

Analysis of

REVELATION

"THE UNVEILING OF JESUS CHRIST"

{1} "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated *it* by His angel to His bond-servant John, {19} "Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things."
Revelation. 1:1, 19

Annotated Analysis of Revelation

Prepared by James T. Bartsch

September, 2007

Updated October 13, 2024

Published Online by WordExplain.com

Email Contact: jbartsch@wordexplain.com

Scripture taken from the *NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE*®,
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman Foundation.
Used by permission. (www.Lockman.org)

REVELATION

"THE UNVEILING OF JESUS CHRIST"

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated *it* by His angel to His bond-servant John, {19} "Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things."
Revelation. 1:1; 19

A 1 THAT WHICH HAS BEEN SEEN: Christ's Appearance to John 1

B 1 The Preface 1:1-8

C 1 The Introduction 1:1-3

D 1 The topic of the document: The Unveiling of Jesus Christ 1:1a

- E 1 The Executor and Subject of the Unveiling: The Revelation¹ of Jesus Christ
- E 2 The Originator of the Unveiling: which God gave Him
- E 3 The purpose of the Unveiling: to show to His bond-servants,² the things which must soon take place;
- E 4 The medium of the Unveiling: and He sent and communicated *it* by His angel³

¹ Rev. 1:1 - Revelation: The Greek word is the [Nominative](#) Feminine Singular of the noun *apokálupsis* ([602](#)), which means by etymology "taking off the covering, an unveiling, a revealing." It is typically translated revelation, but I have used the term *unveiling* to help the English reader understand what is taking place. The word revelation, or unveiling, takes place on two levels. (1) It is an unveiling of the future. Jesus reveals what will happen in the future, much as He did, for example, in Matthew 24-25; Mark 13; Luke 21:5-36. (2) It is an unveiling of Christ, a revealing of Christ in His power, glory, and triumph. When Jesus came the [first time](#), He came as a suffering Savior, the redeemer of mankind, the One who paid the debt for all the sins of all people of all time. Jesus was largely rejected and remains that way today. When He appears the [second time](#), He will come in power and great glory as the Supreme Sovereign. John catches a glimpse of Jesus in His unveiled glory in Rev. 1:10-16. John went into shock and fell at Jesus' feet like a dead man (Rev. 1:17). Jesus had already begun to unveil Himself in all His glory. Part of Jesus' unveiling of Himself is His sending of catastrophic plagues upon a world in angry rebellion against Him. There are terrible references to the wrath of the Lamb (Rev. 6:16-17) and the wrath of God in Revelation (Rev. 11:18; 14:10, 19; 15:1, 7; 16:1, 19). When Jesus comes the [second time](#), He will come with a sharp sword in His mouth to slay the rebels amongst earth's nations, rule them with a rod of iron, and tread the wine press of the fierce wrath of God the Almighty (Rev. 19:15)! What an unveiling! Parallel passages include Isa. 63:1-6; Zech. 14:1-5, 9, 12-19; 2 Thess. 1:7-10.

² Rev. 1:1 - bond-servants: The Greek noun is the plural of *doulos* ([1401](#)), literally, "slave." [NASB](#) typically translates the noun as "slave" in the gospels, but sometimes bond-slave. When referring to Christians, as here, [NASB](#) translates "bond-servant." Why not be consistent and always translate "slave"?

³ Rev. 1:1 - angel: Greek, *aggelos* ([32](#)), lit., "messenger." Unfortunately, English translators almost routinely leave the noun untranslated. See the glossary entry, [Angel](#). Jesus sent a special heavenly messenger to John to give him this unveiling to show to his fellow slaves of Jesus.

- E 5 The recipient of the Unveiling: to His bond-servant John,⁴
- D 2 The writer of the document: John the Apostle 1:2
 - E 1 His function: who testified
 - E 2 His sources
 - G 1 to the word of God
 - G 2 and to the testimony of Jesus Christ,
 - E 3 His qualification – eyewitness: *even* to all that he saw.
- D 3 The blessing to the readers of the document 1:3
 - E 1 The announcement of blessing: Blessed⁵ is he
 - E 2 The conditions for blessing
 - G 1 Reading: who reads
 - G 2 Or hearing: and those who hear the words of the prophecy,⁶
 - G 3 And obeying: and heed the things which are written in it;⁷
 - E 3 The urgency for obtaining the blessing: for the time is near.

⁴ Rev. 1:1 - bond-servant John: The Greek noun is the singular of *doulos* (1401), literally, “slave.” See the note on “bond-servants” in Rev. 1:1. “John” refers, of course, to [John the Apostle](#). John identifies himself by name, *Iōánnēs* (2491) four times in this book, in Rev. 1:1, 4, 9; 22:8. The name means, “Jehovah is a gracious giver” (Thayer); or “Yahweh has given” ([Mounce](#)).

⁵ Rev. 1:3 - blessed: the adjective *makários* (3107), referring to “persons characterized by transcendent happiness or religious joy *blessed, happy* (Matt. 5:32)” ([Friberg](#)). I would add that in this context it conveys the idea that God specially favors someone so that beneficial things happen to him, both in this life and the life to come. This blessing is conditional upon reading, hearing, and obeying this prophecy. I know of no other book in the Bible that specifically promises blessing to those who read, listen to, gain some understanding of, and obey its contents. Sadly, in many Christian settings, this book is ignored. People assume it to be unintelligible. How sad.

⁶ Rev. 1:3 - the words of the prophecy: *prophēteia* (3498) refers to a message given to a human by God to pass on to others. A [prophet](#) is the spokesman on behalf of God. Rev. 11:6 speaks of God’s two witnesses and “the days of their prophesying.” The angelic messenger later would tell John not to worship him, but rather God, “For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Rev. 19:6). This angel would later say, “Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book” (Rev. 22:7); and shortly thereafter, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near” (Rev. 22:10). Jesus Himself warned everyone hearing “the words of the prophecy of this book” not to add to what was written, for God would add to him the plagues written in this book (Rev. 22:18). And again, “if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy,” God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city (Rev. 22:19).

⁷ Rev. 1:3 - heed the things which are written in it: Prophecy is given, not for idle curiosity, but to influence how we live our lives. If we are to give heed to this book, we must, to some degree, understand it. That is not an easy task. But it will do no good if we assume this book is an allegory and refuse to take it literally. Many [non-literalists](#) ridicule us who take this book literally. We literalists, who take a futuristic interpretation, understand, of course, that there are a great many symbols. The symbols, however, have a literal meaning.

C 2 The Salutation 1:4-6

D 1 The author: John ⁸ 1:4

D 2 The addressees: to the seven churches that are in Asia: 1:4

D 3 The blessings 1:4-6

E 1 Blessings given to the saints: Grace to you and peace, 1:4-5a

G 1 From God the Father: from Him who is and who was and who is to come, 1:4

G 2 From God the Spirit: and from the seven ⁹ Spirits ¹⁰ who are before His throne, 1:4

G 3 From God the Son: and from Jesus Christ, 1:5a

H 1 Prophet: the faithful witness, ¹¹H 2 Ultimate man as Victor over Death: the firstborn of the dead, ¹²

⁸ Rev. 1:4 - John: "John" refers, again, to [John the Apostle](#). John identifies himself by name, *Iōánnēs* ([2491](#)) four times in this book, in Rev. 1:1, 4, 9; 22:8. See the note at Rev. 1:1 for etymology.

⁹ Rev. 1:4 - seven: The number seven appears numerous times in the book of Revelation. Often it references something to do with God or His agenda. Occasionally it references Satan and his agenda, for Satan is always trying to counterfeit God's program. Here is a list of the seven's: (1) There are [seven churches](#) (1:4, 11, 20); (2) there are seven Spirits of God (1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6); (3) Jesus was standing in the middle of seven golden lampstands (1:12), which symbolize the [seven churches](#) (1:20); (4) Jesus holds in his right hand seven stars (1:16, 20; 2:1; 3:1), which represent (5) the seven angels of the [seven churches](#) (1:20); (6) seven lamps of fire, which represent the seven Spirits of God, were burning before the throne (4:5); (7) there was a book in heaven sealed with seven seals (5:1, 5; 6:1); (8) Jesus is depicted as a Lamb with seven horns and (9) seven eyes, the eyes representing the seven Spirits of God sent out into the earth (5:6); (10) seven angels stood before God (8:2, 6) (11) with seven trumpets (8:2, 6) which they prepared to sound; (12) seven peals of thunder rumbled and were sealed (10:3, 4); (13) seven thousand people were killed in an earthquake (11:13); (14) a great red dragon had seven heads on which were (15) seven diadems (12:3); (16) a beast coming up out of the sea had seven heads (13:1; 17:3, 7); (17) seven angels (15:1, 6, 7, 8; 16:1; 17:1; 21:9) (18) had seven plagues (15:1; 6, 8), also identified as (19) seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God (15:7; 16:1; 17:1; 21:9); the seven heads of the beast coming out of the sea (13:1; 17:3, 7) are (20) seven mountains on which the woman sits (17:9) (21) and they are seven kings (17:10), and the beast is one of those seven kings (17:11).

¹⁰ Rev. 1:4 - seven Spirits. See note on Rev. 5:6.

¹¹ Rev. 1:5 - the faithful witness: This refers to Jesus' utterly trustworthy activity as the [Anointed Prophet](#). That was His primary ministry while He was on earth. In giving the contents of the Book of Revelation to John, He was also serving as Prophet. The adjective "faithful" is *pistós* ([4103](#)) stresses the reliability and trustworthiness of what Jesus states as a "witness," *mártus* ([3144](#)). Jesus commanded His followers to be His witnesses (Acts 1:8). Christians were faithful in their witness in the early days of the [church](#) to the point of being willing to die in the process (Acts 22:20), just as Jesus had. So the word witness came to have the flavor of one's willingness to be a martyr, giving his life as a witness.

¹² Rev. 1:5 - the firstborn of the dead: The term "firstborn" is the adjective *prōtótokos* ([4416](#)). It means, literally, one's firstborn child (Luke 2:7). Let me state the obvious – one has to be born in order to be the firstborn. So this is a human term, one which certainly could not refer to angels, for example. Jesus is God's firstborn son through the Spirit's empowering of the virgin Mary, just as He is God's "[only-born](#)" ([3439](#)) son. Jesus is the firstborn of the dead in that He is the first, and so far, only person to be resurrected from the dead with a resurrection body,

H 3 Supreme King: and the ruler of the kings of the earth.¹³

E 2 Blessings ascribed to the Son 1:5b-6

G 1 Acknowledging His loving, sacrificial salvation 1:5b

H 1 His love: To Him who loves us¹⁴

H 2 His redemption: and released us from our sins¹⁵

H 3 His sacrifice: by His blood –¹⁶

G 2 Acknowledging His forming the saints into a royal priesthood 1:6

H 1 Royalty: and He has made us *to be* a kingdom,¹⁷

H 2 Priesthood: priests to His God and Father—¹⁸

never to die again. Jesus' resurrection is the first fruits and guarantee, or deposit of the future resurrection of all believers. Jesus' appearance as the "firstborn" indicated John was borrowing from Ps. 89:27, a [Messianic](#) psalm.

¹³ Rev. 1:5 - the ruler of the kings of the earth: This description of Jesus borrows from the Psalm 89:27, a [Messianic](#) Psalm. Presently Jesus is sitting at the right hand of the Father, waiting to be given His Kingdom on earth (Psalm 110:1-3, 5-7). But He is not idle. For 2000 years He has been exercising His present primary [Anointed](#) role as Great High [Priest](#) after the order of [Melchizedek](#) (Psalm 110:4; Heb. 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:17, 21).

¹⁴ Rev. 1:5 - To Him who loves us: Literally, "To the One loving us," where "loving" is the [Present Participle](#) of the verb *agapáō* (25). Jesus constantly loves us. His love is demonstrated by His having died on our behalf at a point of time in history.

¹⁵ Rev. 1:5 - released us from our sins: "Released" is the [Aorist Participle](#) of *luō* (3089), to untie or unbind. Jesus by His death on the cross unloosened us from our sins, the plural of *hamartía* (266). Literally, the whole clause reads, "To the One loving us and having released us from our sins...." Jesus released us from our sins by His death on the cross, as the next phrase indicates. His death was a one-time event. [Communion](#) is a ceremony that memorializes Christ's death. It is not expiatory, as Catholics and Lutherans believe.

¹⁶ by His blood: Only Jesus' blood is the agent sufficiently strong enough to release us who believe in Him from our sins. The water of water baptism is insufficiently strong to wash away our sins, even our original sin, as Roman Catholics claim.

¹⁷ Rev. 1:6 - He has made us *to be* a kingdom: We in the [church](#) presently constitute a reign, realm, or kingdom (*basileús*, 935) in a specific role – we are priests to His God and Father. That conforms to and confirms Jesus' closing assignment to His [Church](#) that we are to be His witnesses throughout the world (Acts 1:8) and are under orders to make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:18-20). Jesus is not presently exercising His role of King as He will when He returns to earth, and neither are we. In [New Jerusalem](#) and upon [New Earth](#) we will reign (*basileuō*, 936) forever and ever (Rev. 22:5)

¹⁸ Rev. 1:6 - priests to His God and Father: The term "[priests](#)" (*hieréis*, 2409) describes the role of the entire [Church](#). We are to bring sacrifices to God the Father and are to serve as mediators, bringing unbelievers to faith in Christ and assisting other believers in a closer walk with God. We call this the "Universal [Priesthood](#)" of believers. There are, in the [Church](#), no legitimate clergy type [priests](#). Catholics defend their unbiblical use of priests by opining that the English word "[priest](#)" comes from the Greek term for elder (*presbuteros*, 4245). According to [NewAdvent.org](#), "It is this name presbyter (elder) which has passed into the Christian speech to signify the minister of Divine service, the priest." But there is absolutely no etymological connection between *hieréis* (priest) and *presbuteros* (elder). Roman Catholic priests are not modeled after the New Testament elder so much as the Old

G 3 Ascribing to Him a glorious, eternal kingdom: to Him *be* 1:6

H 1 The character of His kingdom: the glory

H 2 The extent of His kingdom: and the dominion

H 3 The duration of His kingdom: forever and ever.

H 4 The certainty of His kingdom: Amen.

C 3 The Prologue 1:7-8

D 1 The prediction of John 1:7

E 1 His coming in power: BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS,¹⁹

E 2 His ubiquity – seen by every person: and every eye will see Him,²⁰ even those who pierced Him;²¹

E 3 His effect – all ethnic groups will grieve because of Him: and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him.²²

E 4 The acquiescence of the prophet: So it is to be. Amen.

D 2 The Guarantor of the prediction: The Almighty! Self-Characterized as 1:8

Testament [priest](#). But Christ, through His death on the cross, rendered the [Mosaic Law](#) inoperative (Eph. 2:14-15), and clergy level [priests](#) are unbiblical. For more on this subject, see the article, “[The Bible and Catholic Priests](#).”

¹⁹ Rev. 1:7 - He is coming with clouds: John refers to Dan. 7:13-14 and to Jesus’ own predictions (Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62; Luke 21:27). See also 1 Thess. 4:17.

²⁰ Rev. 1:7 - every eye will see Him: How will this occur? Is it even feasible? Some today speculate that this will be fulfilled because Jesus’ [Second Coming](#) will be televised. I imagine that will occur, but I do not believe that is what John meant. I believe that Christ’s [Second Coming](#) will be an event that takes some time. Jesus, after all, referred to “the sign of the Son of Man” that “will appear in the sky” and predicted that “all the tribes of the earth ... will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory” (Matt. 24:30). I suspect that Christ’s coming in the sky will be visible with the eye to every person on earth. His descent will not be subject to the normal laws of gravity and atmospheric resistance. He will be accompanied by the armies of heaven (Rev. 19:14). If He and His accompanying armies descend straight down as the earth rotates, every eye will indeed be able to see Him and them over a 24-hour period. This specter will terrify people on earth, as both Matthew (Matt. 24:30) and John (Rev. 1:7) attest. Jesus Himself said that His [Second Coming](#) will be in some way be ubiquitous, “just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west” (Matt. 24:27).

²¹ Rev. 1:7 - even those who pierced Him: a reference to the people of Israel.

²² Rev. 1:7 - and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him: A great number of the Israeli people will mourn in sorrow because they crucified their King (Zech. 12:10-13:1). But except for believers in Jesus, all the rest of the world will mourn, not in regret, but in terror. They will fear what this specter will do to them. And they will have good reason to be terrified, for His wrath will be kindled (Psalm 2:12), his enemies in combat dispatched (Rev. 19:20-21), and every living person judged (Matt. 25:31-46). I once visited a man in jail who had just killed his wife. He was half crying. But his crying was not in remorse, but in terror. His question was telling, “What are they going to do to me?” That is the kind of mourning described here in Rev. 1:7, I believe.

- E 1 The Origin and End of all existence: "I am the Alpha and the Omega," ²³ says the Lord God,
- E 2 The Essence and Personification of Eternity: "who is, and who was and who is to come," ²⁴
- E 3 The Omnipotent One: the Almighty." ²⁵

B 2 The Glorious Christ's Command to John to Write 1:9-20

C 1 The circumstances of John 1:9-10

D 1 His identity: I, John, ²⁶ 1:9a

E 1 your brother ²⁷

E 2 and fellow partaker

G 1 in the tribulation ²⁸

G 2 and kingdom ²⁹

²³ Rev. 1:8 - I am the Alpha and the Omega: The speaker is evidently God the Father, as evidenced by the qualifying phrase "says the Lord God" (Rev. 1:8). Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. God claims to be the beginning of all and the end of all and everything in between. He Himself is eternal, as the next clause affirms.

²⁴ Rev. 1:8 - who is and who was, and who is to come: God exists in the present, the past, and the future. He is [eternal](#), unbound by time, but always working precisely within time to bring about His pre-determined plans, meanwhile allowing man to make choices.

²⁵ Rev. 1:8 - the Almighty: Greek *pantokrátōr* ([3841](#)), the One exercising power and dominion over all things and all beings. This word is used only in 2 Cor. 6:18 and in the book of Revelation, where it occurs 9X, in Rev. 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:6, 15; 21:22.

²⁶ Rev. 1:9 - John: "John" refers, again, to [John the Apostle](#). John identifies himself by name, *Iōánnēs* ([2491](#)) four times in this book, in Rev. 1:1, 4, 9; 22:8. See the note at Rev. 1:1 for etymology.

²⁷ Rev. 1:9 - your brother: John identifies himself here, not as an Apostle, but simply as a brother, *adelphós* ([80](#)), a fellow believer in the [Body of Christ](#), the [Church](#).

²⁸ Rev. 1:9 - in the tribulation: *thlipsis* ([2347](#)), refers, metaphorically here, of suffering brought on by outward circumstances, *affliction, oppression, trouble* (Rev. 1:9)" ([Friberg](#)). All Christians suffer tribulation in this life (John 16:33). However, believers in the [Church Age](#) are exempt from [The Great Tribulation](#), also known as "[The Day of the LORD](#)" (1 Thess. 1:10; 5:1-4, 8-9; 2 Thess. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 3:10). After the [Church](#) is removed to heaven (the [Rapture](#)), many people left on earth will become believers in Christ. We call these post-[Rapture](#) believers "[Tribulation Saints](#)." Most of them will be martyred (Rev. 7:9-17). Rev. 1-3 covers the [Church Age](#). Rev. 4-5 depicts a heavenly scene, to be witnessed, I believe by the [Raptured](#) believers who are called up into heaven (Rev. 4:1). Rev. 6:1-18:24 depicts the chaotic time of [Tribulation](#) on the earth before [Christ returns](#) (Rev. 19:11-21) to set up His [Millennial Kingdom](#) here upon earth (Rev. 20:1-6).

²⁹ Rev. 1:9 - kingdom: John spoke of the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance in Jesus. Though the tribulation and perseverance in Jesus are present experiences of the believer, our experience of Christ's [kingdom](#) awaits His return to rule the earth from Jerusalem, Israel. He is presently seated at the right hand of the Father (Luke 22:69; Acts 2:33; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3) serving as Great High Priest (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 2:17; 3:1; 4:14-15; 5:10; 6:10; 7:26), and awaiting the time when His enemies shall be made a footstool for His feet (Psalm 110:1-3, 5-7). There is a parallel with the life of King David. David was anointed to be king while still a teen-ager. But it took many years for his kingdom to begin. His band of 600 warriors who traveled with him in his exile from the court of Saul joined him in anticipation of his coming kingdom. So it is with us believers today. We follow Christ in

- G 3 and perseverance³⁰ *which are* in Jesus,
- D 2 His location: was on the island called [Patmos](#)³¹ 1:9b
 - E 1 because of the word of God
 - E 2 and the testimony of Jesus.
- D 3 His state of being: I was in the Spirit³² 1:10a
- D 4 His chronological frame of reference: on the Lord's day,
- D 5 His sensory perception: and I heard behind me a loud voice like *the sound* of a trumpet,³³ 1:10b
- C 2 The command of Christ: saying, 1:11
 - D 1 "Write in a book what you see,
 - D 2 and send *it* to the [seven churches](#):³⁴
 - E 1 to [Ephesus](#)
 - E 2 and to [Smyrna](#)
 - E 3 and to [Pergamum](#)

anticipation of His coming [Kingdom](#). The noun “kingdom” is *basileía* ([932](#)).

³⁰ Rev. 1:9 - perseverance: The noun *hupomonē* ([5281](#)) means patience, endurance, steadfastness, perseverance, fortitude (adapted from [Friberg](#)). The Christian life is an arduous, life-long battle against the world, the flesh, the devil, and apathy. Calvinists rightly speak of “the perseverance of the saints” – meaning that genuine believers will persevere in their walk with God, overcoming obstacles. See the off-site article, “[Perseverance of the Saints – is it biblical?](#)”

³¹ Rev. 1:9 - Patmos: Evidently [John](#) was imprisoned or exiled on [Patmos](#) because of his loyalty in proclaiming God's Word and testifying to others about Jesus Christ.

³² Rev. 1:10 - I was in the Spirit: It is difficult to know precisely what [John](#) meant. Was he filled with the Spirit as he was praying or meditating? In my opinion, he means that the Holy Spirit came upon him in a revelatory way, just as He came upon Joseph or Ezekiel or Daniel in the OT and revealed to them through dreams or visions what would happen in the future. For [John](#), this was what we would today call “virtual reality,” except that he did not have to put on goggles to see what was shown him. In some cases, as [John](#) will describe, he was transported in his human spirit to far away places. In this immediate context he hears and sees something behind him that was literally shocking – in fact he will relate that when he turned around and saw the glorified Christ, he fell at his feet like a dead man (Rev. 1:17).

³³ Rev. 1:10 - I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet: Later, John would describe Christ's voice as being “like the sound of many waters” (Rev. 1:15). Still later, John would see “a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, ‘Come up here ...’” (Rev. 4:1).

³⁴ Rev. 1:11 - [seven churches](#): The number seven, used frequently in Revelation, seems to be the number of completeness. It is my belief that each of these [seven churches](#) was a real [church](#) existing at the time of writing. However, it also seems very possible that each represents a different era of [Church](#) History. That interpretation, to be honest, is a bit subjective. However, there are certain elements in Rev. 2-3 that are best explained if one includes this longer view of history as a viable interpretation. See the [graphic](#) locating the [seven churches](#) geographically in [John's](#) day. Each of these [churches](#) was located in modern day Turkey. Most of them at that time were located in what was then called “Asia.”

- E 4 and to [Thyatira](#)
- E 5 and to [Sardis](#)
- E 6 and to [Philadelphia](#)
- E 7 and to [Laodicea](#)."

C 3 John's description of Christ 1:12-16

- D 1 As surrounded by seven golden lampstands: Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands;³⁵ 1:12
- D 2 As appearing to be "one like a son of man:" and in the middle of the lampstands *I saw* one like a son of man,³⁶ 1:13-16
 - E 1 clothed in a **robe** reaching to the feet,³⁷ 1:13a
 - E 2 and girded across His chest with a **golden sash**.³⁸ 1:13b
 - E 3 His **head** and His **hair** were white like white wool,³⁹ like snow; 1:14a
 - E 4 and His **eyes** were like a flame of fire.⁴⁰ 1:14b

³⁵ Rev. 1:12 - seven golden lampstands: Jesus Himself explained the meaning – they represented the [seven churches](#) to whom John was to write (Rev. 1:20). For other descriptions of a lampstand see Exod. 25:31-40; 1 Kings 7:49; Zech. 4:2-6, 10. In the imagery of Jesus these [seven churches](#) were to shine light in a dark world. Jesus will refer to His walking among the golden lampstands in His address to the [Church](#) at Ephesus (Rev. 2:1). The Greek word for lampstand is *luchnia* ([3087](#)). It refers to a candlestick, lampstand, or candelabrum (Thayer). It appears in this book 7X in 6 verses – in Rev. 1:12, 13, 20; 2:1, 5; 11:4.

³⁶ Rev. 1:13 - one like a son of man: This term describes Jesus' appearance, but it also has [Messianic](#) overtones. See the Glossary term "[Son of Man](#)."

³⁷ Rev. 1:13 - clothed in a robe reaching to his feet: In this context, this is the [apparel of a priest](#). Jesus, of course, as the [Messiah](#), is the Ultimate [Priest](#) after the order of [Melchizedek](#). However, it is also the apparel of a powerful messenger sent to reveal the future to Daniel (Dan. 10:5-6). Many of the descriptions of the risen Christ here in Rev. 1 parallel this powerful messenger sent to Daniel. Since the descriptions are eerily similar, some take the opinion that the powerful messenger sent to Daniel was, in fact, the [Messenger of Yahweh](#), the pre-incarnate Christ. See [Constable's](#) discussion in Daniel 10 of the pros and cons and documentation of exegetes who take the same position and those who oppose it. Though the resemblances are uncanny, the chief reason I argue against the view that Daniel's messenger was the pre-incarnate Christ is that the "prince of Persia" withstood him for 21 days. And it was not until Michael, "one of the chief princes" came to help him escape the opposition of the "kings of Persia" that this messenger was able to resume his mission and deliver his message to Daniel (Dan. 10:13). I do not see how the pre-incarnate Christ could have been detained by the demonic forces of Persia. See also a [Comparison of the Visions of Daniel and John](#).

³⁸ Rev. 1:13 - golden sash: The seven messengers who came out of the temple in heaven to pour out their seven bowls of wrath upon the earth also wore golden sashes around their chests (Rev. 15:5-7).

³⁹ Rev. 1:14 - His head and his hair were white like white wool: In the vision Daniel saw, the hair of the Ancient of Days was like pure wool (Dan. 7:9).

⁴⁰ Rev. 1:14 - eyes like a flame of fire: This description is repeated in Jesus' message to the [church](#) in Thyatira (Rev. 2:18). See also the description of the returning Christ in Rev. 19:12. See also the [Messianic](#) description in Dan. 10:6.

- E 5 His **feet** *were* like burnished bronze,⁴¹ when it has been made to glow in a furnace, 1:15a
- E 6 and His **voice** *was* like the sound of many waters.⁴² 1:15b
- E 7 In His **right hand** He held seven stars,⁴³ 1:16a
- E 8 and out of His **mouth** came a sharp two-edged sword;⁴⁴ 1:16b
- E 9 and His **face** was like the sun shining in its strength.⁴⁵ 1:16c
- C 4 John's stunned reaction to Christ: When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as a dead man.⁴⁶ 1:17a
- C 5 The reassurance of Christ 1:17b-18
 - D 1 His supremacy over time: And He placed His right hand upon me, saying, "Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last,"⁴⁷ 1:17b
 - D 2 His supremacy over death: and the living One; and I was dead, and

⁴¹ Rev. 1:15 - feet ... like burnished bronze: This description is repeated in Jesus' message to the [church](#) in Thyatira (Rev. 2:18).

⁴² Rev. 1:15 - voice ... like the sound of many waters: Earlier, John wrote that he heard behind him a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet (Rev. 1:10). Concerning the messenger who appeared to Daniel he stated that "the sound of his words was like the sound of a tumult" (Dan. 10:6).

⁴³ Rev. 1:16 - seven stars: Jesus will refer to His holding seven stars in His right hand in His message to the [Church](#) of Ephesus (Rev. 2:1).

⁴⁴ Rev. 1:16 - out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword: This speaks of Jesus' sovereign ability simply to command death and destruction. Jesus will refer to His possession of this sword in His message to the [church](#) of Pergamum (Rev. 2:12). At His return to earth to eliminate His enemies and judge the earth, Jesus is again depicted as possessing a sharp sword with which "He may strike down the nations" (Rev. 19:15).

⁴⁵ Rev. 1:16 - His face was like the sun shining in its strength: This was not the first time John had witnessed Christ's face shining brilliantly. When Jesus was transfigured before Peter, James, and John, Matthew had recorded that Jesus' face "shone like the sun" (Matt. 17:2). Later on, John will see a strong messenger descending from heaven whose "face was like the sun" (Rev. 10:1)

⁴⁶ Rev. 1:17 - When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as a dead man: The shock of seeing the risen Christ was not merely a visual, but also a physical shock. We have no idea of what it must be like to encounter beings from the spiritual dimension who manifest themselves in the physical realm. When [Daniel had encountered a heavenly messenger](#) with a similar appearance to Christ (Dan. 10:5-6), his strength had left him, and he had fallen into a deep sleep with his face to the ground (Dan. 10:8-9). See also Daniel's description of his shock (Dan. 10:15-17). See also Daniel's reaction to Gabriel (Dan. 8:16-17). Similarly, Saul, en route to Damascus, had encountered Christ as a light from heaven that had flashed around him, and he had fallen to the ground (Acts 9:3-4), blind (Acts 9:8).

⁴⁷ Rev. 1:17 - I am the first and the last: Jesus identified Himself as the eternal, self-existent originator and ender of all creation. God through Him created all beings (such as angels) and our physical universe (Gen. 1:1; John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:1-2). When Jesus stops holding everything together (Col. 1:17), the entire universe will explode in a gargantuan fireball (2 Pet. 3:10-12). This statement of Jesus is repeated in His final remarks that He is "the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end" (Rev. 22:13).

behold, I am alive forevermore,⁴⁸ and I have the keys of death and of Hades.⁴⁹ 1:18

C 6 More specific instructions of Christ to write 1:19

D 1 Concerning the past (i.e., that which he has just witnessed – the vision of Christ): "Therefore write the things which you have seen,"⁵⁰

D 2 Concerning the present: and the things which are,⁵¹

D 3 Concerning the future: and the things which will take place after these things.⁵²

C 7 The explanation of Christ concerning what John had seen: "As for the mystery⁵³ of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven

⁴⁸ Rev. 1:18 - I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore: Literally, "and I became dead," where "I became" is the [Aorist Indicative](#) of *ginomai* (1096), and "dead" is the Adjective *nekrós* (3498). Jesus endured both [physical death](#) and [spiritual death](#) (He was separated from God His Father – Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34). "and behold, I am alive forevermore" is, literally, "and look! – living I am into the ages of the ages" – where "look!" is the [Interjection](#) *idouí* (2400); "living" is the [Present Participle](#) of the verb *dzáō* (2198); "I am" is the [Present Indicative](#) of the verb *eimi* (1510); "ages of the ages" in both cases is the plural of *aiōn* (165). Jesus, at a point in time, was dead, but now He is living into the ages of the ages, translated by the [NASB](#), "forevermore."

⁴⁹ Rev. 1:18 - I have the keys of death and of Hades: Jesus has supreme destiny over the destinies of human beings. He holds the keys of death, *thánatos* (2288) (which includes [Physical Death](#), [Spiritual Death](#), and [Second Death](#)) and [Hades](#), *hadēs* (86), the temporary place of the dead. Ultimately [Hades](#) will be cast into the [Lake of Fire](#), also known as the [Second Death](#) (Rev. 20:13-14). Jesus has control over when, how, and where someone dies physically. He has control over whether or not a given person is spiritually alive or spiritually dead. And He has authority to cast all unbelievers into the [Lake of Fire](#). He is the [Judge](#) (John 5:22-30).

⁵⁰ Rev. 1:19 - write the things which you have seen: These instructions by Christ in Rev. 1:19 constitute the inspired outline of the book of Revelation. The things which John has seen refers, essentially, to the contents of Rev. 1. In particular it refers to John's vision of the [Omnipotent, Sovereign, Risen Christ](#) in all His glory (Rev. 1:9-20). Rev. 1:1-8 is the Introduction or Preface to the book of Revelation. For a series of brief, but increasingly complex outlines of Revelation, see "[Brief Outlines of Revelation](#)." For a more complex overview of the book without annotations, see "[The Analysis of Revelation](#)." The present [Annotated, Expanded Outline of Revelation](#) is, of course, by far the most comprehensive.

⁵¹ Rev. 1:19 - and the things which are: This refers to the present [Church Age](#), detailed and outlined in Jesus' messages to the [Seven Churches](#) which John is to convey to the messenger of each [church](#) (Rev. 1:7; 2:1-3:22). For a series of brief, but increasingly complex outlines of Revelation, see "[Brief Outlines of Revelation](#)." For a more complex overview of the book without annotations, see "[The Analysis of Revelation](#)." The present [Annotated, Expanded Outline of Revelation](#) is, of course, by far the most comprehensive.

⁵² Rev. 1:19 - the things which will take place after these things: This constitutes everything which will happen in the future, from Rev. 4:1-22:5. Rev. 22:6-22 is the Conclusion or Epilogue to the book of Revelation. Future things constitutes the vast majority of the Apocalypse. Revelation 4:1-5:14 describes a scene up in heaven. But since it happens, in my understanding, after the [Church Age](#), I have good grounds for concluding that Rev. 4:1-2 symbolizes the [Rapture](#) of the [Church](#). For a series of brief, but increasingly complex outlines of Revelation, see "[Brief Outlines of Revelation](#)." For a more complex overview of the book without annotations, see "[The Analysis of Revelation](#)." The present [Annotated, Expanded Outline of Revelation](#) is, of course, by far the most comprehensive.

⁵³ Rev. 1:20 - mystery: The Greek noun is *mustérion* (3466). Typically, in the NT a "[mystery](#)" is a truth unrevealed, or not fully revealed in the OT, but now revealed in the NT. See the [Glossary entry](#). In Revelation, the word has more to do with a symbol that John views that is inexplicable without supernatural explanation, either by Christ Himself, or perhaps by one of the messengers (angels) who interact with John. The word is used in Revelation in Rev. 1:20; 10:7; 17:5, 7. For a more extensive discussion of this word see WordExplain's [Word Study of "Mystery" \(Greek mustérion\)](#). The last four entries in this article deal with the "mysteries" found in Revelation.

golden lampstands: 1:20

D 1 The identity of the seven stars: the **seven stars** are the angels ⁵⁴ of the seven churches,

D 2 The identity of the seven lampstands: and the **seven lampstands** are the seven churches. ⁵⁵

A 2 THAT WHICH IS: The [Church Age](#) – Christ's Messages to the [Seven Churches](#) 2 - 3

B 1 **Christ's Message to the Messenger of the [Church](#) in Ephesus:** Having left your first love, repent, or I'll remove your lampstand **2:1-7**

C 1 His constituency: To the angel ⁵⁶ of the church in Ephesus ⁵⁷ write: 2:1a

C 2 His characterization of Himself 2:1b

D 1 "The One who holds the seven stars ⁵⁸ in His right hand,

⁵⁴ Rev. 1:20 - angels: The plural of *ánggelos*, pronounced *ángelos* ([32](#)), which means simply "messenger." Unfortunately, translators almost routinely leave the Greek noun untranslated. In my opinion, it would be better to translate the noun. The reader needs to determine if the messenger is an ordinary human messenger, or a supernatural messenger from God. And that is the real interpretive question here. Are these messengers here supernatural beings or are they human messengers? See Luke 9:52 and James 2:25 (below) for this latter meaning (Charles C. Ryrie, *The Ryrie Study Bible* [[RSB](#)]). Observe that the messenger of each [church](#) is addressed in the subsequent messages, beginning in Rev. 2:1. This fact favors the view that human messengers are in view. Why, for example, would John be commanded to write material letters to immaterial, celestial messengers and command them, and through them the particular [churches](#), to rectify certain faults? It is humans who are answerable for human behavior, not celestial messengers (angels).

Luke 9:52: and He sent *messengers* on ahead of Him, and they went and entered a village of the Samaritans to make arrangements for Him. James 2:25: In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the *messengers* and sent them out by another way?

⁵⁵ Rev. 1:20 - the seven lampstands are the [seven churches](#): Jesus was walking in the middle of the seven lampstands (Rev. 2:1). In the imagery of Jesus these [seven churches](#) were to shine light in a dark world. He will warn the [church](#) at Ephesus that He will remove its lampstand unless it repents (Rev. 2:5).

⁵⁶ Rev. 2:1 - angel: Better, "messenger" *ánggelos* ([32](#)). The nouns and verbs are relentlessly singular. If the messenger is a human, say a pastor / elder, is it the elder himself whose practice is questioned or whose merits are applauded? Or is he simply the representative of the [church](#)? Obviously, the messenger is expected to relay this message to the people of the [church](#). It would seem, then, that while the singular noun and verb forms used here are addressed to the messenger, they are meant to apply to the (singular) [church](#) as a whole.

Michael J. Sigel uses the messengers of the [seven churches](#) as evidence, in his view, that these were [presiding elders](#) in the first century. In my opinion, he is laying the groundwork to prove the validity of monarchical bishops such as are found in [Roman Catholicism](#). I believe he is in error, as my review of his article concludes. (See my review of his article, "[Can an Ecclesiology Be Biblical and Not Apostolic?](#)")

I believe that these individuals addressed in Rev. 2:1-3:22 were simply human messengers to whom John gave his letters. What precisely their additional function may have been in each [church](#) cannot be determined. Were they overseers (*episkopos*, [1985](#)) or elders (*presbuteros*, [4245](#))? We cannot know. John does not use the term *presbuteros* ([4245](#)), elder, anywhere in the first three chapters of Revelation. This term begins appearing in Rev. 4:4, 10. The term overseer (*episkopos*, [1985](#)) never appears *anywhere* in the book of Revelation. All Christ wanted us to know was that these "angels" better, *messengers*, were assigned to deliver Christ's messages to each [church](#). That is all we should conclude.

⁵⁷ Rev. 2:1 - Ephesus: See the [map of Ephesus](#).

⁵⁸ Rev. 2:1 - seven stars: Jesus is referenced as holding seven stars in his right hand in Rev. 1:16, 20; 2:1; 3:1. The seven stars are the seven messengers (*ánggelos*, [32](#)) of the [seven churches](#) (Rev. 1:20). I believe these to be human, not celestial messengers. See the discussions of "angel(s)" at the appropriate footnotes in Rev. 1:20; 2:1.

- D 2 the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, ⁵⁹ says this:
- C 3 His commendation 2:2-3
 - D 1 For their hard diligent service: 'I know your deeds ⁶⁰ and your toil ⁶¹ and perseverance, ⁶² 2:2
 - D 2 For their hatred of evil: and that you cannot tolerate evil men,
 - D 3 For their perception of false apostles: and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, ⁶³ and they are not, and you found them *to be* false;
 - D 4 For their unflagging loyalty 2:3
 - E 1 and you have perseverance
 - E 2 and have endured for My name's sake,
 - E 3 and have not grown weary.
- C 4 His criticism: 'But I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love. ⁶⁴ 2:4
- C 5 His caution 2:5
 - D 1 His commands
 - E 1 'Therefore remember therefore from where you have fallen,

⁵⁹ Rev. 2:1 - the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands: This is the only time it is stated that Jesus walks, *peripatēō* (4043) among the lampstands. This is appropriate because this is the only [church](#) from which Jesus threatens to remove its lampstand, *luchnia* (3087), unless it repents (Rev. 2:5) of having lost its first love (Rev. 2:4).

⁶⁰ Rev. 2:2 - deeds: The vanilla "works," *érgon* (2041), used 169X in the NT. Jesus knew their works, (Rev. 2:2), but would urge them to perform the works they had done at the first (Rev. 2:5). He would later commend them that they hated the works of the Nicolaitans (Rev. 2:6), which Jesus also hates. This term is used 20X in this book in Rev. 2:2, 5, 6, 19, 19, 22, 23, 26; 3:1, 2, 8, 15; 9:20; 14:13; 15:3; 16:11; 18:6; 20:12, 13; 22:12.

⁶¹ Rev. 2:2 - toil: *kópos* (2873), in this context, labor, hard work, strenuous exertion of effort. The Ephesians not only served the Lord through their works, but they labored hard at it.

⁶² Rev. 2:2 - perseverance: *hupomonē* (5281), "steadfast adherence to a course of action despite difficulties and testings *perseverance, endurance, fortitude*" (adapted from [Friberg](#)). Etymologically, this noun comes from the verb *hupomonēō* (5278), to "remain under," thus, to "persevere, endure." The noun is used 7X in this book, in Rev. 1:9; 2:2, 3, 19; 3:10; 13:10; 14:12.

⁶³ Rev. 2:2 - apostles: Were these men masquerading as one of the twelve [apostles](#)? Or are they false missionaries / evangelists / [church](#) planters "sent out" by false [churches](#)? Whatever the case, the messenger and through him the [church](#) had enough discernment to detect that these men were both evil and false and to reject their teaching. See the article, "[Do Apostles Exist Today?](#)"

⁶⁴ Rev. 2:4 - left your first love: "love" is *agápē* (26). Christ is chiding them for having lost their initial love for Him. To remedy this He exhorts them to remember from whence they have fallen, repent, and perform the deeds they had at the first (Rev. 2:5). He does not specify which deeds these were, and neither can we. In spite of their many admirable qualities, the Ephesians had left their first love. I am reminded of Jesus' words, "If you love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15, 21; 15:10; 1 John 5:3).

- E 2 and repent ⁶⁵
- E 3 and do the deeds ⁶⁶ you did at first;
- D 2 The consequences for inaction: or else I am coming to you, and will remove your lampstand out of its place ⁶⁷ – unless you repent.
- C 6 His renewed commendation: 'Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, ⁶⁸ which I also hate. 2:6
- C 7 His challenge 2:7
 - D 1 To listen: 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. ⁶⁹
 - D 2 To conquer: To him who overcomes, ⁷⁰ I will grant to eat of the tree

⁶⁵ Rev. 2:5 - repent: the [Aorist Imperative](#) of the verb *metanoëō* (3340), literally, "to perceive afterward," to change one's mind and one's behavior. See "[A Biblical Theology of Repentance](#)."

⁶⁶ Rev. 2:5 - do the deeds you did at first: Literally, "and the first works perform." "Deeds" or "works" is the plural of *érgon* (2041), the same word Christ used in Rev. 2:2 and 2:6. See the footnote for "deeds" at Rev. 2:2 for a complete list of the uses of this word in Revelation.

⁶⁷ Rev. 2:5 - remove your lampstand out of its place: Jesus would shut down the [church](#) as a viable means of shedding light in this dark world. That is a fearsome threat indeed. "Eventually the Ephesian [church](#) passed out of existence, but that did not occur until the eleventh century" ([Constable](#), citing [Henry Barclay Swete](#), p. 28). "The [church](#) that loses its love will soon lose its light, no matter how doctrinally sound it may be" ([Constable](#), quoting [Warren Wiersbe](#), 2:572).

⁶⁸ Rev. 2:7 - Nicolaitans: [Constable](#) comments as follows:

We know little of the "Nicolaitans," who were evidently followers of someone named "Nicolas," perhaps the proselyte from Antioch who was one of "the Seven" (cf. Acts 6:5). Irenaeus, who lived in the late second century, wrote that they were without restraint in their indulgence of the flesh, and practiced fornication and the eating of foods sacrificed to idols.^[131] The word "Nicolaitans" is a transliteration of two Greek words that mean "to conquer" and "people." Consequently, Nicolaitanism has come down through history as typifying any system that seeks to dominate rather than serve people.

⁶⁹ Rev. 2:7 - He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the [churches](#): This refrain occurs at the end of the letter to each [church](#). This admonition is addressed to individuals within the [churches](#) – the opening words appear in the singular. That means that, down through the entire [church age](#), individual Christians are to learn what the Holy Spirit is saying to the [churches](#), profit from what He is saying, and make appropriate adjustments in their thinking and in their behavior. "Let him hear" is the [Aorist Imperative](#) of the common verb *akoúō* (191). This admonition appears in Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22.

⁷⁰ Rev. 2:7 - overcomes: The verb is the [Present Active Participle](#) of *nikáō* (3528), "overcome, defeat, conquer" ([Friberg](#)). Literally, the clause reads, "To the one conquering I will give to him to eat of the tree of life." The promise in 2:7, along with each of the other references to "overcoming," is conditional in the grammatical sense, but not the final sense. There is a sense in which Christ is saying, "If you overcome, I will grant to eat of the tree of life." As such the believer is indeed motivated to conquer. On the other hand, according to 1 John 5:4, 5, "whatever is born of God overcomes the world" and "the one who overcomes the world ... [is] he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God." So in the actual sense, every Christian is by birth an overcomer, or conqueror. As is true countless other times in Scripture, the believer is challenged to make good in practice what is already his by Divine bequeathal. That is always the challenge of the New Testament – "Let your practice match your position!" or, as in the book of Ephesians, "Let your Walk match your Wealth." The Christian life is a life-long struggle against evil and for good. It is an arduous process.

of life,⁷¹ which is in the Paradise of God.'⁷² 2:7

B 2 Christ's Message to the Messenger of the [Church in Smyrna](#): Knowing your tribulation, I ask you not to fear the ten days' tribulation which you will suffer **2:8-11**

C 1 His constituency: "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna⁷³ write: 2:8a

C 2 His characterization of Himself 2:8b

D 1 Eternal in relation to time:⁷⁴ The first and the last,⁷⁵

D 2 Resurrected in relation to life: who was dead, and has come to life,⁷⁶ says this:

C 3 His commendation 2:9

D 1 His awareness of their impoverished suffering: 'I know your tribulation and your poverty'⁷⁷

D 2 His assessment of their actual wealth: '(but you are rich),⁷⁸

D 3 His awareness of the verbal opposition to them: and the blasphemy by those

⁷¹ Rev. 2:7 - tree of life: We saw this tree in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:9; 3:22). It will appear again in [New Jerusalem](#) (Rev. 22:2, 14). It is a literal tree with supernatural powers.

⁷² Rev. 2:7 - the Paradise of God: *parádeisos* (3857), according to Strong, a noun of Oriental origin, traceable, however, to the Hebrew *pardēs* (6508), which, according to [BDB](#), means "park, preserve, enclosed garden, forest." The Greek references (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 12:4; Rev. 2:7) give little content to the meaning of the word, but the Hebrew references are quite illustrative – Neh. 2:8 (forest); Ecc. 2:5 (parks); Song of Sol. 4:13 (orchard). See the Glossary entry on [Paradise](#). See one Visualization of [Paradise / New Jerusalem](#).

⁷³ Rev. 2:8 - Smyrna: "the word Smyrna itself means 'myrrh,' a sweet perfume used in embalming dead bodies, and included in the holy anointing oil used in the Tabernacle worship in the Old Testament (Ex. 30:23). It was also a common perfume and is mentioned as used by the bridegroom in the Song of Solomon 3:6 Likewise in Psalm 45:8, the heavenly Bridegroom is described as using myrrh as perfume The fragrance of Christ as the bridegroom is thus represented typically by the myrrh" (John F. Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* [[TROJC](#)], p. 60). See a [map of Smyrna](#).

⁷⁴ Rev. 2:8 - eternal: These two descriptive phrases ("Eternal in relation to time" and "Resurrected in relation to life" are borrowed from Walvoord, [TROJC](#), p. 60. The two textual phrases refer back to Rev. 1:17-18. Walvoord adds, "The [church](#) at Smyrna is told that the One who was eternal became incarnate and died, a reminder that even the eternal Son of God willingly became subject to the rejection and persecution of man."

⁷⁵ Rev. 2:8 - the first and the last: Christ is referring back to His opening statement to John back in Rev. 1:17.

⁷⁶ Rev. 2:8 - who was dead, and has come to life: Christ is referring back to His opening statement to John back in Rev. 1:18.

⁷⁷ Rev. 2:9 - poverty: Walvoord, [TROJC](#), p. 60: "The word used for 'poverty' (Gr., *ptocheian*) [4432] is the word for abject poverty. They were not just poor (Gr., *penia*) (sic). It may be that they were drawn from a poor class of people, but it is more probable that their extreme poverty is explained by the fact that they had been robbed of their goods in the process of their tribulation and affliction."

⁷⁸ Rev. 2:9 - rich: Cf. James 2:5

- E 1 who say they are Jews and are not,
- E 2 but are a synagogue of Satan.⁷⁹
- C 4 His comfort – His alerting them to coming trials: ‘Do not fear’⁸⁰ what you are about to suffer. 2:10a
- D 1 The devil’s activity: Behold, the devil ⁸¹ is about to cast some of you into prison,
- D 2 God’s purpose: so that you will be tested,⁸²
- D 3 God’s time framework: and you will have tribulation ten days.⁸³
- C 5 His conditional promise 2:10b

⁷⁹ Rev. 2:9 - synagogue of Satan: Alford observes, "These slanderers were in all probability actually Jews by birth, but not (see Rom. 2:28; Matt. 3:9; John 8:33; 2 Cor. 11:22; Phil. 3:4 ff.) in spiritual reality; the same who everywhere, in St. Paul's time and afterwards, were the most active enemies of the Christians" (Alford, Henry, *The Greek New Testament*, IV, 566, as quoted by Walvoord, [TROJC](#), p. 61). J. A. Seiss, *The Apocalypse*, Vol I, p. 158: "When Polycarp was tried and martyred (whom some regard as the angel of the [Church](#) here addressed), we are told that the Jews joined with the heathen in clamoring for the good bishop's destruction, and were the most forward in bringing the fuel for the fire which consumed him. These Jews were blasphemers, in the enmity and contempt which they felt and enacted against Christ and His people; and they were false Jews, and a mere Satanic synagogue, because of that blasphemy."

⁸⁰ Rev. 2:10 - fear: Lit., "Stop being afraid." (Walvoord, [TROJC](#), p. 63).

⁸¹ Rev. 2:10 - devil: It was the devil who would cast them into prison and persecute them. But the devil was only doing that which God permitted to accomplish His purposes, not the devil's!

⁸² Rev. 2:10 - tested: God never tests us in the sense of trying to trick us into sinning. Rather He is endeavoring to build our character!

⁸³ Rev. 2:10 - ten days: Some believe that this refers to the time period of the second and third centuries A. D. W. A. Spurgeon, *The Conquering Christ*, p. 28 (as quoted in Walvoord, [TROJC](#), p. 62): Is it not obvious that the "ten days" of persecution during which Satan would cast some of this [Church](#) into prison, refers to one of the seven church epochs to which the [seven churches](#) correspond? Then the "ten days" of persecution must refer to the ten persecutions of secular history during which great numbers of Christians were imprisoned and slain. Over these martyrs the second death will have no power.

"Walter Scott, who does not hold this view, quotes White in itemizing ten pagan persecutions as follows: The first under Nero, A. D. 54; the second under Domitian, A. D. 81; the third under Trajan A. D. 98; the fourth under Adrian [Hadrian], A. D. 117; the fifth under Septimius Severus, A. D. 193; the sixth under Maximin, A. D. 235; the seventh under Decius, A. D. 249; the eighth under Valerian, A. D. 254; the ninth under Aurelian, A. D. 270; the tenth under Diocletian, A. D. 284 (Walter Scott, *Exposition of the Revelation of Jesus Christ*, p. 72, note, as quoted by Walvoord, [TROJC](#), p. 62).

Walter Scott (p. 69) believes "ten days" refers to a limited period of time. He cites Gen. 24:55; Neh. 5:18; Dan. 1:12; Acts 25:6; Jer. 42:7 as cases in point. Alford (IV, 567) believes the same, and cites Gen. 24:55; Num. 11:19; Dan. 1:12; Num. 14:22; 1 Sam. 1:8; Job 19:3; Acts 25:6. (Both authors cited by Walvoord, [TROJC](#), p. 62.)

Walvoord ([TROJC](#), 63) further suggests that suffering in the lives of Christians may be explained in several ways: (1) The sovereignty of God; (2) Disciplinary (1 Cor. 11:30-32; Heb. 12:3-13); (3) Preventative (2 Cor. 12:7); (4) Educational (Heb. 5:8; Rom. 5:3-5); (5) Testimonial (Acts 9:16).

It is the present writer's view that (1) the messages to the [churches](#) had to have relevance to the particular [church](#) in the day in which it was written, but that (2) the message also has relevance in a broader, prophetic sense to the [churches](#) at large who will read these messages down through the centuries. So there is, as is so often in Scripture, both a near and a far fulfillment.

D 1 The command: Be faithful until death,⁸⁴

D 2 The conditional promise: and I will give you the crown of life.⁸⁵

C 6 His challenge 2:11

D 1 To listen: 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'⁸⁶

D 2 To conquer: He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.'⁸⁷

B 3 His Message to the Messenger of the [Church](#) in Pergamum: Though you did not deny my faith, you must repent of the teaching of Balaam (immorality) and of the Nicolaitans (rule of the people) or I'll war against you **2:12-17**

C 1 His constituency: "And to the angel of the church in Pergamum"⁸⁸ write: 2:12a

C 2 His characterization of Himself: The one who has the sharp two-edged sword⁸⁹ says this: 2:12b

⁸⁴ Rev. 2:11 - faithful until death: Polycarp, when asked to deny Christ, said, "Four score and six years have I served the Lord, and He never wronged me: How then can I blaspheme my King and Savior?" (Walvoord, [TROJC](#), 64, quoting Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, *Commentary*, VI, 662).

⁸⁵ Rev. 2:10 - crown of life: Lit., the crown of the life, meaning the life of God, which is by definition, eternal life. There is a curious situation here in which every believer in Christ is promised eternal life immediately upon faith (John 3:16), but in which faithfulness, in this case, even until death, is required to secure it. The Calvinists would have us believe that eternal life is conditioned only upon simple faith in Christ, and they are right; whereas the Arminians would have us believe that eternal life is conditioned upon our faithfulness, and they are right as well. Herein lies the Calvinist explanation, that the just will persevere to the end. I suppose there are many who thought themselves to believe, but did so half-heartedly or not really at all. Theirs was not a persevering faith, for it never was there at all, really, in the first place. They were the tares sown among the wheat by the enemy, whose character, so apparently identical to the true believers, could never be accurately discovered until the harvest – the judgment at the end of the age (Matt. 13:24-30; 36-43). There is a maxim here: Saving faith is enduring faith.

The crown of the life is not a crown of gold, to be worn as some heavy, gilded hat. It is intangible – it is a crown which consists of the life of God – the eternal life.

⁸⁶ Rev. 2:11 - [churches](#): There is, in each case, a message to the messenger of each individual [church](#). But there is also a broader constituency: He [of any age] who reads the book which contains what the Holy Spirit says to the [churches](#) [plural]. Is this a justification for saying that each message to each [church](#) had relevance for that particular day (the "Historical Interpretation"), but that the messages also have relevance for different eras of the [Church Age](#) (the "Futuristic Interpretation")? Yes.

⁸⁷ Rev. 2:11 - [second death](#): That is, the [lake of fire](#), or eternal death, an oxymoron in itself, but true nonetheless, defined in Rev. 20:6, 14; 21:8.

⁸⁸ Rev. 2:12 - Pergamum: See the [map of Pergamum](#).

⁸⁹ Rev. 2:12- two-edged sword: ([4501 rhomphaia](#), a javelin or long sword often slung over the right shoulder [On-Line Bible]): In the book of Revelation (six appearances), this sword is said to proceed out of Christ's mouth (Rev. 1:16, 19:21). It is used to smite the nations (Rev. 19:15) and to destroy the armies opposing Christ at His return (Rev. 19:21). It apparently symbolizes Christ's spoken word. At Christ's verbal command, men die! The [church](#) at Pergamum is reminded that Christ has this sword (Rev. 2:12) and that the [church](#) must repent or He will use His sword against those among them who promulgate the teachings of Balaam and the Nicolaitans (Rev. 2:14-15). Only in Rev. 6:8 is it used by someone other than by Christ, namely by the rider, "Death," astride the pale or ashen horse. (The only usage outside Revelation is in Luke 2:35, where it is said that a sword shall pierce Mary's soul.)

- C 3 His commendation 2:13
 - D 1 In light of His knowledge of their situation in hostile surroundings: 'I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is;'⁹⁰
 - D 2 With respect to their loyalty
 - E 1 The expression of their loyalty
 - G 1 and you hold fast My name,
 - G 2 and did not deny My faith
 - E 2 The time of their loyalty: even in the days of Antipas,⁹¹ (described as:)
 - G 1 My witness,
 - G 2 My faithful one,
 - G 3 who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.
- C 4 His criticism: 'But I have a few things against you,
 - D 1 Of those who promote the teaching of Balaam: because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam,⁹² who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, 2:14
 - E 1 to eat things sacrificed to idols
 - E 2 and to commit *acts of* immorality.
 - D 2 Of those who promote the teaching of the Nicolaitans: 'So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.'⁹³ 2:15

⁹⁰ Rev. 2:13 - Satan's throne: Possibly a reference to Emperor worship, especially rampant in this city. See [Constable](#).

⁹¹ Rev. 2:13 - Antipas: According to [Constable](#), quoting [Frederick A. Tatford](#), *The Patmos Letters*, p. 75, "Antipas is said to have been a dentist and a physician, but the Aesculapiades suspected that he was propagating Christianity secretly and they accused him of disloyalty to Caesar. He was condemned to death and was shut up in a brazen (or copper) bull, which was then heated until it was red-hot."

⁹² Rev. 2:14 - the teaching of Balaam: According to [Constable](#),

Balaam told Balak that he could overcome the Israelites if he would involve them in Moabite religious feasts that included sacred prostitution (Num. 25). This would render them unfaithful to God and consequently subject to His discipline. The pagans in Pergamum, likewise, were evidently encouraging the Christians to join in their pagan feasts, and the sexual immorality that accompanied those feasts. By thus participating, some in the [church](#) had given tacit approval to Balaam's teaching.

Jesus identifies the particular sins of the Balaam doctrine as eating things sacrificed to idols and committing acts of immorality (Rev. 2:14).

⁹³ Rev. 2:15 - the teaching of the Nicolaitans: According to [Constable](#), "The 'Nicolaitans' evidently regarded these sins as acceptable, under the pretense of Christian liberty (cf. v. 6)."

C 5 His caution 2:16

D 1 His command: 'Therefore repent;

D 2 His enforcement: or else I am coming to **you** quickly, and I will make war against **them** with the sword of My mouth.⁹⁴

C 6 His challenge 2:17

D 1 To listen: 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

D 2 To conquer: To him who overcomes,⁹⁵

E 1 to him I will give *some* of the hidden manna,⁹⁶

E 2 and I will give him a white stone,⁹⁷

E 3 and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.'

B 4 His Message to the Messenger of the [Church](#) in Thyatira: Knowing your good works, carry on, yet I warn you not to tolerate the Jezebel-like "prophetess" among you, whom I will dispose of for her immorality **2:18-29**

C 1 His constituency: "And to the angel of the church in Thyatira⁹⁸ write: 2:18a

C 2 His characterization of Himself 2:18b

D 1 The Son of God,

D 2 who has eyes like a flame of fire,⁹⁹

⁹⁴ Rev. 2:16 - make war against them with the sword of my mouth: If they would not repent, Christ would decree hardship against them. That might involve sickness or even physical death. See the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11), along with the sickness and premature deaths of the Corinthian believers who were partaking unworthily of the Lord's table (1 Cor. 11:27-32).

⁹⁵ Rev. 2:17 - overcomes: literally, "to the one conquering, to him I will give..." where "conquering" is the [Present Active Participle](#) of *nikáō* (3528).

⁹⁶ Rev. 2:17 - hidden manna: *mánna* (3131) – most likely a reference to Christ Himself, the true bread from heaven (John 6:30-35). See [Constable](#).

⁹⁷ Rev. 2:17 - white stone: [Constable](#), quoting Frederick A. Tatford, [The Patmos Letters](#), p. 82, states, "A *tesseron* was, "... given to those who were invited to partake, within the precincts of the temple [at Pergamum], of the sacred feast, which naturally consisted only of meats offered to the idol. That stone bore the secret name of the deity represented by the idol and the name was known only to the recipient."

⁹⁸ Rev. 2:18 - Thyatira: *Thuáteira* (2363). See the [map](#).

⁹⁹ Rev. 2:18 - eyes like a flame of fire: This matches the description of Christ that John described in Rev. 1:14.

- D 3 and His feet are like burnished bronze,¹⁰⁰ says this:
- C 3 His commendation 2:19
 - D 1 'I know your deeds,
 - D 2 and your love
 - D 3 and faith
 - D 4 and service
 - D 5 and perseverance,
 - D 6 and that your deeds of late are greater than at first.¹⁰¹
- C 4 His criticism – their tolerance of Jezebel: 'But I have *this* against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel,¹⁰² (2:20a) 2:20-23
 - D 1 The sins of Jezebel 2:20
 - E 1 Her false claim of authority: who calls herself a prophetess,¹⁰³
 - E 2 Her seduction of Christ's bond-servants
 - G 1 Her calculating influence: and she teaches¹⁰⁴ and leads My bond-servants astray

¹⁰⁰ Rev. 2:18 - feet ... like burnished bronze: This matches the description of Christ that John described in Rev. 1:15.

¹⁰¹ Rev. 2:19 - your deeds of late are greater than at first: Most of the descriptions of the [church](#) at Thyatira are nearly identical to those of Ephesus (Rev. 2:2-3). Unlike Ephesus, however (Rev. 2:4-5), this [church's](#) deeds had not diminished, but had increased, evidently signifying that she had not left her first love.

¹⁰² Rev. 2:20-23 - Jezebel. Jezebel is probably not her real name, but a code-name given to her by Christ to describe whom she is like. The real Jezebel introduced Baal worship into Israel (1 Kings 16:30-32) and killed as many of God's prophets as she could (1 Kings 18:4). This woman in Thyatira first of all set herself up as an authority from God (she called herself a prophetess, Rev. 2:20). Second, she led many people of the Thyatira [church](#) into idolatry (Rev. 2:20), the worshiping of a god or gods other than Yahweh and His Christ. The references to committing immorality (*porneûō*, [4203](#)) (Rev. 2:20); immorality (KJV - fornication; Gr. - *porneia*, [4202](#)) (Rev. 2:21); and committing adultery (*moicheûō*, [3431](#)) (Rev. 2:22) may mean only spiritual fornication and adultery. However, Walvoord believes the idolatry referred to included immorality as part of the cultic worship (John F. Walvoord, [TROJC](#), 73-74). In addition, the repeated uses of such terms as immorality, adultery, and bed (*klinē*, [2825](#), Rev. 2:22) indicate that literal, as well as spiritual immorality is in view.

¹⁰³ Rev. 2:20 - prophetess: The [Accusative Feminine](#) of *prophētis* ([4398](#)), a woman who either receives revelation from God, or in the case of Jezebel, falsely claims to receive revelation from God, and conveys this information to others. It is used only twice in the NT. The first time was of the true prophetess Anna, a devout widow who lived in the temple. She witnessed the infant [Messiah](#) (Luke 2:36-38). The only other instance is of this "Jezebel." She was a false prophetess (Rev. 2:20). The much more common noun is *prophētēs* ([4396](#)), appearing 144X in the NT and always in the [Masculine](#) Gender. It is used 8X in Revelation, and always in this book refers to true [prophets](#). See the article, "[Do Prophets Exist Today?](#)"

¹⁰⁴ Rev. 2:20 - she teaches: the [Present](#) tense of the verb *didáskō* ([1321](#)), "to teach, instruct" ([Friberg](#)). People who call themselves prophets or prophetesses are false, and they deliberately lead others astray. They are on a teaching mission. They deliberately lead others astray.

- G 2 Their immorality: so that they commit *acts of* immorality¹⁰⁵
- G 3 Their idolatry: and eat things sacrificed to idols.
- D 2 The unrequited forbearance of Christ 2:21
 - E 1 His forbearance: 'And I gave her time to repent,
 - E 2 Her unrepentance: and she does not want to repent of her immorality.¹⁰⁶
- D 3 The judgment of Christ 2:22-23
 - E 1 Sickness for Jezebel: 'Behold, I will throw her upon a bed of *sickness*,¹⁰⁷ 2:22a
 - E 2 For her followers 2:22b-23
 - G 1 Great tribulation: and those who commit adultery¹⁰⁸ with her into great tribulation,¹⁰⁹ unless they repent of her deeds. 2:22b
 - G 2 Death: 'And I will kill¹¹⁰ her children¹¹¹ with

¹⁰⁵ Rev. 2:20 - they commit *acts of* immorality: the [Aorist Active Infinitive](#) of *porneúō* (4203). This was evidently part of the cultic worship perhaps requisite for participating in the trade guilds (so [Constable](#)). Christians were trying to marry Christianity with a cultic religion that included debauchery. This woman had powerful influence. She must have been quite persuasive. I have known of otherwise solid Christians who have fallen under the spell of a false teacher.

¹⁰⁶ Rev. 2:21 - immorality: This is the noun *porneia* (4202), translated “fornication” by KJV, usually “immorality” by [NASB](#). This seems to be a broad range of sexual misbehavior. The noun *moicheia* (3430), “adultery,” is much more specific, indicating illicit sex by a married person. The two nouns are distinguished in Matt. 15:19; Mark 7:21. Elsewhere *moicheia* appears only in John 8:3. The verb counterpart of *moicheia* is *moicheúō* (3431), “committing adultery,” occurring more frequently, but in Revelation, only in Rev. 2:22. This woman, evidently named “Jezebel” in code, persisted in her immorality. She refused to repent. It was part of her practice and her power over others.

¹⁰⁷ Rev. 2:22 - bed of *sickness*: Literally, Christ would throw her on a bed (*klinē*, 2825). She and her followers used a bed for immorality, but there are ominous overtones connected with this bed – overtones of tribulation (Rev. 2:22) and death (Rev. 2:23), perhaps some kind of disease or pestilence.

¹⁰⁸ Rev. 2:22 - commit adultery with her: literally, “the ones committing adultery with her,” where the verb is the [Present Active Participle](#) of *moicheúō* (3431). The Christians involved with her were married and continually and actively being unfaithful to their spouses. “With her” ... it is entirely possible that she was bedding down different men in the [church](#). A sordid mess.

¹⁰⁹ Rev. 2:22 - great tribulation: I do not believe this refers to the [Great Tribulation](#), but rather to a great deal of trouble that these derelict believers would face. The noun is *thlipsis* (2347). It means “affliction, oppression, trouble, tribulation, distress” (adapted from [Friberg](#)).

¹¹⁰ Rev. 2:23 - I will kill: The verb is the [Future](#) of *apokteinō* (615). This verb is almost always translated by [NASB](#) as some form of the verb “kill,” and occasionally, “put to death.”

¹¹¹ Rev. 2:23 - her children: This probably does not refer to her biological children, but to the Christians in Thyatira who had been seduced by her actions and her false teaching. [Constable](#) calls them her “spiritual” children.

pestilence,¹¹² 2:23a

E 3 The result of the judgment: and all the churches will know that I am He who [searches the minds and hearts](#); 2:23b

E 4 The thoroughness of the judgment: and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.¹¹³

C 5 His consolation 2:24

D 1 His targeted audience

E 1 'But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching,¹¹⁴

E 2 who have not known the deep things of Satan,¹¹⁵ as they call them—

D 2 His reprieve: I place no other burden on you.

C 6 His caution: 'Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come.¹¹⁶ 2:25

C 7 His challenge 2:26-29

D 1 To conquer 2:26-28

E 1 The definition of conquering 2:26a

¹¹² Rev. 2:23 pestilence (NAS). AV = death (*thanatos*). *thanatos* ([2288](#)) is the normal Greek word for death. The noun is used 120X. The [NASB](#) translates it “death” 117X; “pestilence” 2X; and “fatal” 1X (Rev. 13:3). Rarely, the context may indicate some kind of deadly sickness or pestilence (Rev. 2:23; esp. Rev. 6:8). Translating this clause, “I will kill her children with death” seems redundant. Therefore the word “death” may infer a dreaded disease or illness from which they would not recover.

¹¹³ Rev. 2:23 - I am He who searches the minds and the hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds: This is a direct quotation from Jer. 17:10. The verse immediately preceding is the sad commentary on fallen human nature, “The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?” (Jer. 17:9). This is a sad commentary on the hearts and conduct of some in Thyatira.

¹¹⁴ Rev. 2:24 - the rest in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching: Praise God, not all in the [Church](#) of Thyatira had been seduced by the teaching and practice of “Jezebel.” The word “teaching” is *didachē* ([1322](#)). It is used 30X in the NT. NASB translates it “teaching(s)” 28X and “instruction” 2X, in 2 Tim. 4:2 and Heb. 6:2. Jezebel, who called herself a “prophetess,” was definitely on a teaching mission (Rev. 2:20). Those who hold aberrant views feel compelled to teach others to follow them. Thankfully, not all Christians are seduced by them.

¹¹⁵ Rev. 2:24 - who have not known the deep things of Satan: [Constable](#), quoting [William Barclay](#), The Revelation of John, 1:137:

“Those who knew the deep things of Satan were those who had plumbed evil to its depths deliberately in order to experience it [cf. 1 Cor. 2:10; Rom. 11:33; Eph. 3:18]. This has got some kind of remote parallel in the old idea that it is necessary for a young man to sow his wild oats. Jezebel may well have been teaching that it was a duty to sin.”

¹¹⁶ Rev. 2:25 - until I come: This is a reference to the [return of Christ](#) for His [Church](#) – that which we call the [Rapture](#). The best understanding of this aspect of Christ’s return is the [Pre-Tribulation Rapture](#).

- G 1 'He who overcomes,'¹¹⁷
- G 2 and he who keeps My deeds until the end,¹¹⁸
- E 2 The reward for conquering 2:26b-27
 - G 1 International authority: TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; 2:26b
 - G 2 Total shepherding authority: AND HE SHALL RULE¹¹⁹ THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, 2:27
 - G 3 Delegated authority: as I also have received *authority* from My Father;
 - G 4 Supported authority: and I will give him the morning star.¹²⁰ 2:28
- D 2 To listen: 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.' 2:29
- B 5 Christ's Message to the Messenger of the [Church](#) in Sardis:** Your deeds are incomplete; unless you repent, I will come on you as a thief **3:1-6**
 - C 1 His constituency: "To the angel¹²¹ of the church in Sardis write: 3:1a
 - C 2 His characterization of Himself: He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: 3:1b
 - C 3 His empty commendation 3:1c
 - D 1 Their reputation for vibrancy: 'I know your deeds, that you have a

¹¹⁷ Rev. 2:26 - He who overcomes: Literally, "And the one conquering and the one keeping until the end My works – I will give to him authority over the nations." "The one conquering" is the [Nominative Masculine Singular Present Active Participle](#) of the verb *nikáo* ([3528](#)).

¹¹⁸ Rev. 2:26 "until the end" - a classic example of the Calvinistic position "the perseverance of the saints." True believers will persevere until the end.

¹¹⁹ Rev. 2:27 rule - lit., to shepherd ([4165](#) *poimaino*)

¹²⁰ Rev. 2:28 morning star - perhaps a reference to Christ Himself, as one whose return to the earth after the dark night of sordid human history culminating in the [Great Tribulation](#) brings relief and joy at the dawn of the new [millennium](#). As the [Church Age](#) believers help govern the nations of the earth, Christ's presence on earth will be a guiding light of support, security and hope in their important and challenging task (note Rev. 20:7-9). (Cf. also [RSB](#) note and Walvoord, [TROJC](#), p. 77.)

¹²¹ Rev. 3:1 - angel: Most of the lecture given here is directed, not to the [church](#) but to the messenger! The messenger is indicted for being alive in name only, for not being watchful, for having incomplete works. There are a few names in Sardis who are worthy, and they will walk with Jesus in white, but apparently the messenger is not presently one of those! If anyone conquers (the messenger among them) he, like them, will be given white garments, and Jesus will confess his name before His Father and His messengers!

- name ¹²² that you are alive,
- D 2 Their actual lifelessness: but you are dead.
- D 3 His criticism 3:2
- D 4 His commands
 - E 1 'Wake up,
 - E 2 and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die;
- D 5 His dire assessment: for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God.
- C 4 His caution 3:3
 - D 1 His commands
 - E 1 'So remember what you have received and heard;
 - E 2 and keep *it*,
 - E 3 and repent.
 - D 2 The consequences for inaction: Therefore if you do not wake up,
 - E 1 I will come like a thief,
 - E 2 and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.
- C 5 His consolation 3:4
 - D 1 Their limited purity: 'But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments;
 - D 2 Their reward of pure fellowship: and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.
- C 6 His challenge 3:5-6
 - D 1 To conquer: 'He who overcomes 3:5
 - E 1 will thus be clothed in white garments;

¹²² Rev. 3:1 - name: i.e. reputation. There is an interplay in this passage between the words *messenger*, *white*, and *name*. The **messenger** has a **name** with regard to his works that he lives, but he is really dead. There are a few **names** in Sardis who are worthy (3:4), and they will walk with Jesus in **white**. If the messenger (and anyone else) conquers, he also will receive **white** garments, and his **name** will not be blotted out of the [book of life](#), and Jesus will confess his **name** before His Father and His **messengers**.

E 2 and I will not erase his name from the book of life,¹²³

E 3 and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

D 2 To listen: 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.' 3:6

B 6 Christ's Message to the Messenger of the [Church](#) in Philadelphia: I have set before you an unshuttable door of service and I will keep you from the [tribulation](#) which is to try the whole earth **3:7-13**

C 1 His constituency: "And to the angel¹²⁴ of the church in Philadelphia write: 3:7a

C 2 His characterization of Himself 3:7b

D 1 As to character

E 1 He who is holy,

E 2 who is true,

D 2 As to authority¹²⁵

E 1 who has the key of David,

E 2 Permitting at will: who opens and no one will shut,

E 3 Preventing at will: and who shuts and no one opens, says this:

¹²³ Rev. 3:5 I will not erase his name from the [book of life](#); This is the promise made the one overcoming, or conquering. This is not a threat to a believer's eternal security. Eternal life (John 3:16) is by definition that which endures into the ages. Overcoming is by statement a trait of those who are born of God by believing that Jesus is the Son of God (1 John 5:4-5). Those who are genuinely believers (not merely those who profess to believe but do not) will persevere in their faith (John 10:27-29; Romans 8:28-30).

"The Book of Deeds and the [Book of Life](#) are distinguished in Rev 20:12 . . . The motif of having one's name erased from, or blotted out of, the [Book of Life](#) is a metaphor for judgment (Exod 32:32-33; Ps 69:27-28; . . .), based on the notion of expulsion or disenfranchisement from the record of citizenship. Originally, however, to be blotted out of the [Book of Life](#) meant 'to die' (Exod 32:32-33; Ps 69:27-28; Isa 4:3)" (David E. Aune, [Revelation 1-5](#), p. 224, quoted by [Constable](#)).

Another possibility is that all those who live have their names written in the [book of life](#). When they die without trusting in Christ, their names are expunged (see John F. Walvoord, [TROJC](#), p.82; see also Warren Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, 2:577-78).

I prefer the view that the [Book of Life](#) is a book, presumably in heaven, in which are recorded the names of all who have trusted or who will one day trust in God and His [Messiah](#), Jesus.

¹²⁴ Rev. 3:7 - angel (messenger): The entire message is directed to the messenger of the [church](#). All the verbs are singular except for those which describe the pseudo Jews of the synagogue of Satan in 3:9 and the reference to those dwelling upon the earth in 3:10.

¹²⁵ Rev. 3:7 key of David. A reference to Jesus' future reign as the official Davidic King in the [Millennial Kingdom](#). Though His reign in that sense is still future, Jesus already has the key and already is empowering people to do His will and preventing them from transgressing it. His authority transcends the [Millennial Kingdom](#)! As this passage goes on to point out, He is using the key of David to empower the [church](#) of Philadelphia through an open door of service. This is imagery borrowed from Isa. 22:22.

- C 3 His commendation 3:8-9
 - D 1 His awareness of his service: 'I know your deeds. 3:8a
 - D 2 His promises 3:8b-9
 - E 1 An open door of service 3:8b
 - G 1 The promise of service: Behold, I have put before you an open door
 - G 2 The guarantee of service: which no one can shut,
 - G 3 His qualifications for service
 - H 1 Power: because you have a little power,
 - H 2 Obedience: and have kept My word,
 - H 3 Loyalty: and have not denied My name.
 - E 2 Judgment upon his opponents 3:9
 - G 1 The identity of his opponents
 - H 1 Their true identity: 'Behold, I will cause *those* of the synagogue of Satan,
 - H 2 Their pseudo identity: who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—
 - G 2 The sentence for his opponents
 - H 1 Humility toward the messenger: I will make them come and bow down at your feet,
 - H 2 Realization of Christ's love for the messenger: and make them know that I have loved you.
- C 4 His consolation 3:10
 - D 1 His qualification – persevering obedience to Jesus: 'Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, (RSV: Because you have kept my word of patient endurance ...)
 - D 2 His promise from Jesus – preservation from the [Great Tribulation](#): I also will keep you from the hour of testing,¹²⁶

¹²⁶ Rev. 3:10 - keep you from the hour of testing: This promise to the [church](#) at Philadelphia means that Christ would preserve the [church](#) from a specific future trial (*peirasmos*, 3986). There is, however, a double reference. The language goes beyond a merely localized trial. I believe Christ also promises He will preserve the Philadelphian [church](#), the entire [Church](#) that exists at the end of the [Church Age](#), "from *the* hour of *the* trouble, *the one* coming upon *the entire* inhabited earth, to test *the ones dwelling upon the earth*" (my literal translation, emphasis mine). It is for this reason that I am justified, in the outline, to speak of the [Great Tribulation](#). This is a monumental, unprecedented, world-wide [Tribulation](#), the same one of which Jesus spoke (Matthew 24:21-22).

- E 1 The extent of the [Great Tribulation](#): that *hour* which is about to come upon the whole world,
- E 2 The purpose of the [Great Tribulation](#): to test those who dwell on the earth.¹²⁷
- C 5 His caution 3:11
 - D 1 His promised soon return: 'I am coming quickly';¹²⁸
 - D 2 His charge to retain: hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown.
- C 6 His challenge 3:12-13
 - D 1 To conquer 3:12
 - E 1 The condition: 'He who overcomes,
 - E 2 The promises
 - G 1 Prominence: I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God,
 - G 2 Security: and he will not go out from it anymore;
 - G 3 Identity: and I will write on him
 - H 1 the name of My God,
 - H 2 and the name of the city of My God,
 - J 1 the new Jerusalem,¹²⁹

The [Church](#) will be preserved from the [Great Tribulation](#), because Christ comes to retrieve His [Church](#) from the world in a [pre-tribulation rapture](#) (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). For another allusion to a [pre-tribulation rapture](#) in Revelation, see the note on 4:1.

¹²⁷ Rev. 3:10 - to test those that dwell on the earth: This is the purpose of the [Great Tribulation](#) in the first part of this verse – it is, literally, “to test the ones dwelling upon the earth.” “Dwelling” is the [Present Active Participle](#) of the verb *katoikéō* (2730). In the book of Revelation this phrase is code for unbelievers – they are settled down and at home on the earth, whereas Christians are citizens of the Kingdom of the Heavens. Our destination is New Jerusalem. The purpose of the [Tribulation](#) is to test unbelievers, not to test believers! This phrase is used in Revelation in the following places: Rev. 3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:8, 12, 14; 17:2, 8. See the Glossary Item “[Earth-Dwellers](#).”

¹²⁸ Rev. 3:11 - I am coming quickly: In the context, this is the third factor demonstrating a [Pre-Tribulation Rapture](#) – Jesus is coming quickly! Let me summarize the factors emphasizing a [Pre-Tribulation Rapture](#): (1) The [Church](#) will not go through the [Tribulation](#) because Jesus will keep us from the hour of testing that is to come upon the whole world (Rev. 3:10). (2) The [Church](#) will not go through the [Tribulation](#) because the purpose of the [Tribulation](#) is to test “[Earth-Dwellers](#),” not Christians (Rev. 3:10). (3) The [Church](#) will not go through the [Tribulation](#) because Jesus is coming quickly. This fits in best with a [Pre-Tribulation Rapture](#), not a [Mid-Tributional](#) or [Pre-Wrath](#) or [Post-Tributional Rapture](#) (Rev. 3:11).

¹²⁹ Rev. 3:12 - new Jerusalem: This is the first of two references to [New Jerusalem](#) in Revelation, the other being in 21:2. 21:10 also uses similar language, although the city is there designated *holy*, not *new*. Although the designation *new Jerusalem* occurs only twice, most of chapter 21 and the first part of chapter 22 describe this prodigious city! In all three references, [New](#) (or holy) [Jerusalem](#) is described as coming down out of heaven

J 2 which comes down out of heaven
 from My God,

H 3 and My new name.

D 2 To listen: 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to
 the churches.' 3:13

B 7 Christ's Message to the Messenger of the Church in Laodicea: I warn you, who
 are lukewarm, to invite me into your lives, lest I spit you out **3:14-22**

C 1 His constituency: "To the angel of the church in Laodicea ¹³⁰ write: 3:14a

C 2 His characterization of Himself 3:14b

D 1 The Amen,

D 2 the faithful and true Witness,

D 3 the Beginning of the creation of God, says this:

C 3 His empty commendation 3:15

D 1 Christ's awareness: 'I know your deeds,

D 2 Their tepid condition: that you are neither cold nor hot;

D 3 Christ's desire: I wish that you were cold or hot.

C 4 His caustic criticism 3:16

D 1 His assessment: 'So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor
 cold,

D 2 His rejection: I will spit you out of My mouth.

C 5 His caution 3:17-19

D 1 His analysis 3:17

E 1 Their false claims: 'Because you say,

G 1 "I am rich,

from God. Several observations are in order: (1) New Jerusalem is *not* heaven, for it comes down *out of* heaven. (2) New Jerusalem is said twice to be in the process (present tense) of coming down out of heaven from God. My hypothesis is, therefore, that John is describing what we would call a satellite city orbiting the (new) earth. It never lands upon earth. (3) Our future destination as Church saints is not heaven, but New Jerusalem, orbiting New Earth in New Heaven, what we would call New Universe (21:1), for that is where God the Father and God the Son will be for eternity (21:3, 22-23; 22:1, 3-5)!

¹³⁰ Rev. 3:14 - church in Laodicea: Though the message to Laodicea applied to that church in that day, a prophetic view of the church would also suggest that it may refer to the organized, visible church left behind at the Rapture, when Christ comes to claim those who truly believe in Him (John 14:1-6; 1 Cor. 15:51-53; 1 Thess. 4:13-18). Christ describes this church as bankrupt (3:17), needing to invite Him in (3:20)!

- G 2 and have become wealthy,
 - G 3 and have need of nothing,"
 - E 2 Their ignorance of their pathetic condition: and you do not know that you are
 - G 1 wretched
 - G 2 and miserable
 - G 3 and poor
 - G 4 and blind
 - G 5 and naked,
- D 2 His counsel: I advise you to buy from Me 3:18
 - E 1 To become truly wealthy
 - G 1 The commodity: gold refined by fire
 - G 2 The result: so that you may become rich,
 - E 2 To become suitably clothed
 - G 1 The garments: and white garments ¹³¹
 - G 2 The result
 - H 1 so that you may clothe yourself,
 - H 2 and *that* the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed;
 - E 3 To become truly seeing
 - G 1 The medication: and eye salve to anoint your eyes
 - G 2 The result: so that you may see.
- D 3 His policy: 'Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; 3:19a
- D 4 His command: therefore be zealous and repent. 3:19b
- C 6 His invitation 3:20
 - D 1 His initiative: 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock;

¹³¹ Rev. 3:18 - white garments. A reference to holiness. Cf. Rev. 3:4-5; 4:4; 6:11; 7:9, 13-14; 19:7-8, 11, 14. The word in 19:8 describing the fine linen worn by the saints is [2986](#) *lampros* - bright, shining. Elsewhere in these passages, the word is [3022](#) *leukos*, white, and in some cases dazzling white.

D 2 His condition: if anyone hears My voice and opens the door,¹³²

D 3 His promise of fellowship: I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.

C 7 His challenge 3:21-22

D 1 To conquer 3:21

E 1 His condition: 'He who overcomes,

E 2 His promise of authority: I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne,

E 3 His example: as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

D 2 To listen: 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'" 3:22

A 3 THAT WHICH SHALL BE IN THE FUTURE 4 - 22

B 1 John's Upward Call to Heaven (Representing the [Rapture](#)—the upward call of the [Church](#) to Heaven, cf. 1 Thess. 4:13-18) **4 - 5**

C 1 The invitation of John into heaven to view what would take place "after these things" 4:1

D 1 The open door in heaven: After these things I looked, and behold, a door *standing* open in heaven,

D 2 The trumpet-like message: and the first voice which I had heard, like *the sound* of a trumpet speaking with me, said,

E 1 To ascend: "Come up here,"¹³³

E 2 To be shown: and I will show you what must take place after these things."

C 2 The heavenly worship around the throne of the Creator God 4:2-11

D 1 His transportation to the throne in heaven 4:2

¹³² Rev. 3:20 - opens the door: Jesus is speaking to a formalistic [church](#) that is blind to the truth and doesn't even know it. These people are going through the motions of worship, but they have excluded Jesus. Jesus stands at the heart's door of every person in this world, patiently knocking, seeking entrance. He will not force Himself upon us. But if we open the door of our lives and allow Him access, He has promised, on His good word, that He will enter our lives and have intimate fellowship with us. Will you, the reader, permit Jesus to enter your life?

¹³³ Rev. 4:1 - Come up here: I believe this upward call of John to heaven in 4:1 is symbolic of the upward call of the [Church](#) into Christ's presence prior to the start of the [Tribulation](#). This event is spoken of elsewhere in Scripture (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18), and is commonly known as the [Rapture](#). It is problematic for the pre-millennial, [pre-tribulation rapture](#) position that there is no *explicit* reference to a pre-tribulation translation of living saints into heavenly bodies ([rapture](#)) at this juncture. (In fairness, it is equally true, however, that there is no *explicit* mid-tribulation or post-tribulation translation of living saints into heavenly bodies anywhere else in the book of Revelation, either.) There are, however, implicit references to a [pretribulation rapture](#) in Revelation, and this is one of them, Rev. 3:10 being another (see the note there).

- E 1 The Mode of his transportation: Immediately I was in the Spirit; 4:2a
- E 2 His observation of a throne: and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, 4:2b
- D 2 His description of the One sitting upon the throne 4:2c-3a
 - E 1 His observation of the One on the throne: and One sitting on the throne. 4:2c
 - E 2 His description of the One on the throne: And He who was sitting *was* like a jasper stone and a sardius ¹³⁴ in appearance; 4:3a
- D 3 His description of that which surrounded the throne 4:3b-8a
 - E 1 A rainbow: and *there was* a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance. 4:3b
 - E 2 Twenty-four elders 4:4
 - G 1 The authority of the elders: Around the throne *were* twenty-four thrones;
 - G 2 The number of the elders: and upon the thrones *I saw* twenty-four elders sitting, ¹³⁵
 - G 3 The apparel of the elders
 - H 1 clothed in white garments,
 - H 2 and golden crowns on their heads.
 - E 3 An electric storm 4:5a
 - G 1 Out from the throne come flashes of lightning
 - G 2 and sounds and peals of thunder.
 - E 4 Seven lamps of fire 4:5b

¹³⁴ Rev. 4:3 - jasper ... sardius: The One sitting on the throne is evidently God. John accurately describes what He sees, but He repeatedly uses words such as like or as. In what way God resembles a jasper or sardius stone it is impossible to state with certainty, though many have attempted.

¹³⁵ Rev. 4:4 - twenty four elders: The elders are, I believe, human beings who have been selected by God to be representatives of those humans who have been chosen to live in the earth's Capital City, [New Jerusalem](#). Why twenty four? The text does not state why. My best guess is that twelve elders represent Israel, and twelve represent the [Church](#). Other redeemed human beings from among the earth's nations will make their home on the [New Earth](#) (see notes on 21:24, 26). Those who live on [New Earth](#) are not sub-standard saints, while those who inhabit [New Jerusalem](#) are not more holy, but they are more privileged, not because of any work on their part, but because of the gracious, unmerited choice of God. God chose Israel as His special nation (Exodus 19:3-6), and God chose a finite number of people from among Israel and the nations to be His special assembly (*ekklesia*, [1577](#)) usually translated [church](#), the Body (1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:14-18; 3:6; 4:4, 12-16; 5:23, 30) and Bride (Rev. 19:7; 21:9) of Christ.

- G 1 Their description: And *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne,
- G 2 Their significance: which are the seven Spirits of God;
- E 5 A sea of glass: and before the throne *there was something* like a sea ¹³⁶ of glass, like crystal; 4:6a
- E 6 Four living creatures 4:6b-8a
 - G 1 The placement of the creatures 4:6b
 - H 1 and in the center
 - H 2 and around the throne,
 - G 2 The number and essence of the creatures: four living creatures ¹³⁷
 - G 3 The awareness of the creatures: full of eyes in front and behind.
 - G 4 The appearance of each of the creatures 4:7
 - H 1 The first creature *was* like a lion, ¹³⁸
 - H 2 and the second creature like a calf,
 - H 3 and the third creature had a face like that of a man,
 - H 4 and the fourth creature *was* like a flying

¹³⁶ Rev. 4:6 - sea ([2281](#), *thalassa*). Any large body of water, be it the Sea of Galilee, the Red Sea, or the Mediterranean, etc. In heaven, the contents of the sea was crystal-like glass, not water. In heaven, it appears there are many phenomena unknown to man on earth!

¹³⁷ Rev. 4:6 - living creatures - ([2226](#), *zō'on*, a noun, living beings, from [2198](#) *záō*, verb, to live): *Zō'on* normally refers to animals, as in Heb. 13:11, 2 Pet. 2:12, and Jude 1:10. In the latter two passages, the adjective ([249](#)) *alogos*, meaning "without speech," hence, without logic or reason, is added to better fit the connotation. Obviously, animals cannot talk, hence they cannot reason on any level approaching the ability of man. However, these animals, or living creatures in Revelation are an entirely different order of beings. They are not man and they are not stated to be angel ([32](#) *aggelos*). In fact they are repeatedly portrayed as being in a different category than angels (Rev. 5:11; 7:11; 15:7). The first was like a lion, the second like a calf, the third had a face like that of a man, the fourth like a flying eagle (4:7). In that sense they closely parallel the cherubim of Ezekiel 1:10; 10:14-15. They have innumerable eyes (Rev. 4:6), which parallels the presence of many eyes in the rims of the wheels and on the bodies of the cherubim in Ezek. (Ezek. 1:18; 10:12), and they can reason and speak (Rev. 4:8, etc.). They have a moral / spiritual sense, recognizing God and His worth, and they feel compelled to fall down before Him continually and worship, verbally ascribing to Him His worth and greatness (4:8; 5:8; 19:4)! The living creatures invite John to view the results of the breaking of successive seals (6:1, 3, 5, 7), and one of them gives seven bowls of God's wrath to seven angels (15:7) to pour out upon the earth. It is my belief that these four living creatures represent either a high order of angels or an exceedingly high, intelligent class of animals unknown on earth. If neither of these is true, then they belong to a class of beings unknown anywhere else but in heaven.

¹³⁸ Rev. 4:7 - lion...calf...man...eagle: There seems to be a correlation between these four living beings and the beings that Ezekiel saw in 1:10, identified as cherubim in 10:14-15.

eagle.

G 5 The mobility and awareness of the creatures 4:8a

H 1 And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings,¹³⁹

H 2 are full of eyes around and within;

D 4 The praise of the One upon the throne 4:8b-11

E 1 From the four living creatures 4:8b-9

G 1 The frequency of their praise: and day and night they do not cease to say, 4:8b

G 2 The content of their praise

H 1 His separateness: "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY ¹⁴⁰
IS THE LORD GOD,

H 2 His power: THE ALMIGHTY,

H 3 His eternity: WHO WAS AND WHO IS
AND WHO IS TO COME." ¹⁴¹

G 3 The concomitant of their praise: And when the living creatures 4:9

H 1 (Its content): give glory and honor and thanks

H 2 (Its focus)

J 1 His authority: to Him who sits on the throne,

J 2 His eternity: to Him who lives forever and ever,

E 2 From the twenty-four elders 4:10-11

G 1 Their humility: the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, 4:10

¹³⁹ Rev. 4:8 - six wings: The six wings of these four beings correspond with the six wings of the seraphim Isaiah saw (Isa. 6:1-6). The data in Rev. 4:7, 8 seem to suggest that these beings may be a high order of angels. As previously noted, however, they have a different name: *zō'on* (2226, living being or animal) versus *àngelos* (32, angel or messenger) and they are distinguished from angels (5:11; 7:11; 15:7).

¹⁴⁰ Rev. 4:8 - Holy, Holy, Holy: This tri-fold utterance of the Holiness of God is exactly what the seraphim in Isaiah 6:3 exclaimed!

¹⁴¹ Rev. 4:8 - was, is, is to come: This is one of the most powerful statements of the Eternity of God, coupled together with the following phrase in Rev. 4:9, "to Him who lives forever and ever!"

- G 2 Their worship: and will worship Him who lives forever and ever,
- G 3 Their submission: and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying,¹⁴²
- G 4 The content of their praise 4:11
 - H 1 Their acknowledgment of His praise-worthiness
 - J 1 Worthiness: "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God,
 - J 2 Praise: to receive glory and honor and power;
 - H 2 Their acknowledgment of His creatorship
 - J 1 The fact of His creation: for You created all things,¹⁴³
 - J 2 The exercise of His will in creation: and because of Your will they existed, and were created."
- C 3 The heavenly worship of the Redeeming Lamb worthy to open the Seven-Sealed Scroll of Judgment as the Lion of Judah 5
 - D 1 The description of the scroll¹⁴⁴ 5:1
 - E 1 Its possessor – God: I saw in the right hand of Him who sat

¹⁴² Rev. 4:10 casting of crowns. Some have seen these crowns as a reward for service well done. Since believers are said to receive crowns (1 Cor. 9:25; 2 Tim. 4:8; Jas. 1:12; 1 Pet. 5:4; Rev. 2:10; 3:11), and since the elders cast their crowns before the throne, it is assumed that New Testament believers will also cast their crowns before the throne. The emphasis is on giving and sacrifice. We have been given tangible rewards and in turn we will give them right back to the One from whom all gifts proceed. (As a child, I often wondered what was the purpose of receiving a reward if one were dutifully required to give it right back!) Two faulty assumptions exist here: (1) the crowns believers receive are made of some sort of metal: The content of the afore-mentioned crowns is never said to be metal, but rather variously righteousness, life, glory, etc. (2) the crowns of the twenty-four elders were a reward: It seems rather that the crowns of the elders are symbols of authority. When they cast their crowns before the throne, they are acknowledging that their authority springs from God. It is an act of praise and deference, not an act of sacrifice.

¹⁴³ Rev. 4:11 - created all things: The true worship of God acknowledges Him and Him alone as the Creator of all that exists. The devious doctrine of evolution, taught by the religion of secular humanism is a resounding testimony to the accuracy of Rom 1:21-23 "For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. {22} Professing to be wise, they became fools, {23} and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures." In short, evolution is a modern day version of primitive animism and idol-worship. When men fail to honor and thank God, they devolve into a futile, foolish form of worship.

¹⁴⁴ Rev. 5:1 - **book** - ([975](#) *biblion*, diminutive of [976](#) *biblos*): a small book or scroll or written document or sheet on which something has been written (On-Line Bible). It is actually a scroll (Walvoord, [TROJC](#), p. 113). [JTB](#): See Rev. 6:14, where a *biblion* is described as being rolled up. The word book (*biblion*) is central in this chapter, occurring eight times (5:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9).

- on the throne a **book**
- E 2 Its length: written inside and on the back,
- E 3 Its importance: sealed up with seven seals.
- D 2 The problem in connection with the scroll: worthiness to open it 5:2-5
 - E 1 The question of worthiness: And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is **worthy** ¹⁴⁵ to open the **book** and to break its seals?" 5:2
 - E 2 The absence of worthiness: And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the **book** or to look into it. 5:3
 - E 3 The sorrow over unworthiness: Then I *began* to weep greatly because no one was found **worthy** to open the **book** or to look into it; 5:4
 - E 4 The solution for unworthiness 5:5
 - G 1 The call to comfort: and one of the elders said^ to me, "Stop weeping;
 - G 2 The reason for comfort – the conquering of Christ!
 - H 1 The description of Christ
 - J 1 behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, ¹⁴⁶
 - J 2 the Root of David,
 - H 2 The conquering of Christ: has overcome ¹⁴⁷ so as to open the **book** and its seven seals."
- D 3 The Lamb's taking possession of the scroll 5:6-7
 - E 1 The placement of the Lamb: And I saw between the throne

¹⁴⁵ 5:2 - **worthy** - ([514](#), *áxios*): Four times in chapter 5 is this word used (5:2, 4, 9, 12). Employed as it is with eight occurrences of "book" (scroll), the central question of chapter 5 is the worthiness of someone to open this scroll. The obvious answer becomes apparent: Only Jesus is worthy to do so! I have supplied emphasis in the outline and Biblical text for the words *book* and *worthy*.

¹⁴⁶ Rev. 5:5 - Lion, Judah: As the next few verses indicate, the Lion of Judah is none other than Jesus, the Lamb of God slain for the sins of the world. The imagery for the [Messiah](#) as the Lion is derived from Genesis 49:9-10, where Jacob, in blessing the progenitors of the twelve tribes of Israel, describes Judah three times as a lion in 49:9, and then predicts in 49:10 that the scepter, the ruler's staff, will not depart from Judah. This was a prophecy that the ultimate Anointed One would come from the tribe of Judah, which Jesus did.

¹⁴⁷ Rev. 5:5 - overcome - ([3528](#) *nikao*): Jesus has challenged Christians in the [churches](#) to overcome, or conquer (chs. 2-3). He sets a good example. He has conquered sin and Satan and death. This qualifies Him to break the seals.

- (with the four living creatures) and the elders 5:6a
- E 2 The description of the Lamb: a Lamb 5:6b
 - G 1 standing,
 - G 2 as if slain,¹⁴⁸
 - G 3 having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits¹⁴⁹ of God, sent out into all the earth.
- E 3 The action of the Lamb: And He came and took the **book** out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. 5:7
- D 4 The worship directed toward the Lamb 5:8-12
 - E 1 The time of the worship: When He had taken the **book**, 5:8a
 - E 2 The participants in worship 5:8b
 - G 1 the four living creatures
 - G 2 and the twenty-four elders
 - E 3 The object of worship: fell down before the Lamb,
 - E 4 The accouterments of worship: each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.
 - E 5 The music of the worship 5:9a
 - G 1 The type of music: And they sang^ a new song,
 - G 2 The focus of the text: saying, "**Worthy** are You to

¹⁴⁸ Rev. 5:6 - lamb, slain: In the book of the Bible devoted to the Unveiling of Christ, it is remarkable that Jesus is far more often referred to as Lamb, than Lion! Jesus is the King, but He is the Servant-King, and He prefers to emphasize His Servant role as a sacrificial Lamb above His ruling role as a conquering Sovereign. In 5:16, the great people of the earth wish to hide themselves from the wrath of the Lamb. An angry Lamb is remarkable indeed! It seems to be that the persona of God and of Christ is primarily love and mercy extended rather than judgment. God prefers to extend mercy and forgiveness, patiently waiting, unwilling for any to perish, but for all to repent (2 Peter 3:9). But when mercy is rejected, the reluctant Lamb brings terrible judgment.

¹⁴⁹ Rev. 5:6 - seven Spirits of God: Rev. 1:4 refers to the seven Spirits of God which are before His throne, and in 3:1 Jesus is said to have the seven Spirits of God. In Rev. 4:5 the seven lamps of fire burning before the throne are said to be the seven Spirits of God. Here in 5:6, the seven horns and seven eyes of the Lamb are said to be the seven Spirits of God. The traditional interpretation is that seven is the number of perfection or completion. Just how God can have seven Spirits which are "sent out into all the earth," when elsewhere in Scripture the singular Holy Spirit of God is mentioned, is beyond the present writer's ability to explain fully. However, a woman in my [church](#) once alerted me to Isaiah 11:1-2, which indicates that the "Spirit of the LORD will rest on" the [Messiah](#). "The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD." The Isaiah passage may help to some degree in explaining the seven Spirits of God. See the note on Rev. 1:4 for a listing of all the seven's in Revelation.

take the **book** and to break its seals; ¹⁵⁰

G 3 The reasons for worship 5:9b-10

H 1 for You were slain, 5:9b

H 2 and purchased for God with Your blood *men*
from every tribe and tongue and people and
nation.

H 3 "And You have made them *to be* a kingdom
and priests to our God; 5:10

H 4 and they will reign upon the earth." ¹⁵¹

E 6 The expansion of worship 5:11-12

G 1 The participants in worship 5:11

H 1 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many
angels around the throne

H 2 and the living creatures ¹⁵²

H 3 and the elders;

G 2 The number of the worshipers 5:11b

H 1 and the number of them was myriads of
myriads, ¹⁵³

H 2 and thousands of thousands,

G 3 The content of the worship: saying with a loud
voice, "**Worthy** is the Lamb that was slain 5:12

¹⁵⁰ Rev. 5:9 - worthy ... to take the book, break its seals: Why was Jesus alone, in all of heaven, the only one worthy to break the scrolls of the book? It is because the book will hammer down judgment after judgment upon the unrepentant earth below. Jesus is worthy because He provided the perfect sacrifice to pay for the sins of all earth's inhabitants. If they have scorned and spurned His sacrifice, it is fitting that He be the one to initiate their terrible judgment!

¹⁵¹ Rev. 5:10 - they will reign upon the earth: It is the redeemed of the Lamb, not the anti-God, anti-Christ, anti-Christian power brokers who will reign upon the earth, just as Jesus predicted they would. It is the meek, or gentle, who will inherit the earth, not the bold, wealthy, ruthless, powerful (Matthew 5:5).

¹⁵² Rev. 5:11 - living creatures: Here the living creatures are distinguished from angels.

¹⁵³ Rev. 5:11 - myriads of myriads, thousands of thousands: The phrase connotes an incalculable number of angels (and redeemed humans) worshipping the Lamb around the throne of God (see also Daniel 7:10). In a literal sense, a myriad means ten thousand. Taken literally, the numbers designate multiple 10,000's multiplied by multiple 10,000's. If you multiplied those numbers you would still have left over multiple 1000's times multiple 1000's! (See also Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 1-7: An Exegetical Commentary*, pp. 403-4, cited by [Constable](#).) The number is so huge, it was not meant to be calculated. If one were to attempt to calculate this number, one would have to multiply a minimum of 20,000 X 20,000 = 400 million, plus 2,000 X 2,000 = 4 million. An absolute *minimal* number of angels here represented is 404 million!

H 1 to receive power ¹⁵⁴

H 2 and riches

H 3 and wisdom

H 4 and might

H 5 and honor

H 6 and glory

H 7 and blessing."

D 5 The worship directed toward God and the Lamb 5:13-14

E 1 The participants in worship: And every created thing ¹⁵⁵
5:13a

G 1 which is in heaven

G 2 and on the earth

G 3 and under the earth

G 4 and on the sea,

G 5 and all things in them,

E 2 The objects of worship: I heard saying, 5:13b

G 1 "To Him who sits on the throne,

G 2 and to the Lamb,

E 3 The content of worship 5:13c

G 1 *be* blessing

G 2 and honor

G 3 and glory

¹⁵⁴ Rev. 5:12 - power, wisdom, riches, might, honor, glory, blessing: Just as there were an incalculable number of angels worshiping the Lamb around the throne, the Lamb is worthy of an infinite amount of praise and honor!

¹⁵⁵ Rev. 5:13 - every created thing: The designation of the places where one day every created entity will give praise to God Himself and to the Lamb is exhaustive (see also Philippians 2:10-11). There are no other places where created beings might exist. Evidently all unbelievers and Satan and his host of demons also will one day be obliged, however unhappily, to join in this anthem of praise alongside all holy and redeemed created beings. Why? Because God and the Lamb are entitled to it! This is the only true entitlement in all the universe. We humans are entitled to nothing, no matter what any government decrees. Only God and the Lamb are entitled. And they are entitled to exhaustive praise! In my view this comprehensive praise includes even animal and plant life. God has already made a donkey to speak (Numbers 22:30-32). One day mountains and hills will sing and trees of the field will clap their hands (Isaiah 55:12).

G 4 and dominion forever and ever." ¹⁵⁶

E 4 The co-participants in worship 5:14

G 1 ¹⁵⁷ And the four living creatures kept saying, "Amen."

G 2 And the elders fell down and worshiped.

B 2 The Great Tribulation: The Time of the Wrath of God and the Lamb upon the Earth 6 - 19

C 1 The Lamb's opening of the seven-sealed book of judgment 6:1 - 8:5

D 1 His breaking of the first seal: The Antichrist's diplomatic conquest of the earth 6:1-2

E 1 The breaking: Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, 6:1

E 2 The invitation: and I heard one of the four living creatures ¹⁵⁸ saying as with a voice of thunder, "Come."

¹⁵⁶ Rev. 5:13 - forever and ever: Not only are God and the Lamb worthy of exhaustive praise from every created being in all places, they are worthy of praise for eternity! An infinite God is worthy of total praise from a totality of creation in a totality of created places for an infinite amount of time!

¹⁵⁷ Rev. 5:14 - "Amen ... worshiped: What a fitting conclusion to the grandest praise service recorded in Scripture!

¹⁵⁸ Rev. 6:1 - living creatures: Each of the four living creatures issues a command at the breaking of each of the first four seals. There is, up in heaven cooperation between God and His created beings. Jesus breaks the seal and the four living beings issue commands.

E 3 The view: A rider on a white horse 6:2

G 1 Mobility: I looked, and behold, a white horse,¹⁵⁹

G 2 Weaponry: and he who sat on it had a bow;

G 3 Authority: and a crown was given to him,

G 4 Mastery: and he went out conquering and to conquer.¹⁶⁰

D 2 His breaking of the second seal: Global turmoil – the breaking out of wars 6:3-4

¹⁵⁹ Rev. 6:2 - white horse, and he who sat on it: Jesus will descend on a white horse (19:11-16), but the description of Him in Rev. 19:11-21 differs distinctly from the description here. Most likely this rider is the [Antichrist](#), who appears to be the righteous solution to all the world's problems, but is in reality empowered by the Devil. Nevertheless he makes his entrance at the command of God as issued by the first living creature. The rider has a bow, but no arrows, so he threatens war but does not at this time employ it. He is given a crown, and he goes forth "conquering and to conquer." This means that he conquers the world diplomatically, neutralizing all opponents diplomatically through the threat of war. Ryrie, [RSB](#), calls this "cold war." See also Constable, pp. 66-67; Walvoord, TBKC, p. 947. This diplomatic conquest was predicted in Daniel 9:27, where the [Antichrist](#) brokers a treaty apparently solving the Arab-Israeli fight for the control of the land of Israel and of Jerusalem, including the temple mount. His deal initially authorizes the Jewish people to rebuild the temple on the temple mount, but he subsequently breaks the treaty, throwing Israel into turmoil (Dan. 9:27; Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14). The breaking of the first seal (Rev. 6:1) marks the beginning of the seven-year [tribulation](#) period, which ends with Christ's return to conquer the world (Rev. 6 - 19). The specific event that begins the seven year period will be the Treaty with Israel that the [Antichrist](#) brokers (Dan. 9:27). The first half of the period seems to usher in a time of peace for Israel, but in the middle of that period the [Antichrist](#) breaks his treaty with Israel and enormous trouble begins for that nation. Most of the events of the [Tribulation](#) relate to the last half. [Thomas Constable](#) has a chart of the first half of the [tribulation](#) period, here reproduced.

“The beginning of birth pangs” (Matt. 24:8; Mark 13:8) The first half of the Tribulation					
Matt. 24:4-5	Mark 13:6	Luke 21:8	Antichrists	Rev. 6:1-2	First seal
Matt. 24:6-7	Mark 13:7-8	Luke 21:9-10	War	Rev. 6:3-4	Second seal
Matt. 24:7	Mark 13:8	Luke 21:11	Famine	Rev. 6:5-6	Third seal
Matt. 24:9	Mark 13:12	Luke 21:16	Death	Rev. 6:7-8	Fourth seal
Matt. 24:9-13	Mark 13:9-13	Luke 21:12-19	Martyrdom	Rev. 6:9-11	Fifth seal
		Luke 21:11	Earthly & heavenly phenomena	Rev. 6:12-17	Sixth seal
“The abomination of desolation” (Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14) [JTB - add Dan. 9:27] The middle of the Tribulation					

¹⁶⁰ Rev. 6:2 - conquering and to conquer: The liberals of earth's nations all seem to want a one-world government. God says in effect, "You want a one-world government apart from Me? You'll get it, and in the end it will turn out to be totalitarian and ugly, but there will be nothing you can do to stop it! Liberals claim to have compassion for people, but I do not believe that is true. I believe they are really interested merely in controlling people. They give people enough opiate so they will want to remain on the government plantation, but the elitists are all about control, not compassion. The rider on the white horse probably represents the “[Antichrist](#)” who will rapidly gain power in the world. He will engage in diplomatic conquest. But his rule and regime will ultimately be cruel and self-serving (Rev. 13:1-18).

- E 1 The breaking: When He broke the second seal, 6:3
- E 2 The invitation: I heard the second living creature saying, "Come."
- E 3 The view: A rider on a red horse 6:4
 - G 1 Departure: And another, a red horse, went out;
 - G 2 Political and military turmoil: and to him who sat on it, it was granted to take peace from the earth, ¹⁶¹
 - G 3 Wars: and that *men* would slay one another; and a great sword was given to him.
- D 3 His breaking of the third seal: Famine 6:5-6
 - E 1 The breaking: When He broke the third seal, 6:5
 - E 2 The invitation: I heard the third living creature saying, "Come."
 - E 3 The view: A rider on a black horse 6:5b
 - G 1 Steed: I looked, and behold, a black horse;
 - G 2 Measurement: and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand.
 - E 4 The voice from the four creatures: And I heard *something* like a voice in the center of the four living creatures saying, 6:6
 - G 1 "A quart of wheat for a denarius,
 - G 2 and three quarts of barley for a denarius; ¹⁶²
 - G 3 and do not damage the oil and the wine."
- D 4 His breaking of the fourth seal: Death to a quarter of the earth's population 6:7-8
 - E 1 The breaking: When the Lamb broke the fourth seal, 6:7
 - E 2 The invitation: I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come."
 - E 3 The view: Death on an ashen horse followed by Hades 6:8

¹⁶¹ Rev. 6:4 - take peace from the earth: The world's leftists had counted on the world leader ([Antichrist](#)) to bring them peace. Instead wars break out all over the globe! Man's best apart from God always turns into a nightmare!

¹⁶² Rev. 6:6 - wheat, barley, denarius: These figures represent an 800% increase in price, a sign of severe food shortage. (Ryrie, [RSB](#))

- G 1 The steed: I looked, and behold, an ashen horse;
- G 2 The rider - Death: and he who sat on it had the name Death;
- G 3 His companion: and Hades was following with him.
- G 4 Their authority to kill
 - H 1 The nature of the authority – received: Authority was given to them
 - H 2 The scope of the authority: over a fourth of the earth,¹⁶³
 - H 3 The purpose of the authority: to kill
 - H 4 The weapons of authority:
 - J 1 with sword
 - J 2 and with famine
 - J 3 and with pestilence
 - J 4 and by the wild beasts of the earth.¹⁶⁴
- D 5 His breaking of the fifth seal: Martyrs awaiting vengeance 6:9-11
 - E 1 The breaking: When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, 6:9a
 - E 2 The view of the martyrs 6:9b
 - G 1 The viewpoint: I saw underneath the altar
 - G 2 The sight seen: the souls of those who had been slain¹⁶⁵
 - G 3 The reasons for their murder
 - H 1 Their adherence to God's Word: because of the word of God,

¹⁶³ Rev. 6:8 - a fourth of the earth: As of the present date (September 12, 2016) the world's population is estimated to be 7.33 billion according to the U. S. Census Bureau. With the breaking of this fourth seal, 1.83 billion (1,834,000,000) people will lose their lives, based upon the above estimate. That is a staggering number of deaths! See the [US and World Population Clock](#).

¹⁶⁴ Rev. 6:7-8 - wild beasts: It is interesting that in recent decades there have been movies of animals attacking the people of the earth: Birds, spiders, dinosaurs (Jurassic Park), etc.

¹⁶⁵ Rev. 6:9 - slain: One almost gets the impression that the people of the earth blame God for the incredible global carnage, and when these believers publicly state their allegiance to God and Christ, vengeful death is swift! Even in "civilized" America today, an underlying hostility against Christians and Christianity is increasingly apparent.

- H 2 Their open confession of Christ: and because of the testimony which they had maintained;
- E 3 The speech of the martyrs 6:10
 - G 1 Their loud complaint: and they cried out with a loud voice, saying,
 - G 2 Their plea for expedited justice
 - H 1 Their concern about time: "How long,
 - H 2 Their acknowledgment of God's justice: O Lord, holy and true,
 - H 3 Their concern about God's delay in justice: will You refrain from judging and avenging ¹⁶⁶our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"
- E 4 The disposition of the martyrs 6:11
 - G 1 Their gift of clothing: And there was given to each of them a white robe;¹⁶⁷
 - G 2 Their instructions to rest: and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer,
 - G 3 Their instructions to await other martyrs: until *the number* of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also.
- D 6 His breaking of the sixth seal 6:12 - 7:17 ¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ Rev. 6:10 - avenging ... blood: The martyrs had been killed by the people of the earth ([1093](#), *ge*), and they believed that justice was being delayed unnecessarily, although at the same time they acknowledged God as just and true. The answer given was that there were other believers who were, in God's sovereign plan, yet to be killed! They were, however, assured implicitly that vengeance would be meted out. That vengeance is described partially in Rev. 19:21, but more fully in 2 Thess. 1:6-10. See also the footnote on the breaking of the sixth seal, 6:12 - 7:17.

¹⁶⁷ Rev. 6:11 - white robe: These martyred [Tribulation](#)-era believers in Christ have left their bodies on the earth, and their souls appear in heaven. However there is some kind of corporeality, for to each was given a white robe. One cannot hang a robe on a ghost or spirit! So we conclude that people who die have some sort of body visible in the after-life. [Church-age](#) believers will be reunited with their glorified, resurrection bodies at the [Rapture](#) (1 Cor. 15:51-55; 1 Thess. 4:13-18). These [Tribulation saints](#) also await Resurrection, at the end of the [Tribulation](#) and the beginning of Christ's [Millennial](#) reign (Rev. 20:4). White symbolizes holiness and purity (Rev. 7:14; 19:8, 11, 14).

¹⁶⁸ Rev. 6:12 - 8:5 - the breaking of the sixth seal: In response to the plaintive prayers of the souls underneath the altar pleading for vengeance, several things happen. 1) The sixth seal is broken with horrifying judgment upon the evil unbelievers who have been killing the saints: An unprecedented earthquake shakes the earth so violently that every mountain and every island is displaced! The sun is darkened and the moon becomes red, perhaps as a result of incredible volcanic activity spewing ash world-wide into the atmosphere. Stars fall from the heavens, and the earth's people, panic-stricken, realize this is God's vengeance, and wish, unsuccessfully, for death (Rev. 6:12-17)! 2) God seals [144,000](#) Israelites from coming judgment (Rev. 7:1-8). 3) An innumerable company of [tribulation saints](#) appear in heaven, now not under the altar, but fully clothed in white robes, and they are praising God. Part of their motivation is that God has terribly exercised His prerogative of vengeance, and they have been saved (Rev. 7:9-17)! (In Rev. 8:1-5, preparation is made for seven angels to blow seven trumpet blasts.)

- E 1 The judgments of the seal 6:12-17
- G 1 His breaking of the seal: I looked when He broke the sixth seal,
- G 2 The great earthquake: and there was a great earthquake;
- G 3 The celestial upheavals 6:12b-14a
- H 1 The darkening of the sun: and the sun became black¹⁶⁹ as sackcloth *made* of hair, 6:12b
- H 2 The blood-red moon: and the whole moon became like blood;¹⁷⁰
- H 3 The dissolution of stars: and the stars of the sky fell to the earth,¹⁷¹ as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. 6:13
- H 4 The chaos in the heavens: The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up,¹⁷² 6:14a
- G 4 The terrestrial upheavals: The and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.¹⁷³ 6:14b

¹⁶⁹ Rev. 6:12 - and the sun became black: Identical or similar prophecies include Isa. 13:10; Ezek. 32:7; Joel 2:10, 31; Amos 8:9; Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:24; Luke 21:25. People on earth will be horrified at this catastrophic anomaly up in the heavens. They will be forced to conclude that God is at work. Man cannot cause these dramatic changes in nature!

¹⁷⁰ Rev. 6:12 - moon became like blood: Joel 2:31, quoted by Acts 2:20, refers to the same event. Notice John did not say the moon “became blood,” but rather, “became like blood” (emphasis mine). I have seen what we popularly call a “[blood moon](#),” but this event that will take place will be wholly unlike the “blood moon” connected with a lunar eclipse. There will be no “natural” explanation, because God will be at work in a supernatural event. People on earth will be utterly dismayed.

¹⁷¹ Rev. 6:13 - stars ... fell to the earth: Stars, as far as we know, are composed of fiercely burning gas. Just how they might fall to earth is beyond our present knowledge or comprehension, but assuredly, this prophetic prediction will happen just as described. Our closest analogy would be an unprecedented, catastrophic bombardment of the earth with meteors or even small asteroids. In any event, people on earth will see great disturbances in the stars, and objects will land on earth, and they will be absolutely terrified. They will think the world and the universe is coming to an end. One day it will, but not just yet. Terrified humans ought to flee to God for refuge when they view these catastrophes. Unfortunately, for most humans, they will simply grow hardened in their opposition to God. More about that later. For more references to celestial disturbances affecting the stars, see also Ezek. 32:7; Joel 2:10, 30; 3:15; Zech. 14:6; and esp. Matt. 24:29.

¹⁷² Rev. 6:14 - sky was split apart like a scroll ... rolled up: Isa. 34:4 prophesies this event earlier. [Constable](#) believes this event will permit people on earth to see into heaven. Certainly in 6:16 they are sufficiently terrified that they plead with mountains and rocks to fall on them to hide them from the wrath of the Lamb and from the presence of the One sitting on the throne!

¹⁷³ Rev. 6:14 - every mountain and island ... moved out of their places: The earthquake of Rev. 6:12 is so severe that it physically and visibly alters the topography of every island and mountain on the entire globe! One can only imagine the accompanying volcanic eruptions and tsunamis. In August of 1883, the volcanic island of Krakatoa erupted. Much of the island was blown away, and a huge tidal wave swept over nearby islands. 36,000 people

G 5 The terror of men 6:15-17

H 1 The inclusion of all mankind 6:15

J 1 Then the kings of the earth

J 2 and the great men

J 3 and the commanders

J 4 and the rich

J 5 and the strong

J 6 and every slave

J 7 and free man

H 2 Their hiding of themselves: hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains;

H 3 Their panicky plea for removal from the presence of God and the wrath of the Lamb 6:16-17

J 1 Their address: and they said^ to the mountains and to the rocks, 6:16

J 2 Their request for death: "Fall on us

J 3 Their objective: deliverance from Divine displeasure

I1 hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne,

I2 and from the wrath of the Lamb;

J 4 Their realization: for the great day of their wrath has come, 6:17

J 5 Their doom: and who is able to stand?" ¹⁷⁴E 2 The sealing of [144,000](#) Israelis 7:1-8

lost their lives in this single catastrophe.

¹⁷⁴ Rev. 6:17 - who is able to stand: In the fearsome judgments of the sixth seal, the sun, the moon, the stars, the islands, and the mountains will reel in apocalyptic devastation. Every human on earth will understand that God is doing this and they will be absolutely petrified. Tragically, most will plead for death to hide them from God and Jesus rather than coming to God and Jesus in repentance and faith. How terribly man has been blinded, and how arrogantly man acts toward God. There will be no atheists left then, but they will not submit to Him, either.

- G 1 The view of four restraining angels 7:1
 - H 1 The station of the angels: After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth,
 - H 2 The activity of the angels: holding back the four winds of the earth, so that no wind would blow on the earth or on the sea or on any tree.
- G 2 The message of another angel 7:2-3
 - H 1 The view of the angel: And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun,
 - H 2 The possession of the angel: having the seal of the living God;
 - H 3 The cry of the angel 7:2b-3
 - J 1 His urgency: and he cried out with a loud voice 7:2b
 - J 2 His audience: to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea,
 - J 3 His command: saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads."
- G 3 The number and identity of those sealed 7:4-8
 - H 1 The total – [144,000](#) Israelis sealed: And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel: ¹⁷⁵ 7:4

¹⁷⁵ Rev. 7:4 - one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel: Who are these Israelis, what is the purpose of their sealing, and what happens to them? (1) That these are Israelis, and not representatives of the [Church](#), is inarguable. Though Jewish people today do not know the identity of their tribe, God does.

(2) Why are they sealed? The primary purpose of sealing is to indicate ownership by God as well as service for God (they are called His bond-servants in 7:3). The fact that they are to be sealed before the angels "harm the earth or the sea or the trees" (7:3) suggests that they will be immune from catastrophe at least until their mission is accomplished.

Some, I among them, have assumed that their mission on earth is evangelistic: they function as [144,000](#) Apostle Paul's taking the Gospel world-wide. This is an inference, however, and not derived from any explicit statement. The circumstantial data, on the other hand, is impressive. Immediately after hearing about their sealing (7:4-8), John is shown an innumerable, multi-national multitude worshipping God and the Lamb in heaven. These are martyrs coming out of the [great tribulation](#) (7:9-17). Apparently the evangelistic ministry of the [144,000](#) has been wildly successful!

(3) Do the [144,000](#) themselves survive the [Tribulation](#)? Apparently not. They are evidently all martyred, for they are later found on heavenly [Mt. Zion](#) (14:1). After their successful evangelistic ministry, they will be put to death because they are identified by the seals on their foreheads as "the bond-servants of God"

H 2 The numerical and tribal breakdown 7:5-8

- J 1 from the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand *were* sealed, 7:5
- J 2 from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand,
- J 3 from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand,
- J 4 from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand, 7:6
- J 5 from the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand,
- J 6 from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand,
- J 7 from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand, 7:7
- J 8 from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand,
- J 9 from the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand,
- J 10 from the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand, 7:8
- J 11 from the tribe of Joseph ¹⁷⁶ twelve thousand,
- J 12 from the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand *were* sealed.

E 3 The great multitude of [tribulation saints](#) 7:9-17

G 1 The description of the multitude 7:9

H 1 Their number: After these things I looked,

(7:3) rather than as followers and worshipers of the beast (13:14-17). They seem to be unusually holy and devout individuals (14:5), all males (14:3), who serve as first fruits devoted to God and Christ (14:4). Perhaps this foreshadows "a larger group of Israelites ... who will turn to the Lord at the end of the [tribulation](#) (cf. Isa. 2:3; Rom. 11:15)" (Ryrie, [RSB](#)).

¹⁷⁶ Rev. 7:8 - tribe of Joseph: Joseph's two sons represent two tribes of Israel. Manasseh is listed in 7:6, while Ephraim is not. For a reason not explained, Joseph takes the place of Ephraim in Rev. 7:8. Also not listed is the tribe of Dan, perhaps because of the tribe's long-standing participation in idolatry (Judges 18:30; 1 Kings 12:29-30). In any event, both Dan and Ephraim are allotted land in the [Millennial Kingdom](#) (Ezek. 48:2, 6). (See Constable, p. 76.)

- and behold, a great multitude ¹⁷⁷ which no one could count,
- H 2 Their composition: from every nation and *all* tribes and peoples and tongues,
 - H 3 Their station: standing before the throne and before the Lamb,
 - H 4 Their appearance
 - J 1 clothed in white robes,
 - J 2 and palm branches *were* in their hands;
 - G 2 Their praise 7:10
 - H 1 Their enthusiasm: and they cry out with a loud voice,
 - H 2 Their ascription: saying, "Salvation
 - J 1 to our God who sits on the throne,
 - J 2 and to the Lamb."
 - G 3 Their accompanists: Angels 7:11-12
 - H 1 Their number: And all the angels 7:11
 - H 2 Their station: were standing around the throne and *around* the elders and the four living creatures;
 - H 3 Their subservience: and they fell on their faces before the throne
 - H 4 Their worship: and worshiped God,
 - H 5 Their ascription: saying, "Amen, 7:12
 - J 1 blessing
 - J 2 and glory
 - J 3 and wisdom
 - J 4 and thanksgiving

¹⁷⁷ Rev. Rev. 7:9 - great multitude: A great multitude of people clothed in white robes appear in heaven from every nation, language, and people-grouping. They are enthusiastic worshipers of God and the Lamb (7:10). Sequentially this vision of John's occurs right after the sealing of the [144,000](#) Israelis. Presumably those who are sealed had led these Gentiles to faith in Christ. These Gentiles have come out of the [great tribulation](#) (7:14), during which they were apparently martyred for their faith in the blood of Christ (7:14). No longer will they suffer hardship or sorrow (7:15-17).

- J 5 honor
- J 6 and power
- J 7 and might, *be* to our God forever and ever. Amen."
- G 4 Their identity 7:13-15a
 - H 1 The elder's question 7:13
 - J 1 His topic: Then one of the elders ¹⁷⁸ answered, saying to me, "These who are clothed in the white robes,
 - J 2 Their identity: who are they,
 - J 3 Their origin: and where have they come from?"
 - H 2 John's ignorance: I said to him, "My lord, you know." 7:14a
 - H 3 The elder's explanation 7:14b-15a
 - J 1 Their history: And he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation," ¹⁷⁹ 7:14b
 - J 2 Their salvation: and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
 - J 3 Their activity: "For this reason, they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple; 7:15a
- G 5 Their destiny 7:15b-17
 - H 1 Their home: and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them. 7:15b

¹⁷⁸ Rev. 7:13 - one of the elders: It is significant that it was one of the 24 elders who asked John where this vast multitude came from. It is the task of an elder to shepherd that portion of God's flock over which the Holy Spirit has placed him in charge. So, for example, the Apostle Paul charged the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:17) with the task of shepherding "the [church](#) of God which He purchased with His own blood" (Acts 20:28). That the elder who questions John is thinking along these lines is clear when he says of this martyred multitude that "the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the water of life" (Rev. 7:17). One of the three fundamental tasks of an elder / overseer as shepherd is to Guide the flock into a good situation. Jesus as the Great Shepherd is the Supreme Guide!

¹⁷⁹ Rev. 7:14 - the [great tribulation](#): Literally, "the [tribulation](#), the great one." This is that time of unprecedented catastrophe and trouble sent by God to judge man for his blasphemous evil and rejection of God and the Lamb, God's chosen sacrifice for the sins of the world. This time of great trouble is elsewhere similarly referenced by Jesus in similar terms in Matthew 24:21. See also Rev. 3:10; 9:20-21; 17:1-2.

- H 2 Their protection 7:16
 - J 1 "They will hunger no longer,
 - J 2 nor thirst anymore;
 - J 3 nor will the sun beat down on them,
 - J 4 nor any heat;
- H 3 Their shepherd 7:17
 - J 1 for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, ¹⁸⁰
 - J 2 and will guide them to springs of the water of life;
- H 4 Their release from all pain: and God will wipe every tear ¹⁸¹ from their eyes."
- D 7 His breaking of the seventh seal: Silence; the introduction of Seven Trumpets 8:1-5
 - E 1 The half-hour of silence: When the Lamb broke the seventh seal, ¹⁸² there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. 8:1
 - E 2 The seven angels given seven trumpets: And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. 8:2
 - E 3 Another angel casting a golden censer upon the earth 8:3-5
 - G 1 The angel with a censer: Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; 8:3a
 - G 2 The purpose of the incense – To be added to the prayers of all the saints: and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne. 8:3b

¹⁸⁰ Rev. 7:17 - Lamb ... will be their shepherd: The word shepherd is actually a verb. Lit., "because the Lamb, the One in the center of the throne, will shepherd them and will lead them" This is a great enigma -- this Lamb gets angry with His enemies (6:16), but this Lamb also shepherds His flock supremely well (7:17)! See also Isa. 49:10. This Scripture is a central passage for the Leading aspect of [shepherding a flock](#). Good elders will guard the flock, feed the flock, and guide the flock. See the article [Biblical Eldership](#).

¹⁸¹ Rev. 7:17 - every tear: In a scene of great pathos and empathy, God wipes away every tear from the eyes of these saints who have died as martyrs during the [Great Tribulation](#). He will do the same for every believer in the New Universe (Rev. 21:4).

¹⁸² Rev. 8:1 - seventh seal: The Lamb breaks each of the seven seals on this book of judgment. Seven is a featured number (see note on Rev. 1:4). This is the last seal. It telescopes into seven angels who blow seven trumpets (8:2).

- G 3 The accomplishment of the incense – God's awareness of the prayers of the saints: And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand. 8:4
- G 4 The destination of the censer – cast upon earth: ¹⁸³ Then the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and threw it to the earth; 8:5a
- G 5 The immediate effect of the censer upon earth: and there followed 8:5b
 - H 1 peals of thunder
 - H 2 and sounds and flashes of lightning
 - H 3 and an earthquake.
- C 2 The seven angels' soundings of seven trumpets 8:6 - 11:19
 - D 1 The first trumpet: Hail, fire, and blood decimate a third of earth's vegetation 8:6-7
 - E 1 The preparation for sounding: And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them. 8:6
 - E 2 The sounding of the first trumpet: The first sounded, 8:7a
 - E 3 The judgment of the first trumpet: and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were thrown to the earth;
 - E 4 The effects of the first trumpet 8:7b
 - G 1 and a third of the earth was burned up, ¹⁸⁴
 - G 2 and a third of the trees were burned up,
 - G 3 and all the green grass was burned up.
 - D 2 The second trumpet – Judgment upon the sea: A third of marine life and ships destroyed 8:8-9
 - E 1 The sounding of the second trumpet: The second angel sounded, 8:8a
 - E 2 The judgment of the second trumpet: and *something* like a

¹⁸³ Rev. 8:5 - censer: Perhaps the censer is thrown down to earth as a prelude to more judgment in response to God's answering the prayers of His people requesting justice and vengeance (see Rev. 6:10).

¹⁸⁴ Rev. 8:7 - third of the earth, trees, green grass burned: The loss of vegetation will be an environmental catastrophe of enormous proportions, not to mention the destruction of animals and humans. Undoubtedly environmentalists will curse God, but the fault is their own sins and the sins of all mankind.

great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea; ¹⁸⁵

E 3 The effects of the second trumpet 8:8b-9

G 1 and a third of the sea became blood, ¹⁸⁶ 8:8b

G 2 and a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; 8:9

G 3 and a third of the ships were destroyed. ¹⁸⁷

D 3 The third trumpet – "Wormwood" judgment upon fresh water: A third of fresh water becomes poisonous 8:10-11

E 1 The sounding of the third trumpet: The third angel sounded, 8:10

E 2 The nature of the judgment: and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, ¹⁸⁸

E 3 The target of the judgment: and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters.

E 4 The name connected with the judgment: The name of the

¹⁸⁵ Rev. 8:8-9 - *something like a mountain ... thrown into the sea*: In his novel, *The End of the Age* (Word Publishing, 1995), Pat Robertson portrays this as an asteroid striking the Pacific Ocean, fearfully raising the temperature in the region, and inundating Los Angeles with a 5,000 foot tsunami. L. A., San Diego, San Francisco and Seattle are obliterated. A very graphic description! During the first full week of January, 1998, a computer model of an asteroid striking the Atlantic Ocean was released, projecting a mere 300 foot tsunami. Perhaps Robertson is over-zealous in his computations. On December 26, 2004, a 9.0 magnitude earthquake occurred at a depth of 6.2 miles 100 miles off the coast of Indonesia's Sumatra Island. Some of the tsunamis unleashed by the mighty quake reached as far as 1600 kilometers (10,000 miles). The Sri Lankan port city of Trincomalee reported 14 meter (40 foot) waves hitting inland as far as a kilometer (0.6 miles). In Sri Lanka alone, more than 4500 people were killed, thousands were missing and a half million displaced. All in all, from Sri Lanka to India, Thailand and Malaysia, more than 13,000 were killed in at least nine countries. A later estimate placed the loss of life significantly higher. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, 227,898 were recorded dead with Indonesia alone experiencing a death toll of 170,000. See the [following link](#) and scroll down to "The 2004 Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami." See also, "[Indian Ocean Tsunami Remembered](#)"

¹⁸⁶ Rev. 8:8 - sea ... blood: It is inconceivable that massive deaths of marine population could turn a third of the sea into blood. Rather, the reverse is true - the blood caused the death of a third of marine life. This judgment is reminiscent of the plague of blood upon the rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, and water storage containers of Egypt (Exod. 7:14-22), but on a vastly larger scale. Environmentalists will rail at God, but it is man's disobedience and rebellion that will bring God's judgment. [Thomas Constable](#) notes, "I understand that the only chemical difference between sea water and blood is that blood contains an iron molecule that is absent in sea water. Perhaps this mountain-like mass (a meteor?) will provide that molecule resulting in a change in the chemical composition of these seas."

¹⁸⁷ Rev. 8:9 - third of the ships destroyed: The loss of human life, not to mention the loss of container vessels and petroleum-carrying tankers will be staggering. Think of the effect this disaster will have on the price of imported goods, gasoline, and heating fuels!

¹⁸⁸ Rev. 8:10 - star ... burning like a torch: "The ancients sometimes used "torch" (this Greek word, *lampás*, 2985) to describe a meteor shooting through the sky" (Robert L. Thomas, [Revelation 8-22](#), p. 21, quoted by [Constable](#)).

- star is called Wormwood;¹⁸⁹ 8:11a
- E 5 The effects of the judgment 8:11b
- G 1 and a third of the waters became wormwood,
- G 2 and many men died from the waters, because they
 were made bitter.
- D 4 The fourth trumpet: Darkening of the sun, moon, and stars 8:12-13
- E 1 The sounding of the fourth trumpet: The fourth angel
 sounded, 8:12a
- E 2 The judgment of the fourth trumpet 8:12b
- G 1 and a third of the sun
- G 2 and a third of the moon
- G 3 and a third of the stars were struck,¹⁹⁰
- E 3 The effects of the fourth trumpet 8:12c
- G 1 so that a third of them would be darkened
- G 2 and the day would not shine for a third of it,
- G 3 and the night in the same way.
- E 4 The prediction of three woes 8:13
- G 1 The view in midheaven: Then I looked, and I heard
 an eagle flying in midheaven,
- G 2 The voice in midheaven: saying with a loud voice,

¹⁸⁹ Rev. 8:11 - Wormwood ([894](#) *ápsinthos*): "of uncertain derivation," . "Wormwood" occurs in the N. T. only twice, in Rev. 8:11. In Rev. 8:11, men are said to die because the waters were made bitter ([4087](#) *pikrainō*, to make bitter or be bitter). In the O. T. "wormwood" appears seven times (in the A. V.), always the translation of [3939](#) *la'anah*, meaning, metaphorically, "bitterness." (The eighth occurrence of [3939](#) *la'anah* is translated "hemlock" in Amos 6:12 [AV].) In five of the eight O. T. references to [3939](#) *la'anah*, "gall" ([7219](#) *ro'sh*) is parallel, meaning "gall, venom, bitter, poisonous" ([BDB](#)). In Proverbs 5:4, wormwood is associated with bitter ([4751](#), *mar* or *marah* [fem.]) and in Lamentations 3:15 it is paralleled with bitterness ([4844](#), *meror*). It is safe to conclude that the N. T. AV translators understood [894](#) *ápsinthos* to refer to some substance of bitterness, hence they gave it the name "Wormwood." "Wormwood," then, refers to some bitter, fatally toxic substance emanating from a star. Could it be radioactive in nature?

¹⁹⁰ Rev. 8:12 - third ... struck: With our present limited knowledge of astrophysics, it is difficult for us to comprehend the mechanics of this plague. On the one hand, there is a one-third diminishing of the *quantity* of light, since a third of the sun, a third of the moon and a third of the stars fail to emanate light. On the other hand, there seems also to be a one-third reduction of the *time* during which light shines at all, for the last part of Rev. 8:12 seems to indicate that there will be no light for a third of the day and a third of the night. The meaning of the text will be readily apparent in that day. It is no wonder that Jesus described human reactions to this time as "men fainting from fear ... for the powers of the heavens will be shaken" (Luke 21:26). Think of the plunging temperatures this earth will record that will be caused by the decreased light!

- H 1 Consternation to earth-dwellers! "Woe, woe, woe"¹⁹¹ to those who dwell on the earth,
- H 2 The reason for the consternation: because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!"
- D 5 The fifth trumpet (the first woe): Scorpion-like locusts! 9:1-12
 - E 1 The sounding of the fifth angel: Then the fifth angel sounded, 9:1a
 - E 2 The star from heaven: and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth; 9:1b-2a¹⁹²
 - G 1 His authority: and the key of the bottomless pit¹⁹³ was given to him. 9:1b
 - G 2 His action: He opened the bottomless pit, 9:2a
 - E 3 The smoke from the pit: and smoke went up out of the pit, 9:2b
 - G 1 The description of the smoke: like the smoke of a great furnace;
 - G 2 The effect of the smoke: and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit.
 - E 4 The locusts from the pit: Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth, (9:3a) 9:3-11
 - G 1 Their authority 9:3-5

¹⁹¹ Rev. 8:13 - Woe, woe, woe: As if what had already happened to the earth was not bad enough, an eagle pronounces a triple-woe upon the earth for the ensuing trumpet judgments! The Greek word for woe (*ouia*, [3759](#)) is a primitive expression of grief. The reader is reminded of the progress of these three upcoming woes at the conclusion of the fifth trumpet (Rev. 9:12) and the sixth (Rev. 11:14). The third and final woe (Rev. 12:12) apparently is pronounced upon both the earth and the sea in connection with Satan and his angels being cast down to the earth. Satan knows he has but a short time and evidently redoubles his efforts, which only signals even greater trouble for the earth-dwellers. Three series of double-woes are mournfully pronounced on behalf of Babylon by the earth's kings, merchants, and mariners in connection with its crushing judgment (Rev. 18:10, 16, 19).

¹⁹² Rev. 9:1-2 - star from heaven: This star which had fallen from heaven apparently symbolizes an angel, because he opens the bottomless pit. Is he a good angel or an evil angel? The fact that he fell from heaven reminds one of Rev. 12:4, where Satan drags a third of the stars of heaven and casts them to the earth, probably referring to fallen angels (demons); also of Rev. 12:9, where, after a war in heaven between Michael and his angels and Satan and his angels, the latter were cast out of heaven onto the earth. Because of the language used here ("having fallen") I classify this angel as an evil angel. Walvoord ([TROJC](#), p. 159) believes it is Satan himself, while [Thomas Constable](#) takes the view that it is a good angel.

¹⁹³ Rev. 9:1 - pit: [5421 phrear](#), lit., well, here combined with [12 abussos](#), [abyss](#), translated "bottomless" by the AV. [For note on [12](#), *abussos*, see Rev. 20:1.] [5421 phrear](#) - of uncertain derivation; TDNT-omitted; AV - pit (5); - well (2) [7]

Phrear is "a well, the pit of the [abyss](#) (because the nether world is thought to increase in size the further it extends from the surface of the earth and so resemble a cistern, the orifice of which is narrow)" ([Thayer](#)). [Constable](#) translates the phrase "bottomless pit" as "the shaft of the [abyss](#)."

- H 1 Their comparison to that of scorpions: and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. 9:3b
- H 2 Their restriction from damaging vegetation: They were told not to hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, 9:4
- H 3 Their restriction to affect only those men without God's seal: but only the men who do ¹⁹⁴not have the seal of God on their foreheads.
- H 4 Their restriction from causing death: And they were not permitted to kill anyone, 9:5a
- H 5 Their permission to torment: but to torment 9:5b
 - J 1 The duration of their torment: for five months;
 - J 2 The nature of their torment: and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man.
- G 2 Their effect 9:6
 - H 1 And in those days men will seek death and will not find it;
 - H 2 they will long to die, and death flees from them.
- G 3 Their description 9:7-11
 - H 1 The **appearance** of the locusts ¹⁹⁵ was like horses prepared for battle; 9:7
 - H 2 and on their **heads** appeared to be crowns like gold,
 - H 3 and their **faces** were like the faces of men.

¹⁹⁴ Rev. 9:4 - seal of God: The exemption from harm from the locusts is extended only to those who have the seal of God on their foreheads. Unquestionably this refers to the [144,000](#) Israelis sealed in 7:1-8. The question arises: Do people who come to faith in Christ and refuse the mark of the beast (Rev. 13:16, 17) become sealed with the seal of God or remain unsealed? If the latter is true, they also would apparently suffer torment from the locusts. My best guess is that all who become believers in Christ are sealed with the seal of God. It appears, then, that, after the events of Rev. 13:16, 17, there will be three classes of people on earth – those who have the mark of the beast, those who have the seal of God, and those who have not yet identified themselves either with Christ or the beast. Exactly what this seal of God might look like is never stated. When the time comes, it will be identifiable.

¹⁹⁵ Rev. 9:7 - appearance of the locusts: John, in his description of these locusts, was deliberately vague. Literally, he said, “And the likenesses of the locusts were like horses having been prepared for war” These locusts were unlike any insects we know of today. These locusts were fearsome in appearance. [Constable](#), citing other sources, takes the position that these creatures will be demons who take the appearance of locusts.

- H 4 They had **hair** like the hair of women, 9:8
- H 5 and their teeth were like *the teeth* of lions.
- H 6 They had **breastplates** like breastplates of iron; 9:9
- H 7 and the **sound** of their wings was like the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to battle.
- H 8 They have **tails** like scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt men for five months. 9:10
- H 9 They have as **king** over them, 9:11
 - J 1 His identity: the angel of the abyss;
 - J 2 His name: his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon.
- E 5 The completion of the first woe: The first woe is past; ¹⁹⁶ behold, two woes are still coming after these things. 9:12
- D 6 The sixth trumpet: The release of four demonic angels at the Euphrates to gather a 200 million-man army killing a third of humanity; the strong angel with the little book; the two witnesses 9:13 - 11:14 ¹⁹⁷
 - E 1 The sounding of the sixth trumpet: Then the sixth angel sounded, 9:13a
 - E 2 The command to release the four angels at the Euphrates 9:13b-14
 - G 1 The origin of the voice: and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, 9:13b
 - G 2 The audience of the voice: one saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, 9:14
 - G 3 The command given: "Release the four angels who

¹⁹⁶ Rev. 9:12 - first woe: See note on Rev. 8:13.

¹⁹⁷ Rev. 9:14 - sixth trumpet: The sixth trumpet seems to relate to the sixth bowl (16:12). The Euphrates River and military overtones are connected with both. In the sixth trumpet 200,000,000 horsemen are released, and when the sixth bowl is poured out, the Euphrates is dried up to permit the movement of the kings of the east. The sinister figure behind this movement is none other than Satan (the dragon). He undoubtedly wants to galvanize the armies to gain military control of the whole world, but God is gathering them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty (16:14)!

are bound ¹⁹⁸ at the great river Euphrates." ¹⁹⁹

E 3 The release of the four angels 9:15

G 1 The precise preparation of the angels: And the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released,

G 2 The deadly purpose of the angels: so that they would kill a third of mankind. ²⁰⁰

E 4 The result of the angels' release: The marshaling of a huge army 9:16-19

G 1 The size of the cavalry: The number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. 9:16 ²⁰¹

G 2 The description of the cavalry: And this is how I saw in the vision the horses and those who sat on them: 9:17

H 1 The riders: *the riders* had breastplates *the color* of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone;

H 2 The horses ²⁰²

¹⁹⁸ Rev. 9:14 - four angels ... bound at the great river Euphrates: Clearly these are fallen angels, or demons, for no good angel is ever said to be bound. These four demonic messengers are (or will be at that future time) bound at the Euphrates. They will be released in order to orchestrate the deaths of a third of mankind (Rev. 9:15).

¹⁹⁹ Rev. 9:14 - Euphrates River: The [Euphrates River](#) begins in Turkey, flows through Syria and through Iraq, and is eventually joined by the Tigris River, finally emptying into the Persian Gulf (or the Gulf of Arabia, as Arabs prefer to call it). The Euphrates serves as a natural barrier. Its drying up would pave the way for a land invasion into Israel from all the countries to the north and east, such as Iran, Georgia, Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, India, Mongolia, and China, not to mention the countries of southeast Asia. Note the enormous army indicated in Rev. 9:16-19.

²⁰⁰ Rev. 9:15 - kill a third of mankind: The loss of human life is staggering. Already a minimum of 1.8 billion people, a fourth of the earth's population were killed with the breaking of one seal (Rev. 6:8). Now, a third of the remaining three fourths are killed. That amounts to another 1.8 billion people! In two plagues alone, fully one half of the world's 7.3 billion people, or 3.65 billion have been killed. The carnage is unimaginable! (These figures were correct as of Sept. 26, 2016, based on the [US and World Population Clock](#).)

²⁰¹ Rev. 9:16 - 200 million: Some speculate that John is not giving a precise number, but merely using expansive code words to designate an innumerable host. However, he states specifically, "I heard their number." This number is clearly to be taken literally.

²⁰² Rev. 9:17-19 - horses: It is difficult to say whether these are horses as we know them today, or John's first century description of modern mechanized warfare, or demonic horses that will yet appear. There are several possibilities: (1) John was describing real horses, although their description in Rev. 9:17-19 is unlike any horses we know today. In support of this view, if one third of the oil tankers have been destroyed (Rev. 8:9), and if the oil infrastructure in Babylon and the Middle East has been sabotaged (Rev. 17:16 - 18:19), there will be an acute global shortage of petroleum. In that event, the mobilization of alternative transportation, such as horses, is a real likelihood. (2) John was doing his best, in first century language, to describe modern warfare. One can easily see how he would describe tanks with fire coming out of their mouths (Rev. 9:17-18). But what about the tails that look like serpents with heads and are capable of harming people (Rev. 9:19)? (3) A third possibility is that elements of both (1) and (2) may provide the eventual outcome. (4) [Constable](#) (pp. 90-91) takes the position that these horses and

- J 1 Their heads: and the heads of the horses are like the heads of lions;
 - J 2 Their mouths: and out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke and brimstone.
 - G 3 The deadly force of the cavalry 9:18-19
 - H 1 The enormity of the fatalities: A third of mankind was killed 9:18
 - H 2 The cause of the fatalities: by these three plagues,
 - J 1 by the fire
 - J 2 and the smoke
 - J 3 and the brimstone which proceeded out of their mouths.
 - H 3 The firepower of the horses 9:19
 - J 1 Double damage: For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails;
 - J 2 Terrible tails: for their tails are like serpents and have heads, and with them they do harm. 9:19
- E 5 The unrepentance of mankind 9:20-21
 - G 1 The identity of the unrepentant: {20} And the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, 9:20a
 - G 2 The nature of their unrepentance 9:20b-21
 - H 1 False worship: did not repent ²⁰³ of the works of their hands,
 - J 1 Of fallen spiritism: so as not to

riders are demonic. The text is explicit in stating that fire, smoke, and sulfur are emitted from the horses' mouths, and that their serpent like tails have heads with which they harm people. These riders and horses will succeed in killing 1.65 billion people (9:15, 18)! It is impossible to state with certainty which of the possibilities is correct.

Perhaps [Constable's](#) explanation makes the most sense. The closer we get to the events which John predicted, the more sense his descriptions will make, and the easier it will be for readers to understand why he described what he saw as he did.

²⁰³ Rev. 9:20, 21 - did not repent: It would seem that the great bulk of unbelievers in the [Great Tribulation](#) grow hardened in their opposition to God, no matter what happens. They refuse to repent of their Godless behavior, because they have been blinded by Satan (John 8:44).

- worship demons,
- J 2 Of crass materialism: and the idols
 - I1 Their material nature: of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood,
 - I2 Their total impotence: which can neither see nor hear nor walk;
- H 2 Wicked living: {21} and they did not repent²⁰⁴ 9:21
 - J 1 of their murders
 - J 2 nor of their sorceries
 - J 3 nor of their immorality
 - J 4 nor of their thefts.
- E 6 The strong angel standing on the sea and land holding the little book 10
 - G 1 The description of the angel: I saw another strong angel²⁰⁵ coming down out of heaven, (10:1) 10:1-2a
 - H 1 clothed with a cloud;
 - H 2 and the rainbow was upon his head,
 - H 3 and his face was like the sun,
 - H 4 and his feet like pillars of fire;
 - H 5 and he had in his hand a little book which was open. 10:2a
 - G 2 The actions of the angel 10:2b-4
 - H 1 His station 10:2b
 - J 1 He placed his right foot on the sea
 - J 2 and his left on the land;

²⁰⁴ Rev. 9:21 - and they did not repent: Not only will the great bulk of humanity refuse to repent of their false worship during the [Tribulation](#) period (Rev. 9:20), but they will also refuse to repent of their great evil – their murders, sorceries, their immorality, and their thievery.

²⁰⁵ Rev. 10:1 - strong angel: Some have theorized that this is Christ, but he is referred to as another (Grk. *állos*, [243](#) of the same kind) strong angel, of which at least three are referenced in Revelation (5:2; 10:1; 18:21). For a more lengthy discussion, see [Constable](#).

- H 2 His cry: and he cried out with a loud voice,
as when a lion roars; 10:3a
- H 3 The result of his cry: the seven peals of
thunder 10:3b-4
 - J 1 The utterance of the thunder: and
when he had cried out, the seven
peals of thunder uttered their voices.
10:3b
 - J 2 The attempted transcription: When
the seven peals of thunder had
spoken, I was about to write; 10:4
 - J 3 The forbidding from heaven: and I
heard a voice from heaven saying,
"Seal up²⁰⁶ the things which the
seven peals of thunder have spoken
and do not write them."
- G 3 The oath of the angel: Then the angel whom I saw
standing on the sea and on the land (10:5a) 10:5-7
 - H 1 The gesture of his oath: lifted up his right
hand to heaven, 10:5b
 - H 2 The Guarantor of his oath: and swore by
Him 10:6a
 - J 1 who lives forever and ever,
 - J 2 WHO CREATED²⁰⁷ HEAVEN AND
THE THINGS IN IT,
 - J 3 AND THE EARTH AND THE
THINGS IN IT,
 - J 4 AND THE SEA AND THE THINGS
IN IT,
 - H 3 The substance of his oath 10:6b-7
 - J 1 The end of delay: that there will be
delay no longer, 10:6b
 - J 2 The completion of the mystery of
God: but in the days of the voice of

²⁰⁶ Rev. 10:4 - seal up: Why John was permitted to hear the message of the seven thunders (see note on the number seven in Rev. 1:4) but then forbidden from revealing the message to his readers we will not know this side of heaven, if ever. God does not tell us all He knows, but He tells us enough for us to act!

²⁰⁷ Rev. 10:6 - created: Compare Exod. 20:11, where in the Decalogue, God is said to have created all that exists in six days, explicitly excluding the possibility of the "[Big Bang](#)" and [evolution](#) over millions of years.

the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished,²⁰⁸ 10:7

J 3 The fulfillment of prophecy: as He preached to His servants the prophets.

G 4 The book held by the angel 10:8-11

H 1 The command from heaven 10:8

J 1 The source of the command: And the voice which I heard from heaven, *I heard* again speaking with me, and saying,

J 2 The essence of the command: "Go, take the book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the land."

H 2 The request of John: So I went to the angel, telling him to give me the little book. 10:9

H 3 The instruction of the angel: And he said[^] to me, "Take it and eat it; it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey."

H 4 The taste of the book 10:10

J 1 The act of eating: I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it,

J 2 The initial taste: and in my mouth it was sweet as honey;

J 3 The after-taste: and when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter.²⁰⁹

H 5 The result of eating the book – empowerment to continue prophesying: And they said[^] to me, "You must prophesy again²¹⁰ concerning 10:11

J 1 many peoples

²⁰⁸ Rev. 10:7 - mystery of God is finished: When the seventh angel sounds his trumpet, seven angels will pour out, in rapid succession, seven bowls of God's wrath upon the earth, and that will complete the new revelation about God's judgment upon many "peoples and nations and tongues and kings" (10:11).

²⁰⁹ Rev. 10:10 - bitter: The Word of God is sweet, but it predicts bitter judgments on those who disregard it.

²¹⁰ Rev. 10:11 - prophesy again: John was not yet half way through his prophecy.

- J 2 and nations
- J 3 and tongues
- J 4 and kings."
- E 7 The two witnesses 11:1-14
 - G 1 The religious / political environment in Jerusalem during the ministry of the two witnesses 11:1-2
 - H 1 The instructions to measure the temple 11:1-2a
 - J 1 The measuring rod: Then there was given me a measuring rod like a staff; 11:1
 - J 2 The included measurements: and someone said, "Get up and measure the temple of God ²¹¹ and the altar, and those who worship in it.
 - J 3 The excluded measurements: "Leave out the court which is outside the temple and do not measure it, 11:2a
 - H 2 The Gentile occupation 11:2b
 - J 1 Of the outer court of the temple: for it has been given to the nations;
 - J 2 Of Jerusalem proper: and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months. ²¹²
 - G 2 The ministry of the two witnesses 11:3-4

²¹¹ Rev. 11:1 - temple of God: As implausible as it may seem to us living early in the 21st Century, a Jewish temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem. I cannot see any place other than the Temple Mount where devout Jews would rebuild their temple. Today the Temple Mount is occupied by the Dome of the Rock Shrine and the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The future leader of a [Revived Roman Empire](#) will one day make a seven-year agreement with Israel (Dan. 9:27). Presumably this agreement will permit Israel to erect her long-anticipated Temple. No one knows precisely the political and religious climate that will be in place when these prophecies are fulfilled. The only way I can foresee that happening, at least in today's political climate, is for this leader also to make a pact with the Arabs. The only pact I know of which would motivate the Arabs to surrender peacefully the Temple Mount to hated Israel today, would be a guarantee to the Arabs (1) of the future return of Jerusalem to the Arabs; (2) of the future annihilation of Israel; and (3) of the conversion of Europe, if not the whole rest of the world, to Islam. See notes on Rev. 17 for more details.

²¹² Rev. 11:2-3 - Jerusalem is to be trodden under foot for 3.5 years. Comparing this with Dan. 9:27, this would seem to correspond with the last half of the seven year period popularly known as the [Tribulation](#). The two witnesses would also seem to prophesy over that same period (1260 days = 42 months = 3.5 years). When the future leader of the [Revived Roman Empire](#) breaks his treaty with Israel, halts sacrifices, and allows an abomination to be placed in the temple (Dan. 9:27; 12:11; Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14), that will mark the beginning of the 42-month period. The approaching end of the [tribulation](#) period will mark the end of Gentile domination and desecration of Jerusalem as predicted by both Jesus (Luke 21:24) and John (Rev. 11:2).

- H 1 Their authority: "And I will grant *authority* to my two witnesses,"²¹³ 11:3
- H 2 Their task: and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days,
- H 3 Their apparel: clothed in sackcloth."²¹⁴
- H 4 Their celestial identity: These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth.²¹⁵ 11:4
- G 3 The power of the two witnesses 11:5-6
 - H 1 Of self-defense 11:5
 - J 1 And if anyone wants to harm them, fire flows out of their mouth and devours their enemies;
 - J 2 so if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this way.
 - H 2 Over water 11:6a
 - J 1 These have the power to shut up the sky, so that rain will not fall²¹⁶ during the days of their prophesying;
 - J 2 and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood,²¹⁷
 - H 3 Over disease: and to strike the earth with every plague, as often as they desire. 11:6b

²¹³ Rev. 11:3 - two witnesses: See the footnote on Rev. 11:4 regarding "the two olive trees and two lampstands." Clearly these two witnesses are prophets, for "they will prophesy."

²¹⁴ Rev. 11:3 - sackcloth - Their austere existence is reminiscent of John the Baptist (Matt. 3:4). Sackcloth, moreover, is worn by mourners and penitents (On-Line Bible) (cf. Gen. 37:34 and Luke 10:13) and reinforces the ministry of judgment and doom carried out by the witnesses (Walvoord, [TROJC](#), p. 179).

²¹⁵ Rev. 11:4 two olive trees and two lampstands: As Walvoord ([TROJC](#), pp. 179-180) points out these are most likely long-term fulfillments of the symbols in Zechariah 4. The two witnesses are thus appointed by God to proclaim His Word, anointed and empowered with the oil of God's Spirit. Stylistically, their identity fits in well with Enoch and Elijah, two who never died. However, the [Church](#) alive at Christ's return (1 Thess. 4:13-18) will not experience death either. Their similarity to Moses and Elijah (fire, blood, water, and plagues) might suggest that these two reappear on earth. But would it be just in God's order for Moses to die twice? Walvoord ([TROJC](#), p. 179) explains these two witnesses simply as future prophets raised up by God at that time. That may well be, but I lean toward the reappearance of Enoch and Elijah.

²¹⁶ Rev. 11:6 - so that rain will not fall: Elijah was able, by the power of God, to withhold rain for three and a half years (1 Kings 17:1; James 5:17). These two prophetic witnesses will have similar authority and power. The people of the world will hate them with a passion!

²¹⁷ Rev. 11:6 - water to blood: reminiscent of Moses turning the water of the Nile to blood at the command of God (Ex. 7:17-21).

G 4 The death of the two witnesses 11:7-10

- H 1 The signal for their death: When they have finished their testimony, 11:7
- H 2 The cause of their death: the beast that comes up out of the abyss²¹⁹ will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them.
- H 3 The place of their death: And their dead bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city²²⁰ which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. 11:8
- H 4 The reactions to their death 11:9-10
 - J 1 Gloating: Those from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations *will* look at their dead bodies for three and a half days, and will not permit their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb. 11:9
 - J 2 Celebration: And those who dwell on the earth *will* rejoice over them and celebrate; and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. 11:10

G 5 The resurrection of the two witnesses 11:11

- H 1 The time: But after the three and a half days,
- H 2 The cause: the breath of life from God came into them,
- H 3 The description: and they stood on their feet;
- H 4 The reaction: and great fear fell upon those who were watching them.

²¹⁸ Rev. 11:6 - plague ([4127](#) *plêgê'*) - specifically, a wound or flogging; generally, any kind of disaster upon someone, including, in Revelation, scorching heat and hail. The seven angels with seven bowls in Rev. 15 are said to have seven plagues. The power of these witnesses to strike the earth with plagues is reminiscent of Moses (In Ex. 11:1 God says He will bring one more plague – [5061](#) *nega'* – a stroke, wound or plague – upon Egypt.).

²¹⁹ Rev. 11:7 - beast ... out of the [abyss](#): The term beast is God's term to describe a sophisticated, charismatic, evil, powerful dictator who first gains control over a [Revived Roman Empire](#), and then over the world. He is Satan's version of the [Messiah](#), thus frequently referred to among dispensational Bible teachers as the [Antichrist](#) (Rev. 13:1-10; 16:10; 17:3, 7-17; 19:19-20; 20:10; see 1 John 2:18).

²²⁰ Rev. 11:8 - great city: A reference to Jerusalem.

- G 6 The ascension of the two witnesses 11:12
 - H 1 The call: And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here."
 - H 2 The departure: Then they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies watched them.
- G 7 The judgment in connection with the two witnesses 11:13
 - H 1 The nature of the judgment: And in that hour there was a great earthquake,
 - H 2 The extent of the damage: and a tenth of the city fell;
 - H 3 The fatalities: seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake,
 - H 4 The response: and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.
- G 8 The completion of the second woe: The second woe²²¹ is past; behold, the third woe is coming quickly. 11:14
- D 7 The seventh trumpet 11:15-19
 - E 1 The sounding of the seventh trumpet: Then the seventh angel sounded; 11:15a
 - E 2 The loud voices in heaven: and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, 11:15b
 - G 1 "The kingdom of the world has become *the kingdom* of our Lord and of His Christ; ²²²
 - G 2 and He will reign forever and ever."
 - E 3 The worshipful praise of the twenty four elders 11:16-18

²²¹ Rev. 11:14 - second woe: See the note on the triple woe at 8:13. For the third woe, go to Rev. 12:12.

²²² Rev. 11:15 - kingdom of the world ([2889](#) - *kosmos*): The world was originally God's kingdom. The kingdom of the world was instituted by Satan with a *coup de tat* in Genesis 3. In Matt. 4:8-9 Satan offers the kingdoms of the world to Jesus in exchange for worship, which, of course, the latter refused. Looking ahead to His impending death, Jesus said in John 12:31, "Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out." That which is cause for such praise in Rev. 11:15 is that the kingdom of the world (kingdoms of this world - AV), has now, with God's vengeful judgment of that same *kosmos*, been transformed into the kingdom of God. The difference seems to be the activity of God. With the exception of the great Deluge of Genesis, God has not actively entered into judging the world as a whole. Beginning with the [Great Tribulation](#), God actively enforces His standards upon the world. This active phase will continue on through human history as He installs His King upon Mount Zion (Rev. 20:4-6, cf. Psalm 2:4-6), destroys the existing universe (2 Pet. 3:10-12), and creates a New Universe in which only righteousness exists (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1-8).

- G 1 Their number: And the twenty-four elders, 11:16
- G 2 Their position: who sit on their thrones before God,
- G 3 Their humility: fell on their faces
- G 4 Their worship: and worshiped God, saying, 11:17-18
 - H 1 Their thanks: "We give You thanks, 11:17a
 - H 2 Their description of God
 - J 1 O Lord God,
 - J 2 the Almighty,
 - J 3 who are and who were,
 - H 3 The reasons for their thanks 11:17b-18
 - J 1 Authoritative rule: because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign.²²³ 11:17b
 - J 2 Despite international rebellion: "And the nations were enraged, 11:18
 - J 3 Divine wrath: and Your wrath came,
 - J 4 Divine judgment: and the time *came* for the dead to be judged,
 - J 5 Divine reward: and *the time* to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great,

²²³ Rev. 11:17 - begun to reign: Six things are said to happen: **(1)** God has taken to Himself great power and has begun to reign (11:17). Even though Christ does not set up His Kingdom until chapter 20, God, with the beginning of the [Tribulation](#) period, or at least with the breaking of the seals, beginning in ch. 6, has begun to reign as King of the Earth in judgment. At this point His reign is marked by fearful judgments, not the stable, peaceful society described in Isaiah 2:1-4 and 11:5 ff. The next three items go together: **(2)** The nations are filled with wrath ([3710](#) *orgizo*, vb.) (11:18). **(3)** In response, God's wrath ([3709](#) *orge*, noun) is poured out against the rebellious wrath of the nations (11:18). **(4)** Even the wicked dead cannot escape God's wrath, for the time for the judgment of the (wicked) dead has come. Though, in the scheme of Revelation, this does not happen until a thousand years later (Rev. 20:11-15), it is still part of God's reign, comparing to "the Day of the Lord" in the Old Testament. As the term *bema* ([968](#)) is used in Romans 14:10 and 2 Cor. 5:10 and refers to the evaluation of believers in Christ, the use of the term *krino* ([2919](#)) here in Rev. 11:18, especially following on the heels of God's response of wrath toward the wrath of the nations, seems to apply best to the judgment of the wicked dead. This is final judgment, with no thought of rehabilitation in view (Rev. 20:11-15). **(5)** In contrast to the judgment meted out to the resurrected wicked, only good is anticipated for the resurrected righteous – they will receive wages ([3408](#) *misthos*) – the reward for their labor. Three groups are seen as receiving their pay – the prophets, the saints, and those who fear God's name, both great and small. **(6)** Last, God's wrath against the wrathful (living) nations is explained – He will destroy those who (through their utter evil) are destroying the earth. For support of this exegesis, see J. B. Smith, *A Revelation of Jesus Christ*, p. 181. For a slightly different take, cf. J. F. Walvoord, [The Revelation of Jesus Christ](#), pp. 185-186.

- J 6 Poetic justice: and to destroy those
who destroy the earth."²²⁴
- E 4 The opening of God's temple in heaven: And the temple of
God which is in heaven was opened;²²⁵ 11:19
- G 1 The appearance of the ark of the covenant: and the
ark of His covenant appeared in His temple,
- G 2 The jolting response of nature
- H 1 and there were flashes of lightning
- H 2 and sounds and peals of thunder
- H 3 and an earthquake
- H 4 and a great hailstorm.
- C 3 Satan's strategy against God's program 12 - 13
- D 1 Satan's personal opposition throughout history as the Dragon²²⁶
12:1-17

²²⁴ Rev. 11:18 - destroy those who destroy the earth: In both instances the word destroy is [1311](#) *diaphtheiro*. It is perfectly just for those who, by their evil deeds, are destroying the earth, themselves to be destroyed. Apparently the earth is being destroyed by God because of the evil deeds of unrepentant men, and so God holds them, not Himself, responsible for destroying the earth. Liberals think that man is destroying the earth by his use of petrochemicals and carbon dioxide. What they fail to understand is that they themselves are destroying the earth because of their immorality and their rebellious deeds and attitudes against God and His Anointed King, Jesus. They are oblivious of the eternal truth that all sin is destructive.

Since no man is an island, there is no such thing as sin that only impacts the person committing the sin. Sin destroys marriages, families, relationships, societies, nations, and ultimately the world. Sin must be judged. Those who rebel against God's provision for human sin, the blood of Jesus, are doomed to suffer the wrath of God eternally.

²²⁵ Rev. 11:19 - temple, ark: Evidently there is a real temple and a real ark of the covenant in heaven, of which the ones on earth were mere copies.

²²⁶ Rev. 12:1-17 Title - Satan's personal opposition throughout history as the Dragon: The time sweep is enormous. The ongoing battle described here between Satan and God goes back in time at least before the fall of man in Genesis 3 with Satan's gaining control over a third of God's angels (Rev. 12:4). (Evidently angels witnessed God's creation of the earth [Job 38:6-7], and the fall of Satan [Ezek. 28:11-19; Isa. 14:4-14] obviously took place before Satan's temptation of Eve in Gen. 3. There is no way, however, to date the fall of Satan.)

Throughout history, Satan is the enemy of Israel, hoping to destroy Israel's [Messiah](#) by gaining control over Him (Rev. 12:4, cf. Matt. 4:1-11) and ultimately by having Him killed (Rev. 12:4, cf. Matt. 27). The cross, however, proved Satan's undoing (John 12:31; 16:11). God thwarted Satan's plan by resurrecting Christ and taking Him back to heaven (Rev. 12:5, cf. Luke 24). Even though, after his fall into sin, Satan was cast out of heaven to the earth (Ezek. 28:16-17) he still had access to heaven, at least when called to give an account of his doings (Job 1:6-7). Indeed, as the ruler of this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2), Satan delights in accusing God's people of evil (Job 1:9-12; 2:4-6; Rev. 12:10). Undoubtedly many, but not all, of his accusations are founded in fact.

Rev. 12:7-9 (cf. Dan. 12:1, acc. to Walvoord, [TROJC](#), p. 192) evidently describes a yet future war in heaven between Michael and his angels and Satan and his angels, and is apparently Satan's last-gasp attempt in the celestial realm to dethrone God. When he is defeated and thrown back down to the earth for the last time, Satan's efforts on earth to destroy Israel, God's chosen nation (12:13), and all believers in Christ (Rev. 12:10-11) will intensify. A place of safety in the wilderness is provided for Israel during the last half of the [Tribulation](#) period (Rev. 12:14). Prevented from drowning the enclave with a flood, Satan departs to war against the dispersed remnant of Israel (Rev. 12:15-17) as described in Rev. 13.

- E 1 The sign of the celestially-clothed pregnant woman – the nation of Israel 12:1-2
 - G 1 The location of the sign: A great sign appeared in heaven: 12:1
 - G 2 The focus of the sign: a woman ²²⁷
 - G 3 The appearance of the woman
 - H 1 clothed with the sun,
 - H 2 and the moon under her feet,
 - H 3 and on her head a crown of twelve stars; ²²⁸
 - G 4 The situation of the woman – about to give birth (to the [Messiah](#)) 12:2
 - H 1 and she was with child;
 - H 2 and she cried^ out, being in labor and in pain to give birth.
- E 2 The sign of the great red dragon: Satan – Subverting many of God's angels; Anticipating gaining power over God's [Messiah](#) 12:3-4
 - G 1 The location of the sign: Then another sign appeared in heaven: 12:3
 - G 2 The description of the dragon: and behold, a great red dragon ²²⁹
 - H 1 having seven heads
 - H 2 and ten horns,
 - H 3 and on his heads *were* seven diadems.

²²⁷ Rev. 12:1 - woman: The woman John saw apparently symbolizes the nation of Israel.

²²⁸ Rev. 12:1 - sun, moon, stars: Language strongly reminiscent of Joseph's dream about Jacob's family (Gen. 37:9-10), and a good Biblical reason for asserting that the woman is the nation of Israel.

²²⁹ Rev. 12:3 - dragon: The dragon John saw symbolizes Satan (12:9). Note that the dragon has seven heads, ten horns, and seven crowns. The fourth beast Daniel sees in a vision also has ten horns (Dan. 7:7, 20, 24). The beast which John sees arising from the sea also has seven heads, ten horns, and ten crowns (Rev. 13:1); and the [great prostitute](#) is sitting upon a scarlet beast that has seven heads and ten horns (Rev. 17:3, 7-13). The seven heads are interpreted in Rev. 17:9-10 as being seven mountains and seven kings; the ten horns are said to be ten kings who give their power and strength to the beast (Rev. 17:12-13). The dragon (Satan), then, is the real power behind the world-wide kingdom in the [Tribulation](#), and the beast (false messiah) is the human/demonic ruler (see notes in Rev. 17:1-18). Perhaps the best understanding of the seven heads is that they are successive kingdoms. Seiss suggests Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, and the [revived Roman Empire](#). The ten kings in Rev. 17 are said to reign contemporaneously with the beast, who is the eighth successive kingdom (see Walvoord, [TROJC](#), 250-255).

- G 3 The actions of the dragon 12:4
 - H 1 With reference to the stars
 - J 1 And his tail swept[^] away a third of the stars ²³⁰ of heaven
 - J 2 and threw them to the earth.
 - H 2 With reference to the woman
 - J 1 His stance: And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth,
 - J 2 His evil intent: so that when she gave birth he might devour her child.²³¹
- E 3 The actions of the woman 12:5-6
 - G 1 The birth of her son (Jesus Christ, God's [Messiah](#)) 12:5
 - H 1 The birth of her son: And she gave birth to a son, a male *child*,
 - H 2 The destiny of her son: who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron;
 - H 3 The ascension of her son: and her child was caught up to God ²³² and to His throne.
 - G 2 Her flight to safety during the [Tribulation](#) 12:6
 - H 1 Then the woman fled into the wilderness
 - H 2 where she had[^] a place prepared by God,²³³
 - H 3 so that there she would be nourished for one

²³⁰ Rev. 12:4 - a third of the stars: Possibly a reference to Satan's having seduced a third of the angels of heaven to rebel against God and join him. Satan's goal has always been to defeat God's program, especially upon earth, and replace it with his own (Daniel 8:9-14; Rev. 12:7-17).

²³¹ Rev. 12:4 - devour her child: Satan tried to have the infant Jesus killed (Matthew 2:7-18), tried to defeat Jesus by tempting him to sin against God (Matt. 4:1-11), and succeeded in motivating others to kill Him (John 8:37-44; 13:27-30).

²³² Rev. 12:5 - caught up to God: A reference to the [Messiah's](#) ascension to the right hand of the Father after His resurrection (Luke 24:50-51; Acts 1:9; 2:33).

²³³ Rev. 12:6 - place prepared by God: Many have speculated that this is Petra, a natural sanctuary in modern Jordan, roughly sixty miles (by air) SSE of the Dead Sea and sixty miles (by air) NNE of Aqaba. That is certainly possible, although the text states it is a site *prepared by God*. Only the future will reveal its precise location.

thousand two hundred and sixty days.²³⁴

E 4 The war in heaven: The dragon's expulsion from heaven to earth. (The beginning of the third woe – upon earth and sea!) 12:7-12

G 1 The war in heaven: And there was war in heaven,²³⁵ 12:7

H 1 Good angels: Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon.

H 2 Versus evil angels: The dragon and his angels waged war,

G 2 The impotency of the dragon in heaven 12:8

H 1 and they were not strong enough,

H 2 and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven.

G 3 The expulsion of the dragon from heaven: And the great dragon was thrown down, 12:9

H 1 His identity

J 1 Snake: the serpent of old

J 2 Overthrower: who is called the devil

J 3 Adversary: and Satan,

J 4 Deceiver: who deceives the whole world;

H 2 His expulsion

J 1 Of Satan: he was thrown down to the

²³⁴ Rev. 12:6 - 1260 days: This amounts to 42 months of 30 days each or 3.5 years. This time period evidently refers to the last half of the seven years known by Bible students as "Daniel's Seventieth Week," or more precisely as the seventieth unit of seven years spoken of in Daniel 9:24-27. The false Messiah, [Antichrist](#), head of the yet-to-be-revived Roman Empire, will make a seven-year peace treaty with Israel (Daniel 9:27), but will break his treaty by putting a stop to the sacrifices he has been permitting on the Temple Mount. This event will launch an enormous persecution of the Jewish people (Rev. 12:13).

²³⁵ Rev. 12:7 - war in heaven: Throughout history Satan has opposed and tried to defeat God. Here in a frontal attack, Satan and his demons attempt to defeat and destroy God and His angels. Believers of all ages who are in heaven at this time may well witness in awe firsthand this epic struggle. Satan's arrogance and self-delusion must be nearly infinite for him to believe he can actually unseat God, but that has been his ambition for ages (Isaiah 14:12-14).

earth,²³⁶

J 2 Of his messengers: and his angels
were thrown down with him.

G 4 The reactions to the dragon's expulsion 12:10-12

H 1 Exultation for God and Christ in heaven
12:10

J 1 The source of the exultation: Then I
heard a loud voice in heaven, saying,

J 2 The content of the exultation: The
arrival of

K1 The regnal redemptive
kingdom of God: "Now the
salvation, and the power, and
the kingdom of our God

K2 The authority of Christ: and
the authority of His Christ
have come,

J 3 The reason for the exultation

K1 The overthrow of the accuser:
for the accuser of our brethren
has been thrown down,

K2 The relentlessness of the
accuser: he who accuses them
before our God day and night.

H 2 Victorious martyrdom for believers on earth
12:11

J 1 Their victory over Satan: "And they
overcame him

J 2 The reason for their victory

K1 because of the blood of the
Lamb

K2 and because of the word of
their testimony,

²³⁶ Rev. 12:9 - thrown down to the earth: Satan was demoted and expelled from heaven after his original sin (Ezekiel 28:16), but he apparently continued to have access to heaven (Job 1-2), where he constantly accuses believers (Rev. 12:10). Here, likely at the mid-point of the [Tribulation](#) period, he will be cast down from heaven to earth, no longer with access to heaven. For this reason heaven rejoices, but woe comes upon the earth as Satan, with fury, realizes he has little time left to wrest power from God (Rev. 12:12).

- J 3 The cost of their victory: and they did not love their life even when faced with death.
- H 3 Joy in heaven: "For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. 12:12a
- H 4 The beginning of the third woe – upon earth and sea 12:12b
- J 1 The pronouncement of woe: Woe²³⁷ to the earth and the sea,
- J 2 The reason for woe
 - K1 Satan's descent to earth: because the devil has come down to you,
 - K2 Satan's wrath: having great wrath,
 - K3 Satan's expiring time: knowing that he has *only* a short time."
- E 5 The dragon's persecution of the woman 12:13-17
 - G 1 The occasion for the persecution: And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male *child*. 12:13²³⁸
 - G 2 The escape of the woman 12:14²³⁹
 - H 1 The nature of the help: But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman,²⁴⁰

²³⁷ Rev. 2:12 - woe: Evidently the third and final woe. See the note on Rev. 8:13.

²³⁸ Rev. 12:13 - dragon persecuted the woman: Having been defeated in his attempt to overthrow God in heaven, Satan intensifies his persecution of Israel, attempting to destroy God's covenant people upon earth.

²³⁹ Rev. 12:14 title - The escape of the woman: Rev. 12:14 simply mirrors Rev. 12:6. The woman is the same, the wilderness is the same, the time is the same. 1,260 days = 3.5 years (time, times, and half a time).

²⁴⁰ Rev. 12:14 - two wings of the eagle: "The two wings probably do not refer to modern airplanes but rather to God's delivering power, and are a figure of speech taken from such Old Testament passages as Exodus 19:4 and Deuteronomy 32:11-12. The flight of Israel to a place of safety was also indicated in Matthew 24:16; Mark 13:14; and Luke 21:21 (Walvoord, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary [TBKC]*, II, 959)." None can know for certain, however, what God's method of deliverance will be. If Walvoord is correct, the eagle probably does not refer to the United States. Some have suggested the place of safety in the desert is Petra (see note on Rev. 12:6). That is possible, of course, but speculative. The three afore-mentioned gospel texts speak only of fleeing to the mountains. In some respects, it seems strange for God to take His people out of the Promised Land to save them, but He has done so twice before. Jacob's family moved to Egypt for 400 years (Gen. 15:13-4; 46:2-4), and God sent His own son to Egypt for safe-keeping (Matthew 2:13-15).

- H 2 The place of safety: so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place,
- H 3 The duration of safety: where she was[^] nourished for a time and times and half a time,
- H 4 The accomplishment of the escape: from the presence of the serpent.
- G 3 The plot of the serpent 12:15-17
 - H 1 The nature of his onslaught: And the serpent poured water like a river²⁴¹ out of his mouth after the woman, 12:15
 - H 2 The objective of his onslaught: so that he might cause her to be swept away with the flood.
 - H 3 The provision for the woman: But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and drank up the river which the dragon poured out of his mouth. 12:16
 - H 4 The reaction of the dragon 12:17
 - J 1 His rage: So the dragon was enraged with the woman,
 - J 2 His war: and went off to make war²⁴² with the rest of her children,
 - K1 who keep the commandments of God
 - K2 and hold to the testimony of Jesus.²⁴³
- D 2 His opposition at the end time through the Beast coming up out of the sea – The [Antichrist](#) or False Messiah 13:1-10
 - E 1 The rise of the beast 13:1a
 - G 1 The station of the dragon: And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. 13:1a

²⁴¹ Rev. 12:15 - river: Evidently Satan will try to drown the believing remnant of Israel in the mountainous region to which she has fled. Mountain canyons provide ideal sites for flash floods. Satan will be unsuccessful.

²⁴² Rev. 12:17 - make war: Two thirds of Israelis will be killed during the bloodbath of the latter half of the [Tribulation](#) (Zechariah 13:8).

²⁴³ Rev. 12:17 - her children ... [who] keep the testimony of Jesus: Evidently a reference to believing, Messianic Jews who are scattered elsewhere.

G 2 The origin of the beast: Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea,²⁴⁴

E 2 The description of the beast 13:1b-2a

G 1 having ten horns²⁴⁵c 13:1b

²⁴⁴ Rev. 13:1 - beast ... out of the sea: To understand the beast John saw, one must go back its prophetic antecedent in the book of Daniel. In Daniel 7 Daniel was given a vision of four beasts, all of which came up out of "the great sea", undoubtedly a reference to the Mediterranean (J. Dwight Pentecost, Daniel, [The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#)). These four beasts represent four empires that conquered the Mediterranean area, including Israel, from whose perspective all Old Testament and much New Testament prophecy must be understood. The fourth beast that Daniel saw represented the Roman Empire, just as the first three represented Babylon, Media-Persia, and Greece (Dan. 2:38-40; 8:20-22). That Daniel's fourth beast has continuity with John's beast can be seen in that both beasts have ten horns (Dan. 7:7, 20, 24; Rev. 13:1; 17:3, 7, 12, 16). Daniel clearly says that the ten horns represent a subsequent development – ten kings who will arise out of the fourth beast, or kingdom, the Roman Empire. To understand the symbolism, one must understand that, though Daniel, and later John, saw the beasts at a point in time, they are composite images of developments that span scores, or hundreds, or even thousands of years.

An end-time version of Daniel's ten-horned beast, a [Revived Roman Empire](#), will see an eleventh horn rise up, overpower three of the horns (Dan. 7:8, 11, 20-24), oppose God and His people and His program world-wide (Dan. 7:25), and have influence for three and a half years (the last half of the [Tribulation](#) period - Dan. 7:25; 12:11; Rev. 11:2; 12:14; 13:5). His dominion will be terminated, and then God's Righteous Kingdom will be installed forever (Dan. 7:26-27; Rev. 20:1-6; 21:1 - 22:5).

The eleventh horn development of Daniel's Fourth Beast coincides with John's Beast out of the Sea (Rev. 13:1-10) and his Scarlet Beast (Rev. 17:3; 8-17), representing both a King and his Kingdom, the [Revived Roman Empire](#) with its pan-Mediterranean influence. Daniel's Fourth Beast (Dan. 7) and John's Scarlet Beast (Rev. 17) focus more on the (Revived) Roman **Empire**. John's Beast out of the Sea (Rev. 13) focuses more on the final **Ruler** of the Empire. This is a reference to the [Antichrist](#) or False Messiah instigated and empowered by the dragon (Rev. 13:1, 4), who is Satan (Rev. 12:9). From man's viewpoint he will be a charming, persuasive leader with unprecedented charisma. God portrays him as he really is – a ravenous beast who is arrogant and blasphemous (Rev. 13:1, 5-6), who brutally opposes the saints (Rev. 13:4, 6-7), who gains world-wide power (Rev. 13:7), and who accepts worship (Rev. 13:4, 8).

A summary of important passages referring to this world ruler include Daniel 7:8, 11, 20, 21, 24-27 (11th "horn"); Dan. 8:23-25 (the "insolent" king refers both to Antiochus Epiphanes and the [Antichrist](#)); Dan. 9:26-27 ("the prince who is to come"); Dan. 11:36-45 (the king who "will magnify himself above every god"); 2 Thessalonians 2:3-10 ("man of lawlessness," "son of destruction," "lawless one"); 1 John 2:18 ("the [antichrist](#)"); Rev. 13:1-8 (the composite beast "out of the sea"); Rev. 17:3, 7-17 (the "scarlet beast"); Rev. 19:19-20 ("the beast"); Rev. 20:4, 10 ("the beast").

²⁴⁵ Rev. 13:1 - ten horns: Other references to ten horns in the Bible: Daniel 7:7, 20, 24; Revelation 12:3; 13:1; 17:3, 7, 12, 16. (1) According to the explanation provided Daniel (7:24), the ten horns refer to ten kings who will arise out of the fourth beast, the Roman Empire, prior to the emergence of the eleventh horn, the [antichrist](#). (2) The fact that the dragon (Satan) has ten horns (Rev. 12:3) indicates that he controls and inspires these ten kings. (3) To John it is explained that the ten horns of the scarlet beast he saw represent ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but reign with the beast ([Antichrist](#)) for "one hour" (Rev. 17:12).

What does it mean? (1) When the [Antichrist](#) first appears there will be ten rulers in power who have emerged from the [Revived Roman Empire](#). What are the ten nations represented by these ten kings? In the past I have speculated as to whether certain nations in the European Union would be the ten. I now believe this is a fruitless endeavor, in the main, because the Old Roman Empire did not confine itself to Europe, but it surrounded the Mediterranean and extended eastward to the Baltic Sea and even the Persian Gulf. A conservative list of modern day countries formerly controlled or partly controlled by the Roman Empire would exceed forty (see Appendix 1 at the end of this document). Only time will reveal the identity of the ten rulers. In the [Antichrist's](#) consolidation of power, he will overcome three of those rulers (Dan. 7:8, 20). Again, it is fruitless to speculate which of these three he will overpower.

(2) Satan is hard at work manipulating events and nations to set up his counterfeit Messiah and [Millennium](#). He will succeed, but only for a short time. His powers are great, but are, of course, limited to that which God permits him (see Job 1-2).

(3) It is possible that the ten horns representing ten kings John saw (Rev. 13, 17) are the same ten kings revealed to Daniel. It is also possible, however, that the ten rulers of the scarlet beast (Rev. 17:12) are different rulers because they seem to have no historical antecedent. In Daniel 7, clearly the ten rulers emerged out of the Roman Empire prior to the appearance of [Antichrist](#). These rulers, or at least their nations had historical standing by the time of the [Antichrist's](#) appearance. The language in Rev. 17:12 is unusual. It speaks of ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but reign with the beast ([Antichrist](#)) for "one hour." In other words it almost seems as though these ten

- G 2 and seven heads,²⁴⁶
- G 3 and on his horns *were* ten diadems,²⁴⁷
- G 4 and on his heads *were* blasphemous names.²⁴⁸
- G 5 And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, 13:2a
- G 6 and his feet were like *those* of a bear,
- G 7 and his mouth like the mouth of a lion.²⁴⁹

nations amount to a development contemporaneous with the emergence of the [Antichrist](#). Some have speculated that this development refers to the ten global regions envisioned in the New World Order. These ten regions would include (1) North America, (2) Western Europe, (3) Japan, (4) Australia, South Africa, and the rest of the market economy of the developed world, (5) Eastern Europe, including Russia, (6) Latin America, (7) North Africa and the Middle East, (8) Tropical Africa, (9) South and Southeast Asia, and (10) China. In this view, NAFTA is seen, for example, as an economic predecessor of Region 1.

It is impossible to state dogmatically that this is what is meant, but this hypothesis certainly bears watching in the future. At this point, my own working hypothesis is as follows. The future will reveal which ten rulers are in power when the [Antichrist](#) emerges on the world scene. These ten rulers will be from the [Revived Roman Empire](#), which necessarily approximates the original Roman Empire. Some of these leaders will undoubtedly be European, but others could be Middle Eastern or North African. This will necessitate some sort of working agreement between Europe and Islam (see the discussion on Rev. 17), a development that seems inevitable as we watch the trends today. When the [Antichrist](#) rises to power, he will make a seven-year agreement with Israel that seems to provide her with security (Dan. 9:27). This will mark the beginning of the [Tribulation Period](#), although it will seem to be a time of peace at its inception. Half-way through the seven year treaty, he will double-cross Israel (Dan. 9:27). Perhaps it is at this time that he also overpowers three of the ten rulers of the [Revived Roman Empire](#) (Dan. 7:8, 20). At this time the [Antichrist](#) will anoint himself as ruler of the entire globe. Perhaps it is at this time that he consolidates his power world-wide by implementing the ten regions of the world and the rulers over these regions, who subordinate their authority to him for the brief time remaining (Rev. 17:12).

²⁴⁶ Rev. 13:1 - seven heads: There are two possibilities: (1) The seven heads represent the seven remaining kings after the [Antichrist](#) has disposed of three of the ten (Daniel 7:8) (see [Constable](#)). (2) They represent seven kings who headed up seven empires that span a long period of time. "Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come" (Rev. 17:9-10). In this view, the five who have already fallen include Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece. Rome represents the 6th; and the [Revived Roman Empire](#) the seventh. I personally lean toward the second interpretation, but frankly, there could be a dual meaning, with both being true.

²⁴⁷ Rev. 13:1 - ten diadems: A different sort of crown (Grk. *diadema* - [1238](#)) from the more frequent crown (*stephanos* - [4735](#)), appearing only three times in the entire New Testament. The dragon (Satan) has seven diadems on his seven heads (Rev. 12:3); the beast out of the sea ([Antichrist](#)) has ten diadems on his ten horns (Rev. 13:1); and Jesus has many diadems on His head (Rev. 19:12). Several observations are in order: (1) Obviously Satan attempts to counterfeit the authority of the Real [Messiah](#) by placing diadems on his counterfeit Messiah, the [Antichrist](#). (2) In Rev. 12:3 the seven diadems on the dragon's seven heads emphasize his policy throughout Biblical history in raising up empires that are inimical to God and conquer Israel. Those empires include Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Greece, Medo-Persia, Rome, and Revived Rome. (3) In Rev. 13:1 the ten diadems on the ten horns of the [Antichrist](#) represent his preoccupation with the ten kings who rule contemporaneously with him. (4) In Rev. 19:12, the many diadems on the head of Jesus represent His incalculable supremacy. He is the only rightful Lord of the Earth, who will rule all nations with a rod of iron (Psalm 2:9; Rev. 12:5; 19:15).

²⁴⁸ Rev. 13:1 - blasphemous names: There is continuity between the beast out of the sea (Rev. 13:1) and the scarlet beast (Rev. 17:3). Both have seven heads, ten horns, and blasphemous names. Both beasts represent the reign of [Antichrist](#), who, inspired by Satan (with his seven heads and ten horns - Rev. 12:3), has a proclivity toward blaspheming God (Rev. 13:1, 5, 6; 17:3; cf. Dan. 7:8, 11, 20, 25; 8:23; 11:36). Satan himself has an ancient history of blaspheming God (Isaiah 14:12-14).

²⁴⁹ Rev. 13:1-2 - leopard, bear, and lion: This description of the beast coming out of the sea seems to be a composite of the first three beasts of Daniel 7. The beast John saw looked like a leopard, the third beast Daniel saw (Dan. 7:6), representing Greece (Dan. 8:21). John's beast had the feet of a bear, the second beast Daniel saw (Dan. 7:5), representing Media and Persia (Dan. 8:20). John's beast had the mouth of a lion, the first beast Daniel saw

- E 3 The power behind the beast: And the dragon ²⁵⁰gave him his power and his throne and great authority. 13:2b
- E 4 The miraculous recovery of the beast: *I saw* one of his heads ²⁵¹as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. 13:3a
- E 5 The global reactions 13:3b-4
 - G 1 Toward the beast 13:3b
 - H 1 Amazement: And the whole earth was amazed
 - H 2 Allegiance: *and followed* after the beast;
 - G 2 Toward the dragon – worship 13:4a
 - H 1 The fact of worship: they worshiped the dragon
 - H 2 The reason for worship: because he gave his authority to the beast;
 - G 3 Toward the beast – worship: and they worshiped ²⁵²the beast, saying, 13:4b
 - H 1 Because of his uniqueness: "Who is like the beast,
 - H 2 Because of his military supremacy: and who is able to wage war with him?"
- E 6 The powers given to the beast 13:5

(Dan. 7:4), representing Babylon (Dan. 2:32, 38). In the order that John described the aspects of the beast he saw, it represented the culmination of three great empires of the Mediterranean world stretching back through time. These three kingdoms were ultimately replaced by a fourth kingdom, a terrible beast of Dan. 7:7 that had ten horns. Comparing Revelation and Daniel, this fourth beast is a composite of the preceding three, and refers, in Daniel, to the Roman Empire, and in certain aspects of Daniel and in Revelation 13, to a revived form of the Roman Empire. In Rev. 13:1-10, the beast emphasizes the ruler, (the [Antichrist](#)), while in Daniel 7, the emphasis is more on the kingdoms of the rulers.

²⁵⁰ Rev. 13:2 - dragon: Satan instigates and empowers the [Antichrist](#) and his regime.

²⁵¹ Rev. 13:3 - fatal wound healed: According to Walvoord, this is probably not a resurrection of the [Antichrist](#), but rather a reference to the fact that the Roman Empire seemingly had died, but is now brought back to life. Note that the beast itself is not said to have died, but one of its heads appeared "as if it had been slain" (Walvoord, [TROJC](#), 199). However, Ryrie, another conservative dispensationalist, says, "Apparently Satan will miraculously restore [Antichrist](#) to life in imitation of the resurrection of Christ. No wonder the world will acclaim [Antichrist](#)" ([RSB](#)). Pat Robertson, [TEOTA](#), pp. 294-296, agrees with Ryrie, seeing this as the assassination and immediate resurrection of the [Antichrist](#), performed by the power of Satan. The [Left Behind](#) series by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins takes the same view. The true meaning? Why not *both* a revival of the Roman Empire *and* the resurrection of the [Antichrist](#)? Time will tell.

²⁵² Rev. 13:4 - worshiped: This will be a fearful time in human history, one in which the people of the world deliberately worship Satan and his human representative. No wonder God brings devastating judgments on the world!

- G 1 Great, yet evil communication skills
 - H 1 There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words
 - H 2 and blasphemies,
- G 2 Authority: and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him.²⁵³
- E 7 The antagonism of the beast toward God, His people, and His program 13:6-10
 - G 1 The anti-God blasphemy of the beast: And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, 13:6
 - H 1 to blaspheme²⁵⁴ His name
 - H 2 and His tabernacle, *that is*, those who dwell in heaven.
 - G 2 The global dictatorship of the beast 13:7
 - H 1 To destroy believers: It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them,
 - H 2 To rule the entire earth: and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him.²⁵⁵
 - G 3 The worship ascribed to the beast 13:8
 - H 1 The universal extent: All who dwell on the earth will worship him,
 - H 2 The exceptions: *everyone* whose name has not been written from the foundation of the

²⁵³ Rev. 13:5 - authority: Though this evil world ruler has authority from Satan (13:2), yet the precise time-limit of three-and-a-half years indicates his ultimate authority or permission comes only from God. God is never the author of evil (James 1:13), but, just as He permitted Satan in Job 1-2 to wreak havoc against Job, yet only within prescribed limits, so God will permit this evil ruler to wreak havoc upon the earth, yet only within prescribed limits. In both cases, a higher glory to God ensues.

The conundrum behind all these questions is why God permitted evil in the first place. The standard answer is that, without evil, we would never have seen God's grace, mercy, love, redemption, and justice as displayed in Jesus as we now see it. Perhaps the point of the exercise in Revelation 13 is to prove to man and the angels that, when given his best opportunity, man (and Satan) can only bring the world to ruin. Only God can accomplish good for man and for the cosmos!

²⁵⁴ Rev. 13:6 - blaspheme His name ... and ... those who dwell in heaven. To blaspheme is "to speak against someone in such a way as to harm or injure his or her reputation" ([Louw and Nida](#)). The [Antichrist](#) deliberately slanders God, His angels, and saints up in heaven. Those on the earth who worship the [Antichrist](#) join him in blaspheming God (Rev. 16:9, 11, 21).

²⁵⁵ Rev. 13:7 - it was given. The authority comes from Satan (13:2), yet ultimately, from God.

world in the book of life²⁵⁶ of the Lamb who has been slain.

G 4 The warnings connected with the beast 13:9-10

- H 1 Regarding spiritual discernment: If anyone has an ear, let him hear. 13:9
- H 2 Regarding the predestination of captivity: If anyone *is destined* for captivity, to captivity he goes;²⁵⁷ 13:10
- H 3 Regarding reciprocal capital punishment: if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed.²⁵⁸
- H 4 Regarding the consolation for the saints: Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints.²⁵⁹

D 3 His opposition at the end time through the Beast out of the earth – the False Prophet 13:11-18

- E 1 The rise of the beast: Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth;²⁶⁰ 13:11

²⁵⁶ Rev. 13:8 - *everyone* whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the [book of life](#): Apparently God has a [book of life](#) in which have been written, from the foundation of the world, the names of all those who will eventually trust in Him, and, after the coming of Christ, trust in Him (Jesus). This is election, pure and simple. There will be some in the [Tribulation](#) who are not yet believers. But they will not worship the beast, for their names are written in the [Book of Life](#). At the proper moment, they will trust in Jesus, demonstrating their prior election. Everyone whose name is not written in the Lamb's [Book of Life](#) will worship this evil ruler. The reader may respond, "How do I know if my name is written in the [Book of Life](#)?" The answer? Do you desire to trust in Jesus? Do so! And don't wait until you have died. It will be too late, then!

²⁵⁷ Rev. 13:10 - If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes: A passage difficult to interpret, it probably serves as a consolation to saints who will be imprisoned. Their tormentors who imprison them will themselves be imprisoned. Knowing that justice will ultimately triumph, believers must remain steadfast in their faith.

²⁵⁸ Rev. 13:10 - if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed: Also difficult to interpret, this passage probably serves as a consolation to saints who will be put to death. Their tormentors who execute them will themselves be executed. Knowing that justice will ultimately triumph, believers must remain steadfast in their faith. This probably refers to the fact that all unbelievers, whose names have not been written in (lit.) "the book of the life" (Rev. 13:8), will be put to death at Christ's return and sentenced to eternal imprisonment in the [lake of fire](#). Note the connection between not having one's name written in the [book of life](#) followed by terrible judgment in this passage (Rev. 13:8-10) and also at the end of time as we now know it (Rev. 20:12-15). See also Matthew 25:31-46.

²⁵⁹ Rev. 13:10 - Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints: Those who hear this message are believers. They must realize that they will almost inevitably face imprisonment and / or death because of their faith in Christ during this terrible [Tribulation](#) period. Saints must persevere and keep believing in Jesus. This is a good example of the Calvinist doctrine of "the perseverance of the saints." The saints must persevere, and the saints will persevere.

²⁶⁰ Rev. 13:11 - another beast coming up out of the earth: The false prophet (see Rev. 16:13; 19:20; 20:10), or spokesman on behalf of the world ruler. He is described in Rev. 13:11-18. Much as John the Baptist pointed to Christ in His first coming, the false prophet directs the attention of the world toward the false messiah. The significance of this second beast's rise from the earth (Rev. 13:11), as opposed to the first beast's rise from the sea (Rev. 13:1) is not certainly known, though many attempt an explanation. Again, no matter how sophisticated man

- E 2 The description of the beast
 - G 1 and he had two horns like a lamb
 - G 2 and he spoke as a dragon.²⁶¹
- E 3 The authority of the beast 13:12
 - G 1 Delegated authority: He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence.
 - G 2 Religious authority: And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed.
- E 4 The supernatural power of the beast 13:13
 - G 1 He performs great signs,
 - G 2 so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men.
- E 5 The deception of the beast 13:14-15a
 - G 1 Through miraculous signs: And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, 13:14a
 - G 2 Through an image to the first beast 13:14b-15a
 - H 1 The construction of the image: telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had²⁶² the wound of the sword and has come to life.
 - H 2 The animation of the image 13:15a
 - J 1 Breath (or spirit): And it was given

may view this official, God portrays him to Daniel as the destructive, carnivorous animal that he really is.

²⁶¹ Rev. 13:11 - (this beast) ... had two horns like a lamb and he spoke as a dragon: Though he appears to most humans as innocuous and as innocent as a lamb, the words he speaks are inspired by Satan himself.

²⁶² Rev. 13:14 - wound of the sword: Apparently someone will assassinate the world ruler (Rev. 13:2, 12). Miraculously, the ruler will be resurrected, presumably through the power of Satan. Whether Satan enables him to survive a wound that by all medical knowledge should have been fatal, or whether Satan is permitted the power to raise him from the dead, the perception is that he has risen from the dead, just as Jesus actually did. Does the use of the sword indicate that Muslims will abduct him and attempt to behead him? That is a real possibility in the light of biblical prophecy (see Rev. 17) and the current geopolitical climate. Assuming that we are very near the end of the present age, and that the world ruler will have to make concessions to the Muslim countries adjacent the Mediterranean to achieve his short-term objective of acquiring power over the [Revived Roman Empire](#), and that, to gain even greater power in his bid to conquer the earth, the [Antichrist](#) will double-cross the Arab world, it is understandable that an assassination would be attempted. One cannot be dogmatic. Time will tell.

to him to give breath ²⁶³ to the image of the beast,

J 2 Conversation: so that the image of the beast would even speak

E 6 The control of the beast 13:15b-17

G 1 Through death for refusal to worship: and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed. 13:15b

G 2 Through exclusion from economics for non-possession of the mark of the beast 13:16-17

H 1 The extent of his economic control: And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, 13:16

H 2 The logistics of his economic control: to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead,

H 3 The parameters of his economic control 13:17

J 1 Those excluded from economic participation: and *he provides* that no one will be able to buy or to sell,

J 2 Those included in economic participation: except the one who has the mark, *either* the name of the beast or the number of his name.

E 7 The number of the beast 13:18

G 1 The need for wisdom in understanding the number of the beast: Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast,

G 2 The significance of the number of the beast: for the number is that of a man; ²⁶⁴

²⁶³ Rev. 13:15 - breath: the word is *pneuma* (4151), which means spirit or breath. 2 Thess. 2:9-10 indicates that the false messiah will act "... in accordance with the activity of Satan, with all powers and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish" Apparently the false prophet will have similar powers.

²⁶⁴ Rev. 13:18 - number ... man: A more literal rendering: "for [the] number is [that] of man." It seems that, to human minds, this numbering system identified as the mark of the beast constitutes a notable measure of success in human endeavor and achievement. The best that man can accomplish, apart from God, is to bind the entire world in economic and religious slavery. Men will think that this identification system is an unprecedented success in human endeavor. God sees it as slavery for the entire human race.

- G 3 The digits of the number of the beast: and his
number is six hundred and sixty-six.²⁶⁵
- C 4 Songs and messages of praise, evangelism, and judgment 14
- D 1 The complex, new song sung in heaven by the [144,000](#) – The first
fruits of saved Israel having exhibited faithfulness unto death 14:1-
5.
- E 1 The scene on heavenly Mount Zion 14:1
- G 1 The Lamb: Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb
was standing on Mount Zion,²⁶⁶

²⁶⁵ Rev. 13:18 - six hundred sixty six: We are told that the number requires wisdom and understanding – therefore it evidently symbolizes something. The number is said to be that of man, hence it evidently symbolizes man.

We know that man was the crown of God's creation on the sixth day. We know from Genesis and Revelation that seven is God's number: He has instituted a seven day week by creating the earth in six and resting on the seventh. He instituted the Sabbath and the sabbatical year. He punished Judah with a seventy-year captivity and outlined the course of history for Israel in units of seventy sevens. In Revelation He has seven spirits, a seven-sealed book, seven angels blowing seven trumpets and seven angels pouring out seven vials of wrath upon the earth.

The man in question, the beast, is as anti-God and anti-Christ as he can be. Therefore the number 666 symbolizes the best that man can produce apart from God. The results are appalling. The ultimate man apart from God – the false Messiah – is controlled and empowered by Satan, blasphemous, rebellious, filled with incredible pride, supremely controlling, demanding worship, and murderous. The best that man can produce or accomplish apart from God is man's worst nightmare.

Some have detected in bar codes the number 666, stating that the beginning of a bar code is 6, as is the middle and the end. I have seen this demonstrated, but not consistently. We do know that we have the technology today to implant a tiny computer chip in a person's forehead or the back of his hand. Conceivably, a person could walk up to a scanner or place his hand underneath a scanner as a condition permitting commerce, much as we use a credit or debit card today. Of course, this will also provides the government with powers of identification and perhaps even satellite tracking! Time will tell how this eventuates.

²⁶⁶ Rev. 14:1 - Mt. Zion: Does John mean heavenly [Mt. Zion](#) or earthly [Mt. Zion](#)? Walvoord (*TROJC*, 213-215) takes it as earthly [Mt. Zion](#) because he believes the [144,000](#) were sealed to be protected, and that they thus will not die, surviving the entire [tribulation](#). Therefore, in his view, [Mt. Zion](#) cannot mean heavenly [Mt. Zion](#), for that would mean those sealed had died. J. D. Pentecost (*Things To Come*, p. 300) agrees with Walvoord. Walvoord states further that the term "first fruits", as applied to the [144,000](#) (14:4), demands that they remain alive to inherit the [millennial](#) earth, excluding the possibility of martyrdom.

Ryrie (*RSB*) disagrees, saying simply that after the [144,000](#) had completed their work on earth, they are taken to heaven. In favor of the view that [Mt. Zion](#) here in Rev. 14 is in heaven are the following points: (1) If earthly [Mt. Zion](#) is in view, then Rev. 14 is chronologically out of order, for Christ has returned to earth and is standing on earthly [Mt. Zion](#) with the [144,000](#), who have survived the [tribulation](#). This is anachronistic, for Christ does not return until Rev. 19:11-21! (2) The voice/sound (note - the Grk. word is *phone*, [5465](#), throughout) is said to be from heaven in Rev. 14:2; This voice/sound is said to be like the voice/sound of rushing waters, loud thunder and harpists harping on harps. It is not stated that there actually are any harpists (or rushing waters or thunder), but only that the sound John heard compared to the sound of harpists (and rushing waters and thunder). So the antecedent of "they sing a new song" is best understood to be the [144,000](#), not an unnamed crowd or conjectured harpists. (3) The singers are said to sing before the throne in heaven. Walvoord evidently takes the position that others sing the song up in heaven, but the [144,000](#) on earth are the only ones able to learn the song. Walvoord's interpretation makes little sense, for, assuming his view, the ones singing the song (the harpists or an unnamed choir) were unable to learn it. If one can learn a song, that means one can sing it. If one is singing the song, he has been able to learn it. So evidently the only ones able to learn the song are the [144,000](#) and they are the ones singing it and they are singing it in heaven. (4) The [144,000](#) are said to be purchased from the earth. In what sense would this be true if they were still on it? (It doesn't say they were purchased from the world - *kosmos* ([2889](#))- but from the earth (*ge*, [1093](#)). This better fits the situation if, in fact, they are now in heaven. (5) If, as Rev. 15:1-3 later reveals, there are actually accompanying harps in heaven, they may well in this case (Rev. 14:2) be played by the [144,000](#). Indeed the [Tribulation martyrs](#) of Rev. 15:2 possess the harps of God and sing. Under the author's view, the [144,000](#) will, by the time of ch. 14, have been martyred and are presumably among the multitude of Rev. 15:1-3 who sing, accompanying themselves on harps. (6) The fact that the [144,000](#) are first fruits [probably of Israel] does not prevent them from being martyred, as Walvoord suggests. It only suggests that, following the [rapture](#) of the [church](#),

- G 2 The 144,000: and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand,²⁶⁷
- H 1 Their ownership by the Lamb: having His name
- H 2 Their ownership by the Father: and the name of His Father written on their foreheads.

they are the first fruits of many other Jewish people who commit to Jesus as their Messiah as part of the nation of Israel, and not as part of the Church.

Apparently then, the 144,000 were protected on earth while they performed their (presumably evangelistic, see note on Rev. 7:3) mission. Having completed their task, they were martyred, and are now (in Rev. 14) in heaven.

Another possibility is that the 144,000 sealed in Rev. 7:3-8 are a different group than the 144,000 at heavenly Mt. Zion in Rev. 14:1-5. The group in Rev. 7 is clearly comprised only of Israelis (Rev. 7:4-8), while those in Rev. 14 are said to have been redeemed from the earth and from among men (Rev. 14:3-4). Furthermore, the sealing in Rev. 7 seems to affect positively their safety, while the individuals in Rev. 14 clearly have been martyred, for they are in heaven. Against the view that there are two distinct groups is the fact that those in Rev. 7 have been sealed in their foreheads (Rev. 7:3) and those in Rev. 14 have the Father's name written on their foreheads (Rev. 14:1). Furthermore, why would such a distinctive number as 144,000 represent two different groups? It makes more sense to take the 144,000 in Rev. 7 and Rev. 14 as referring to the same group.

²⁶⁷ Rev. 14:1 - 144,000: Who are the 144,000? (1) They are identified as bond-servants (lit. slaves) of God (Rev. 7:3). (2) They are sealed in their foreheads (Rev. 7:3). This seal evidently contains the names of Jesus and the Father (Rev. 14:1). (3) They are Jewish believers, 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel listed in Rev. 7:4-8). (4) Their mission, though unstated, is evidently evangelistic, and they are successful, for an innumerable company of martyred tribulation saints are found in heaven after their death (Rev. 7:9-17). (5) They have a special affinity for Jesus, for after their martyrdom, they are seen standing with the Lamb on heavenly Mt. Zion (Rev. 14:1), and they follow Him wherever He goes (Rev. 14:4). (6) They alone are able to sing a new song of praise with spectacular accompaniment before the throne of God (Rev. 14:2-3). (7) They are celibate males who kept themselves morally pure throughout their lives on earth (Rev. 14:4). (8) They are men of high ethics and integrity – they tell no lies and are blameless in their conduct (Rev. 14:5). (9) They serve, evidently throughout eternity, as first fruits from among men to God and to the Lamb. Thus they are wholly dedicated to the Lord and follow the Lamb wherever He goes (Rev. 14:4). As first fruits, they stand as a guarantee of a greater harvest yet to come – people who will yet be redeemed and follow the Lamb from both the remainder of the Tribulation period and from the Millennial Kingdom yet to come.

Who are the 144,000 *not*? Jehovah's Witnesses believe they are an elite group, the only ones who will be privileged to live in heaven. Here is a quotation from their official web site: "To begin with, the Bible states that only a limited number of faithful Christians — namely, 144,000 of them — are raised as spirit creatures to live in heaven. Why are they given this wonderful reward? Because they make up the group that John saw in a vision who "came to life and ruled as kings with the Christ for a thousand years." (Revelation 14:1, 3; 20:4-6) Compared with the billions on earth, the 144,000 truly are a "little flock. (Luke 12:32)" (http://www.watchtower.org/library/w/2000/10/1/article_02.htm, viewed ca. 2007. This link is no longer valid as of Aug. 30, 2016.)

Members of the Watchtower Society are wrong on several counts. (1) The 144,000 are Jewish believers (Rev. 7:1-8) sealed during the Tribulation period, not rewarded Christians of the Church Age. (2) Resurrection does not eventuate in disembodied spirits. Paul reveals that in the resurrection, the bodies of believers will be heavenly, not earthly; imperishable, not perishable; glorious, not dishonorable; powerful, not weak; and spiritual, not natural (1 Cor. 15:35-49), for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 15:50). Resurrection bodies will be of a different order, to be sure, but they are still *bodies*! (See also Dan. 12:2-3; 1 Cor. 15:51-58; 1 Thess. 4:13-18.) The best example of a resurrected body is that which Jesus exhibited after His resurrection (Matt. 28:9-20; Luke 24:15-51; John 20:14 - 21:12; Acts 1:1-9). (3) The 144,000 are not identical with the group who come to life and rule with Christ a thousand years (Rev. 20:4-6). They are, I believe, a part of the group, but the group is much larger than 144,000, for it consists of an innumerable multitude of believers killed during the Tribulation period and resurrected to enter the Millennial Kingdom of Christ (Rev. 7:9-17; 20:4-6). In addition to the Tribulation saints who appear on the Millennial earth, resurrected Old Testament saints will be present (Dan. 12:2-3), as will resurrected New Testament believers, the Church, the Bride of Christ (Rev. 19:7-9). (4) Contrary to what Jehovah's Witnesses (and most Christians) believe, neither the 144,000, nor believers in general will, after the creation of the New Heaven and New Earth (Rev. 21:1-4; 21:9 - 22:5), spend much, if any, time in heaven. God the Father and Jesus the Lamb will come down to the New Earth to make their eternal abode with man in the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven to or near the New Earth. If God and Jesus are in the New Jerusalem, why would anyone want to be up in heaven?

E 2 The sounds from heavenly Mount Zion 14:2-5

G 1 The description of the sound/voice 14:2

H 1 The origin of the sound/voice: And I heard a voice²⁶⁸ from heaven,

H 2 The description of the sound/voice

J 1 like the sound of many waters

J 2 and like the sound of loud thunder,

J 3 and the voice which I heard *was* like *the sound* of harpists playing on their harps.

G 2 The description of the song 14:3

H 1 The novelty of the song: And they sang^ a new song

H 2 The audience of the song

J 1 before the throne

J 2 and before the four living creatures

J 3 and the elders;

H 3 The complexity of the song: and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth.

G 3 The singers of the song 14:4-5

H 1 Their gender and purity: These *are* the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. 14:4

H 2 Their devotion to Christ: These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

H 3 Their purpose: These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb.

H 4 Their integrity: And no lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless. 14:5

D 2 Angelic messages from midheaven 14:6-12

²⁶⁸ Rev. 14:2-3 - voice (/sound, [5456](#) *phone*): The voice/sound John heard was the voice of the choir of [144,000](#) singing. They were the only ones able to learn/sing this new song.

- E 1 From a first angel – **The proclamation of the eternal gospel:** Fear and worship the Creator-God because of up-coming judgment 14:6-7
 - G 1 The angel's position: And I saw another angel ²⁶⁹ flying in midheaven, 14:6
 - G 2 The character of the angel's message: having an eternal gospel
 - G 3 The targeted audience of the angel
 - H 1 Earth-dwellers: to preach to those who live on the earth, ²⁷⁰
 - H 2 Every sub-division of earth-dwellers: and to every nation and tribe and tongue ²⁷¹ and people;
 - G 4 The message of the angel: and he said with a loud voice, 14:7
 - H 1 The command to fear God: "Fear God, and give Him glory,
 - H 2 The reason to fear God: because the hour of His judgment has come;
 - H 3 The command to worship the Creator: worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters."
- E 2 From a second angel – **The announcement of the fall of Babylon:** And another angel, a second one, followed, saying, 14:8

²⁶⁹ Rev. 14:6 - angel: There is a sequence of events in Rev. 14. The setting is at or near the mid-point of the [tribulation](#). Many believers in Christ have by now been martyred, evidently with the help of Babylon. The [144,000](#), representative of martyred [Tribulation saints](#), are seen in heaven (Rev. 14:1-5). Now, three angels announce their messages. **(1)** An angel proclaims the eternal good news: Fear and worship the Creator-God because of up-coming judgments! (Rev. 14:6-7). **(2)** A second angel announces that Babylon has fallen (Rev. 14:8). The [Antichrist](#) has permitted Babylon to seduce the world into submitting to the religion of Babylon. Having rid himself in this manner of Bible-believing opposition, the [Antichrist](#) and his henchmen turn on Babylon and destroy her (see Rev. 17:16-18; 18:1-24; 19:1-3). Having eliminated the global false religion, and having set himself up as the [Messiah](#), God-come-in-the-flesh, the [Antichrist](#) then decreed that all the world must worship him if they wish to eat and transact business (Rev. 13:8-18)! **(3)** Now a third angel warns against worshipping the beast ([Antichrist](#)) and his image and taking his mark (Rev. 14:9-11). Anyone who does so will drink of the wine of God's wrath and will be tormented forever with fire and brimstone (sulphur) (see also Rev. 20:10-15).

²⁷⁰ Rev. 14:6 - angel ... gospel ... to preach to those who live on the earth: Though the [144,000](#) Jewish evangelists have been removed from the earth, God makes sure there is someone to proclaim the good news of redemption to people on the now Satanically ruled earth. This angel becomes God's mobile, celestial public-address medium!

²⁷¹ Rev. 14:6 - every ... tongue: This angel flying in midheaven proclaims the eternal good news in such a way that every linguistic group hears him in its own language!

- G 1 His prediction of the fall of Babylon: "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great,
- G 2 His reason for the fall of Babylon: she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality."²⁷²
- E 3 From a third angel – **The warning against allegiance to the beast** for fear of drinking the wrath of God: Then another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, (14:9a) 14:9-12
 - G 1 The conditions for drinking the wrath of God: "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, 14:9b
 - G 2 His prediction of drinking the wrath of God: he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; 14:10a
 - G 3 His description of eternal torment 14:10b-11a
 - H 1 Tormented with fire: and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone²⁷³ 14:10b
 - H 2 Exposed to true holiness
 - J 1 in the presence of the holy angels
 - J 2 and in the presence of the Lamb.

²⁷² Rev. 14:8 - Babylon, immorality: This is, apparently, a prediction of the demise of the false religious system and its supporting economy and government which will dominate the earth at that time, headquartered in Babylon. In the Post-Flood era, Babylon was the starting point of collective rebellion against God (Gen. 11:1-6), and the focal point of false religion from earliest times. Apparently, the ziggurats built in Babylon subsequently were all dedicated to a false God to appease him and prevent divine judgment on the people. The main ziggurat in Babylon, for example, was dedicated to the god Marduk (Merodach in the AV) (Merrill F. Unger, *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, 1957, p. 151). Even today, the word "Easter" is a remnant of the Ishtar Gate of ancient Babylon. In the final days many presume worship will be syncretistic and inclusive, perhaps embracing pseudo-Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and the like. The present writer, however, is leaning more and more to the notion that Islam will dominate at least the confines of the Old Roman Empire and likely, for a brief time, the entire world. For further study, see "[What is the Identity of Babylon, the Great Prostitute in Revelation 17:1-19:6?](#)"

Regardless of the precise identity of this religious system, it will apparently be tolerated during the first three and a half years by the [Antichrist](#) (beast) and his administration (Rev. 17:1-15). Then he and his subordinates will obliterate it (Rev. 17:16 - 18:24) in order for him to elevate himself to the status of Deity, the final form of false worship (2 Thess. 2:1-12; Rev. 13:4, 11-15; 14:9). The final form of false worship will include worship of the beast, or world dictator, and his image (Rev. 14:9; 13:4, 11-15). God has always labeled false worship as an act of spiritual adultery or (in this case, Rev. 14:8), immorality, or fornication ([4202 porneia](#), cf. Walvoord, *TROJC*, 218). Babylon is identified in Revelation as the [great prostitute](#) or harlot (Rev. 17:1, 5, 15, 16; 19:2). The fall of Babylon is described in detail in Rev. 17-18. For more information on the increasing prominence of Islam, see the book, *[Is Fanatic Islam a Global Threat?](#)*, by Victor Mordecai, 1997. For an expose of the decades-old symbiosis of Arabs and Europe, see *Eurabia: [The Euro-Arab Axis](#)* by Bat Ye'or, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2005.

²⁷³ Rev. 14:10 - brimstone: Sulphur, which has an extremely low flash point.

- H 3 Unalleviated suffering: "And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever;²⁷⁴ 14:11a
- H 4 Deprivation of rest: they have no rest day and night,
- G 4 His reiteration of those who experience the wrath of God 14:11b
 - H 1 those who worship the beast and his image,
 - H 2 and whoever receives the mark of his name."
- G 5 The requisite for preservation from the wrath of God – longsuffering persistence in obedience and faith: Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. 14:12
- D 3 The voice from heaven: Blessings upon the martyrs 14:13
 - E 1 The blessing of believers' deaths as escape from the [Tribulation](#): And I heard a voice²⁷⁵ from heaven, saying, "Write, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord'²⁷⁶ from now on!" "
 - E 2 The blessing of rest: "Yes," says the Spirit, "so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them."
- D 4 The bloody harvest of the grapes of wrath on earth as ordered from heaven 14:14-20
 - E 1 The harvest of Christ (one like a son of man) 14:14-16
 - G 1 The description of Christ 14:14
 - H 1 His situation: Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud
 - H 2 His designation: *was* one like a son of man,

²⁷⁴ Rev. 14:11 - forever and ever: The judgment that awaits the human who worships the [Antichrist](#) and his image is beyond man's worst nightmare: (1) He will experience God's undiluted, angry wrath (already in the [Tribulation](#) period). (2) He will suffer the agony of being burned with fire mixed with noxious sulphur. (3) He will be fully conscious of God's holy angels and Jesus, whose sacrifice he had rejected. (4) Their tormented burning will last into eternity. (5) They will never find rest. There is no antidote for worshipping the beast and his image.

²⁷⁵ Rev. 14:13 - voice from heaven: Unless otherwise identified, it is best to take this voice as God's voice.

²⁷⁶ Rev. 14:13 - die in the Lord: "Better Red than Dead" was the cry of many in the United States during the cold-war era of the 1950's and 60's. It was better, they thought, to appease and submit to the Communists than to be killed. Most in the [Tribulation](#) period will say the same. "Better to worship the [Antichrist](#) than be killed!" But they will be eternally wrong. Multitudes who choose to trust in Jesus and remain true to him will resist the temptation to worship the [Antichrist](#). They will be executed, but their death will provide them with blessed relief in the present and untold blessing throughout eternity. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

277

- H 3 His sovereignty: having a golden crown on His head
- H 4 His judgment: and a sharp sickle in His hand.
- G 2 The command of an angel from the temple in heaven 14:15
 - H 1 The origin of the angel: And another angel²⁷⁸ came out of the temple,
 - H 2 The urgency of the angel: crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud,
 - H 3 The command of the angel: "Put in your sickle and reap,"²⁷⁹
 - H 4 The reasoning of the angel: for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe."
- G 3 The judgment conducted by Christ 14:16
 - H 1 His swinging of the sickle: Then He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth,
 - H 2 The harvest of the earth: and the earth was reaped.
- E 2 The bloody, wrathful harvest of an angel 14:17-20
 - G 1 The approach of another sickle-bearing angel from the temple in heaven
 - H 1 His approach: And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven,
 - H 2 His possession: and he also had a sharp sickle. 14:17
 - G 2 The instructions of yet another angel to harvest the earth 14:18
 - H 1 His power: Then another angel, the one who

²⁷⁷ Rev. 14:14 - son of man: A Messianic title, referring to Jesus Christ.

²⁷⁸ Rev. 14:15 - another angel: another of the same kind as described in Rev. 14:6, 8, 9, 17, 18.

²⁷⁹ Rev. 14:15 - "Put in your sickle and reap": It is not to be assumed that a mere angel orders Christ around, but only that the angel is passing on a command from God the Father to Christ the Son. sickle: The two-fold sequence of references to sickles, first, as wielded by Christ (Rev. 14:14-16), and then as wielded by an angel (Rev. 14:17-19), increases the dramatic effect and the sense of the grim gore of judgment upon humans.

- has power over fire,
- H 2 His origin: came out from the altar;
- H 3 His urgency: and he called with a loud voice
- H 4 His audience: to him who had the sharp sickle, saying,
- H 5 His command: "Put in your sharp sickle and gather *the clusters from* the vine of the earth,
- H 6 His reason: because her grapes are ripe."
- G 3 The compliance of the sickle-bearing angel 14:19
 - H 1 The swing: So the angel swung his sickle to the earth
 - H 2 The gathering: and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth,
 - H 3 The consignment: and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God.
- G 4 The results of the harvest 14:20
 - H 1 The treading: And the wine press was trodden outside the city,
 - H 2 The flow of blood: and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles,²⁸⁰ for a distance of two hundred miles.
- C 5 Seven angels' pouring out of the seven last plagues of God's wrath from seven bowls 15 - 16
 - D 1 The introduction to the seven bowls of wrath 15
 - E 1 The identification of a great sign in heaven 15:1
 - G 1 The magnitude of the sign: Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous,
 - G 2 The identity of the sign: seven angels who had seven plagues,
 - G 3 The significance of the sign: *which are* the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished.

²⁸⁰ Rev. 14:20 - blood ... bridles: The gory effect of Christ and the angel both swinging their sickles over the earth is a human blood bath flowing for a distance of 1,600 stadia (180 miles) near or around the city of Jerusalem. It is probably not meant that the blood is as deep as a horse's bridle, but that there is so much blood that when horses are maneuvered in the carnage, the blood spatters as high as their bridles (see Walvoord, [TBKC](#)). The reference to horses may suggest that, with the Middle East's oil infrastructure in flames (see the discussion in Rev. 17:16 - 19:4), causing a world-wide shortage of petroleum, horses are necessarily requisitioned for use in warfare.

E 2 The great choir 15:2-4

G 1 The setting for the choir: And I saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, 15:2

G 2 The participants in the choir: and those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and the number of his name,

G 3 The position of the choir: standing on the sea of glass,

G 4 The accompaniment for the choir: holding harps of God.

G 5 The worship of the choir 15:3-4

H 1 The songs of the choir 15:3

J 1 And they sang^ the song of Moses, the bond-servant of God,

J 2 and the song of the Lamb, saying,

H 2 The greatness of God's works: "Great and marvelous are Your works, O Lord God, the Almighty;

H 3 The righteousness of God's ways: Righteous and true are Your ways, King of the nations!

H 4 The wisdom of worship: "Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; 15:4

H 5 The inevitability of worship: For ALL THE NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE YOU,

H 6 The cause for worship: FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUS ACTS HAVE BEEN REVEALED."²⁸¹

E 3 The preparation of the angels 15:5-8

G 1 The opening of the Holy of Holies of the Heavenly Tabernacle: After these things I looked, and the

²⁸¹ Rev. 15:4 - have been revealed: lit. "were revealed" (Grk. [Aorist Passive](#) of *phanerōō*, [5319](#)). God's righteous acts of judgment and mercy were revealed in the plagues and the everlasting gospel that preceded. This portion of the heavenly song (Rev. 15:4) appears to be a quotation from Ps. 86:9-10. The choir's song in Rev. 15:4 anticipates the time when all nations will come and worship God, both in the [Millennial Kingdom](#) (Pss. 2:8-9; 24:1-10; 66:1-4; 72:8-11; 86:9; Isa. 2:2-4; 9:6-7; 66:18-23; Jer. 10:7; Dan. 7:14; Zeph. 2:11; Zech. 14:9 – Walvoord, [TBKC](#)) and, for eternity, in the [New Earth](#) (Rev. 21:22-26; 22:3-4).

temple of the tabernacle of testimony²⁸² in heaven was opened, 15:5

G 2 The presentation of the seven angels 15:6

H 1 The identity of the angels: and the seven angels who had the seven plagues 15:6

H 2 The origin of the angels: came out of the temple,

H 3 The clothing of the angels

J 1 clothed in linen, clean *and* bright,

J 2 and girded around their chests with golden sashes.

G 3 The utensils given the seven angels 15:7

H 1 The source of the bowls: Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels

H 2 The contents of the bowls: seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever.

G 4 The overwhelming display in the Holy of Holies in Heaven 15:8

H 1 The filling with smoke: And the temple was filled with smoke

H 2 The source of the smoke: from the glory of God and from His power;

H 3 The effect of the smoke: and no one was able to enter the temple

H 4 The duration of the smoke: until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

D 2 The pouring out on the earth of the seven bowls of God's wrath 16

E 1 **The first bowl** poured upon the earth: A malignant sore upon all men possessing the mark of the beast and worshiping him 16:1-2

G 1 The command 16:1

²⁸² Rev. 15:5 - tabernacle of testimony: A reference to the temple (Rev. 15:6) in heaven, after which the earthly tabernacle (Exodus 25-31; 335-39) and temple (1 Kings 5-8; Ezekiel 40-46) were modeled. The word testimony refers to the Word of God housed in the tabernacle, the basis on which the world below, having violated God's Word, was about to be judged ([Constable](#)).

- H 1 The source of the command: Then I heard a loud voice from the temple, saying to the seven angels,
- H 2 The essence of the command: "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God."
- G 2 The pouring of the bowl: So the first *angel* went and poured out his bowl 16:2
- G 3 The target of the bowl: on the earth;
- G 4 The effect of its contents: and it became a loathsome and malignant sore
- G 5 The selectivity of its contents
 - H 1 on the people who had the mark of the beast
 - H 2 and who worshiped his image.
- E 2 **The second bowl** poured upon the sea: The sea becomes like blood; the death of all marine life 16:3
 - G 1 The pouring of the bowl: The second *angel* poured out his bowl
 - G 2 The target of the bowl: into the sea,
 - G 3 The effect of its contents
 - H 1 and it became blood like *that* of a dead man;
 - H 2 and every living thing in the sea died.²⁸³
- E 3 **The third bowl** poured upon rivers and springs: Fresh water becomes blood – God justly gives blood-shedding humans blood to drink! 16:4-7
 - G 1 The pouring of the bowl: Then the third *angel* poured out his bowl 16:4
 - G 2 The target of the bowl: into the rivers and the springs of waters;
 - G 3 The effect of its contents: and they became blood.
 - G 4 The approving reactions to the bowl 16:5-7
 - H 1 From the angel of the waters: And I heard

²⁸³ Rev. 16:3 - every living thing in the sea died: Environmentalists will howl at God's destruction of marine life. They will be unwilling to admit that their own evil acts and those of the entire world are the reason for the devastation.

the angel of the waters saying, (16:5a) 16:5-6

J 1 His ascription of righteousness to God: "Righteous are You, who are and who were, O Holy One, 16:5b

J 2 His example of righteousness: because You judged these things;

J 3 His citation of the blood-thirstiness of the earth: for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, 16:6

J 4 His observation of the poetic justice of God: and You have given them blood to drink.²⁸⁴

J 5 His pronouncement of fairness: They deserve it."

H 2 From the altar: And I heard the altar saying, "Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments." 16:7

E 4 The fourth bowl poured upon the sun: Men are scorched with heat and blaspheme God unrepentantly 16:8-9

G 1 The pouring of the bowl: The fourth *angel* poured out his bowl 16:8

G 2 The target of the bowl: upon the sun, and it was given to it to scorch men with fire.

G 3 The effect of its contents: Men were scorched with fierce heat;²⁸⁵ 16:9a

G 4 The reaction of men to its contents 16:9b

H 1 and they blasphemed²⁸⁶ the name of God who has the power over these plagues,

H 2 and they did not repent so as to give Him glory.

²⁸⁴ Rev. 16:6 - You have given them blood to drink: This is a superb example of poetic justice! "They" – probably referring back to those "who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image" (Rev. 16:2) – had "poured out the blood of the saints and prophets" (Rev. 16:6), and now they were being paid back by God for their blood lust. As the "angel of the waters" stated, "They deserve it." (Rev. 16:6).

²⁸⁵ Rev. 16:9 - scorched with fierce heat: This will be true global warming from the sun. Man's evil, not his technological advances, will be its cause!

²⁸⁶ Rev. 16:9 - they blasphemed the name of God: These arrogant, unrepentant humans join the [Antichrist](#) in slandering God, even though it is their own corporate sin that brings down God's wrath upon the earth (Rev. 13:6, 16:9, 11, 21). Moreover, "they did not repent so as to give Him glory" (Rev. 16:9).

- E 5 **The fifth bowl** poured upon the throne of the beast: his kingdom plunged into darkness, his subjects unrepentantly blaspheme God because of their pain 16:10-11
- G 1 The pouring of the bowl: Then the fifth *angel* poured out his bowl 16:10
- G 2 The target of the bowl: on the throne of the beast,
- G 3 The effect of its contents
- H 1 and his kingdom became darkened;
- H 2 and they gnawed their tongues because of pain,
- G 4 The reaction of men to its contents 16:11
- H 1 and they blasphemed ²⁸⁷ the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores;
- H 2 and they did not repent of their deeds.
- E 6 **The sixth bowl** poured out upon the river Euphrates, preparing the way for the kings of the east; the whole world's armies drawn demonically to Armageddon 16:12-16
- G 1 The pouring of the bowl: The sixth *angel* poured out his bowl 16:12
- G 2 The target of the bowl: on the great river, the Euphrates; ²⁸⁸
- G 3 The effect of its contents:
- H 1 and its water was dried up,
- H 2 so that the way would be prepared for the kings from the east.
- G 4 The response of the unholy trinity to its contents 16:13-16

²⁸⁷ Rev. 16:11 - they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and sores; and they did not repent of their deeds: Unrepentant men will experience God's wrath and will arrogantly blaspheme Him (Rev. 13:6; 16:9, 11, 21).

²⁸⁸ Rev. 16:12 - Euphrates: This [important river](#) extends 2,781 kilometers (1,730 miles) from eastern Turkey, through Syria and Iraq, and is joined by the Tigris River in southern Iraq to form the Arvand/Shatt al-Arab, which flows 200 kilometers (125 miles) into the Persian Gulf. God's purpose is to remove a natural barrier that would impede the progress of the armies of the kings of the east toward the Battle of [Armageddon](#) in the plain adjacent Mount Megiddo (Rev. 16:16). The kings of the east would include Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and perhaps southern China and southeast Asia. If horses become a significant means of transportation (see Rev. 14:20) due to the shortage of oil (see Rev. 18), the Himalayan mountains would present a significant barrier to rapid deployment for the main portion of China.

- H 1 The identity of the unholy trinity 16:13a
 - J 1 And I saw *coming* out of the mouth of the dragon
 - J 2 and out of the mouth of the beast
 - J 3 and out of the mouth of the false prophet,
- H 2 The issuance from the unholy trinity 16:13b-14
 - J 1 Their description: three unclean spirits like frogs; 16:13b
 - J 2 Their explanation: for they are spirits of demons, 16:14
 - J 3 Their power: performing signs,
 - J 4 Their targets: which go out to the kings of the whole world,
 - J 5 Their mission: to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.
- H 3 Parenthetical: The warning from Christ 16:15
 - J 1 His unexpected return: ("Behold, I am coming like a thief.
 - J 2 His blessing upon those prepared for His return: Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.")
- H 4 The success of the unholy trinity: And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon.²⁸⁹ 16:16
- E 7 **The seventh bowl** poured upon the air: an electrical storm, a record-breaking earthquake, and 100-pound hailstorms decimate islands, mountains, and cities and Babylon; men blaspheme God 16:17-21

²⁸⁹ Rev. 16:16 - Har-Magedon: Sometimes called "[Armageddon](#)." Two early Greek manuscripts read *Armagedon*. The Hebrew word means "Mount (*har*) of Megiddo." "That mountain is near the city of Megiddo and the plain of Esdraelon, the scene of many Old Testament battles" (Walvoord, [TBKC](#), 968). There will be a series of battles in the War of [Armageddon](#). Initially the earth's nations will assemble to gain supremacy. Eventually they will unite against Christ and His army, who descend to earth to wipe out all resistance in Rev. 19.

- G 1 The pouring of the bowl: Then the seventh *angel* poured out his bowl 16:17
- G 2 The target of the bowl: upon the air,
- G 3 The pronouncement with regard to the bowl: and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, "It is done."
- G 4 The effect of its contents 16:18-21
 - H 1 An electrical storm 16:18a
 - J 1 And there were flashes of lightning
 - J 2 and sounds and peals of thunder;
 - H 2 A record-breaking earthquake 16:18b-20
 - J 1 Its greatness: and there was a great earthquake,²⁹⁰ such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake *was it, and* so mighty. 16:18b
 - J 2 Its devastation upon Jerusalem: The great city was split into three parts, 16:19
 - J 3 Its impact among the nations: and the cities of the nations fell.
 - J 4 Its judgment upon Babylon: Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath.
 - J 5 Its devastation upon the islands: And every island fled away, 16:20
 - J 6 Its devastation upon the mountains: and the mountains were not found.
 - H 3 Huge hailstones 16:21
 - J 1 Their size: And huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each,
 - J 2 Their origin: came[^] down from heaven upon men;

²⁹⁰ Rev. 16:18 - great earthquake: This monstrous earthquake is so unprecedented it does great violence to the "great city"(Rev. 16:19, probably Jerusalem, mentioned prominently in Rev. 20-22), to the cities of the nations (Rev. 16:19), and to Babylon (Rev. 16:19, featured in Rev. 17 - 18). It's shock waves level every island in the sea and every mountain on every continent (Rev. 16:20)!

J 3 Men's reaction: and men blasphemed God ²⁹¹ because of the plague of the hail, because its plague was[^] extremely severe.

C 6 The destruction of Babylon, the [Great Prostitute](#) 17 - 19:4

D 1 The explanation of the [Prostitute](#), the Beast, and their relationship 17

E 1 The angel's invitation to view the judgment of the [great prostitute](#) 17:1-3a

G 1 The issuer of the invitation: Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, 17:1a

G 2 His invitation: "Come here, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot ²⁹²

²⁹¹ Rev. 16:21 - men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail: Plagues in Rev. 16 involving nature are so severe and obviously inexplicable by natural causes that men can only deduce that God is causing them. Instead of repenting, they blaspheme God. (See Rev. 13:6; 16:9, 11, 21).

²⁹² Rev. 17:1 - great harlot: [NASB](#), NKJV = harlot; NIV = prostitute; KJV = whore. Obviously, the woman John sees is a symbol of something. (1) She is identified first of all as a [prostitute](#) (*pornē*, [4204](#)) (Rev. 17:1, 15, 16; 19:2), with whom all the nations and kings of the earth and those who dwell on the earth commit acts of immorality, the verb *porneúō* ([4203](#)), which means to commit immorality ([NASB](#)) or to commit fornication (KJV) (Rev. 2:14, 20; 17:2; 18:3, 9). It is impossible that this prostitution is physical, for it is global in scope. It must, therefore, be a spiritual prostitution, which means it is a religion. Since this person John saw is labeled a [prostitute](#) with whom nations and kings commit immorality, it is a false religion which prostitutes the true worship of the true God. (2) The woman is identified, second, as a city, Babylon (Rev. 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21). This means that the woman represents not only a religion, but a political entity tied to a specific city.

Who or what is the [Great Prostitute](#), Babylon the Great (Rev. 17:1, 5)? To answer that question, I ask two more questions: (1) How near are we to the time when these events will be fulfilled? (2) If we are very near that time, what entity is present here on earth today which will most likely be able to fulfill the following criteria when the events of Revelation 17 and 18 unfold?

1. It will be headquartered in Babylon (Rev. 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21), ancient site of rebellion against God (Genesis 11:1-9). Both Isaiah (Isa. 13:19-22) and Jeremiah (Jer. 51:24-26, 62-64) predicted the city, at some point, would never be rebuilt. Today it lies in ruins. Either the city will be rebuilt, yet to fall into eternal ruin (Rev. 19:3), or else Babylon refers to an empire with both religious and political overtones. My belief is that Babylon denotes a literal city, just as [New Jerusalem](#) denotes a literal city. If this view is correct, the city of Babylon, of necessity, will be rebuilt.
2. It will be the antithesis of [New Jerusalem](#). (Compare Rev. 17-18 with Rev. 21-22.) ([New Jerusalem](#) is so named in Rev. 3:12; 21:2.)
3. It will be both a religion (it is called a [prostitute](#) – Rev. 17:1, 2, 15, 16; 19:2; compare Jeremiah 2:20-31; 13:25-27; Ezekiel 16:14-42; Hosea 1:2; 2:1-13) and an empire (it has enormous political and economic influence (Rev. 14:8; 17:2-3, 9-10, 15; 18:3; 9-23).
4. It will be a false religion, for it will oppose God by collaborating with the [Antichrist](#) (Rev. 17:3, 7), by espousing all sorts of abominations (Rev. 17:4-5), by fornicating with the people and nations and kings of the earth (Rev. 14:8; 17:2, 4; 18:3, 9; 19:2), and by opposing the followers of God (Rev. 17:6; 18:24; 19:2), and because heaven will announce and rejoice over its destruction (Rev. 14:8; 18:2, 20-21; 19:1-3).
5. It will be capable of being drunk with the blood of saints (Rev. 17:6; 18:24; 19:2), perhaps employing the method of beheading (Rev. 20:4).
6. It will, when a world-wide moral, theological and philosophical vacuum has been created by the removal of the [Church](#) from the earth (the [Rapture](#)), have the capacity for a time to dictate political and religious terms to a [revived Roman Empire](#) and ultimately to all the peoples and nations of the world (Rev. 14:8; 17:2, 15; 18:3, 9; 19:2).
7. It will have the capacity to be the source and conduit of incredible wealth worldwide (Rev. 17:4; 18:3, 11-14, 15-17, 19).

- G 3 His preliminary description of the [prostitute](#) 17:1b-2
- H 1 Her seat: who sits on many waters,²⁹³ 17:1b
- H 2 Her clientele: with whom the kings of the earth committed *acts of immorality*,²⁹⁴ 17:2a
- H 3 Her victims: and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality."²⁹⁵ 17:2b

-
8. Its capacity to dictate religion and commerce world-wide will be capable of being destroyed / neutered by fire by a world ruler and his ten kings who will have a change of heart concerning it (Rev. 17:16). Its destruction by fire in a brief time will result in financial and merchandising losses to, and thus mourning by, the kings of the earth, the merchants of the earth, and the mariners of the earth (Rev. 18:8-19).
9. Its destruction by fire will prevent the earth's merchants and merchant marine from moving their cargoes (Rev. 18:11-19).
10. Its fiery demise will be a judgment from God and cause heaven to rejoice (Rev. 14:8; 17:16-17; 18:1-2, 4-8, 20, 21; 19:1-3).

So what is the false religion of Babylon that will have enormous political influence? No one can state with certainty precisely what the political and religious milieu will be when these events are actually fulfilled. Whatever the religion, in the future it will, if my interpretation is correct, be headquartered in Babylon. In my judgment, the entity most likely to fulfill the criteria listed is Islam, which in the future will be headquartered in Babylon. One cannot be dogmatic, but at the present writing (first in 2007, and now, later, in 2019), this is my working hypothesis. For more complete Scriptural documentation supporting this hypothesis, see the article "[What is the Identity of Babylon, the Great Prostitute in Revelation 17:1-19:6?](#)"

The greatest obstacle to this view is that sequentially, in the book of Revelation, the events of Rev. 17-18 (the ascendance and demise of the religion of Babylon) take place after the events of Rev. 13 (the world-wide worship of the beast and his image). It should be pointed out that those who hold that the religion of Babylon is a syncretistic religion must overcome the same obstacle. In my view, the events of Revelation 17-18 fall chronologically before the events of Revelation 13. They are placed here, in my understanding, in order to juxtapose defiled Babylon (Rev. 17-18) with pure [New Jerusalem](#) (Rev. 21-22), separated thematically only by the [return of Christ](#) to establish his kingdom and the final judgment of the present universe and all unbelievers (Rev. 19-20).

To my Muslim friends, I urge you in the words of the voice from heaven, "Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues; for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities" (Rev. 18:4-5). I urge you to place your faith in Jesus, the [Messiah](#). As Peter informed his listeners after having healed a man with congenital lameness, "let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead – by this *name* this man stands here before you in good health.¹¹ He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, *but* which became the chief corner *stone*.¹² And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:10-12).

²⁹³ Rev. 17:1 - sits on many waters: The waters, according to Rev. 17:15, represent peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues which the false religion controls.

²⁹⁴ Rev. 17:2 - with whom the kings of the earth committed *acts of immorality*: Or, perhaps, "with whom the kings of the earth fornicated," where "fornicated" is the 3rd Person Plural [Aorist Indicative Active](#) of the verb *porneúō* (4203). It is hardly feasible to presume this is a literal prostitute and that the kings of the earth literally had sex with her. It seems more reasonable to take the position that this is metaphorical prostitution, and that she represents a false religion. Whatever this false religion is, a significant majority of the kings of the earth will embrace it. They will be prostituting themselves to a religion that worships someone other than the true God and His [Messiah](#), Jesus Christ. The [Aorist](#) form of the verb indicates a point in time at which the kings of the earth deliberately embraced this false religion.

²⁹⁵ Rev. 17:2 - those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality: Apparently the vast majority of unbelievers upon the earth will be forced (note the [Aorist Passive](#) voice of the verb *methúskō*, 3182; some Greek MSS have the verb *methúō*, 3184) to become intoxicated with the wine of her immorality (*porneia*, 4202). In other words, they will be forced to embrace this false religion. In Revelation, "those who dwell upon the earth" evidently refers to unbelievers (Rev. 3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:8, 12, 14; 17:2, 8). Believers are twice referred to as "those who dwell in heaven" (Rev. 12:12; 13:6).

G 4 His escorting of John to the place of her abode: And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; 17:3a

E 2 John's description of the [prostitute](#) 17:3b-6

G 1 Her support: and I saw a woman sitting ²⁹⁶ on [a ... beast] 17:3b

H 1 Its color: a scarlet beast, ²⁹⁷

H 2 Its nomenclature: full of blasphemous names, ²⁹⁸

H 3 Its appearance: having seven heads and ten horns. ²⁹⁹

G 2 Her clothing: The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, ³⁰⁰ 17:4

G 3 Her cup: having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her

²⁹⁶ Rev. 17:3 - woman sitting: The fact that the woman is sitting on the scarlet beast indicates that (1) the religion will control the empire and (2) the empire will tolerate the religion. It is a symbiotic relationship in which both, for a time, will benefit. A religion having enormous political influence certainly has its precedent. For example, "At its post-Carolingian peak, the Holy Roman Empire encompassed the territories of present-day Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Belgium, and the Netherlands as well as large parts of modern Poland, France and Italy." The [Holy Roman Empire](#) commenced with the coronation of Charlemagne by Pope Leo III on Christmas Day, 800, and lasted a thousand years. Even today, "[Vatican City](#) ... is a land-locked city state whose territory consists of a walled enclave within the city of Rome. At approximately 44 hectares (108.7 acres), it is the smallest independent nation in the world."

²⁹⁷ Rev. 17:3 - scarlet beast: A reference to the yet-to-be-[revived Roman Empire](#) headed up by the [Antichrist](#).

²⁹⁸ Rev. 17:3 - blasphemous names: The [Revived Roman Empire](#) and its leader will be characterized by blasphemy against God (see Rev. 13:1, 5, 6; 16:9, 11, 21; see also Daniel 7:8, 11, 20, 25; 8:23; 11:36). Satan himself has an ancient history of blaspheming God (Isaiah 14:12-14).

²⁹⁹ Rev. 17:3 - seven heads and ten horns: The dragon (Satan) had seven heads and ten horns (Rev. 12:3), as did the beast out of the sea (Rev. 13:1). The seven heads refer to seven mountains (Rev. 17:9), meaning seven empires ruled by seven kings (Rev. 17:10) which appear at different times in Biblical history. For further explanation, see the note referencing seven kings at Rev. 17:10.

The ten horns are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but will reign with the beast ([Antichrist](#)) for one hour (a brief time) (Rev. 17:12). These ten kings will probably be rulers from the yet-to-be-[revived Roman Empire](#). They will rule contemporaneously with the [Antichrist](#) in subservience to him.

Another possibility is that these ten kings will be the rulers of a global [New World Order](#). In 1974, for example, Mihajlo Mesarovic and Eduard Pestel, in a book entitled, "Mankind At The Turning Point," wrote that the world should be reorganized into 10 Super Nation States as follows: 1. North America, 2. Western Europe; 3. Japan, 4. Australia; South Africa, and the rest of the market-economy of the developed world; 5. Eastern Europe, including Russia; 6. Latin America; 7. North Africa and the Middle East; 8. Tropical Africa; 9. South and Southeast Asia; 10. China.

³⁰⁰ Rev. 17:4 - purple, scarlet, gold, precious stones, gold cup: This religious entity with political influence will be characterized by great wealth.

immorality,³⁰¹

G 4 Her name: and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."³⁰² 17:5

G 5 Her drink: And I saw the woman drunk with the

³⁰¹ Rev. 17:4 - gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality: This religious / political entity will be characterized by all manner of unholy beliefs and practices.

³⁰² Rev. 17:4 - mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH": Here, the unholy nature of this religion is spelled out: **(1)** First, it is headquartered in Babylon, which, from its inception had an aura of united nations, quasi-religious, anti-God fervor (Gen. 11:1-4). The Hebrew word Babel (Gen. 11:9), in a play on words, denotes "Confusion," after God's confusion of the original uni-language. Babylonians have always preferred its more literal, religious rendering, "Gate of God." Furthermore, in 606, 597, and 586 B. C. the Babylonians invaded Israel, deporting its people and ultimately destroying the city of Jerusalem and the temple. Ezekiel, Daniel, and Jeremiah all experienced the trauma of the Babylonian invasion. The book of Lamentations vividly paints Jeremiah's grief. Though today, the city of Babylon lies in ruins, the people and the religion of the region it represents virulently oppose Israel and Christianity. Inasmuch as it is denoted as Babylon the Great, when the events of Revelation take place, the influence of Babylon will be massive, pervading the entire earth. **(2)** Second, Babylon is described as "the Mother of Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth." We have already noted Babylon's opposition to God and the people of God. The reference to harlotry means that Babylon has historically prostituted the true worship of God and will continue to do so in the future. Babylon has always mothered false religion. Walvoord states,

Nimrod, who founded Babylon (Gen. 10:8-12), had a wife known as Semiramis who founded the secret religious rites of the Babylonian mysteries, according to accounts outside the Bible. Semiramis had a son with an alleged miraculous conception who was given the name Tammuz and in effect was a false fulfillment of the promise of the seed of the woman given to Eve (Gen. 3:15).

Various religious practices were observed in connection with this false Babylonian religion, including recognition of the mother and child as God and of creating an order of virgins who became religious prostitutes. Tammuz, according to the tradition, was killed by a wild animal and then restored to life, a satanic anticipation and counterfeit of Christ's resurrection. Scripture condemns this false religion repeatedly (Jer. 7:18; 44:17-19, 25; Ezek. 8:14). The worship of Baal is related to the worship of Tammuz.

After the Persians took over Babylon in 539 B.C., THEY DISCOURAGED THE CONTINUATION OF THE MYSTERY RELIGIONS OF BABYLON. SUBSEQUENTLY THE BABYLONIAN CULTISTS MOVED TO PERGAMUM (OR PERGAMOS) WHERE ONE OF THE [SEVEN CHURCHES](#) OF ASIA MINOR WAS LOCATED (CF. Rev. 2:12-17). Crowns in the shape of a fish head were worn by the chief priests of the Babylonian cult to honor the fish god. The crowns bore the words "Keeper of the Bridge," symbolic of the "bridge" between man and Satan. This handle was adopted by the Roman emperors, who used the Latin title *Pontifex Maximus*, which means "Major Keeper of the Bridge." And the same title was later used by the bishop of Rome. The pope today is often called the *pontiff*, which comes from *pontifex*. When the teachers of the Babylonian mystery religions later moved from Pergamum to Rome, they were influential in paganizing Christianity and were the source of many so-called religious rites which have crept into ritualistic [churches](#). Babylon then is the symbol of apostasy and blasphemous substitution of idol-worship for the worship of God in Christ (Walvoord, [TBKC](#), pp. 970, 971).

Islam, the religion that today dominates the region of Babylon, takes the position that Abraham's child of sacrifice was Ishmael, not Isaac (Gen. 22), that Jesus is a prophet, but not the Son of God, that Mohammed is the last prophet (the one predicted by Moses – Deut. 18:15-19) and therefore superior to Jesus, that Jesus did not die, but ascended to heaven on the cross.

The Bible teaches that the child of promise was Isaac, not Ishmael (Gen. 17:15-21), and Jacob, not Esau (Gen. 25:21-13; Malachi 1:2-3, cf. Gen. 28:6-9); that Jesus is the Creator of the Universe and the Son of God (John 3:16-18; Colossians 1:12-19; that Jesus died on the cross to pay for the sins of the world, was buried, rose again, and ascended to heaven, where He sits at the right hand of God (Matthew 27:1 - 28:20; Luke 23:1 - 24:52; John 1:29; 3:16; 19:1 - 21:25; Acts 1:1-11; 2:23; Romans 5:8-10; 8:34; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; 1 John 2:1-2); that God has exalted the name of His [Messiah](#), Jesus, above all other names (Philippians 2:5-11); and that there is salvation only in the name of Jesus (Acts 4:12).

(3) Third, the fact that Babylon is called "the mother of harlots," may mean not only that it is the *source* of religious prostitution, but that it is the *greatest* of all prostitutions of religion. In Middle Eastern thinking, for example, the phrase "the mother of all battles" identifies the greatest battle.

blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus.³⁰³ 17:6

G 6 Her effect upon John: When I saw her, I wondered greatly.

E 3 The angel's explanation of the beast 17:7-14

G 1 The angel's offer of explanation: And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I will tell you the mystery 17:7

H 1 of the woman

H 2 and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.

G 2 The angel's synopsis of the beast 17:8a

H 1 His time frame: "The beast that you saw was, and is not,³⁰⁴

H 2 His (demonic) origin: and is about to come up out of the abyss³⁰⁵

H 3 His end: and go to destruction.³⁰⁶

³⁰³ Rev. 17:6 - woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus: The word "witnesses" in Greek is *mártus*, [3144](#), from which the English "martyr" is derived. John outlines, I believe, a symbiotic relationship between a revived, end-time Roman Empire and a religion with political overtones. The revived, pan-Mediterranean Roman Empire will be ruled by the world ruler ([Antichrist](#) or False Messiah) supported by ten kings (Rev. 17:12), probably from the future form of the European Union, the Middle East, and North Africa. Notice that in Rev. 17:3 the woman, symbolizing a religion, rides the beast, which means that, for the time being, she controls the beast. Islam presently controls most of north Africa and most of the Middle East. Islam is making huge inroads in Europe as a result of immigration and reproduction.

If events unfolding in 2016, at the writing of this note, continue as they are, the leaders of Europe, despising Israel, distancing themselves from America, and ignoring Islamic Jihad, will continue to allow an influx of Muslims for the purpose of political correctness, the illusion of peace with Islam, for business, and for oil. Leading up to the time of the [Tribulation](#), the non-Arabic rulers of Europe will continue to cooperate with Islam. During the [tribulation](#) period, I suspect the [Antichrist](#), who gradually consolidates his power, will permit fanatical Muslims to destroy Jewish resistance and newly-converted Christians, whom he will see as a threat to his attempts to take over the entire world. This portends a terrible blood bath for those in the [Tribulation](#) period who become followers of Jesus. It is no wonder it is stated that this [prostitute](#) is drunk with the blood of the saints and the witnesses of Jesus.

³⁰⁴ Rev. 17:8 - beast ... was, and is not, and is about to come: There is disagreement among dispensational Bible scholars about the meaning. I believe this has a double reference, first, to the (Roman) empire that existed for centuries, then died out, but that will be resurrected in the end days; second, to the world ruler, who lives, is assassinated, and who is miraculously resurrected. In either event, the phrase is eerily similar to statements made about God in Rev. 1:4, 8; 4:8. Satan is ever striving to counterfeit God's program.

³⁰⁵ Rev. 17:8 - [abyss](#): Greek, *ábussos* ([12](#)). A place where certain demons are temporarily confined pending a future diabolic task on earth or final judgment. Apparently this evil world ruler is inspired and energized by a demon who comes up out of the [abyss](#). It is due to this Satanic power that the beast and his false prophet are able to perform miracles that deceive the world (2 Thess. 2:9; Rev. 13:13-15). References to the [abyss](#) in the NT include Luke 8:31; Rom. 10:7 (where Christ apparently was while dead); Rev. 9:1, 2, (in Rev. 9:1, 2 the Grk. word *abussos* ([12](#)) is translated *bottomless*) Rev. 9:11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1, 3. Satan will yet be confined to the [abyss](#) for 1000 years. See notes also on Rev. 9:1; 20:1.

³⁰⁶ Rev. 17:8 - destruction: The [antichrist](#) is destined for the [lake of fire and sulphur](#) (Rev. 19:20).

G 3 The beast's effect 17:8b

H 1 The identity of those affected

J 1 Earth-dwellers: And those who dwell on the earth,

J 2 Unrecorded: whose name has not been written in the book of life ³⁰⁷ from the foundation of the world,

H 2 The nature of the effect – amazement: will wonder when they see the beast,

H 3 The reason for their amazement: that he was and is not and will come.

G 4 The beast's heads: "Here is the mind which has wisdom. (17:9a) 17:9-10

H 1 Seven mountains: The seven heads are seven mountains ³⁰⁸ on which the woman sits, 17:9bH 2 Seven kings: and they are seven kings; ³⁰⁹ 17:10

J 1 five have fallen,

J 2 one is,

J 3 the other has not yet come; and when

³⁰⁷ Rev. 17:8 - [book of life](#): See note on Rev. 13:8. Those whose names are written in the [book of life](#) either have become believers in Christ or will yet do so. None of them will be swayed by the power and charisma of the beast (the [Antichrist](#) / world dictator).

³⁰⁸ Rev. 17:9 - seven mountains: Many have thought that this refers to the seven hills of Rome, but here, the context indicates that nations or empires are in view. Often in prophetic language the term mountain refers to a nation or empire. See also the footnote on seven kings in Rev. 17:10.

³⁰⁹ Rev. 17:10 - seven kings: These have been variously interpreted as seven Roman Emperors (Walvoord, [TBKC](#)), the seven hills of Rome (Rev. 17:9), and as merely symbolic of completeness. It is probably best to explain them as Empires prominent in Bible times. To John it was explained that, in his day, five had fallen, one is, and one will come for a little while. The five Empires that had fallen are probably Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Greece ([Constable](#)). The empire that existed in John's day was Rome. The coming empire that will exist for a time will be the [Revived Roman Empire](#). The [Antichrist](#) will initially come as the ruler of the [Revived Roman Empire](#). It is that sense in which he was, is not, and is to come (Rev. 17:8). It is also in that sense that he is one of the seven (Rev. 17:11). The ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but who will reign with the [Antichrist](#) for "one hour" (Rev. 17:12) are underlings who are puppet kings and help him administer his kingdom. The reference to the beast being an eighth king (Rev. 17:11) probably has a two-fold meaning. (1) It may mean that in his rise to power he subdues and replaces three of ten kings in power in the [Revived Roman Empire](#) when he takes over. (Daniel 7:24 says that a king will subdue three kings in his rise to power.) (2) At the same time it may also mean that he is an eighth major Biblical empire. After he has gained control of the [Revived Roman Empire](#), he will take matters into his own hands, probably at the mid-point of the [Tribulation](#) period. He will assume total control and extend his empire not merely over the regions of the Old Roman Empire, but over the whole world. In that sense he supplants the [Revived Roman Empire](#) and himself becomes the eighth major Empire from a Biblical reference point. To do that, he will have to throw off the religious / political restraints of the [Prostitute](#). Here his subservient ten kings will aid him in a brutal and fiery dismantling of her power (Rev. 17:16 - 19:3).

he comes, he must remain a little while.

G 5 The beast's identity - eighth in a succession of kings:
"The beast which was and is not, 17:11

H 1 His royalty: is himself also an eighth ³¹⁰

H 2 His relation to the seven: and is *one* of the seven,

H 3 His doom: and he goes to destruction. ³¹¹

G 6 The beast's horns – he will reign contemporaneously over ten kings: "The ten horns which you saw are ten kings ³¹² (17:12a) 17:12-14

H 1 Their future reign: who have not yet received a kingdom, 17:12b

H 2 Their delegated reign: but they receive authority as kings

H 3 Their shared reign: with the beast

H 4 Their brief reign: for one hour.

H 5 Their devoted reign: "These have one purpose, and they give their power and authority to the beast. 17:13

H 6 Their anti-Christ reign: "These will wage war against the Lamb, 17:14

³¹⁰ Rev. 17:11 - eighth: The reference to the beast being an eighth king or empire (Rev. 17:11) may well have a twofold meaning. (1) It may mean that in his rise to power he subdues and replaces three of ten kings in power in the [Revived Roman Empire](#) when he takes over. (Daniel 7:24 says that a king will subdue three kings in his rise to power.) (2) At the same time it may also mean that he heads up an eighth major Biblical empire. After he has gained control of the [Revived Roman Empire](#), he will take matters into his own hands, probably at the midpoint of the [Tribulation](#) period. He will assume total control and extend his empire not merely over the regions of the Old Roman Empire, but over the whole world. In that sense he supplants the [Revived Roman Empire](#) and himself becomes the eighth major Empire from a Biblical reference point.

³¹¹ Rev. 17:11 - destruction: The [Antichrist's](#) destiny is the [Lake of Fire and Brimstone](#) (sulphur) (Rev. 19:20).

³¹² Rev. 17:12 - ten kings: The ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but who will reign with the [Antichrist](#) for "one hour" (Rev. 17:12) are underlings who are puppet kings and help him administer his kingdom. Initially, at least, these ten kings are heads of state in the [Revived Roman Empire](#). At some point in the [Tribulation](#) period, probably around the mid-point, the [Antichrist](#), as head of the [Revived Roman Empire](#) (European Union?) will make a successful bid to extend his authority over the entire world. It is possible that at this time his administration of his New World Order government shifts from the ten kings of the [Revived Roman Empire](#) to the ten rulers of a global New World Order. In that event, the world will be reorganized into ten Super Nation-States (see the footnote on "seven heads and ten horns" at Rev. 17:3). In any event, to accomplish his world-wide objectives, he will, at some point, have to throw off the religious / political constraints of the [Prostitute](#). Here his subservient ten kings, whatever their identity then, will aid him in a brutal and fiery dismantling of her power (Rev. 17:16 - 19:3). See also the note on seven heads and ten horns at Rev. 17:3.

- H 7 Their futile reign: and the Lamb will overcome them,³¹³
- J 1 Because of Christ's supremacy: because He is Lord of lords and King of kings,
- J 2 Because of Christ's army: and those who are with Him *are the* called and chosen and faithful."³¹⁴
- E 4 The angel's explanation of the waters: And he said^ to me, "The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues."³¹⁵ 17:15
- E 5 The angel's prediction of the demise of the [prostitute](#) at the hands of the kings 17:16-17
- G 1 The identity of the kings 17:16
- H 1 "And the ten horns which you saw,
- H 2 and the beast,

³¹³ Rev. 17:14 - will overcome them: The ten kings who govern the earth as puppets of the [Antichrist](#) will have deployed their forces to Israel (Rev. 16:14, 16) and will fight against Christ when He returns to the earth to set up His Kingdom. They will fail (Zechariah 14:1-3, 12-13; Rev. 19:19-21). The translation "will overcome" is a bit anemic. The verb is the [Future](#) tense of *nikáō* ([3528](#)), and should be translated, "will conquer."

³¹⁴ Rev. 17:14 - called and chosen and faithful: the terminology seems, on the surface, to refer to believers. In Rev. 19 reference is made to the Bride of the Lamb, the [Church](#), clothed in fine linen (Rev. 19:7-8), and to "those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Rev. 19:9), probably meaning Jewish and Gentile believers of all ages who are not a part of the [Church](#). There is a further reference to "the armies which are in heaven" (Rev. 19:14, 19) who accompany Christ at His return. These armies are said to be "clothed in fine linen, white and clean," riding white horses. The fine linen of the armies (Rev. 19:14) coincides with the fine linen of the [Church](#) (Rev. 19:8), so there is at least a possibility that the [Church](#) is included in the term "armies." The Old Testament is replete with references to "Yahweh Sebaoth" (eg. Isa. 6:3, 5) usually translated "Lord of Hosts," but which literally can be translated "Yahweh of Troops." Yahweh's armies in the Old Testament consisted of angels (see 2 Kings 6:17; Dan. 10:5-13). It is unthinkable that the armies accompanying Christ would not include angels, especially since angels are specifically mentioned in connection with His return (Matthew 24:31; 25:31; 2 Thess. 1:7). So, the terms "called," "chosen," and "faithful" *may* refer to all who return with Christ to conquer and then set up His kingdom here on earth.

On the other hand, just because members of Christ's bride and members of His army all wear similar clothing ("fine linen white and clean") does not demand that they are the same group. Similarity does not demand identity. In my opinion, it is more likely that Christ's armies are not populated by members of His Bride. Angels have a long history of supernatural warfare. Humans, even resurrected humans, do not. Since those indicated in Rev. 17:14 clearly appear in a context of war, it may be best to consider those labeled "called and chosen and faithful" as angels, rather than as humans who comprise the [Church](#), the [Bride of Christ](#).

If the "called and chosen and faithful" does indeed refer to human saints in resurrected bodies, including the [Church](#), there is insufficient evidence in Scripture that these will engage in actual physical warfare. Even here (Rev. 17:14) it says that the Lamb will conquer them. In Rev. 19:21 it states that "the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat upon the horse." In other words, Christ will command the death of His adversaries at His return. Something of the physical process can be seen from Zech. 14:12-15. In that passage, it is clear that unresurrected Israelis in mortal bodies will engage in physical combat. If the "called and chosen and faithful" includes the [Church](#), then perhaps their contribution in war is spiritual, through prayer, rather than physical, through actual combat.

³¹⁵ Rev. 17:15 - peoples, multitudes, nations, tongues: The control of the [Prostitute](#) (false religion) over the globe will be vast.

- G 2 The hatred of the kings: these will hate the **harlot**
- G 3 The destructiveness of the kings: and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire.³¹⁶
- G 4 The motivation of the kings 17:17
 - H 1 The motivation from God: "For God has put it in their hearts
 - H 2 The plan of God: to execute His purpose
 - J 1 by having a common purpose,
 - J 2 and by giving their kingdom to the beast,
 - H 3 The criterion of God: until the words of God will be fulfilled.
- E 6 The identity of the [prostitute](#): "The woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth."³¹⁷

³¹⁶ Rev. 17:16 - hate the harlot ... burn her up with fire: After the ten kings ruling under the [Antichrist](#) have largely accomplished their objective of using the religion of Babylon to destroy Christian opposition, God will put it in their hearts to turn on the false religion of Babylon and destroy it. The trump card of the religion of Babylon today is oil. The references to fire in Rev. 17:16 and in Rev. 18:8-9 suggest that the ten rulers will destroy the trump card by burning up its oil fields. Deprived of its ability to move commerce and war materiel, the power of the religion of Babylon will be neutered. Supported by the ten kings, the [Antichrist](#) will himself gain power over the entire world (see Rev. 13). Deprived of oil, world-wide commerce will grind to a halt. It is no wonder that the earth's rulers, merchants and ship captains will abjectly mourn the destruction of the commercial clout of the religion of Babylon (Rev. 18:9-19). But heaven will rejoice at the judgment of the [prostitute-religion](#), which will be paid back double for her perversion of the true worship of God and her destruction of the saints (Rev. 18:20-24).

³¹⁷ Rev. 17:18 - woman...great city...rules over the kings of the earth: The woman is identified as the [great Prostitute](#), which can mean nothing less than a false religion (Rev. 17:1, 5, 15, 16). The woman represents a great city, identified as Babylon (Rev. 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21). As a great city, it will have enormous political clout because it will, for a time, rule over the kings of the earth. If my identification is correct, and the religion of Babylon is Islam, then two things will happen in the future, one of them a probability, the other a certainty: (1) Probably, Babylon will be rebuilt, and power will be transferred from Baghdad to Babylon. (2) Certainly, Islam will gain power over virtually the entire globe. There will be nothing that Europe or America can do to stop it. The trump card that Islam holds is oil. The kings and nations of the earth will ultimately submit to Islam, who seduces them to do so (Rev. 17:2; 18:3, 9) by her deceptive sorceries (Rev. 18:23) for the sake of oil and the commerce associated with oil as a vehicle of energy and transportation.

If my view is correct, Islam will gain power, with the blessing of the [Antichrist](#) and his ten subordinates, during the first half of the seven-year [Tribulation](#). [Antichrist](#) will permit Islam to help neutralize any opposition to his rule during that time (Rev. 13:7), with the exception that the nation of Israel is granted an exemption (Daniel 9:27a), permitting Israel to rebuild its temple. Incidentally, I suspect that the only way the [Antichrist](#) will be able to mollify Muslims into permitting Israel to rebuild its temple on the temple mount is to concede the rest of the world to Islam with the private promise that he (the [Antichrist](#)) will later renege on his promise to Israel. By the mid-point of the [Tribulation](#), the [Antichrist](#) and his ten puppet kings will have achieved their political objectives enough to implement their final game plan.

(1) First, he will double cross Israel and reverse himself on his seven-year treaty (Dan. 9:27b). He will enter the Jewish temple and proclaim himself to be the [Messiah](#), God-come-in-the-Flesh, and worthy of worship (1 Thessalonians 2:3-4).

(2) At the same time he and his ten henchmen will abruptly turn on Islam and destroy its capitol (Babylon) and influence with fire (Rev. 17:16; 18:8) and smoke billowing up into the heavens (Rev. 18:9, 8; 19:3). The inference is that, to destroy Islam's stranglehold over the world and to neutralize its ability to deploy itself around the world, the [Antichrist](#) and his ten puppet kings will destroy the entire oil infrastructure of the Middle East!

17:18

D 2 The description of the judgment of the [Prostitute](#) 18:1 - 19:4

E 1 The pronouncement of an authoritative angel 18:1-3

G 1 The description of the angel 18:1

H 1 His descent from heaven: After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven,

H 2 His authority: having great authority,

H 3 His glory: and the earth was illumined with his glory.

G 2 The pronouncement of the angel: And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, (18:2a) 18:2-3

H 1 The fall of the [Prostitute](#): "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!"³¹⁸ 18:2H 2 The vileness of the [Prostitute](#): She has become

J 1 a dwelling place of demons

J 2 and a prison of every unclean spirit,

J 3 and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird.

H 3 The effects of the [Prostitute](#) 18:3

J 1 The passion of her fornication: "For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed

(3) The [Antichrist](#), having asserted himself as God, will gain financial control of the world by imposing a worship of himself as the pre-condition for buying and selling. This was already described in Revelation 13:8-18.

It might be asked, "If the events in Rev. 17-18 occur in the first half of the [Tribulation](#), why are they recorded after the events of Rev. 13:8-18, which transpire in the last half of the [Tribulation](#)?" That is a good question. The answer is that, in God's providence, he wished to juxtapose the [Great Prostitute](#) - False Religion and City (Babylon) (Rev. 17-18), with the [Holy Bride](#) - True Worship and City ([New Jerusalem](#)) (Rev. 21-22). The intervening chapters (Rev. 19-20) deal with the [return of Christ](#) to smash the rebellion on the earth, His [Millennial](#) reign, the destruction of the existing universe, and the purging of all evil people at the Judgment at the Great White Throne.

³¹⁸ Rev. 18:2 - Fallen, fallen ... Babylon the great: This echoes the refrain of 14:8. Having used the false religion of Babylon to destroy much of his opposition, especially Christians (17:6; 18:24), the [Antichrist](#) and his ten kings, motivated by God, turn on the false religion and destroy it (17:16-18)! Revelation 18 details the destruction of the religion of Babylon, which, as we shall see, has enormous global economic implications.

acts of immorality with her,³¹⁹

J 2 The wealth of her sensuality: and the merchants of the earth have become rich³²⁰ by the wealth of her sensuality."

E 2 The message of a voice from heaven 18:4-20

G 1 The call for separation from the [Prostitute](#) 18:4

H 1 The origin of the voice: I heard another voice from heaven, saying,

H 2 The call for separation: "Come out of her, my people,³²¹

H 3 The reason for separation

J 1 Exemption from guilt: so that you will not participate in her sins

J 2 Exemption from punishment: and receive of her plagues;

G 2 The justification for punishing the [Prostitute](#) 18:5

H 1 The enormity of her sins: for her sins have piled up as high as heaven,

H 2 The remembrance of her sins: and God has remembered her iniquities.

G 3 The extent of punishment for the [Prostitute](#) 18:6-7

H 1 Payment in kind: "Pay her back even as she has paid, 18:6

³¹⁹ Rev. 18:3 - all nations ... kings of the earth ... immorality with her: Demonstrating the global reach of the false religion of Babylon at that time, John heard this heavenly messenger (Rev. 18:1) cry out mightily (Rev. 18:2) that, literally, "... of the wine of the passion of her immorality (*porneia*, [4202](#)) all the nations have drunk, and the kings of the earth with her committed fornication (*porneúō*, [4203](#)).” We derive our English word *pornography* from this Grk. word. The woman herself is called a [prostitute](#) or harlot (*pórne*, [4204](#)) (Rev. 17:1, 15, 16; 19:2) and lit. "the mother of the prostitutes" (Rev. 17:5). I take it that this false religion, which I suspect will be Islam, will, for a brief time, sweep over the entire earth.

³²⁰ Rev. 18:3 - merchants of the earth have become rich: The reader is given, for the first time, a cogent clue as to the motivation of the nations and kings of the earth for submitting to the false religion of Babylon. They are not sincere worshipers of the religion – their motivation is economic! All rulers are concerned about the economies of their nations. The businessmen in a nation constitute a powerful lobbying force. If there is economic prosperity, rulers' citizens are less likely to rebel and they themselves are more likely to remain in office and consolidate their own power and wealth. It will be economically expedient in that future time for the kings and merchants of the earth to partake of this false religion.

³²¹ Rev. 18:4 - Come out of her: God urges His people to come out of the false religion of Babylon so they do not partner with the religion in its grievous sins and partake of the terrible judgment of God.

- H 2 Double payment in kind
 - J 1 and give back *to her* double according to her deeds;
 - J 2 in the cup which she has mixed, mix twice as much for her.
- H 3 Poetic justice 18:7
 - J 1 Sumptuous living: "To the degree that she glorified herself and lived sensuously,
 - J 2 Demands tormenting punishment: to the same degree give her torment and mourning;
 - J 3 In view of arrogance: for she says in her heart, 'I SIT AS A QUEEN AND I AM NOT A WIDOW, and will never see mourning.'
- G 4 The severity of the [Prostitute's](#) punishment 18:8
 - H 1 Quickly: "For this reason in one day
 - H 2 Plague-stricken: her plagues will come,
 - J 1 pestilence
 - J 2 and mourning
 - J 3 and famine,
 - H 3 Fire-stricken: and she will be burned up with fire;³²²
 - H 4 Divinely and powerfully engineered: for the Lord God who judges her is strong.
- G 5 The lament of the kings of the earth in reaction to the judgment of the [Prostitute](#): 18:9-10
 - H 1 Their past involvement with her: "And the kings of the earth, who committed *acts of* immorality and lived sensuously with her, 18:9
 - H 2 The statement of their mourning: will weep

³²² Rev. 18:8 - burned with fire: It is my belief that the [Antichrist](#) and his ten-king ruling council will tire of submitting to the false religion of Babylon. Seeking to elevate their power over that of the religion, they will sabotage her power and ability to generate wealth by destroying the oil infrastructure of the Middle East.

- and lament over her ³²³
- H 3 The occasion of their mourning: when they see the smoke of her burning,
 - H 4 The fearfulness in their mourning: standing at a distance because of the fear of her torment, 18:10
 - H 5 The vocalization of their mourning: saying, 'Woe, woe, ³²⁴ the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment has come.' ³²⁵
 - G 6 The lament of the merchants of the earth in reaction to the judgment of the [Prostitute](#) 18:11-17a
 - H 1 The statement of their mourning: "And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, ³²⁶ 18:11a
 - H 2 The reason for their mourning – financial loss: because no one buys their cargoes any more – ³²⁷ (18:11b) 18:11b-13
 - J 1 Precious metals and stones: cargoes of gold and silver and precious stones and pearls 18:12

³²³ Rev. 18:9 - kings of the earth ... weep and lament over her: The earth's kings will mourn the financial losses that will cripple their economies when the oil infrastructure of the Middle East is obliterated.

³²⁴ Rev. 18:10 - Woe, woe: Three sets of double woes epitomize the abject misery of the earth over the fall of the false religion of Babylon and its economic consequences: (1) The kings of the earth lament her downfall (Rev. 18:9-14); (2) the merchants of the earth lament her downfall (Rev. 18:15-17a); (3) the members of the earth's maritime transportation industry lament her downfall (Rev. 18:17b-19).

³²⁵ Rev. 18:10 - Babylon ... in one hour your judgment has come: It must be remembered that Babylon in Revelation is not only a false religion, it is a real city. Evidently it will be rebuilt and will become a center for trade, transportation, and global wealth. Its demise will be sudden ("one hour"). Though Babylon will be afflicted with the natural disaster of an earthquake (Rev. 16:18-19), the disaster described here will be inflicted by man (Rev. 17:16, 18; 18:1-24) motivated by God (Rev. 17:17).

³²⁶ Rev. 18:11 - merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargoes any more: What is it about the destruction of a single city that could cause the earth's merchants to mourn? What is it about the destruction of a single city that could cause "no one" to buy the merchants' cargoes any more? The answer is that the destruction of Babylon the city dramatizes, I believe, a much larger destruction in the Middle East – the destruction of the entire oil infrastructure. To neutralize the political power of the false religion of Babylon, the [Antichrist](#) and his ten subordinates will destroy oil wells, oil storage facilities, oil refineries, and facilities for loading petroleum products aboard sea-going tankers. Within days of this event oil supplies around the world will be decimated and the price of petroleum will soar into the stratosphere. The transportation industry around the world will all but grind to a halt. The earth's economy will plunge into a global depression.

³²⁷ Rev. 18:11 - no one buys their cargoes any more: The destruction of the oil infrastructure decimates the transportation industry. Airplanes, ships, trains, and trucks all operate on petroleum products. As the remaining supplies of refined petroleum products are gobbled up and hoarded by nations and regions, the price of oil will skyrocket and make the cost of transportation so prohibitive that commerce will grind to a halt.

- J 2 Dry goods: and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet,
- J 3 Supplies of wood and ivory: and every *kind of* citron wood and every article of ivory
- J 4 Manufactured goods: and every article *made* from very costly wood and bronze and iron and marble,
- J 5 Commodities: and cinnamon and spice and incense and perfume and frankincense and wine and olive oil and fine flour and wheat 18:13
- J 6 Livestock: and cattle and sheep, and *cargoes* of horses
- J 7 Transportation and munitions: and chariots
- J 8 Slave trade: and slaves and human lives.
- H 3 The pronouncement of loss 18:14
 - J 1 "The fruit you long for has gone from you,
 - J 2 and all things that were luxurious and splendid have passed away from you
 - J 3 and *men* will no longer find them.
- H 4 The fearfulness in their mourning: "The merchants of these things, who became rich from her, will stand at a distance because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning, 18:15
- H 5 The vocalization of their mourning 18:16-17a
 - J 1 Their pronouncement of woe: saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, 18:16
 - J 2 Their description of the city: she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls;
 - J 3 Their marveling at her rapid demise: for in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste!' 18:17a

- G 7 The lament of the mariners of the earth in reaction to the judgment of the [Prostitute](#) 18:17b-19
 - H 1 The identification of the mariners: And every shipmaster and every passenger and sailor, and as many as make their living by the sea,³²⁸ 18:17b
 - H 2 The fearfulness in their mourning: stood at a distance,
 - H 3 Their dismay 18:18-19
 - J 1 Their sense of unparalleled loss: and were crying out as they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What *city* is like the great city?' 18:18
 - J 2 Their display of mourning: "And they threw dust on their heads and were crying out, weeping and mourning, saying, 18:19
 - J 3 Their vocalization of mourning: 'Woe, woe, the great city, in which all who had ships at sea became rich by her wealth,
 - J 4 Their marveling over her rapid demise: for in one hour she has been laid waste!'
- G 8 The call for God's kingdom to rejoice in reaction to the judgment of the [Prostitute](#) 18:20
 - H 1 The call to rejoice: "Rejoice over her,"³²⁹
 - H 2 Those called upon to rejoice: O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets,
 - H 3 The reason to rejoice: because God has pronounced judgment for you against her."
- E 3 The symbolic action of a strong angel 18:21-24

³²⁸ Rev. 18:17 - make their living by the sea: The overwhelming sorrow (Rev. 18:18-19) of *all* those in the maritime industry merely reinforces the global effects of the fall of Babylon. Ocean-going vessels, the primary carriers of goods from one nation to another, will be powerless without oil.

³²⁹ Rev. 18:20 - Rejoice over her: Earth will mourn the loss of Babylon because of the crippling economic consequences. Heaven, in stark contrast, will rejoice because Babylon is the headquarters of a false religion that has seduced the earth's inhabitants to defy God and persecute His representatives. Saints, apostles, and prophets in heaven are called on to rejoice over the downfall of Babylon, a judgment from God!

- G 1 The angel's action: Then a strong angel ³³⁰ took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, 18:21
- G 2 The angel's explanation – Babylon to be thrown down: "So will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer.
- G 3 The results of Babylon's overthrow 18:22-23a
 - H 1 The silencing of music: "And the sound of harpists and musicians and flute-players and trumpeters will not be heard in you any longer; 18:22
 - H 2 The cessation of technology: and no craftsman of any craft will be found in you any longer;
 - H 3 The stilling of commerce: and the sound of a mill will not be heard in you any longer;
 - H 4 The darkening of artificial illumination: and the light of a lamp will not shine in you any longer; 18:23a
 - H 5 The silencing of social institution: and the voice of the bridegroom and bride will not be heard in you any longer;
- G 4 The reasons for Babylon's overthrow 18:23b-24
 - H 1 Her entanglement with the great men of the earth: for your merchants were the great men of the earth, 18:23b
 - H 2 Her deception of all the nations: because all the nations were deceived by your sorcery. ³³¹
 - H 3 Her murders 18:24
 - J 1 "And in her was found the blood ³³² of prophets

³³⁰ Rev. 18:21 - strong angel: A strong angel (*aggelos*, [32](#)) (messenger) announces the future downfall of opulent Babylon. The reason for her demise? Because as a religion: (1) She will have deceived all the nations (Rev. 18:23). (2) She will have been responsible for murdering God's prophets and saints and others around the globe (Rev. 17:6; 18:24; 19:2).

³³¹ Rev. 18:23 - all the nations were deceived by your sorcery: The false religion of Babylon is noteworthy for its deception.

³³² Rev. 18:24 - blood: The false religion of Babylon especially targets God's prophets and saints, but it is characterized by murder on a global scale, for "in her was found the blood ... of *all* who have been slain on the earth" (emphasis mine) (Rev. 17:6; 18:24; 19:2).

- J 2 and of saints
 - J 3 and of all who have been slain on the earth."
 - E 4 The loud voice of a great multitude in heaven praising God for destroying Babylon 19:1-4
 - G 1 Their ascription of praise to God 19:1
 - H 1 The sound of the praise: After these things I heard *something* like a loud voice of a great multitude
 - H 2 The place of the praise: in heaven,
 - H 3 The content of the praise: saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; 19:1
 - G 2 The reason for their praise 19:2
 - H 1 His accurate and fair legal verdicts: BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS;
 - H 2 His having judged the [Great Prostitute](#): for He has judged the great harlot ³³³ who was corrupting the earth with her immorality,
 - H 3 His having avenged the murders of His people: and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER."
 - G 3 Their repetition of praise: And a second time they said, "Hallelujah! HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER." ³³⁴ 19:3
 - G 4 The worship of those surrounding the throne 19:4
 - H 1 The participants in worship

³³³ Rev. 19:2 - judged the great harlot: A great multitude up in heaven are heard to praise God, using the Hebrew words, "Hallelu - Jah!" (Praise Yahweh!). This multitude acknowledge God as the source of salvation, the height of glory and the ultimate power (Rev. 19:1). God is to be praised "because His judgments are true and righteous," a quotation of Psalm 19:9b. The occasion for this burst of praise is God's judgment of the [Great Prostitute](#), the false religion of Babylon, who seduced the whole earth into committing spiritual immorality with her because of the enormous financial gain in so doing. God is praised, furthermore, for having avenged the blood of His slaves upon her (Rev. 19:2).

³³⁴ Rev. 19:3 - HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER: The fiery judgment upon the false religion of Babylon transcends time into eternity. Its promulgators and adherents will spend an eternity in the [lake which burns with fire and brimstone](#) (Rev. 20:10, 14-15; see also Mark 9:43, 47-48). This line appears to be a quotation of Isa. 34:10. A similar statement appears in Rev. 14:11.

- J 1 And the twenty-four elders
- J 2 and the four living creatures
- H 2 Their act of worship: fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne
- H 3 Their agreement in praise: saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!" ³³⁵

B 3 The Second Coming of Christ 19:5-21

- C 1 Praise to God for the impending marriage of the Lamb 19:5-10
 - D 1 The command to praise God 19:5
 - E 1 The origin of the voice – an angel from the throne of God: And a voice came from the throne, ³³⁶
 - E 2 The content of the command – a call to praise: saying, "Give praise to our God," ³³⁷
 - E 3 Those instructed to obey the call to praise
 - G 1 all you His bond-servants, ³³⁸
 - G 2 you who fear Him,
 - H 1 the small
 - H 2 and the great."
 - D 2 The resounding response: "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns!" 19:6-7
 - E 1 The description of the sound of the response: Then I heard something like 19:6a
 - G 1 the voice of a great multitude
 - G 2 and like the sound of many waters

³³⁵ Rev. 19:4 - Amen. Hallelujah! - The twenty four elders and the four living creatures offer a concluding punctuation of praise to God for judging the false religion of Babylon.

³³⁶ Rev. 19:5 - a voice came from the throne: One might think this voice to be that of God Himself. The speaker identifies himself, however, in the first person plural with God's bond-servants (lit. slaves, *doúlos*, [1401](#)), "Give praise to **our** God" (emphasis mine). If the speaker in Rev. 19:9 is the same person, he is an unidentified angel, a fellow slave (*súndoúlos*, [4889](#)) of John's (Rev. 19:10) who refuses worship.

³³⁷ Rev. 19:5 - Give praise to our God: All God's slaves (*doúlos*, [1401](#)) are commanded to praise Him (Rev. 19:5) because "the Lord God, the Almighty reigns" (Rev. 19:6). This is a reference to the Messianic reign of Jesus of Nazareth, the God-Man, the [Messiah](#), upon the earth. The first significant event of His reign is His marriage to the [Church](#), who has prepared herself for marriage (Rev. 19:7-9).

³³⁸ Rev. 19:5 - bond-servants: *doulois* ([1401](#)) is the plural of the every-day word for slaves.

- G 3 and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder,
- E 2 The content of the response 19:6b-7
 - G 1 Praise to God for His reign as King: saying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns." ³³⁹ 19:6b
 - G 2 The corporate call to rejoice, be glad, and give glory to God because of the impending marriage of the Lamb to His beautified [bride](#)! 19:7
 - H 1 The exhortation of the call: "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, 19:7a
 - H 2 The two-fold reasons for the call 19:7b
 - J 1 Because of the arrival of the time for the marriage of the Lamb: for the marriage of the Lamb has come ³⁴⁰
 - J 2 Because of the preparation of His [bride](#): and His bride ³⁴¹ has made

³³⁹ Rev. 19:6 - "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns: In many respects this is a climactic point in world history. So often God has been working quietly in the background to restrain evil and bring about good. There were times when He was active, such as when He destroyed the world by water, save for the selected animals and people on the ark. But even then He was not visibly present. A most remarkable time was when Jesus appeared on earth for 33 years. But then He did not come to judge the world, but to save it (John 3:17). During chapters 6-18 of the book of Revelation God was actively judging, but not physically present. Now, in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, King of Kings, God will reign upon earth visibly present! People have had all the opportunity in the world to repent, but most have not. Now Jesus will return as conquering King. He will destroy those actively in revolt against Him (Rev. 19:11-21), and judge all those alive at His coming (Matt. 25:1-46), with those who do not pass the test being cast into eternal punishment and the righteous being ushered into eternal life (25:46). During the [Millennium](#) (Rev. 20:1-6) God's active, visibly present reign upon earth will come closer to fulfilling Jesus' prayer request, "Your king come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10) than it has at any other time in history since the human fall into sin (Gen. 3). God in His wisdom will permit one final rebellion, but it will be short-lived, though frightening (Rev. 20:7-10). After the destruction of the physical universe (2 Pet. 3:7-12; Rev. 20:11), Christ's judgment and disposal of all the wicked dead of all ages (Rev. 20:11-15), and God's creation of a brand new universe from which sin will forever be excluded (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1-8), God's triumphantly holy reign upon [New Earth](#) will reach its eternal zenith, and Jesus' prayer in Matt. 6:10 will be eternally answered!

³⁴⁰ Rev. 19:7 - for the marriage of the Lamb has come: Heaven can glorify God for the demise of the [Prostitute](#) first (Rev. 18) and now for the marriage of the Lamb to His purified [bride](#), the [Church](#)! In my opinion, the preparation of the [bride](#) for marriage takes place at the [Judgment Seat of Christ](#) in heaven while the earth is being judged in the [Great Tribulation](#) down below (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 3:13-15). The contrast in the early verses of Rev. 19 is remarkable. In Rev. 19:1-5 heaven praises God for His true and righteous judgments in destroying the [Great Prostitute](#), Babylon. Immediately thereafter (Rev. 19:6-9) heaven praises God for the imminent marriage of the Lamb to His [bride](#)!

³⁴¹ Rev. 19:7 - [bride](#): Lit., wife (*gunē'*, [1135](#)); the customary word for bride is *númphē* ([3565](#)) (Rev. 18:23; 21:2, 9; 22:17). The symbolism of the Lamb's [bride](#) and wife is most logically fulfilled in the [Church](#) (see the symbolism in Eph. 5:25-32).

A wedding normally included these states: (1) the legal consummation of the marriage by the parents of the bride and of the groom, with the payment of the dowry; (2) the bridegroom coming to claim his [bride](#) (as illustrated in Matt. 25:1-13 in the familiar Parable of the 10 Virgins); (3) the wedding supper (as illustrated in John 2:1-11) which was a several-day feast following the previous phase of the wedding. In Revelation 19:9 "the wedding supper" is phase 3. And the announcement coincides with the second coming of Christ. It would seem, therefore, that the wedding supper has not yet been observed. In fulfilling the symbol, Christ is completing phase 1 in the [Church Age](#) as individuals are saved. Phase 2 will be accomplished at the

herself ready."

D 3 The editorial comment on the preparation of the [bride](#) 19:8

E 1 Symbolism: It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright *and* clean;

E 2 Explanation: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

D 4 An angel's interaction with John 19:9-10

E 1 His perspective on the marriage supper of the Lamb 19:9

G 1 His instructions to write: Then he said^ to me, "Write,"³⁴²

G 2 His pronouncement of blessing on those invited to the wedding celebration: "Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb."³⁴³

G 3 The truth of the pronouncement: And he said^ to me, "These are true words of God."

E 2 The attempted worship by John: {10}

G 1 John's prostration: Then I fell at his feet to worship him.

G 2 The angel's disclaimer

H 1 His rebuke: But he said^ to me, "Do not do that;

H 2 His status: I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus;

G 3 The angel's alternative

[Rapture](#) of the [church](#), when Christ takes His [bride](#) to heaven, the Father's house (John 14:1-3). Accordingly it would seem that the beginning of the [Millennium](#) itself will fulfill the symbolism of the wedding supper (*gámos*, [1062](#)). It is also significant that the use of the word "[bride](#)" in Rev. 19:7 (*gyne*, [1135](#)) lit., "wife,") implies that phase 2 of the wedding will have been completed and that all that remains is the feast itself (Walvoord, [TBKC](#), p. 975).

³⁴² Rev. 19:9 - Then he said to me, "Write": This sounds like Christ speaking (Rev. 1:11, 19; 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14), but in Rev. 19:10 John is clearly rebuked for worshipping a fellow slave. It is best to understand this person as an unnamed angel.

³⁴³ Rev. 19:9 - Blessed those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb: These would include redeemed Jewish people and Gentiles who lived prior to and subsequent to the [Church Age](#). The [Church](#) began at Pentecost (Acts 2) and will be completed at the [Rapture](#) (John 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:13-18). Two suppers are mentioned in Rev. 19, (lit.) "the supper of the marriage of the Lamb" (Rev. 19:9), and (lit.) "The supper, the great one of the God" (Rev. 19:17). The first is a joyful feast for the humans who have been invited. The second is a ghastly, gory feast for the birds invited.

- H 1 His command: worship God.
- H 2 His evaluation of Christ's pronouncements:
For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."
- C 2 The presentation (unveiling) of the Warrior-King 19:11-16
 - D 1 The setting of the unveiling 19:11a
 - E 1 And I saw heaven opened,
 - E 2 and behold, a white horse,³⁴⁴
 - E 3 and He who sat on it
 - D 2 The description of the Warrior-King 19:11b-16
 - E 1 His name in relation to His character: *is* called Faithful and True,³⁴⁵ 19:11b
 - E 2 His policy: and in righteousness
 - E 3 His objectives
 - G 1 He judges
 - G 2 and wages war.³⁴⁶
 - E 4 His eyes: His eyes are a flame of fire, 19:12
 - E 5 His heads: and on His head *are* many diadems;
 - E 6 His name in relation to His infinite Deity: and He has a name³⁴⁷ written *on Him* which no one knows except Himself.

³⁴⁴ Rev. 19:11 - white horse: Evidently there are animals in heaven! The white horse Jesus rides symbolizes purity. Christ's armies also are mounted on white horses (Rev. 19:14). Christ is about to lead them in the True Jihad, the truly Holy War!

³⁴⁵ Rev. 19:11 - Faithful and True: Throughout this section, several names are ascribed to the rider on the white horse. We know, of course, that He is the [Messiah](#), Jesus of Nazareth. But He is never so identified in this section, and only twice in this chapter (Rev. 19:10). He is called Faithful and True because He is the Embodiment of Faithfulness and Truth. He is faithful to God the Father, faithful to His promises and commitments, and faithful to absolute truth. He Himself said, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life" (John 14:6, capitalization mine).

³⁴⁶ Rev. 19:11 - in righteousness He judges and wages war: Christ, the Conquering King, is about to unleash True Jihad, True Holy War on the armies of the nations who have submitted to the beastly [Antichrist](#). The earth's armies will be in total rebellion against God and against His Christ (Psalm 2:2-3). He who sits in the heavens laughs in derision at their feeble efforts to revolt (Ps 2:4). In great anger and fury, God will install His Son on Zion, His holy mountain, and no rebellious human armies can stop Him (Ps. 2:5-6). God will give all the nations to the very ends of the earth to His Son to rule over with a rod of iron, and He will smash them like fragile pottery! (Ps. 2:7-9). If kings and judges (and any other humans) upon the earth show any discernment at all, they will "do homage to (lit. kiss) the Son," worshipping Him so He will not be angry with them and they will not be destroyed (Ps 2:10-12).

³⁴⁷ Rev. 19:12 - name: Here is the unknown name of the [Messiah](#). It remains a mystery!

- E 7 His clothing: *He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood,*³⁴⁸
19:13
- E 8 His name in relation to God: and His name is called The
Word of God.³⁴⁹
- E 9 His armies 19:14
 - G 1 Their base: And the armies which are in heaven,³⁵⁰
 - G 2 Their clothing: clothed in fine linen, white *and*
clean,³⁵¹
 - G 3 Their mounts: were following Him on white horses.
- E 10 His weapon 19:15
 - G 1 Its placement: From His mouth

³⁴⁸ 19:13 - robe dipped in blood: Though one might think this bloody robe symbolizes Christ's sacrificial death as the Lamb on the cross, the context indicates otherwise. The context is one of judgment and jihad, and the Rider has diadems on His head symbolizing rulership and authority. The reference is to Isaiah 63:1-6, where Yahweh comes from Bozrah in Edom with His robe dyed red, spattered with the blood of His victims, whom He has judged in His fury. Rev. 19:13 is the fulfillment of the prediction of Isa. 63:1-6. The results are spelled out in Rev. 19:21!

³⁴⁹ Rev. 19:13 - Word of God. Christ's name, the Word of God, is revealed in John 1:1-3, 14. In the Old Testament the pre-incarnate Christ was often identified as the Angel (Messenger) of Yahweh. In the New Testament He is the final Word (Message) of Yahweh (Hebrews 1:2).

³⁵⁰ Rev. 19:14 - armies: One would ordinarily interpret these troops as angels. However, the fact that John uses the plural of *strateuma* (4753) indicates a plurality of armies. Does their apparel, which closely parallels the description of that of the Lamb's [bride](#) (Rev. 19:8), indicate that His [bride](#) comprises at least a portion of the heavenly armies? It is possible, but I doubt it. Similarity of clothing does not necessarily equate with identity. The plural "armies" probably describes the different divisions of the angelic troops. Jesus Himself stated that He could have twelve legions of angels at His disposal if He but asked (Matt. 26:53).

If the [Church](#), Christ's [Bride](#), actually consists of a portion of the armies which are in heaven, it is doubtful to me that she actually participates in mortal, physical combat on earth. We will read in Rev. 19:15 that a sharp sword protrudes from Christ's mouth, a sword with which He will "strike down the nations." The sword that John saw protruding from Christ's mouth symbolizes Christ's verbal command. But people on earth who oppose him will literally be killed. This view is confirmed in Rev. 19:21, where it is stated that "the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of him who sat on the horse." My point is that it appears that Christ commands the death of the human warriors trying to kill him and His descending armies. If the [Bride](#) constitutes a portion of the plural armies, it does not appear that she is involved in physical combat.

If the angels of heaven are the primary ones involved in combat in some way, we know that angels can simply call on the power of God without themselves actually doing anything physically. A case in point is the two angels in Genesis 19 who told Lot, "we are about to destroy this place" (Sodom) and "the LORD has sent us to destroy it" (Gen. 19:13). When the catastrophe occurred, it is recorded that "the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven, and He overthrew those cities" (Gen. 19:24-25). In that case angels assisted, but it was God who destroyed. In this case (Christ's return – Rev. 19:14 ff.), even though angelic armies in some way assist, it is Christ who will command the death of opposing human armies. See a graphic description of this event in Zech. 14:3-5, 12-15.

³⁵¹ Rev. 19:14 - fine linen, white and clean: Whether or not this terminology indicates that the Lamb's [bride](#), the [Church](#) (Rev. 19:7-8), participates in the ensuing battle on the earth, the garments reflect the purity of the deeds of the heavenly armies. War was never what God intended from the beginning of man's existence on a pristine earth (Genesis 1-2), but war is sometimes necessary and justifiable as a means of purging evil from the earth.

- G 2 Its description: comes a sharp sword,³⁵²
- G 3 Its function: so that with it He may strike down the nations,
- E 11 His rule over the nations
 - G 1 The severity of His rule: and He will rule them with a rod of iron;³⁵³
 - G 2 The motivation behind His rule – the wrath of God! and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.
- E 12 His name in relation to man 19:16
 - G 1 The place where His name is written: And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written,
 - G 2 The supremacy of His name: "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."³⁵⁴
- C 3 The crushing victory of the Word of God over the Beast and False Prophet 19:17-21
 - D 1 The invitation to the great supper of God as delivered by an angel standing in the sun 19:17-18
 - E 1 The angel's station: Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, 19:17
 - E 2 The angel's urgency: and he cried out with a loud voice,
 - E 3 The angel's audience: saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven,
 - E 4 The angel's invitation: "Come, assemble for the great supper of God,"³⁵⁵

³⁵² Rev. 19:15 - From His mouth comes a sharp sword: What John sees is symbolic. What it means is that Christ will kill the troops of the nations who war against Him on earth simply by speaking their demise. The most powerful weapons on earth will be utterly impotent against the verbal command of the Creator King returning to claim His domain and set up His Kingdom!

³⁵³ Rev. 19:15 - rod of iron: Fulfilling Psalm 2:5-9.

³⁵⁴ Rev. 19:16 - KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS: John used this language previously in Rev. 17:14. This magnificent name of Jesus Christ will be fulfilled as He returns to destroy the enemy troops on the earth who seek to destroy Him (Rev. 19:17-21); and as He takes His throne after He has won the Battle of Armageddon and sits in judgment upon every surviving Jewish person (Ezekiel 20:33-38) and every surviving Gentile (Matthew 25:31-46).

³⁵⁵ Rev. 19:17 - the great supper of God: There are two suppers and two invitations in Rev. 19. The humans invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb are blessed (Rev. 19:9). The birds who are invited to the great supper of God are not blessed, for they are called to consume the decaying flesh of all humans and horses who have assembled on earth to fight against the Rider on the white horse and His army riding on white horses (Rev. 19:17-19).

E 5 The angel's purpose: so that you may eat 19:18

G 1 the flesh ³⁵⁶ of kings

G 2 and the flesh of commanders

G 3 and the flesh of mighty men

G 4 and the flesh of horses ³⁵⁷

G 5 and of those who sit on them

G 6 and the flesh of all men, both

H 1 free men and slaves,

H 2 and small and great."

D 2 The demise of the beast and his regime! 19:19-21

E 1 John's view of the participants in the battle on earth 19:19

G 1 Evil versus

H 1 And I saw the beast

H 2 and the kings of the earth

H 3 and their armies assembled to make war ³⁵⁸

G 2 Good

H 1 against Him who sat on the horse

H 2 and against His army.

E 2 The seizure of the beast and false prophet 19:20

³⁵⁶ Rev. 19:18 - flesh (of kings, commanders, mighty men, horses and riders, and all men): The birds flying in midheaven will gorge themselves on the decaying flesh of the kings of the earth and their armies (Rev. 19:19). Their demise is described in graphic and gory detail in Zechariah 14:12-13.

³⁵⁷ Rev. 19:18 - flesh of horses: The use of horses in the final battle of the War of Armageddon accords with the interpretation that the fires of Rev. 18 have decimated the world's available supply of petroleum.

³⁵⁸ Rev. 19:19 - assembled to make war: Originally these armies assembled to fight for world supremacy (Rev. 16:14), but Satan had a more remote plan. He assembled these armies to fight against Christ, whom he knew would return to earth (Walvoord, [TBKC](#), 968). In a cosmic game of chess, God had His own plan, to gather the world's armies to the Holy Land to destroy them (Zechariah 12:3-4). The armies of the nations will detect the sign of the Son of Man in the sky (Matthew 24:30). They will see a huge concentration of light, coming not only from Christ but from His celestial armies (Rev. 19:19), comprised of legions of angels (Matt. 24:31; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8) and perhaps also of humans (Rev. 19:19 cf. 19:8). Shaken, the troops on earth will join forces to resist the UFO (Unidentified Flying Object) from outer space.

- G 1 And the beast was seized,³⁵⁹
- G 2 and with him the false prophet
 - H 1 who performed the signs in his presence,
 - H 2 by which he deceived
 - J 1 those who had received the mark of the beast
 - J 2 and those who worshiped his image;
- E 3 The torment of the beast and false prophet: these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone.
- E 4 The annihilation of his army 19:21
 - G 1 The mode of their death: And the rest were killed with the sword³⁶⁰ which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse,
 - G 2 The scavenging of their carcasses: and all the birds were filled with their flesh.³⁶¹

B 4 The [Millennial Reign](#) of Christ 20:1-6

- C 1 IMPRISONMENT: An angel's 1000-year binding of Satan in the [abyss](#) to prevent his program of international deception 20:1-3
 - D 1 The angel's descent from heaven: Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, 20:1
 - E 1 With the key of the [abyss](#): holding the key of the abyss³⁶²
 - E 2 And a great chain: and a great chain in his hand.
 - D 2 The angel's capture of the dragon: {2} And he laid hold of the

³⁵⁹ Rev. 19:20 - beast was seized: The [Antichrist](#) and his false prophet will be captured and thrown into the [Lake of Fire and Brimstone](#) (Rev. 14:10; 20:10; 21:8).

³⁶⁰ Rev. 19:21 - the rest were killed with the sword ... mouth: Christ will strike the enemy troops with a great panic (Zechariah 12:4; 14:13), and they will begin destroying one another. Though the human, unresurrected forces loyal to the returning [Messiah](#) fight in the battle (Zech. 12:6-8), Yahweh, the [Messiah](#), will Himself be the dreaded destroyer by commanding the deaths of His opponents (Zech. 12:9; 14:12; Rev. 19:21).

³⁶¹ Rev. 19:21 - birds ... flesh: Huge swarms of birds will gather to gorge on the human and animal carrion as invited by the angel (Rev. 19:17-18).

³⁶² Rev. 20:1, 3 - [abyss](#): Having disposed of the human armies at war with the returning [Messiah](#), God turns His attention to the supernatural opposition. An angel is given the power and authority to chain Satan in the [abyss](#) (Grk. *ábussos*, 12), which is evidently a deep place whose location is unknown, in which certain fallen angels are temporarily imprisoned (Luke 8:31; Revelation 9:1-2, 11), and some later released to perform a role on earth. The evil spirit inhabiting the [Antichrist](#) emerges from the abyss (Rev. 17:8). The final destination for Satan and his angels is the [Lake of Fire and Brimstone](#) (Matthew 25:41; Rev. 20:10).

dragon, a.k.a. 20:2

E 1 the serpent of old,

E 2 who is the devil

E 3 and Satan,

D 3 The angel's imprisonment of Satan 20:2-3

E 1 The actions 20:2-3

G 1 His binding him for 1000 years: and bound him ³⁶³
for a thousand years; ³⁶⁴ 20:2

G 2 His casting him into the [abyss](#): and he threw him
into the abyss, 20:3

G 3 His securing of the [abyss](#)

H 1 and shut *it*

H 2 and sealed *it* over him,

E 2 The reason: so that he would not deceive ³⁶⁵ the nations any

³⁶³ Rev. 20:2 - Satan ... bound: Having finally, after thousands of years, been denied access to heaven (Rev. 12:7-9), Satan will be bound in the [abyss](#), thus prevented from access to the earth for the 1000 years of Christ's reign (Rev. 20:1-3, 7). There are at least six judgments of Satan identified in Scripture – (1) He was cast out of heavenly Mount Zion (Ezekiel 28:16) but still allowed access to God (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6; Zech. 3:1-2). (2) God pronounced a fatal judgment upon him in the Garden of Eden after he had successfully tempted Eve (Genesis 3:14-15). (3) The basis for Satan's tyrannical control over all men would be Christ's death on the cross (John 12:31-33). (4) Following a war in heaven, Satan and his angels will be cast out of heaven and their power and presence limited to the earth (Revelation 12:7-12). (5) He will be banned from the earth and placed in custody in the [abyss](#) during Christ's 1000-year reign upon earth (Rev. 20:1-3). (6) Following his release from the [abyss](#) and his final successful deception of many on the earth into revolting against Christ, he will be thrown into the [Lake of Fire and Brimstone](#) for eternity (Rev. 20:7-10). (See Charles C. Ryrie, [A Survey of Bible Doctrine](#), Moody Press, Chicago, 1972, p. 94; see also Charles H. Dyer's discussion of Ezekiel 28:16, [TBKC](#)).

³⁶⁴ Rev. 20:2 - thousand years: Six times in Rev. 20:1-7 John referred to a period of 1000 years. This is the only passage in the Bible which states that Christ's reign upon earth will last a thousand years. Amillennialists deny and in some cases deride the notion of Christ's literal 1000 year reign upon earth, but that is because they typically allegorize or spiritualize prophetic passages of Scripture. While there are admittedly a great many symbols in Revelation, the symbols have literal meanings. There is, furthermore, in the text of Revelation, no cogent reason for denying the literalness of numbers. For example, do the seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven bowls refer to something other than seven? Do the 24 elders indicate something other than 24? Six times in Rev. 20:1-7 John describes a time period of one thousand years. What more could he have done to indicate a literal 1000 years?

³⁶⁵ Rev. 20:3 - deceive: What is Satan's biggest tool in this world? DECEIT!

1. Successful lies always contain enough truth to be believable.
2. A liar is a manipulator: He holds out many promises to get you to enlist in his cause—then he has you in his power and you are helpless to stop him!
3. What are some of the lies of Satan?
 - a. Man can gain wisdom outside of God (Gen. 3:1-5).
 - b. God didn't really mean what He said (Gen. 3:1-5).
 - c. Man can gain power and become God-like (Gen. 3:1-5).
 - d. God is a manipulator to be ignored (God is not good.) (Gen. 3:1-5).
 - e. Having a good time is the most important thing in life.
 - f. Living a virtuous life cheats you out of a good time.
 - i. Humility;

longer,

- E 3 The duration: until the thousand years were completed;
- D 4 The necessity of Satan's release for a short time: after these things he must be released for a short time. 20:3
- C 2 RESURRECTION AND REIGN: The judgment and resurrection of [Tribulation saints](#) to be priests who are also co-regents with Christ 20:4-6
 - D 1 The reference to thrones and judgment 20:4
 - E 1 The occupied thrones: {4} Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them,³⁶⁶
 - E 2 The delegated judgment: and judgment was given to them.
 - D 2 Sacrifice for Jesus rewarded 20:4
 - E 1 The nature of their sacrifice: And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded³⁶⁷
 - E 2 The actions precipitating their sacrifice
 - G 1 Their testimony about Jesus: because of their testimony of Jesus
 - G 2 Their adherence to the word of God: and because of the word of God,
 - G 3 Their refusal to conform in worship: and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image,
 - G 4 Their refusal to conform socially and economically: and had not received the mark³⁶⁸ on their forehead

-
- ii. Sacrifice;
 - iii. Morality;
 - iv. Self-Denial;
 - v. Hard Work;
 - vi. Following God instead of everyone else;
 - g. If it feels good, do it.
 - h. How can Jesus possibly be the only way to God?
 - i. Why would a good God have a literal hell?
 - j. We make our own hell on earth.

³⁶⁶ Rev. 20:4 - thrones, and they sat on them: Those who sit on the thrones are unidentified here. They may include the 24 elders, who elsewhere sit on thrones (Rev. 4:4), or perhaps the overcoming Christians of the [Church Age](#), who are promised authority over the nations to rule them with a rod of iron (Rev. 2:26-27), or perhaps the 12 apostles, appointed to sit on thrones and judge the 12 tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:29-30).

³⁶⁷ Rev. 20:4 - beheaded: The religion of Babylon today sometimes beheads its captured victims. Will the religion of Babylon use this method extensively during the [Tribulation](#) period? These who here are said to have been beheaded were clearly martyred during the [Tribulation](#) period.

³⁶⁸ Rev. 20:4 - not received mark: LESSON: We must teach our sons and daughters that they cannot always be liked and admired. In some things we Christians must stand out and be different.

and on their hand;

G 5 Resurrection: and they came to life

G 6 Reigning with Christ: and reigned³⁶⁹ with Christ for a thousand years.

D 3 Blessing foretold upon the participants in the first resurrection 20:5-6

E 1 Parenthetic: The distinction between the first and second resurrection 20:5

G 1 The delay in resurrection for the wicked dead: The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed.

G 2 The description of the resurrection John has witnessed: This is the first resurrection.³⁷⁰

E 2 The blessing and holiness of those in the first resurrection: Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; 20:6

G 1 Their escape from the second death: over these the second death has no power,³⁷¹

³⁶⁹ Rev. 20:4 - they came to life and reigned: The martyred [Tribulation saints](#) will be resurrected and will help Christ administer His [Millennial Kingdom](#).

³⁷⁰ Rev. 20:5 - first resurrection: Those believers in Christ who have been killed during the [Tribulation](#) are raised from the dead to assist Christ in His 1000 year reign. As believers, they are participants in the First Resurrection. There are two categories of resurrection, one for the righteous and another for the wicked (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29). All believers of all dispensations are partakers of the first resurrection, a resurrection to "everlasting life" (Dan. 12:2a). All unbelievers of all ages participate in the second resurrection, the resurrection to "disgrace *and* everlasting contempt" (Dan. 12:2b). The "first resurrection" (Rev. 20:5) refers to a resurrection to life. The second death has no power over those who participate in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:6). There is a subsequent resurrection to eternal death and damnation (Rev. 20:11-15).

The first resurrection, a resurrection to life, appears in stages: (1) Christ Himself inaugurated the first resurrection. He is "the first fruits of those who are asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:20). (2) The dead in Christ (those who have died during the [Church age](#)) will be resurrected at the [Rapture](#), when Christ comes to take His [bride](#), the [Church](#), back up to heaven (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:50-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). (3) There is another resurrection at the end of the [Tribulation](#), preparatory to the Millennial Kingdom. Saints who have died during the [Tribulation](#) will be resurrected (Rev. 20:4), as will Old Testament saints (Daniel 12:2), for example, David (Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 34:23-24; 37:24-25; Hosea 3:5), and Job (19:25-27).

The implied second resurrection appears to consist of but one general resurrection for the wicked dead of all ages (Rev. 20:11-15). It will occur after the destruction by fire of the existing universe (2 Peter 3:7-12; Rev. 20:11), and is detailed in Rev. 20:11-15. I urge the reader to place his faith in Jesus so that he might partake of the first resurrection. All who do so are blessed, because over them, the Second Death has no power (Rev. 20:6)!

³⁷¹ Rev. 20:6 second death has no power: All believers in Christ have been declared righteous, acquitted of their sins because of their faith in Christ and His sacrificial death on the cross to pay for all human sins. As believers in Christ, they are impervious to the Second Death.

It is helpful to identify three different deaths, all in terms of separation. (1) **Spiritual Death** is the separation of man from God. This occurred initially to Adam and Eve when they ate the forbidden fruit. They died spiritually immediately, as attested to by their embarrassment at their nakedness and by their hiding from God (Genesis 3:1-11). Subsequent to Adam and Eve, all of mankind have been born spiritually dead. (2) **Physical Death** is the separation of man's spirit from his body. The process of physical decay and death began to work in Adam and Eve's body immediately after they died spiritually (Gen. 3:19), but it took many years until the process

- G 2 Their service as priests of God and of Christ: but they will be priests³⁷² of God and of Christ
- G 3 Their lengthy co-regency with Christ: and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

B 5 The Final Judgments 20:7-15

- C 1 REVOLT – The fiery, post-[Millennial](#) destruction of Satanically deceived rebels 20:7-9a
- D 1 Satan's release at the end of the 1000 years: When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, 20:7
- D 2 Satan's tactic – To deceive the nations of the earth: and will come out to deceive the nations³⁷³ 20:8a

was complete (Gen. 5). Physical Death, to most myopic humans, appears to be the only culprit. In reality, our Physical Death is merely the symptom of our Spiritual Death in the same way that a fever is merely a symptom of the real illness. We humans today are born dead spiritually and in the process of dying physically. Spiritual death must be remedied before physical death occurs, otherwise there is no remedy. (3) The third kind of death is identified in Scripture as **Second Death**, the separation of man from God forever in the [lake of fire and brimstone](#) (Rev. 20:10-15). Second Death is irreversible.

There is an antidote for Spiritual Death and for Physical Death, but not for Second Death. The antidote is to be “born again” or “born from above” (the concepts are interchangeable) (John 1:12; 3:3, 7) by the power of God’s Spirit (John 3:1-8). The cause of physical and spiritual death is sin. “For the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23a). All die because all sin (Rom. 3:23; 5:12). God’s provision for human Rebirth was to give mankind a gift, His Son, Jesus the [Messiah](#) (Rom. 6:23b). God’s Son, the Word of God (John 1:1-3) at a point in time became human (John 1:14). As a man, he became mortal, and was willing and able to die for the sins of all of us humans, motivated by Divine love and compassion (Rom. 5:8, 10; 1 John 4:9-10). Forgiveness for sin and eternal life is available to ALL mankind (1 John 2:2), but it is effective ONLY for those who receive Jesus, placing their faith in Him (John 1:11-12; 3:16-18, 36; 5:24; 11:25-26; Ephesians 2:8-10). There is no other antidote for SIN and DEATH (John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Hebrews 10:26-31). Will you, the reader, receive Jesus Christ, trusting in Him alone to forgive you of your sins and grant you eternal life as your present possession? Jesus has promised us He will receive every one who comes to Him! (John 1:11-12; 6:37; Revelation 3:20).

³⁷² Rev. 20:6 - priests: Since Christ Himself is not of the tribe of Levi, but is a priest after the order of Melchizedek (Psalm 110:4; Heb. 5:6; 7:1-17), these resurrected [Tribulation saints](#) will include a large number of Gentiles, who also are priests after the order of Melchizedek. There will be no separation of “church” and “state” in the [Millennium](#). Government can function best only if it is linked with the true religion and the world is governed by the True King, Jesus. These believers will be **priests** and yet at the same time **reign** with Christ, helping Him administer His kingdom! It is the function of priests to bring men to God. They will have a large task in the [Millennium](#). The only people to inhabit the earth in their natural bodies at the beginning of the [Millennium](#) will be believers in Christ who have escaped martyrdom during the [Tribulation](#). As unresurrected saints, they will have the capacity to reproduce. Many, perhaps most of their children, will become believers. It will be the task of the resurrected priests to help the mortals on earth train their children to trust in and serve the King willingly. Unfortunately, they will not be entirely successful (Rev. 20:7-9). Incidentally, in the [Church Age](#) today, we believers constitute a royal priesthood, whose task is to proclaim God's excellencies to the people around us and bring them to God through Jesus (1 Peter 2:9).

³⁷³ Rev. 20:8 - deceive the nations: Evil is in man's heart. If man is given the opportunity to vent his evil and express it, he will rebel against God! The [Millennium](#) and the unleashing of Satan afterwards allow God to demonstrate man's inherent evil from the fall onward, and his justice in condemning unrepentant man eternally to hell! Taken together, what each of the first seven Dispensations – Innocence, Conscience, Government, Promise, Law, Grace, and [Millennium](#) – demonstrate is that, if left to his own devices, man will inevitably turn against his Creator! In the first Dispensation of Innocence, Adam and Eve had a perfect, Edenic environment and no sin in their hearts. Yet they chose to rebel against God. Since then, man has had sin in his heart, and, collectively, has rebelled against God. Even in the [Millennium](#), with the environment as near to Eden as possible in a sin-cursed world of death and decay, and with the King, Jesus, reigning over the world in the most righteous and benevolent of conditions, and with Satan and his legions removed as tempters, corruption still exists in the human heart. When Satan is released, he successfully deceives a huge portion of the earth's population to revolt against the King!

- D 3 Satan's method: WAR 20:8b-9
- E 1 Their location: which are in the four corners of the earth, 20:8b
 - E 2 Their identity: Gog and Magog ³⁷⁴
 - E 3 His purpose: to gather them together for the war;
 - E 4 Their number: the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.
 - E 5 Their strategy: And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, ³⁷⁵ 20:9
- C 2 RUIN – God's destruction of the invaders with fire from heaven: and fire came down from heaven ³⁷⁶ and devoured them. 20:9b
- C 3 FIRE – Satan's eternal judgment in the [lake of fire](#) 20:10
- D 1 Thrown into the [lake of fire and brimstone](#): And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, ³⁷⁷

Mankind will inevitably choose against God and rebel against Him unless God proactively and mercifully chooses some to salvation (Romans 11:13; 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 17:14). Unless God, operating under the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:8-13) gives man a heart of flesh (Ezekiel 11:19-20; 36:26-27), man's heart of stone will turn against God. Would you like to have a soft heart toward God? Ask Him to give you one! Then turn to Jesus, who loved you so much that He died and rose again to pay for all your sins (Romans 5:8). Receive him and you will be born into God's family (John 1:11-12; 3:1-7; 16-18; Revelation 3:20)! – and you will be privileged to enter His kingdom (Luke 23:42-43; John 3:3, 5; Zech. 14:9; Isa. 2:1-4; Rev. 19:11-20:5)!

³⁷⁴ Rev. 20:8 - Gog and Magog: According to Ezekiel 38:2, Gog is the leader and Magog are the peoples which he rules. Though the terminology is the same, the differences between Ezek. 38 and Rev. 20 are significant. In Ezekiel, the Gog - Magog alliance consists of a defined list of nations, including Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal (Ezek. 38:2-3), as well as Persia, Ethiopia, Put, Gomer, and Beth-togarmah (Ezek. 38:5). In Revelation 20:8, the nations are undesignated. In Ezek. 38:5 these allies are said to invade Israel from "the remote parts of the north." In Rev. 20:8 the nations are said to be "in the four corners of the earth." WordExplain takes the position that the battle of Gog and Magog as described in Ezek. 38-39 takes place in the [Tribulation](#) period some time prior to the final Battle of Armageddon (Rev. 16:13-16). Gog and Magog obviously have a dual reference, and so the further fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy is the final, Satanically-inspired rebellion against God a thousand years later at the end of the [Millennium](#). The similarities of the two battles are significant enough so that they carry the same label, much like World War I and World War II (see J. Vernon McGee, [Through the Bible with J. Vernon McGee](#), 5:1058, quoted by [Constable](#)).

³⁷⁵ Rev. 20:9 - surrounded ... the beloved city: Satan's reason – the Satanically inspired armies of Satan surround Jerusalem because Satan seeks to destroy all Christians and Christ himself and set up his own kingdom (even after his [Antichrist](#) has been destroyed)! Satan will have deluded himself that he can still defeat God and God's anointed King, Jesus. Satan is completely delusional.

³⁷⁶ Rev. 20:9 fire came down from heaven: This judgment is reminiscent of God's judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:4); upon Egypt (Exodus 9:23-24); and upon the army officers and their fifty men (2 Kings 1:10, 12, 14). When God's presence was localized above the ark of the covenant in the tabernacle, fire would burst forth from the Lord (Leviticus 10:2; Numbers 11:1; 16:35; 26:10; 1 Kings 18:38).

³⁷⁷ Rev. 20:10 - [lake of fire and brimstone](#): The final destination of the devil (*diabolos*, [1228](#)), the overthrower, will be the [lake of fire and sulphur](#). He forsook serving God in the heavenly Mount Zion among the stones of fire, to which he was impervious (Ezekiel 28:14), and now he will be tortured by fire for eternity, but never destroyed. He joins the beast (his [Antichrist](#)) and the false prophet, who have been in the fire for a thousand years without being consumed. This is the eternal fire prepared by God for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41).

- D 2 Unholy fellowship: where the beast and the false prophet are also;
- D 3 Ceaseless, eternal torment: and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.
- C 4 JUDGMENT – The Great White Throne Judgment of the wicked dead 20:11-15
 - D 1 The scene in the courtroom: A great white throne; the dissolution of the universe! 20:11
 - E 1 The seat of judgment - Formal trial before a judge on a throne: Then I saw a great white throne ³⁷⁸ 20:11
 - E 2 The person of judgment - Christ on the throne: and Him who sat upon it, ³⁷⁹
 - E 3 The cataclysmic effect of the judge – The dissolution of matter: from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, ³⁸⁰ and no place was found for them.
 - D 2 Unsavd man's stand before the bar 20:12-15
 - E 1 The identity of the defendants 20:12
 - G 1 The dead: And I saw the dead, ³⁸¹
 - G 2 The great and the small: the great and the small, standing before the throne, ³⁸²

³⁷⁸ Rev. 20:11 - great white throne: Satan is not given a trial (Rev. 20:10); man is. The location of this throne and judgment is unstated. It is evidently in a place outside the existing universe, which universe will cease to exist.

³⁷⁹ Rev. 20:11 - Him who sat upon it: None other than Jesus Christ, according to John 5:21-29. To Christ has been delegated the responsibility of judgment because He is the Son of Man, but Christ acts always in accordance with His Father's will, and the two, though distinct persons, are essentially inseparable (John 10:30).

³⁸⁰ Rev. 20:11 - fled away: This is evidently the destruction of the heavens and earth foretold by Peter (2 Pet. 3:10-13). The finality of this event is such that God strips man, as it were, of all his material crutches – all of nature itself disappears in a roaring explosion, and man is left totally naked before the Almighty, bereft of the comforting security of matter.

³⁸¹ Rev. 20:12 - dead: Since these are called the dead, I presume they are primarily spiritually dead, as well as having died physically. This is the resurrection not of life (John 5:29), but of judgment, reserved for those who have committed evil deeds, never having been forgiven. They are spiritually dead, never having been regenerated through faith in Christ, and thus not among those listed in the [book of life](#) (Rev. 20:12, 15).

³⁸² Rev. 20:12 - standing before the throne:

THINGS THAT CANNOT PREVENT MAN FROM STANDING BEFORE GOD

1. Materialism cannot prevent man from standing before God! Man's crutch, matter, is abolished. Matter is not eternal, as evolutionists want us to believe. Man stands utterly naked before God. 20:11 (cf. 2 Pet. 3:7, 10-12)
2. Death cannot prevent man from standing before God! 20:12
3. Station in life cannot prevent man from standing before God! 20:12 (Great and small)
4. Lack of evidence cannot prevent man from standing before God! 20:12
 - a. Books were opened: Evidently God keeps a record of man's deeds (20:12, 13).
 - b. [Book of life](#)
5. No hiding place can prevent man from standing before God! 20:13

- E 2 The criteria of judgment
 - G 1 The evidence – Books containing a record of men's deeds: and books were opened;
 - G 2 The [book of life](#): and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life;³⁸³
 - G 3 The objective basis: and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books,
 - G 4 The performance basis: according to their deeds.³⁸⁴
- E 3 The inevitability of judgment: the dead are given up by ... 20:13
 - G 1 The sea: And the sea gave up the dead which were in it,
 - G 2 Death: and death
 - G 3 Hades: and Hades³⁸⁵ gave up the dead which were in them;
- E 4 The universality of judgment: and they were judged, every one *of them* according to their deeds.
- E 5 The disposal of the effects of sin 20:14
 - G 1 Death thrown into the [lake of fire](#): Then death
 - G 2 Hades thrown into the [lake of fire](#): and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire.
 - G 3 The identification of the [lake of fire](#): This is the second death,³⁸⁶ the lake of fire.
- E 6 The disposal of those not found written in the [book of life](#):

-
- a. Not the sea
 - b. Not death
 - c. Not Hades

³⁸³ Rev. 20:12 - [book of life](#): "The [book of life](#) evidently refers to the roll of those who are saved and have eternal life." John F. Walvoord, *"The Revelation of Jesus Christ,"* The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1966, p. 306. The book could be accurately titled, "The [Book of](#) [those who have God's] [Life](#) [which is Eternal]."

³⁸⁴ Rev. 20:12 - according to their deeds: Presumably there are degrees of punishment in the [lake of fire](#).

³⁸⁵ Rev. 20:13 - Hades: The temporary abode of the wicked dead. The righteous who die evidently go immediately to be with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:6-8). According to Luke 16:23 the unbelieving rich man was in Hades in torment, separated by a great gulf from the believing beggar, in comfort in Abraham's bosom. Christ's soul was not left in Hades (Acts 2:27, 31); Christ holds the keys to death and Hades (Rev. 1:18). The Old Testament word for the place of the dead is Sheol (Gen. 37:35; Psa. 16:10; 49:12-15, etc.).

³⁸⁶ Rev. 20:15 - second death: The Second Death is identified as being the [Lake of Fire](#) in the next phrase. See the note on the same topic at Rev. 20:6.

And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.³⁸⁷ 20:15

B 6 The [Eternal State](#) 21 - 22:5

C 1 The New World Order: God's dwelling among His people with sin and its effects totally excluded 21:1-8

D 1 John's vision of a [New Heaven](#) and [New Earth](#) 21:1

E 1 Observation: Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth;³⁸⁸

E 2 Explanation: for the first heaven and the first earth passed away,

³⁸⁷ Rev. 20:15 - [lake of fire](#): All those who appear at the Great White Throne judgment, not having God's life within them (since they have rejected Him), are spiritually dead (see note on Rev. 20:12); therefore their names are not written in the [book of life](#); therefore they are all thrown into the [lake of fire](#).

Nothing can be sadder than the eternal plight of humans who have rejected God and the forgiveness freely and lovingly offered them by Jesus at enormous personal cost (John 3:16-18; Romans 5:8, 10). There are many who make no claim of believing in Jesus, and many who do claim to believe in Him, who reject the idea of a literal hell. "How can a loving God," they say, "cast people into a [lake of fire](#) for eternity?" Sadly, these people are grievously mistaken, having an exalted view of themselves, an insufficient view of the deadliness of sin, and a defective view of the holiness of God. Jesus took hell literally. He called it a place of outer darkness, weeping, and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 8:12; 13:42; 22:13; 25:30). He described it as a place of conscious agony in flame (Luke 16:24). He described it as a place where "their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:47-48). Jesus took hell seriously. We had better also!

First, it is not good people who are consigned to the [lake of fire](#). None of us are innocent. We are all guilty. None of us is righteous (Romans 3:10); not one of us seeks God (Rom. 3:11); not one of us does good (Rom. 3:12); all of us have sinned (Rom. 3:23). Those who find themselves in the [lake of fire](#) are described as "the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying" (Rev. 22:15). These are those who have rejected the only way of salvation God has provided, Jesus, who did not come the first time to condemn the world but to save the world (John 3:16-17). Those who reject Him stand already condemned (John 3:18).

Second, sin is the deadliest activity known to man. God told our first parents that if they sinned by eating of the forbidden fruit, in that very day they would die (Genesis 2:17). They did so anyway, and that first sin spawned a deadly succession of evil that engulfed the entire human race, warranting the terrible destruction of the entire world in Noah's Flood, and warranting the destruction in the [lake of fire](#) of all who reject Jesus' sacrifice (Acts 4:12; Hebrews 10:26-27). All humans are afflicted with spiritual AIDS, an Acquired Immune Deficiency in regard to Sin. If we reject God's extended hand of mercy in Jesus, there is no other rescue from the [Lake of Fire](#).

Third, we must understand the Holiness of God. God is all light and no darkness (1 John 1:5). He cannot look upon evil (Habakkuk 1:13). Most of us do not understand either the holiness of God or our own sinfulness. Isaiah did (Isa. 6:1-5), and declared himself ruined for having "seen the King, the Lord of hosts" with his own defiled condition of sinful speech! For six thousand years, Holy God has been enduring man's sinful condition and the defiled condition of the world. Two thousand years ago He sent His Son as the only cure for the redemption of man and of the universe (John 3:16-18; 3:36).

God is poised to destroy both the universe and sinful man by fire (2 Peter 3:7, 10, 12), and to create a Brand New Universe in which only righteousness and righteous people dwell (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1-4). But He is patiently waiting, "not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:8-9). God invites you to accept, at no cost to yourself, the spring of the water of life (Rev. 21:5-7). Are you thirsty enough to take a drink? Will you, the reader, reach out and grab hold of Jesus, God's loving sacrifice for your sins? He stands ready to enter your life (Revelation 3:20). Will you open the door?

³⁸⁸ Rev. 21:1 - [new heaven](#) ... [new earth](#): Having completely destroyed the original, sin-contaminated earth and the vast, star-studded universe with a roaring, fiery explosion (Matthew 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 16:17; 21:33; 2 Peter 3:7-12; Rev. 20:11; 21:1), God creates a brand new universe absent any sin or its corroding effects (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:4; 22:3). Only righteousness and righteous people exist in the New Universe (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:8, 27; 22:15).

- E 3 Differentiation: and there is no longer *any* sea. ³⁸⁹
- D 2 John's vision of the Holy City 21:2
 - E 1 It's name: And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, ³⁹⁰
 - E 2 Its direction: coming down ³⁹¹
 - E 3 Its origin: out of heaven from God
 - E 4 Its appearance: made ready as a bride ³⁹² adorned for her husband.
- D 3 John's hearing of a loud voice from the throne: And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, 21:3-4
 - E 1 Announcing God's dwelling among men 21:3
 - G 1 God's tent now among men: "Behold, the tabernacle

³⁸⁹ Rev. 21:1 - no sea: The sea, from God's perspective, seems not to be positive (cf. Isa. 57:20). The river that issues from the [millennial temple](#) will evidently flow into the Dead Sea and heal it so that fish will once again swim in it (Ezek. 47:1-11). One speculates that prior to the judgment of Noah's great Flood, the earth's seas were fresh water, as originally created by God. With the incredible turmoil caused by the Flood, minerals that were previously locked up in the soil, to be mined by man, were washed into the sea, making it inhospitable to most forms of vegetation. Perhaps the enormously alkaline condition of the Dead Sea, in which not even fish can swim, was caused by the judgment of fire and brimstone upon the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah in that area. So from God's perspective, salty seas result from judgment, not creation. In the [New Earth](#), there will be no judgment, hence no salty sea, but only fresh water! The word sea (*thalassa*, [2281](#)) applies to more than just the ocean, however. It applies to what we also call sizeable lakes, such as the Sea of Galilee (Matt. 4:18). Apparently there will be no large bodies of fresh water on the [New Earth](#), the most prominent distinguishing feature, as John records it. Either that, or there will be no salty sea anywhere, for that speaks of judgment. If this latter understanding is the correct interpretation, there may well be large bodies of water, but they will not be salty. We do know that there will be a life giving river flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb (Rev. 22:1-2).

³⁹⁰ Rev. 21:2 - holy city, [new Jerusalem](#): Two things are remarkable about Jerusalem: (1) Jerusalem is a holy city (Rev. 11:2; 21:2, 10; 22:19), in marked contrast to Babylon, which is a decidedly unholy city (Rev. 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2-5; 19:1-3). (2) Jerusalem is a new city (Rev. 3:12; 21:2), because she belongs to the true New World Order. I believe [New Jerusalem](#) presently exists in heaven, and consists of the dwelling places Jesus is presently preparing for us in the "Father's house" (John 14:1-3). After the destruction of the present heavens and earth and the creation of the [New Heaven](#) and [New Earth](#) (Rev. 21:1), God will cause the city of [New Jerusalem](#) to descend out of heaven to the [New Earth](#) (Rev. 21:2). In the New World Order, [New Jerusalem](#) offers unprecedented quality of life in the presence of God (Rev. 21:3); with no pain, sorrow or death (Rev. 21:4); with unparalleled beauty, size, and wealth (Rev. 21:10-21); with supernatural illumination (Rev. 21:23-24); as the world capital (Rev. 21:24-26); in absolute safety (Rev. 21:25); in pristine ethics and morality (Rev. 21:27); with eternal health and flawless nutrition (Rev. 22:1-2); absent any curse (Rev. 22:3); with God and man in total accord (Rev. 22:3-4); in God's eternal kingdom (Rev. 22:5). I hope to meet you, the reader, in the [New Jerusalem](#)! To reserve your place in the city, you must admit you are a sinner (Romans 3:23); admit that you deserve death in all of its terrible implications (Rom. 6:23a; Rev. 20:11-15); accept that Jesus, God's [Messiah](#), died for your sins (Rom. 5:8); believe that He arose from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:1-5); and trust in Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins and for eternal life (John 3:16-18, 36; 5:24; 14:6; Acts 2:38; 4:12).

³⁹¹ Rev. 21:2 - coming down out of heaven from God: Coming down is a present participle. John never sees the city arrive upon the [New Earth](#), yet it is no longer in heaven. I lean towards the notion that the [New Jerusalem](#) is a gigantic satellite city orbiting the [New Earth](#). As such, it is able to shed light upon Earth below, providing sufficient illumination for crops to grow and for business to be conducted thereupon (Rev. 21:24).

³⁹² Rev. 21:2 - [bride](#): Observe that God's city, the [new Jerusalem](#), is called holy, a [bride](#) (Rev. 21:2), and a wife (Rev. 21:9), unlike Babylon, which is called the [great prostitute](#), and the mother of prostitutes and abominations of the earth (cf. Rev. 17:1, 5)! (See also the note on Psalm 48:8.)

of God is among men,³⁹³

G 2 God to dwell among them: and He will dwell among them,

G 3 They shall be His people: and they shall be His people,

G 4 God Himself shall be among them: and God Himself will be among them,

E 2 Announcing God's care for men 21:4

G 1 Wiping away every tear: and He will wipe away every tear³⁹⁴ from their eyes;

G 2 Abolishing ... the former things:

H 1 Death: and there will no longer be *any* death;³⁹⁵

H 2 Mourning: there will no longer be *any* mourning,

H 3 Crying: or crying,

H 4 Pain: or pain;

H 5 The reason: the first things have passed away."³⁹⁶

D 4 God's proclamation of His making all things new 21:5-8

E 1 His making all things new 21:5

³⁹³ Rev. 21:3 - the tabernacle of God is among men: [4633](#) *skene* {skay-nay'} – apparently akin to [4632](#) and [4639](#); TDNT - 7:358,1040; n f
AV - tabernacle (19)
- habitation (1) [20]

1) tent, tabernacle, (made of green boughs, or skins or other materials); of that well known temple of God after the pattern of which the temple at Jerusalem was built [Strong's entry, *Online Bible*]

JTB: In Rev.21:3 it could perhaps be said that the [New Jerusalem](#) is God's tent in which He will gladly dwell with man forever. Here the tent does not suggest that God's living with mankind is temporary, but only that the domicile is an artificial arrangement for God, inasmuch as living within any kind of physical, material structure is foreign to His essence. Here, He permanently "puts up" with an artificial living situation because He loves redeemed humans so intensely. Of course, for us redeemed humans, the [New Jerusalem](#) is a fabulously opulent permanent home!

³⁹⁴ Rev. 21:4 - wipe away every tear: As predicted in Isaiah 25:8. See also Rev. 7:17

³⁹⁵ Rev. 21:4 - no longer be *any* death: Neither physical nor spiritual death can any longer haunt or affect people in [New Jerusalem](#). Death has ceased to exist, having been thrown into the [Lake of Fire](#) (Rev. 20:14). See also Isa. 25:8.

³⁹⁶ Rev. 21:4 - first things have passed away: It is difficult, but stimulating to imagine an existence in which there is no physical or emotional pain, but so it shall be. In three different ways it is stated that the symptoms of pain will be removed – no tears, no mourning, no crying! There will be no regrets. Even the existence of humans forever trapped in the [Lake of Fire and Sulphur](#) will not pain humans in the [New Earth](#) and [New Jerusalem](#).

- G 1 The source of the announcement: And He who sits on the throne said, 21:5
- G 2 The substance of the announcement: "Behold, I am making all things new."
- G 3 The veracity and faithfulness of His words: And He said^, "Write, for these words are faithful and true."
- E 2 His completion of His program [of creation, rebellion, salvation, and victory]: Then He said to me, "It is done."
- E 3 The authority behind His words: He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning [of all programs] and the end [of all programs]: I am the Alpha and the Omega,³⁹⁷ the beginning and the end.
- E 4 His renewed offer of salvation 21:6-7
 - G 1 His pledge to give to the thirsty from the spring of the water of life without charging: I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.³⁹⁸ 21:6
 - G 2 His pledge of blessing to the one overcoming 21:7
 - H 1 The recipient of the blessing – the one who conquers: "He who overcomes"³⁹⁹
 - H 2 Inheriting these things: will inherit these things,⁴⁰⁰
 - H 3 Being his God: and I will be his God
 - H 4 His being God's son: and he will be My son.

³⁹⁷ Rev. 21:5 - the Alpha and the Omega: The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. The speaker is the One sitting on the throne, and that appears to be God. In Rev. 22:13 the speaker identifying Himself as the Alpha and the Omega is Christ. Both are true. The significance of Alpha and Omega is found in the next phrase: God is "the beginning and the end" of all existence, all being, and all activity.

³⁹⁸ Rev. 21:6 - without cost: God offers salvation by grace alone (cf. Eph. 2:8-9)!

³⁹⁹ Rev. 21:7 - he who overcomes (lit. "the one conquering"): A definition of what this conquering means for believers in Christ in the book of Revelation is derived from Rev. 2:11, 26; 3:5, 12, 21. (Rev. 2:11): Being faithful in imprisonment, testing, tribulation, and death. (Rev. 2:26): Stop tolerating and following Jezebel, who leads Jesus' slaves to fornicate and eat things sacrificed to idols; those who do not follow this teaching should hold fast and keep Jesus' works until the completion (His return). (Rev. 3:5): Being watchful, they are to strengthen the things that remain and are about to die, their works being incomplete before God. They are to be remembering what they have received and heard, and to be obeying and repent. (Rev. 3:12): Taking hold of what each one has in order that no one takes away one's crown. (Rev. 3:21): Overcoming spiritual bankruptcy, being zealous and proceeding to repent, opening the door to Jesus. Obviously, for believers, overcoming means conquering sin – lethargy and apathy in morality, spirituality, and service.

The only other uses of overcome / conquer (outside of Rev. 21:7) occur in Rev. 6:2, where a rider on a white horse has a bow and is given a crown, and he went out conquering and in order that he might conquer. Obviously Rev. 6:2 refers to military and political conquest.

⁴⁰⁰ Rev. 21:7 - will inherit these things: The New Order found in the [New Heaven](#) and [Earth](#).

- E 5 His exclusion of the damned 21:8
 - G 1 The character of the damned
 - H 1 "But for the cowardly
 - H 2 and unbelieving
 - H 3 and abominable
 - H 4 and murderers
 - H 5 and immoral persons
 - H 6 and sorcerers
 - H 7 and idolaters
 - H 8 and all liars,
 - G 2 The destiny of the damned: their part *will be*
 - H 1 in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone,⁴⁰¹
 - H 2 which is the second death."⁴⁰²
- C 2 The description of the [New Jerusalem](#) 21:9 - 22:5
 - D 1 The introduction to the description of the city 21:9-10
 - E 1 The tour guide: Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, 21:9
 - E 2 The invitation to view the [bride](#), the wife of the Lamb: "Come here, I will show you the bride,⁴⁰³ the wife of the Lamb."
 - E 3 His showing him the Holy City, Jerusalem 21:10
 - G 1 The method of viewing: And he carried me away in the Spirit
 - G 2 The place of viewing: to a great and high mountain,
 - G 3 The subject of viewing: and showed me the holy

⁴⁰¹ Rev. 21:8 - lake that burns with fire and brimstone: See note on Rev. 20:15.

⁴⁰² Rev. 21:8 - second death: See note on Rev. 20:6.

⁴⁰³ Rev. 21:9 - [bride](#): See note on Rev. 17:1 comparing the [Prostitute](#), Babylon, with the [Bride](#), the holy city of [New Jerusalem](#)! Remember that the [Prostitute](#) Babylon represented (1) a literal city, (2) a false religion with (3) enormous political power. Just so the [Bride](#), [New Jerusalem](#) represents (1) a literal city, (2) the true religion with (3) global political power.

city, Jerusalem, coming down ⁴⁰⁴ out of heaven from God,

D 2 The glory of the city 21:11

E 1 Possessing the glory of God: having the glory of God.

E 2 Its brilliance like a costly, crystal-clear jasper stone: Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper.

D 3 The wall of the city 21:12-14

E 1 The general description 21:12

G 1 A great, high wall: It had a great and high wall,

G 2 12 gates: with twelve gates, ⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰⁴ Rev. 21:10 - coming down: Literally, here is what John records: "And he carried me off in [the] Spirit upon [a] mountain great and high, and he pointed out to me the city the holy Jerusalem descending out of the heaven from the God" (21:10). John states that he observed the [New Jerusalem](#) descending (present participle) from heaven to earth. The verbal form indicates a present process. This may be the best way John could describe the fact that the [New Jerusalem](#) with its great size of 1,343 miles (see note on Rev. 21:16) in length, width, and height, never rests on the earth, but is an orbiting satellite of the earth just as is our present day moon.

The present moon's diameter is about 3,476 - 3,479 KM or 2,160 - 2,162 miles ([Diameter of the Moon](#), edited by Glenn Elert). The diameter of the Earth is 7,926 miles at the equator and 7,900 miles at the poles, for an average of 7,913 miles. The average distance from the Earth to the Moon is 384,399 KM or 238,854 miles ([Moon](#), [Wikipedia](#)), or about 30 earth diameters. The volume of the Moon is 5,291,335,807.6 cubic miles. The volume of the [New Jerusalem](#) is 2,422,300,607 cubic miles (assuming a cube, as opposed to a pyramid), or 45.7% of the Moon's volume. Assuming the [New Earth](#) is the same size as our present Earth, exerting the same gravitational pull on human and animal bodies on the [New Earth](#) as on the present, the [New Jerusalem](#) would orbit the earth at a distance of 108,673.87 miles.

According to Rev. 21:23-24, 26 "the nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it." Assuming [New Jerusalem](#) orbits the earth and noting that its light is not external (reflected from the sun) but internal (its light source is the glory of God and the Lamb), the [New Jerusalem](#) will illuminate the [New Earth](#) 24 hours a day, and the peoples on the [New Earth](#) will certainly be able to walk or live by its light.

This, of course, presents additional physics problems. (1) How much will humans weigh on earth, and how far will they be able to leap or jump? (2) How will people on the [New Earth](#) access the [New Jerusalem](#) (which they certainly will, bringing their glory into it)? The answer is that we do not know, but there are hints. Paul argues (1 Cor. 15:39-54) that there are earthly bodies and there are heavenly bodies. Mere flesh and blood as we know it today cannot inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 15:50). There will undoubtedly be a different set of physics at work there and then with resurrected bodies and an eternal, non-decaying universe than we have now. How can you explain that the resurrected Jesus could appear suddenly in a locked room without having someone opening the door to permit Him to enter (John 20:19, 26)? You respond, "Well, He is God incarnate. He was just performing another miracle." Perhaps, but how can you explain that we mere humans will be resurrected and / or changed and then transported into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:17)? Or that there is a tree in the [New Jerusalem](#) that bears a different fruit each month (Rev. 22:2)? Or that there are massive pearls that can serve as gates to an enormous wall (Rev. 21:21, cf. Rev. 21:17)? Or that there is a river of life flowing from the throne of God (Rev. 22:1-2)? We can't explain those and many other things. We can only conclude that there are physical / spiritual realities in operation in the New Universe for sinless, resurrected people unknown in our present mortal, decaying world.

⁴⁰⁵ Rev. 21:12 - twelve gates: This number and its square figure prominently in Revelation: There are [144,000](#) sealed (Rev. 7:4; 14:1), twelve thousand from each tribe (Rev. 7); the woman (Israel) has a crown with twelve stars (Rev. 12:1); the wall of the [New Jerusalem](#) has twelve gates imprinted with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, and guarded by twelve angels (Rev. 21:12); the wall of the city has twelve foundations imprinted with the names of the twelve apostles (Rev. 21:14); the city's equilateral dimensions measure twelve thousand stadia (Rev. 21:16); the city's twelve gates are comprised of twelve solitary pearls (Rev. 21:21); the tree of life bears twelve different kinds of fruit (Rev. 22:2).

- G 3 12 angels, one at each gate: and at the gates twelve angels;⁴⁰⁶
- G 4 The names of the 12 tribes of Israel, one on each gate: and names *were* written on them, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel.⁴⁰⁷
- E 2 The placement of the gates 21:13
 - G 1 *There were* three gates on the east
 - G 2 and three gates on the north
 - G 3 and three gates on the south
 - G 4 and three gates on the west.
- E 3 The foundation stones 21:14
 - G 1 12 foundation stones: And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones,
 - G 2 12 names of the: and on them *were* the twelve names
 - G 3 12 apostles of the Lamb: of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.⁴⁰⁸
- D 4 The measurements of the city 21:15-17
 - E 1 The city surveyor: The purpose of the angel's gold rod – to measure: The one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod 21:15
 - G 1 to measure the city,
 - G 2 and its gates
 - G 3 and its wall.
 - E 2 The city proper 21:16
 - G 1 Its shape – square: The city is laid out as a square,

⁴⁰⁶ Rev. 21:12 - twelve angels: [New Jerusalem](#) will evidently be the home and headquarters of myriads of angels for eternity. These angels are not standing guard, for there is no danger, but rather are serving some unstated purpose on behalf of God.

⁴⁰⁷ Rev. 21:12 - Israel: The mention of the twelve tribes of Israel indicates that [New Jerusalem](#) is the capital city and home of redeemed Israelis from all ages. The idea that the [Church](#) replaces Israel, and is the “New Israel” is wholly without foundation in the Biblical text.

⁴⁰⁸ Rev. 21:14 - twelve apostles of the Lamb: These, the highest leaders of the [Church](#), indicate that [New Jerusalem](#) will be the home of the [Church](#). Israel and the [Church](#) continue to exist as distinct, yet compatibly cooperative entities throughout eternity. The presence in [New Jerusalem](#) of the [Church](#), comprised largely of Gentiles (people of the earth's nations), is a fulfillment of Psalm 87, which remarkably predicts "born in Zion" status to multitudes of believing Gentiles!

G 2 Its dimensions: 1500 miles ⁴⁰⁹ long, wide, and high: and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. ⁴¹⁰

E 3 The city wall: 72 yards 21:17

G 1 By human measure: And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, *according to human measurements*, ⁴¹¹

G 2 By angelic measure: which are *also* angelic *measurements*.

D 5 The construction materials of the city 21:18-21

E 1 The wall – Jasper: The material of the wall was jasper;

⁴⁰⁹ Rev. 21:16 - 1,500 miles: The Greek text states twelve thousand *stadiwn*. A *stadios*, according to the NASB footnote, is approximately 600 feet. According to the *Greek-English Lexicon of Semantic Domains*, it is about 185 meters. Computing more precisely, $12,000 \times 600 \text{ feet} = 7,200,000 \text{ feet} / 5,280 = 1363.63 \text{ miles}$; $12,000 \times 185 \text{ meters} = 2,220,000 \text{ meters} / 1000 = 2,220 \text{ kilometers}$. This is an enormous city!

⁴¹⁰ Rev. 21:16 - length and width and height are equal: It is not known whether the city exists in the form of a cube or a pyramid. Regardless, it is a city of prodigious size! For this reason and others, commentators such as Sam Storms (who follows Greg Beale) claim that this city is a metaphorical city. It is not to be taken literally. Storms and Beale ridicule a literal city as being either poor architecture or poor art. But that is because we have nothing in our present experience by which to visualize such a city. Some conservative commentators have proposed a pyramidal shape. But if one plots the measurements of this city on graph paper as a pyramid, the city would have such steep slopes that it would appear to be an enormous mountain so precipitous that habitation would be extremely difficult, if not impossible in our present world of physics. So I submit two alternative views.

(1) The city may be built much like the interior of an enormous Embassy Suites Hotel. Residences (and perhaps businesses) may surround the outside of the city. The interior may be situated with enormous stretches of parks with rivers, lakes, trees, forests, and gardens. There may be outlying suburbs which eventually lead to the City Center of New Jerusalem. Heavenly Mount Zion would be situated, presumably, at the center of the city.

(2) Alternatively, and this view presupposes the city's inhabitants will need some sort of atmosphere to breathe, the entire city may appear to be quite normal to the human eye. But the sides and top of the city may include some sort of transparent or translucent structure that houses the necessary atmosphere. The city itself, with proposed parks, rivers, and buildings, along with Mount Zion, would be situated in more or less normal (to us) proportions. Under this view, the entire city structure would amount to an enormous, climatically controlled terrarium.

Regardless, I believe we are best off always taking the text as literally as possible. This city is outside the realm of any present day experience. Why invalidate what John saw and wrote about with such exquisite detail by saying it is not a real city? A great many prophecies have been fulfilled in very literal fashion. Who, for example, would have supposed that the Messiah would have been born of a literal virgin? History is on the side of a literal interpretation of Scripture. In my judgment we would be ill-advised to follow metaphorical naysayers like Storms and Beale. I am confident the city will be large enough to hold as many of the redeemed as God sees fit with room to spare. I am confident it will be an exquisitely beautiful city. And I am confident it will make absolute sense architecturally and artistically, far in excess of any feeble experience we have had in this life. It will be a joy to behold!

⁴¹¹ Rev. 21:17 - human measurements: Literally, the text reads, "And he measured the wall of her - of one hundred forty four cubits - measure of man, which is of angel." "The reference to man's measurement simply means that though an angel is using the rod, he is using human dimensions" (Walvoord, *TBKC*, II, p. 986). Sam Storms' argument that the reference to an angelic measurement (Rev. 21:17) is proof that the dimensions are symbolic rather than literal is, in my judgment, a complete misrepresentation of what John meant to say. What John actually said was that, though an angel did measure the city, yet the angelic measurements were identical to human measurements. This is a literal city with literal measurements. The Amillennial method of spiritualizing prophetic passages simply cannot be trusted to give us an accurate understanding of the text.

It is possible that 144 cubits may be the measure of the *thickness* of the wall, at least if Ezekiel 40:5 serves as a precedent (see Constable). If the angel was measuring thickness, the *height* of the wall would undoubtedly be far greater.

21:18

- E 2 The city: Pure gold, like clear glass: and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.⁴¹²
- E 3 The foundation stones – Adorned with precious stones: The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned⁴¹³ with every kind of precious stone. 21:19-20
- G 1 The first foundation stone was jasper;⁴¹⁴ 21:19
- G 2 the second, sapphire; the fourth, emerald;
- G 3 the third, chalcedony;
- G 4 the fourth, emerald;
- G 5 the fifth, sardonyx; 21:20
- G 6 the sixth, sardius;
- G 7 the seventh, chrysolite;
- G 8 the eighth, beryl;
- G 9 the ninth, topaz;

⁴¹² Rev. 21:18 - pure gold, like clear glass: Either this is a high quality of gold unknown to man today, or else the purity of the gold is being emphasized. "Clear glass was the best quality glass in John's day, so when he compared the gold to clear glass he probably meant that there was no impurity in the city" (Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, p. 381, as quoted by [Constable](#)). In any case, the appearance and the actual value of this city is fabulous and beyond description!

⁴¹³ Rev. 21:19 - were adorned: What does this mean? One view is that the city's foundation stones, of which there were twelve, were not made of, but were extravagantly decorated with semi-precious stones such as sapphire and emerald and amethyst. That may be possible, but a careful look at the language reveals a different understanding, I believe.

John is saying that, corporately, the (plural) foundations of the wall of the city each (singular) with a precious (singular) stone (singular) existed having been corporately adorned (plural [perfect passive participle](#)). He proceeds immediately – "The foundation the first – jasper; the second sapphire" etc. (Rev. 21:19). It makes more sense to say that each foundation (the words "foundation stone" are never used) consists of a single gargantuan stone. The first foundation consists of a single jasper stone. The second foundation consists of a single sapphire. To me it makes the most sense to surmise that these twelve foundations were laid one on top of another, and that presumably, each stone stretched the complete length and width of the enormous city.

I believe, further, that, according to the [Present](#) Tense language John used in describing this city in the process of "descending" from heaven, that it will never arrive at a destination upon earth. I believe it will be a satellite city orbiting the earth much as our present day moon orbits the earth. It would not surprise me if [New Jerusalem](#) will orbited earth in geosynchronous orbit stationed precisely above the future land of Israel upon [New Earth](#)!

If my hypothesis is correct, all of these foundations will be visible from the exterior. To observers exterior to the city, the light of the glory of God and of the Lamb that illuminates not only the entire city, but the Earth down below (Rev. 21:23-24) will be filtered through the optical glory of the variously shaded precious stones. It will be a sight of indescribable beauty, unlike anything we have ever observed on this present earth (Rev. 21:11)!

⁴¹⁴ Rev. 21:19 - jasper, etc. According to Walvoord, ([TBKC](#), p. 986) we are not certain what color jasper is, for it is an opaque stone appearing in various colors. Sapphire is probably blue; chalcedony, blue with stripes of other colors; emerald, bright green; sardonyx, red and white; sardius = carnelian, ruby red, sometimes amber or honey in color; chrysolite, golden; beryl, sea green; topaz, transparent yellow-green; chrysoprase, green; jacinth, violet; amethyst, purple.

- G 10 the tenth, chrysoprase;
- G 11 the eleventh, jacinth;
- G 12 the twelfth, amethyst.
- E 4 The gates 21:21
 - G 1 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls;
 - G 2 each one of the gates was a single pearl.⁴¹⁵
- E 5 The city's street: And the street of the city⁴¹⁶ was pure gold, like transparent glass. 21:21
- D 6 The worship in the city 21:22
 - E 1 No temple seen: I saw no temple in it,⁴¹⁷
 - E 2 They Who constitute the Temple
 - G 1 for the Lord God the Almighty
 - G 2 and the Lamb are its temple.
- D 7 The illumination of the city 21:23-24
 - E 1 The superfluousness of artificial illumination 21:23
 - G 1 The sun: And the city has no need of the sun
 - G 2 The moon: or of the moon to shine on it,⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁵ Rev. 21:21 - single pearl: "Among the ancients, pearls were ranked highest among precious stones, because their beauty derives entirely from nature, improvement by human workmanship being an impossibility . . ." (Robert L. Thomas, [Revelation 8-22: An Exegetical Commentary](#), p. 473, quoted by [Constable](#)). This would be a pearl of gargantuan size, contributing to the extravagant beauty of the city!

⁴¹⁶ Rev. 21:21 - street of the city: The word translated "street" lit. means "broad" or "wide." Though most if not all translations render it "the street," it is difficult to imagine this city having only one street, since in most other instances in the NT plural "streets" are spoken of in cities (Matt. 6:5; 12:19; Luke 10:10; 13:26; 14:21; Acts 5:15). This broad area could, in my estimation, refer to the central pedestrian square of the city. If it does mean "street," it would have to refer to the main street of the city, Main Street, or Broadway, as it were.

⁴¹⁷ Rev. 21:22 - no temple: In the Old Testament, God's glory customarily dwelt between the cherubim associated with the ark of the covenant in the Holy of Holies in both the tabernacle and Solomon's temple (Exodus 25:17-22; 40:34-38; 1 Kings 8:10-11; 2 Chronicles 5:13-14; 7:1-3; Psalm 26:8; Ezekiel 9:3; 10:4). With a pristine [New Heaven](#), [New Earth](#), and [New Jerusalem](#), God and the Lamb will be able to dwell among purified, redeemed man with no contamination from sin or decaying matter. There is no need for a temple when man can come into the very presence of God and worship!

⁴¹⁸ Rev. 21:23 - no sun, moon: Some take this to mean there will no longer be a sun or moon in the [new heaven](#) and [earth](#). On the other hand, why would God create a [new heaven](#) with nothing in it? I take Rev. 21:23 to mean not that no sun or moon *exist*, but only that their light is *superfluous*. In support of this view, see Isa. 24:23. A difficulty with this view is the fact that, since there will never be any night in this city (Rev. 21:25; 22:5), no one in the city will ever be able to see stars if there are stars to see, just as we today cannot see stars during the daytime. A possible solution to this problem is that the city of Jerusalem is an orbiting satellite of the [New Earth](#). Much as the moon orbits the earth and illuminates it for a time each day, [New Jerusalem](#) may daily illuminate the

E 2 The sources of illumination

G 1 The glory of God: for the glory of God has illumined it,

G 2 The Lamb: and its lamp is the Lamb.⁴¹⁹E 3 The beneficiaries of its illumination 21:24⁴²⁰

G 1 The nations: The nations will walk by its light,

G 2 The kings of the earth: and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it.

D 8 The politics of the city 21:24

E 1 And the nations⁴²¹ shall walk by its light,⁴²²

portion of the [New Earth](#) above which it orbits. In that case, the nations and kings of the earth could still walk by its light (Rev. 21:24) during the daytime, and yet see stars at night. If this model is correct, the inhabitants of the city will never see stars unless they leave the city for the earth or for other destinations in the universe. Apparently access from the earth to the city is not problematic (Rev. 21:24, 26). On the other hand, residents of [New Jerusalem](#) will not need artificial lighting (Rev. 22:5), even in interior rooms. So the glory of God and of the Lamb is pervasive, either bending around corners, or penetrating walls. If the light of the glory of God actually bends around corners, the light emanating from the [New Jerusalem](#) may well bend around the entire globe, meaning not only is there never any night up in the city, but there is also no night on the earth below. In that case, the sun and the moon (and stars) would not only not be necessary, but perhaps never visible, and therefore non-existent. Knowing God's vast creativity from our universe today, I still struggle with the concept that the [New Heaven](#) would consist of only one planet, [New Earth](#), with but one (albeit spectacular) orbiting moon / city. My best guess is that the glory of God and of the Lamb overpowers, but does not replace celestial bodies. We will understand it better by and by!

⁴¹⁹ Rev. 21:23 - God, lamb: The glory of God and the glory of Jesus illuminate this beautiful city. God and Jesus are inherently light. God introduced light into His created world (Genesis 1:3-5) before there were sun, moon, or stars. The prophet Isaiah predicted that Yahweh would serve as Israel's light (Isa. 60:19-20). God gives us inner illumination through Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6). God Himself is light (1 John 1:5), and Christ said He Himself was the light of the world (John 8:12; 9:5). God dwells in unapproachable light (1 Timothy 6:16). Humans in present day mortal bodies would be incapable of coping with this spectacular glory – the shock would be too great. But with our glorified resurrected bodies, we will be able to cope with this spectacular illumination. In that day, we believers inhabiting the city will not have to choose between incandescent or fluorescent light bulbs. Neither will be necessary (Rev. 22:5)!

⁴²⁰ Rev. 21:24, title - The beneficiaries of its illumination: The reader should observe that I have included the text of Rev. 21:24 twice – this first time under the title indicated; the second time under the title “The politics of the city.”

⁴²¹ Rev. 21:24 - nations: Evidently there will be national groupings on [New Earth](#) much as there are today. It is impossible to predict either the topography or the national groupings upon [New Earth](#), but one can only speculate that there will be some sort of correspondence to what we know today, but without any enmity or ill-will. This will be Biblical multiculturalism at its finest!

⁴²² Rev. 21:24 - The nations will walk by its light: The redeemed multitudes from among the earth's nations will dwell below the orbiting [New Jerusalem](#) on the [New Earth](#). They will walk, or conduct their lives by the light of the city orbiting above them.

Incidentally, the repeated use of the term “nations” (*ἔθνος*, [1484](#)) in the eternal city (Rev. 21:24, 26; 22:2) puts to rest the misconception that the redeemed both now and then constitute the “one people” of God. In fact, three classifications of people will exist throughout eternity – (1) redeemed Israelis; (2) members of Christ’s Body, the [Church](#); and (3) redeemed Gentiles who are part of neither. There are three peoples of God. They are unified, but they exist in diversity.

- E 2 and the kings ⁴²³ of the earth shall bring their glory into it. ⁴²⁴
- D 9 The safety of the city 21:25
 - E 1 The existence of perpetual daytime: In the daytime (for there will be no night there)
 - E 2 The perpetually open city gates: its gates will never be closed;
- D 10 The commerce of the city: That which shall be brought into the city 21:26
 - E 1 The glory of the nations: and they will bring the glory
 - E 2 The honor of the nations: and the honor ⁴²⁵ of the nations into it;
- D 11 The holiness of the city 21:27
 - E 1 Eternal exclusions from the city
 - G 1 Everything unclean: and nothing unclean,
 - G 2 Everyone who practices
 - H 1 Abomination: and no one who practices abomination

⁴²³ Rev. 21:24 - nations, kings: These political terms indicate national entities led by rulers (kings) in the [new heavens](#) and [earth](#). The standard form of government of the [new earth's](#) peoples is monarchy, with all nations and their rulers gladly submitting to the Great King, Christ. These different nations will have kings who administer the affairs of state underneath God and the Lamb, the Great King. There is no stigma whatever attached to dwelling upon [New Earth](#). As administrators of the various kingdoms upon [New Earth](#), these kings and their peoples will have access to [New Jerusalem](#). There will be no democratically elected constitutional republics. They are too inefficient!

⁴²⁴ Rev. 21:24 - kings of the earth will bring their glory into it: Apparently the earth will be populated by non-Jewish peoples who live their lives much as we do today, but without any sin or pollution, whether moral or environmental. Whatever commerce, agriculture, industry, and art is conducted upon [New Earth](#) will have an exclusively moral and beneficial tone. The kings of the earth will joyfully bring representative elements of their accomplishments into [New Jerusalem](#). Transportation will be no problem. Presumably that which the kings deliver to the capital city will contribute to the quality of life in the city. Presumably food and manufactured items will be brought into the city. One might make the case that this is a form of taxation, but from the use of the term glory, it will be a joyful, not a grudging contribution.

⁴²⁵ Rev. 21:26 - glory, honor: Both Rev. 21:24 and 26 suggest that foreign dignitaries will bring their wealth into the city to honor the King. The scenario is that of "the ancient practice of kings and nations bringing their wealth and glory to the city of the greatest king.... (see Ps. 68:29; 72:10-11; Isa. 60) (Warren Wiersbe, [The Bible Exposition Commentary](#), Victor Books, Wheaton, Illinois 60187, 1989, II, 624)." This wealth, in present-day terms, would be tribute or tax. In the [New Jerusalem](#), it is probably a voluntary honoring of Christ. In any event, there is something tangible being brought into the city to honor the King and indicate servitude (Ps. 72:10-11), and this suggests some sort of commercial activity. See Isaiah 60:16. (Though it is difficult in Isaiah 60 to distinguish the [Millennial Kingdom](#) from the [Eternal State](#), the language of Rev. 21:24, 26 justifies a commercial model in the [Eternal State](#).) Rev. 21:24 states that the kings of [New Earth](#) bring their glory into [New Jerusalem](#), and Rev. 21:26 advances beyond that by saying that [New Earth's](#) nations will bring their honor and glory into the city. So not only will kings have 24-hour access to [New Jerusalem](#), but so will all of [New Earth's](#) international community. If my hypothesis is correct that [New Jerusalem](#) will be a satellite city orbiting [New Earth](#), that fact will not impede the access of resurrected saints with their glorified bodies into the celestial city any more than locked doors could impede the risen Christ's access into a room full of disciples (John 20:19-29).

- H 2 Lying: and lying,
- G 3 The statement of exclusion: shall ever come into it,
⁴²⁶
- E 2 Eternal inclusions in the city: but only those whose names
are written in the Lamb's book of life.⁴²⁷
- D 12 The nourishment in the city 22:1-2
- E 1 Water 22:1-2
- G 1 The source of the water – A river: Then he showed
me a river⁴²⁸ 22:1
- G 2 The nature of the water
- H 1 Life-giving: of the water of life,⁴²⁹

⁴²⁶ Rev. 21:27 - shall ever come into it: John, the human author of Revelation, is a Messianic Jew. He knew the pagan lifestyle of most Gentiles on present earth. He is aware that they are unclean, practice abominable things, and lie. Even though the nations from [New Earth](#) have 24-hour access to [New Jerusalem](#), however, none of that filth will ever enter [New Jerusalem](#)! What a relief to all redeemed people, who properly find that life-style so destructive and so repugnant! Never will there be in [New Jerusalem](#), nor on [New Earth](#), immorality, prostitution, topless dancers, pornography, theft, battery, assault, murder, abortion, war, terrorism, politicians who vote for bills merely to keep in power, government officials who misrepresent justice for political or economic favors, members of the news media who distort the truth for a political agenda, scientists who misrepresent truth for a political or theological or philosophical agenda, citizens who take advantage of the largess of others without working their fair share, pollution, eating of meat, cruelty to animals, hospitals, doctors, prisons, military, military budgets, graft, corruption, crime, decay, rust, inflation. What a great world and what a great capital city!

⁴²⁷ Rev. 21:27 - Lamb's [book of life](#): This is the final reference to the [book of life](#) (Rev. 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27). This book is the record of all the redeemed of all ages. The names appearing therein were written in this book from the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8; 17:8). They, and they only, will escape the [Lake of Fire and Sulfur](#) (Rev. 20:15) and be granted free access into [New Jerusalem](#) (Rev. 21:27). Would you, the reader, like to make sure your name is written in the Lamb's [book of life](#)? Then place your trust in Jesus, God's sacrificial Lamb, who was slain to pay for your sins, my sins, and the sins of the whole world. Then you will know that your name, from the foundation of the world, has been written in the Lamb's [Book of Life](#)!

⁴²⁸ Rev. 22:1 - river: In the [New Jerusalem](#), and evidently the [New Earth](#), there is no sterile, turbulent, alkaline sea (Rev. 21:1), but a virile, flowing, life-giving river issuing from God Himself (Rev. 22:2)! [This is not to imply that there is only one river – presumably there are more, but Scripture is silent on that issue.]

⁴²⁹ Rev. 22:1 - water of life: Evidently this water, emanating from the throne of God and of the Lamb, contributes to the physical well-being and eternal health of the citizens of and visitors to [New Jerusalem](#). References in Revelation to the water of life are found in Rev. 7:17; 21:6; 22:1, 17. Water of life has both physical and spiritual nuances. Jesus offered the woman at the well living water (John 4:10-11), by which He meant eternal life. Jesus also said that anyone who believed in him would have rivers of living water flowing from his innermost being (John 7:38-39), referring to the Holy Spirit. In Christ's [Millennial Kingdom](#), water will flow from the temple and grow in volume until it flows into the Dead Sea and produces abundant life therein. The Dead Sea will swarm with fish, and along the banks of the river, fruit trees will bear fruit every month, and the fruit and leaves of the trees will provide health and healing for all who partake (Ezekiel 47:1-12). These trees are reminiscent of the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:9; 3:22, 24) and forerunners of the Tree of Life in [New Jerusalem](#) (Revelation 2:7; 22:2, 14, 19). The life-giving river in Ezek. 47 is a forerunner of the river of the water of life in [New Jerusalem](#) (Rev. 22:1-2). But it is not the same river.

[Non-literal](#) exegetes (such as [Sam Storms](#), quoting Greg Beale) overlook the disparity in details and assume the city and the river in Ezekiel 41-47 are one and the same with the city and the river in Rev. 21:1-22:5. That cannot possibly be so for at least two reasons. (1) A detailed description of a temple complete with animal sacrifices is the prominent feature of Ezek. 41-47. We are distinctly told that in [New Jerusalem](#) there is no temple building whatsoever, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple (Rev. 21:22). They cannot possibly be referring to the same event or time frame. (2) Furthermore, in Ezek. 41-47 animals will be slain as sacrifices (Ezek. 43:18-27) and fish will be eaten, caught in the rejuvenated Dead Sea (Ezek. 47:8-10). In [New Jerusalem](#), however, there will be

- H 2 Crystal-clear: clear as crystal,
- G 3 The origin of the water – The throne: coming from the throne⁴³⁰
 - H 1 of God
 - H 2 and of the Lamb,
- G 4 The situation of the river: in the middle of its street.⁴³¹ 22:2
- E 2 Food 22:2
 - G 1 The situation of the food: On either side of the river
 - G 2 The source of food: was the tree
 - G 3 The nature of the tree – Life-giving: of life,⁴³²
 - G 4 The productivity of the tree
 - H 1 bearing twelve *kinds* of fruit,
 - H 2 yielding its fruit every month;
 - G 5 The beneficial effects of the leaves: The health (well-being) of the nations: and the leaves of the tree

no death, and therefore, no animals will be killed or eaten (Rev. 21:4).

⁴³⁰ Rev. 22:1 - throne: Here is perhaps the clearest reference to the ultimate government in the [New Jerusalem](#) during the [Eternal State](#) – a co-regency, with both God the Son and God the Father reigning, much as for a time, Solomon reigned upon the throne in Jerusalem while his father, David was still alive. There appears to be only one throne, not two, inasmuch as God is One, not two. How this will actually play out visually, we can only wait to see, but there are here two distinct entities ruling. This co-regency seems to be the fulfillment of 1 Cor. 15:24, "Then comes the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power." See also the note re: *throne* at Rev. 22:3.

⁴³¹ Rev. 22:2 - street: See note on street at Rev. 21:21.

⁴³² Rev. 22:2 - tree of life: The Tree of Life was first seen in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:9; 3:22, 24). Adam and Eve were banned from the Garden to prevent them from eating of the Tree of Life (Gen. 3:22-24) and, presumably, from living forever entrapped in decaying but never quite dead physical bodies. The Tree of Life is next seen in [New Jerusalem](#). During the [Millennium](#), however, a life-giving river will flow from the Millennial Temple into the Dead Sea (Ezekiel 47:1-12). The Dead Sea will swarm with fish (Ezek. 47:8-10), and along the banks of the river, fruit trees will bear fruit every month, and the fruit and leaves of the trees will provide health and healing for all who partake (Ezek. 47:12). "Their leaves will not wither and their fruit will not fail. They will bear every month ..., and their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing." These multiple trees are reminiscent of the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden and forerunners of the Tree of Life in [New Jerusalem](#) (Revelation 2:7; 22:2, 14, 19). Will the tree of life in [New Jerusalem](#) be the identical tree that was found in the Garden of Eden? We do not know for certain, of course. But my best guess is that since the initial Tree of Life was situated in a world that became contaminated by man's sin, it cannot possibly be the identical tree. When we believers arrive in [New Jerusalem](#), I am certain we will be able to ask the question and receive a satisfactory answer.

were for the healing⁴³³ of the nations.

- D 13 The state of nature in the city – The absence of any curse: There will no longer be any curse;⁴³⁴ 22:3
- D 14 The fellowship in the city 22:3-4
- E 1 The presence therein of the throne of God and of the Lamb: and the throne⁴³⁵ of God and of the Lamb will be in it, 22:3
- E 2 The rendering of worshipful service to Him by His slaves: and His bond-servants will serve Him;⁴³⁶
- E 3 Their seeing His face: they will see His face, 22:4
- E 4 Their bearing His name on their foreheads: and His name

⁴³³ Rev. 22:2 - healing: the noun *therapeia* (2322), from the verb *therapeúō* 2323; TDNT - 3:65,331; n f. The noun *therapeia* (2322) appears in Luke 9:11, where it is translated “healing”; in Luke 12:42, where, strangely enough, it is translated “servants”; and in Rev. 22:22, where it is translated “healing.” Lk. 12:42 would more accurately be translated “...Who then is the faithful, sensible steward whom the lord will appoint over his ‘health’ or ‘well-being’ to give him his portion of food at the proper time?” (Note that *therapeia* appears in the singular, not the plural, and the pronoun is singular (“him”), not plural “them”.)

We derive our words *therapy* and *therapeutic* from *therapeia*. Whereas one may not be ill, a massage or whirlpool treatment can have a beneficial or “therapeutic” effect on one’s sense of well-being. Even today many herbs have a beneficial effect upon even a healthy person. In [New Jerusalem](#) and on [New Earth](#), there will be neither illness nor death. Nevertheless, the leaves of the Tree of Life will, like the trees along the banks of the life-giving river flowing from the Temple into the Dead Sea (Ezekiel 47:12), have a beneficial and therapeutic effect upon the bodies of all resurrected saints who partake thereof, whether in a topical or oral form.

So this word *therapeia* (2322) speaks here not of a matter of sickness, but of well-being. There will be no sickness in [New Jerusalem](#) and upon [New Earth](#). However, these leaves, like many herbs today, will engender well-being and optimal health in the bodies of those who imbibe them. My guess is that the leaves from this tree will brew into a delicious, invigorating tea that gives a euphoric (but not drug-induced) sense of well-being to those who drink it.

⁴³⁴ Rev. 22:3 - no longer any curse: The curse that God placed upon the ground because of Adam’s sin (Genesis 3:17) will not exist in [New Jerusalem](#) or on [New Earth](#).

⁴³⁵ Rev. 22:3 - throne: This may be difficult to understand. It seems as though there is only one throne. Throughout Revelation, throne in conjunction with Deity occurs only in the singular. In Revelation 3:21, Jesus speaks of letting overcomers sit with Him in His throne. However He immediately speaks of the fact that He Himself overcame and is now sitting with His Father in His Father’s throne. In Rev. 5:6 a Lamb stands in the center of the throne. In Rev. 5:13 there is praise to the one sitting on the throne and to the Lamb. In Rev. 7:17 the Lamb is said to be in the center of the throne. Apparently this throne is big enough for more than one person to sit in it. Each time a reference is made to someone sitting on the throne, it seems to be God the Father, clearly the focal point of power. Jesus is seen to be with Him, sharing His rule, in the center of the throne, once, standing. See also the note re: throne at Rev. 22:1.

⁴³⁶ Rev. 22:3 - serve: (3000) *latreuo* from *latris* (a hired menial); TDNT - omitted,503; vb
 AV - serve (16)
 - worship (3)
 - do the service (1)
 - worshiper (1) [21]
 1a) to serve for hire

1b) to serve, minister to, either to the gods or men and used alike of slaves and freemen; **in the NT, to render religious service or homage, to worship**; to perform sacred services, to offer gifts, to worship God in the observance of the rites instituted for his worship: of priests, to officiate, to discharge the sacred office (Strong’s def., *Online Bible*) (bold = mine for emphasis).

JTB: The Greek noun *latris* does not appear in the [UBS4](#) Greek text. The noun equivalent of *latreuo* (3000) is *latreía* (2999).

will be on their foreheads.⁴³⁷

D 15 The light in the city 22:5

E 1 The absence of night: And there will no longer be *any* night;

E 2 The absence of any need for light: and they will not have need of the light

G 1 From a lamp: of a lamp⁴³⁸

G 2 Nor from the sun: nor the light of the sun,

E 3 Their illumination by the Lord God: because the Lord God will illumine them;

D 16 The participants in the royal government of the city: and they will reign forever and ever.⁴³⁹ 22:5

B 7 Epilogue 22:6-21

C 1 The angel's affirmation of the origin and accuracy of his message 22:6-7

D 1 His affirmation of the veracity of his message: And he said to me, "These words are faithful and true"; 22:6

D 2 The source of authority for his message: and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel⁴⁴⁰

D 3 The purpose of the message: to show to His bond-servants the things which must soon take place.

D 4 The importance of heeding the message 22:7

E 1 Christ's soon return: "And behold, I am coming quickly.

E 2 The blessing upon the obedient: Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book."

⁴³⁷ Rev. 22:4 - His name *will be* on their foreheads: This is a personal touch in marked contrast to the worshippers of the beast having his mark or name or the number of his name on their foreheads (Rev 13:16-18)! The beast ([Antichrist](#)) is enamored with mathematics; God and Christ, with names!

⁴³⁸ Rev. 22:5 - light of a lamp: Apparently the glory of God and of the Lamb is pervasive. It can shine around corners and into crevices or if not, through walls and buildings. No artificial lighting of any kind will be necessary.

⁴³⁹ Rev. 22:5 - reign forever and ever: Evidently there will be work to do on behalf of the King throughout eternity. The verb *basileuo* (936) is the standard word for a king reigning. It appears in the [Future Tense, Indicative Mood](#). There will be no opposition to God and Christ, but there will be administrative requirements. Conquest, police action, detection, prosecution, judiciary action, and incarceration, no. Organization and administration, yes.

⁴⁴⁰ Rev. 22:6 - sent His angel: The same Lord God who spoke to the spirits of prophets in the Old Testament had also spoken to this [angel](#) (32), who had been showing His slaves what is about to come. Chapters 2-3 of Revelation (Rev. 2:1-3:22) are largely fulfilled after 1900 years. We await the next step, the upward call of the [Church](#) (Rev. 4:1), preserving her from the [Great Tribulation](#) (Rev. 3:10; Rev. 6:1-18-24).

- C 2 The angel's refusal of John's attempted worship 22:8-9
 - D 1 John's affirmation of his testimony: I, John, ⁴⁴¹ am the one who heard and saw these things.
 - D 2 His attempted worship of the angel: And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things.
 - D 3 The angel's refusal of worship 22:9
 - E 1 His command: But he said^ to me, "Do not do that.
 - E 2 His identification of himself as a fellow servant: I am a fellow servant
 - G 1 of yours
 - G 2 and of your brethren the prophets
 - G 3 and of those who heed the words of this book.
 - E 3 His command to worship God: Worship God."
- C 3 The call to holiness in view of the nearness of the fulfillment of the prophecy 22:10-15
 - D 1 The angel's command to leave the prophecy unsealed 22:10
 - E 1 The command: And he said^ to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, ⁴⁴²
 - E 2 The reason: for the time is near.
 - D 2 The angel's call to confirmation in moral state 22:11
 - E 1 Of evil
 - G 1 "Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong; ⁴⁴³
 - G 2 and the one who is filthy, still be filthy;

⁴⁴¹ Rev. 22:8 - John: "John" refers, once again, to [John the Apostle](#). John identifies himself by name, *Iōánnēs* ([2491](#)) four times in this book, in Rev. 1:1, 4, 9; 22:8. See the note at Rev. 1:1 for etymology.

⁴⁴² Rev. 22:10 - Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book: 2500 years earlier, an angel had commanded Daniel to seal up his book until the time of the end, when people would travel extensively and knowledge would explode (Dan. 12:4). We are on the verge of the next stage in human history!

⁴⁴³ Rev. 22:11 - wrong, still do wrong ... holy, still keep himself holy: There will come a time when peoples' characters are fixed. It will be too late for the unrighteous to change by turning to faith in Jesus. I urge the reader to trust in Jesus, the only hope of eternal survival now, before it is too late. "... now is the acceptable time, ... now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2). "When Christ comes, people will not be able to change their destiny. What they are then they will remain forever. People should not expect some second chance in the future but should make the decision about worshipping God now in the light of what they have read in this book" ([Constable](#)).

- E 2 Of good
 - G 1 and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness;
 - G 2 and the one who is holy, still keep himself holy."
- D 3 Christ's promise of His soon return 22:12
 - E 1 His promise of soon return: "Behold, I am coming quickly,
 - E 2 His promise of evaluation and compensation: and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.⁴⁴⁴
- D 4 Christ's identification of Himself 22:13
 - E 1 "I am the Alpha and the Omega,
 - E 2 the first and the last,
 - E 3 the beginning and the end."
- D 5 Christ's pronouncement of blessing upon the righteous 22:14
 - E 1 The beneficiaries of the blessing: Blessed are those who wash their robes,⁴⁴⁵
 - E 2 The benefits to the holy
 - G 1 so that they may have the right to the tree of life,
 - G 2 and may enter by the gates into the city.
- D 6 Christ's pronouncement of the exclusion of the evil 22:15
 - E 1 Outside are the dogs⁴⁴⁶
 - E 2 and the sorcerers
 - E 3 and the immoral persons
 - E 4 and the murderers
 - E 5 and the idolaters,
 - E 6 and everyone who loves and practices lying.

⁴⁴⁴ Rev. 22:12 - render to every man according to what he has done: Jesus has been appointed judge of all mankind (John 5:22-30).

⁴⁴⁵ Rev. 22:14 - wash their robes: Lest one should think that human effort cleans the robes, the invitation again is given to partake of salvation on the basis of grace alone – to take the water of life freely, without cost (Rev. 22:17)!

⁴⁴⁶ Rev. 22:15 - outside: A reference to eternal torment in the [Lake of Fire and Sulfur](#) (Rev. 20:10, 14).

- C 4 The authority and identity of the speaker—Jesus 22:16
 - D 1 His delegated authority – His having sent His messenger: "I, Jesus, have sent My angel
 - E 1 The recipient of the messages: to testify to you these things
 - E 2 The ultimate target of the messages: for the churches.
 - D 2 His identity
 - E 1 I am the root and the descendant of David,
 - E 2 the bright morning star."
- C 5 The invitation to come and partake freely of the water of life 22:17
 - D 1 The extenders of the invitation
 - E 1 The invitation of the Holy Spirit and the [Church](#): The Spirit and the bride say, "Come."
 - E 2 The exhortation to new converts to extend the invitation: And let the one who hears say, "Come."
 - D 2 Those invited
 - E 1 The thirsty: And let the one who is thirsty come;
 - E 2 The desirous: let the one who wishes
 - D 3 The invitation: take the water of life without cost.⁴⁴⁷
- C 6 The warning against tampering with the book of prophecy (Revelation) 22:18-19
 - D 1 The solemnity of the warning: I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: 22:18
 - D 2 The warning against adding to the prophecy
 - E 1 Condition: if anyone adds to them,
 - E 2 Consequence – Added plagues: God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book;
 - D 3 The warning against subtracting from the prophecy 22:19
 - E 1 Condition: and if anyone takes away from the words of the

⁴⁴⁷ Rev. 22:17 - take the water of life without cost: In a document filled with catastrophic plagues, Armageddon, the end of world, and eternal torment, you, the reader, are urged to "take the water of life without cost." I urge you, please trust in Jesus, the King of kings. If you come to Him in faith and ask Him, He will give you living water! Jesus said to an outcast, oft-married woman, "Whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life" (John 4:14). Will you take a deep drink?

- book of this prophecy,
- E 2 Consequence: Exclusion!
- G 1 From the tree of life: God will take away his part
from the tree of life
- G 2 From the holy city: and from the holy city, which are
written in this book.
- C 7 The benedictory farewells 22:20-21
 - D 1 Christ's promised soon return: He who testifies to these things says,
"Yes, I am coming quickly." 22:20
 - D 2 The response of John to Christ
 - E 1 Amen.
 - E 2 Come, Lord Jesus.
 - D 3 John's benediction upon the [churches](#):⁴⁴⁸ The grace of the Lord
Jesus be with all. Amen. 22:21

⁴⁴⁸ Rev. 22:21 - [churches](#): Jesus specifically addressed [seven churches](#) in Rev. chapters 2-3. This book as a whole is addressed to all [churches](#) (see Rev. 22:16), but anyone who reads and heeds this book is blessed (Rev. 1:3).

Bibliography

Constable, Thomas L., [*Notes on Revelation*](#), .html version; [*Notes on Revelation*](#), .pdf version.

Pentecost, J. Dwight, [*Things to Come*](#) (TTC),

Robertson, Pat, [*The End of the Age*](#) (A Novel) (TEOTA), Word Publishing, Dallas, 1995, 376 pp.

Ryrie, Charles C. [*The Ryrie Study Bible*](#) (selected notes).

Walvoord, John F., [*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*](#) (TROJC), Moody Press, Chicago, 1965, 350 pp.

Walvoord, John F., "Revelation," pp. 925-991, [*The Bible Knowledge Commentary*](#) (TBKC), II, SP Publications, Inc., 1983.

Annotated Analysis of Revelation

Prepared by James T. Bartsch

September, 2007

Updated October 13, 2024

Published Online by WordExplain.com

Email Contact: jbartsch@wordexplain.com

Scripture taken from the *NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE* ®,
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman Foundation.
Used by permission. (www.Lockman.org)

*** December 16, 2019. Start at the beginning and proof read each footnote.