lord in John 2:20 and destroyed by the Roman Titus in 70 A.D.

There will also be a Millennial Temple. See Ezekiel 40ff.

Vs. 2 "court which is without the temple leave out" – This means to reckon it unaccepted or unhallowed. With the Temple of Israel again being recognized, the gentiles take their place without, that is, in the uncovered yard outside. In Herod's Temple the outer court was marked off from the inner by "the middle wall of partition" (Ephesians 2:15) beyond which a gentile could not go.

"for it is given unto the Gentiles" – It is given to be profaned by the gentiles. The balance of this verse takes place in the last three and one half years.

The phrase “forty and two months” takes us back to the famous phrase of the prophet Daniel. Daniel 7:25; 12:7

The Lord Himself prophesied this event. Luke 21:24

“Holy City” – This is without question the city of Jerusalem. Nehemiah 11:1&18; Isaiah 52:1; Daniel 9:24; Matthew 4:5; 25:52-53

Vs. 3 Here is the introduction of the two witnesses.

“power” – This will be seen and discussed in verses 5-6.

The duration of their ministry is 1,260 days or 3 ½ years. They minister the first half of the tribulation and are slain in the middle. This is one event that consolidates the power of the antichrist.

“sackcloth” – This is a garment associated with mourning. It is also the garment of prophets worn when they were calling the people to renounce sin and come to repentance and warning of impending judgment. Ester 3:13-4:4

Vs. 4 This verse leads us into the discussion of who the two witnesses are. First, let us establish the background of this verse. This is a reference to Zechariah 4-5, especially 4:2, 11-4. There the reference is to Joshua, the high priest, and Zerubbabel, who was a prince (Haggai 1). These two were called of God to be special witnesses for Him in their day. Similarly, the two witnesses in Revelation are called to be special witnesses in the tribulation.

Who are the two witnesses? Here are my three best guesses!

1. Moses and Elijah
2. Enoch and Elijah
3. **Two men living at the time**

Can you guess which view I lean toward?

Vs. 5-6 These verses are an explanation of the “power” of verse 3. “fire proceedeth out of their mouth” – This may be literal fire issuing forth from their mouth or symbolic of fire being called down from heaven. 2 Kings 1:7-14

Notice that these events are very much like the events associated with the ministries of Moses and Elijah.

Vs. 7 Only after their testimony is finished, the two witnesses are killed by the antichrist or beast.

This “beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit” is the antichrist. If you find this confusing, consider the following facts:

- At the beginning of the tribulation period the antichrist confirms a covenant with Israel for seven years. This covenant will be broken in the middle of the tribulation period. Daniel 9:27
- During the first 3 ½ years, the antichrist will attempt to consolidate his world power. Much warfare will be involved in this. During this time his true character will not be revealed. Daniel 7:8
- Several events take place at the midway point of the tribulation that allows the antichrist to become the uncontested world leader. This is when his evil, demonic character begins to show and will continue throughout the last 3 ½ years. Rev. 13:5.
 - The antichrist is killed. * Rev. 13:3,12,14; 17:7-8
 - The antichrist is resurrected. * Rev. 13:3; 17:7
 - It is at this resurrection that vs. 7 takes place. A beast (demon) comes from the pit and possesses the body of the slain antichrist. This could be satan himself, but I understand it is another demonic angel. However, the association of the antichrist and satan in the last 3 ½ years is so close as to be almost synonymous. 13:4
 - He is able to kill the two witnesses which no one else is able to do. Now, all the doubters believe in his power. 13:4
 - An enraged devil is cast out of heaven at this time. Rev. 12:9,17

* A careful study of Rev. 13:3 “As it were” indicates to me that people thought he was dead but never actually died. There is no indication in the Bible that satan has creative power!!

Vs. 8 Concerning the sin of Sodom and Egypt see the following references.

Sodom – Ezekiel 16:46-59

Egypt – Ezekiel 23:3-4,8,19

Vs. 9-10 The celebration of the earth dwellers. How will they see this event? It should be noted that this is the only mention of rejoicing on the earth during the entire tribulation. How tragic!!

Vs. 11-12 The resurrection of the two witnesses. There is little doubt that “stood upon their feet” also has reference to Israel’s resurrection. Ezekiel 37:10

Vs. 13 Here is another great earthquake. Do you remember 6:12? These people acknowledged that God was the God of Heaven, as opposed to satan, who is the god of the earth. However, this is not an indication these people got saved.

Vs. 14 This is an introduction to the last Trumpet judgment.

Vs. 15-19 SEVENTH TRUMPET JUDGMENT & THIRD WOE JUDGMENT

The seventh Trumpet lasts the entire last 3 ½ years. The last set of judgments in Revelation issues forth from this seventh Trumpet. They are the vials of chapter 16. Note that 15-19 surveys this whole period of time.

Vs. 15 The latter part of this verse is still 3 ½ years away yet is seen as already taking place. The plan of God is sure and unchangeable!

Vs. 16-17 The adoration of the elders in the future. Who are the elders?

Vs. 18 This verse takes us to the time of resurrection and judgment.

The lost dead will be resurrected and judged at the Great White Throne Judgment. This will be at the end of the 1,000 year reign of Christ. Rev. 20:11-15

The saved dead will be resurrected in the “first resurrection” which is in two parts.

Church age saints will be resurrected at the Rapture. I Thess. 4; I Cor. 15

Old Testament saints and Tribulation saints will be resurrected at the end of the Tribulation. Daniel 12:2,13

Vs. 19 This again indicates that Israel is coming into view and that God will once more renew His dealings with Israel nationally.

The focus of this vision is on the ark which is a symbol of God's presence with His people, Israel.

Notice in this verse the Temple in Heaven. Both Old and New Testaments tell of its existence. Is. 6:1; Heb. 8:2-5; Heb. 9:23-24

The 3 ½ year drought is broken by hail not rain.

Note the similar heavenly displays in the beginning middle and end of the tribulation. 4:5; 11:9; 16:18

REVELATION CHAPTER 12

There are numerous time periods referenced in this chapter. However, with prayerful consideration and a careful comparing scripture with scripture (I Cor. 2:13) these can be readily discerned.

Vs. 1 There are two wonders or signs in this chapter. The other is found in verse 3. The use of the word wonder lets us know this is symbolic.

“woman” – There are four women mentioned in Revelation. Two are evil and two are good. Jezebel in 2:20 and the Harlot of chapter 17 are evil. The Bride of chapter 19 and this woman are both good.

This woman is Israel. We know this from Genesis 37 and the description of the child in this chapter. See also Is. 54:5-6; Jer. 31:32; Hosea 2:19-23; Is. 66:7-9; Micah 4:10-5:3

Vs. 2 This is a symbolic picture of the nation of Israel prior to the birth of Christ.

Vs. 3 “red dragon” – This is satan. The word clearly states this in verse 7 and 9.

“seven heads and ten horns” – There will be a detailed study of this phrase at the beginning of chapter 13.

“heads” refer to world kingdoms. Since seven is the number of completion, this shows how that satan has always been in control of all the kingdoms of the world. Verse 9 says he “deceiveth the whole world”. Do you remember what he said to Christ in Luke 4:5-6?

Vs. 4 “tail” – This is symbolic and refers to the lies of satan. See Isaiah 9:15

“drew the third part of the stars of heaven” – There are two main views on this phrase. The first, and the view I favor, is that this is a reference to satan’s original fall. Isaiah 14:12-15. The second view is that it refers to the gathering under his power of those who oppose him politically and spiritually.

You also have in this verse the age of old conflict between satan and Christ that began in Genesis 3:15.

Vs. 5 In this verse we have the Incarnation, Ascension and Second Coming of Christ to Earth to rule. Psalm 2:8-9

Vs. 6 The entire church age fits between verses 5 and 6. In this verse we have Israel in the last 3 ½ years fleeing to a special place “prepared of God”. This special place is called “her place” in verse 14.

Vs. 7-9 Angelic warfare in heaven is seen here. Michael and his angels defeat satan and his angels. YES!!! This conflict ends in the middle of the tribulation period and ends satan’s reign in the air. Eph. 2:2. It is likely that this conflict began at the beginning of the tribulation period. Daniel 12:1

Vs. 10 For insight on this matter of satan as an accuser, read the opening chapters of the book of Job.

Vs. 11 The “they” of this verse is a reference to the “brethren” of verse 10.

Vs. 12 The rejoicing in heaven is because the devil no longer has access. The people on earth will experience never seen terror from an enraged devil whose time is short.

The inhabitants of the sea would be fishermen, merchant seamen, navy personnel, boat dwellers, etc.

Vs. 13 This is specifically a reference to the dragons persecution of Israel in the last 3 ½ years.

Vs. 14 “wings of a great eagle” – This is symbolic of swift flight. That is, the ability to escape quickly. This is the protection of God. Exodus 19:4; Deut. 32:11-12; Is. 40:31

We also see that Israel flees into the wilderness to that special place God has prepared for her. Where is this place? Some say Petra or Egypt or Southern Palestine. We really don’t know, but!!

I wonder if the place of safety will be the site of the original Garden of Eden? Why would God of old leave it in existence and its entrance guarded? Was it because he had a use for it later? You will also note that Israel is miraculously “nourished” for 3 ½ years. God feeds and provides in “her place”.

Vs. 15 This could be symbolic language that refers to all satan’s attempts to destroy Israel. It would include his armies and evil propaganda. It could really be a flood!!

The figure of a flood is often used in the Old Testament. Jer. 46:8; 47:2; Daniel 11:26; Is. 59:19; Ps. 124:1-6

Vs. 16 God supernaturally defeats the attempts of satan to pursue Israel to this special place. Exodus 15:11-12; Numbers 16:31-33

Vs. 17 When satan sees that this main body of Jewish people is protected by God, he turns his attention to the remnant still scattered about.

REVELATION CHAPTER 13

There are two “beasts” introduced in this chapter. These two beasts are men, but are called beasts because of the cruelty and fierceness of their reign.

The first beast is antichrist. 13:1-10. There are many names for this vile individual given in scripture. A partial list is as follows:

- the little horn (Daniel 7:8)
- the willful king (Daniel 11:36)
- the man of sin (II Thess. 2:3)
- the son of perdition (II Thess. 2:3)
- the lawless one (II Thess. 2:8)
- the antichrist (I John 2:22)
- the beast (Rev. 11:7; 13:1)
- the one coming in his own name (John 5:43)
- the king of fierce countenance (Daniel 8:23)
- the abomination of desolation (Matt. 24:15)
- the desolator (Daniel 9:27)

The second beast is the false prophet. 13:11-17

These two beasts and satan make up the false trinity of Revelation.

Vs. 1 “sea” is representative of gentile nations. 17:15

Daniel 9:26-27 tells us he comes from the people of the Roman empire.

“seven heads and ten horns” – This phrase is mentioned several times in Revelation. 12:3; 13:1; 17:3,7

Revelation 17:9 tells us that the seven heads are seven mountains. Verse 10 of that same chapter tells us that the seven heads are also seven kings.

Revelation 17:12 tells us that the ten horns are ten kings.

Now, most high school students are taught that the city built on seven hills is Rome. Therefore, we see an association of the ancient empire of Rome and

this first beast who is the antichrist. This is the significance of the seven mountains.

In chapter 14 we will give the connection to Rome and Babylon.

The seven heads are seven kings or kingdoms. Refer to 17:10-11. Various views have been given on this. The best seems to be that it is a reference to past world wide kingdoms. The past kingdoms would be Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia and Greece. The present would be Roman. The future kingdom would be that of the beast which will be a restored Rome empire.

Daniel saw the beast as the fourth (vs. 2) and final worldwide empire.
Daniel 7:19-28

The ten kings are a confederacy of ten nations that will make up the revived Roman empire. Some have referred to them as a “United States of Europe”.

These kings ultimately give authority to the beast. 17:7. However, warfare is necessary to accomplish this. Daniel 7:8,20,24

Now get the big picture!!

Vs. 2 Notice that the kingdom of the antichrist will combine all the cruelty and wickedness of all the past devil controlled kingdoms. We will now identify these kingdoms by doing a comparison of two separate visions in the book of Daniel.

Leopard = Grecian Empire, Daniel 2:32-7:6 (Thighs of brass)

Bear = Medo-Persian Empire, Daniel 2:32-7:5 (Silver breast and arms)

Lion = Babylonian Empire, Daniel 2:32-7:4 (Head of gold)

The kingdom of the antichrist will represent the fourth and final form of world power. Daniel 2:33,40-43; 7:7,19-28

Satan is seen here to give antichrist his worldwide supremacy.

Vs. 3 We have previously discussed this wound. It is referenced again in verses 12 and 14. See 11:7

“world wondered after the beast” – A world which has been denying the resurrection of Christ for centuries now accepts that there is a man who has conquered death!

Vs. 4 Lost men will now worship the beast. See 2 Thess. 2:4-12; Daniel 8:9-14; 9:27 Also compare with verses 8,12,14-15 of this chapter.

“who is able to make war with him” – He is now the world dictator and was able to kill the two witnesses. 11:7

Vs. 5-6 Daniel foretold these blasphemies in his prophecy. Daniel 7:8,20,25; 11:36 The blasphemies came out of the mouth of the beast like the roaring of a lion. He, empowered by satan, makes great pronouncements to the world counterfeiting God’s divinely inspired prophets of old. He actually makes men believe he will be victorious over God and Christ.

Remember the condition of the people. They have been:

- Deceived and blinded by satan. II Cor. 4:4; Rev. 12:9
- Numbed and confused by drug addiction. Rev. 9:21
- Hardened by sin of every description. Rev. 9:21
- Made calloused by rejecting every great display that God has given.

The “strong delusion” of II Thess. 2:11 refers specifically to the antichrist proclaiming himself to be God which takes place in the middle of the tribulation

Vs. 7 The people of God will be persecuted mercilessly during the last 3 ½ years. Untold multitudes will be martyred. See Daniel 7:21; Rev. 7:14

Vs. 10 The general thought of the first part of this verse is that what you are for, you will receive. The latter part of the verse assures the saint of the just punishment of the wicked.

Vs. 11 This is the introduction of the second beast who is the false prophet. He is so called in 16:13; 19:20; and 20:10.

He comes up out of the earth or land which is Palestine.

He has two horns indicating power and authority. However, the absence of crowns shows that his power is not political. His power is religious.

“lamb” – This speaks of his deception, trying to imitate Christ. Matthew 24:11-24

Vs. 12 His job is to draw attention to the first beast who is antichrist.

Vs. 13 He performs miracles like those of God’s two witnesses.

In relation to verses 13-14 we would do well to remember the words of our Saviour in Matthew 24:24

In relation to verses 14-15, read Daniel 9:27 and Matthew 24:15-21 along with II Thess. 2:3-4.

Vs. 14-5 How does he do this? I believe that only God can “create life”. This seeming life is accomplished by a demon spirit taking up residence in the image.

The “image” mentioned in this chapter is also mentioned in 14:9,11; 15:2, 16:2, 19:20; 20:24

Vs. 16-18 We will have a class discussion on these verses. Very little is really known about this mark. But, O, the speculation!!!

This registration is intended to be absolutely universal. It is probable that registration centers will be set up in every city, town and community and that people are instructed to report and register on or before a certain day.

Contrast this seal with that of the people of God in Rev. 7:3; 14:1. The false trinity is still trying to imitate and replace the Divine Trinity!!

In verse 17 we see that even if a person has money or valuables, they are useless if they don’t receive the mark of the beast. Think about all that is involved here and then think of it in the light of Matt. 24:31-46.

It is important here to understand the religious aspect of the antichrist’s rise to power. This involves chapter 17.

REVELATION CHAPTER 14

This chapter shows us the greater power of the lamb and His holy purposes in sharp contrast to the fearsome power the beast and his evil purposes. We would do well to read the words of the psalmist here. (Psalm 37:35-40)

This chapter is a series of unrelated events that take place at different times within the tribulation period. They do not present any type of chronological sequence.

Vs. 1-5 This is a vision of the 144,000 on earth at the end of the tribulation period.

These had received the seal of the Father's name in their forehead. The battle has been joined but the evil one cannot touch them. I John 5:18 – “he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not”.

Bless God! Glory! Halleluiah! Seven years of the most vicious effort and cruelest persecution and the dragon, the beast and the false prophet combined could not so much as harm even one of those with the Seal of God. Brethren, our God is able!!!

Vs. 1 Here we see the Jewish evangelist with Christ on the earthly Mount Zion.

Vs. 3 This new song probably relates to their protective journey through the Tribulation.

Vs. 4 This is not a condemnation of the marriage relationship. Hebrews 13:4. It simply means they were unmarried and not guilty of fornication.

“firstfruits” – This is a Bible term used to indicate that others will follow. They were the firstfruits of salvation in the tribulation and the firstfruits to enter the Kingdom in their physical body. I Cor. 15:23

Vs. 5 This verse is not teaching that these men were sinlessly perfect. This is similar to what God said of Job in the opening chapters of that book. Concerning their speech see James 3:2.

Vs. 6-7 The everlasting Gospel. This is late in the Tribulation and is another picture of the grace of God. Can you imagine the scene on Earth as they see and hear the angel's proclamation? This is more than just the natural Gospel. Rom. 1:19 ff

Vs. 8 We have here a glimpse of the fall of "Babylon". This is the first use of the word Babylon in the book of Revelation. We must stop here and examine what Babylon refers to. The following will be a series of statements that will help us identify this place.

- The first Babylon mentioned in the Bible is Genesis 10:8-10; 11:1-9. It grew into the first great gentile world power that oppressed the nations. It was a stronghold of pride, idolatry, demon worship and general ungodliness. Satan began his reign over the nations there and he will ultimately close out his reign there.
- The name "Babylon" appears 5 times in the book of Revelation 14:8; 16:19; 18:2,10,21. The name "mystery Babylon" appears in 17:5 so the Bible is clearly showing us a difference between "Babylon" and "mystery Babylon".
- "Mystery Babylon" (Rev. 17:5) is the religious entity that will be in place in the first 3 ½ years of the tribulation period. It is headquartered in the City of Rome and will be destroyed in the middle of the tribulation period.
- The other 5 references to "Babylon" are a reference to the literal City of Babylon which will be rebuilt and be the world center of trade and commerce of the tribulation period or at least the latter part of it. However, there is great debate over whether the term Babylon really means Babylon or whether it really means the City of Rome.
- I see no scriptural justification for saying Babylon, in the 5 references given, is anything other than literal.
- I do not believe the prophecies concerning the destruction of Babylon as given in Is. 13-14 and Jer. 27,50,51 were fulfilled when

the medo-persian monarch, Cyrus the Great, captured Babylon in 538 B.C.

- As I see it, we have two facts that must be reconciled. One is the association of the beast/satan with the Roman empire and the City of Rome. (Daniel 9:26; Rev. 12:3; 13:1; 17:3&7) The second is the relationship of the City of Rome with the City of Babylon. Here are my thoughts on this matter. The antichrist rises to power in the early part of the tribulation aided by two entities. The first is the 10 nation confederation which represents a revived Roman empire. The second entity, and one that is just as important, is the “great whore” or harlot church that helps the antichrist gain world wide acceptance. Remember, this harlot church is headquartered in Rome (Vatican) but is much more than just the Roman Catholic Church. During these early years of the tribulation, while the antichrist is consolidating this power, the City of Babylon is being rebuilt to even exceed it’s splendor of the glory days of Nebuchadnezzar. When all is ready in Babylon, by mid-tribulation, the antichrist/beast will move the world center for commerce, trade and politics to the gloriously restored Babylon. At mid-tribulation the antichrist/beast breaks his covenant with Israel, sets himself up on the temple in Jerusalem as God and aided by the 10 nation confederacy, destroys the harlot church. During the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation, his headquarters will be the restored Babylon and he will demand that all people everywhere worship him only. All that the antichrist/beast does is fulfilling the will of satan and is accomplished by the power of satan.
- Here are some additional thoughts to consider:
 - Babylon is very near the geographic center of the world, it’s within navigable distance of the Persian Gulf and is at the crossroad of the continents of Europe, Asia and Africa. This would make it an ideal location for a world trade center or a world capital!
 - Arnold Toynbee, who is a modern day historian, used to stress to his readers and hearers that Babylon would be the best place in the world to build a future world cultural metropolis.

- The ten nation federation headed by the antichrist/beast would probably find a “neutral” location more acceptable than any one of their ten nations.
- Satan will be eager to “show God” that he can rebuild the empire that was originally used to beguile man and defy Almighty God

I am glad to report that God always wins. In “one hour” literally, God is going to completely destroy this city whether it is Babylon or not!! Rev. 18:10

Vs. 9-11 The doom of those who worship the beast is stated in these verses. Note that part of the eternal torment is eternal fatigue, “no rest day nor night”. Note Heb. 4:9 for the contrast of believers in eternity.

Vs. 12-13 There we have a view of tribulation saints. In verse 12 the word patience carries the idea of endurance. Verse 13 brings before us the idea that the vast majority will give their life for their faith.

Vs. 12 The people of God in every age have been exhorted to patience and long-suffering in confidence that God would eventually reward their faithfulness and judge their persecutors. Matt, 5:10-12; Roman 12:19, II Thess. 1:6-8; Heb. 10:30-37; I Peter 1:6-7 A very explicit promise to this effect had also been made to the martyred saints here in the tribulation period. (Rev. 6:9-11)

“Here” is the reality. God’s people really do win and the ungodly will suffer eternal damnation.

Vs. 13 The wonderful thought brought before us in the latter part of this verse is that the results or fruits of our labor for Christ may appear and or continue after we are with the Lord. I Cor. 15:58; I Cor. 3:8.

Remember, God rewards based on what He sees, not on what we see.

Vs. 14-20 Here we have the reaping of the earth and a forview of Armageddon. The overall scene here shows the involvement of Christ and His angelic subjects in the final judgments at the end of the tribulation. Matthew 13& 25; Rev. 19:11-21

The symbolism in this passage is that of fruit which has ripened to the point of bursting. The iniquity of man is full and the time of reaping has come. Genesis 15:16; Deut. 20:17; Joshua 3:10

Vs. 14 Here is a picture of Christ. Daniel 7:13-14; Rev. 1:13

This view of Christ shows that He is coming in judgment “sharp sickle” and that He is coming to reign “golden crown”. This scene takes us back to Joel 3:9-16.

Vs. 18 Concerning specifically the harvest of the grapes as symbolic of judgment read Joel 3:13ff.

Vs. 19-20 Just as the feet crush grapes in a winepress and cause the juice to gush forth, the judgment at Armageddon will cause the blood to gush forth. “even unto the horses bridles” Two to four feet. “thousand and six hundred furlongs” = 180 miles

All the nations will be gathered and defeated at this battle. Joel 3:2; Zechariah 14:2; Rev. 16:16; 19:19

Note an interesting observation by Henry Morris:

“That 200 million is not an impossible number is evident from the fact that this is the number of demon horsemen released from the River Euphrates under the sixth trumpet (see on Rev. 9:16) and the fact that, at this time, there will probably be still well over 2 billion people on earth. Most of the able-bodied men (possibly also women) will be drafted into the armies of the nations under the beast. If 10 percent of the world’s population is gathered to fight under the beast in the Holy Land (and such seems appropriate in light of the superlatives employed in Scripture to describe this vast army), that would come to 200 million, and such a number would become a veritable sea of humanity, a mile wide and 180 miles long.”

REVELATION CHAPTER 15

This entire chapter is used as an introduction to the vial judgments.

Vs. 1 Here it is clear that these will be the final judgments of the tribulation. The wrath of God is “filled up” and will be poured out as pouring out a vial or bowl.

The sign is “great and marvelous” because the seven last plagues will be the greatest, that is most severe, of them all. Remember, from the very beginning we have held that the judgments are in chronological order and progressively increase in severity.

It is also very significant that the wording “seven last plagues” prove that these are not reiterations of former plagues.

Vs. 2 This sea of glass was first introduced in 4:6, but here it is “mingled with fire”. The judgments are based on the holiness of God.

The tribulation saints are in view here.

Vs. 3 The song of Moses is recorded in Exodus 15. Only the 144,000 could sing the “new song” of 14:3 but all saints can sing this song. The song of the lamb takes us back to Revelation 5:9-14.

Vs. 4 This verse contains a millennial scene.

Vs. 5 “Temple of the tabernacle” refers to the holy of holies in the Temple. Only the high priest could minister there but here the angels are seen ministering. We see them coming from the presence of God to fulfill the will of God.

Verse 5 also marks a change of scenes and themes. Attention now goes to imminent judgment.

Vs. 6 This scene reminds us of the garments worn by Old Testament priests.

Vs. 7 These same 4 beasts were seen in Rev. 4:6 and Rev. 6:1-8 and again appear here to initiate the bowl judgments.

Vs. 8 When the tabernacle in the wilderness and the Temple were completed, they were filled with a cloud but no smoke was seen. Exodus 40:35; I Kings 8:10-11. However, when God gave the law to Moses, the entire Mount Sinai was enveloped in smoke because the law pronounced judgment on all who failed to obey its demands. Ex. 19:18. When Isaiah saw the Temple, “the house was filled with smoke” (Is. 6:4) for the prophet was sent to God to Israel with a message of judgment.

In this vision of John, judgment is about to descend from God upon the earth.

No man by prayer or otherwise will be able to change God’s determination in these judgments.

REVELATION CHAPTER 16

Vs. 1 Dr. Warren Wiersbe introduces this chapter with the following thought: “The great voice” out of the temple command the seven angels to pour out their vials (16:1), after which he announces “it is done!” (16:17) The “mystery of God” is finished! (10:7) The martyrs in glory had asked, “How long?” (6:9-11), and now their cry would be answered.”

It seems that the purpose of these plagues is no longer primarily for the purpose of conviction and conversion but is a frightful expression of the vengeance of a Holy God.

As this stage is set the Jewish remnant has fled to the wilderness and the fierce purges of the beast are under way. Those who are refusing to be branded with the mark of the beast are fleeing for their lives, but multitudes are being caught and executed. Long running drought and famine have resulted in widespread starvation and turmoil. Such is the condition of earth at this hour, but now it will be many fold worse!!!

Vs. 2 FIRST VIAL JUDGMENT

Notice that this only affects those who worship the beast. “noisome” means painfully bad. Verses 10-11 suggest that this plague stays until the end.

Vs. 3 SECOND VIAL JUDGMENT

Can you imagine the awful stench as all the oceans of the world congeal “as” the blood of a dead man! Ships will no longer be able to navigate!

“soul” is a word which means conscious life. Every living creature in the sea dies. Note that man and animals have “soul”. The thing that makes man different from animals is that man has “spirit” which animals don’t have.

Vs 4-7 THIRD VIAL JUDGMENT

In verse 4 we see all fresh water become blood. We had previously seen 1/3 of the fresh water become bitter. 8:10-11

In verses 5-7 the angel declares that all the judgments in general and this judgment in particular are the true and righteous judgment of God.

Vs. 6 As repulsive as it is, it seems that people will still be able to drink. “blood to drink”

Vs. 7 Seven times in Revelation the Lord Jesus Christ is called both “Lord” and “Almighty”. Rev. 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7; 19:6; 21:22 He is called that because He is both “Lord” and “Almighty”!!!

Vs. 8-9 FOURTH VIAL JUDGMENT

This judgment is self explanatory. However, consider the miracle involved that this does not affect the saints. See Malachi 4:1; Is. 24:6; Is. 30:26

Vs. 10-11 FIFTH VIAL JUDGMENT

This judgment only affects the “seat” or throne of the beast. (Remember 2:13?) The throne of the beast is probably in one of two places at this time. It may be in Jerusalem where his image is set up in the Temple. Or, it may be in the city of Babylon where his political, commercial and military headquarters are. I strongly favor Babylon.

This is similar to the ninth plague in Egypt. (Exodus 10:21-23)

A description of utter mental and physical torment is seen in the phrase “they gnawed their tongues for pain”.

Verse 11 brings before us a sad truth. Put it in the words of William R. Newell, “*If men are not won by grace, they will never be won*”.

Vs. 12-16 SIXTH VIAL JUDGMENT

In verse 12 the Euphrates River is literally dried up. Remember, we also saw this river in 9:14. This action makes possible the invasion at the end of the tribulation that we know as the Battle of Armageddon.

“east” is literally the sun rising and no doubt references the oriental kings. However, we know that these kings will be joined by all the kings of the world. The kings of the east would include China, Japan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam etc.

Vs. 13 Demons come forth from the evil trinity, the dragon, beast and false prophet.

Vs. 14 Through demonic miracles and wonders these demons incite the kings of the earth to try once and for all to thwart the plan of God.

Vs. 15 We have here a parenthetical warning and encouragement to tribulation saints. Remember, things are getting worse on the earth. Most saints give their life for their faith. They are being reminded that the increase in the severity of judgment signals the approach of Christ.

The garment and nakedness is symbolic language.

Vs.16 Here we have the location of the conflict. Please consider the following comments from Dr. John F. Walvoord's commentary on Revelation: *“There has been considerable discussion concerning the meaning of the term Armageddon, taken by some to mean “Mount of Slaughter”. Geographically, it relates to the Mount of Megiddo located adjacent to the plain of Megiddo to the west and the large plain of Esdraelon to the northeast. Megiddo is the Hebrew word corresponding to the Greek word Armageddon. This area was the scene of many great battles of the Old Testament such as that of Barak and the Canaanites in Judges 4 and the victory of Gideon over the Midianites in Judges 7. Here also occurred the deaths of Saul and Josiah. The area, though it is a large one, is not sufficient for the armies of all the world, though the valley of Esdraelon is fourteen miles wide and twenty miles long. What this scripture seems to indicate is that this area is the central point for the military conflict which ensues. Actually the armies are deployed over a 200-mile area up and down from this central location. (14:20)”*

Vs. 17-21 SEVENTH TRUMPET JUDGMENT

Vs. 17 “It is done” – With the pouring out of the vial, God has completed His judgment process. There are no more judgments in the tribulation period.

“into the air” – Many commentators mistakenly make much ado over this statement because Satan is the “prince of the power of the air”. (Ephesians 2:2) However, Satan's dominion of the air ended 3 ½ years earlier. 12:9-12

Vs. 18 The greatest earthquake ever! See 6:12; 11:13

Vs. 19 “great city” is probably Jerusalem (See 11:8) which is the only city of the world spared destruction. I Chron. 23:25; Ps. 125:1

All cities of all nations are destroyed in this judgment.

Vs. 20 The entire earth is altered.

Vs. 21 The weight of a talent has varied over the centuries. It is generally agreed that it is around 100 pounds.

REVELATION CHAPTER 17

Vs. 1 There is no doubt from the statement of this verse that the purpose here is to show John the “judgment of the great whore”. I wish now to offer several statements to establish the identity of the harlot woman reference here.

- This “woman” represents a false religion professing to be Christianity She is referred to symbolically as a “whore” or “harlot” because she is guilty of committing spiritual adultery which is rebuked often in scripture. Jer. 13:27; Ez. 23:43-44; James 4:4
- This harlot is lead by the Roman Catholic Church but is not limited to it. It is a combination of apostate Protestantism, Romanism and Atheism. It is the huge Ecumenical church of the last days.
- Rome is taking the leadership in forming it and it will be headquartered in Rome. See verses 9 & 13.
- Verse 5 calls it the “mother of harlots” so it is older than Romanism which did not exist until the 4th century.
- The godless teachings of this harlot church originated in the first worldwide empire of Babylon. Thus the title “Mystery Babylon”.

Verse 15 gives us the meaning of “many waters”.

Vs. 2 The influence if this false religious system reaches the upper part of society. She has prostituted herself to many for worldly gain.

Vs. 3 She is aligned with a supported by the antichrist, for she is seen sitting upon a scarlet colored beast. Verse 8 identifies this beast as the antichrist.

Vs. 4 Here we see the great wealth of this harlot church. We hardly have to mention the wealth of false religion today.

Vs. 6 This false church will be responsible for the deaths of many of the saints in the first half of the tribulation period.

There is also a Historical point that needs to be made here. It is estimated that the Roman Catholic Church has been responsible for the deaths of as many as 50,000,000 Christians in its religious purging of the past. The Spanish Inquisition, the Stake and the Torture Chamber are all history. Every Christian should read “Foxe’s Book of Martyrs”.

Vs. 7 Here the angel begins to reveal the vision to John.

Most of verse 7-11 have been discussed in previous chapters and will be mentioned only briefly here.

Vs. 8 Refer to the detailed discussion of 11:7

Vs. 9 This identifies the place where the woman was as Rome.

Vs. 10-11 Refer to the discussion of 13:1. Remember, I see these as kingdoms. Some see here the leaders of the Roman Empire, Julius Caesar, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero and then Domitian. However, there are real problems with this view.

Vs. 12 These are the kings that are seen as the ten toes on the image in the vision of Daniel 2. They represent the “United State of Europe”.

Vs. 13-14 These kings give their power to the beast and will be destroyed with him at the battle of Armageddon.

Vs. 16-17 The beast and his kings destroy the harlot church in the middle of the tribulation period. The only worship allowed in the last 3 ½ years will be the worship of the beast.

Humanly speaking, these kings realize they have been used and made puppets by the papal system of the harlot church.

REVELATION CHAPTER 18

This chapter details the destruction of political, commercial Babylon. As has been discussed previously, this is the literal city Babylon. In the previous chapter we saw the destruction of the religious aspect of Babylon (Rome) by the beast and his army. That destruction took place in the middle of the tribulation. The destruction of the city of Babylon itself in this chapter occurs at the end of the tribulation and is destroyed by Christ.

Vs. 1 This verse introduces another angel who bears the glory of God. The thought of a different time period between chapter 17 and 18 is further strengthened by the announcement by different angels. Compare 17:1 and 18:1

Vs. 2 This fall had been briefly foretold in 14:8 and again in 16:19. This fall is justified because Babylon is the seat of satan and his demons.

“foul” and “bird” are words used symbolically in scripture to reference satan and demonic angels. Matt. 13:31-32; Mark 4:15; Luke 8:12

Vs. 3 This is the capitol of a worldwide empire. All nations had partaken of her sin and had gotten rich through commerce with her.

Vs. 4 Here is a clear call to separation. In its primary interpretation it is prophetic, addressed to the tribulation saints of that day. However, it is also a warning to believers of our day. The call to separation has come to people of God in every age.

- Abraham (Genesis 12:1)
- Lot (Genesis 19:12-14)
- Moses (Numbers 16:23-26)
- Israel (Isaiah 48:20; Jeremiah 50:8)
- Church (2 Cor. 6:14,17; I Tim. 5:22)

Vs. 5 The iniquity of Babylon is full and the time is at hand for God to exercise His plan for judgment.

Vs. 6 At least part of the meaning of “double” is the double judgment of religious Babylon (Rome) in chapter 17 and of political, commercial Babylon here.

Vs. 7 Notice here how the city and its people were lifted up in pride.
Proverbs 29:23; 16:18; 11:12; I John 2:16

Vs. 8 The destruction comes swiftly. Not only does the destruction come in “one day” as stated here, but in one hour of that day. verses 10,17,19

Vs. 9-19 These verses show the agony of the worlds merchants over the loss of their riches. See Matt. 16:26; James 5:1-6; I Tim. 6:8-10

Verse thirteen of this portion is of particular interest!!

Vs. 20 As the destruction of Babylon brings great wailing and sorrow to the earth dwellers, it brings great joy to the residents of heaven.

Vs. 21 Here we have a symbolic picture which again illustrates swiftness and completeness of Babylon’s destruction. Many Old Testament prophecies are fulfilled with this verse. See Is. 27:1; Jer. 51:41-42, 63-64

Vs. 22-23 All the normal daily activities of life have ceased forever in the city. But, not in this city only but all the cities of the world!

The latter part of verse 23 again brings before us the satanic activity associated with the antichrist. For Old Testament prophecies concerning destruction of Babylon see Is. 13-14; Jer. 50-51.

Vs. 24 Remember, in the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation this had been the headquarters of the beast’s war against the people of God whether Jew or Gentile.

REVELATION CHAPTER 19

The chapter before us naturally divides itself into two parts. The first ten verses is a heavenly scene and deals with the joy of the people of God. The balance of the chapter is a judgment scene taking place on earth.

This chapter opens with four Alleluias in verses 1, 3, 4 and 6.

Vs. 1 It appears that this verse is in response to the instruction of 18:20. Here the apostles and prophets of the past along with the church age and tribulation saints rejoice in the judgment of the world system that persecuted them. At last, all the injustices, all the oppressions, all the violence and murder against the people of God and against the innocent, are to be brought to public, official judgment in the destruction of the godless world system. Psalm 73:17-18; Galatians 6:9

Sinners seem to be getting away with it for a while, and sin seems to be good, but the end will always come. Proverbs 5:4-5; 23:32

Vs. 2-3 Here we have the righteous judgment of God on the great whore. It seems that the burning of the city brought on by the earthquake starts on earth and continues in hell for verse 3 says “her smoke rose up for ever and ever”.

Vs. 4-6 Here we have the unanimous declaration of the heavenly host. In verse 4 we have the same group we meet in chapter 4.

Verse 6 tells us that the combined voice of the heavenly host was as “many waters” and “mighty thunderings”.

Never forget dear Saint!

“THE LORD GOD OMNIPOTENT REIGNETH”

Vs. 7-8 Here is the marriage of the Lamb. Weddings are happy occasions. They mean that love matches love. They mean permanent union of the beloved ones to each other.

This is the full and final union between Christ and His Church for all eternity.

The Bridegroom is the Lord Jesus Christ. Matthew 9:15; 22:1-13; 25:1-10; John 3:29; 2 Cor. 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32

The Bride is the Church. Ephesians 5:22-32; 2 Cor. 11:2

“hath made herself ready” – There are several aspects to this thought.

- When the Bride first appeared in heaven, she had spots, wrinkles and blemishes according to Ephesians 5:27. However, the judgment seat of Christ removed all imperfection.
- All that is left after the judgment seat is “fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints”. Isaiah 61:10
- So in a very real sense the wedding garment is of our own making!
- Of course, we will also be clothed in the imputed righteousness of Christ. Phil. 3:9; Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3

This will be a time of unparalleled rejoicing when the rafters of the universe will quiver with the joyful praise and adoration of the Bride for the Bridegroom.

Vs. 9 Here we have the marriage supper. This supper is separate from the ceremony. There are guests at the supper for the bible says “blessed are they which are called”.

I believe the guests will be all Old Testament and Tribulation Saints. Remember the words of John the Baptist in John 3:29.

Vs. 10 “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy”. This is teaching us that the very heart of prophecy is to reveal and make much of Christ. O, how many have erred on this point!

The balance of the chapter will now deal with the Battle of Armageddon and the destruction of the antichrist and false prophet.

Vs. 11 Here we have the second of two openings in the book of Revelation. These two openings mark a clear distinction between Christ’s coming **for** His saints and His coming **with** His saints.

Christ comes **for** His saints at the Rapture in 4:1.

This verse unfolds the Revelation of Christ where He comes back **with** the saints.

Christ is seen on a “white horse” which is the mount of victorious Generals and Kings.

Christ is “Faithful and True in contrast to satan who is a liar and deceiver.

Vs. 12 This vision takes us back to the vision of chapter 1. Perhaps this name is the same as 3:12.

Vs. 13 It seems that the vesture dipped in blood anticipates the bloodshed to follow.

“Word of God” John 1:1-14; 14:7-11

Vs. 14 The army is, I believe, all saints of all ages. I do not limit it to the Church.

Vs. 15 “Sharp Sword” is the Word of God. Heb. 4:12; 2 Thes. 2:8; Isaiah 11:4. Notice that only Christ Himself is involved in the conflict. His army is watching. The winepress imagery takes our minds back to 14:14-20

Vs. 16 He will now claim His rightful place. Zechariah 14:9

Vs. 17-19, 21 This is the conquest of Armageddon

- All the armies of all the world will be killed here. 16:14; 19:19
- The blood will flow several feet deep for 200 miles! 14:20
- The birds will literally feast on the bodies of dead soldiers. Vs. 17,18,21

Vs. 20 In this verse we have the final defeat and the eternal doom of the antichrist and false prophet.

REVELATION CHAPTER 20

Vs. 1 In these verses we have the imprisonment of satan for a thousand years. Here an angel is given the authority “key” of the bottomless pit.

This “bottomless pit” was discussed in detail in 9:1-2. It is also mentioned in 9:11; 11:7; 17:8.

Vs. 2 This angel forcibly binds satan. I don’t know who this angel is but I like to think it is Michael!

Vs. 3 Here the devil is cast in, shut up and sealed for the thousand years. After the millennium he will be released for a short time. The casting of satan into the pit was prophesied in Isaiah 24:21-22.

“little season” – We don’t know exactly how long this amount of time is. However, in light of the fact that the “hour” of 17:12 is several years long, we assume this is also a period of some years.

Vs. 4-6 These verses bring before us the millennial (1,000 year) reign, a time in which Christ will rule on the earth.

The saints will rule with him!!

In verses 2-7 of this chapter the term “thousand” is used six times. **It means thousand!**

Verse 4 brings before us this thought of reigning with Christ. The following passages give insight on this subject. Rev. 5:10; 2:26-28; 3:12-21; I Thess. 4:13-18; 2 Tim. 2:12, also verse 6 of this chapter.

I would like to offer several thoughts about this matter of “judging” as set forth in verse 4.

- Church age saints who have been rewarded at the judgment seat of Christ will judge. See I Corinthians 6:2; Daniel 7:22
- The twelve Apostles will judge the twelve tribes of Israel. Matt. 19:28

- Other realms of authority will be assigned in proportion to faithfulness. Luke 19:11-27; Matt. 25:14-30
- The latter part of this verse shows that tribulation saints reign also. See 5:10

The phrase “they lived” references a bodily resurrection of tribulation saints.

Concerning the “first resurrection” in verses 5-6, I refer you to the notes of 11:18.

I would now like to discuss the conditions on earth during the millennium. The following is a list of some of those conditions.

- Christ will be the undisputed King reigning over the earth from Jerusalem. Jer. 23:5; Luke 1:30-33; Isaiah 2:1-4.
- The nations of the world will come yearly to worship Christ at Jerusalem. Zechariah 14:16; Isaiah 2
- The earth will be restored to its pre-curse condition as to plants and animals. Romans 8:18-23; Is. 35:1; 55:13; 11:6-9; 17-25.
- Consider this quote from the preacher scientist Dr. Henry Morris: *“The violent earthquake and upheavals will have leveled all the polluted cities of a sinful world, the better to facilitate the erection of new, clean, peaceful communities at the beginning of the millennium. The great land movements will also have eliminated the great mountain ranges and islands of the world, filling up the ocean depths and restoring gentle, globally habitable topography and geography all over the world, as it had been in the antediluvian age, before the cataclysmic upheavals of the great Deluge. As Isaiah the prophet had foretold, “Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain” (Isaiah 40:4)”*
- There will be no outward sin. Psalm 46:9; Isaiah 2:4

- There will be a complete knowledge of God. Is. 11:2, 9; 41:19-20; 54:13; Habakkuk 2:14
- There will be no sickness of death (except as punishment) at that time. Is. 33:24; Jer.: 30:17; Ezekiel 34:16; Is. 65:17-25
- There will be a unified language. Zephaniah 3:9
- There will be universal labor and economic prosperity. Is. 4:1; 35:1-2, 7; 30:23-25; 62:8-9; 65:21-23; Jer. 31:5; Ez. 48:18-19; Joel 2:21-27; Amos 9:13-14

Vs. 7-10 The final conflict on earth and the eternal damnation of satan is seen in these verses.

Verse 7 identifies the time period. It is at the end of the 1,000 year reign.

Verse 8 could be used to refute the dumb ideas of the socialist of our day. Putting someone in a better environment does not make them better. This period was preceded by a thousand year utopia.

V.9 See Malachi 4:1

While there is no doubt as to the time period of this war, there is much discussion as to who Gog and Magog are and if these are the same people or nations mentioned in Ezekiel 38-39. Ezekiel 39:2 causes me to firmly believe that they cannot be the same. Refer to our study in chapter six.

A close comparison of details between Ezekiel 38-39 with this passage will show them to be different.

Vs. 10 The devil will burn forever in the lake of fire with the beast and false prophet.

Vs. 11-15 Here we have the “Great White Throne Judgment”. Several general thoughts should be noted here.

This is a judgment of lost people only. It is not to determine if they are lost but rather to determine the degree of their eternal punishment.

Do not confuse this with the Judgment Seat of Christ where only saved people are in view.

This takes place at the end of the millennial reign and just before the start of the eternal state.

Vs. 11 The judge is Christ. John 5:22; Acts 17:31; Romans 2:16

This is where II Peter 3:7, 10-12 and Matt. 24:35 will be fulfilled. See also I Tim. 6:16.

Vs. 12 All the lost dead will be there both “small and great”. This will include the famous and the infamous; those who had a large following and those whose names are unknown; those whose names were synonymous with sin and those whose sin was completely hidden. See Christ’s word of John 5:29.

“books” – We really know very little about these books. The Bible indicates here that the works of the lost have been recorded in them. See also verse 13.

“another book was opened” – This book is identified here and in verse 15 as the “Book of Life”. I will simply refer you to our detailed study of the “Book of Life” in 3:5.

Men are judged and punished in eternity “according to their works” in verses 12 and 13.

Contrary to what you may have heard and think, in eternity, men will suffer different degrees of punishment.

All sin is not the same. John 19:11

Vs. 13 The bodies of the lost dead are delivered up from every place.

Vs. 14-15 The eternal destiny of lost people will be in the same place as “their father the devil”.

Where is the lake of fire? It seems unlikely that it would be on the new earth (II Peter 3:13) and it could not be on the present earth (II Peter 3:10). It may

well be on some far corner of the universe. Matt. 8:12; 22:13; 25:26-30;
Jude 13; II Peter 2:17

REVELATION CHAPTER 21

Most of the last two chapters of Revelation bring before us a thrilling glimpse of the eternal state. The exception of this is 22:6ff which contains general closing exhortations.

Vs. 1 The eternal state will see a new heaven and earth. This was prophesied in the Old Testament. Isaiah 66:22; 65:17 It is further attested to in the New Testament. Matt. 19:28; 2 Peter 3:10-13.

“no more sea” – Today’s earth surface is 3/4 water. There will be a new arrangement in eternity.

Vs. 2 Here is the fascinating introduction of the “New Jerusalem”.

This city has a special connection with the church age saints. Vs. 9-10

The eternal city is not only the home of the Bride, it is the Bride. A city is not only buildings, it is people. From the viewpoint of the people in it, the New Jerusalem is the Lamb’s wife. From the standpoint of the place, it is an actual city.

I am persuaded this is the place our Lord was speaking of in John 14:2-3.

Vs. 3 “tabernacle” means the place where God dwells. We will dwell with Him for eternity.

Notice the “no mores” in these closing chapters.

- No more sea (21:1)
- No More death (21:4; I Cor. 15:26)
- No more sorrow (21:4)
- No more crying (21:4; Ps. 30:5)
- No more pain (21:4)
- No temple (21:22)
- No sun, moon, night (21:23; 22:5)
- No more curse (22:3)

Vs. 4 See Is. 25:8-9

Vs. 5 These “no mores” are the things made new.

Presumably all things will be made new and stay new!!! The entropy law will be “repealed” and nothing will wear out, decay or age.

It may well be that the “apparent age” of each person in the resurrection may be in say, his or her early thirties!!!

Vs. 6 “It is done” – Christ’s plan for the final redemption of the Church, Israel, Heaven and Earth is consummated with the final Revelations of these chapters.

“Alpha and Omega” – The first and last letters in the Greek alphabet.

Vs. 7 Do you remember the overcomers in chapters 2-3? See I John 5:4-5

Vs. 8 There is a prepared place for those mentioned in this verse but it is not the “Holy Jerusalem”. The listing here is a reference to the sins of unbelievers in the tribulation and after. I refer you to our study in chapter 9. I am glad that according to I Cor. 6:9-11 these sins can be forgiven as long as one has life.

Vs. 9-10 These verses raise a very thought provoking question. Why is another picture of the New Jerusalem, almost identical to the one in verse 2, seen here?

The introduction of this vision by one of the vial angels seems to be a key.

I believe that from 21:9 through 22:5 God is giving us a picture of the New Jerusalem as it relates to the millennial Kingdom on earth. 21:1-8 is related to eternity.

The New Jerusalem cannot be a picture of conditions on earth during the millennium for the following reasons:

- There is no temple in the New Jerusalem while there is one during the millennium. Compare Rev. 21:22 – Ez. 40-48.

- There is no night in the New Jerusalem while there is in the millennium. Compare Rev. 21:25 – Is. 30:26; 60:19-20
- There is no death in the New Jerusalem while there is limited death in the millennium. Compare Rev. 21:4 – Is. 65:20
- The length of the millennial reign is 1,000 years while this reign is forever. Compare Rev. 20:4 – Rev. 22:5

Here is the scene as I understand it. The “New Jerusalem” hovers over the earth during the millennium and is the home of Church Age Saints and resurrected Old Testament and Tribulation Saints.

Church Age Saints will already be in our eternal state throughout the millennium.

This helps explain the otherwise difficult problem of the dwelling place of resurrected beings during the time of the millennium when others on earth will be in physical bodies and living ordinary lives.

After the millennium, the city will be moved for the purging of the heaven and earth and come back to sit on the earth for the eternal state.

Vs. 11 Beginning with this verse we are told of the glory of the city.

Everything in this Holy City expresses the many sided Glory of God.

It is God’s glory that gives it light and makes it what it is. 21:11, 23

Some Bible commentators feel that as the city hovers over the earth, it gives the appearance of a huge crystal shining its glories on the earth!

Vs. 12 The wall is 216 feet tall. See vs. 17

The gates are each made of a single pearl. See vs. 21

The names of the twelve tribes on the gates and the twelve apostles on the foundations show an association of all saints with this city.

Vs. 15 To measure means to accept it. See 11:1-2

Vs. 16 The city is almost 1,500 miles square, 1,342 miles to be exact! That is 3/4 the size of the United States.

The cities walls are jasper (vs. 18) which is a clear crystal. The city itself and the streets (vs. 18, 21) are made of pure gold as clear as crystal. The light of God's glory will shine throughout the city resembling a huge Holy of Holies.

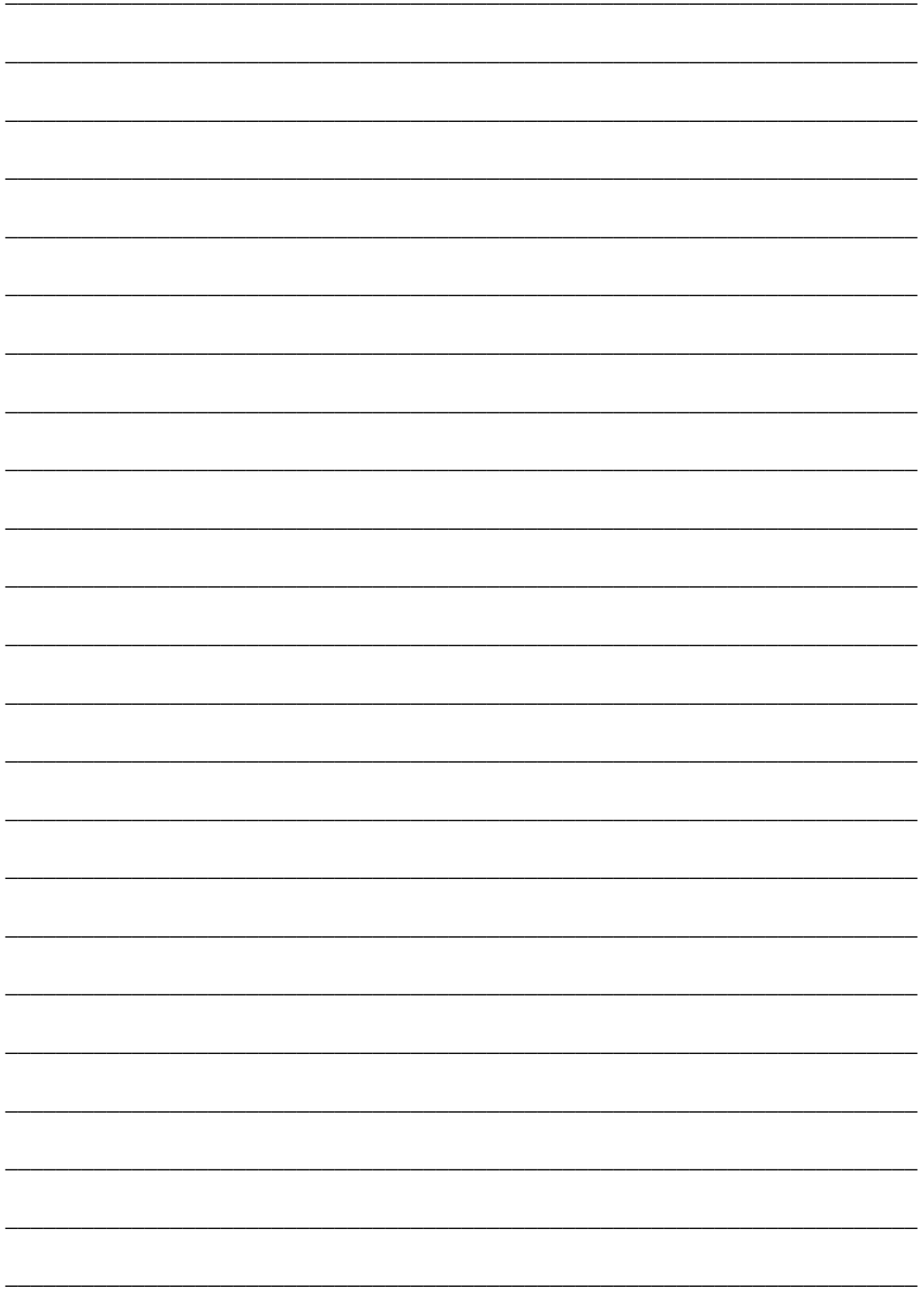
Vs. 19 Foundations are usually underground, but not this one. The colors of the stones are as follows:

- Jasper – clear crystal
- Sapphire – blue
- Chalcedony – greenish blue
- Emerald – green
- Sardonyx – white streaked with brown
- Sardus – red
- Chrysolyte – yellow quartz
- Beryl – green
- Topaz – yellow green
- Chrysoprasus – golden tinted
- Jacinth – blue
- Amethyst – purple

Vs. 24, 26 The mention of nations in these verses suggest there will be people on the new earth. Is. 66:22

Vs. 25 There is no need to shut the gate for only saved may enter here.

Vs. 27 The New Jerusalem will never be defiled by anything that is unclean or wholly.



REVELATION CHAPTER 22

The first five verses of this chapter continue the thought began in 21:9. Some aspects of these verses have already been mentioned.

Vs. 1-2 These verses bring before us the fact that in the eternal city we will have access to both water and food though it is unlikely we will have to have either.

It seems that both the thought of water and food symbolize abundant life in the glorious city.

These verses also show that within the city of environment will be as a beautiful garden.

Concerning this “pure river of water of life” it should be noted that since there is “no more sea” (Rev. 21:1) the exhaustible waters of this mighty river will supply whatever hydrologic needs the new earth may have. The phrase “clear as crystal” is used to describe the water. This is the same phrase used to describe the jasper stone in the walls of the city (Rev. 21:1) and a similar phrase “like unto crystal” was used to describe the sea of glass in Rev. 4:6. The thought seems to be that all of these things are free from all impurities, clear and sparkling in radiance, which speaks of the character and glories of their divine creator.

Concerning the “Tree of Life” in verse 2, I believe that this is probably the same tree that God had planted in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:9).

In verse 3 the age long curse is gone forever. What greater privilege could we have than that of serving our omnipotent creator and everlasting King!!!

Vs. 6 The angel again speaks to John to assure him that these things are indeed true and not just dreams, allegories or symbols with unknown meanings.

The word “shortly” was discussed in Rev. 1:1. I would however add an additional thought here. When all is done, that is the tribulation and millennium, and we are in eternity, even the 1007+ years it took to accomplish it will seem like a very brief amount of time.

Vs. 7 Divine blessing is here promised to those who hold fast, guard the saying of this book. See Rev. 1:3

Vs. 8 John gives another personal assurance to his readers. Remember, those first readers know him personally and loved and honored him.

John is overwhelmed with it all!! However, the mistake made here was the same as he made in 19:10 and resulted in the same rebuke from the angel. I believe John's intent was to worship God, not the angel.

We are never to worship anything or anyone other than God Himself. Col 1:18; Acts 12:21-23; Daniel 4:28-37; Is. 14:12-15; John 4:24

Vs. 7, 12, 20 These verses present us with the three fold promise of His coming

Vs. 10 Many things we do not know about Revelation is because of our weakness. They are knowable!

Notice the contrast between all that has been given to us thru John in Revelation and all that was given thru Daniel in his prophecy. (Dan. 12:4) Remember, Daniel's prophecy has been unsealed in the pages of the revelation. All that has been given is to and for the church and is urgently needed for this day.

Vs. 11 Notice that this verse is set between verse 7 and 12 which both proclaim the soon return of our Saviour. I offer the following observations from this verse.

- The coming of Christ will be swift. There will be no opportunity for men to change their lives and they will, therefore, be caught as they are.
- The same Gospel which results in the salvation of some results in increased hardness from others. I Cor. 1:18; II Cor. 2:16
- When Christ comes men and women will be forever in eternity as they are then. It is a simple division of all mankind that is taught in the word of God, righteous and just or unrighteous and unjust.

- The sins of lost men are to a large extent their own punishment and torment. Daniel 12:10; Romans 1:22-32

Vs. 12 Of the six times in Revelation that Christ promises to come quickly, two are a warning (Rev. 2:5 & 16) and four are a promised blessing. (Rev. 3:11; 22:7, 12, 20) This emphasizes expectancy, urgency and imminence. When He comes all men, both righteous and unrighteous, will be rewarded according to their works.

Vs. 13 This verse is the fourth time the Lord Jesus Christ calls Himself by this wonderful name, twice at the beginning of the book and twice at the end. (Rev. 1:8 & 11; 21:6; 22:13) He is the Creator and He is the Consummator. Col. 1:7

Vs. 14-15 The word here gives us a contrast between those who do God's commandments and enter the city and those who reject His word and are excluded from it.

Vs. 14 This is the seventh and last of the great "beatitudes" of Revelation. Rev. 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7

Remember, one is not saved by keeping commandments; however, the characteristic of the saved is that they do keep His commandments or words. John 14:15; John 15:10; I John 2:3-4; I John 3:23

Vs. 15 I refer you to our study in chapter 9 for a complete list of sins given in the Revelation.

Vs. 16 "root and offspring of David" – This shows the eternity of Christ. Matt. 22:41-45; Is. 11:1. I also refer you back to our study in 5:5. Only an eternal God could be both an ancestor and a descendant of the same person. And only the God/man could do that!!

"Bright and Morning Star" Num. 24:17; Rev. 2:28. The title as used here seems to be announcing the soon arrival of Christ for his church.

"Bright and Morning Star" – This is the only place in the entire bible where this title is used as Christ. It would therefore seem that special significance is attached to its usage here at the end of God's written revelation to man.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the true one who will herald the dawn of eternal day.

Vs. 17 An invitation for all to be ready for Christ.

Here is a twofold plea from the Holy Spirit and the Bride. It seems that they could not contain the overwhelming emotions brought forth from the titles of Christ in the previous verses. They plea for Him (Christ) to come for them and they also plea for the world to come to Christ. The invitation is open, as always, for whosoever will.

Man today scoffs at the thought of His coming saying “where is the promise of His coming?” (II Peter 3:4) The Bible responds with the words of II Peter 3:9 & 15.

Vs. 18-19 These two verses contain one of the most serious warnings and sober indictments in all the Word of God. This book has been the revealing of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have seen Christ in the work of creation, in His work of controlling all that has been created and final in bringing all that creation to its consumption. Those who would pervert this view of Christ will suffer the eternal punishment stated in these verses.

Vs. 20-21 How fitting that the final two verses bring before us both His imminent coming and His infinite grace.

If every thought of man was written down and put in the form of multiple lists, the beginning of every list should say that Jesus Christ is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. He has redeemed us by His precious blood. He is coming again and coming soon.

Halleluiah, Praise His name, for He is worthy!!!

THE PURPOSE OF THE TRIBULATION

During the seven year tribulation period, all the great determinative purposes of God will begin to be brought to their fulfillment and culmination. A natural question arises as we consider all that the book of Revelation says about the tribulation period. Why is God going to bring the tribulation period on the earth? The following statements will answer this question.

- I believe that first and foremost God is preparing the nation of Israel to receive Jesus Christ as her promised Messiah. Jeremiah makes this clear by referring to it as “the time of Jacob’s trouble”. (Jeremiah 30:7)
Stanton shows the Jewish character of the entire period as follows: *The tribulation is primarily Jewish. This fact is borne out by Old Testament Scriptures (Deut. 4:30; Jere. 30:7; Ezek. 20:37; Dan. 12:1; Zech. 13:8-9), by the Olivet Discourse of Christ (Matt. 24:9-26), and by the book of Revelation itself (Rev. 7:4-8: 12;1-2; 17, etc.) It concerns “Daniel’s people,” the coming of “false Messiah,” the preaching of the “gospel of the kingdom,” flight on the “Sabbath,” the temple and the “holy place,” the land of Judea, the city of Jerusalem, the twelve “tribes of the children of Israel,” the “son of Moses,” “signs” in the heavens, the “covenant” with the Beast, the “sanctuary,” the “sacrifice and the oblation” of the temple ritual-these all speak of Israel and prove that the tribulation is largely a time when God deals with His ancient people prior to their entrance into the promised kingdom. The many Old Testament prophecies yet to be fulfilled for Israel further indicates a future time when God will deal with this nation (Deut. 30:1-6; Jer. 30:8-10, etc.)*
- The second great purpose of the tribulation is to pour judgment and wrath on unbelieving men and nations. Rev. 3:10 declares “I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth”. See also Jer. 25: 32-33; Isa. 26:21; II Thes. 2:12; Rev. 6:15; Rev. 16:9 .

While the above two thoughts represent the main purpose of the tribulation, other important aspects come into play.

- The rapture, prior to the tribulation, will bring to a close the church age.

- Jesus Christ will redeem the earth from the dominion of satan. Man had lost dominion to satan all the way back in the Garden of Eden. Part of this redemption will include the removal of the curse from all of creation.
Romans 8
- The Word of God will be shown to be true in all it says. Centuries old prophecies will be fulfilled down to the very last detail.

THE PREMILLENNIAL POSITION

The premillennial position is that there will be a literal 1,000 year reign of Christ upon this earth. Christ Himself will rule over that kingdom from His throne in Jerusalem.

While there are individual verses that speak of this 1,000 year reign, the basis for premillennial doctrine is in the literal interpretation of scripture and in the great covenants of the Old Testament. For specific mention of the 1,000 years see Revelation 20:1-7. Other references are Zech. 14:16; Is. 2:1-4; 11:3-4; Ps. 2 & 72, Jer. 31:28-37; Ezek. 48 and literally hundreds of other references.

Both the premillennial and pretribulational positions rest on one major premise - the literal method of interpretation of the scriptures. Even some amillennialists admit that if the literal method of interpretation is applied to the bible that it does indeed teach a premillennial doctrine. A literal interpretation sees a clear distinction between Israel and the church and demands a literal 1,000 year reign so that the conditions of God's four great eternal covenants with Israel can see a complete fulfillment. I will briefly list the basic concepts of these covenants so that you might study them further.

- The Abrahamic Covenant. This covenant was made with Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3 and then detailed in Gen. 12:6-7; 13:14-17; 15:1-21. In its most general sense this covenant promises to the nation of Israel a national land.
- The Palestinian Covenant – This covenant is stated in Deut. 30:1-10. See also Ezekiel 20:33-37; 42-44. This covenant has to do with Israel's assurance of final permanent restoration to the land.
- The Davidic Covenant – This promise was made by God to David and is given in II Samuel 7:12-16. See also Jer. 33:20-21; 31:35-37. This covenant has to do with promises of dynasty, nation and throne.
- The New Covenant – The New Covenant promised to Israel is stated in Jeremiah 33:31-34 and deals with Israel's spiritual blessing and

redemption. There are also New Testament references to this covenant such as Hebrews 8:6-13.

All four of these covenants are eternal covenants that carry the “I will” of Almighty God. The “I will” of God means that they do not depend on the action of man but will be carried out to their complete fulfillment by the determinative will of God. There has to be a literal kingdom reign (millennium or 1,000 year) so that all provisions of these covenants can be fulfilled.

THE PRE-TRIBULATION POSITION

The Pre-Tribulational position stated in its simplest form is that the tribulation period is a time of wrath from which the church has been promised deliverance.

The Lord Jesus Christ will rapture the church before the tribulation period starts.

The above position is proven by the following:

- The tribulation period is a time of wrath. Zeph. 1:15, 18; I Thess. 1:10; 5:9; Rev. 6:16-17; 11:18; 14:10, 19; 15:1, 7; 16:1, 19. That the tribulation period is a time of God's wrath, cannot be disputed if one accepts the clear statements of the word of God.
- The church has been promised deliverance from this time of wrath. I Thess. 5:9 is the most important single verse of scripture in the bible to prove the pre-tribulational position.

Revelation 3:10 is also a clear promise that the church will be kept from the "hour of temptation" which is the tribulation period.

Revelation 4:1 should also be noted here. The rapture takes place in this portion of scripture and it must be recognized that the church is not seen on earth again throughout the entire tribulation period. If the church was going to be involved in the tribulation that would have been shown in the multitude of details given in Revelation.

For further study on the tribulation period, please consider the following:

- It is a time of judgment. Rev. 14:7; 15:4; 16:5 & 7; 19:2
- It is a time of indignation. Is. 26:20-21; 34:1-3
- It is a time of trial. Rev. 3:10
- It is a time of trouble. Jer. 30:7; Zeph. 1:14-15; Dan. 12:1

- It is a time of destruction. Joel 1:15; I Thess. 5:3
- It is a time of darkness. Joel 2:2; Amos 5:8; Zeph. 1:14-18
- It is a time of overturning. Is. 24:1-4, 19-21
- It is a time of punishment. Is. 24:20-21

No passage can be found to alleviate to any degree whatsoever the severity of this time that shall come upon the earth. Thank God, the church will be gone!!!

EARTHQUAKES AND OTHER CONVULSIONS OF NATURE

The world has never seen a time of continual “natural disaster” as will be experienced during the tribulation period. All the normal processes that relate to the earth, sea, heavens and animals will be disrupted and see great convulsions during this seven year period.

The following will show the earthquakes that take place in the tribulation and approximately when they take place. Note that three are called “great” earthquakes.

Revelation 6:12

“Great earthquake” – This one takes place very early in the tribulation.

Revelation 8:5

This occurs around the midway point of the first 3 ½ years.

Revelation 11:13

“Great earthquake” – This is one of the numerous events to take place at the middle of the tribulation.

Revelation 11:19

This occurs at the middle of the last 3 ½ years.

Revelation 16:18

“Great earthquake” – This earthquake destroys every city on earth (except Jerusalem) and takes place very near the end of the tribulation period.

As can be seen from the above, earthquakes will occur throughout the tribulation period. Take note though!!! They are not merely “natural disasters” but are supernaturally controlled by Almighty God. The same is true today. The bible declares, in reference to Jesus Christ “and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist” (Colossians 1:17). This verse teaches that Christ holds all things together by His omnipotent power. If an earthquake occurs today or during the tribulation it is because He allows it by conscious determination of His will.

The following will list other unusual events that relate to natural processes during the tribulation time. These occur because Christ is using them as part of His judgment/redemption process.

- 6:8 "Beasts of the earth" – I personally find this to be one of the most intriguing thoughts in all the book of Revelation. The word best means wild, dangerous or venomous.
- 6:12-14 Sun black as sack cloth
Moon becomes as blood
Stars of heaven fall; heaven departs as a scroll
Every mountain and island moved
- 8:5 Voices, thunderings, lightening (all on earth see and hear!)
- 8:7 Hail and fire mingled with blood
1/3 of trees and grass burned up
- 8:8-9 Great burning mass cast into sea
1/3 of sea becomes blood
1/3 of creatures in sea die
1/3 of ships destroyed
- 8:10-11 Great burning star falls upon rivers and fountains of water
1/3 of all fresh water poisoned
- 8:12 1/3 of sun, moon, stars smitten
Lose 1/3 of their light
- 9:2 Sun and air darkened by smoke from bottomless pit
- 11:6 Drought for 3 ½ years
- 11:19 Lightening, voices, thunderings and great hail
- 14:2 Voices and thunder from heaven
- 15:5 Heaven opens to reveal the temple of the tabernacle
- 16:1 Vial poured upon earth and a grievous sore comes on those who

received the mark of the beast

16:3 Sea becomes as the blood of a dead man and all life in sea dies.

16:4 All fresh water becomes blood

16:8 Sun radiates blasts of heat that scorch men

16:10 Supernatural darkness that causes great pain

16:12 Euphrates River dries up

16:18-21 Voices, thunders, lightening and 100 pound hail

19:11 Heaven opens and Christ appears on a white horse

WAR IN THE TRIBULATION/REVELATION

The tribulation period will be a time of ceaseless warfare that is unparalleled in human history!! Every nation that can field an army will be involved in war at some point of this period. The armies that fight will sometimes be human and sometimes they will be demonic. Literally billions of people will be killed either directly or indirectly as a result of these battles.

Over the years as I have listened to what people say about the tribulation and in some cases read what they have written, I have come to the conclusion that many have two incorrect perceptions of the tribulation period.

The first misconception is that the first 3 ½ years of the tribulation is not going to be that bad. This is not the case, half the world's population will be killed in this period and unspeakable horrible judgments from God will be visited upon the earth!!!

The second misconception is that the antichrist will actually bring about an extended time of peace. He will not! He will talk it but not produce it. The only peace he makes a reality is in a period of time between the rapture and the signing of the covenant with Israel!! (See the section on "Time Gaps in Revelation"). The bible is very clear that in the tribulation proper war starts at the very beginning with the opening of the first seal.

The following is a complete list of all wars referred to in the Book of Revelation. These references are given in order and following each is a brief description and a time perspective.

Revelation 6:2-8

This warfare begins with the opening of the first seal judgment at the very beginning of the tribulation period. The primary focus of these campaigns is perhaps the first two years of the tribulation. However, the general conditions of war will carry throughout the tribulation period. The Battle of Gog and Magog (Ex. 38-39) though not specifically mentioned in Revelation, would be added here.

Revelation 9:13-21

This is a demonic army who kills 1/3 of the world's population. This warfare lasts 13 months and ends at the middle of the tribulation period.

Revelation 11:2

This is general warfare that last the entire last 3 ½ years of the tribulation.

Revelation 11:7

This has reference to the killing of God's two special witnesses. This occurs at the midway point of the tribulation.

Revelation 12:7-9

This heavenly warfare ends at the midway point of the tribulation. My position is that it started at the rapture!

Revelation 12:13-17

This is extremely violent, intense slaughter and persecution that carries throughout the final 3 ½ years of the tribulation.

Revelation 13:7

The beast, who is now a world leader, carries out this campaign for the last 3 ½ years.

Revelation 14:14-20

This is the Battle of Armageddon at the end of the tribulation.

Revelation 16:12-16

Battle of Armageddon

Revelation 17:14-6

Battle of Armageddon

Revelation 19:11-21

This is the Battle of Armageddon. The end of this battle marks the end of the tribulation period.

Revelation 20:2-9

This final battle is not part of the tribulation period because it takes place after the 1,000 year reign. Remember, this is the absolute final battle to be fought on earth and occurs immediately prior to the institution of the eternal state.

TIME GAPS IN REVELATION

There are, I believe, three time gaps that relate to the prophetic events of the Book of Revelation.

GAP #1

There is a period of time between the rapture of the church and the beginning of the tribulation period.

Many object immediately to this statement because they have always heard that the rapture will take place and then the tribulation period will begin. I have made the statement hundreds or thousands of times and still consider it a valid generalization. However, it is not completely accurate from a scriptural perspective.

I offer the following:

- The Bible teaches that it is the peace covenant that is signed between Israel and the antichrist and not the rapture of the church that marks the beginning of the tribulation. Daniel 9:27
- The Bible teaches that the antichrist comes on the scene as a man of peace. Daniel 8:25. Since he is not revealed until after the rapture (II Thess. 2) and since there is no peace during the tribulation period proper (Rev. 6) there must be some period of time between the rapture and the start of the tribulation (marked by the signing of the covenant) for him to convince the world that he can indeed produce peace. It is indeed ironic to note that there is no peace from the time he signs the “peace covenant” onward. The devil never makes good on his promises and the antichrist is controlled by the devil!!
- I do not know how long this gap will be. It could be weeks, months or years. I guess it is one or two years.

GAP #2

This period of time is between the Battle of Armageddon (which marks the end of the tribulation) and the beginning of the millennial kingdom. I do not know how long this period is but some time must be allowed for the judgment of the living nations (Matthew 25) to take place.

GAP #3

This time period will be between the end of the millennial kingdom (1,000 year reign) and the beginning of the eternal state.

- Satan is loosed from the bottomless pit “when the thousand years are expired” (Rev. 20:7) to go out to deceive the nations. This is probably a period of some years when it is considered that the “one hour” (Rev. 17:12) is a period of 3 ½ years.
- Time is allowed in this gap for the final conflict to be fought (Rev. 20:8-9), the devil to be cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10), the Great White Throne Judgment to take place (Rev. 20:11-15) and for the purging of the old heaven and earth (Rev. 21:1)
- It is possible that the time involved here is thousands or even millions of years!!!!

SALVATION IN THE TRIBULATION, GOD'S EFFORT AND MAN'S RESPONSE

God is God and because He is, He has always been concerned that undeserving lost men would be saved. This truth has been a reality in Old Testament times, in New Testament times and in every age and dispensation (Is. 45:22; Is. 53; John 3:16; John 6:37-39; II Peter 3:9). This truth, that God desires the salvation of the lost, is also true during the pouring out of His wrath in the tribulation period. The following thoughts are supplied for your consideration.

- It is an undeniable Bible fact that there will be a great host of people saved in the tribulation period. Rev. 6:9-11 shows those who are saved in the first half of the tribulation. Rev. 7:9-14 shows those who are saved in the last half of the tribulation. What a picture of the love, grace and mercy of God!!! Even in the midst of judgment and the culmination of all things He is still saving souls.

- God uses many means to bring about the salvation of the lost during the tribulation. Many of these means are truly remarkable and supernatural. Consider the following:
 - God seals two special witnesses who minister in the first 3 ½ years of the tribulation. Rev. 11:3-11

 - God seals 144,000 Jewish men to minister for the entire tribulation period. Rev. 7:3-8; 14:1-5

 - God allows men on earth to actually view events in heaven itself. Rev. 6:14-16; 11:19

 - God uses angels to make proclamations to men on earth and even to fly back and forth in heaven preaching the gospel. Rev. 14:6-7; 8, 9, 15; Rev. 8:13

 - God uses the supernatural circumstances surrounding the destruction of the army of God and Magog as a sign to the

heathen and to Israel. Ezekiel 38:23; 39:21-22. I believe this takes place very near the beginning of the tribulation period.

- While many are saved as a result of the efforts of God, the sad truth is that many more will reject Christ after receiving all that has been mentioned. Read Rev. 6:16-17; 9:20-21; 16:9; 16:21. This is not unlike the conditions of this day when the word is preached and some are saved, yet far more reject Christ. Matt. 13
- Salvation in the tribulation is based on the same things that have always brought salvation to lost men: faith and the Blood of Christ!!! Rev. 7:14; 12:11; 14:12
- Before closing this section, I would like to deal with the question of whether those who have heard the gospel in this age, and refused to trust Christ as Saviour, can be saved after the rapture takes place. My answer to this is yes they could be but it is very unlikely that many if any will be!!! I base my answer on the following:
 - It is my position that the strong delusion (II Thess. 2:11) will be sent at the middle of the tribulation because it has particular reference to the antichrist setting himself up in the temple as God which takes place at the middle of the tribulation.
 - When we take into account the hardening and blinding effects of sin, the depravity of man and the deceiving work of satan (which will increase many fold after the rapture,) it is unlikely that many who have rejected Christ before the rapture will accept him afterward. John 3:19-20; II Cor. 4:4; Eph. 4:18; Prov. 29:1; Hebrews 3:13; Romans 2:5

Steve Kirkpatrick trusted Christ as Saviour on February 24, 1974 at the age of nineteen. Having enrolled in the Bible School division of Tennessee Temple University in January 1975, Steve answered God's call to preach on May 4, 1975. In early 1976 he met Tricia Blevins, the wonderful lady who became his wife on December 20, 1976. Since Steve's graduation from Tennessee Temple in 1978 and Tricia's in 1979, they have faithfully served God together in various church ministries. Steve and Tricia currently live in Cartersville, Georgia and are serving the Lord at the Philadelphia Baptist Church in Calhoun, Georgia.

Dear Friend,

Have you trusted Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour? The Book of Revelation reveals the future time of tribulation wrath that will come upon the earth (Revelation Chapters 6-19) as well as the suffering of the lost throughout eternity (Revelation 20:11-15). Now is the time to trust Christ and be saved while you have life and opportunity.

The opportunity for salvation is available now!!! Revelation 20:17 proclaims “and the spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

The basis for salvation is the same as it has always been, by the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary’s cross and the shedding of His precious blood.

Revelation 1:5 “and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the Kings of the earth. Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.”

Revelation 5:9 “and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and has redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;”