



THE REVELATION

by John R. Ecob DD

PROPHECY SERIES - STUDY NO 1 FOR THE HERALD OF HOPE

1,000 years
reign of Christ
on the earth

The Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ

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The Church Age to Eternity



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Preface

The book of Revelation brings together all the prophecies of the Old and New Testaments and places them in chronological order. It is the final inspired record given by God to John when he was a prisoner of Rome on the Isle of Patmos in the Aegean Sea. John was the last prophet and Revelation is God's final word. All who add to it bring great judgment upon themselves (Rev.22:18-19).

According to Irenaeus (AD130-202), John wrote the Book of the Revelation at the end of the reign of Emperor Domitian (AD96). Irenaeus was a disciple of Polycarp, who in turn was a disciple of the Apostle John, so his testimony is reliable.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ was given by the Father to the Lord Jesus to show to His servants *"things which must shortly (quickly) come to pass."* The message of Revelation is not primarily to reveal the person of Christ, but **events**; things which must come to pass. Within the Godhead it is the Father who determines the *"times and seasons"* (Acts 1:7) and in the Revelation He has revealed the **sequence of events** that will transpire on earth through the Church age and beyond into eternity.

Since Revelation incorporates events prophesied elsewhere in Scripture we need to be aware of what **all the prophets** have spoken about the end-times. Halfway through the Tribulation God revealed to John the final scenes when *"the mystery of God should be finished, AS HE HATH DECLARED TO HIS SERVANTS THE PROPHETS"* (Rev.10:7).

Before we begin to interpret the book of Revelation we therefore need to know what **all the prophets** have spoken. Otherwise, we will be in conflict with the rest of the Bible. Peter tells us that the **first thing** to remember is that no prophecy in Scripture can be studied in isolation:

"Knowing this FIRST, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men (plural) of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2Peter 1:20-21).

How can we fit the last-days events into their chronological sequence if we don't know what those events are?

The disciples of our Saviour made this mistake. They focussed only on some of the prophecies of Christ's second Advent and of the glorious future Kingdom of God on earth when Israel would be at the head of the nations, but they failed to understand the prophecies that Messiah must suffer first.

*"Then Jesus said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe **ALL that the prophets have spoken**: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And **beginning at Moses and all the prophets**, he expounded unto them in **all the scriptures** the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:25-27).*

Many Bible prophecy preachers have erred simply because they have interpreted prophetic scriptures in isolation; they have exhibited a lack of knowledge of *"ALL that the prophets have spoken."*

Old Testament prophets were given elements of God's future plan and like Daniel (Dan.12:8) did not understand many aspects of what they wrote. They knew nothing about the mystery of the Church, *"Which in other ages was **not made known** unto the sons of men, as it is **now revealed** unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit"* (Eph.3:5). Therefore they could not comprehend the Church-age gap in Israel's history.

However, when John wrote in AD96 the Church was revealed and had become a reality. John was therefore able to place it in its chronological sequence in Chapters 2 and 3 of Revelation.

When the Old Testament prophets prophesied they spoke in the context of the era in which they lived and many of their prophecies related to events occurring in their day or in the near future. Thus, Isaiah had much to say about the Assyrians, the northern kingdom of Samaria and Gentile nations surrounding Judea where he was located. But Isaiah also was given many prophecies of Messiah's sufferings, Israel's ultimate restoration, Christ's second Advent and kingdom. Isaiah, Daniel and Ezekiel are therefore briefly reviewed in the following pages to highlight the major events that must come to pass in the last days and which must find their place in the final panoramic view of last-days events given to John.

The Books of Revelation and Isaiah

Many of Isaiah's prophecies have been fulfilled and had become history when John wrote the book of Revelation. In Chapter 2 of his prophecy he wrote of *"the last days"* when Jerusalem would become the centre of world evangelism and global peace would prevail among the nations:

"It shall come to pass in the last days, ... many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD...and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem... nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa.2:2-4).

Isaiah also wrote of a time of great tribulation prior to the return of Christ (Chapters 24 to 26) - when Israel would suffer greatly, the nations will be judged, and Christ will reign from Zion.

"Behold, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste... When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done....Wherefore glorify ye the LORD in the fires, even the name of the LORD God of Israel in the isles of the sea... in that day, that the LORD shall punish ...the kings of the earth upon the earth... the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion" (Isa.24:1-23).

Isaiah wrote of Christ's first and second advents. Chapter 53 gives intimate details of the sufferings of Christ. Chapters 60 to 66 provide much detail of the return of the Jews after *"the Redeemer shall come to Zion"* (Isa.59:20) and indicates that the *"ships of Tarshish"* will be the first to bring the redeemed nation back to the land. At the same time, the Gentile nations will *"come to thy (Israel's) light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising"* (Isa.60:3); they will rebuild the cities of Israel.

The Lord's second advent is described several times by Isaiah (Chapters 24:21-23; 26:21; 59:20; 63:1 and 66:15-16). Israel will experience *"travail"* and new birth during the Great Tribulation.

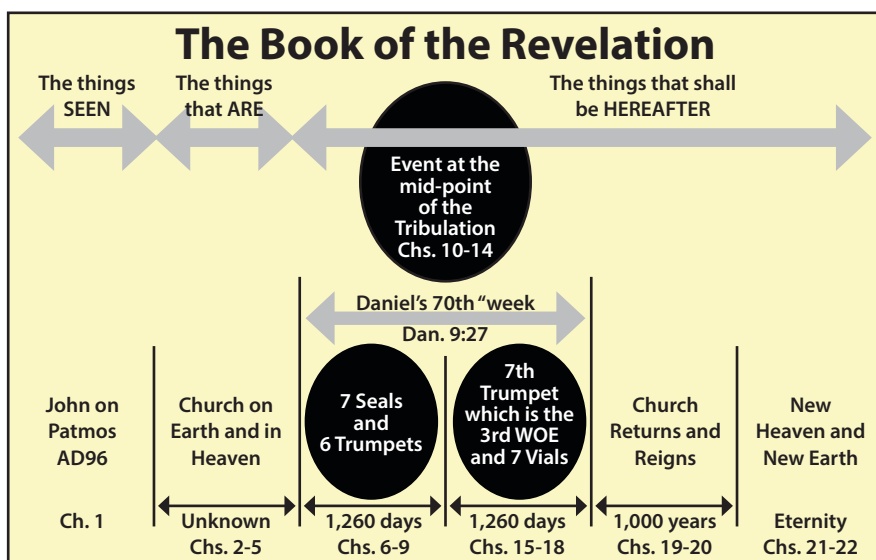
"Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child (Christ)...Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children" (Isa.66:7-8).

The Books of Revelation and Daniel

"No prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation" (2Pet.1:19-20).

John's book of Revelation harmonizes with Daniel's prophecies: Daniel wrote about the *"times of the Gentiles,"* which began with the Babylonian Empire followed by Persia, Greece and finally Rome. The final **Roman** ruler is a blasphemous *"little horn"* who will rule for the final 3½ years (*"a time, times and an half"*) before Christ returns to establish His everlasting kingdom ruled by redeemed Israel as the *"saints of the most High"* (Dan.7:15-28).

- Daniel prophesied that 490 years were determined on the Jews and Jerusalem before the nation will be redeemed. Christ's first coming was to occur after 483 years, then after a long gap, the last seven years would be divided into two periods of 1,260 days. The Beast (a **Roman** prince) would rule during the second 1,260 days (3½ years).
- John devotes Chapters 6 to 18 of the Revelation to the same period of seven years dividing it into two periods of 1,260 days following the Rapture of the Church (ch.4) and calls it the *"great tribulation"* (ch.7:14) after which Christ returns to reign. Both books must be read together.



The Book of Daniel

Daniel 1 & 2 → Daniel 3-7 → Daniel 8 → Daniel 9 → Daniel 10-12



The Books of Revelation, Ezekiel and Joel

While Daniel deals with the “*times of the Gentiles*” Ezekiel’s prophecy has as its focus **the nation of Israel** and describes the departure of the glory of God from the first Temple in 586BC (Ezek.chs.9 to 11) and the “*overturning*” of the throne of David (Ezek.21:25 to 27) until Messiah comes to reign. Ezekiel finally sees the glory of God return to the future millennial Temple which is described in Chapters 40 to 43.

Before the glory of God can return to the millennial Temple the nation of Israel must repent of its rejection of Jesus the Messiah. Chapters 34 to 39 of Ezekiel’s prophecy describe the last-days restoration of Israel to the land and to the Lord.

In order to bring Israel to repentance God will send a “*northern army*” into Israel from the land of Magog (Russia), Persia (Iran), Togarmah (Turkey), Libya, and Ethiopia (Sudan). Two-thirds of Jews in the land will perish but **the nation will seek the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved (Zech.13:8-9)**. Jeremiah called this time “*the time of Jacob’s trouble*” but he states that “*he shall be saved out of it*” (Jer.30:7). Ezekiel describes a **global earthquake and hailstones** (meteorites) that will destroy the invading armies and this matches the description of the **sixth Seal Judgment** (Rev.6:12-13) in the first half of the Tribulation.

The book of Joel Chapter 2 places the last-days conversion of Israel in the **first half** of the Tribulation when the land is invaded by a “*northern army*” (Joel 2:20), but the final battle of Armageddon will be in the **second half** of the Tribulation when “*all nations*” come against Jerusalem as seen in Joel Chapter 3.

The book of Revelation also places the conversion of Israel in the first half of the Tribulation. Two Jewish prophets must prophesy at Jerusalem for **the first 1,260 days** and, since they die at the mid-point of the Tribulation, their conversion to Christ must therefore occur immediately after the Rapture.

The 144,000 Jewish evangelists who preach the Gospel of the kingdom “*in all the world for a witness to all nations*” (Matt.24:14) **in the first half** of the Tribulation (Rev.11:3), do so **before** Antichrist moves into the Temple at the mid-point of the Tribulation (Matt.24:15). **Half-way through the seven years** these “*servants of our God*” appear around the throne **in heaven** to receive the

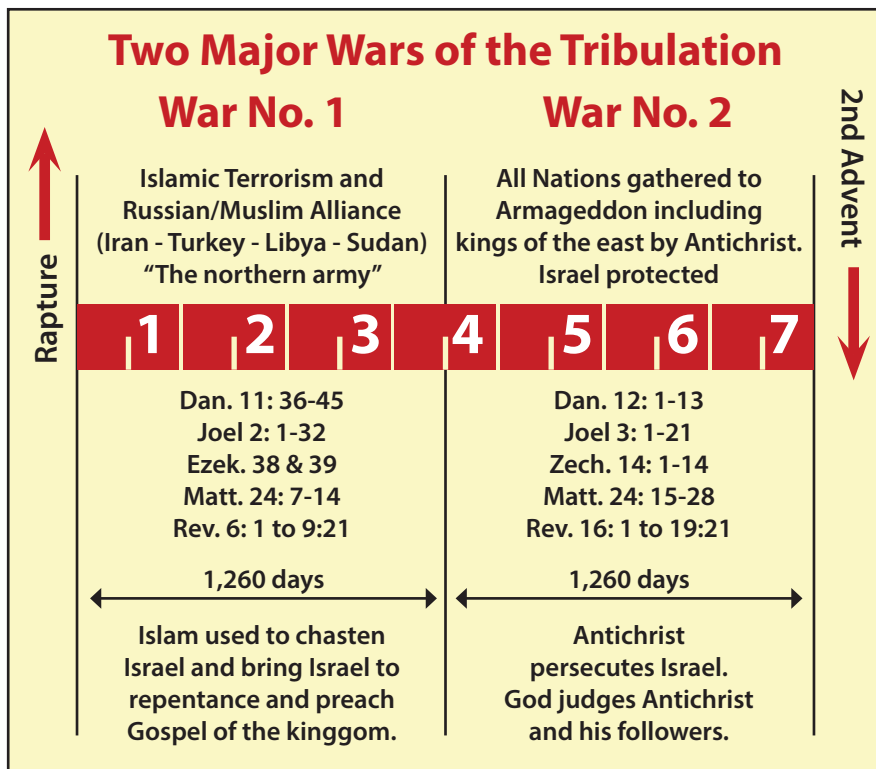
Revelation

martyrs' crown (Rev.14:1-5). They too must be saved very early in the seven years for they are sealed for protection **before** the first four Trumpet judgments (Rev.7:3).

The conversion of Israel will be a most remarkable event since the **entire nation** worldwide will turn to Christ as indicated by Paul (Rom.11:25) and by Jeremiah; *"from the least of them unto the greatest of them"* (Jer.31:34). Ezekiel speaks of that day:

"So the house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God from that day and forward" (Ezek.39:22).

At the **mid-point** of the Tribulation Israel is described as those who *"keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ"* (Rev. 12:17), which means that Israel must be converted **before the mid-point** of the seven years, and since Israel's conversion occurs at the Russian invasion, the Russian/Islamic invasion must also occur **in the first half of the Tribulation**.



The Russian/Islamic invasion is therefore distinct from Armageddon which occurs right **at the end** of the Tribulation during the “*seven last plagues*” (Rev.15:1), ie. the **sixth of the vial** judgments (Rev.16:12-16).

Therefore when we read the book of Revelation we should expect to see **two major conflicts** in the land of Israel;

i) The first is a **Russian/Islamic** invasion that brings Israel to repentance and sees the land of Russia burned (Ezek.39:6). Islam will be broken; “*every man’s sword shall be against his brother*” (Ezek.38:21) and only one sixth of their armies will survive (Ezek.39:2) in the first half of the seven years (Joel 2:20).

ii) The second war involves **all nations** against Israel as Antichrist seeks to totally destroy God’s people who are protected by God and sustained by a powerful nation described as having “*two wings of a great eagle*” (Rev.12:14); possibly “*Tarshish and the young lions thereof*” (Ezek.38:13) ie. USA and UK. This conflict is described in Joel 3 and Daniel 12.

The Russian/Islamic invasion in the first half of the Tribulation must therefore occur **at the time of the sixth Seal Judgment** when there is a global earthquake (Ezek.38:20; Rev.6:12). It cannot be before the Rapture as some have suggested, otherwise all Israel would be raptured as a part of the Church and the prophecies of Israel in the “*time of Jacob’s (Israel’s) trouble*” (Jer.30:7) would be meaningless.

Joseph in the Old Testament, is a ‘type’ of Christ. He was loved by His Father, betrayed by His brethren and sold to Gentiles. Joseph was sent to a dungeon but raised up to sit on the throne. A seven-year dearth came over the whole world and after two years of the dearth Joseph was reconciled with his repentant brethren, the children of Israel.

The Lord Jesus was loved by the Father, despised and rejected by His brethren, crucified, and buried in a tomb only to rise and ascend to the throne in heaven. The seven-year Tribulation will cause the children of Israel to turn to Christ in their distress, and if it runs true to the ‘type’, they will be reconciled **after two years** of the seven-year Tribulation **at the time of the sixth Seal Judgment**.

The Book of Revelation Summarized

The Key: “Write the things which thou **hast** seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter” (Rev.1:19).

The Church Age

Chapter 1

“The things which thou **has** SEEN.
- the vision of Christ on the Isle of Patmos.

Chapters 2 and 3

“the things **which ARE**” - The letters to seven churches are prophetic of **seven stages** of Christendom in this present age. “Born again” believers, the saved remnant in each stage of Church history are called “overcomers.”

The Rapture

Chapters 4 to 22

“the things which must be **HEREAFTER**” ie. after this present Church age.

Chapters 4 and 5

John foresees his own Rapture through the open door of heaven. The Rapture of the Church occurs before the Tribulation begins. Old Testament saints led by 24 elders are already at the throne. The seven seal judgments are opened after the Church is home in heaven.

First Half of 7-Year Tribulation

Chapters 6:2

Israel’s 70th “week” begins as a Roman prince (Antichrist) divides “the land for gain” (Dan.9:26-27; 11:39). Two Jewish men are saved when the Rapture takes place and prophesy for 1,260 days. Also, 144,000 Jewish single men are converted and preach worldwide.

Chapter 6:3-11

Islamic global terror takes “peace from the earth” creating famine and one quarter of men perish. Tribulation saints are persecuted and many martyred. Terrorism has already begun.

Chapter 6:12-17

A Russian/Islamic invasion of Israel slays two-thirds of the Jews in the land but the remnant turn to God and trust Christ as their Saviour. The invading army is destroyed by A GLOBAL EARTHQUAKE, hailstones, famine, and “every man’s sword shall be against his brother” (Ezek.38:19-20; Joel 2; Dan.11:44). The nations fear the Lord and recognize that the “Day of the Lord” has come when they see

Israel converted (Ezek.39:22-23). **Israel will take seven months to bury the dead. Only one-sixth of their enemies escape to Siberia; Russia (Magog) and the "isles of the Gentiles" will be burned (Ezek.39:6).**

Chapter 7

The 144,000 saved Jewish young men are sealed for protection from impending environmental judgments and preach "*the Gospel of the Kingdom in all the world*" (Matt.24:14) for the first 1,260 days of the Tribulation. Many Gentiles believe their witness and are martyred (Rev.7:9-17).

Chapter 8

Four environmental Trumpet judgments destroy one third of the sea and one third of the trees and grass is burned **before** the **three Woes** begin with the release of demons from the bottomless pit to torment those WHO FOLLOW ANTICHRIST (Rev.9:1-11).

Chapter 9:12-21

War in Asia involving 200 million armed men will see one-third of mankind perish.

Mid-Tribulation Events

Chapter 10

The "*mystery of God*" is finished revealing to all that the final conflict will be with Antichrist (the Beast) against Christ during

the final half of the seven years. The judgments sealed in Daniel Chapter 12 are now to be fully revealed in the "*seven last plagues*" i.e. the seven vial judgments.

Chapter 11

The Beast occupies the Temple and slays the two Jewish prophets but after three and a half days they are raised at Jerusalem and caught up to heaven - the imminent Kingdom is announced.

Chapter 12

Satan is cast out of heaven to the earth and a demon from the bottomless pit possesses Antichrist making him "the Beast." Satan seeks to destroy redeemed Israel who are now protected in the 2nd half of the Tribulation by a great eagle with two wings; possibly the US and UK.

Chapter 13

The ten kings of the Roman Empire (EU) give the Beast total political and religious power - men commanded to worship the Beast.

Chapter 14

The 144,000 Jewish men are seen in heaven; earth's harvest about to be reaped and cast into the winepress of the wrath of God.

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Second Half of 7 Years Tribulation

Chapter 15

The seven “*last plagues*” (7th Trumpet = 3rd Woe = 7 vials) is announced.

Chapters 16 to 18

The seven Vial judgments are poured out culminating in the burning of apostate Christendom at Rome. Redeemed Israel will be fighting with great victories against the armies of the Beast (Zech.12:1-9).

The Second Advent of Christ

Chapter 19

Christ returns **with** the church **AFTER the wedding** (Luke 12:36); A SECOND GREATER GLOBAL EARTHQUAKE (Rev. 16:18); Antichrist is slain and cast into the lake of fire (Joel 3; Zech. 14; Matt. 24).

Christ's Millennial Kingdom Established

Chapter 20

Satan is bound in the bottomless pit for 1,000 years; Tribulation martyrs are raised to reign with Christ 1,000 years. The rest of the dead are not raised until the end of the 1,000 years.

After 1,000 years Satan is released from the bottomless

pit to test the nations. Many are deceived by Satan and they besiege Jerusalem, but fire comes down from heaven to destroy these nations. Satan is cast into the lake of fire, the unsaved dead in *hades* are raised in the “*resurrection to damnation*” and judged at the Great White Throne for the deeds done in the body.

“Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire” (Rev. 20:15).

Christ's Eternal Kingdom Established in the New Heaven and New Earth

Chapters 21 and 22

The earth will be burned and the New Jerusalem will descend from God out of heaven to the earth. God will dwell with men on the earth. The throne of God and the Lamb will be in the New Jerusalem.

The Church (the Bride of Christ) will occupy the New Jerusalem, Israel will dwell around the city, and the Gentiles who are saved in the Millennial kingdom, will occupy the new earth.

Christ will finally deliver up to the Father the kingdom He has won by His redemptive work.

The Key to the Book of Revelation

Revelation is the only book in the Bible that promises a special blessing for those who read, hear and obey it. Those who wilfully refuse to study this book are therefore being deceived.

Method of Interpretation

The book of Revelation is not devotional but prophetic. It must be interpreted **literally** like any other prophetic book in the Bible. Where symbols are used God gives us their meaning. where God does not give us the meaning of the symbol we are to interpret literally.

The Revelation is Chronological

In Chapter 5 the Lord opens a book sealed with seven seals. As each seal is broken a judgment is revealed. The seventh seal **IS** seven Trumpet Judgments (Rev.8:1) and the seventh Trumpet Judgment **IS** seven Vial (bowl) judgments which are called the “*seven LAST plagues*” (Rev.15:1). John saw future events. On 34 occasions John said “*I saw*”- indicating that he had a panoramic view of future events exactly as it would happen in chronological order. The judgments relate to the Tribulation.

Three Periods of Time

The Key to interpreting the Book of Revelation is given in Ch.1:19:



There are **three time divisions** in the book:

1) The things John **had SEEN** on Patmos (Ch.1) - **past tense**.

2) The **things that ARE** in this present Church age (Chs.2 & 3) - **present tense**.

3) The things that **shall be “hereafter”** the Church age (Chs.4 to 22) - **future tense**. The word “*hereafter*” occurs in Chapter 4:1 and Chapter 9:12.

The Things Which Thou Has Seen - Chapter 1

Thirty-four years had passed since John had seen the Lord and now he was to receive the final revelation for the world; the summation of all that the prophets had spoken. John had seen the Lord coming in His kingdom on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt.16:28;17:1-5), and now he saw Him as the risen, glorified, Son of man walking among the seven golden candlesticks which represented the seven Churches of Asia. The Lord had been given a message for the Churches in which He indicated the sequence of events that would occur to the end of time.

The seven golden candlesticks represented seven churches of Asia: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea, but more importantly, they prophetically represented seven stages of Christendom from Pentecost to the Rapture. The golden candlesticks speak of the light of testimony. In the Old Testament the lamps on the candlesticks were to be ever burning and never to go out. God will never allow His testimony to perish. When one testimony ceases another is started. Israel had failed and been put aside. The torch had been passed to the Church which now was responsible for Divine testimony.

To each church the Lord presents Himself in a manner that is appropriate to the spiritual condition of that Church, but first the Lord Jesus is identified as *"the first begotten of the dead,"* the *"prince of the kings of the earth,"* and the *"Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end."* He is the eternal One who *"is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty"* (Rev.1:5-8). When John saw Him he *"fell at his feet as dead"* and the Lord laid His hand upon him saying, *"Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death"* (Rev.1:17-18) There can be no doubt who Jesus Christ is: perfect man and perfect God, worthy of all praise for He has

"loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev.1:5-7).

The message of the book of Revelation therefore carries the full authority of the Godhead; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Seven Stages of Christendom - Chapter 2 & 3

Paul wrote epistles to seven churches to establish the doctrines of the Church, and John wrote to seven churches to establish its **eschatology**.

Revelation was not written to Israel though Israel appears in Chapters 6 to 18 on earth, after the Church is removed at the Rapture. Because the church is in heaven after the Rapture, events on earth are seen from a heavenly perspective. There is not one mention of the Church on earth after Revelation Chapter 4:1 until the Church is seen as the bride of Christ coming with the Lord at the end of the Tribulation.

The Church age is the age of the Bride of Christ in which every saved soul is “*espoused*” (engaged) to Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom (2Cor.11:2; John 3:29). The wedding will be in heaven for seven years after that, Jesus will “*return from the wedding*” (Luke 12:36).

Repentant Israel, represented as “*wise virgins*”, and will participate in the marriage supper of the Lamb. All history is moving toward the grand finale of the return of Christ in glory **with His bride** for the marriage supper of the Lamb. Heaven will resound with Alleluias saying,

*“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, **Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb**”* (Rev.19:7-9).

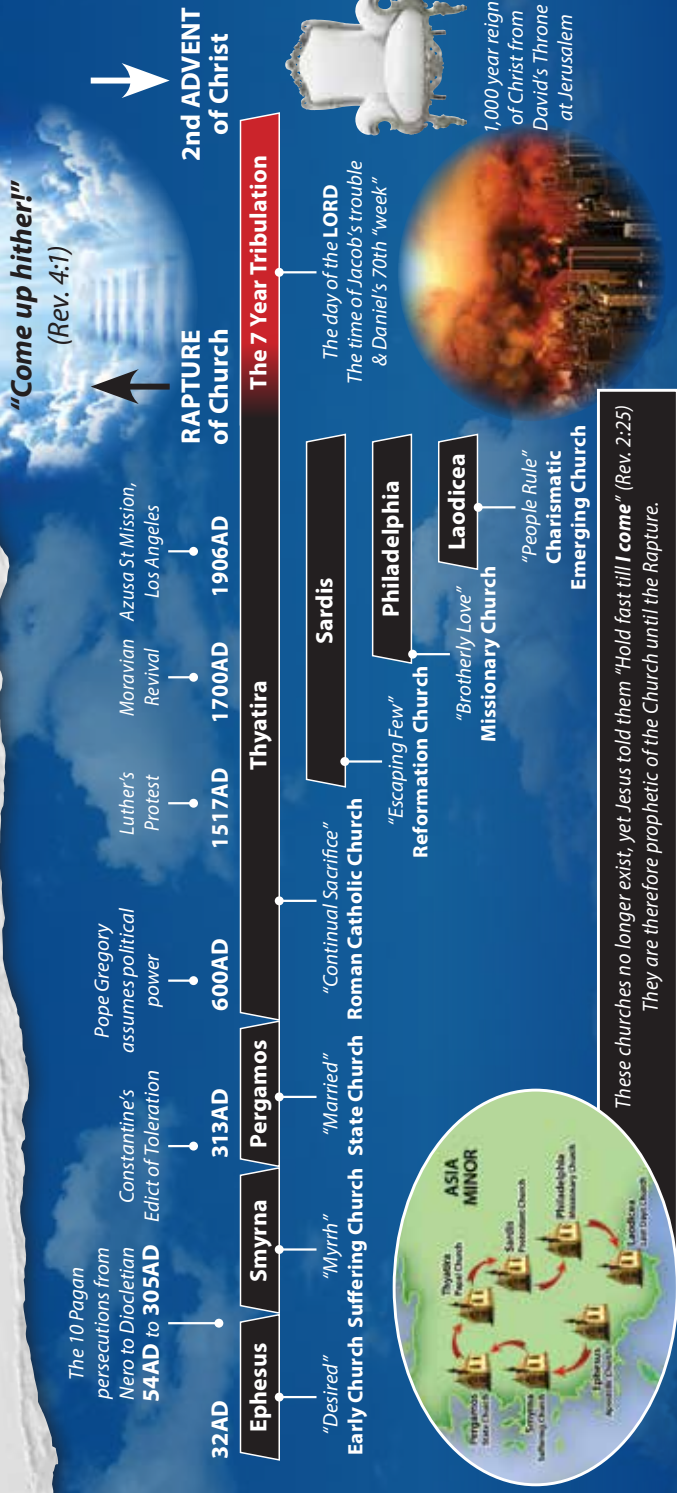
Seven letters are written to seven churches in Asia. These churches existed in John’s day but no longer exist in Turkey (Asia). However, the last four exist when the Lord returns for His Church. The message to the churches is therefore prophetic of seven stages in Church history and the last four stages continue to the Rapture.

The Lord reveals Himself in a special aspect of His character which is consistent with their problems. He commends each church but then exposes the shortcomings and rebukes them.

A special promise is made to some in each church who are described as “*overcomers*.” The nature of these promises indicates that the overcomers are not a spiritual elite but those that are the **saved**

THE SEVEN SIAULO OF THE SEVEN CHURCHES (Rev: 2 & 3)

as foretold in the Seven Letters to the Sevens



NOTE: The “overcomers” in each stage are the **saved** remnant in Christendom. They will not be “blotted out” of the Book of Life and will be kept “from **the HOUR** of temptation which shall come upon all the world...” (Rev. 3:10)

The Seven Stages of Christendom

remnant in each stage of church history, from Pentecost to the Rapture of the Church, which is described in Chapter 4.

John also uses the term *“overcomer”* in his epistles and applies it to those who are *“born again”* (1John5:4-5 & in Rev.21:7). Every truly saved person, though not perfect, does overcome.

Ephesus - “desired”

The Church at Ephesus represents the era of the early Apostolic Church and is commended for her zeal and purity and that she judged apostates. The name Ephesus means *“desired”* and the Lord appears to this Church as He who is *“holding the seven stars in His right hand and is walking among the seven golden candlesticks.”*

The Lord was moving in their midst but *“first love”* was waning and the church stood in danger of losing her testimony. The early Church reached out to *“all the world”* (Col.1:6) and took the Gospel as far afield as Britain; probably on ships of Tarshish. The *“overcomers”* are promised a place in the *“paradise of God”* which could only apply to saved persons.

Smyrna - “myrrh”

Christ is revealed to this Church as the *“first and the last, which was dead, and is alive.”* The Greek word *“smurna”* (σμύρνα) means *“myrrh”* which was used in burials and signifies a suffering church. This church would have *“tribulation ten days”* (Rev.2:10).

Following the apostolic church of the 1st Century there was a period of pagan persecution known in history as *“the 10 pagan persecutions”* under 10 Emperors:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1) Nero (AD54-68) | 6) Maximian (AD235-238) |
| 2) Domitian (AD81-96) | 7) Decius (AD240-251) |
| 3) Trajan (AD98-117) | 8) Valerian (AD253-260) |
| 4) Marcus Aurelius (AD161-180) | 9) Aurelian (AD270-275) |
| 5) Severus (AD193-211) | 10) Diocletian (AD285-305) |

This church is exhorted to be *“faithful unto death”* and receive *“a crown of life”* (2:10). *Foxes Book of Martyrs* records many of the martyrs' deaths. *“The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.”*

The *“overcomers”* are promised not to be *“hurt of the second death,”* which is the lake of fire. This could only apply to born-again believers.

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Pergamos - "married"

Christ appears to this church with a *"sharp sword with two edges."* Pergamos means *"married"* and describes the Church under Emperor Constantine, who joined Church and State in an unholy union. When Constantine contested the Emperorship with other contenders he adopted the sign of the cross on his shields after seeing a cross in the sky in a dream with the words, *"By this conquer."* In AD313 he issued the *Edict of Toleration* ending the persecution of Christians. Pagan Temples became Christian churches and large cathedrals were built. The Council of Nicea (AD325) was held to resolve the Arian heresy which challenged the Deity of Christ - an 18-yr-old deacon, Athanasius, swung the decision in favour of the Deity of Christ, while Arius was banished. At one stage, Constantine said, *"Athanasius, don't you realise the whole world is against you?"* to which he replied, *"Then I'm against the whole world!"*

The church at Pergamos adopted the *"doctrine of Balaam"* which was friendship with the world (2Pet.2:15; 1John 4:4). When Balaam could not curse Israel he advised Balak King of Moab to send his maidens to cause Israel to commit fornication, and thus God's wrath came upon Israel and 24,000 perished (Num.chs.22 to 25).

The *"doctrine of the Nicolaitanes,"* according to Irenaeus (2nd Century), was to *"lead lives of unrestrained indulgence."* It may also refer to the rise of a hierarchy of clergy for the name means, *"conquer the laity."*

The *"overcomers"* at Pergamos are given *"hidden manna"* and a *"white stone"* with *"a new name"* upon it. The saved have an intimate relationship known only to the Lord and us. The *"white stone"* may be a reference to the practice at law of throwing a white stone into a box to indicate a prisoner was vindicated. There were faithful men of God such as Athanasius who stood firmly for the Truth.

Thyatira - "continual sacrifice"

The Lord appears to the Church at Thyatira as one who has *"eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet like fine brass"* and Thyatira describes the Catholic Church centred in Rome beginning with Gregory the Great (AD590-604). Prior to Gregory, the State ruled the Church but under him the Church assumed secular powers and ruled the States.

The Seven Stages of Christendom

A wicked prophetess, Jezebel, caused men to commit adultery and to eat things sacrificed to idols. Thyatira means “*continual sacrifice*” which describes the idolatrous sacrifice of the Mass and Jezebel’s adultery identifies the sexual crimes of the Catholic Priesthood.

The Lord appears as the Son of God with eyes like a flame of fire for she will be cast into “**Great Tribulation**” and her children killed. This is undoubtedly “*mystery Babylon the Great the mother of harlots*” (Rev.17 & 18). The “*beast*” and his 10 kings will turn and burn her with fire.

The message to the remnant of “overcomers”(saved) is that Christ will give them the “morning star” which arises BEFORE the sun. Christ is the “bright and morning star” (Rev.22:16) and the “Sun of righteousness” (Mal.4:2). Christ appears as the “morning star” at the Rapture and as the “Sun of righteousness” at the second Advent.

Overcomers (the saved) will be given “*power over the nations*” (Rev.2:26) and reign with Christ. Rome wants political power but only the saved (“overcomers”) will reign with Christ in the kingdom. The remnant in the Catholic Church who have “*not known the depths of Satan*” are to “*hold fast till I come.*”

Sardis - “escaping few”

Sardis means “*escaping few*” and is prophetic of the Reformation era, beginning with Luther’s protest at the Wittenburg Cathedral in 1517 when some escaped the bondage of Rome. The Reformation released the Bible to the people and the Lord appeared to Sardis as He “*that hath the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars.*” The Reformation was a movement of the Spirit of God to break with Rome.

However, God says “*I have not found thy works perfect before God.*” The Reformation still clung to many aspects of the Church of Rome eg. christening and confirmation, a priestly clerical system, union of church and state, liturgy, a general resurrection, and a-millennialism.

Protestantism “*has a name that she lives but is spiritually dead*” (Rev.3:1); the Lord will come on her “*as a thief*” and she will not be expecting the Lord’s return. The Reformation church is not watching for the Lord’s return because she is a-millennial.

The “overcomers” (saved) at Sardis will **not be blotted out of the book of life**. Reformation theology teaches that only the elect are

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written in the Book of Life before the foundation of the world and cannot be blotted out. The truth is that God has written **all names in the Book of Life** and only those who reject God's mercy are blotted out. The "*overcomers*" (saved) are eternally secure.

Philadelphia - "brotherly love"

Christ appears to Philadelphia as the One with the "*Key of David*." He "*opens and no man shuts*;" He sets before this church "*an open door and no man can shut it*." The "*key of David*" suggests the unlocking of Israel's role in the last days and of the coming kingdom with Christ reigning from the throne of David. It clearly identifies with Christ and is a quotation from Isaiah 22:22. This church kept "*THE WORD of My patience*" ie. the message of "*patient waiting for Christ*" (2Thess.3:5; James 5:7-8); the second advent.

Philadelphia means "*brotherly love*" and describes the great missionary era of Church History, beginning about 1700 with the Moravian revival and ending about 1900. During this era the second advent message was revived. The Moravian brethren were protected from persecution by Count Zinzendorf and sent missionaries out to the heathen. John Wesley was one convert and the Methodist Church was started. General Booth started the Salvation Army, and the Baptists and Brethren flourished.

"Faith Missions" spread the Gospel all over the globe - Hudson Taylor had 1,500 missionaries in China alone, William Carey, C.T. Studd, Judson of Burma, Oriental Missionary Society, Unevangelized Fields Mission, Egypt General Mission, World-wide Evangelization Crusade (WEC), New Tribes Mission, and many many more. A great door was opened by the British Empire all over the globe. Dr. Oswald Smith's *Church of the Open Door* in Toronto supported 1,000 missionaries; Robert Le Tourneau was a member.

Christ promised to keep the "*overcomers*" at Philadelphia from "*the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth*" (Rev.3:10). They would be kept from the TIME of the Great Tribulation indicating the Rapture is before the Tribulation.

The saved (overcomers) are also promised they will have a place in the "*New Jerusalem which cometh down out of heaven from God*." (See Rev.21:9-14 where the Bride of Christ is identified with the new Jerusalem.)

The Seven Stages of Christendom

Laodicea - "people rule"

Laodicea means *"the people rule,"* and describes the final stage of Christendom before the Rapture and the Tribulation. It began about 1900. The Lord appears to this liberal Church that denies the literal seven days of creation as *"the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of (the head over) the creation of God."*

In 1900 the Charismatic "tongues" movement began with the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles where Afro-Americans engaged in strange spiritualistic experiences, receiving extra-Biblical revelation. The movement now dominates Christendom. It uses rock music to attract crowds and the Prosperity Gospel to fleece them of hundreds of millions of dollars. The Lord said that last-days Christendom would be *"rich and **increased with goods** and have need of nothing."* TV "evangelists" take hundreds of millions of dollars each year and live lavish life-styles. Hillsong Churches are a multi-million dollar contemporary music business.

The Lord will spew the Laodicean church out of His mouth. Jesus warned that many will say, *"Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name,"* but He will answer, *"I never knew you"* (Matt.7:22-23).

Christ is excluded from the last-days church, but the ungodly are welcomed. God's Word is contradicted or denied. Many have turned to social programs and some accept Gay marriages. Hillsong invited a Gay, Josh Canfield from London, to lead the music in its New York church and for **eight years continued in various leadership roles**. His former openly Gay partner was also in leadership. Forced by adverse publicity, Hillsong now state that it stands for traditional marriage but Pastor Brian Houston says, *"We've got many gay people in our church and not only in Australia but around the world."* The Bible says, *"Put away from among yourselves that wicked person"* (1Cor.5:13). This is the charismatic church of the last days where *"seducing spirits and doctrines of devils"* speak *"lies in hypocrisy"* (1Tim.4:1-2).

The Church age ends with Christ outside the door of the professing church and when this occurs God will open a door in heaven to rescue the remnant Bride of Christ. In the meanwhile, *"Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach"* (Heb.13:13-14).

THE FIRST RESURRECTION

or The Resurrection of Life (John 5:29)



**Bema Seat and
Marriage of the Lamb**
(2 Cor. 5:10)



2ND COMING
Christ comes "from the wedding"
(Luke 12:36)



**The New Heaven
and New Earth
for the saved**
(Rev. 21 & 22)

FIRST FRUITS

All the Old Testament Saints
rose with Christ. Paradise
was taken to Heaven
(Matt. 27:52 - 53)



Paradise where the Old Testament
Saints waited for Christ to rise.
(Luke. 24:7 - 28)



The Church Age
(Eph. 3: 1 - 10)



7 Years Tribulation
(Matt. 24: 7 - 28)



**1,000 Year Reign of
Christ on Earth** (Rev. 20: 1 - 10)

Marriage Supper
(Rev. 19:9)

GLEANNINGS

Tribulation Martyrs
(Rev. 11: 12 & Rev. 20: 4)

HARVEST

The Rapture of
the Church
(1 Thess. 4: 13 - 18)
(1 Cor. 15:50 - 54)

GLEANNINGS

Millennial Saints
(Rev. 20: 5)



The Resurrection to
Damnation at the
Great White Throne
(Rev. 11 - 25)



Hell ("Hades") - a place of torment where unsaved souls await
the Resurrection to Damnation at the Great White Throne.

The everlasting
Lake of Fire
"Gehenna"



The Rapture - A Door Opened in Heaven - Chapters 4 & 5

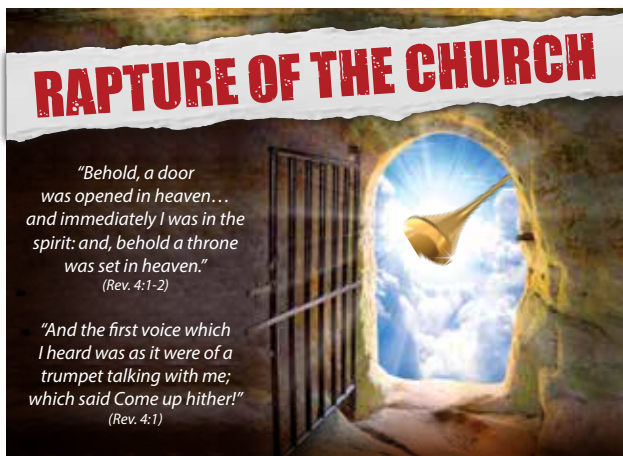
Chapter 4 begins the third stage of the book: “*Hereafter*” the present Church Age; John sees a door opened in heaven and hears the commanding shout, “*Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.*”

It is interesting to compare the Rapture of the Church with the coming of the Lord to the earth at the end of the Tribulation. At the Rapture only “*a door*” is opened to heaven to receive the bride of Christ, but when Christ comes “*immediately after the tribulation*” (Matt.24:29), John sees “*heaven opened*” (Rev.19:11) for all the saints and angels to burst forth at the coming of the Lord.

At the second advent, Christ comes “*WITH all his saints*” (1Thess.3:13; Jude.1:14) and reigns on the earth. However, at the Rapture, He comes to the air **FOR** all who are “*in Christ*” i.e. the Church (1Thess.4:16), and returns with them into heaven.

John heard a voice like the sound “*of a trumpet*” and Paul spoke of the same trumpet call in 1Cor.15:51-55 and in 1Thess.4:13-18. The “*last trump*” is a military term. Josephus, the Jewish historian of the first century, wrote that when the Roman army shifted camp three trumpets were blown; the first to pack up, the second to form up in columns, and **the last trump was to move out**. The commander would shout, “Are you ready?” The soldiers replied, “We are ready!”

The shout of the Lord is a “commanding shout” (*keleuma*); to “*Come up hither!*” - in the “*twinkling of an eye*” “*one shall be taken and the other left*” (1Cor.15:52; Luke 17:34). The saved will answer, “We are ready!”



Revelation

The Throne of God

John enters through the door of heaven and “*immediately*” he is before the throne where Christ is seen like a “*jasper and sardine stone*”- and around the throne a rainbow of mercy like an “*emerald.*” A full circle rainbow can be seen when viewed from above the storm clouds looking down on earth. After we have been caught up in glorified bodies we will fully understand the extent of God’s mercy.

The jasper and sardine stones were the last and first of 12 stones on the High Priest’s breastplate with the names of the 12 tribes engraved upon them. Judah was the fourth son of Jacob and the fourth stone was an emerald with Judah’s name on it. Thus, Jesus is seen on the throne as the King of Israel of the line of David from the tribe of Judah and is called “*the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David*” (Rev.5:5).

John saw 24 elders leading the worship of the Old Testament saints. These were appointed by David to lead the worship at the Temple (1Chron.24). We should remember that all the Old Testament saints were raised **with Christ** (Matt.27:52-53) **and are in heaven now** as “*the spirits of just(ified) men MADE PERFECT*” through resurrection (Heb.12:23; Eph.4:8-10). At the Rapture, the “*Church of the firstborn*” will also be “*made perfect*” in resurrection bodies; the souls of Church-age saints will come into the air with Christ and “*the dead in Christ shall rise first*” (1Thess.4:14,16).

The worship of Old Testament saints is led by the 24 elders of Israel appointed by David (1Chron.ch.24). The Lord Jesus is seen as:

- i) the King of Israel - “*the Lion of the tribe of Judah*”
- ii) God incarnate - “*the root of David*” (Isa.11:10), and
- iii) “*the Lamb slain*” who alone is worthy to judge (John 5:22,27).

The Church is the Bride of Christ and Christ is the Bridegroom (John 3:29). The wedding will take place in heaven after the Rapture. It will be a royal wedding. At the same time there will be seven years of tribulation on earth. The Church will receive rewards at the Judgment Seat (bema) of Christ in heaven and when Christ returns to earth as King of kings at the end of the Tribulation, the Bride comes with Him for the “*marriage supper of the Lamb*” on earth (Rev.19:7-9). The wedding must take place BEFORE the Lord returns to earth because when He comes He will “*return from the wedding*” (Luke12:36). Israel will have been saved in the first

half of the Tribulation and be guests at the marriage supper. The distinction of Jew, Gentile and Church will never cease. Even in the new heaven and earth, the distinction of Jew, Gentile and Church will continue (Rev.21:9-14; Rev.21:12; Rev.21:24-26).

Rapture Before the Tribulation

The book of Revelation places the Rapture of the Church **before** the Tribulation begins on earth. Immediately **after** the Rapture is described in 1Thess.4:13-18 we read:

*“But of the **times and the seasons**, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when **THEY** shall say, Peace and safety; **then sudden destruction cometh upon THEM**, as travail upon a woman with child; and **THEY** shall not escape”* (1Thess.5:1-3).

The Day of the Lord (the Tribulation) will come suddenly; just as men are talking peace destruction will come, but Paul assures the believers that

*“Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that **that day** should overtake you as a thief... For **God hath not appointed us to wrath**, but to **obtain salvation** by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him”* (1Thess.5:4-9).

The Thessalonians were already saved and the salvation he refers to is the “*redemption of the body*” ie. resurrection at the Rapture. God has appointed us to be delivered **before the wrath of the Tribulation**. A similar promise is given to the church at Philadelphia:

*“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, 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”*(Rev.3:10).

The **sign given TO ISRAEL** of the “*end of the age*” (Tribulation) is:

*“In that night there shall be two in one bed; the **one shall be taken, and the other shall be left**. Two shall be grinding together; the **one shall be taken, and the other left**. Two shall be in the field; the **one shall be taken, and the other left**”* (Luke 17:34-36).

This is a **global disappearance** of people. The word “*taken*” is παραλαμβάνω which means “to receive to one’s self” and the word “*left*” is ἀφίημι meaning, “to send away.” **It cannot mean**, “taken in judgment” and “left to enter the kingdom” as some have suggested.

The First Half of the Tribulation - Chapters 6 to 9

In this Church age Israel is blinded by God for rejection of Messiah, as foretold by Isaiah (Isa.6:9-12) and as confirmed by the Lord (Matt.13:10-15; John 12:37-41). Paul also wrote:

*“But even unto this day, when Moses is read, **the veil is upon their heart**. Nevertheless when **it shall turn to the Lord**, the veil shall be taken away”* (2 Cor.3:15-16).

Paul indicated that Israel, as the natural olive branch, had been plucked out of the olive tree and the Gentiles, a wild olive branch, has been grafted into their place **UNTIL** “*the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*” and then “*all Israel shall be saved...*” (Rom.11:15-27).

The Time of JACOB’S (Israel’s) Trouble

The Tribulation follows the Rapture of the Church and Jeremiah indicated that the “*day of the LORD*” (the Tribulation) would be “*the time of JACOB’S (Israel’s) trouble*” (Jer.30:7); he adds, “*but he shall be saved out of it*”. Both Joel and Ezekiel describe a “*northern*” Russian/Islamic invasion of Israel in the last days which God uses to bring the nation to repentance (Joel 2 and Ezek.38,39).

The Tribulation is ISRAEL’S “70th Week”(Dan.9:27)

God told Daniel that 70 sevens of years (490 prophetic years) were determined on Jerusalem and upon the Jews UNTIL the nation would be blessed in the Kingdom (Dan.9:24-27).

This 490-year period began in the month Nisan of the 20th year of Artaxerxes (445BC) (Neh. chs.1 and 2) and after 483 prophetic years Messiah the Prince presented Himself to the nation on Palm Sunday as their King in fulfilment of Zech.9:9. See Luke 19:33-38.

*“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, **thy King cometh unto thee**: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass”*.

A long gap is foretold after Christ presents Himself as King. In this gap Messiah would be “*cut off*” (four days later), Jerusalem and the Temple would be destroyed (38 years later), and finally a Roman prince will make a seven-year covenant with the Jews (still future). This covenant and the Rapture trigger the Tribulation.

During this gap in Israel’s prophetic history, “*desolations are determined*” in the land and the Church age would run its course

First Half of the Tribulation

after which there is the last seven years of ISRAEL'S HISTORY before the Kingdom is established.

The Thessalonian Christians had been taught that the Church would not go through the Tribulation, but when persecution came, some said that the Tribulation had already come. Paul wrote:

*"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come **a falling away (literally, the Departure) first, and that man of sin be revealed**, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God" (2Thess.2:2-4).*

The words "*a falling away*" should be translated "***the Departure first.***" This is how it is translated in all old English translations and the verbal form of the Greek word means "*depart*". The definite article indicates a specific **event**, THE Departure of the Church, and not a condition. Two events signal the beginning of the Tribulation; the departure of the Church and Antichrist is revealed.

It is true there that apostasy is a sign of the last days as indicated by the Lord and the apostles (Matt.24:11; 1Tim.4:1; 2Tim.3:1; 2Pet.3:3-4) but the context of 2Thess.2 demands a physical departure and the appearance of the "*son of perdition.*"

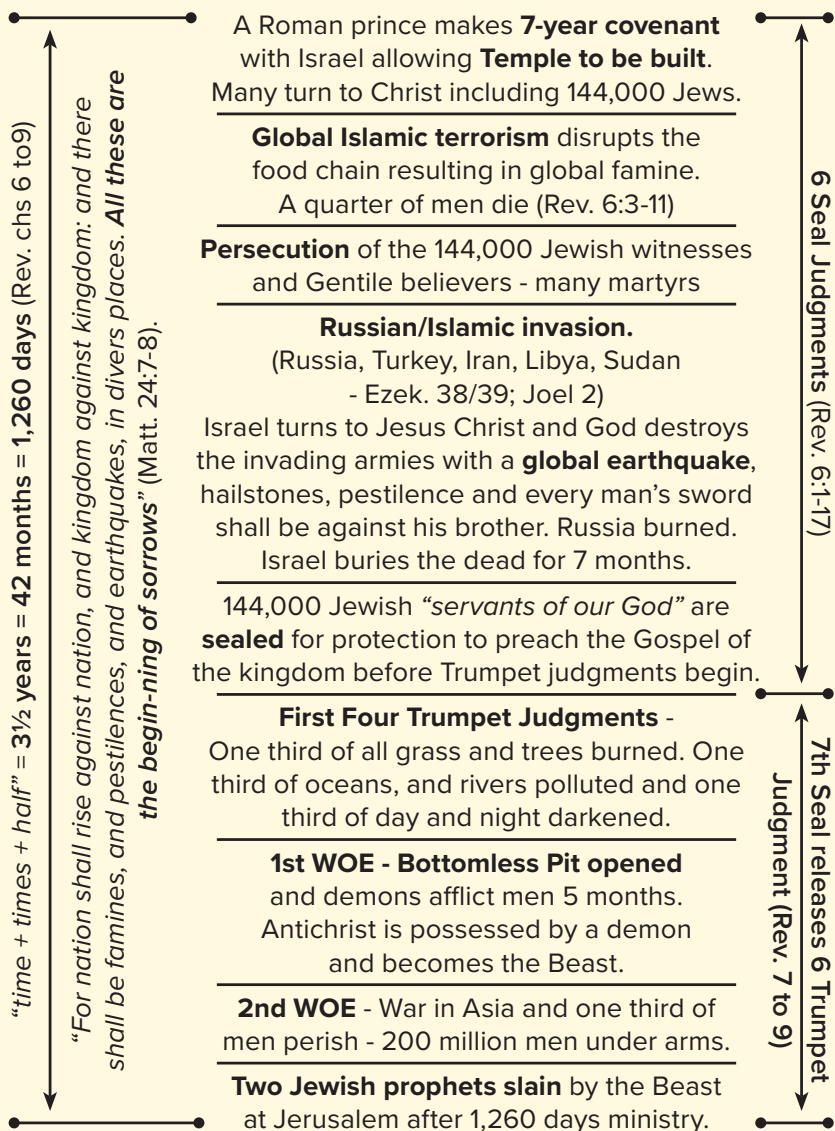
Revelation Chapter 6 - The 1st Seal - Peace & Safety

John saw the Lord open seven seals on a book which contains all the judgments that will occur during the seven years of Tribulation and they begin with four riders on horses; white, red, black and pale. The seventh seal contains seven trumpets and the seventh trumpet contains seven vial (bowl) judgments described as the "*seven last plagues.*"

The rider on the white horse has a bow but no arrows and he "*went forth conquering and to conquer.*" We know that the Tribulation begins with the revelation of the "*man of sin*" - Antichrist who will seek peaceable conquest. When they say, "*Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them.*"

According to Daniel 9:26-27 Antichrist will be a **Roman prince** for it was his people who destroyed "*the city and sanctuary*" in AD70. The last seven years begins when this Roman prince "*shall confirm*

Departure of the Church at the Rapture and Antichrist confirms a 7-year Covenant



Chronology of Events in the First Half of the Tribulation

Revelation chs. 6-9

First Half of the Tribulation

a covenant with many for one week (seven years)" (Dan.9:27). One thing he will do is "divide the land (of Israel) for gain" (Dan.11:39), which suggests that he will resolve the Arab/Israeli issue and a Jewish Temple will be built on the Temple Mount where Jews will recommence worship including sacrifices. However, "in the midst of the week (seven years) he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate" (Dan.9:27).

The Roman "**prince that shall come**" is described as a "*little horn*" who will arise among "*10 horns*" in the final stage of the Roman Empire which must be revived in the last days. A *horn* is a symbol of a king or ruler and this "*little horn*" will "*make war with the saints and prevail against them*" (Dan.7:21). This war with the saints must occur at the mid-point of the seven years when the Roman prince causes the sacrifices to cease. At that time the Jews will be converted - hence they are called, "*saints of the most High*" (Dan.7:27).

The 2nd, 3rd, 4th, & 5th Seals - Global Islamic Terrorism

The rider on the red horse and the two that follow remove peace from the earth and result in the death of **one quarter** of the world population. We have already identified **the sixth seal as the Russian/Islamic invasion of Israel** (pages 8 & 9) and this is preceded by Islamic terror that will take peace from the earth. Since 1979 and the Arab Spring, Islam has begun a jihad to convert the world by the edge of the sword. Planned migration into every country has provided a safe haven for terrorists, and mosques provide a platform for Imams to radicalize the new generation.

Muslims openly boast that they will control the world. In Africa Islam is moving south killing, kidnapping and raping; Central Asia is already under their control and they are pushing into China. The Western nations have opened their doors to millions of Muslims and the wars in the Middle East have been used to provide a continual flow of potential terrorists into Europe, America and Australia.

Terrorist cells are already operating and fear is spreading but this is nothing to compare with the terror that will flood the world after the Rapture. Soon Iran will have nuclear weapons and will make these and other weapons of mass destruction available to operatives in Western countries. John wrote:

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*“And there went out another horse that was red: and **power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth**, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him **a great sword**”* (Rev.6:4).

When the second and third seals are opened there is great famine and death; the consequence of global terrorism that will disrupt the food chain to many cities. Islam’s hatred for all other religions will be responsible for the martyrdom of many who turn to Christ.

The 6th Seal - A Russian/Islamic Invasion

When the sixth seal is broken the invasion of Israel by a Russian/ Islamic army takes place. We know it is this army because at this time there is the first of two global earthquakes, and great hailstones (shooting stars) will decimate the armies leaving only one-sixth of their number to escape to Siberia. The land of Magog (Russia) will be burned as Jews all over the world turn to Jesus Christ.

Some have wondered why America, the most powerful nation ever to exist on earth, will play a very small part in the Tribulation. It may be that she will be greatly weakened by terrorism and unable to dominate the world scene, as she has since WWII. Also, the *“isles of the Gentiles”* are burned at this time (Ezek.39:6).

Chapter 7 - 144,000 Jews Sealed to Preach the Gospel of the Kingdom

At this time there will be 144,000 Jewish young men who are the *“firstfruits unto God”* (Rev.14:4) and *“the servants of our (Israel’s) God”* who will be sealed for protection. During the **fifth seal** judgment there are many martyrs and we know that the 144,000 Jewish witnesses will testify throughout the whole world. These young men must turn to Christ shortly after the Rapture, but the conversion of the whole nation will be at the time of the northern invasion (Ezek,39:22).

In the first half of the Tribulation the 144,000 will preach *“the Gospel of the Kingdom in **all the world** for a witness”* (Matt.24:14) and will be persecuted even by their own people. Jesus said, *“When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the **cities of Israel**, till the Son of man be come”* (Matt.10:23).

First Half of the Tribulation

Matthew places the witness of the 144,000 **before** the mid-point of the Tribulation when the "*abomination of desolation*" is set up (Matt.24:15) and the sealing of the 144,000 is **for protection** until their work is done and occurs **before** the Trumpet Judgments begin when four angels destroy one third of the "*earth, sea and trees*" (Rev.7:2-3).

There will also be two Jewish prophets saved immediately after the Rapture; these will encourage the rebuilding of the Temple and witness for 1,260 days at Jerusalem ie. the first half of the Tribulation (Rev.11:3). After 1,260 days Antichrist will kill them but God will raise them up and they will be caught up to heaven (Rev.11:11-12).

The 144,000 are seen around the throne in heaven at the mid-point in the Tribulation before the Vial Judgments, "*the seven last plagues*," commence so the 144,000 must also die as martyrs (Rev.14:1-4).

The entire Tribulation period of seven years is about Israel; invaded, persecuted, repenting and protected by God. There is not one mention of the Church on earth during the Tribulation because the Church will be raptured **BEFORE** the "*Day of the Lord*" (the Tribulation) begins. Paul told the Christians:

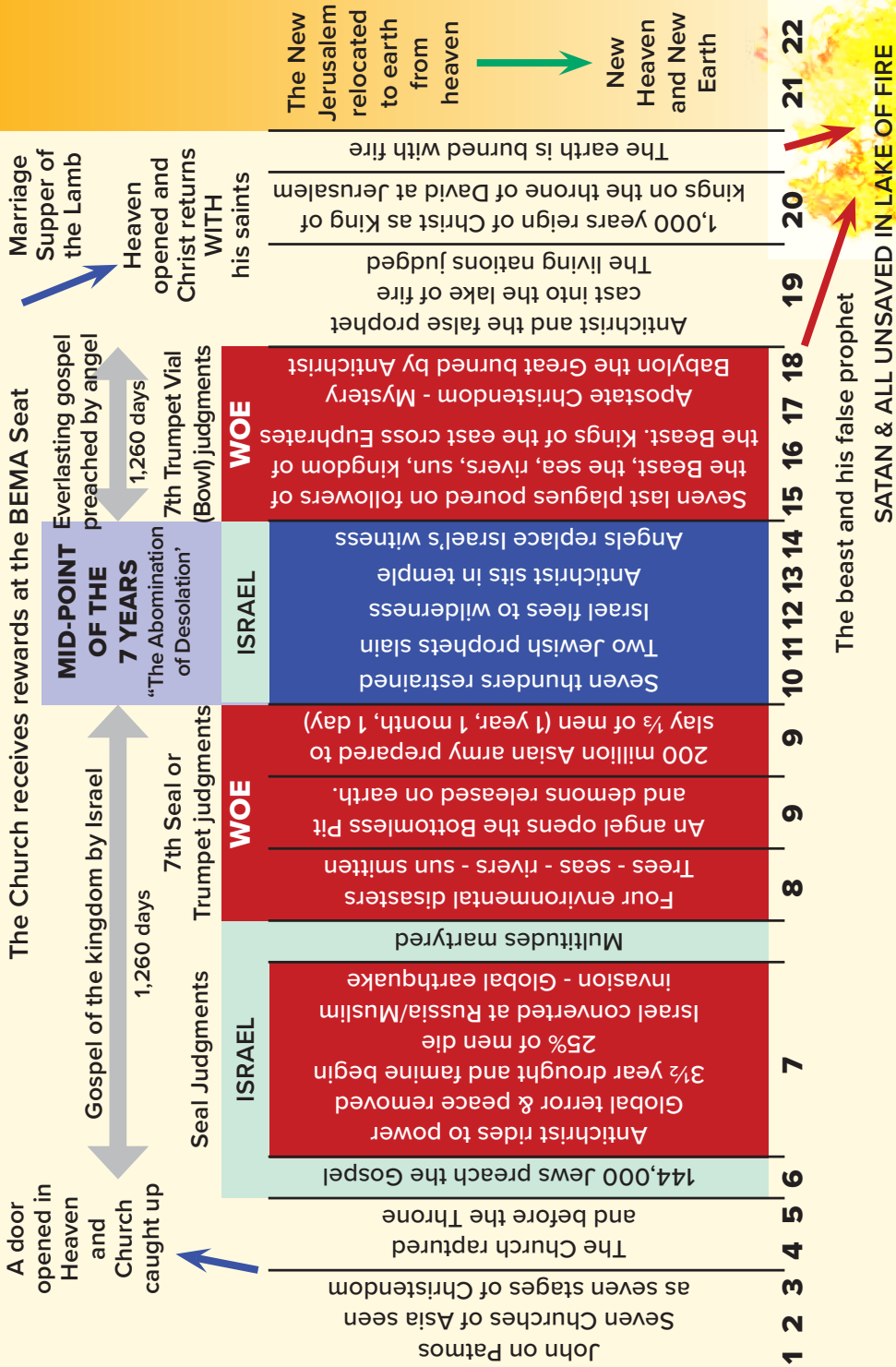
"God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation (deliverance) by our Lord Jesus Christ" (1Thess.5:4,9-10).

Chapters 8 and 9 - Trumpet Judgments Including Three WOES

When the seventh seal is broken seven angels appear and to each was given a trumpet. When each trumpet is blown a judgment is announced. The first four trumpets announce environmental judgments and these are in response to the prayers of God's suffering saints (Rev.8:1-12). **One third** of the world will see the grass, trees, the sea, the atmosphere, and even the sun, judged. God will show that He controls the weather and the environment. It will be God's answer to the "Greens" who have propagated the lie that man can control the environment. It is hard to imagine devastation on a scale that will destroy one-third of crops, disrupt transport and cause innumerable deaths. But worse is to come.

The **last three trumpets** each announce a Woe that will bring the Tribulation to a conclusion. The first two Woes bring us to the mid-point of the seven years and the third Woe introduces the "*seven last plagues*" known as the seven Vial Judgments.

The Book of the Revelation



First Half of the Tribulation

Chapter 9 - The First Woe or 5th Trumpet

John saw a mighty angel come down from heaven and open the bottomless pit. From the bottomless pit arose *"smoke of a great furnace"* and demons, in appearance like locusts, emerge to afflict all who do not have *"the seal of God in their foreheads"* (Rev.9:4). Once bitten, men suffer excruciating pain for five months.

These demons have a king over them whose Hebrew name is *Abaddon*, and his Greek name is *Apollyon*. These demons were *"cast down to hell, delivered into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment"* at the time of the Flood (2Peter 2:4) - as Jude tells us, because *"they kept not their first estate"* (Jude 1:6). When the *"sons of God (angels) saw the daughters of men...and took them wives of all which they chose"* (Gen.6:2), God cast these fallen angels down to Tartaros (*Tαρταρος*); the deepest abyss in *hades* ie. the bottomless pit.

At this juncture, the king of the bottomless pit possesses Antichrist who then changes character to become *"the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit"* (Rev.11:7). Antichrist becomes a demon-possessed man who, with his False Prophet, is henceforth able to perform miracles to deceive men. He is not called the Beast until this time.

The Second Woe or 6th Trumpet - War in Asia

When the sixth angel sounds his trumpet, four fallen angels, imprisoned in the River Euphrates, are released to raise an army of 200 million in order to slay one-third of men. Euphrates is the border of Asia and when the Kings of the East come to Armageddon it is said that they cross the Euphrates.

Asia has half the world's population and China boasts she has a militia of 200 million. If a war broke out in Asia the combatants could easily number 200 million. Already there is confrontation between India and China, India and Pakistan, North Korea and the world, China and Taiwan. India, China and North Korea all possess nuclear weapons. The death toll will be high; one third of the human race! It is likely that nuclear weapons will be used.

Sadly, suffering does not always lead to Godly sorrow and repentance. Those who survive, will not repent of their evil deeds or cease to *"worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood"* (Rev.9:20)

Review of the World at the End of the First 1,260 Days

The first half of the Tribulation will leave the world in a state of awful desolation and many nations will be crippled:

- Islamic terrorism will have taken peace from the earth and people will be living in fear; **one quarter** of world population will have perished.
- Russia and Islam will be decimated and the land of Russia burned. The *"Isles of the Gentiles"* will be burned. US and UK?
- Four environmental judgments will burn one third of trees; contaminate one-third of the seas; pollute one-third of drinking water and the sun will not shine for one-third.
- A war in Asia lasting one year, one month, one day and one hour will slay one-third of men. Politics in Asia will change.
- Demonic activity will reach an all-time high and demons will attack men with agonizing painful stings.
- The world will be willing to accept anybody who claims he is able to bring order out of chaos, and Antichrist (the man of sin) will fill the vacuum. With Russia, Islam, Asia and the Isles of the Gentiles all crippled, the Beast at the head of the powerful revived Roman Empire will have little opposition.
- It seems that during the first half of the Tribulation the Revived Roman Empire (Europe) will be able to stand aside from the wars that bring Russia and Islam to destruction in the land of Israel, and from the Asian war that leaves one-third of men dead. The balance of political power will have swung in Antichrist's favour.
- The *"seat (throne) of the Beast"* and *"his kingdom"* come in for special judgment in the second half of the Tribulation (Rev.16:10).
- Those who hold the "pre-wrath rapture theory" teach that God's wrath is not revealed in the first half of the Tribulation. The events listed above show that all the seal judgments are the wrath of God. The kings of earth declare that the *"wrath of the Lamb has come"* after the 5th seal and the Russian/Islamic forces will be the object of the *"fire of My (God's)wrath"* (Ezek.38:19) early in the seven years.

Time Required for Events in First Half of the Tribulation

There are only 3½ years in the first half of the Tribulation and if we have correctly determined the events that will take place then they must fit within the time frame. If we allocate reasonable times for each event then the summation of times must amount to no more than 42 months when placed in their proper sequence. **No doubt some events will overlap.**

The following is a summary of events which Scripture indicates will occur in the first half of the Tribulation with reasonable estimates of time for each event.

EVENT 1 - The Rapture of the Church - No time is allocated Scripture indicates this event will happen *“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye”* (1Cor.15:52).

EVENT 2 - A Roman prince (EU) will sign a seven-year covenant with Israel (1st Seal) - No time allocated

There can be no gap between the Church age and Israel’s 70th week. According to 2Thess.2:3-8 Antichrist is revealed **immediately after** the Rapture and these **two events** trigger the seven years of the Day of the Lord:

*“That day shall not come, except there come a falling away (**literally, The Departure**) first, AND that man of sin be revealed ... For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth (hinders) will let (hinder), until he be taken out of the way. And **THEN** shall that Wicked be revealed”* (2Thess.2:3-8).

EVENT 3 - A Tribulation Temple must be built very early in the Tribulation infuriating Islamists - Six months

*“Peace is taken from the earth” **probably** by global Islamic Terrorism (2nd Seal) resulting in extensive famine and death (3rd and 4th Seals). Intense persecution of those who stand with the 144,000 Jewish servants of God will produce many martyrs (5th Seal). Islamic migration is preparing havens terrorist havens and all above events could occur in the first year.*

EVENT 4 - The King of the South (Egypt) will Invade - Nine months (Dan.11:40-42; Isa.19) - Israel and EU respond occupying the Middle East. Egypt is desolated angering the Muslim world.

EVENT 5 - Russia will lead an Islamic Army from Turkey, Iran, Libya and Sudan into Israel from the North (sixth seal) - Russia and Iran are already located in Syria - Nine months.

Revelation

Israel is converted and the invaders destroyed by a global earthquake, meteorites etc (Ezek.38,39; Joel 2).

*"When he had opened the **sixth seal**, lo, there was a great earthquake... and every mountain and island were moved out of their places"* (Rev.6:12-14).

NOTE: The 144,000 Jewish Servants of God are sealed for protection BEFORE the Environmental Judgments (Rev.7:1-4)

"Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees (First four Trumpets), TILL we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."

The 144,000 Jews preach the Gospel of the Kingdom to all nations (Matt.24:14) and are protected from the environmental judgments and from demons out of the bottomless pit (Rev.9:4).

EVENT 6 - Four environmental judgments suddenly destroy one-third of all trees, grass, seas and the sun is darkened for one-third of the day. At the same time Israel will be burying the dead and the Bottomless Pit is opened - Five months

Demonic forces are released and men are afflicted for five months. These events can continue while the Asian war is fought.

EVENT 7 - War in Asia involving 200 million men - Thirteen months

This war is given a specific time of an hour and a day and a month and a year *"for to slay the third part of men"* (Rev.9:15). It would appear that Antichrist's kingdom, the Revived Roman Empire, is not involved in major wars apart from subduing Egypt and occupying the Middle East countries (Dan.11:41-43) during the first half of the Tribulation, whereas Russia and Islamic nations are decimated and Asia is greatly reduced in the first half of the Tribulation. **This leaves a vacuum that Antichrist can fill without being challenged.** In the second half of the Tribulation the conflict is between God and Satan; Christ and Antichrist. Men will worship God or the Devil (Rev.9:20; 16:21) and therefore the judgments of *"the seven last plagues"* are directed against the **Kingdom of the Beast and those who have the mark of the Beast.**

EVENTS OF THE FIRST HALF OF THE TRIBULATION CAN EASILY FIT INTO 42 MONTHS OR 1,260 DAYS.

The Mid-Point of the Tribulation

Revelation - Chapters 10 to 14

The events that occur at the **mid-point of the seven-year Tribulation** are described in Chapters 10 to 14 and a summary can be seen on the following page.

Chapter 10 - Seven Thunder Judgments Restrained

In Chapter 10 John sees a mighty angel coming down from heaven with a rainbow, the token of God's mercy, about his head. Seven Thunder Judgments are revealed and John is told not to record them. Jesus said, *"Except those days should be **shortened** there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake (Israel's sake) those days shall be shortened"* (Matt.24:22). Perhaps the restraining of the seven Thunders is what He referred to.

At this stage six Trumpet Judgments have sounded and John is told that when the seventh angel *"shall begin to sound, the mystery of God"* will be finished (Rev.10:7). The seventh Trumpet is the third Woe which announces the *"seven last plagues,"* called the **seven vial judgments**. When Daniel prophesied of this period, he was told *"the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end"* (Dan.12:9), but in the book of Revelation we are seeing the Lamb of God unseal the book of prophecy (Rev.5:5). As the second half of the Tribulation begins, seven vials (bowls) are revealed and the seven **last plagues** that were previously hidden are entirely revealed. The angel announced that there should be *"Time (Delay) no longer!"* (Rev.10:6).

Chapter 11 - Jewish Prophets Slain and Sacrifices Cease

In Chapter 11 we are told that there will be two Jewish prophets at Jerusalem who, like Haggai and Zechariah, are described as *"two olive trees"* supplying oil for the lamps in the Temple. Haggai and Zechariah encouraged the rebuilding of the Temple after the Babylonian captivity and these two prophets encourage the rebuilding of the Tribulation Temple, they are told to measure the Temple no doubt for construction. However, only a portion of the Temple Mount is to be measured and the remainder is to be left in the hands of the Gentiles indicating that the Dome of the Rock will remain until the Lord returns, or at least until the

Antichrist Demon possessed from the Abyss

Seven thunder judgments are sealed up and an angel declares there *“should be **delay no longer**”*.

Antichrist causes **Jewish sacrifices to cease** in the Temple and places his image there - *“the abomination of desolation”*.

There is **war in heaven** and Michael and his angels cast the Dragon (Satan) and his angels into the earth.

The two Jewish prophets slain by the Beast in Jerusalem are raised and **caught up to heaven** after 3½ days.

Israel flees from Jerusalem helped by a nation with *“two wings of a great eagle”* - possibly the United States.

The 144,000 Jewish servants of God appear **before the throne** in heaven. Israel's testimony on earth silenced.

Angels flying through the heavens **proclaim the “Everlasting Gospel”** & warn of imminent wrath and Great Tribulation.

An **assassination attempt** is made on the Beast and his *“deadly”* wound by a sword to the head is healed.

The Lord and angels prepare to **reap the harvest** of earth and to cast the nations into the winepress of the wrath of God.

An angel warns not to receive the **mark of the Beast**. Better to die *“in the Lord”* than be tormented for ever in the lake of fire.

18 Events Occurring at the Mid-point of the Tribulation

Revelation chs. 10-14

Mid-Point of the Tribulation

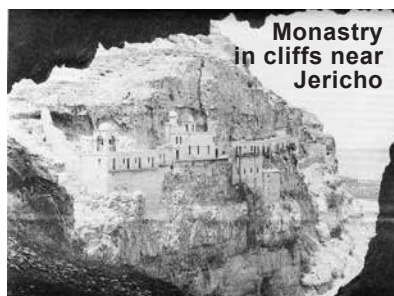
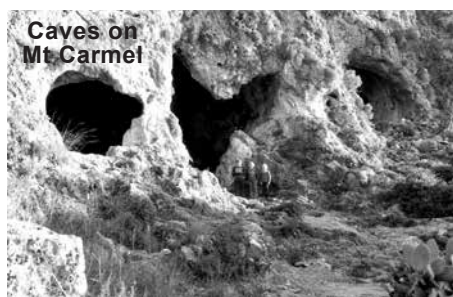
mid-point of the Tribulation. These prophets minister for only 1,260 days during which time they have special powers for their protection (Rev.11:1-6). After 1,260 days the Beast (Antichrist) will interfere with Temple worship and cause the “*sacrifice and oblation to cease*” (Dan.9:27). The ministry of the two prophets will be terminated by the Beast who at this stage will be demon-possessed from the Bottomless Pit (Rev.11:7). The bodies of the two prophets will lie on the streets of Jerusalem for the world to see and rejoice. However, after three and one half days God will raise them up and they will ascend to heaven.

Chapter 12:7-13 - War in Heaven

At this time there will be war in heaven (Rev.12:7-13). The Devil has always had access to the throne of God, but halfway through the Tribulation he will marshall all his demons in an attempt to overthrow Almighty God. Michael and the angels over whom he presides as archangel, will overcome Satan’s host casting them out of heaven into the earth. Having been denied access to heaven Satan will come down with great fury knowing that he has “*but a short time*” ie. 42 months, before he is bound in the bottomless pit.

Chapters 12:1-6; 13-17 - Israel Persecuted by the Beast

In Chapter 12 a woman appeared to John wearing a crown with 12 stars. She is clothed with the sun and the moon is under her feet, which is **symbolic of the nation of Israel**. The 12 stars represent the 12 tribes in accordance with Joseph’s dream (Gen.37:9-10).



When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee INTO THE MOUNTAINS: (Matt.24:15-16)

Revelation

The woman that John saw, gave birth to a *“man child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron”* who is *“caught up unto God and His throne”* (Rev.12:5). This can be none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. At His birth the Dragon (Satan) sought to devour the child *“as soon as it was born”* when Herod slew the infants at Bethlehem, but Christ has been raised to the throne of God.

The woman's *“seed”* are described and these are the **Jews** in the Tribulation. When Israel is converted in the first half of the seven years, Satan will seek to destroy the Jews who at this stage *“keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ”* (Rev.12:17). Persecution will be intense and the Jews will flee into the wilderness (of Judea) where **God has a place prepared**. **There** she is nourished for *“a time, times and half a time”* or three and one half years ie. the second half of the Tribulation. Daniel described this event at the end of the first half of the Tribulation. Daniel wrote: *“He (the Beast) shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many”* (Dan.11:44).

At this time the Jews will be given *“two wings of a great eagle”* to escape from the Beast (Rev.12:14), and though the Jews are pursued they will be sustained for the second half of the Tribulation.

Who is the great eagle?

In the book of Ezekiel we read of Babylon and Egypt as a *“great eagle with great wings”* (Ezek.17:3,7) and the symbolism would suggest that some great nation will assist Israel during the second half of the Tribulation, providing protection from the Beast - perhaps that nation will be the United States.

We know from Zechariah's prophecy that the saved Jewish nation will be fighting against the Beast and that the Lord will fight for them. Zechariah states that *“Judah shall fight at Jerusalem”* (Zech.14:14) and great successes will be achieved against *“all the people round about.”* The Governors of Judah will be *“like a torch of fire in a sheaf”* (Zech.12:6) and even the *“feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God; as the angel of the Lord before them”* (Zech.12:8).

Chapter 13 - The Beast and His False Prophet

In Chapter 13 of Revelation we have a description of the Beast and his False Prophet. These will be part of a Trinity of evil: the Dragon

(Satan), the Beast and the False Prophet. The Beast is likened to a leopard, bear and lion, combining all the attributes of the four earlier world empires - Babylon, Persia, and Greece, described by Daniel (Dan.7:1-14). The Beast has “*ten horns*” representing ten kings (rulers) of the revived Roman Empire which we



The 4th Beast (Dan.7:7-8)

see beginning to form today in the EU. Ultimately the EU must consist of ten kingdoms that give their power to Antichrist halfway through the seven-year Tribulation (Ch.17:12-13).

With the bottomless pit opened to release its demon hordes and Satan cast down to the earth, the second half of the Tribulation will see unprecedented demonic activity; **men will worship the Dragon (Satan) and**

“the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? And ... he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints” (Rev.13:4-7).

The Beast will be given great Satanic authority over the world’s economy and religions for 42 months - the second half of the Tribulation. Men will not be able to buy or sell without the sign of allegiance; the “*mark of the Beast*” (666) in their forehead or right hand. As the “*seven last plagues*” come upon earth men will blaspheme the name of God (Rev.6:6,9,21). There will be only two camps after the mid-point of the Tribulation; God’s and Satan’s. All religions will be subject to Satan and worship his “*man of sin.*”

Revelation

Chapter 14:1-13 - The 144,000 Martyred & Angels Preach the Everlasting Gospel

In Chapter 14 we are shown the scene in heaven where the 24 Jewish elders worship before the throne and they are joined by 144,000 Jewish men from earth. John described these as the “*servants of our (Israel’s) God*” (Rev.7:3) who preached “*the Gospel of the Kingdom in all the world for a witness unto all nations*” (Matt.24:14). These are the “*firstfruits unto God and the lamb*” (Rev.14:4). These were **the first of Israel** to turn to Christ after the Rapture of the Church; through their testimony “*all Israel*” turned to Christ at the Russian invasion; the two prophets at Jerusalem were probably from this company and when these “*finished their testimony*” (Rev.11:7) human testimony on earth is silenced and angels will testify to a world openly at war with God.

The message of the angelic witness is not an offer of mercy, for men will have **made their final choice** either to receive the mark of the Beast or to follow the Lamb; Antichrist or Christ. No Gospel of grace is preached in the second half of the Tribulation for the door of mercy has closed and only judgment remains to all outside.

“If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb” (Rev.14:9-10).

Chapter 14:14-20 - The Winepress of the Wrath of God is Prepared

At this stage one like the Son of man appears in the clouds of heaven and angels emerge from the heavenly Temple; their message is the same:

*“Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for **the harvest of the earth is ripe**... Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for **her grapes are fully ripe**. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the **great winepress of the wrath of God**. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs”* (Rev.14:15-20).

The Second Half of the Tribulation

Revelation - Chapters 15 to 18

Chapter 15 describes seven angels coming out of the temple in heaven with the “*seven last plagues*” - seven Vial (Bowl) judgments.

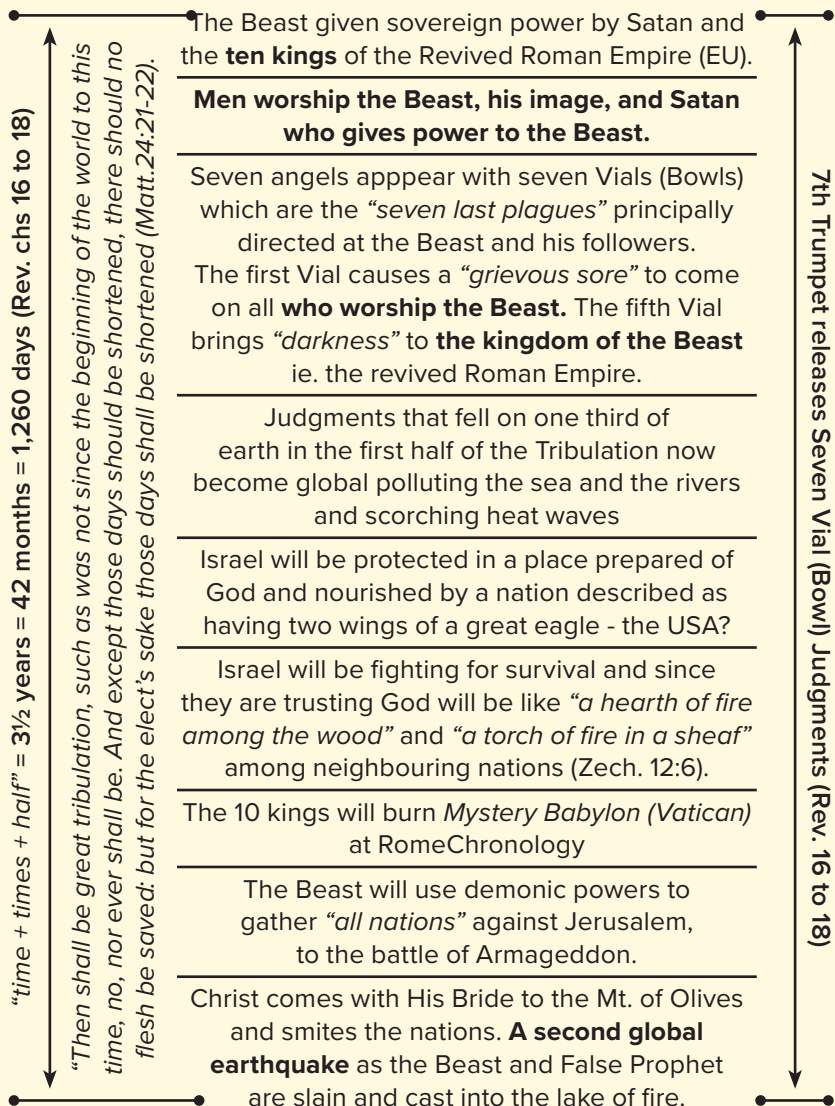
The second half of the Tribulation will see the demon-possessed Antichrist take control of the entire world and use all his resources to utterly destroy the believing nation of Israel. However, God will protect and fight for His redeemed people. The forces mustered by Antichrist will be judged by seven Vial Judgments directed against the kingdom of Antichrist and all who give allegiance to him. Mystery Babylon, apostate Christendom that assisted Antichrist come to power, will be burned and then Christ will return in glory and power.

God will direct His judgments against the Beast and all who worship the Beast as follows:

- A grievous sore will break out on all who receive the mark of the Beast, the sea will be turned to blood (Rev.16:2).
- The sea will be turned to blood and the fountains of water such as rivers and lakes will be turned to blood (Rev.16:3-7)
- The sun will scorch men and there will be darkness over all the kingdom of the Beast (Rev.16:8-9).
- The kingdom of the Beast will be “*full of darkness*” (Rev.16:10)
- Finally, the Euphrates River will dry up to make a way for the armies of the “*kings of the east*” to come to the final conflict at Armageddon in the land of Israel (Rev.16:12-16).

This final conflict will be open warfare between God and Satan. Christ will lead the armies of heaven and Antichrist will lead the armies of Satan. In this battle however, the Lord Himself will destroy all the armies arrayed against Him. Lightning thunders, and a great earthquake, greater than any before it, will shake the globe. Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots headquartered at Rome will be burned as described in Revelation Chapters 17 and 18. God will use the ten kings who give their power to the Beast to turn on Mystery Babylon and burn her.

The 7th Trumpet Announces 7 “last plagues”



Chronology of Events in the Second Half of the Tribulation
Revelation chs. 15-19

2nd Half of the Tribulation

Apostate Christendon Finally Destroyed - Chapters 17 and 18

In Chapters 17 and 18 we are given a detailed description of the judgment of “*Mystery Babylon the Mother of Harlots*” (idolatry). In scripture, idolatry is described as spiritual harlotry. When Israel turned to idols, God accused the nation of being the unfaithful wife of Jehovah as can be seen in the book of Hosea. Idolatry began after the Flood at Babylon and it has spread throughout the world, especially in the Catholic Church.

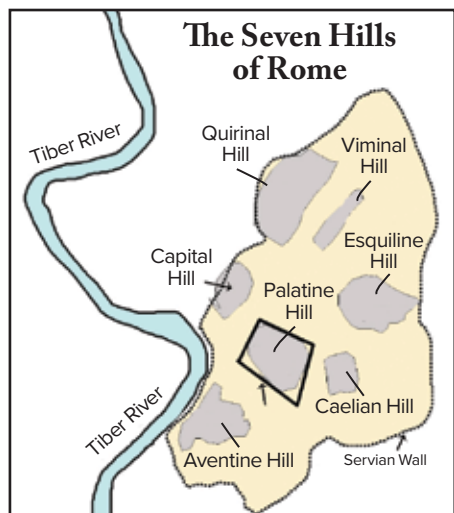


TIME December 9, 1991

Thousands of “saints” are prayed to and devotees bow before their image as well as the image of Christ. The Catholic Mass is a blasphemous and idolatrous pagan sacrifice repeated at weddings, funerals, and other special occasions. The exultation of Mary as the Queen of Heaven makes her an ancient god, condemned in the Bible (Jer.44:15-27).

This harlot woman is riding the Beast which indicates that she is guiding the Beast to power. After the Beast declares himself to be God he will have no further use of her.

The picture of the harlot woman riding the Beast relates back to Greek mythology where the daughter of the King of Tyre was courted by the Zeus, the father of the gods but she refused his advances. Zeus then turned himself into a bull and became friendly with the maiden. When she rode on his back he leaped into the Mediterranean and swam to Crete where he turned himself back into Zeus and married her. Her name was Europa and Europe gets its name from her.



Revelation

There can be no doubt that the Vatican answers to all the clues given to identify her in Revelation Chapter 17.

- She is, exceedingly rich (Rev.17:4)
- Her influence is global and political (Rev.17:15)
- She is guilty of the blood of countless martyrs of Jesus Christ (Rev.17:6)
- She holds the idolatrous golden cup of the mass in her hand (Rev.17:4), and
- She sits on the seven hills of Rome (Rev.17:9). She ruled over the kings of the earth in AD96 (Rev.17:18).



Those who teach that the ancient city of Babylon in Iraq will be rebuilt, or that Mystery Babylon is Mecca, have no scripture to support their theory. God has plainly stated that ancient Babylon will NEVER be rebuilt (Jer.51:64). Mecca is located in a valley and not on seven hills (Rev.17:9,18). Also, Mecca is too far from the coast for seamen to see her burn while Rome reaches the coast.

Israel's Fight for Survival

During the second half of the Tribulation Israel will be a redeemed people and they will have God on their side as they defend against the forces of Antichrist. Zechariah plainly states that *"Judah shall fight at Jerusalem"* (Zech.14:14) and Jerusalem will be *"a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the seige both against Judah and Jerusalem"* (Zech.12:2). God will make the *"governors of Judah like a hearth of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about"* (Zech.12:6).

Antichrist will not be successful in subduing Israel and so three unclean spirits mobilize all the kings of the earth in a final attack on Jerusalem. However, this will be to no avail for *"then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle, and His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives"* (Zech.14:3-4).

The Second Advent and Millennial Kingdom

Revelation - Chapters 19 & 20

Chapter 19 begins with the Hallelujah chorus sung in heaven. John wrote:

"And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore" (Rev.19:1-3).

From this we learn that it is perfectly right to rejoice when God judges evil. We can rejoice with all of heaven.

The Chaste Bride of Christ on Display - Revelation 19:7-10

Praise continues as the true Bride of Christ is displayed in "*fine linen, clean and white*" which is "*the righteousness(es) of the saints*" or the "*righteous acts of the saints.*" The Greek text in this verse has a **plural righteousness**, signifying that the imputed righteousness of Christ is not in view but rather the righteous acts of believers is in view. Christ will be "*admired in all them that believe*" (2Thess.1:10). Every faithful service done for Christ will be rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ and will be displayed to the glory of Christ in that day when Christ will come "*to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe*" (2Thess.1:10).

The crowns of the saints are *stephanos* (laurels) for a race well run, but the many crowns worn by the King of kings are *diadems* (kingly crowns). Crowns of reward will all redound to the praise and glory of the King of kings and Lord of lords who will be adorned with "*many crowns*" (Rev.19:12).

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

The wedding of Christ and His Church takes place in heaven, for Jesus will "*return from the wedding*" (Luke 12:36). The marriage supper will be **on earth**, and Israel will be guest with all the "*blessed*" who survive the Tribulation - these are the "*sheep*" who come before the "*throne of His glory*" (Matt.25:31-34). These are the "*blessed of my Father*" who inherit the millennial kingdom (Matt.25:33).

"Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Rev.19:9).

Revelation

The parable of the ten virgins (Matt.25:1-13) was given to Jewish disciples before the Church existed and the bride is not mentioned. The *"wise virgins"* are those prepared for the marriage supper. It is a warning to Israel at the end of the age to be ready.

The parable of the marriage supper for the King's Son was prophetic of the nation of Israel. Invitations were sent out but those invited *"made light of it"* and entreated the King's servants *"spitefully and slew them"* (Matt.22:5-6). The King *"was wroth: and he sent forth his armies...and **burned up their city**"* (Matt.22:7).

At Christ's first coming the Gospel of the Kingdom was an invitation to Israel to attend the marriage supper of the Lamb but they rejected the invitation, so God sent the Romans to destroy their city; Jerusalem in AD70. Since then the invitation has gone out to all who will respond and honour the King's Son.

In this Church age God is taking out from the Gentiles *"a people for His name"* (Acts 15:14) and this people will be the *"wife of the Lamb."* During the Tribulation the invitation will again go out to attend the *"marriage supper of the Lamb"* as guests; those who respond will be blessed at the marriage supper and in the kingdom.

John the Baptist was an Old Testament saint but saw himself as only a *"friend of the bridegroom"* (John 3:29).

Heaven Opened - "When the Lord Jesus Shall be Revealed from Heaven..." (2Thess.1:7)

In Chapter 4 a door is opened to receive the Church, but at the end of the Tribulation heaven will be opened and Christ will come WITH the armies of heaven and *"all His saints"* (1Thess.3:13).

The Second Advent is to bring judgment for the Lord comes *"to judge and make war"* (Rev.19:11) and He comes *"in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (2Thess.1:8).

It will be too late to seek mercy when Christ returns. Some teach that Israel will turn to the Lord when they see Christ at the second advent, but this is impossible. The Jews will mourn when they see Christ but that will be **as a saved nation** when they remember the centuries of rejection. Neither Jew nor Gentile can be saved

Christ Returns to Reign

when the Lord returns for as the psalmist wrote:

*“He cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall He **judge the world**, and the people with equity” (Ps.98:9).*

There are at least 23 scriptures throughout the Old and New Testaments that specifically speak of the Lord’s glorious coming to earth to establish His Kingdom. They are:

Matt.16:28; 24:29-31; Mark 13:24-27; Luke 17:24; 21:25-27; 2Thess.1:7-10; 2:8; Ps.96:13; 97:1-6; 98:9; Dan.2:44-45; 7:13-14; Isa.24:21-23; 26:21; 59:20; 63:1; 66:15; Joel 3:12-17; Zech.14:1-4; Titus2:13; James 5:7; Rev.19:11-21.

The Purpose of Christ’s coming is clear:

- 1) He comes to judge the nations (Ps.96:18; 97:1-6; 98:9).
- 2) He comes to destroy Antichrist and all who war against the Lamb (Rev.19:18-21; Isa.24:21-23).
- 3) He comes to take vengeance against those who persecute believers (Rev.6:10-11; Isa.63:16. Heb.10:30-31).
“The day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come” (Isa.63:4).
- 4) He comes to rescue His people Israel (Joel 3:12-17; Zech.14:2-3).
- 5) He comes to display His Bride after the wedding (Luke12:26; Rev.19:7-8; 2Thess.1:10).
- 8) He comes to reign over the earth for 1,000 years (Rev.20:4-6; Zech.14:9; Joel 3:17; Dan.7:27).
- 9) He comes to bind Satan and his demons (Rev.20:1-3; Isa.24:21).

Joy and Sorrow at Christ’s Return

Christ will be welcomed by Israel as Isaiah wrote:

*“And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; **we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD**; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation” (Isa.25:9).*

However, Israel will recall their years of rejection:

*“They shall **look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn** for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is **in bitterness** for his firstborn. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon...” (Zech.12:10-14).*

Revelation

It will be like the lamentation after the death of Josiah when he was slain by Pharaoh-necho at Megiddo, as recorded in 2Chron.35:24-25.

After the judgment of the living nations those that are cast into “*everlasting fire*” (Matt.25:41) will be filled with remorse.

“At the end of the world (age): the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth” (Matt.13:49-50).

People *wail* in remorse and *gnash their teeth* in unrepentant anger. Seven times Jesus spoke of “*weeping and gnashing of teeth*” in the context of the judgment of the nations at the “*end of the age*” (Matt.8:12; 13:42,50; 22:32; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28).

The Judgment of the Beast

When Christ returns the Beast will have gathered all the kings of the earth to fight against Christ at His coming - “*to make war against Him...and His army*” (Rev.19:19). Both the Beast and the False Prophet will be “*taken,*” slain, given a resurrection body, and cast alive into the lake of fire. Mighty angels will fling them into the lake of fire (Matt.13:49-50).

The issues in the Tribulation will be so clear after the Rapture and the testimony of 144,000 Jews - the amazing conversion of Israel, the destruction of the Russian/Islamic forces by the power of God, and the testimony of the angel flying through the heavens proclaiming the “*everlasting Gospel,*” that for anyone to follow Antichrist and worship the Devil will be blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. These will not wait until the Great White Throne to be judged.

Hades and Gehenna

It is important to distinguish between *hades* (hell) and the lake of fire. In the KJV Bible two different Greek words are translated “*hell*” - *hades* and *gehenna*. *Hades* is where the souls of the unsaved go after death to await the resurrection to damnation at the Great White Throne (Rev.20:11-15).

Gehenna is where the resurrected unsaved are cast after receiving judgment at the Great White Throne. It is also called the “*lake of fire*” or “*everlasting fire.*” The Greek word *gehenna*, is used in the following scriptures: Matt.5:22,29-30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33; Mark

Christ Returns to Reign

9:43,45,47; Luke 12:5 and James 3:6, where we observe that Jesus spoke of “*body and soul*” being cast into hell (*gehenna*). This could only be referring to a resurrected body and therefore refers to the lake of fire. Jesus said:

“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (gehenna)” (Matt.10:28).

When the Beast, the false Prophet, and those who receive the mark of the Beast, are cast into the lake of fire after Christ’s second advent, the Lord will say,

“Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matt.25:41).

Thus the unsaved from the Tribulation period will not have to wait until the end of the 1,000 years of millennial kingdom to be judged at the Great White Throne but will go immediately to the lake of fire which is “*prepared for the Devil and his angels*” (Matt.25:41).

The **Devil goes to the Bottomless Pit** portion of *hades* during the millennium, but he goes to *gehenna* at the end of the millennium which was prepared for him when he rebelled against God.

The resurrection of some unsaved and some saved at the 2nd advent of Christ was prophesied by Daniel:

“there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Dan.12:1-2).

Only Tribulation martyrs are the saved who are raised. Neither Old Testament nor Church-age saints have any part in this resurrection (Rev.20:4-5). John wrote:

“I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast... and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.”

The “*rest of the dead*” are raised 1,000 years later so **there is definitely no general resurrection.**

Revelation

Life in the Millennial Kingdom of Christ

Christ will come and will reign on the earth. Zechariah wrote:
*"And **the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one**" (Zech 14:9).*

Isaiah wrote:

*"Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the **LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously**" (Isa. 24:23).*

Micah wrote:

*"And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and **the LORD shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever**" (Micah 4:7)*

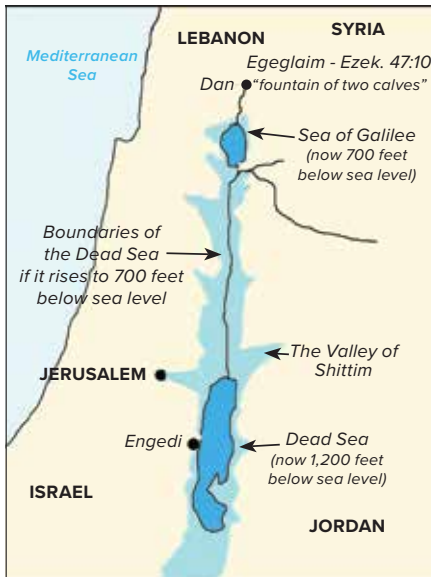
When Christ reigns:

- i) Righteous Government will fill the earth (Isa.11:9).
- ii) Every Jew will return to the land (Ezek.39:25-29).
- iii) The 12 apostles will judge the 12 tribes of Israel (Matt.19:28).
- iv) David will be the Prince over all Israel (Hosea 3:5).
- v) The Jews will rule under Christ as King (Isa.60:12; Isa.2:2).
- vi) Jews will be honoured by the nations (Zech.8:23).
- vii) The Jews will teach the law to the world (Isa.2:3).
- viii) Wars will cease (Isa.2:4).
- ix) The animals will be at peace (Isa.11:6-9; 65:25; Hos.2:18).
- x) The deserts will blossom (Isa.35:1) (Ezek.34:26-27).
- xi) A New Millennial Temple will be built and the glory of God will be seen (Ezek. 43:2).
- xii) Jewish priests will offer sacrifices in the Millennial Temple in memorial of Christ's death (Ezek. 44:15; Zech.14:21).
- xiii) Gentiles will keep the feasts of the Lord (Zech.14:16).

*I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will **set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore**. My tabernacle also*

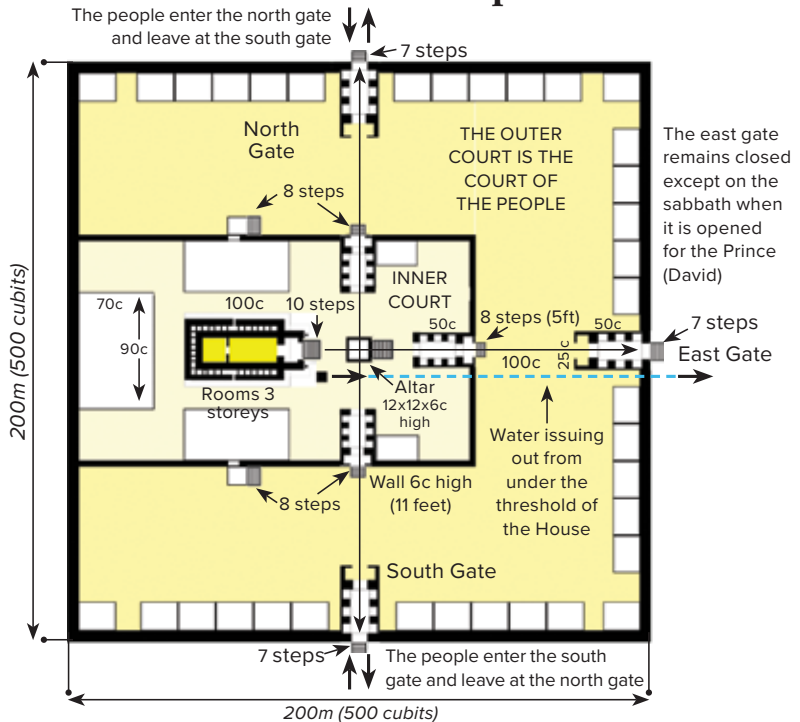


Christ Returns to Reign



Ezekiel's Millennial Temple - Ezek. chs. 40-42

The people enter the north gate and leave at the south gate



Revelation

*shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I the LORD do sanctify Israel, **when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore***" (Ezek.37:26-28).

- xiv) The Dead Sea will be made fresh and fishermen will cast their nets there (Ezek.47:1-10; Zech 14:8; Joel 3:18)

The Last Rebellion

At the end of the 1,000 years Satan will be loosed from the Bottomless Pit for "*a little season*" and allowed to test the nations that have been subject to Christ's rule for 1,000 years. This action by Almighty God demonstrates the fact that Man has been given a free will. The people who Satan will appeal to will be the unsaved on earth at the end of 1,000 years of Christ's reign. By releasing Satan from the bottomless pit men will be given a final choice. What else can we conclude?

How long will Satan have freedom to deceive the nations? The Bible says it is for a "*little season*" (Rev.20:3). In Revelation Chapter 12 when Satan is cast out of heaven into the earth, he knows "*that he hath but a short time*" (Rev.12:12) **which is 42 months**. During that time he will be able to mobilize the kings of the earth to fight against Christ at His second advent.

At the end of the millennial kingdom of 1,000 years, Satan will have a similar task of mobilizing the nations in a revolt against Christ and the nation of Israel in "*the beloved city*" (Rev.20:9). Conditions at the end of the millennial kingdom will be quite different. The extent of the rebellion appears to be very great, for the invading army is "*as the sand of the sea*" and involves "*the breadth of the earth.*" It will be a global rebellion against God's people Israel and against the Lord Himself.

The timing of this final revolt will be at the end of the millennial kingdom. Gog and Magog will again be the centre of rebellion and will lead another attack on Israel. We should remember that Gog is a title, such as King or President. It is not the name of an individual.

Two Invasions by Gog

Some confuse the attack by Gog and Magog at the end of the millennium with the invasion of Israel described in Ezekiel 38 and 39, but:

- i) One-sixth of Gog's army escape during the Tribulation. None escape at the end of the millenium.
- ii) Ezekiel's invasion is by a limited number of nations, but the final invasion involves **all nations**.
- iii) Russia is burned after the first invasion, but the **whole heaven and earth** are burned after the second invasion.

These are separate events more than 1,000 years apart.

The Resurrection to Damnation

Chapter 20:11-15

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them” (Rev.20:11).

The One who sits on this throne can be none other than the Lord Jesus because *“the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son”* (John 5:22).

There is **no rainbow** of mercy about this throne and those who appear before it come from *“death and hades.”* Death is the body. Hades is where the soul of the unsaved has been kept in remand to await the final sentence for the deeds done in the body. **No saved person will ever appear before this throne of judgment.**

Every person who appears before the Great White Throne will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone.

*“They were judged every man according to their works. **And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire.** This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire”* (Rev.20:13-15).

Note two things:

- 1) Judgment is **according to works** i.e. **the degree of punishment** is appropriate to their degree of sinfulness (Luke 12:47).
- 2) Their destiny is determined by whether their name is found in the Lamb’s book of life (Rev. 20:15). Names are blotted out of the book of life when men refuse salvation (Exod. 32:33).

No General Resurrection

There are two resurrections; the *resurrection to life* and the *resurrection to damnation*. The resurrection to life is in **several stages**: The Old Testament saints rose from paradise (sheol) with Christ (Matt.27:52-53); The Church will be raised and changed at the Rapture (1Thess.4:13-18); the Tribulation martyrs will be raised at the Second Advent (Rev.20:4) and millennial saints will be raised at the end of the 1,000 years kingdom (Rev.20:5).

The resurrection to damnation is in **two stages**: Antichrist is slain and given a resurrection body when Christ returns (Dan.12:2; Matt,25:41); all other unsaved are raised at the end of the millennial kingdom.

The New Heaven and Earth - Chapters 21 and 22

At the same time that the Great White Throne judgment takes place, we read that *"the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them"* (Rev.20:11). The heaven referred to in this scripture must of necessity be the **atmospheric heavens** surrounding the earth. The Psalmist said:

*"And he built his sanctuary like high palaces, like **the earth which he hath established for ever**"* (Ps. 78:69; Ps.119:90; Ps. 93:1).

There are three heavens:

The first heaven is the atmosphere in which the birds fly. In Genesis.1:20 we read of the *"fowl that fly above the earth in **the open firmament of heaven.**"*

The second heaven is the stars and galaxies of stars in space.

The "third heaven" is God's dwelling place (2Cor.12:2).

When Jesus said that *"Heaven and earth shall **pass away**, but my words shall not pass away"* (Matt.24:35), He was not saying that the earth would cease to exist but that everything on the earth and in the first heaven would be burned up and there will be *"no more sea."* Peter makes this clear:

*"**The heavens shall pass away** with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, **the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up**"* (2Peter 3:10).

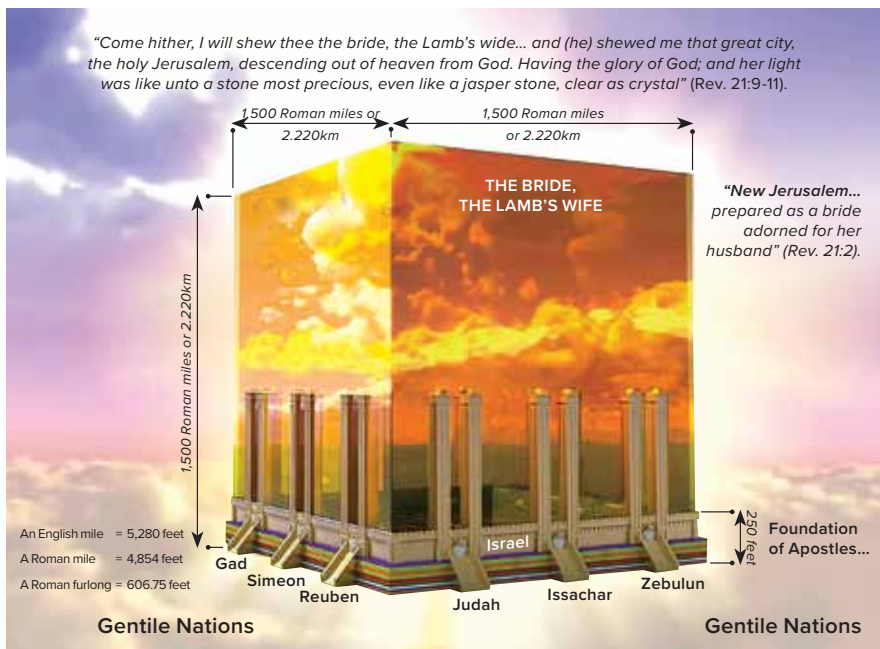
The firmament - the air we breathe - will disappear or *"flee away (lit. vanished) and there was no place found for them"* (Rev.20:11) and there will be *"no more sea"* (Rev.21:1) ie. *"the first heaven and first earth were passed away."*

The new heaven and earth will be a renovated earth and an entirely new environment. Its inhabitants will be resurrected people who have trusted in the mercy of God and been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. There will be three classes of saints - the saved Jews, Gentiles and the Church (Gal.3:28).

These three distinct groups of saints will continue on into the eternal kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ in the New Heavens and New Earth as follows:

- The Church will occupy the New Jerusalem. When an angel showed John *"the Bride, the Lamb's wife"* (the Church) (Rev.21:9)

Revelation



he saw *“the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God”* (Rev.21:10). *“The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb”* and Paul told us that the Church is built upon *“the foundation of the apostles and prophets”* (Eph.2:20).

The New Jerusalem is now in heaven where Jesus is preparing a mansion for His Bride. It was customary for a man to become engaged to his wife (*“espoused”* - 2Cor.11:2), then to go to his father’s house to prepare a dwelling place for his Bride. When the future home was ready, the bridegroom would come for his Bride and take her to the home he had prepared. After a short ceremony, the Bride and Bridegroom would retire to the new home for seven days. After seven days they would emerge for the marriage supper with all their friends.

At conversion we are *“espoused”* to Christ and at the Rapture He will take His Church to the place in His father’s house; in heaven, which He has prepared, and we will be with Him for the seven years of the Tribulation. Then He will return WITH His bride *“from the wedding”* (Luke.12:36). **The marriage supper will be on earth.**

The New Heaven and Earth

- Israel will be located around the New Jerusalem and the names of the twelve tribes will be inscribed on the twelve gates, one tribe on each gate. Perhaps this indicates that the redeemed of Israel will be located either inside the wall around the high city or outside the wall on the four sides. An angel will stand at each gate, perhaps to remind all who enter that it was through Israel that access to God was possible since Christ, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, was the promised Messiah and Saviour of the world.

- The Gentiles will occupy the new earth and the kings of redeemed Gentile nations from the millennial kingdom will occupy the new renovated earth and come into the city to *"bring their glory and honour into it"* (Rev.21:24). The Lord Jesus will be King of kings, the Church will be His Bride, Israel His servants, and the Gentile nations His subjects.

"The throne of God and of the Lamb" (Rev.22:3) will be in the New Jerusalem and God will dwell with redeemed mankind *"and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them"* (Rev.21:3).

The angels of God are innumerable yet only 12 attend the new Jerusalem, so we must assume that they continue to occupy heaven. The wonder is that God has chosen to dwell with man (Rev.21:3) whom He has made in His own image. God was manifest in human form when the Lord Jesus came to earth to be our Saviour, and God the Son is the Lamb, who shares the throne with the Father in the New Jerusalem.

The New Jerusalem

In the eternal state all redeemed mankind will have resurrection bodies like Christ's resurrection body for the *"former things have passed away"* (Rev.21:4). There will be *"no more death, sorrow, tears, crying or pain"* (Rev.21:4).

In the eternal kingdom of Christ every relic of the past will be gone and every trace of the effects of sin will cease. All tears, death, sorrow, crying and pain will be but a memory. There will be *"no more curse"* (Rev.22:3), sin and sinners will be excluded (Rev.21:8) and *"his servants will serve Him: and they shall see His face"* (Rev.22:3).

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Nobody will be idle in that place; the kings of the new earth will come into the New Jerusalem and *"bring the glory and honour of the nations into it"* (Rev.21:26).

The city will be glorious. A wall 1,500 Roman miles long (2,220 km) on each side of the city surrounds the New Jerusalem; it is 250 feet high with 12 gates each inscribed with the name of one of the 12 tribes of Israel. Each gate is made of one pearl (Rev.21:21) as a constant reminder that the distinction of **Jew, Gentile and Church** (Gal.3:28; Col.3:11) on earth will continue throughout eternity, and that we cannot *"rightly divide the word of truth"* (2Tim.2:15) if we do not recognize these divisions.

The Final Appeal

"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" (Rev.22:17).

The Bible closes with a passionate appeal to all mankind to **come to Christ and receive the free gift of salvation**. Eternal life is a FREE GIFT. *"The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom.6:23).*

We earn and deserve eternal punishment for our sin, but God has provided salvation purchased on the cross by **one sacrifice for ever**, as a free and eternal gift. The choice is ours.

We cannot obtain salvation by good deeds because God requires that which is past, and our good deeds, can never satisfy the perfect righteous standard of God. But Jesus was perfect, and as the perfect One He took our sin on Himself as our substitute and bore the wrath of God that we justly deserve. Now by His Spirit He is pleading with sinners to repent and to **come to Him to receive the gift of eternal life**.

It is important to understand that the One who offers freely eternal life is none other than the Son of God who, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, are one God. Jesus takes to Himself the title of *"Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."* He did this when He began to speak to John and when He concluded His message (Rev.1:8 and 22:13). The Saviour is the **Almighty** God equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit in the Godhead (Col.2:9). Therefore it is God alone who can save. No Church or system can be a substitute for *"God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself."*

Have you accepted this offer yet? If not, why not? Eternity is a long time - forever. So why reject God's offer just because you want the fleeting pleasures of sin for a few years down here. The life of a Christian is far superior than the life of the sinner.

"As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13).

The Clock of Life

Robert H. Smith

The clock of life is wound but once,
And no man has the power
To tell just where its hands will stop;
At late or early hour.

To lose one's wealth is sad indeed,
To lose once health is more;
To lose one's soul is such a loss
That no one can restore.

The present only is our own,
To seek to do God's will
Place no faith in "Tomorrow,"
For the Clock may then be still.

But even if our days are long
And life is full of fun
Christ could come at any time
Before our race is run.

Would you be left behind in fear
Of what will happen when
God's judgments fall upon the earth
To punish evil men.

What would you do if Christ should come
And you be left behind?
Now is the time to seek the Lord
And His salvation find.

This moment you could bow in prayer
And call upon the Lord
For He can save you from your sin
His blood has been out-poured.

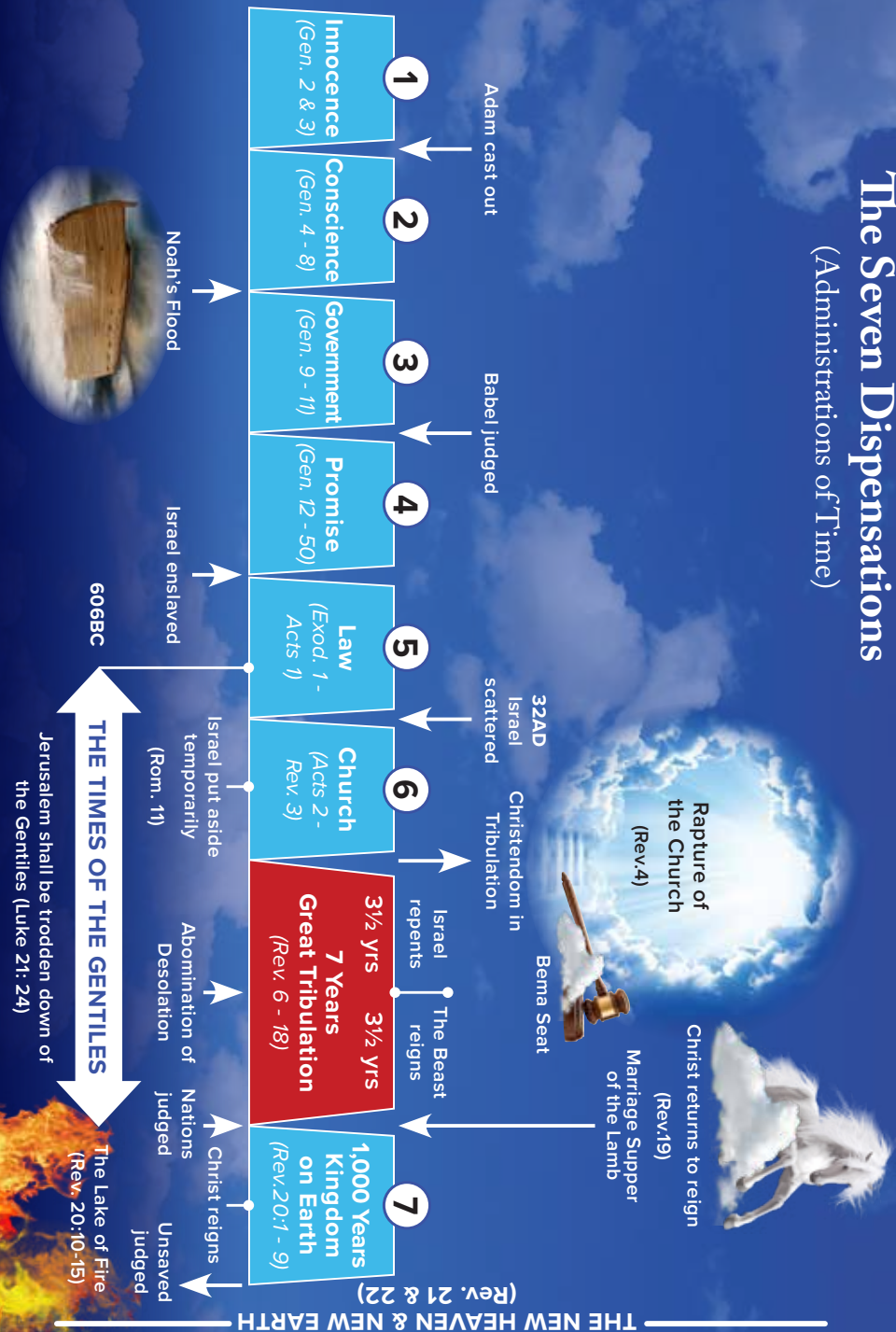
Additional verses by John Ecob

Jesus said:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life"

The Seven Dispensations

(Administrations of Time)





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