

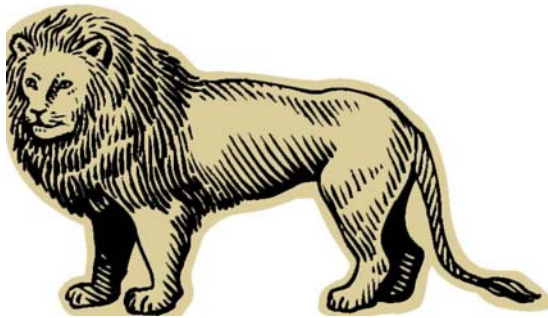
A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION



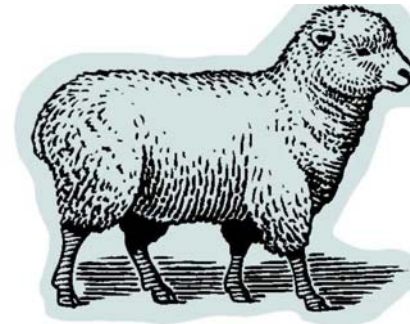
"The great dragon was cast out," Rev. 13:7.



"The beast was captured," Rev. 19:20.



"The Lion...has prevailed," Rev. 4:5.



"The Lamb shall overcome them....," Rev. 14:15.

By

Charles R. Williams

**CHRIST, THE LION AND THE LAMB, IS VICTORIOUS OVER
THE ENEMIES OF GOD'S PEOPLE, BECAUSE
HE IS KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.**

FORWARD NOTES: I began collecting this material as early as 1963. It is not fully footnoted in most places because I no longer have some of the original resources. I have placed footnotes where I am able to give credit. Because this is the case, **no part of this material may be reprinted under any circumstances.** This material is for Bible class study only. In addition, I have re-written some of the material thus making changes that agree with my assessment of the meaning of the verses in the book of Revelation. The notes and comments under the main outline have come from many different resources as well as my own conclusions after much research. The Bibliography at the end of this study provides a list of most of the resources used. If the reader recognizes the source where any of these quotes might have originated, please inform me and I will add the footnote so that credit may be given where it is due. The charts are the result of spending many hours using various clipart drawings software, masking software, and Microsoft Publisher and Digital Image Pro 10 editing tools. Thank you, and may you be spiritually enriched by this study. If you would like to respond to this material, you may do so at charlesrwilliams@comcast.net You may download the charts in color from <http://www.biblestudyplus.info>.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: Many thanks to Joyce Proctor for laboring patiently many hours to type this material and to Evelyn Harris and Pat Watson for proofreading the text.

BACKGROUND: Many different approaches have been applied to the interpretation of the book of Revelation. The first time I taught the book was in a teenage class in Nashville, Tennessee in 1963. I had never studied nor had I ever been in a class on Revelation. I gathered all the material I could find at the time. Resources were very limited. During my youthful inexperience, the most appealing approach to me was the *Continuous-Historical Method*, which makes the claim that you can find the popes, Mohammed, the Reformers, Hitler and others in the pages of Revelation. One of the problems I discovered with this approach is that this theory has to be revised every few years in order to accommodate later world-shaking events. While sitting around the dinner table of a preacher friend of mine, I was introduced to the approach I now accept as the proper interpretation of the book of Revelation. This approach has no particular name, but it could be called the *Immediate-Historical Method*. This method is based upon the opening and closing remarks found in the book. John says that God told him through this Revelation "the things which must shortly take place...for the time is at hand," Rev. 1:1-2. John closes the book with the same words, "the things which must shortly take place...the time is at hand," Rev. 22:6, 10. There is more regarding this in the introduction pages. Every interpretation theory is not without its difficulties, including this one, but in my thinking, it has fewer than the other approaches.

RECOMMENDATION: As I continued to develop my thoughts using the *Immediate-Historical Method*, I came across a book in 1985 that really helped convince me that this approach makes the best sense. The book is ***Looking Into The Bible Series: The Book of Revelation* by Jim McGuiggan**. I recently discovered this book is still available. I highly recommend you **acquire the book**. Although it is a scholarly work, it is written in a conversational style and therefore makes it an easy read. He soundly defeats the heresies that are presently taught in many religious circles. A number of sections and paragraphs in this study you are about to read are taken in whole from its pages. You can find more information about this and his other books at <http://www.jimmcguiggan.com>. C.R.W.

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I. STUDIES IN REVELATION¹

Introduction to the Book of Revelation

The book of Revelation might well be called the greatest of the books, if one book were placed above another. All of the other books, from Genesis on, point forward, but Revelation has a note of finality. What was lost in Eden is regained in Revelation. What came on man for his sin (death, Rom. 5:12) is regained in the city where there is no death. (Rev. 21:4). Sin is seen in its horrible form in Genesis, but is reconciled in Revelation. One of the main questions in this study will be, "What kind of death and what kind of tears will the children of God *no* longer see?"

Revelation declares the greatest message of time and eternity. ("The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever.") (11:15). Despite the greatness of its message there has been, through the years, a spirit of dislike to the book, resulting in its being the least studied of the books. The Book of Revelation is generally considered a very difficult book to understand. For this reason the study and teaching of it have been neglected and even avoided. Many teachers in Bible Schools in local churches and in Christian Colleges have been reluctant to teach it. They state they cannot understand it. It has been and remains a closed book to many students of the Bible. This is very unfortunate in view of the fact that the book has a great message and that a blessing is promised to the one who reads and those who hear "the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein. . . ." Revelation 1:3. Of all the sixty-six books of the Bible, Revelation is the most sublime. It unfolds the most spectacular and significant panorama that the mind of man has ever had the opportunity to dwell upon.

Some Questions of Importance:

1. *If we did not have the book of Revelation, which of the books would you select as the grand finale of the Book of God?* It would seem to most that the Bible would close abruptly, and become what blunt at the end without Revelation. Neither of Paul's masterpieces - Romans or Hebrews - would be a satisfactory substitute for Revelation. What other New Testament book would be a fitting conclusion for the Bible? In its subject matter, Revelation is the only book that gracefully terminates God's wonderful message to man. "It puts gold and blue in the clouds of life and imparts inspiration and hope to every weary Christian who is nearing the river of death." Revelation brings the prophecies, doctrines, duties and motives of the Bible to a focus.

2. *Can we understand Revelation, and is it necessary to study it?* The book opens with words, "The revelation of Jesus Christ." Are we interested in such a revelation? Then it says, "Blessed is he that reads, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein, for the time is at hand," Rev. 1:3. We are no more excused from studying this book, than we are from studying Acts or Romans. Revelation is full of practical teaching which we should try to get, but the majority study it just to see how well they can unravel its mysteries. Many are so fascinated with the scenery of the book that they get lost in going through it. Some refuse to study Revelation because they think it is hard to

¹ Some of the following material is taken from *Book of Revelation* by John Hinds and *Story of Revelation* by V. E. Howard. See Bibliography.

understand (2 Peter 3:16). Shall we refuse to study what Paul wrote because it is hard to understand? The best thing to do with anything that is hard to understand is to study it more. Of course, there are many difficult matters in Revelation that should cause a person to be cautious about being cocksure and dogmatic about one's conclusions; however, this is also true of Deuteronomy and Matthew. Every book in the Bible bears the mystery of the mind of God. While some things in Revelation are veiled in darkness and belong to God, other things are made plain. "The revelation of Jesus Christ" signifies the uncovering of hidden objects. Specifically the book shows the future course of the church within the immediate context of the prophecies being in John's day and when Roman persecution will end. The principles in this book apply to all times in human history. Many will try to destroy God's people and His church, but the King of Kings shall prevail. As Jesus in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew and twenty-first chapter of Luke tried to prepare the minds of his disciples for the destruction of Jerusalem, so in Revelation the minds of Christians are prepared to meet the misfortunes that will befall the church soon after the writing of the Revelation.

A. Apocalyptic Literature²

[The book of Revelation belongs to a class of literature termed *apocalyptic*. The Old Testament books of Daniel and Ezekiel, along with parts of Zechariah, belong to the same class.

The word "apocalyptic" comes from a compound Greek word which refers to the taking off of a veil so as to discover what was previously hidden. The purpose of such literature was not to hide the writer's message but to make it vivid and impressive through the use of signs and symbols. This type of literature ordinarily appeared in difficult times and sought to convey a message of optimism and hope. That God is in control of history and fully capable of bringing human beings and human events to His desired divine goal is the confidence which underlies such literature. That the book of Revelation belongs to this category of literature is evident.

Revelation was written at a crisis time in the history of the church. The very existence of the body of Christ was being threatened. Christians were being persecuted almost everywhere and a number of them had already died as martyrs because of their steadfast allegiance to Jesus Christ as Lord. This book was therefore written in an optimistic spirit and was designed to assure its readers that their cause would ultimately triumph. The *theme* of the book can be expressed in these words: God's way of truth and righteousness will triumph over all its foes!

Since the church had to exist under a virtual police state when Revelation was written, the apocalyptic form was the ideal method for the Holy Spirit to use in revealing the message of encouragement which constitutes this book. The symbols used to refer to the Roman government and its anti-Christian rulers served to protect both the writer and his readers. Those who were not Christians would see the book as merely a fanciful tale involving monsters, angels and spirits. But the Christians would understand that these were symbolic representations of the contestants in the ongoing struggle between truth and righteousness on the one hand and error and wickedness on the other. They would easily

² The following seven paragraphs in brackets were taken from *Simple Studies In Revelation*, Shelly; 1973; pp. 5-6, 9-11. The book has been reprinted but with different page numbers. It presents a simple but great summary of the book of Revelation in just 22 pages. NOTE: The book is out of print (1973).

discern the message of the book that the former was guaranteed victory over the latter. The overall theme of the book can be clearly seen.

Understanding only this much about the nature of the literary form of Revelation aids one immensely in his effort to interpret the book. One must realize that the essential message of the book can be understood without understanding every detailed part of the symbolism used to convey the message

One should study Revelation with the goal of understanding the significance of its symbolism to the first-century readers of the book. The bearing of the encouraging message of Revelation on the present-day problems of Christians can then be easily seen and appreciated.

Some of the problems of interpreting Revelation are enormously complex and difficult. But the gist of its message is clear enough to be grasped by every reader. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein: for the time is at hand." (Rev. 1:3). More will be said later on the symbolism of Revelation.]

B. Destination

This book was obviously intended for the seven churches of Asia Minor which are specified in chapters two and three. But, whereas these seven churches constituted the immediate destination of the book, there can be no doubt that its message had a much wider relevance.

Everywhere the church existed at the time in history when this book was written; its membership was subject to persecution. The message of hope and encouragement was certainly for all these congregations. That such a wide distribution of the book occurred is evident from the attestations to it which is available to us.

Furthermore, since believers of every generation have to undergo trials of some sort for the sake of their faith (cf. 2 Tim. 3:12), this book remains relevant for every generation of saints until the final victory over Satan is won!

C. The Recipients of Revelation

The condition of the Christians who first received it was very critical. Christianity had remained for several decades unnoticed by the Roman Government. It had been regarded as a part of the Jewish religion, which was legalized religion of Rome. When it became known that Christianity was not just a new patch on the old garment of Judaism, the Christians found themselves in difficulty with the government as well as with their fellow men.

Reasons for the antagonism directed against Christians:

- 1. Christianity was an illegal religion.** Rome tolerated the religion of those whom they conquered so long as they did not proselyte. Christians, of course, existed to save others.
- 2. Christianity aspired to universality.** With the Romans the State was the main thing; with the Christians the kingdom of God throughout the world was the principal concern.
- 3. Christianity was an exclusive religion.** Christians refused to mingle freely with heathen social life and customs. It was necessary for them to refuse intercourse with the pagan world because of the idolatrous practices in which the Romans engaged.
- 4. Christians were accused of all manner of evil.** Because they held meetings at night and were fond of each other, the Romans figured the meetings were for the gratification

lust. When they heard Christians speak of "eating flesh and drinking blood" they accused them of cannibalism. (Ante-Nicean Fathers).

5. **The Christians refused to go to war.** Two reasons:
 - a. A part of the oath and initiation of the soldiers included service to the idols of the State and the wearing of idolatrous insignias on their uniforms.
 - b. Christ had taken their sword from them and had given them the ways of peace. (Ante-Nicean Fathers)
6. **Christians were recruited chiefly from the poor and outcast.** This caused the "respectable" to look down on Christianity.
7. **Christians shared with the Jews the contempt which the Romans held for this people.** Because of their refusal to compromise they were regarded as worse than the Jews.
8. **Christians were looked upon as wild fanatics because of their enthusiasm.**
9. **Christianity came in conflict with the temporal interest of many of the Romans.** (Priests, makers and venders of sacrificial animals in particular).
10. **Christians refused to worship the emperor.**

The policy of the government to exterminate Christianity was by itself a sufficient menace to have brought despair to the hearts of the baffled churches, but this was not all. While this danger threatened without, another fierce monster stalked within, in the form of pernicious heresy. The heresy of Judaism combined with that of Gnosticism to produce bewilderment, controversy, and dissension. It also destroyed fellowship, and threatened to destroy the permanence of Christianity. When people were being killed, exiled, and robbed of all their property for refusal to renounce their religion, when evils were threatening to strike a death blow within the church, is there any hope for the future? Revelation is God's answer to this question.

D. Conditions in the Roman Empire

Since Revelation pictures the Roman State in conflict with the Church, we need to get a picture of this great enemy. As Revelation was being written, Rome was reaching her greatness. Her boundaries extended from the British Isles to the African Desert, and from the Atlantic Ocean to the Euphrates. To the people of that day it seemed that Rome was the world.

The things that made such a great empire possible were large and well-trained armies. The distant frontiers saw garrisons of soldiers schooled in the discipline of Roman army life. The fear of the Roman legions went before it; they seemed invincible. They brought the wealth and luxury into the city of Rome.

In contrast to this wealth and extravagance, there was much dire poverty. There was no work for hire; the slaves did that kind of work. The idle poor swarmed to the capital to be fed by the enormous dole system and to be amused by the many interesting things of city life.

Moral Condition: The teachers of the day were inconsistent; they taught purity and lived immorally. Seneca taught contempt for material wealth, yet amassed over twelve million dollars in a few years. The pupils were like their teachers in their living. According to their own testimony, the Romans cast away everything that was good and honorable. Crimes were multiplied; vice made no attempt to hide itself; a monstrous contest of lust and wickedness was carried on. Marriage came to be a commercial transaction easily effected and

as easily dissolved. Children were a burden and they were left to the slaves for rearing or were sold as slaves themselves. Naturally, the Christians looked with abhorrence upon such conditions. They saw their religion about to be crushed by such a system and wondered about the outcome of it. Revelation was badly needed to assure them of victory.

II. The Romans, the Jews and the Christians³

[The Romans were called into Palestinian affairs by the Maccabean boys but had no concrete contact with the Jews until Pompey defeated Jerusalem and Aristobulus II in 63 B.C. Julius Caesar in gratitude, later, made Antipater II (father of Herod the Great) governor of Judah; Herod governor of Galilee and John Hyrcanus II was given the priesthood in perpetuity. The nationalist hated the Herods and despised John for being their puppet. Nationalist bandits roamed the hills of Galilee troubling Herod and thus Rome. The last of the Hasmoneans, Antigonus, son of Aristobulus II, was defeated by Herod and the Roman, Sossius. Nationalism was set back but fumed and smoldered. Two strange men were born just prior to the death of Herod; one, the son of the priest Zachariah, and the other, Jesus, son of a virgin, Mary.

In A.D. 6 Archelaus, son of Herod the Great, was deposed by Augustus and Judea came under a succession of Roman governors. Tiberius succeeded Augustus who had changed the governors in quick succession. The morose world leader appointed only two governors - Valerius Gratus and the "famous" Pontius Pilate. He knew how venal were the Roman representatives and refused to keep changing one "hungry fly" for another more hungry. This Gratus appointed Caiaphas (son-in-law of Annas), High Priest. Pontius Pilate succeeded Gratus and it is claimed he was influenced by the powerful Roman, Sejanus, to be a thorn in the side of the Jews. Philo has claimed that the Jews in Rome until the time of Caligula (Gaius) were looked upon favorably by the Roman emperors. In any case it seems Pilate went out of his way to be a troubler to the Jews. After a series of bungles relating to the Jews, Pilate attacked a Samaritan community which promptly reported him to the Syrian legate who ordered Pilate to Rome to explain and defend himself. Tiberius died while Pilate was on the way home and Gaius became emperor. The next Roman to rule over Judea was Marullus. He was followed by Herod Agrippa I on the accession Claudius.

Herod Agrippa was a friend of Claudius and a Hasmonean through Mariamne I. It was due to his intercession that a full scale war didn't develop when Gaius decided to have a huge statue of himself erected in the temple at Jerusalem. Gaius, who took his divinity seriously, had become incensed at the conduct of Alexandrian Jews who denied his deity. This Herod Agrippa was made ruler of Judea by Claudius who realized the Jews would be more easily ruled by one who knew them. The Jews were pleased that now they had a Jew as their king. Agrippa served them well, killing James and laying hands on Peter because he saw this pleased the Jews. The early chapters of Acts make it plain that the Jews were firmly opposed to this new sect (at least in Palestine and in nearby areas). The treatment of Peter and John and later (though impossible to say exactly when) Stephen, at the hands of the Jews give clear testimony to this. The killing of Stephen was followed by the persecution of the area-wide Church as a whole. Agrippa died - eaten of worms.

³ This section in brackets is taken from the *Looking Into the Bible Series: The Book of Revelation*, McGuigan, pages 21-28. Understanding the historical context in which the book of Revelation was written, adds greatly to revealing the mysteries within it. McGuigan provides a clear and detailed history of this period.

Acts would suggest that when Paul met Priscilla and Aquila (Jews from Rome) they were already Christians. Suetonius (p.226) claims that Claudius drove the Jews out of Rome because of riots caused by "Chrestus" (obviously Jesus Christ). Maybe there was some unknown "Chrestus" who was causing these riots but it is certainly more probable that Suetonius heard the riots were due to the introduction and propagation of Christianity and he assumed that Christ was personally there. All this would seem clearly to suggest that the Jews were reacting to the evangelical work of the saints in Rome. This thought is set forth by F. F. Bruce (N. T. History, pp. 297-298). In Claudius' day, of course, no distinction between Jews and Christians would have been noted by the outsider (See Acts 18:14ff).

Fadus took the rule upon the death of Agrippa I. He put down many of the bandit groups which, in the main, had the sympathy of the locals. He was followed in office by an apostate Jew, Tiberius Alexander. He was followed by the tactless and inconsistent Cumanus who was banished by Rome for his stupidity and tactlessness. The commoner, Felix, became governor. He was a ruthless man with money on his mind. Before him, Tertullus spoke against Paul when Paul had been attacked by the Jews while on an errand of mercy to Jerusalem with the Greek contribution for the poor saints. Felix was hated for his ruthless handling of insurgents and so the patter of Tertullus is clearly "syrup". Bruce feels it was Felix who inadvertently caused the rise of the "Sicarii" (an underground group of assassins which took the place of open revolt and battle). Felix was removed in 59 and Festus took over. He was only three days in the office when the Jews wished him to send for Paul and bring him to Jerusalem (hoping, says Luke, to kill him on the way or in the city). The young Agrippa visited Festus and Paul was paraded before him before going off to Rome. Agrippa was the king who set Annas in the office of High-Priest. Between the time of the death of Festus and arrival of Albinus, his successor, Annas convened the council and put James the Just and some other Christians to death. Albinus was a rapacious ruffian who ran a protection racket with the bandits. Annas made money hand over fist. The various high-priestly parties began to riot and murder each other in the streets and Albinus helped to keep it going. Before he was recalled, the prisons were emptied - the incorrigibles were executed and the others were permitted to obtain the money to buy their freedom. Milman wrote, "Thus the prisons were empty, but the whole province filled with these desperate ruffians."

Albinus left and then came the gangster Gessius Florus; worse many times than his predecessor (a villain with influence with the Empress (herself an utter decadent). He abused, robbed, maligned and humiliated the Jews - rich and poor, noble and ignoble. He made no attempt to cover his godlessness but rather showed off his callousness and greed. He drove whole districts into flight and left villages without inhabitants and urged the Jews into open warfare that his cruelty might go uninvestigated. At last the Jews could no longer bear his pillaging and murder and, what with one thing and another, the lid blew off. Several Roman-manned fortresses were taken. The Zealots were in control and perpetrated some vile deeds. Meanwhile in Caesarea, so it is said, the Greeks arose and annihilated, to a man, every Jew in the city - 20,000. "By this act the whole nation was driven to madness." (Milman) The troubles spread to Alexandria where 50,000 were slain in their protests and revolt against the former governor of Judea, Tiberius Alexander.

Cestius Gallus marched south with insufficient man-power and was battered and humiliated by the confident Jews who destroyed almost 6,000 of their enemies. Beth-Horon, famous from the days of Judas Maccabees and now seeming to be an omen of favor, figured in the scene of the victory. The whole world watched as a tiny little nation threw down the

gauntlet to "the whole force of the civilized world". The Jews were quivering with excitement and flushed with victory. The word was passing around and was being heard by everyone that this was the time when "men" from Judea were to arise and rule the world. This saying was known and reported by Josephus, Tacitus and Suetonius. These understood it of Vespasian and Titus while the Jews understood the Messiah was to arrive!

Nero sent Vespasian to put down the revolt in Judea. This was early in 67 and within a year Vespasian had slowly subdued, by bitter battle, most of the country. In June 68, Nero committed suicide and Vespasian eased operations for a year. In June 69, he left the area for Rome and left his eldest son, Titus, to take care of the only major problem left, Jerusalem! Titus paraded his men before the city for three days doubtless hoping to intimidate the Jews into surrender - for his pains he received a "Bronx cheer" (Dimont). Jerusalem was taken after about 5 month's siege. The impregnable Massada held out until the spring of 73 when the whole garrison systematically and calmly committed suicide! So ended the 66 revolt against the Roman colossus.

Bruce assures us that between 73 and 132 there was some measure of resettlement of Jerusalem on the site of the now derelict city and "to what extent sacrificial worship was resumed in the temple area is a debated subject." (Page 389 of "History") Some time later, under Hadrian (117-138 A.D.), an ardent Hellenist, another revolt broke out. Hadrian, in furthering his policy to unite the various elements within the empire, built a shrine to Jupiter on the ruins of Jerusalem and called the place "Aelia Capitolina." He forbade circumcision on pain of death. (Mutilation of the body was obnoxious to him and, in addition, such practices as would maintain the distinctiveness of the Jews were not in keeping with his overall policy.)

The Jews revolted and so did the Jewish Christians. Ben-Kosheba was the new wind which was stirring the Jewish ranks. A fiery, outspoken and irreverent Roman-hater and nationalist. It is said of him that he told God not to help the Jews or the Romans but just to stand clear and let the issue resolve itself. His "apostle and armor-bearer" was the famed Rabbi Akiba who declared Ben-Kosheba to be the promised Messiah and so he gained the name "Bar-Kosheba" ("son of the star" from Numbers 24:17). The early days of the revolt began in Alexandria but it was in Judea in 132 A.D. that the explosion took place. Bar-Kosheba organized the people, persecuted Christians "who had separated from the nation" (Tenney) and fought Rome to a standstill. Hadrian sent for one of his leading generals from Britain, Julius Severus. Severus "Shermanized" the whole of Judea exterminating everything and everyone. It was a merciless purge but Rome paid dearly. Finally, the greater numbers and better equipped army won. Dio Cassius reports that 580,000 men died in this war in addition to those who died of famine and pestilence. The rubble of Jerusalem was used to fill in some of the hollows in the Tyropean valley. The whole area was ploughed and sown with salt. Jerusalem had ceased to be Jewish and had become a Roman garrison town! Tenney has said: ("Hadrian's action insured the separation of Christianity from Judaism. As long as a Jewish church existed in Jerusalem and Judea, it formed a link between Judaism and Christianity. With the dispersion of the Christians from Jerusalem, the link was permanently broken") (Times," p.351) Bruce has ("The year 135 also marks the final breach between the Jewish Christians and their fellow Jews. . . From that time onward, then, the distinctively Jewish Christian communities went their own way, isolated in religion from their fellow Jews") ("The Spreading Flame," p.272) The Jews were not finished, of course, and despite such horrific setbacks they thrived in whatever city they settled. The Rabbinic writings

inform us of the constant public debates between the Christians and the Jewish followers of Moses; of the Christians disturbing the synagogue services by the promoting of their views on the prophecies and of the curses in the prayer book against the "Nazarene" heretics. So, despite the fact of the vanished temple and ritual the Jews not only were still unconvinced of the truth of the Christian's position, in some ways, he was even more ardently set for the defense of the Judaic position.]

III. Emperor Worship⁴

[It is not hard to see that the worship of someone or something other than God is being promulgated in the book of Revelation. Chapter 13 in particular gives us a clear picture of an "earth beast" that is later identified in Chapter 19 as "the false prophet." The "earth beast" has the express function of causing all the earth to worship the "sea beast" whose authority the earth beast possesses.

How did emperor worship arise? The process was slow but it is not hard to follow it. It began early because, as MacKendrick tells us: "Official Roman religion was inseparably bound up with politics. The **pontifex maximus**, head of a powerful board of religious advisors to the consuls, was elected . . . To be elected required political manipulation. ." The aim, according to Cicero, of religion was to "protect ancestral institutions by retaining the old rites and ceremonies." Religion in Rome was rotten through and through with the usual superstitions which prevail where the word of God is not known or cared for. It wasn't helped by the slow but definite approach of Greek and particularly Eastern religions into the lives of the Romans. J.P.V.D Balsdon tells us: "To a Roman of the best days of the Republic religion represented stability in the State and in the home. . ." (p.182)

With the end of the 2nd Punic war (ended 202 B.C.); foreign gods were willingly accepted into Roman thought. The Great Mother (Cybele) was brought from Phrygia to Rome and made welcome. Others followed later. Bacchus came in but was disruptive and thus had to be punished in its worshipers. R.H. Barrow informs us (p.144): The tests applied to foreign cults, therefore, were three: (1) Would they upset the dominant position of the Roman cults? (2) Were they politically unsafe? (3) Were they morally desirable? If these tests were satisfied, toleration was complete.

The farther east Rome prevailed the more they heard of the generals and kings being called gods and worshiped. The line between the gods and men were not too clearly defined in eastern thought. From the idea of providence we begin to get the "divine right of kings" idea. He is the obvious representative of the gods since without the favor of the gods he couldn't be ruler - at least so it was believed. From the idea of the representative of the gods they moved to the embodiment of the mind and desires of the gods, that is, the rulers are now the embodiment, the expression of the will of the gods. In the east, Roman governors found themselves called by titles which in Italy would have been thought absurd. Many a governor repudiated these titles - others loved and sought them. The Roman leaders in their full-dress ceremonial with their powerful, disciplined legions were more impressive than any of the kings of the east ever were and so the people used the exalted terms of them. Rome was her rulers and her generals were Rome! She became an eastern god **DEA ROMA**, and had her temples and altars in the eastern Mediterranean. However, as Balsdon reminds us (p.187), Rome was not a goddess in Rome until the 2nd century A.D. Barrow says it was from the time of Augustus (27 B.C. to 14 A.D.) that a new form of Roman cult appeared - the worship of

⁴ Ibid., pp. 25-28.

the emperor. Mac Kendrick assures us (p.61) that Augustus was never worshiped in Italy during his lifetime but that he encouraged provincial cults. Tiberius was against his own deification and Claudius wrote commending Jews in Alexandria for refusing to worship the "mad" Caligula. He thought such practice was nonsense and Seneca thought the deification of Claudius was "pumpkinification" rather than "deification." Nero, as William Barclay informs us, at no time took his divinity seriously since he wanted nothing to overshadow his own inner talent. So rather than ascribe anything to divinity he bragged on himself.

Caligula had been serious about his divinity and mercifully died before he was able to erect a statue of himself in the holy of holies at Jerusalem. With the death of Nero, the Roman world erupted. Four emperors in quick succession come on the scene. Galba, Otho, Vitellius and then Vespasian who brought back stability to the empire and ruled from 69-79 A.D. None of these men talked of divinity - none of them had the time or desire. Why talk of divinity when humans are on verge of slaying you - right?! Titus, the older son of Vespasian, succeeded his father and ruled 79-81. He was not one to bother about divinity either. Following him, came his brother Domitian who was serious about his godhood and would persecute in pursuit of it. With him began the empire policy which later grew into fierce persecution against the Church of God. Stewart Perowne in his "Caesars and Saints" said (pp.83-84) concerning the state's view of the Church:

First, there was the savage attack of Nero, who in the year 64 tries to divert the guilt of having burnt the city from himself to the Christians. That was mere shift, not a settled policy. In the last decade of the century, Christians, among many others, fell as victims of the loutish brutality of Domitian. Here again, there is no evidence of any thought-out and enduring legal procedure.

Perowne goes on to discuss the reason for the slowness of the development of out and out, full scale persecution against the Church and the reasons for its inevitability. He speaks of outbursts of persecution, as for example, at Smyrna and Lyons. He speaks of the perplexity of both the saints and their rulers as to how to approach the problem of the "third race." He sums it all up in three points:

1. They worshiped a criminal (Jesus) therefore must be political offenders themselves;
2. They would pray **for** the king but would not pray **to** him;
3. They were accused of cannibalism and incest. The fire smoldered, then flickered into flame and then devoured the saints!

The Jews were tolerated; they had no universal dominion aspirations. The saints, consisting of various nations, preached universal conquest and dominion by Jesus. Barrow's piece on "Christianity and the Roman Empire" (pp. 175ff) is obviously off the mark in many respects. The saints were called on to acknowledge the emperor as "Lord." Their refusal branded them as subversive. Persecutions followed upon persecutions but the saints came out on top. And even that, which we are permitted to freely regard as the Church of Christ, even that watered down Gospel with its pagan mixture was more than enough against Rome when God was through with her. Applying them where we can, the words of F.W. Farrar in his "History's Witness to Christ" (pp.100, 6, 7, and 8) are a fitting conclusion:]

Yet unaided by any, opposed by all, Christianity won. Without one earthly weapon she faced the legionary masses, and, tearing down their adored eagles, replaced them by the sacred monogram of her victorious labarum, she made her instrument of a slave's agony a symbol more glorious than

the laticlave of consuls or the diadem of kings; without eloquence she silenced the subtle dialectics of the Academy, and without knowledge the encyclopedic ambition of the porch . . . yes, it was of God, and they could not overthrow it; the catacomb triumphed over the Grecian temples; the Cross of shame over the wine cup and Salian banquet, the song of the siren and wreath of the rose. These obscure sectaries, barbarians, Orientals, Jews, as they were, fought against the indignant world and won. "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, Saith the Lord of Hosts" by heretic endurance, by stainless innocence, by burning zeal, by inviolable truthfulness, by boundless love. The world's seductive ideals and intoxicating joys, the world's enchanting mythologies and dissolute religions . . . all fled before a Cross of wood! Yes, my brethren, because that Cross was held by the bleeding hands of the world's true King, who perfected the strength of His followers in weakness: and having been lifted up, drew all men unto himself.

A study of the history of the times of the early church is essential in understanding the meaning and application of the book of Revelation. McGuiggan has captured the essence of that history in the sections quoted above.⁵

⁵ Ibid., pp. 25-28.

EMPERORS, RULERS, AND GOVERNORS OF THE TIMES

ROMAN EMPERORS		JUDEA RULERS		JUDEA ROMAN GOVERNORS	
Pompey	63 B.C. (General)	Antipater II (Governor of Judea, father of Herod the Great)		Valerius Gratus (appointed Caiaphas High Priest)	
Julius Caesar (Not considered an emperor)	47-44 B.C.	John Hyrcanus II	63-40 B.C.	Pontius Pilate	
Augustus Caesar	27 B.C. - A.D. 14	Antigonius II	40-37 B.C.	Marullus	
Tiberius	A.D. 14-36	Herod the Great (Governor of Galilee, King of Judea)	37-4 B.C.	Herod Agrippa I (King of Judea, killed James arrested Peter, died eaten of worms)	A.D. 37-44
Caligula (Gaius)	A.D. 37-41	Herod Antipas (Tetrach of Galilee)	4 B.C. - A.D. 39	Fadus	
Claudius	A.D. 41-54	Archelaus (Son of Herod, Ethnarch of Judea)	4 B.C. - A.D. 6	Tiberius Alexander	
Nero	A.D. 54-68			Cumanus	
Galba	A.D. 68-69			Felix (Procurator of Judea)	A.D. 52-59
Otho	A.D. 69			Festus	A.D. 60-62
Vitellius	A.D. 69			Herod Agrippa II (Tetrach of Galilee)	A.D. 50-70
Vespasian	A.D. 69-79			Albinus	
Domitian	A.D. 81-96			Gessius Florus	
				Cestius Gallus	

IV. The Time for Fulfillment of the Book of Revelation⁶

Jim McGuigan, in his introduction states, "Now don't tell me the book cannot be understood for that would mean God had mocked us in giving it to us and in adding a blessing for those who 'keep' it." There is no doubt the book presents its readers with a number of challenges, but God meant for this book to be read and understood, otherwise, how could anyone receive the promised blessing?

In addition McGuigan says, "And don't tell me it is a simple book to understand for that is clearly an overstatement. Perhaps for some of you professional students and teachers with a lot of time on your hands the book has **become** simple but it isn't for the rest of us. And when I look at the mass of commentaries written on the book and see how they differ often and widely - I wonder if it is really simple for anyone!"⁷

[The book of Revelation deals with the struggle of the Church of our Lord against the Roman Empire! All the historical events dealt with (prophesied of), in the book, have been fulfilled! Please do not turn this thought off until you have read the evidence for this conclusion. However, there are truths set forth in the book which are eternal and therefore speak to us of warning and comfort today. In Genesis 15 God told Abraham he would bring his seed up out of Egypt in the fourth generation. That was fulfilled in the days of Moses but the truths set forth by the Exodus are still as applicable today as then.

There are two observations that need to be made in order to fully understand the Revelation. These are perhaps the most important statements that can be made toward its understanding:

1. It is written, says John, concerning **"things which must shortly come to pass"** and of a time which was **"at hand"** when John wrote! And,
2. It was written in "apocalyptic" speech.

It is amazing how much the two introductory verses and the two concluding verses about the time of fulfillment are overlooked by Bible students. Four times in the book John tells us what he is writing about. Read Chapter 1:1, 3 and 22:6, 10 before reading this material any further. John was told by inspiration that the fulfillment of the book of Revelation was to be soon and that it was at hand. Let's illustrate this: Suppose John came into your presence right this minute with a scroll in his hand and said to you, "I have a revelation here for you about things which must shortly come to pass." What would you think? Could your mind even begin to think 42nd century"? Suppose he said to you again, "This letter concerns things the time of which is at hand." How would that grab you? Would you think it was close to happening? If he said again to you, just before he was leaving, "Now remember, the letter I'm leaving with you concerns things which must shortly come to pass," would you not think he meant just what he said? And finally, suppose he said, just as he vanished. "Don't seal up that book for the time is at hand," would you not be more than ever convinced that what he meant was "soon"? Of course you would. Now let commonsense be your guide in this matter. The contents of the book are related to things close to John's day.

NOTE: For some unknown reason, Word 7 wants to start the footnote below with the number "4" when it should have inserted footnote number "6." Any suggestions on solving this would be greatly appreciated.

⁶ This section in brackets is taken from the *Looking Into the Bible Series: The Book of Revelation* by Jim McGuigan, pages 12-13. NOTE: This book has had the greatest influence on my thinking regarding the meaning of the book of Revelation because to me it make the best sense when compared to other views I have studied.

⁷ Ibid, p. 12.

(THIS IS IMPORTANT REGARDING THE TIME OF FULFILLMENT)

There is in the book of Daniel a matter that really clinches the question about the time when the book of Revelation was to be fulfilled. Daniel received a vision in the year 550 B.C. (8:1) which was fulfilled in 164 and 165 B.C. (8:13, 14), and, now get this, he was told "shut up the vision; for it belongeth to many days to come." (8:26). Here is a vision fulfilled in less than 400 years after it was received and God says, "Therefore seal up the vision, For it refers to many days in the future." **John is told exactly the opposite!** "Don't seal it up for the time is at hand!" Why was John told the very opposite of Daniel? It was because the Revelation given to John was to be fulfilled 'not many days in the future of John.'

In reply to this, some will say, "Well, 'at hand' or 'shortly to come to pass' may mean a short time to us but in light of 2 Peter 3:8 it might involve a long time." This would be alright except God was not speaking to Himself in these passages. He was speaking to men and women like you and me. And besides, it was God Himself in Daniel 8:26 who said 400 years was "many days." So we have God on record that 2000 years is not a short period and such events would not be "at hand." Re-read the previous paragraph and think about it for a while.]

V. APOCALYPTIC SPEECH AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE⁸

The book of Revelation uses what is called "Apocalyptic" language extensively. It is simply a fancy word that denotes highly colorful, figurative language.

"Apocalyptic" writings denote speech which is made up of symbols. [In the New Testament, there is only one book of "apocalyptic speech" although there are a number of examples of such speech in books written in "ordinary" speech. In the Old Testament apocalyptic speech pervades books such as Daniel, Ezekiel, and Zechariah. In a number of other books (e.g. Isaiah and Joel) there are many examples of apocalyptic speech.

McGuigan points out, "The word itself denotes 'an unveiling, or uncovering, a revealing.' In the light of the confusion which swirls around these books, it is hard for the average person to believe this. In Revelation 1:1, we are told God gave Jesus a "revelation" to John in symbolic speech, Paul "revealed" some things in ordinary speech but the last book in the New Testament - the last "revelation" was given in symbolic speech. Because this last book is called an "apocalypse" and it was given in symbolic speech, men then called books written in symbolic speech - apocalyptic."⁹

McGuigan observes that "One can go through the Bible and without much difficulty gather together the sections of scripture which remind him of the book of Revelation. These sections sound like one another. They strike the same chord in our mind - they are in a class of their own. This may be because they not only sound alike but that they have the same general import."¹⁰

[Apocalyptic speech is lurid in its colors and very often violent in its tone. It strikes the imagination and grabs hold of the mind. Who, having read of it, can forget the seven-headed sea beast or the scarlet prostitute on its back? Whose mind does not boggle over the falling of the stars and the rolling up of the heavens? Apocalyptic speech is vivid and easily remembered. It appeals to our imagination. It is the language of conflict and victory. It is the language used when God smites the oppressor and vindicates His people. It is the language of crisis if not of persecution.

⁸ These are very **important points made by McGuigan**. These facts set forth the way this unusual language is to be read and thus interpreted.

⁹ Ibid., p. 14.

¹⁰ Idem.

It is the extension of the Biblically familiar. See examples of it in Isaiah 13, 34; Micah 1:2ff; Zephaniah 1:2ff; Jeremiah 4:11-26. In these we read of God's attack on the world of the ungodly. It is a repetition of past historical events.

The earth (of the ungodly) becoming once more "without form and void"; The heavens (of the ungodly) once more coming under attack as they did in the days of Pharaoh; another Sodom and Gomorrah judgment comes on Edom; and the earth's high places tremble again at God's presence as they did at Sinai.

This is certain, though an apocalyptic book may have material in it which is to be understood literally, we must reverse the usual rule of interpretation when approaching it. Here is the usual approach to a book: Understand it literally unless forced to do otherwise. In approaching an apocalyptic **book** the rule is: Understand it figuratively unless there is good reason to do otherwise.

Whatever they may say to the contrary, the practice of Premillennialists is to make figurative sections of Revelation when they are **not** forced to. Lindsey makes "**fire and brimstone**" equivalent to nuclear explosions: **locust's** equivalent to Cobra helicopters; **swords and shields** stand for tanks and missiles. He insists **144,000 Jews** in the text (Revelation 7) must mean just that but "**fire and brimstone**" must mean something else. Did it mean something else in the destruction of Sodom? If it means nuclear activity in Revelation, why does it not mean that in Genesis? Walvoord refuses to accept "**10 days**" in 2:10 as "**10 days**" but insists on "**1000 years**" in 20:1ff meaning "**1000 years.**" These are not isolated cases. So don't let anyone give you the impression Amillennialists are the only people who see figurative language in Revelation.

Through the years there have been and are those who affirm "apocalyptic speech" was used to hide the truth from the hostile authorities. There is no proof whatever for such a view. What's to prevent an enemy from infiltrating an assembly of believers and hearing the message explained? What's to prevent the enemy from "extorting" from a weak believer the explanation he heard? How does it come that Daniel explains a lot of the symbolic speech to the enemy? How is it that Zechariah used this type of speech in regard to matters which were not inflammatory? How come John explains some of this and that some other symbolic pictures are so thinly veiled their meaning is self-evident?]¹¹

McGuiggan provides some very important materials and observations, which compare the views of premillennial writers such as Hal Lindsey and J. F. Walvoord. He states, "Lindsey suggests it was to make it difficult for biblical critics to level any real criticism against the book. Perhaps so - but why wasn't the whole Bible written this way? And from the survey of the comments I've read on this book it has brought quite a bit of criticism **because** it was written in this fashion. Some said it couldn't be understood and others gave it their own strange interpretation. That interpretation proved incorrect and the book was maligned for containing false prophecies."¹²

[It has also been suggested by some writers (among them Lindsey) that this speech may well have been used because the writer didn't have the words to convey the literal truth. We can hardly be expected to take this view seriously. These men believe Egypt is alluded to under the figure of one of the heads of the seven-headed beast in chapter 17. Now John knew how to say Egypt (11:8). Besides, God could have given John the vocabulary he had he wanted to.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 14-15.

¹² Ibid., pp. 15-16.

Remember then, the writer **chose** to describe the visions in the terms related. The "explanations" offered by millennialists like Lindsey and Walvoord underline the point that the book in so many areas **really is** written in non-literal speech.

However you understand the book you must take into account that John has explicitly told us it concerns things "**which must shortly come to pass**"; things that are "**at hand.**"

While there are sections of the book (e.g. Chapters 2-3) containing speech to be literally understood you must constantly remind yourself, "What I am reading is what he has seen but what does it mean? What is the truth behind the vision he has just related?" You must remember you are seeing a portrait and just as one does not examine every brush stroke but stands back and examines the whole so must you look for the overall import of the vision.]¹³

¹³ Ibid., p. 16.

VI. KEY TO THE SYMBOLS¹⁴

As was emphasized in the introduction of the last lesson, the book of Revelation, like the books of Daniel, Ezekiel, and Zechariah, is a book of symbols; and in order to study the book properly the student must have some knowledge of those symbols and their general reference, or meanings, have their roots in the Old Testament. To illustrate, the symbol, "Babylon," had an emotional meaning and reaction - that is, a captivity and persecution - to the people of God very much as the expression "Remember the Alamo," had an emotional meaning and reaction for Americans of a prior century.

Abaddon--(*abaddon* in Hebrew; *appollyon* in Greek) - a symbol of one who destroys. (Rev. 9:1-11)

Abyss—a symbol of an immeasurable depth, whether space or morality; a prison or abode of evil persons and/or powers. (Rev. 9:1, 2, 11)

Adultery—a symbol of spiritual adultery, especially; the apostasy of individuals, and collectively as the church, the bride of Christ. (Rev 6:9, Gen. 12:7)

Altar—seat of worship, place of sacrifice. (Rev. 6:9), Gen. 12:7)

Alpha and Omega—First and last letters of the Greek alphabet. (Rev. 1:11, 22:13)

Ascension into heaven--a symbol of any political or spiritual elevation to position, dignity, and honor. (Rev. 11:12)

Babylon—a symbol of any power which subjects God's people to persecution and to captivity, as the nation of Judah was carried captive to Babylon. (Rev. 6:5; Dan. 5:27)

Balance, Scales—God's righteous judgments. (Rev. 6:5; Dan. 5:27)

Bear, Lion—characteristics; strong, crushing. (Rev. 13:2, Lam. 3:10; Prov. 19:12)

Beast—denotes a wild savage beast; a symbol of a cruel, lawless, tyrannical ruler or power, whether civil, or political, or religious. (Rev. 17:7-11)

Beloved city--the church. (Rev. 20:9; Heb. 12:22-23)

Binding—a symbol which means to render one helpless to deprive of power. (Rev. 20:1, 2)

Birth—a bringing forth; natural and spiritual. (Rev. 12:2, Matt. 1:25, John 3:3-5)

Black—a symbol denoting disaster, anguish, and affliction. (Rev. 6:5)

¹⁴ The meanings of the numbers, words, and symbols in the book of Revelation, which are listed here, have been gathered from many different sources, including *A Study of the Revelation* by John A. Copeland, pp. 115-118.

Blood--a symbol denoting carnage, slaughter, war. (Rev. 6:3)

Book—a sealed book is a symbol of secrecy or mystery; an open book is a symbol of a mystery about to be revealed, or a revelation of future history; the book of seven seals denotes destiny. (Rev. 5)

Book of Life—Heavenly record of the names of the saints. (Rev. 13:18, Phil. 4:3)

Bottomless pit--the abode of crafty, evil forces. (Rev. 9:2, Isa. 38:17 Phil. 4:3)

Bow—a symbol of war, particularly when held in the hand. (Rev. 6:10)

Bride—a symbol of the church and its relationship to Christ. (Rev. 21:1-4)

Bridegroom—a symbol of Christ and His relationship to the church. (Rev. 21:1-4)

Bright and morning star—Christ. (Rev. 23:16)

Calf, Ox—Symbols of servitude; strong, but also docile. (Rev. 4:7; Ezek. 1:10; Deut. 5:14)

Candlestick—symbol of how the church is the light to the world; the seven golden candlesticks were symbols of the seven churches of Asia. (Rev. 2 and 3)

Chain--a symbol of bondage and affliction; to render powerless; to bind or limit the power of Satan. (Rev. 20)

Cloud—a symbol which denotes glory, power, and royalty; to ride upon the cloud denotes an appearance in a power of destruction and/or to appear in glory and exaltation. (Rev. 1:7)

Countenance as the sun--a symbol of the majesty of Christ. (Rev. 1:16)

Court—a section of the Jewish tabernacle, or temple, Strangers (Gentiles) were permitted in the outer court, symbolic of the world. (Rev. 11:2; Lev. 17:8-9)

Crown--a symbol which denotes royalty, authority, and power; that which belongs only to the victor. (Rev. 2:10)

Crowns of Gold—pure and refined authority; also honor and reward. (Rev. 3:18)

Crystal sea--a symbol of the transcendence of God which separates God from His people; the unapproachable throne: when "the sea is no more" (Rev. 21:1), there will be no further separation of God from His people. "Sea" is also the symbol of peoples or nations.

Cubit—the Hebrew cubit of measurement was almost two feet.

Day--one year. (Rev. 18:8, Ezek. 4:6)

Darkness--a symbol of blindness that results in calamity and affliction. (Rev. 9:2; 16:10)

Death--a symbol of calamity and affliction. (Rev. (:2; 16:10)

Diadem--a headband worn as a badge of royalty; any person of royalty may wear a diadem but only a victor may wear a crown. (Isa. 28:4)

Doctrine of Balaam—the teaching of going beyond the word of God. (Rev. 2:14; Num. 22, 23, 24; 3 John 9:2; 2 Thess. 2:11-12)

Doctrine of the Nicolaitans--it is believed that the followers of this doctrine claimed Nicholas of Antioch, one of the deacons, as their leader, Acts 6:5. The doctrine consisted of living after the desires of the flesh and false doctrines. (Rev. 2:15, 1 Cor. 8, 11:20-22, 3:17, 1 Cor. 5:1-4)

Door—a passage, revelation, opportunity. (Rev. 4:1, 1 Cor. 16:9)

Dragon—a symbol of Satan working through cruel monarchs. (Rev. 12)

Drunkenness—a symbol of (1) stupidity and confusion of mind, and (2) a self-exaltation as a result of power, success, affluence, and pleasure. (Isa. 51:17)

Eagle—a symbol of aspiration, penetration, and swiftness. (Rev. 4:7)

Earth—a symbol of all people, governments, and rulers of all the world; of human origin. (Rev. 13:3).

Earthquake—a symbol of the power of God to wreak destruction by means of a natural calamities. (Rev. 8:5)

Eclipse—a symbol of the darkening of heavenly bodies, or the observation of the glory of kings and potentates, of which the sun, moon, and stars are symbols. (Rev. 6:12-17)

Elders (24)--a symbol of God's leaders over His people; 12 tribes, 12 apostles (Rev. 4)

Euphrates—a river of Asia Minor. A symbol of people. (Rev. 16:12, 17:15)

Eyes—a symbol of enlightenment and understanding. (Rev. 4:6)

Eyes of flaming fire--a symbol of Christ's spiritual penetrating vision. (Rev. 1:14)

Face of man--a symbol of intelligence. (Rev. 4:6, 7)

Face of a lion--a symbol of courage, strength, and bravery. (Rev. 4:6, 7)

Face of an ox, or calf--a symbol of strength or patience and endurance. (Rev. 4:6, 7)

Face of an eagle--a symbol of swiftness and speed, penetrating vision, and aspiration. (Rev. 4:6, 7)

False prophets--a symbol of any person, nation, or institution which misrepresents the word of God. (Rev. 2:1-4)

Faithful and True—true Christians possess these characteristics of Christ. (Rev. 3:7, 19:11, Heb. 10:23)

Feet of burnished brass--a symbol of the strength of Christ. (Rev. 1:15)

Fire—a symbol which denotes fierce destruction; never denotes a symbol of blessing, but always a curse. (Rev. 8:7, 9)

Fire from heaven--a symbol of false demonstrations, delusions, and descriptions. (Rev. 13:14)

First fruits unto God--a symbol which denotes that the lives of Christian saints belong to God, just as the first-fruits under the law belonged to God. (Rev. 14:4; Ex. 23:19)

First resurrection—the resurrection of Christ and the saints who will arise with Him; The saints may die a physical death but they will still live as Christ lives. (Rev. 20:6, Matt. 27:52:53)

Flood—a symbol of (1) any destroying power, severe persecution or distress, and (2) God's power to effect calamity through means of natural calamity. (Rev. 12:15, 16)

Fornication--a symbol of (1) political alliances with heathen nations, and (2) the recognition and/or worship of the pagan gods of heathen nations. (Rev. 17:1-5)

Fowls of heaven—God's people. (Rev. 19:17, Hos. 7:11-12)

Forty two months—1260 years. (Rev. 13:4, Ez. 4:6)

Four beasts--the Roman world with the primary political divisions (Rev. 4:6, Dan. 7:17-23)

Four corners—the whole world with the primary directions. N.E., S.E., S.W., N.W. (Rev. Dan. 7:2)

Forehead—Seat of the mind. (Rev. 7:3, Ezek. 9:4)

Flying eagle--a symbol freedom and swiftness. (Rev. 4:7, Isa. 40:31)

Frog—a symbol of any slimy, unclean, loathsome, lying, devilish, and hateful person. (Rev. 16:12-21)

Furlong—a measure of length. Eighth of a mile. (Rev. 14:20)

God's tabernacle--a symbol of where God's people dwell and of God's people as well. The church is God's tabernacle for those who dwell on earth. The words "temple" and "tabernacle" are interchangeable. (Rev. 13:6; 15:5)

Gold—a symbol of purity and great value. (Rev. 17:4, 1 Pet. 1:7)

Golden bowls of incense--a symbol of the prayers of the saints as they ascend as a sweet-smelling odor to the throne of God. (Rev. 5:8)

Grave—a symbol of one's being consigned to oblivion; to be buried was to be forgotten; "Not to suffer dead bodies to be put into the grave," meant that they shall be remembered. (Rev. 11:1-10)

Green grass, trees—living things. (Rev. 8:7; Psa. 1-3; Isa. 40:7)

Great harlot--an apostate religious organization. (Rev. 17:4-5)

Hail—a symbol of God's power to wreak ravages and destruction by means of a natural calamity. (Rev. 16:21).

Harlot—a symbol of any idolatrous community, or city, or any unchaste or untrue church. (Rev. 2:18-22; 17:4-5)

Harp---a symbol praise (Rev. 14:2; 15:2) as "incense" was a symbol of prayer (Rev. 5:8).

Heaven and earth—a symbol of the whole universe, political and religious, civil and spiritual. (Rev. 20:11)

Hidden manna--life giving teachings of Christ. Manna preserved the life of the children of Israel (Ex. 15). The teachings of Christ are hidden to the man who lives after the flesh but is life to the believer. (Rev. 2:17, John 6:63)

Hour—a portion of time. (Rev. 18:10, Ezek. 4:6)

New Heaven and new earth—a symbol of the passing away of the old order of things and the establishment of a new order; a new situation (Rev. 21:1)

Horn or horns—a symbol of a king or kings. (Rev. 12:3; 17:1-6)

Horse or horses--a symbol of war, and the color of the horse denotes the condition of the warrior, and the state of the war, as follows:

1. "White" denotes a successful or conquering war (warrior). (Rev. 6:2)
2. "Red" denotes a cruel or bloody war (warrior). (Rev. 6:4)
3. "Black" denotes a devastating war (warrior) followed by famine. (Rev. 6:5)

4. "Pale" denotes a devastating war (warrior) followed by disease and pestilence.

Image—likeness, similar. (Rev. 13:14; Gen. 1:26)

Incense—a symbol of the prayers of the saints. (Rev. 5:8)

Islands—a symbol of the small nations and/or powers. (Rev. 5:8)

Island—the word "Mountain" and "Island" are connected with the coordinating conjunction "and." "Mountain" is a symbol of a government, therefore, "Island" is a symbol of a maritime government. (Rev. 6:14, Dan. 2:35, 44)

Jerusalem—a symbol of the church; the holy city is contrasted with the great city of Jerusalem Palestine; with the false church; the church on earth is contrasted with the heavenly church. (Rev. 21:1, 2 Heb. 12:22-24)

Jezebel—a symbol of an unholy woman, or an unholy influence, or the introduction of idolatry of one form or another. (Rev. 2:18-22)

Key--a symbol of power or authority to open or close heaven or hell, prison or the church; the power to set free or to bind; and to save and destroy. (Rev. 1:18; 3:7)

Key of David--God promised David, King of Israel, that of his seed He would raise up one to sit upon his throne and that his kingdom would be established forever. Jesus was of the lineage of David. He now reigns as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords over His kingdom, the church. (Rev. 3:7, 2 Sam. 7:12-13, Isa. 22:22, Lk. 1:32)

Kill, or killing—a symbol of an evil one who deprives any person or power of their rights. (Rev. 11:1-9); 16:3)

King of Kings--Jesus. (Rev. 19:16; 17:14; 1:5)

Kings and priests—Christians. (Rev. 1:6; 1 Pet. 2:5)

Kings of the east—nations of Asia. (Rev. 16:12)

Kingdom-the church. (Rev. 1:9; Matt. 3:2; Mark 9:1; Acts 2; col. 1:13-14; 1 Thess. 2:12)

Lake of fire—death, destruction, and punishment. (Rev. 20:10, 15)

Lamb—a symbol denoting the Messiah, slain as a lamb before the world. (Rev. 14)

Leopard—a spotted beast, symbolic of both good and bad, also denotes speed and power. (Rev. 13:2; Jer. 13:28; Daniel 7)

Lightening, thunder, earthquake, voices, etc.--rapid, great shaking events, etc. (Rev. 8:5, Job 26:14; Psa. 10:7; Heb. 4:12; Ex. 19:16)

Lion—power; Jesus of the tribe of Judah. (Rev. 5:5; Gen. 49:9-10; Heb. 7:14)

Locusts--a symbol of the invasion of a cruel and devastating army. (Rev. 9:1-11)

Lords Day—Christ's resurrection day. Sunday; the first day of the week. (Rev. 1:10; Mark 1:1-2; Acts 20:7)

Male Virgins--a symbol which denotes men who are free from spiritual fornication, or the worship of pagan gods.

Man or male child—Christ; ascended to heaven to sit on God's throne. (Rev. 12:5; 2:24-29)

Many Waters—peoples. (Rev. 17:15)

Mark on the forehead--a symbol of one's public profession; Satan's people were branded on their foreheads; whereas, God's people were sealed on their foreheads. (Rev. 14:16; 17; 7:4)

Merchants of the earth—a symbol of those who peddle idolatry and sow false doctrines among men; unholy alliances maintained for gain. (Rev. 18:11)

Moon—a symbol of rulers or great men, but not supreme. (Rev. 6:12-17)

Mountain—a symbol of a person who is high and lofty and conspicuous among men. (Rev. 17:9)

Mountains were not found--a symbol which denotes the complete overthrow, the annihilation, or complete destruction of existing rulers and their governments and laws by which they have ruled. (Rev. 16:30)

Mount Zion--a symbol which denotes a place of deliverance. (Rev. 14:1)

Morning star--a symbol of Jesus, the Christ. (Rev. 22:16)

New Jerusalem—God's dwelling, the home of the redeemed. (Rev. 21:2; Heb. 12:22-23)

New name—Christian. (Rev. 2:17; Isa. 62:2; 46:5; Acts 11:26; Matt. 23:19)

Oil, wine--Gladness. (Rev. 6:6; Psa. 45:7; 23:5)

Olive trees--a symbol of the Old and New Testaments; the Bible. (Zech. 4:8-12; Rev. 11:3, 4)

One hundred and forty four thousand—symbolic number for God's people. (Rev. 19:6; 14:1-3)

One third--a symbol of a partial judgment; a partial judgment which included a large part of it. (Rev. 8:7-12)

Ox, or calf--a symbol of strength and patience to bear burdens. (Rev. 4:6-7)

Palm--a symbol of great joy after a victory. (Rev. 7:9-12)

Paradise--a symbol of the joy and happiness characteristic of the place and peace of the righteous departed souls; the word means "beautiful garden." (Rev. 2:7)

Rain—spiritual blessings. (Rev. 11:1; Ezek. 34:26)

Rainbow—the glory of God. Assurance. (Rev. 4:3; Gen. 9:13)

Red—a symbol of (1) wrong doing or sin (Isa. 1:18); (2) a carnage, war, sorrow and grief. (Rev. 6:3, 4)

Red dragon--a bloody ruling power; Satan worked through them (Rev. 12:3, Isa. 34:3; Rev. 11:6)

River—a symbol of (1) a swift advance of an overpowering enemy (Isa. 8:5-8), and (2) an abundance of everything. (Psa.1)

River of life--a symbol of the abundant overflowing life that Christ bestows; He is the fountain of life. (John 7:37-39); Rev. 22:1-5)

Root of David-Christ. (Rev. 22:16; Isa. 11:1-5; Rom. 15:11-12)

Rod—a symbol of power; the scepter to rule. (Ezek. 19:10-14)

Rod of iron--a symbol which is a full rule of uncompromising power. (Rev. 2:26-29; 19:15)

Sanctuary—a symbol which denotes the true church, God's people. (Heb. 8:1-4)

Satan's seat—the center of evil authority. (Rev. 2:13)

Scarlet woman--a symbol of mockery and cruel persecution; a bright red. (Matt. 27:7-31)

Scepter—a symbol which denotes (1) regal or imperial, and (2) the prevailing power of righteousness. (Gen. 49; Heb. 1:8)

Sea—a symbol which denotes people, whether (1) an invading army, or (2) a political body, or (3) a large religious body, either true or false, and (4) a great mass of society at large. (Rev. 13:1-10; 15:1-4)

Seal--a symbol which denotes, when sealed up, a secret which is to be kept under guard (Dan. 12:4, 9); and when opened, it denotes a revealing, or to make plain, to hold up (Rev. 5)

Seven candlesticks--a symbol of the seven churches of Asia. (Rev. 1:20)

Serpent--a symbol of Satan; the one who deceives, beguiles, and leads people astray. (Rev. 12:9-15)

Servants sealed on their foreheads--a symbol which denotes God's recognition and approbation of His faithful. God's people, by way of antithesis, is said to be sealed; whereas, Satan's people were marked, or branded. (Rev. 7:4; 13:16, 17)

Seven—a symbol for that which is full, complete, and finished; a sacred number. (Gen. 2:13)

Seven horns--a symbol of the universal reign of Christ over all of the earth. (Rev. 5:6; 19:13-16)

Seven lamps--a symbol of the seven churches denoting their position of example. They were to be lights to the world around them.. (Rev. 4:5, 6)

Seven mountains—a symbol denoting the city of Rome, Italy, which was and is built on seven hills as follows: (1) Godlen (2) Aventine (3) Pincian (4) Palantine (5) Capitaline (6) Coelian (7) Vatican. (Rev. 17:1-9)

Seven spirits—a symbol which denotes the perfect and complete sovereignty and operation of the Godhead-Spirit beings - with a special emphasis on the operation of the Holy Spirit in his complete revelation to man the things of God. (Rev. 4:5)

Seven stars--a symbol of seven angels (messengers) who were to read the revelation to the seven churches. (Rev. 1:16-20)

Sharp two-edged sword--a symbol of the cutting power of the words of Christ; the Revelation given through John would be piercing. (Rev. 2:12)

Silence in heaven--a symbol denoting a delayed judgment accompanied by an anxious awaiting. (Rev. 8:1)

Smoke--a symbol denoting a consuming destruction upon the enemies of God. (Rev. 9:1-3)

Sodom and Egypt—symbols of evil, wickedness, and bondage. (Rev. 11:8, Gen 18:20; Ex. 8:26)

Stone--firmness, steadfastness. (Rev. 3:17, 18:21, Matt. 16:16-18)

Sun—source of light. Christ is the Sun of true spiritual light. (Rev. 12:1; Mel. 4:2)

Synagogue of Satan—worship supervised by the Devil. (Rev. 2:9)

Tabernacle—symbol of the church. (Rev. 13:6; Acts 15:16; Heb. 8:2)

Ten days—completeness, simply a necessary amount of time. (Rev. 2:10; Ezek. 4:6)

Ten horns--ten kings, complete power. (Rev. 17:12)

Three days and a half—half of seven, incomplete, short time. (Rev. 11:11; Ezek. 4:6)

Thousand years—the Christian dispensation, symbol of completeness. (Rev. 20:2-4)

Throne—symbol of supreme rule. (Rev. 4:2; 20:11-15; Isa. 66:1; Psalms 89:14)

Thunder—symbol of a power that upsets the existing systems of society and governments. (Rev. 16:17, 18)

Tree of life—sustenance of life; Christians are sustained now. (Rev. 22:2; Gen. 3:22-24)

Trumpets—a symbol of a call or pronouncement from the throne in heaven. (Rev. 8:6)
Trumpets were used in the Old Testament for the following purposes:

1. To call the Israelites together.
2. To call the princes of thousands together
3. To give the Israelites their marching orders.
4. To warn the people of an approaching danger.
5. To call the people together for the celebration of an event.

Twelve—a symbol which denoted the completeness of God's people; God's religions in the Old and New Testaments, as in the twelve tribes and the twelve apostles; combination is seen in "24" elders and "144,000" saints. (Rev. 7)

Undefiled with women--a symbol denoting purity; those, who were free from spiritual fornication, or idol worship. (Rev. 14:4)

Voice of many waters--a symbol which denotes the voice and authority of Christ. (Rev. 1:10-15)

Waters—a symbol denoting the multitudes of peoples, nations and tongues. (Rev. 17:15)

White hair--a symbol of the purity and holiness of Christ. (Rev. 1:14)

White cloud--a symbol of kingly power and glory. (Rev. 14:14; Matt. 26:63-64)

White robes--a symbol of the righteousness and purity of the saints. (Rev. 7:14)

Whore or whoredom—a symbol of an unfaithful city and/or church. (Rev. 12:16, 17)

Wife--the Church. (Rev. 21:9; Eph. 5:22-23)

Woman that sitteth upon many waters--a symbol for "that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth," Rev. 17:15-18. This was Rome.

Wormwood—bitterness. (Rev. 8:11)

VII. SYMBOLISM OF NUMBERS

The inner significance of numbers was a kind of device which always had fascination for the Oriental mind. In that early day, when language was primitive and the vocabulary meager, one Hebrew word was sometimes compelled to do duty for a score of diverse meanings. Under such conditions men came naturally to use numbers as we use words. They were symbols of moral or spiritual truth. A certain number would suggest a definite concept.

Numerals in ancient days also had symbolic meaning, just as a few numerals do even in modern times. Symbolic numerals and multiples of them are used throughout the Revelation. These symbols should not be given literal interpretation.

"1" Man saw a single object and came to associate with the number "1" the idea of unity or independent existence. It stood for that which was unique and alone. This number does not appear symbolically in the book of Revelation.

"2" When man went out to hunt the wild animal or fight against a foe he found strength and courage in companionship. Two were far stronger and much more effective than one.

Thus the number "2" came to stand for strength, for confirmation, for redoubled courage.

"3" Because man found love in the home - father, mother and filial - the number "3" came to be the number for perfection. The number three came to carry the thought of the divine.

"3.5" The number three and one-half, in various forms, is used both in the Revelation and in the prophecies of Daniel. If the number seven symbolizes completeness and perfection, it seems logical that the number three and one-half (half of seven) represents incompleteness, imperfection, not the whole of anything.

When coupled with time (days, weeks, months or years), the number three and one-half symbolizes an unspecified span of time, but *not the whole span of time*. This same expression also appears in the Revelation as 42 months and as 1260 days. Forty-two (42) months is exactly three and one-half years; and to the ancient Jews 1260 days was also three and one-half years. These are symbolic expressions and therefore they should not be interpreted literally. Three and one-half years is also expressed as "time, times and a half-time."

"4" The number four, used several times in the Revelation, had come to symbolize God Himself because the most holy place in the temple was a perfect square - it was *four*-square. Thus the four creatures encountered in the Revelation symbolize various attributes of God Himself.

To man the world was a flat surface with four boundaries. There were four winds. In the town in which he lived he was surrounded by a wall with four sides. Thus, when he thought of the world he thought of four. Four becomes the cosmic number. In Revelation there are four living creatures and four horsemen. The world in which men lived and worked and died was conveniently symbolized by "4."

"5" & "10" Next, man turned to study himself. Perhaps our decimal system arose from the intensive study by a man of his own fingers and toes. A perfect man was one who had all his members intact. So the "5" doubled to "10" came to stand for human completeness. In Revelation, 10 horns also 70 and 1000 - ultimate completeness - completeness raised to the nth degree.

"6" This number spoke to the Jew of "falling short." Milligan offers:
The number six itself awakened a feeling of dread in the breast of the Jew who felt the significance of numbers. It fell below the sacred number seven just as much as eight went beyond it . . . the number six was held to signify inability to reach the sacred point and hopelessly falling short of it. To the Jew, there was a doom upon the number six, even when it stood alone. Triple it . . . and we have represented a potency of evil than which there can be none greater, a direfulness of fate than which there can be none worse.

"7" The number seven, or multiples of it, is used frequently in the Revelation. To ancient Jews this number represented completeness, perfection, the whole of anything. Peter asked Jesus if he should forgive his brother seven times. Apparently Peter was asking if he should forgive his brother completely - the symbolic meaning of the number seven. Jesus' reply was that Peter should forgive his brother 70 times 7 - not literally 490 times, but emphatically perfect and complete forgiveness every time.

In the case of the seven churches of Asia to whom the Revelation was addressed, we can infer a double application. The Revelation was addressed to seven specific congregations; but we can infer that seven congregations were chosen to let the servants of Christ know that the Revelation was meant for *all* churches, one of the symbolic meanings of the number seven. There were more than seven churches in Asia, some of which are mentioned in the New Testament and others of which are mentioned in the writings of early church leaders shortly after the Revelation was recorded. If, however, any other number of churches had been chosen, except seven or ten, the inference that the Revelation was meant for *all* churches could not be drawn.

"8" The number eight meant "a new beginning." It was the numeric symbol for resurrection; See Luke 1:58; Acts 7:8; Phil. 3:5; Rev. 17:11 and Rev. 21:20. In ancient literature, the first day of the week was also spoken of as the eighth day of the week.
Jesus was resurrected on the first day and the eighth day of the week; a new beginning.

MULTIPLES OF NUMBERS:

4 + 3 = 7 & 3 + 7 = 10 Man took the perfect world number 4 and added to it the perfect divine number 3 and obtained 7, the most sacred number of the Hebrews. This number is the most prevalent number in the Apocalypse. Three plus seven formed the number of wholeness and perfect (ten toes and ten fingers).

4 X 3 = 12. In Hebrew, the religious thought it was the symbol of organized religion in the world.

7 cut in half = 3 ½ This came to express the incomplete, that which was imperfect. It symbolized restless longings not yet fulfilled, aspirations unrealized. Always 3 ½ or its equivalents stood for the indefinite, the incomplete, the dissatisfied; but in it all was the hope and patient waiting for a better day when truth would be delivered from the scaffold and placed on the throne usurped by wrong.

"10" The number ten, or multiples of it, it's also frequently used throughout the Revelation. To the ancient Jews this number had about the same symbolic meaning as the number seven - all, or the whole, of anything. The Jews referred to the Law of Moses as "the ten words," an allusion to the Ten Commandments; but to them "the ten words" meant the entire law.

"12" Multiples of these symbolic numbers are also found throughout the Revelation; and they too should be interpreted in accordance with their symbolic meaning, not in accordance with their literal numerical value. For example, there are 144,000 from the 12 tribes of Israel in chapters 7 and 14. This number is derived from $12 \times 12 \times 10 \times 10 \times 10$. It is therefore composed of multiples of symbolic numbers and it should not be interpreted literally. It symbolically means all of God's people under the Jewish dispensation.

"24" In like manner, there are 24 elders who appear periodically in the Revelation. It seems logical that this number is derived from the fact that there were 12 tribes of Israel and there were 12 apostles. Thus, the 24 elders represent all of God's faithful people from both the Jewish and the Christian dispensations.

"10 X 10 X 10 = 1,000" Multiplies of 10 meant perfection times perfection times perfection.

"1,000 X 12 X 12 = 144,000" The number twelve represented God's people, but when multiplied by 1,000 it become representative of the sum total of God's people.

VIII. APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF REVELATION¹⁵

There are many approaches that can be taken to study this great book. There are four major schools of interpretation.

[The Poetic (or "Spiritual") Method. Those who use this method of interpreting Revelation allegorize everything in the book and thus destroy any hope of arriving at a definite message from its pages. This view denies the clear contention of the book itself that it is a book of prophecy (1:3, etc.) and allows each reader to make the book mean whatever he desires it to mean.

The Preterist Method. This theory holds that Revelation was written prior to A.D. 70 and was fulfilled in the series of events involved in the destruction of Jerusalem. As has already been shown in discussing the date of the book, this requires an unjustified and arbitrary dating of the book and is inadequate for the explanation of the triumph of the persecuted saints.

The Continuous-Historical Method. This view holds that the book is a blueprint for history from A.D. 96 to the end of time. Those who hold this view claim to find the popes, Mohammed, the Reformers, Hitler and others in the pages of Revelation. This approach makes the book practically meaningless to the people to whom it was originally written, attaches too much importance to the Roman Catholic apostasy and often becomes absurd in its fanciful and detailed interpretations.

The Futuristic Method. This system of interpretation holds that the things referred to from the beginning of chapter four to the end of the book will take place in the time immediately prior to Christ's return and the establishment of His kingdom on earth. It interprets everything in the book quite literally. It seeks to impose a very literal meaning on what is clearly symbolic (apocalyptic) literature. It turns the kingdom into a carnal rather than a spiritual thing and causes this book to contradict other parts of the Bible. This view adopts the unscriptural theory of Premillennialism as its base for understanding the book.

These theories are inadequate and false. They must be rejected by one who would have a tenable base from which to interpret the book. Such a base is suggested in the following approach. I prefer what I call the *Immediate-Historical Method*. More details will follow.

Revelation must be interpreted in the light of the circumstances in which it was written. The church existed in a period of severe persecution when saints were being hunted down, imprisoned and murdered. This book was written to bring comfort, exhortation and warning to men living under these conditions - *comfort* to Christians who were being persecuted for Christ's sake, *exhortation* that the saints patiently endure their trials in hope and *warning* to their enemies of their eventual overthrow and damnation.

This view relates the symbolism of the book to the immediate situation of the first-century church and considers its message as one of optimistic encouragement. Yet it allows Christians of every age - particularly those who live in times of great stress and opposition - to read this book and be encouraged by its assurances of God's concern for and control over the spiritual welfare of His people.

Therefore one should study this book with two questions in mind: (1) What did this mean to the saints to whom it was first written? (2) What practical application of this truth can be made to our present-day situation?] See ["BACKGROUND," page a., for my view.](#)

¹⁵ The material in brackets is from *Simple Studies in Revelation*, Shelly; pp. 7-8.

IX. PUT YOURSELF IN THEIR PLACE!¹⁶

It is important in the study of any book of the Bible to go back to the time when it was written and sit where the man sat who, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, wrote it. We must sit where the people sat to whom it was written. In order to understand "John's Revelation" we must view it with 1st Century glasses. Therefore, in our study of the Apocalypse of John, let us go back to the first century, and observe conditions as they then existed, in the Roman Empire in which John lived when he wrote the Revelation. (Remember we cannot escape the study of history in the study of God's Word for the Bible was written in history.) The Roman Empire was composed of people different in kind, divided, all around the Mediterranean Sea. These people had been brought together to form a vast Empire. They were of different cultures, different backgrounds, and of different races. It was conceived by the powers in Rome that the way to unite these people, so divergent in thought and background, was to have a "Pantheon" in which each god or goddess of the people in the Roman Empire might be represented. The "Pantheon" comes from the two Greek words "pan" (all) and "theon" (gods). Hence, the two words together mean "all gods." Thus, somewhat of a federation of gods was assembled in the "Pantheon." The purpose of this was to unite the people of the Empire, in the belief that religion is the most basic trait that is characteristic of man.

This helped for a while but it did not unite the people to the Roman Empire as they had hoped. So the Roman Empire and Senate decided that the Emperor should be worshipped as means of uniting all the people. The worship of one being the Supreme Emperor in the Roman Empire, it was thought, would unite a diversified people.

Emperor worship had its beginning under Augustus, who came to the throne in 14 B.C. A temple was first built to Augustus in the ancient city of Pergamos and Emperor worship had its beginning there. Emperor worship grew as time passes so that by the time of Nero in the sixties' it was rather strong. But it was much stronger in the nineties under the rule of Domitian. Statues were erected, and the inhabitants of the Roman Empire were required to worship the image of the Emperor. In this worship the worshippers said that the Emperor is "Lord and he is God." The Jews were excused from this worship. They had been considered for some time as peculiar people, worshipping one God, while the Romans and Greeks worshipped many gods. However, the Christians had not been excused and by the nineties they had become a despised people.

Christianity started under the wing of Judaism and was considered by the Roman people at large a sect of Judaism, somewhat comparable to the sects of the Pharisees or Sadducees. It was not long till the Romans saw that they were wrong; that Christianity was different and that it was completely distinct from Judaism. They saw it as a religion whose adherents did not conform to the ways of the Roman people. This brought the Christians into a direct clash with those in the Roman Empire who were pagans; who worshipped the gods or goddesses of Rome.

Two Empires marched forth in the first century to conquer the hearts and lives of men and women within the vast Roman Empire; the empire of Christ and the empire of Caesar. This was mighty conflict between Caesar who claimed to be Lord, and Christ who claimed to be Lord. It was a conflict between Christ and His people who were living in strict devotion to Him, who were living clean moral lives, and who accepted Jesus and His word as their guide; and the Roman people who had been degraded by the Pagan worship in which they engaged.

¹⁶ See the Bibliography at the end of this paper for the various resources used in this section.

They had become degraded both morally and religiously. This was a conflict between God and Satan, between right and wrong. The book of Revelation, in a number of dramas portrays that conflict. Scene after scene comes before us describing it.

The early Christians, having given up the safety which they could have had by rejecting Him, having risked their lives, needed to be assured in their believing in Christ, that right would win and that truth would triumph. There were many who gave up the affirmation that they believed that Jesus was Lord and apostatized. One of the greatest questions in the second century church was what to do with those who apostatized. . . . Should they be brought back to the church when persecution had subsided? We have pictured in the apocalypse the souls of those under the altar crying out "How long. O Lord, how long shall this be?" . . . the kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ: and He shall reign forever and ever."

Now, if possible, let us transplant ourselves back to the first century, back to the isle of Patmos where John temporarily resided, back to where the early Christians lived, and let us sit where they sat. The only way to understand this book is to go back to the first century and get with those concerned . . . the one who wrote and the ones to whom he wrote.

Let us, therefore, imagine ourselves as members of one of the seven churches of Asia; Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamus, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, or Laodicea. Let us suppose that we have assembled for worship and while we are gathered we are afraid the police may come and interfere with our worship. Let us suppose that some of our loved ones have been killed because they confessed that Jesus is Lord and did not confess that Caesar was Lord. We are wondering what the outcome will be of this struggle. We see men and women in large numbers going to worship their gods. We see all around us beautiful buildings erected to pagan gods. We have no meetinghouse, we have no expensive furniture where we do meet, and we are meeting under very difficult circumstances. Should we continue to refuse to worship Caesar or should we acquiesce and bow to him as Lord?

While we are thus gathered in this imaginary situation, which was very real to these early Christians, the book of Revelation is read and there is underscored the letter that particularly concerns us in Revelation two and three. A reader (angel of the church) stands up and reads this book, and as he reads we listen attentively and our minds and hearts are moved.

The book tells a dramatic story of a conflict between Satan and God. Preceding the drama: Title and superscription - 1:1-3; Address and Salutation - 1:4-8; The author's commission to write - 1:9-20; The letters to the seven churches - chapter 2-3; and the letters reveal much about the church in the first century.

X. A BRIEF OUTLINE OF REVELATION¹⁷

- I. INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK (1:1-20)**
 - A. Purpose of book and blessing announced to those who hear (1:1-3)
 - B. Address to the seven churches (1:4-8)
 - C. John's commission to write (1:9-11)
 - D. The first vision (1:12-20)
 - 1. Christ among the candlesticks (1:12-18)
 - 2. John's commission repeated (1:19)
 - 3. Explanation of symbols (1:20)
- II. LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES (2:1-3:22)**
 - A. Ephesus: left her first love (2:1-7)
 - B. Smyrna: the rich poor church (2:8-11)
 - C. Pergamos: where Satan's throne was (2:12-17)
 - D. Thyatira: home of Jezebel (2:18-29)
 - E. Sardis: a dead church (3:1-6)
 - F. Philadelphia: church with an open door (3:7-13)
 - G. Laodicea: the lukewarm church (3:14-22)
- III. GOD ON HIS THRONE (4:1-11)**
 - A. Door opened for John (4:1)
 - B. Appearance of the throne (4:2-3)
 - C. Description of those before the throne (4:4-8a)
 - D. Worship before the throne described (4:8b-11)
- IV. THE BOOK WITH SEVEN SEALS (5:1-8:1)**
 - A. A book in heaven (5:1-14)
 - 1. The book with seven seals (5:1-5)
 - 2. The Lamb takes the book (5:6-7)
 - 3. The worship of the Lamb (5:8-14)
 - B. The opening of six seals (6:1-17)
 - 1. First seal: white horse - conquest (6:1-2)
 - 2. Second seal: red horse - war (6:3-4)
 - 3. Third seal: black horse - famine (6:5-6)
 - 4. Fourth seal: pale horse - death (6:7-8)
 - 5. Fifth seal: souls under the altar - persecution (6:9-11)
 - 6. Sixth seal: great earthquake - judgment (6:12-17)
 - C. Interlude for the sealing of God's saints (7:1-17)
 - 1. The 144,000 on the earth (7:1-8)
 - 2. The great multitude in heaven (7:9-17)
 - D. The seventh seal opened - angels of retribution (8:1-2)
- V. THE SEVEN TRUMPETS (8:3-11:19)**
 - A. Preparation for sounding the trumpets (8:3-6)

¹⁷ This brief outline is taken from *Simple Studies in Revelation*, Shelly, pp. 9-11.

1. Angel with the prayers of the saints (8:3-5)
2. The seven angels prepare to sound (8:6)
- B. The first four trumpets (8:7-12)
 1. Woe on land (8:7)
 2. Woe on sea (8:8-9)
 3. Woe on land waters (8:10-11)
 4. Woe on heavenly bodies (8:12)
- C. The flying eagle (8:13)
- D. The fifth trumpet: locusts (9:1-12)
- E. The sixth trumpet: horsemen (9:13-21)
- F. The episode of the little book (10:1-11:2)
 1. The strong angel (10:1-7)
 2. The little book (10:8-11)
 3. Measuring of Temple altar and worship (11:1-2)
- G. The two witnesses (11:3-14)
- H. The seventh trumpet: conflict and triumph (11:15-19)

VI. THE GREAT CONFLICT BETWEEN CHRIST AND SATAN (12:1-13:18)

- A. The woman, child and dragon described (12:1-6)
- B. The war in heaven (12:7-12)
- C. The woman in the wilderness (12:13-17)
- D. The first beast (13:1-10)
- E. The second beast (13:11-18)

VII. THE ULTIMATE TRIUMPH OF THE SAINTS DEPICTED (14:1-20)

- A. The Lamb and the 144,000 (14:1-5)
- B. The first angel: good tidings (14:6-7)
- C. The second angel: fall of Babylon (14:8)
- D. The third angel: fate of those who worship the beast (14:9-11)

VIII. THE SEVEN BOWLS OF WRATH (15:1-16:21)

- A. An introductory vision (15:1-4)
- B. The seven angels commissioned (15:5-8)
- C. The first bowl: earth (16:1-2)
- D. The second bowl: sea (16:3)
- E. The third bowl: fresh waters (16:4-7)
- F. The fourth bowl: sun (16:8-9)
- G. The fifth bowl: throne of the beast (16:10-11)
- H. The sixth bowl: Euphrates River (16:12-16)
 1. Three unclean spirits (16:12-15)
 2. Armageddon (16:17-21)

IX. THE FALL OF BABYLON THE GREAT (17:1-19:21)

- A. Vision of the "Mother of Harlots" (17:1-19:21)
- B. Mystery of the beast explained (17:7-14)

- C. Mystery of the harlot explained (17:15-18)
- D. Fall of Babylon described (18:1-24)
- E. Thanksgiving over the fall of Babylon (19:1-10)
- F. Vision of the victorious army (19:11-16)
- G. Doom of the beast and false prophet (19:17-21)

X. THE DRAGON'S DOOM AND THE FINAL JUDGMENT (20:1-15)

- A. Binding of Satan (20:1-3)
- B. The Thousand-Year Reign of Christ (20:4-6)
- C. Satan loosed and destroyed (20:7-10)
- D. The judgment on God's enemies (20:11-15)

XI. THE BLESSED STATE OF THE REDEEMED (21:1-22:5)

- A. A vision of the new Jerusalem (21:1-4)
- B. The inheritance promised (21:5-8)
- C. The holy city described (21:9-22:5)

XII. CONCLUSION (22:6-21)

- A. Validation of the book (22:6-9)
 - 1. Must shortly take place (22:6)
 - 2. Fulfillment at hand (22:10)
- B. Warning to heed its message (22:11-20)
 - 1. Coming soon to take care of the beast (22:11-17).
 - 2. Do not add or take away from this prophecy (22:18-19).
 - 3. Coming quickly (22:20).
- C. Benediction (22:21)

MAJOR OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION¹⁸

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK (1:1-20)

- A. **(1:1-3)** Purpose of book and blessing announced to those who hear John identifies the content of this book as both "revelation" and "prophecy:" The events to be presented are those "which must shortly come to pass" in the struggle between the church and the Roman Empire. The book is to be read aloud in the assemblies of the saints and careful attention is to be given to its contents.
1. From God to Jesus to angel, to John to persecuted saints.
 2. "Shortly come to pass," "for the time is at hand" ----- In Rev. 22:5, 10 we have "things which must shortly come to pass," and "seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand." ----- Daniel is told to seal up his prophecy because it was a long way off (Dan. 8:13, 14, 26). This prophecy was fulfilled within 400 years; therefore, John's revelation was fulfilled in less time. See also Mark 1:15.
- B. **(1:4-8)** Address to seven churches: A typical epistolary greeting is given to the readers in the early part of verse four. The writer then launches into an extended praise of the Lord. Every descriptive phrase in this passage should be noted carefully.
1. "Seven Spirits"-----complete Spirit-----Holy Spirit, all seeing.
 2. "He cometh"-----This phrase is used elsewhere to mean "to bring judgment upon a
 3. "nation" ---- see James 5:8; Isa. 19:1; Matt. 24:30-34 (His coming on clouds would happen within the time of that generation); Rev. 22:7 (His coming was to be quickly).
- C. **(1:9-11)** John's commission to write: John next relates how he received this revelation "in the Spirit," i.e., in a trance. (CF. Acts 10:10). He was further commanded to write it for the seven churches of Asia Minor specified in verse ten.
1. "in the Spirit" - - -worship, "Lord's Day" - - -Sunday.
 2. "Seven churches" - - -complete, represented the church universal.
- D. **(1:12-20)** The first vision: John's initial vision was of the majestic and authoritative Christ in the midst of seven golden candlesticks. The candlesticks represented the seven churches and the stars represented the angels (literally, "the messengers" of the churches — probably either the elderships or evangelists of the churches). This vision of an exalted and powerful Christ would serve to inform the Christians that their cause has strength and will surely be given the victory.
1. "golden girdle" - - -high priest; "white as snow" - - -purity; "flame of fire" -
--piercing; "burnished brass"-----power to trample (Micah 4:13).
 2. "sharp two-edged sword" ----- words of judgment, Heb. 4:12; Isa. 11:4 -----
wrath.
 3. "Hades" - - -not hell, but the place of the spirits of the dead
 4. "seven angels" - - -messenger, preacher, or reader before the assembly.

¹⁸ The introductory paragraphs and the paragraphs in sections A., B., C., etc. are from *Simple Studies in Revelation*, Shelly, pp. 11-22. The extensive and detailed comments and all other materials in the numerical sections (1., 2., 3., etc.), notes, charts, illustrations, and so on, are my thoughts and other materials gathered from many resources, some of which are listed in the Bibliography

II. LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES (2:1-3:22)¹⁹

These letters follow a definite form. The exalted Christ (1) assures each church that He knows its condition (See the "I know" of 2:2; 2:9; 2:13; 2:19; 3:1; 3:8; 3:15), (2) briefly describes that condition, (3) gives an appropriate commendation or rebuke and (4) closes with the appeal "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches." (See 2:7; 2:11; 2:17; 2:29; 3:6; 3:13; 3:22).

- A. **(2:1-7) Ephesus:** left her first love: This church had a fine past record of loving devotion and service to Christ. But now it had abandoned that love and was in immediate need of repentance. Extinction of the church in Ephesus was threatened if such repentance did not occur.
1. "first love" - - Christ, church, original fervor
 2. "Nicolaitans" ---- followers of Nicolasus who fulfilled the flesh: See Acts 6:5.
 3. "tree of life" - - a beautiful garden; See Gen. 2:8, 9; 3:22.
- B. **(2:8-11) Smyrna:** the rich poor church: Smyrna, a church composed of people poor in this world's goods but rich in faith, was being subjected to an especially fierce attack from Satan's agents in that city. No criticism is offered these saints. To those who are faithful amidst their persecution, a reward is promised.
1. A deeply religious city, center of Caesar worship, erected a shrine to Caesar Tiberius.
 2. Had a large population of Jews but not all Israel is really Israel (Rom. 2:28-29).
 3. "tribulation ten days"----- Daniel was tried ten days (1:12-16), Jacob was tried ten days (Gen. 31:7), Job was tried 10 times ---- an expression of trial by hardship.
- C. **(2:12-17) Pergamum:** where Satan's throne was: "Satan's throne" in Pergamos was likely a shrine for emperor worship. The saints were exhorted to continue resisting the pressures to deny Christ and confess the emperor, even if this meant death — as it had already for Antipas. Certain false teachings were beginning to make inroads in the church there and this was to be corrected immediately. Those who overcame in Pergamos were promised a reward.
1. Was official capital of the Roman province, seat of the state religion, built original Augustan Temple, had one of the most famous altars in the world dedicated to Zeus.
 2. "teaching Baalam" - - loved gain and urged idolatry mingled with fornication on God's people.
 3. "Repent . . . else I come to thee quickly" - - another coming, with judgment on the sects and heretics in the congregation.
 4. "hidden manna" ----- Jesus (John 6:31-65), continued sustenance.
 5. "white" - - pure, just, victory, joy. "stone" - - rewards for heroism, plaques for faithful service or victory.
 6. "new name" - - change in circumstances or status for the one renamed (Abram to Abraham, Jacob to Israel, Cephas or Simon to Peter); describes a change in nature or character of the person; can only be known or understood by the one who experiences it.
- D. **(2:18-29) Thyatira:** home of Jezebel: Although the church here was complimented for its progress, it was censured for tolerating a Jezebel-type woman who was teaching a false

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 12 (See footnote 18 to see the sections to which this footnote applies).

doctrine which had gross immorality and idolatry as its outcome. A curse was pronounced on all those who had accepted this false way and those who were still free of its contamination were urged to hold fast to their purity and service for Christ.

1. A weak town not well protected, had to be and act strong, a town of trade unions or guilds who compromised their principles to live and make a living; their motto- - "A man must live."
2. "burnished brass"- -town worshipped the god of bronze.
3. The Christians there were perhaps too patient and gentle; for, they allowed a woman like Jezebel to dwell among them- -similar to Nicolaitan and Baalamite attitudes.
4. "hold fast till I come"- -hang in there until I give you the victory.
5. "Give you authority over the nations"- -give them what he already had (v. 27) - - they have it already to some degree (Rom. 8:17; 5:17; 1 Cor. 3:21-23; Rev. 8:3-5; they will have it even more so in the future (Cor. 6:2-4) when the Roman Empire is defeated by the Kingdom of Christ.
6. "rule- -word for shepherd; "rod of iron"- -staff with iron top, a weapon; "broken pottery"- -these allusions would be understood by the potter and smith unions.
7. "have received (rule) of my Father"----- He reigns now (Matt. 28:18; Rev. 3:7).
8. "morning star"- -a light bringer, a new appreciation of Jesus given, deeper relationship.

E. **(3:1-6) Sardis:** a dead church: The church at Sardis had not pressed forward since its establishment and was described as being dead. It had evidently compromised with the world to the degree that it was the church of Christ in name only. The few not spotted by the world were commended and the remainder was told to repent.

1. An impregnable fortress, important in times of war but too far away in peace, had been captured twice while their leaders slept at night (Cyrus over Croesus, Antiochus III over Syria).
2. "seven Spirits" ---- equated with "seven eyes" in Rev. 5:6; all-seeing, all-wisdom; Zech. 3:9; 4:7-10--- top stone of new temple had seven eyes either engraved on or looking on it; God could see their lives and what obstacles were ahead.
3. 'has a name, alive, but dead'-----promise much but deliver little; wax flowers, whited sepulcher.
4. No indication of conflict with persecutors; like Sardis she was alive during conflict but asleep during peace; some members don't feel alive except during conflict, peace frustrates them.
5. "be watchful"- -don't fall asleep.
6. "white garments"- -righteous deeds, not defiled; pictures the feast of the tabernacles which followed the Day of Atonement, sins removed; Rev. 7:9.

F. **(3:7-13) Philadelphia:** church with an open door: This church received a warm commendation for its past faithfulness, was assured of a "door opened" (likely some unique opportunity for spiritual service) and was promised special protection amidst the trials yet to come.

1. A city devastated by earthquakes.
2. Jesus has the key of David now, Isa. 22:15-25.
3. The doors to the kingdom were open and all the Jews couldn't close it.
4. There can be no entrance into the presence and blessing of God except through Jesus (John 14:6; Heb. 10:19-23).

5. "little power"- - -small in number and influence when compared to pagans and Jews.
6. "synagogue of Satan" ---- The Jew is lost, undone, Christless, priestless, and therefore without hope (Rom. 2:28, 29; 9:6-7).
7. "worship before thy feet" ----- See Isa. 60:14; a day of vindication for the Christians at Philadelphia.
8. "hour of trial"- - -Premillennialists interpret this as the rapture. The fact is persecution began a sharp rise at the time John wrote Revelation under the Roman emperor Domitian. Those who refused to worship the emperor became enemies of the state. Rather than ending with Domitian the persecution intensified for about 250 years until the Edict of Toleration under Galerius. Both Jews and Christians lost their lives by the thousands. It was indeed "an hour of trial" which came upon the whole earth." (See Caesar and Christ by Will Durant pp. 651, 652)
9. "keep thee from the hour" ----- Does this mean the church would not suffer? NO. Verse 11 says to "hold fast" and a blessing is promised to those who "overcome." They would be preserved all the way through the tribulation. They will "come out of the tribulation," 7:14.
10. "I come quickly" -----another coming to save them and bring judgment on the wicked persecutors.
11. "make him a pillar in the temple of God"- - -Philadelphia was known as little Athens, full of idols and temples. God's pillars in His temple will stand forever. He won't have to run in times of earthquakes. See Isaiah 56:3-8.
12. "new name"- - -A name written on something speaks of endorsement or being identified with (Matt. 10:32). Christ's "overcoming" name was Lord (Phil. 2:5-11). Jesus inherited a name more excellent than the angels (Heb. 1:4). All names are under Him (Eph. 1:21). The over comers are unashamedly owned by Jesus and endorsed by Jesus.
13. "name of the city"- - -"new Jerusalem" written on those who overcome. This is a symbol of the church (See 21:2, 9, 10). The words "cometh down" show continuous action in the Greek; it has come down from God, it is coming down, and it will continue to come down from God.

G. (3:14-22) Laodicea: the lukewarm church: This church had not given over to another Lord or become contaminated with immorality, but neither was it steadfastly loyal to Christ nor aggressive with His distinctive truth. It was comfortable in maintaining the status quo. Its condemnation was clear but an opportunity to repent was granted.

1. It was a leading financial and banking center.
2. It has been called the "Wall Street" of Asia Minor.
3. It was the home of a medical school that specialized in treatment of diseases of eye and manufactured a famous eye salve.
4. They were also famous for glossy black woolen garments.
5. When destroyed by an earthquake in 61 A.D. it refused help from Rome and rebuilt with its own resources.
6. "the Amen"- - -same as verily, verily," a term that means to guarantee the truth of the statement made.
7. "faithful witness"- - -Jesus gives true testimony
8. "beginning of the creation of God"- - -Jesus is the originating source of all that is created (John 1:1-3; Col 1:15-17).

9. "lukewarm"- - a symbol for indifference through self-satisfaction. Laodicea was 43 miles south-east of Philadelphia and a million miles below the spirit of Philadelphia's saints.
10. Be "cold or hot"- -see 2 Pet. 2:20-22.
11. "blind and naked"- -spiritually speaking an object of pity.
12. "gold"- -God's gold is not perishable (1 Pet. 1:18).
13. "white garments"- -their black garments covered their bodies but they needed white garments to cover their souls.
14. "reprove and chasten"----- see Heb. 12:4-13.
15. "sit down with me on my throne" -----slaves would become kings; see 1 Cor. 15:22-28; we will rule with Jesus through eternity.

III. GOD ON HIS THRONE (4:1-11)²⁰

In the midst of their severe trials, the Christians needed to know that "God is still on His throne and all is (or at least will be) right with the world." The prophecy of this apocalyptic book begins as this logical point.

It is especially at this point we need to keep in mind that John is seeing a vision revealed through apocalyptic scenes and written down in apocalyptic language. There are times when John uses "heaven" as simply a location. That is, heaven is where God is, as earth is where men are. But this isn't always what he means by it. This is hard to put into words, but sometimes it means a state or condition rather than a locality. In 12:12 and 13:6 we read of "dwellers in heaven." On the surface it would seem as if this meant people (or beings) who live in the realm beyond our world; the place outside our world. In 13:6 it is made clear, however, that they who dwell in heaven are those in whom God "tabernacles" or dwells- - His temple or church. This thought is not unusual for even Paul often speaks of the saints as sitting with Jesus in the "heavenlies." He speaks of our life hidden with Christ (Col. 3:3); of our being raised to sit with Christ in heavenly places (Eph. 2:6) and as presently having our citizenship in heaven (Phil. 3:30).

We must understand that John is relating a vision. There was no literal door opened in heaven. The entrance into heaven gives John the information he is to convey to us. No one would dare suggest that John couldn't have been taken up into heaven (for Paul was). The description of his other experiences in the book are not to be understood as historical or literal (e.g. seeing the seven-headed beast coming up out of the water; so, we are safe in concluding he didn't actually go into heaven. His going into heaven, in vision, stresses he has "first-hand" knowledge of what he is relaying. It adds vividness and points to his claim of presenting a revelation.

What John will see are symbols which represent truths about God and Christ; Chapter 4 says "Believe in God," and Chapter 5 says, "Believe also in me!" Chapter 4 speaks of the Creator and His power and Chapter 5 speaks of the Redeemer and of His love and mercy. Chapter 4 will say the throne which rules the universe is not in Italy and Chapter 5 will say the co-ruler of the universe is an all-sacrificing Lover of the saints. The two chapters together say that worship, glory and honor should be given to the Father and the (once dead) Lamb and not to any arrogant and evil earthly ruler.

A. (4:1) Door opened for John: John was called to see "the things which must come to pass hereafter."

²⁰ Ibid., p. 13 (See footnote 18 to see the sections to which this footnote applies).

1. The actual revelation of future events does not begin until Chapter 6, with the opening of the first seal. Chapters 4 & 5 are the heavenly counterpart of Chapters 2 & 3 which describe "things which are" (1:19)----- the conditions which existed in the church or earth.
 2. Chapters 4 & 5 describe for our finite minds, in symbolic and picturesque poetic language, the attributes of an infinite God and the worthiness of His Christ.
 3. Thus we can consider these Chapters 4 & 5 as the "things which are" (1:19) in heaven by use of symbolic language.
 4. Chapter 6 begins the "things which must come to pass hereafter" (1:19) which are the same things which John said "must shortly come to pass." See 1:1, 3, 19; 22:6, 10.
- B. **(4:2-3)** Appearance of the throne: The scene in heaven was dominated by the throne and Him who sat upon it. There could be no doubt that this throne represented a more glorious and powerful presence than any upon the earth. Then why should John and his persecuted brethren doubt the security of their cause?
1. God is a spirit. Christ is a spirit. They cannot be described in terms of physical components such as hands, head, ears and eyes. When such physical terms are used to describe God they are used figuratively. This is called anthropomorphism. Our finite minds cannot conceive, or fully understand, the form of a spiritual God; but we can understand the attributes since man himself, having been made in the spiritual image of God, possesses some limited measure of God's attributes: love, mercy, wisdom, understanding and many others.
 2. There is no literal throne in heaven. It is a symbol of authority, the reign of God. It is found 38 times in Revelation. In apocalyptic speech God is said to be enthroned in heaven, among the righteous, amidst the living creatures, in the midst of the new Jerusalem, the church of God, in the temple, above the cherubim (Rev. 22:1, 2; Ez. 42:6-7; Psalm 80:1; 99:1; 1 Sam. 4:4; 2 Sam. 6:2; Is. 37:16).
 3. The stones symbolize the goodness and beauty of God.
 4. The rainbow, colors, etc. suggests many attributes of God; splendor, majesty, purity, peace, covenant keeping, etc.
- C. **(4:4-8a)** Description of those before the throne: The twenty-four elders are likely the heavenly representatives of the people of God throughout history (perhaps twelve tribes and twelve apostles) and the four living creatures remind us that all the powers of the entire creation are at the disposal of God.
1. "24 thrones" - - Royalty in the presence of supreme royalty.
 2. "24 elders" - - This is the number of the courses of the priests in the Old Testament (1 Chron. 24:7-18). They offer up incense (5:8). Perhaps the royal priesthood, the church (1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6; 5:9, 10; 20:4, 6). Others believe it represents all of God's saved people; the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles under the Jewish and Christian dispensations.
 3. "white garments" ---- righteous deeds of God's people (19:8).
 4. "crowns" ---- holy array and priestly garments, priests and kings (Psalm 110:3; Rev. 1:6; 5:10); or, God's people who are joint heirs with Christ (Rom 8:17).
 5. "sea of glass" ---- "sea" of Solomon's temple which stood between the priest and holy place where God dwelt. A separation of holiness. Also serenity, no storm-tossed waves.
 6. "lightnings, voices, thunders" ---- God's justice and wrath (Ex. 19:16).

7. "four living creatures full of eyes"- -Cherubim, defenders of God's holiness, vindicators of His honor, His chariot on which He rides to judgment (1 Chron. 28:18; Psalm 18:10), cherubim as God's war wagon (Ez. 1, 10), woven into veil of temple which stood between all men and the presence of God, over the Ark of the Covenant.
8. Characteristics of God:
 - a. "four"- -pertaining to God, holy place was four-square, a perfect square.
 - b. "full of eyes"- -all seeing
 - c. "lion"- -authority, might, omnipotence
 - d. "calf" or young ox- -strength, steadfastness
 - e. "man"- -wisdom, intelligence, mercy, love
 - f. "eagle"- -sureness, swiftness
 - g. "six wings"- -Isaiah 6:2, seraphim

D. **(4:8b-11)** Worship before the throne described: Thus all nature and the redeemed of the ages are seen acknowledging the sovereignty of God! The glory and the honor and the power are ascribed to Him.

IV. THE BOOK WITH SEVEN SEALS (5:1-8:1)²¹

A. **(5:1-14)** A book in heaven: John saw a book containing the destiny of mankind which was sealed with seven seals. John wept that the book could not be opened and its contents revealed until he learned that one (i.e., Christ) was worthy to take, open and reveal the book. When the Lord came and took the book so as to indicate His willingness to reveal its contents, all creation broke forth in joyful praise. The saints would now learn the outcome of their present fiery trial! Here the unveiling actually begins!

1. "a book"-----contains the full will of God and the hurt, fear, pressures and experiences of God's children in the near future. It also contains the triumph of the church over her vicious oppressor- -Satan in Rome.
2. "seven seals"- -perfectly and completely sealed.
3. "Lion of the tribe Judah," "Root of David"- -Christ
4. "Lamb standing, slain,"---resurrected Christ
5. "seven horns"- -perfection of power

NOTE: It becomes obvious at this point those different symbols can be used to represent the same thing. A Lion and a Lamb represent Christ; and lamps (4:5) and eyes (5:6) represent the Spirit of God. Also we will see that the same symbol is occasionally used to represent two different things; that is, the symbol has a double application.

6. "harps"- -symbols of praise; "incense"- -symbol of saints' prayers (see Rev. 5:8)
7. "new song" ---- The last song sung (4:11) was in regard to God as Creator. This new song is in reference to redemption: see Isaiah 42:8, 9; 43:18, 19----- a new expression of God's care and love. The new song is especially set in contrast with the song of Moses (Rev. 15:3; Ex. 15). God delivered His people from Egypt and He will deliver them from Rome.
8. "Kings and priests" -----Christians share the rule with Christ; an illusion to Ex. 19:5, 6.

²¹ Ibid., pp. 13-14 (See footnote 18 to see the sections to which this footnote applies).

B. **(6:1-17)** The opening of six seals: After each of the first four seals is opened; a rider on a horse appears. These represent, in turn, conquest, war, famine and death. These are the forces of might which have been unleashed against the church. When the fifth seal is opened, the souls of the martyrs (who have suffered during the opening of the first four seals) cry to learn how long this will be permitted. They are told to wait but a little longer. Immediately thereafter, when the sixth seal is broken, great calamities representing the judgment of the Lord against the enemies of His people come into view. The wrath of the Lamb is coming!

SEAL #1

1. "A WHITE HORSE" AND RIDER- - -Some propose this to be Jesus the conqueror (19:12), being depicted as a Parthian warrior (bow) which defeated the Romans on a number of occasions. Others believe that it represents peaceful times for Christians (Rom. 8:37). Still others see the horses and horsemen working as a unit of forces of punishment.

SEAL #2

2. "A RED HORSE" AND RIDER- - -These along with the description represent war among people.

SEAL #3

3. "A BLACK HORSE AND RIDER"- - -Famine and economic hardship (Ez. 4:10, 16). A shilling was a full days wages (Matt. 20); "the oil and wine hurt thou not" ----- a limited famine compared to the famine that would take place later as symbolized by the bowls of Chapter 16.

SEAL #4

4. "A PALE HORSE AND RIDER" - - -yellowish-green, sickly looking, represented death that would result from famine, war, etc.
5. "Hades followed him" ---- place of the dead personified, running behind in ghoulisn fashion.
6. "famine, army, pestilence, wild beasts" ---- the four sore judgments of God in Ezekiel 14:12-23: Red horse --- war, invading armies; black horse ---- famine; pale horse---- pestilence beasts.
7. "given authority over % of earth" ----- not a total judgment.

SEAL #5

8. "saw . . . souls of them that had been slain for the word of God"-----martyrs for truth, persecution of the saints. The persecution would last a while before God brings retribution on the persecutors
9. "until their fellow-servants . . . have fulfilled their course" -----until others fulfilled their task for the Lord. God used persecution to accomplish His plan for the church.

SEAL #6

10. "great earthquake" etc. - - -this is the wrath of the lamb (v. 16); a judgment on the ungodly. The same kind of language is used in the Old Testament to describe

figuratively God's judgments on Israel's enemies; Isa. 34; Jer. 4:23-25; Isa. 34; Micah 1:3-6; Amos 4:13; Zeph. 1:2-4; Isa. 13:6-13, 17-22.

11. "hid themselves in the caves" - -same language in Isa. 2:10, 11, 19-22. People would try to escape God's judgment.
12. Glad picture- -Christ on white horse, in control; sad picture- -trouble is coming.

C. **(7:1-17)** Interlude for the sealing of God's saints: With great wrath about to be poured out upon the enemies of God, there is contrasted with this the compassion of God for His own as He seals (i.e., places a mark of identification upon) the saints. Representing the church as the Israel of God, the sealing of the saints is represented under the figure of twelve tribes with twelve thousand sealed from each. The total number is thus 144,000. Is this a literal numbering of the saved? NO! The 144,000 is symbolic of the entire faithful body of Christ on earth. Any attempt to make the number refer to some certain select group of Christians must be rejected. In addition to the 144,000 on earth, John also saw a great multitude in heaven praising God. These were later identified as those who had already come through earthly trials to their rest.

1. This chapter of interlude or pause gives comfort to Christians before the seventh seal is opened.
2. This chapter is modeled after Ezekiel 9.
3. All suffering is not the judgment of God; for, sometimes the innocent suffer with the guilty, but are not being punished with the guilty (i.e. babies which died in the flood and in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah). In the judgment the saints are exempt (sealed) from judgment but not necessarily from suffering. This was also true when Nebuchadnezzar invaded Jerusalem (Ez. 9).
4. "four angels"- -"four winds"- -universal, God's activity everywhere (Isa. 57:13; Jer. 18:17; Dan. 7; Psalm 104:4; John 3:7, 8). They represent God's judgment that is about to fall upon the earth. "hurt the earth"- -v. 26
5. "another angel . . . from the sunrise"- -good news, a message of cheer and light, hope for the future.
6. "hurt not the earth"- -a delay in carrying out the punishment is called for.
7. "seal servants of . . . God" ----- To show figuratively God's ownership of the saints. They are God's therefore, "HAND'S OFF!" In Ezekiel's reference the Jews were not literally marked-vision. Though many righteous figuratively sealed Jews died in Nebuchadnezzar's invasion, they were exempt from God's eternal judgment.
8. "144,000"- -In Ezekiel all the righteous are marked. The same is true here; for, this number is a symbol for all the saints. Twelve=God's people; to raise a number to a higher power is to emphasize its inner quality; 12 X 12 X 1,000 = the completeness of God's people.
9. "Children of Israel" Christians; see James 1:1, 2. The 144,000 are mentioned again in Rev. 14:1-6 and are referred to as "virgins," "purchased to be the first fruits unto God. . ." The following scriptures indicate this would be referring to Christians; James 1:1, 2; Acts 20:28; Rev. 5:9, 10; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:3, 4; 5:26, 27. The name Israel means "he who prevailed with God." The Christians are the real Jews, the Israelites, and the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3). Gal 6:16 ----- "Israel of God"
10. "great multitude . . . white robes . . . palms"- -a scene modeled on the Feast of Tabernacles, a feast of thanksgiving for the harvest.
11. "great multitude . . . they that come out of the great tribulation"- -the tribulation told about in Rev. 6. God's people do not escape bad times but they come through bad times.

12. Comment: The 144,000 and the great multitude are the same but looked at from different perspectives; see 7:3; 14:1-4; 3:10-12; 22:4.



Summary On Above Comments:²²

This great multitude is led by the Lamb, and they follow Him, wherever He leads them. In 14:4 the 144,000 are said to "follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth."

Remember what this is proposing: The 144,000 are to be identified with the great multitude; they are the same group viewed from different standpoints.

- a. The 144,000 are sealed for preservation in the face of the tribulation. The great multitudes are the ones who come out of the great tribulation.
- b. The 144,000 are sealed with the name of God and the Lamb. The members of the Church bear the same mark (3:12) and for preservation in the face of great trial (3:12). The great multitude (as everyone agrees) speaks of the Church. All God's servants have the same mark as the 144,000 (22:4)
- c. The 144,000 sing before the throne; the great multitude is located there.
- d. The 144,000 are viewed as followers of the Lamb and redeemed from the earth; the great multitude are identified as followers of the Lamb and redeemed from the earth.
- e. You must now re-read the earlier remarks on the identification of the 144,000 in light of the name "Israel," and the number "144,000."²³



13. "They are before the throne of God and they serve Him day and night in His temple" --- Total devotion of God's people, His church.
14. "shall spread His tabernacle over them"- -In the feast of Tabernacles it was a practice to provide for friends and visitors. Here God shares His "booth" (tabernacle) with the homeless (persecuted). Here is the dwelling of God in His people and the dwelling of the people with God (John 17:21, 23).
15. "shall hunger no more"- -Physical or spiritual? To remain consistent with figurative language this would be God's continuous provision for spiritual food, water, and protection.
16. "the Lamb . . . shall be their shepherd"- -He provides them with food, water, shade, and protection. Isa. 25:8; 40:11; 49:8-10; 60:20; Psalm 121:5, 6 are eluded to here.

NOTE: One of the most important questions that is asked about these verses is whether or not these are scenes of martyred Christians who have died and are now in heaven before God. If they are then we would be forced to see and accept these descriptions as literal, but to do that would present many problems such as the lamb, the animal figures, the woman of 12:1, the incense, the ark of the covenant of 11:19, fire and brimstone in the

²² The summary comments are from the *Looking Into the Bible Series: The Book of Revelation*, McGuigan, page 118.

²³ Ibid. p. 118

presence of the Lamb in 14:10, etc. But we must conclude that these are not literal since this is an apocalyptic book.

John is seeing a vision some of which may or may not embody some literal elements. As we go along in our study you will begin to see a reason for some things being in or coming from heaven, the earth, the sea, or the abyss. The promises made to those who came out of the tribulation" are the same promises made to the Israelites and those promises did not literally come true; "not hunger . . . no heat or sun will smite them. . . guided by waters" ----Isaiah 49:10. Paul quotes Isa. 49:8 in 2 Cor. 6:2. These texts are in reference to those saved by Jesus in the church. In Isa. 25:8 and 30:18-33 it was promised that their tears would be wiped away, but in the context the problem is Assyria which would be removed so that she would "weep no more." This was a spiritual removal of tears for Israel in the Old Testament.

To come out of the tribulation and be before the throne of God does not necessarily mean to die and go to heaven. It could also mean to make it through the tribulation or persecution on earth and as members of the church to not suffer persecution like that again under the Romans. We must remember that not every Christian was a martyr. Many survived by going underground. Some were faithful until they died and others were "faithful unto (even if it meant) death."

Jim McGuiggan points out that he does not try to be dogmatic about his point of view. There are many, he says, who know far more than he, who see the 144,000 and those who came out of the great tribulation and gathered around the throne as two separate groups. They see the 144,000 as, the church on earth, but they see the multitude in heaven as those who were martyred in the persecution and now before God in heaven. But it seems to him that the 144,000 are sealed with a view to coming out of the great tribulation and are identified as those who come out of the great tribulation. As one author states, "It would be strange indeed to have the 144,000 sealed so as to come out of the tribulation and then speak of the great multitude who came of the tribulation without wishing to identify them," McGuiggan, p. 117. The 144,000 are sealed in their foreheads (7:3) which is promised to all members of the church (3:10-14), and finally in (22:4) we see that all the servants of God have the same mark as the 144,000.²⁴

D. (8:1-2) The seventh seal opened — angels of retribution: With the saints secured against the divine wrath about to be unleashed upon the foes of Christ, the seventh seal is broken. After a brief dramatic pause, seven angels appeared with seven trumpets. These trumpets would herald doom to the foes of the Lamb!

NOTE: Before we go further you will notice that the vision is now presenting a series of sevens'; the seventh seal contains seven trumpets and the seventh trumpet contains seven bowls. Ripping off a seal simply means to reveal things. Essentially, the seventh seal contains the rest of the book.

V. THE SEVEN TRUMPETS (8:3-11:19)²⁵

²⁴ Ibid, pp. 118-120.

²⁵ Shelly, pp. 14-16 (See footnote 18 to see the sections to which this footnote applies).

- A. **(8:3-6)** Preparation for sounding of the trumpets: Their cry of "How long?" (cf. 6:10) is finally answered. An angel with a golden censer containing the prayers of the saints threw it down to earth. This caused violent disturbances in the earth, a clear indication of what is to be expected when the trumpets are blown.

SEAL #7

1. "Silence in heaven"- - -THERE IS DELAY OF God's judgment, a kind of "drum-roll" before the big event.
 2. "Space half an hour" ---- The term hour carries with it the idea of crisis (1 John 2:18). A half hour would mean a delay to give the wicked time to repent. God is practicing His own principle, "Be slow to anger and slow to wrath."
 3. "Seven angels"- - -completeness and unity in what is about to happen.
 4. "Seven trumpets" -----used to call the assembly and to sound alarm (Numbers 10:1-5).
 5. "Angel came and stood over altar"- - -golden altar of incense in Old Testament which stood before the Ark of the Covenant in the holy place just outside the holy of holies.
 6. "Incense"- - -prayers of the saints (Psalm 141:2; Luke 1:10; Rev. 5:8; 8:40).
 7. "Fire . . . cast upon the earth"- - -judgments upon the enemies of God's people.
- B. **(8:7-12)** The first four trumpets are blown in quick succession and affect man's natural environment. The Bible clearly teaches that man's sin affects the very earth itself. (Cf. Rom. 8:20). But the remaining trumpets will bring even more frightful perils upon the enemies of Christ.

TRUMPET #1

1. "first sounded . . . followed by hail and fire, mingled with blood"- - -an allusion to the plagues on Egypt (Ex. 7-11). The gods of the oppressor are exposed as was Egypt's; crops are destroyed, food is attacked.

NOTE: Some Premillennialists make this to be a nuclear war.. Remember, however, these things were to shortly come to pass in John's day.

2. "Third part . . . was burned up"- - - a partial harm to food products.

TRUMPET #2

3. "Great Mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea"- - -Only God topples mountains and sets them on fire. Mountains stand for kingdoms. To destroy a mountain is to destroy the enemy of God (Jer. 51:25); Amos 4:1; Isa. 2:2).
4. "Sea becomes blood"- - -God's destruction of ungodly power which effects the sea commerce of the world. The Nile, the lifeline of Egypt was attacked by turning it to blood. The lifeline of Rome, the Med. Sea will be attacked by God.
5. "Third part of sea . . . third part of ships" -----part of commerce harmed, life harmed.

TRUMPET #3

6. "A great star burning"----- sometimes stars represent notable individuals (Isa. 14:12----- king and kingdom of Babylon); or, people of God (Dan. 8:10; 12:3; Gen. 15:5); or,

divine visitation (Rev. 6:13; Matt. 24:29). This star most likely represents the last one, divine punishment.

7. "Fell on rivers and fountains"----- the water supply is harmed.
8. "Men died" ---- because of badly contaminated water (Jer. 9:15: 23:15).

TRUMPET #4

9. Heavenly bodies "are smitten" - - Same speech used to describe the fall of Babylon (Isa. 13:4, 5). See also Joel 2:10. The ninth plague in Egypt was darkness. God is in control of everything.

C. **(8:13)** The flying eagle: An eagle's cry from heaven was heard after the first four trumpets had been sounded. This was a sign of foreboding. The remaining three trumpets would be even worse than what had come before.

1. "an eagle, flying . . . saying Woe, woe, woe. . ." - - a fierce predator warning its victims.
2. "them that swell on the earth" - - the ungodly. The godly are referred to as those that "dwell in heaven," (Rev. 13:6; 3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 12:12; 13:8, 12, 14; 14:6; 17:8 - - 12:12; 13:6).
3. Judgment is falling on the ungodly world. Their home becomes a palace of horrors. God is in authority and in control.

D. **(9:1-12)** The fifth trumpet: locusts; The fifth angel sounded his trumpet and a star fell from heaven and opened the abyss (i.e. the abode of demons and the wicked dead). From the abyss came forth fierce demonic locusts which tormented men from a period of five months. This represents the mental confusion and spiritual disillusionment which God would bring upon the enemies of His church, even while these men are persecuting the saints. This is the internal decadence of the Roman Empire. Note from verse four that those having the seal of God on their foreheads are not afflicted by this trumpet.

NOTE: Because of the detail in the following chapters, the verses will be identified at the beginning of each point.

TRUMPET #5 [Woe #1]

1. (9:1) "star from heaven fallen unto the earth . . . given to him"----- One with authority who will bring darkness and has the key of the abyss. He is the opposite of "the bright and morning star" who brings light and has the key of death and Hades (1:18). In verse 11 he is identified as Abaddon, Appollyon- - "destroyer." This is Satan (2 Cor. 4:4).
2. (9:2) "smoke" - - moral decadence, spiritual and moral blindness. God gives them up (Rom. 1:24-28). Lowering of moral standards eventually buried Rome.
3. (9:3) "out of the smoke came forth locusts upon the earth" - - Like the eighth plague of Egypt, pain that results from the darkness of moral decadence.
4. (9:4) "hurt . . . only such men as have not the seal of God. . ."----- The previous plagues hurt the environment, but this plague hurts men directly; uncertainty, fear, discomfort, superstition, and a smitten conscience (for some) - - all these bring torment. Rome is being smitten by her own moral decadence.

5. (9:5) "tormented five months"- - - a locust plague usually lasts this long.
6. (9:6) "men shall seek death" ---- external troubles, inner conflict, unsure future brings desire for death.
7. (9:7) "Locusts"- - - "like unto horses. . .for war. . .crowns like gold. . . men's faces. . . hair as of women. . . teeth as of lions"----- SPOOKY! HORROR! War, authority, intelligence, beauty, strength; destructive power with soft appearance; combination of innocence and vicious power. This is characteristic of decadence. It offers so much while eating and devouring. It is sugar coated poison!
8. (9:9) "breastplates of iron" ---- Powerful, hard to beat or kill. Fully equipped to dispose of the enemy. Jim McGuigan comments, "Evil seems to have the right answer to every protest of conscience or reason. Think for a moment of the decadence which threatens to devour our societies- -how well it defends itself. Is the issue pornography? Well, we've got to protect freedom of speech remember. Is the issue the homosexual legislation? Bear in mind now we have to protect the freedom of the individual, because that's plainly stated in the constitution. He must be left to do as he pleases, especially if his "crime" is a victimless crime. Remember "the pursuit of happiness" and all that. Is it the issue of abortion? For whatever reason? Well, after all, it is her baby and her life!" On and on we could go. Evil is hard to beat down because society makes so many excuses for it. They want to put breastplates of iron upon it. The only thing that will pierce it is the Sword of the Spirit.
9. (9:10) "in their tails is their power to hurt men five months" ----- Sin hurts men. It is a reproach to any nation. They have fun for a while and then it stings. - - -Alcohol- - -adder snake Proverbs 23:32.
10. (9:11) "over them as king the angel of the abyss . . . Abaddon. . .Appollyon"----- He is the "destroyer." If the star is Satan then the locust leader is Satan. He is the angel with the power over the abyss, the power attributed to the "star."

E. **(9:13-21)** The sixth trumpet: The sixth trumpet reveals four angels whose mission is destruction and whose goal is to bring wicked men to repentance. The terrible army led by these angels killed a third of the wicked people on the earth, yet the remainder remained impenitent. As the fifth trumpet served to symbolize the internal crumbling of Rome, the sixth likely symbolizes the external invasions which began eating away the empire shortly after the close of the first century.

TRUMPET #6 [Woe #2]

1. (9:12) "sixth angel sounded" -----another instrument of God against the oppressor.
2. (9:13) "voice from the horns of the golden altar . . . Loose the four angels . . . bound at . . . river Euphrates." -----a response to the prayers of the saints as represented by the smoke from the altar of incense. They will lead armies at God's bidding against Rome. Euphrates always stood for threat of military might (Isaiah 7:20; 8:7, 8).
3. (9:15) "angels . . . had been prepared . . . kill the third part of men" ----- foreign invaders will give partial judgments against Rome.
4. (9:16) Number of horses and horsemen---200 million. Enough to scare the enemy, do damage, and give the Christians confidence that God is in control; Notice the symbolism-----2 (unity) X 10,000 (utter completeness) X 10,000 (plenty enough).

5. (9:17) "fire. . .brimstone, heads of lions. . .smoke. . .three plagues. . .third part of men killed. . .tails like serpents"---- All of this represents unbelievable terror that should scare any reasonable person. Yet. . .
6. (9:20) "these . . . repented not"- - - This is a forewarning to the saints that Rome is bent on evil no matter what.
7. Chapter 9= =Internal Corruption, External Invasion.

F. **(10:1-11:2)** The episode of the little book: Next, John saw a strong angel with a scroll or little book in his hand. From the angel's mouth came the noise of seven thunders. As John was about to write the message of the thunders, he was forbidden to do so. The angel then promised John that the sounding of the seventh trumpet would mean that God's mighty mystery was about to be complete (i.e., no more warnings were to be given the wicked and the waiting of the martyrs for their vindication would end, cf. 6:10-11).

The angel then spoke to John and commanded him to eat the little book which had been in his hand. This book contained a sorrowful message of woes upon men. John was to eat the book (i.e., master the content of the message) and then speak it among "many peoples and nations and tongues and kings."

Finally, in connection with the sad message of the little book, he was to measure the Temple — not the literal Temple in Jerusalem but the Spiritual Temple of God, the church. The purpose of this measuring of the Temple, its altar and its worshippers was to assure the church again that God was solicitous over its welfare and would surely protect and preserve it. The court of the Gentiles (i.e., the bulk of the world being dominated by Rome and its influence) would not be protected from the impending distress.

1. (10:1) "another strong angel" -----high-ranking authority ("arch-angels," "chief princes," Jude 9; Daniel 10:13)
2. (10:2) "little book . . . eat it up (verse 9)"- - -a message received by John which he was to consume (study, digest) and then relate it to others. This is similar to Ezekiel eating the scroll in Ez. 2:8; 3:3. This message was for all nations.
3. (10:2) "right foot on the sea and his left upon the earth"- - -universal authority.
4. (10:3) "great voice . . . seven thunders" -----powerful complete judgments; "write them not" ---- some of God's judgments are not revealed----- "seal them up."
5. (10:6) "delay no longer" ---- Enough time had been given for the ungodly to repent.
6. (10:7) "in the days of the voice of the seventh angel. . .finished the mystery of God"- - -When the seventh angel blows the seventh trumpet seven bowls of wrath will be poured forth which are the last and final judgments on Rome (Chapter 16).
7. (10:7) "good tidings . . . to His servants"----- Ultimate victory of saints over Rome (See 22:6).
8. (10:9) "little book . . . eat it up . . . belly bitter . . . mouth . . . sweet as honey"- - -The message contains bad news with sweet endings. Christians would suffer but the enemy would be defeated.
9. (10:11) "many peoples and nations" would hear John's message.
10. (11:1) "reed . . . measures the temple"- - -This is an additional comfort to the Christians. There is a setting apart of the holy and unholy. Similar to Ezekiel 40:3-43:20. At the time of the writing of Revelation there was only one temple of God-----the church of God; 1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:19-22; Rev. 21:1, 2, 9ff. Only priests could enter the sanctuary. Christians are priests (1 Peter 2:5, 9).

11. (11:2) "the court without the temple . . . measure it not . . . the holy city shall they tread"- -The church will suffer persecution but at the same time be sustained. There will be hardship and abuse but the church will be preserved.
12. (11:2) "'forty and two months"- - 1,260 days (3-1/2 years) (3-1/2 years — V2 of 7). This is the same as "times, times, and half a time" (Rev. 12:6, 14). This is a time figure used to speak of a state of affairs.

WHERE THIS PHRASE AND ITS EQUIVALENTS ARE FOUND

3-1/2 YEARS. [A broken seven]

- (1) The period of the beast's authority ----- Rev. 13:5
- (2) The period of the holy city being trodden under foot-----Rev. 11:2
- (3) The period during which the witnesses prophesy -----Rev. 11:3
- (4) The period the Woman is nourished in the wilderness ----- Rev. 12:6, 14
- (5) O.T. - - -The period the "little horn" persecutes the saints in Daniel 7:25.

This number in figure speaks of a state of affairs wherein the saints are subjected to persecution but are protected. They are victimized but victorious. Daniel uses it to say that the little horn will be bad BUT he will eventually get what is coming to him. The woman of Rev. 12 suffered hardship in the wilderness BUT she was nourished. The two witnesses of Rev. 11 are in sackcloth BUT their preaching can't be stopped. In the case of the temple or holy city its outer limits are abused BUT the inner city stands strong. Its heart is unaffected.

THE NUMBER'S ORIGIN

The prophet Elijah because of being persecuted was nourished 3-1/2 years while he was in the wilderness (1 Kings 17:1-6; James 5:17; Luke 4:25). 3-1/2 is also a broken seven showing incompleteness in the persecution.

G. (11:3-14) The two witnesses: The sounding of seventh trumpet is delayed until two witnesses have prophesied for three and half years. They are opposed by the beast and are killed but rise and return to heaven. These witnesses are not to be understood as two individuals of history. Since the witnesses are identified as "candlesticks," (1:20) would indicate that they represent the church. But what of the number "two?" Eastern symbolism of ten uses this number to represent strength — two men are stronger than one. Thus, the two witnesses (two candlesticks) signify the church as a strong and powerful agency for publishing the gospel. This mission arouses intense opposition from evil men. And at times it would appear that evil (i.e., the beast, symbolizing the power of Rome embodied in its emperor) had conquered Christianity. Thus, the brief period of 7-10. But the setback would be only temporary and would be followed by a restoration of power to the church and period of great progress.

1. (11:3) "two witnesses" ---- Moses and Aaron, Elijah & Elisha, Limited Commission----- two represents unity and strength of preaching the gospel. This is another way of

illustrating the efforts made to stop the preaching of the gospel by the church. It gets hammered down but it always comes back. Perhaps Moses and Christ — O.T. and N.T.

2. (11:4) "two olive trees (God's word preached) . . . two candlesticks" (God's Church) - - Zechariah uses the same symbols: Zech. 4:11-14. The two olive trees are identified as the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth, one a civil ruler (Zerubbabel of the royal line) [Zerub = offspring of babel = Babylon = gate of God] and the priest (Joshua, son of Jozedek). [Jchozadak "Yahweh is righteous"] They were the anointed ones who led the nation. The church is made up of the king and priests. The church is the candlesticks; Rev. 1:12, 13, 20. The church of Christ the body of Christ is the two witnesses.
3. (11:5) "desire to hurt them" ----- There will be those who will want to stop them but they are unstoppable.
4. (11:6) "These have the power. . ." ----- This is a part of the vision to show they can't be stopped because God and His power is with them. They have sackcloth at the same time showing that all is not pleasant, everything is not roses, but they will continue to do their job.
5. (11:7) "the beast. . . shall make war with them,. . . overcome them. . . kill them. . . their carcasses lie in street of the great city. . . spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt. . . where their Lord was crucified." - - -Here is presented again the two sides to the coin by way of vision; the church is persecuted but it continues. The beast is Rome. Rome seems at first to be victorious but the church will not lose (See Daniel 7:23-25ff). (READ) The city Rome is called by three names; Sodom because of its immorality; Egypt because of its being an oppressor of God's people; and Jerusalem because it was the capital of a perverted religion. The two witnesses die as their Lord died in Jerusalem. It was Rome who slew Jesus. It is Rome who goes after Christians.
6. (11:9) "men look upon their dead bodies 3-1/2 days" ----- They are overcome (seemingly) which is also stated of the saints in (13:5-7). BUT this only an apparent victory. 3-1/2 is a broken seven so that tells us their death is real but not complete.
7. (11:10) "they shall send gifts to one another" ----- The enemy will celebrate. BUT. . .
8. (11:11) "after 3-1/2 days . . . they stood on their feet . . . fear fell upon them" that saw it" - - -A resurrection, the triumph of the church over her enemy. Think of past triumphs and compare; Pharaoh's army drowned; three youths unharmed by fire in Babylon; lion's mouths shut; the remnant returns to Jerusalem; Christ and the empty tomb; Christians overcome pagan Rome.
9. (11:12) "they went up into heaven" ----- the vindication of the church; "enemies beheld" - - -the enemies of the church understood.
10. (11:13) "great earthquake . . . 7,000 killed" (7 X 10 X 10 X 10) - - -another part of God's judgment. It is partial but enough for them to get the message.
11. (11:13) "the rest were frightened and gave glory to the God of heaven" ----- Like Nebuchadnezzar they were scared but not repentant enough to give up their gods.
12. Summary: These visions all teach the same lesson; the church will undergo hard times and suffer but God will protect her. This same theme will be presented again in different visions in Chapters 12 and 13.

H. **(11:15-19)** The seventh trumpet: conflict and triumph: The opening of the seventh seal announces victory to the saints and wrath upon their foes. But the vengeance visited upon the unrighteous is not detailed here. There are other visions of reassurance to be given the saints before this awful picture is painted.

TRUMPET #7 [Woe #3]

1. (11:15) "seventh sounded"; "third woe"----- We have already been told the meaning of this trumpet in (10:7) ---- "then is finished the mystery of God, according to the good tidings which he declared to his servants the prophets." This will be the full destructive wrath of God. The job is finished.
2. (11:15) "is become the kingdom of our Lord"----- Not that the kingdom is not already Christ's for Rev. 1:9; 2:26, 27; Col. 1:13, and Eph. 5:5 describe the kingdom already belonging to Christ. From the day of Pentecost there could be no time when there was not always a kingdom and His having been King (Psalm 10:16ff); Ex. 15:18; 1 Chron. 29:11). Even when foreigners ruled God's people as in Babylon, God still made it clear that He had given "the kingdom" unto the pagan Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar wasn't convinced so He had him eat with the wild animals until he learned his lesson. God rules His kingdom and giveth it to whomever He will (Dan. 2:36-38; 4:17).

NOTE: It was God who raised up the Persians to waste the Babylonians and gave the kingdom to Cyrus (Isaiah 45:1ff). God in turn raised up the Greeks and the Romans according to Daniel. What we have in Revelation is a PUBLIC VINDICATION OF AN ALREADY EXISTING TRUTH. By the resurrection we can know that Jesus is Lord and on His throne (Acts 2:22-36).

Therefore this verse does not proclaim the beginning of Christ's kingdom as Premillennialists claim. John had already stated that Jesus is Lord of Lords and King of Kings (1:5) and already in possession of the key of the house of David (3:7).

3. (11:18) "time of the dead (wicked — See Eph 2:1) to be judge" (results of seventh blast to be revealed- -those who would be killed in the wrath of the bowls and those who have already died in opposition to the Lord. What judgment is this? It's recorded for us later in (20:11-15). It is to be completed in the days of the blowing of the seventh trumpet (10:6, 7).
4. (11:18) "give their reward to thy servants" ----- They will know the joy of being victorious. Read Daniel 7:17-27 and you will see the exact same language used to describe the kingdom of God overcoming the "fourth kingdom" which was the Roman Empire. God makes it clear that although it appears that the kingdom has been taken from God the kingdom still belongs to Him and the saints, and what is about to happen will prove it.
5. (11:19) "opened the temple of God in heaven . . . seen . . . the ark of His (not the) covenant"- - -God is faithful to His covenant or promise.
6. (11:19) "lightning's, . . . earthquake. . . hail" ---- judgments to be poured out on Rome because of her mistreatment of Christ's kingdom.

VI. THE GREAT CONFLICT BETWEEN CHRIST AND SATAN (12:1-13:18).²⁶

Chapter 12 begins the story of conflict between good and evil all over again under different figures before moving to the grand conclusion of the story. Some students of Revelation divide the book into two sections, considering Chapters 1-11 and Chapters 12-22 as separate and individually complete dramas. It appears more logical to regard the recapitulation of the entire drama of redemption beginning here as the message of the little book which John was commanded to master and deliver to the nations.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 16-17 (See footnote 18 to see the sections to which this footnote applies).

- A. **(12:1-6)** The woman, child and dragon described: The first duty in appreciating this drama is to properly identify the characters. The woman represents the true Israel of God — at first the righteous remnant of Judaism through which the Messiah came and then, after the coming of Christ, the faithful church. The child represents Christ. The dragon is none other than Satan and all his powers of wickedness.

NOTE: The story begins with the appearance of a pregnant woman (i.e., fleshly Israel with its promise of a Messiah) who is being threatened by a dragon (i.e., Satan). The child (i.e., Christ) is successfully delivered and immediately caught up into heaven for his protection from the dragon. Thus thwarted in its effort to destroy the child, the dragon unleashes its terror against the woman (i.e. now God's "Spiritual Israel," the church) and seeks to destroy her. But God has prepared a place of refuge and safety for her in the wilderness.

1. (12:1) "a great sign seen in heaven: a woman. . .sun. . .moon. . .crown of twelve stars. . .with child. . .in birth. . .in pain" ---- This vision is drawn from Genesis 3:15. The serpent would bruise the feet of her seed and seed was to bruise the head of the serpent. (See also Romans 16:20). With her twelve stars in the victory crown she represents God's people who shed light on a dark world. The number 12 is the number of God's people. Since she existed before the birth of the child she would represent God's people in the Old Testament and New ("the rest of her seed" who hold the "testimony of Jesus"). The figure of a woman is used quite often to represent a nation (Isa. 50:1; 54:1ff; Micah 4:9ff). Read especially Isaiah 54. How did God's people bring forth the Messiah? Jesus descended through the Jewish line.
 2. (12:3) "a great red dragon" -----A sign or figure of Satan who is bloodthirsty for souls and brutal.
 3. (12:3) "seven heads and ten horns"- - Fully equipped with strength. The Roman beast is also seven-headed and ten-horned (13:1; 17:7).
 4. (12:3) "seven diadems" on the seven heads- - These were not victory crowns but what kings wear whether losers or winners.
 5. (12:4) "his tail draweth the third part of the stars . . . cast them to earth"----- Shows his power to cast down people, etc. (When Satan fell?- -and took other angels with him?)
 6. (12:4) "Standeth before the woman . . . he may devour her child"- - Similar to Pharaoh's order to kill babies in Ex. 1:15019; or Herod's order. Especially significant is Jer. 51:34, which is fully developed in Rev. 18. Satan would like to destroy Jesus.
 7. (12:5) "she bore a male child (N.K.J.V.) . . . to rule all the nations"- - Jesus (Psalm 2:1-Rev. 2:26-28; 19:15); "rod of iron" ---- A shepherd's rod tipped with iron for protection against wild animals.
 8. (12:5) "caught up . . . unto His throne. . ." ----- the throne of David, the ascension of Jesus.
 9. (12:6) "the woman fled into the wilderness. . .nourished her"-----3-1/2 years Time figure for a period of trial as already seen in 11:3; James 5:17; Luke 4:25. The church would go through a period of trial but God would take care of her.
- B. **(12:7-12)** The war in heaven: The scene shifts from earth to heaven and the devil is represented as attempting to follow Christ into heaven to destroy him. Michael and his fellow angels fought to prevent such and Satan was cast down. (Note: This text proves nothing about the origin of Satan. It describes a conflict between him and Christ at a time much later than his original fall from heaven. Cf. 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6).

1. (12:7) "war in heaven"- - a vision, not necessarily a real war, but represents the conflict between Satan and Christ. Satan sought to defeat Christ on earth and in heaven- -Satan lost. Therefore, SATAN ISN'T WINNING NOW in the persecution but he is warring against the saints. Later in Rev. we'll see how the saints win.
2. (12:7) "Michael and his angels"- -It is thought by many this represents Christ, the "prince" of God's people as in Dan. 12:1. The name Michael means "Who is like God." He is also represented as a messenger of God.
3. (12:9) "the great dragon was cast down . . . the Devil and Satan"- -The death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus were a full defeat for Satan, Eph. 4:7-10; Col. 2:15. Jesus has defeated the power behind the Roman Empire.
4. (12:10) "Now is come the salvation" the church will be triumphant because of Christ's blood, the word, and they put the kingdom first. See 1 John 1:6-9; 5:13; Acts 20:24. HAVE YOU COUNTED THE COST OF BEING A CHRISTIAN? GOD TAKES YOUR COMMITMENT SERIOUSLY. DO YOU?
5. (12:12) "rejoice, O heavens, and he that dwell in them" -----the people of heavenly places (Col. 3:1 ff). Ours is a heavenly country (Phil. 3:20).
6. (12:12) "woe for the earth" ----- those who are not Christians. Satan will use them for his own purpose and hasn't a care about their welfare.
7. (12:12) "he hath but a short time" ----- The Roman persecution will not last long. "must shortly come to pass" See also 2 Cor. 4:17; 1 Pet. 1:6.

C. (12:13-17) The woman in the wilderness: The scene shifts back to earth. Satan, knowing that Christ is safe from His power in heaven, focuses all his destructive power against the woman (i.e., the church on earth) and her seed (i.e., individual Christians). The scene shows the security of believers against all the devil can do so long as they "keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus."

1. (12:13) "dragon . . . persecuted the woman. . ." ----- Satan persecutes the church but remember God and Christ are still in control.
2. (12:14) "given to the woman the two wings of the great eagle" ----- eagles' wings represent God's protective work (Ex. 19:4; Deut. 32:11; Psalm 36:7; Isa. 40:31).
3. (12:14) She is nourished---- 3-1/2 years, God's protection (See v. 6).
4. (12:15) "serpent . . . mouth . . . water as a river . . ." -----God uses Satan's power to destroy the wicked. As God used the dry ground to whip Satan before, He does here as well (Ex. 14:21-31). On the other side of the sea was a place of safety, the wilderness; Psalm 106:9.
5. (12:17) "dragon waxed wrath . . . went away to make war with the rest of her seed that keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus"---Satan attacks the church as a whole and as individuals.
6. This is a victory chapter to take care of the beast of the next chapter.

THE GREAT RED DRAGON CALLED THE DEVIL AND SATAN

REVELATION TWELVE



"...a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns on his heads...and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to deliver, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. and she brought forth a man child to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was brought up to God and to His throne. And the women fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days (3.5 years)...they overcame him by the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony...that serpent of old called, the Devil and Satan..."



Revelation 12:1-17

Meaning: The woman represents the nation of Israel who would bring forth Jesus through Mary. Satan kills Jesus through Rome, but He is raised from the dead to sit on His throne. The church is persecuted temporarily, but they survive.

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D. **13:1-10) The first beast:** (Satan calls one of his helpers to aid him in this life-or-death struggle. A terrifying beast from the sea which was an object of worship to men on the earth appeared. He had power (horns) and wisdom (heads) and authority (diadems). He has been able to survive fierce combat in the past (wound healed on one of its heads). This beast is the persecuting Roman Empire personified in its emperor who receives worship from men.

1. (13:1) "a beast coming up out of the sea . . . ten horns and seven heads . . . ten diadems. . ." To understand the meaning of the beast we will study Rev. 13, 17, and Daniel 7 together. It has great power. Rev. 17:9, 10 says the 7 heads stand for seven hills and seven kings. Rome was built on 7 hills.

WHO ARE THE SEVEN KINGS?

(Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero, Vespasian, Titus.)

Five of the seven are fallen (17:10); those would be Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero. One is (17:10); that would be Vespasian, and another is yet to come; that would be Titus. He must continue a little while. Titus ruled 2 years.

NOTE: THE WHOLE PICTURE IS TAKEN FROM DANIEL. In apocalyptic speech heads or horns may be used to stand for kings (Rev. 17:9-12; Dan. 2:38; 7:6; 8:8, etc.). Daniel uses horns where John uses heads. Daniel says the 4th beast (kingdom ----Roman Empire) has 10 horns and an 11th horn which uproots three of the former horns (Daniel 7:7, 8, 19-25).²⁷

Daniel's view would be:

- (1) Augustus
- (2) Tiberius
- (3) Caligula
- (4) Claudius
- (5) Nero
- (6) Galba*
- (7) Otho*
- (8) Vitellius*
- (9) Vespasian
- (10) Titus
- (11) Domitian

* The three that were rooted up in Daniel 7.

All commentaries agree that the fourth beast in Daniel is Rome. It is a diverse beast made up of Babylon, Medo-Persian, and Greece. In Daniel the order is lion (Babylon), bear (Medo-Persian), and leopard (Greece)----- future. In Revelation it is leopard, bear, and lion- - -looking back). Notice Daniel's statement: "And as for the rest of the beast (lion, bear, leopard) their dominion was taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time." (Dan. 7:12). That is to say that they lived in the Roman Empire, the fourth kingdom, a diverse beast. The fourth beast or kingdom embodied all their wickedness.

²⁷ McGuigan, p. 183-184

The eleventh horn according to Daniel is the chief personality. He uproots three of the horns. The beast now has eight horns and the little horn is number 8 instead of 11 since he uprooted 3 of them. Daniel is looking forward from his time to the fulfillment of the prophecy, but John is looking back and forward on these kings since his prophecy refers to recent kings now gone, including the three that have been removed.

John has heads representing kings (17:10). In Daniel three of the kings are uprooted by the eleventh king now become the eighth (7:24). BUT in John's Revelation three are ignored and we are left with 8. John takes the vision from Daniel as he finds it -----with three missing. But does John speak of 8 heads? Yes, in 17:11. (SEE FIGURE CHARTS AND TABLE CHARTS: PAGES 59-66)

But why would John ignore three? Because three are uprooted in Daniel. They reigned only a few months, did not persecute the saints. And made no contribution to the Empire due to horrible civil war. If this is the case then Revelation was written in the days of Vespasian, the one who "is" (17:10). But the one who would be so terrible "is not" (17:8, 11). This means that the persecution of the saints while John was writing was only localized and not an empire-wide persecution. This did not happen until Domitian.

Therefore we would have "5 fallen" (Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero). Then the one who "is" (Vespasian, who brought the empire back to stability). The "other is not yet come" (Titus) and the eight (Domitian) is "of the seven" (17:11). This eighth beast also existed in the past for John says he "was," "is not," and "is about to come up out of the abyss." But how did Domitian exist in the past, not exist now, but will exist in the future? It sounds like a resurrection doesn't it? Look at the first 5 kings. Who first drew the sword against Christians? It was Nero, (Tertullian's Apology Chapter 5). When Nero died the persecution ceased. It began again with Domitian. Eusebius wrote, "He (Domitian) finally showed himself the successor of Nero's campaign of hostility to God. He was the second to promote persecution against us, though his father Vespasian had planned no evil against us." (Ecclesiastical History, Bk. 3 17). Tertullian wrote, "A long time after, Domitian, a limb of the bloody Nero makes some like attempts against the Christians. . ."

(TEXT IS CONTINUED ON PAGE 66)

DANIEL'S DREAM OF FOUR WORLD EMPIRES

DANIEL 7:1-7



First Kingdom
LION WITH WINGS
DANIEL 7:4

=

BABYLON EMPIRE

DISPERSED THE JEWS AND
SPREAD THEIR INFLUENCE
ALONG WITH THEIR GOD
AND SCRIPTURE.
SYNAGOGUES BUILT.



Second Kingdom
**BEAR WITH RAISED PAW
AND THREE RIBS**
DANIEL 7:5

=

MEDO-PERSIA EMPIRE

EVERYONE WAS SUBJECT
TO THE LAW.
THEY BUILT HIGHWAYS
FOR TRANSPORTATION.



Third Kingdom
**LEOPARD WITH FOUR
HEADS AND FOUR WINGS**
DANIEL 7:6

=

GREEK EMPIRE


GREEK UNIVERSAL
LANGUAGE AND
CULTURE

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DANIEL 7:7-22

THE TEN HORNS OF THE FOURTH BEAST WHICH REPRESENTED TEN KINGS OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE AND THE ELEVENTH HORN WHICH REPRESENTED THE 11th KING

DANIEL 7:7-22

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
										
Augustus B.C. 27	Tiberius A.D. 14	Caligula A.D. 32	Claudius A.D. 41	Nero A.D. 54	Galbo A.D. 68	Otho A.D. 69	Vitellius A.D. 69	Vespasian A.D. 69	Titus A.D. 79	Domitian A.D. 81-96

DANIEL 7:23-28

1	2	3	4	5	(Three kings plucked up)	6	7	8
---	---	---	---	---	--------------------------	---	---	---

REVELATION 13:1-3; 17:8-11

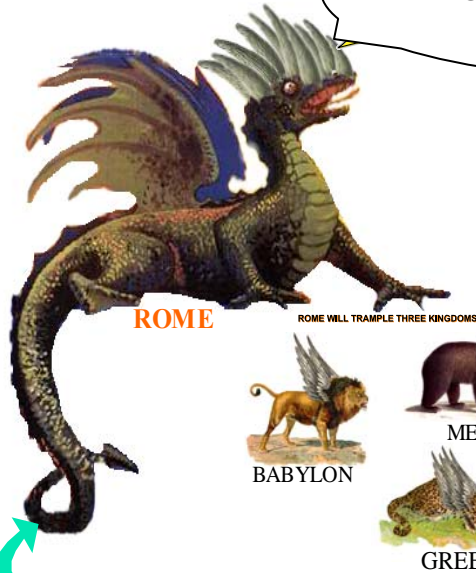
										
Augustus B.C. 27 "Fallen"	Tiberius A.D. 14 "Fallen"	Caligula A.D. 32 "Fallen"	Claudius A.D. 41 "Fallen"	Nero A.D. 54 "Fallen, was, will become #8 smitten head"	Galbo A.D. 68	Otho A.D. 69	Vitellius A.D. 69	Vespasian A.D. 69 "is"	Titus A.D. 79 "not yet come, will continue for a little while"	Domitian A.D. 81-96 "was, is not" "goes down to perdition"
Rev. 17:10	Rev. 17:10	Rev. 17:10	Rev. 17:10	Rev. 13:3; 17:10 11					Rev. 17:10	Rev. 17:8, 11

DANIEL'S AND JOHN'S VISION OF THE FOURTH WORLD EMPIRE

DANIEL 7 & REVELATION 13

DANIEL'S VISION OF ROME

I AM GOD.
I PERSECUTE THE SAINTS.
I CHANGE THE TIMES AND THE LAWS.
BOW TO ME!



=

ROMAN
EMPIRE

||

Fourth Kingdom
A DREADFUL, TERRIBLE,
AND DIFFERENT BEAST HAD
TEN HORNS AND
TRAMPLED THE REST.
DANIEL 7:7, 23-25

JOHN'S VISION

COMPARE DANIEL'S VISION TO JOHN'S VISION IN REVELATION 13 WHICH SYMBOLIZES THE ROMAN EMPIRE COMING UP OUT OF THE SEA. IT IS MADE UP OF THE THREE PRECEDING EMPIRES PLUS OTHER LANDS. JOHN SEES A **LEOPARD** WITH **BEAR'S FEET**, AND A **LION'S MOUTH**. IT HAS SEVEN HEADS ONE OF WHICH WAS DEAD AND CAME BACK ALIVE, AND TEN HORNS WITH CROWNS. HE BLASPHEMED GOD, HIS TABERNACLE, AND THOSE IN HEAVEN. HE MADE WAR WITH THE SAINTS.

REVELATION 13



"I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name... the beast I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion... I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed..." Revelation 13:1-3

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REVELATION 13 ROMAN EMPIRE “THE SEA BEAST”

Nero died and his actions
came alive again in
Domitian.

666

Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion....And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast...He opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.”
Revelation 13:1-6

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DANIEL AND REVELATION 13 & 17 COMPARISONS							
DANIEL 7		REVELATION 13		REVELATION 17		OTHER TEXTS FROM REV.	
1.	Lion beast, bear beast, leopard beast, and diverse beast arise from the sea, (vs. 1-7)	1.	Diverse beast arises from the sea with parts of a leopard, bear, and lion, (v. 2)	1.		1.	
2.	The 4 th or diverse beast was terrible, exceedingly strong and broke into pieces and stamped the residue, (v. 7).	2.	The diverse beast was given power and authority by Satan, (v. 2).	2.		2.	
3.	It was different, (v. 7).	3.	It was different, (vs. 1, 2)	3.		3.	
4.	Had ten horns, (v. 7).	4.	Had seven heads, ten horns,	4.	The seven heads are seven kings, five are fallen, one is, and the other is yet to come, (v. 10) (See also 17:3, 9, 12)	4.	
5.	The 11 th horn put down three horns making him #8, (v. 8)	5.		5.	He was, he died, he is not, he is yet to come and will be #8, (v. 11).	5.	
6.	The little horn spoke great things, (v.8)	6.	The beast spoke great things and blasphemies against God, his tabernacle, and those in heaven, (v. 5).	6.		6.	
7.	Thrones were cast down, (v. 9).	7.		7.		7.	
8.	The Ancient of Days did sit on throne (fiery flame, thousands served him, judgment given, the books were opened) (v. 10)	8.	Those whose names are not written in the Lamb's book worship the beast, (v. 8).	8.		8.	Rev. 4's description of God on His Throne, (v.2, 5 and 5:11—many thousands worshipping Him)
9.	The beast was slain, his body destroyed, and put into fire because of his blasphemies, (v. 11)	9.	He who captures will be captured and he who kills will be killed, (v. 10)	9.		9.	Rev. 19:20—the beast was cast into a lake of fire.
10.	The other beast' dominion was	10.		10.		10.	The ten horns (other parts of the

	DANIEL 7		REVELATION 13		REVELATION 17		OTHER TEXTS FROM REV.
	taken away but their lives (influence) lasted a while, (v. 12)						empire which served Rome) are ten kings who work with the beast one hour (v. 12)
11.	After the beast is slain the Son of man came with clouds of the heavens and was brought to the Ancient of days and is exalted, (v. 13)	11.		11.		11.	After the beast is killed Christ is glorified in heaven; (Rev. 20:4)
12.	The Son was given dominion, glory, and a kingdom for all which would not pass away or be destroyed, (v. 14).	12.		12.		12.	
13.	Daniel asked for the meaning of the vision, (v. 16)	13.		13.		13.	
14.	The beasts are four kings (or kingdoms—vs. 33, 34). V. 17	14.		14.		14.	
15.	The saints shall take and possess the kingdom forever. (v. 18)	15.		15.		15.	The judgment is wrought against the beast, and the saints reign with Christ in the kingdom, (14:7; 19:11-21; 20:1-6)
16.	Daniel wants to know more about the fourth beast.	16.		16.		16.	
17.	The little 11 th horn made war with the saints and prevailed a while until the Ancient of days came and brought judgment and the saints received the kingdom, (vs. 21, 22)	17.	He made war with the saints to overcome them and was given power by Satan over all the nations; (v.7); the beast was given a short time to prevail (42 months)	17.	The beast made war against Christ and the saints, (v. 4)	17.	He will prevail against the saints 42 months, (11:2; 12:6, 14). Those that neither served nor worshipped the beast reigned with Christ 1,000 years (a time of completion or fulfillment Rev. 20:4-6.
18.	The fourth beast will be the fourth kingdom which shall devour the earth, tread it down and break it in pieces, (v. 23).	18.	The beast was given authority over the earth and people. (vs. 2, 7).	18.		18.	
19.	The ten horns are ten kings and another shall arise after them who	19.		19.		19.	

	DANIEL 7		REVELATION 13		REVELATION 17		OTHER TEXTS FROM REV.
	will subdue three kings, (v. 24).						
20.	He will speak great words against God (blasphemies) and wear out the saints and think himself to be God to change times and laws, (v. 25)	20.	It spoke great words and blasphemies against God, his tabernacle, and those in heaven. (vs. 5, 6)	20.		20.	
21.	The saints would suffer under him for a time and times and the dividing of time (3-1/2 yrs, 42 months, 1,260 days), (v.25)	21.	The beast would have authority 42 months (v.5) (See also Rev. 11:2).	21.		21.	
22.	But judgment will come and take away his dominion to destroy it. (v. 26)	22.		22.	He will continue a short space, (v. 10)	22.	This time will be 42 months or 3-1/2 yrs, (11:2; 12:6, 14). A contest between God and the beast is taking place. (See 1 Kings 17& 18 Saints were persecuted and Elijah was in the wilderness 3-1/2 years. See also Luke 5:24, 25: James 5:17. Elijah won the challenge on Mt. Carmel).
23.	The kingdom will then be given to the saints and the kingdoms will obey him, (v. 27).	23.		23.		23.	He (the beast) will be cast into a lake of fire (20:20).

Domitian is, therefore, a resurrection of Nero, only he is worse. He caused much tension in the provinces against Christians and set in motion the outburst of persecution of unparalleled fury and viciousness which lasted until A.D. 311. The 8 is the number of resurrection and a new beginning (Lev. 14:1-20), the year of jubilee (Lev. 25:8) when everyone received a free start and day of circumcision. The 8th day is used to refer to the 1st day or the resurrection of Christ and the Sibylline Oracles (A.D. 328) speak of Jesus under the number 888, resurrected, a new beginning.

John is told the eighth head is of the seven (17:11). He is being told to look back at the seven and he will find the eighth there. Tacitus a Roman historian tells us that there were rumors that Nero wasn't dead and expected him to return disguised as someone else (Histories, p.22). Domitian of course, resurrected Nero's persecution of Christians but on an Empire-wide scale. Most of the Caesars were deified after their death, but Domitian didn't wait until he was dead- - he wanted his deification while he lived and ordered that he be so addressed. When a person approached Domitian he first had to say, "Our Lord god Domitian."

2. (13:1-2) "ten horns" ----- Kings who have submitted themselves to Rome (17:12-17). They are sub-rulers under the Caesars. This dividing of power however, makes the kingdom weak as can be seen in Daniel 2 regarding the mixture of iron and clay which represent Rome.

SUMMARY: (1) The seven heads stand for the Seven Hills of Rome and the seven kings of Rome. The eighth head is mentioned in Chapter 17 as a resurrected head of one of the seven. (2) The ten horns stand for kings with whom Rome was required to make alliances. These alliances will contribute to Rome's downfall.

3. (13:3) "one of its heads . . . smitten unto death"- -This is Nero. In him the beast lived, and in his death the beast died. With Nero persecution lived and with him persecution died. BUT he will be resurrected as is signified by head #8, a number which means resurrection or new beginning. #8 will resume the activity of the beast. Domitian resumed the persecution.
Nero's death was God's judgment on him. When he died, the whole Roman Empire erupted. It seemed as if the "very fabric of civilization was being torn apart."

HOWEVER

4. (13:3) "his death-stroke was healed"- -The beast lived again. Rev. 17:11 says he "was," and "is not," and "is about to come up out of the abyss," (or "go into perdition" ASV- -produce evil). This would be Domitian who began again the persecution.
5. (13:4) "they worship the dragon . . . (and) the beast"- -They seemed unbeatable so the people turn and adore them.
6. (13:5) "a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies"- -boasting, arrogance. Domitian was noted for his arrogance (Seutonius 354, 355) and claims to deity.
7. (13:7) His "authority to continue 42 months"- -He won't last forever.
8. (13:8) "given unto him to make war with the saints"- -See Daniel 7:21.
9. "all. . .the earth shall worship him"- -unbelievers
10. "book of life"- -list of the saved. One's name can be blotted out, Rev. 3:5.

11. (13:18) "his number is 666" -----This verse gives us more information about the beast. This number speaks of the nature or character of the beast. See comments on the number "6" on page 28. It is the number of man or man's number ("a" is not in the Greek). The number seven is associated with God ----- completeness, perfection. Six is to fall short of perfection or God. There is MAN and his numerical value is "666." Man was made on the 6th day. Jesus is telling the saints. "Your opponent is evil, human, and not divine." Trying to associate the number with a particular ruler or person has brought inconsistent, conflicting, and disappointing results.
11. (13:10) "into captivity he goeth" ----- the sufferer is in God's hands.
12. (13:10) "by the sword . . . die" -----Rome will die by the sword.
13. (13:10) "patience and faith of the saints- - -don't give up.

WHO IS THE SEA BEAST? CIVIL PERSECUTING POWER OF ROME

1. He arises from the restless nations of the world (13:1; 17:15).
2. He represents seven kings- -Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero, Vespasian, and Titus.
3. An Eighth head is resurrected Nero in the life of Domitian, (17:11).
4. He has ten horns which are other rulers that serve him, (17:12).
5. His name is "MAN" and his number is "666" which says that he is not divine, he will not last forever, and he falls short of what he seems to be.

- E. **(13:11-18) The second beast:** Satan now calls forth a second helper, a beast from the earth. He was not so fierce looking as the first beast, for he had the appearance of a lamb although he spoke as a dragon. He was cunning, deceptive and caused men to worship the beast from the sea. This beast represents the priesthood of the cult of the emperor and is later referred to as the "false prophet." (16:13; 19:20; 20:10).

This beast persecuted those who would not worship the emperor and gave a mysterious mark of identification to those who did bow before him. Only those having this mark could transact business within the empire. This mark corresponds to the one given God's people in 7:1-8. Both denote allegiance. That a marking or singling out for persecution of those who did not worship the beast occurred in history is undeniable. The mark received is represented with the symbolic number "666." As surely as 7 represented perfection and holiness in Eastern symbolism, 6 fell short of that sacred number and was therefore evil. Using a series of sixes — 666 — represents the raising of evil to the highest degree. The man worthy of such a number was the first beast — the emperor of Rome. (Note: The student would be wise to avoid the pitfall of trying to solve the riddle of this number by assigning numerical values to the letters of the name of some specific individual. This scheme lends itself to all sorts of absurdities).

Here, then, is the unholy trinity of darkness which was seeking to destroy the church in John's day — Satan (the dragon), the emperor (the beast from the sea) and the priesthood of the cult of emperor worship (the beast from the earth).

1. (13:11) "Another beast out of the earth" -----human origin
2. "had two horns like unto a lamb"- - -an innocent look, hypocrisy, wolf in sheep's clothing, false teacher.

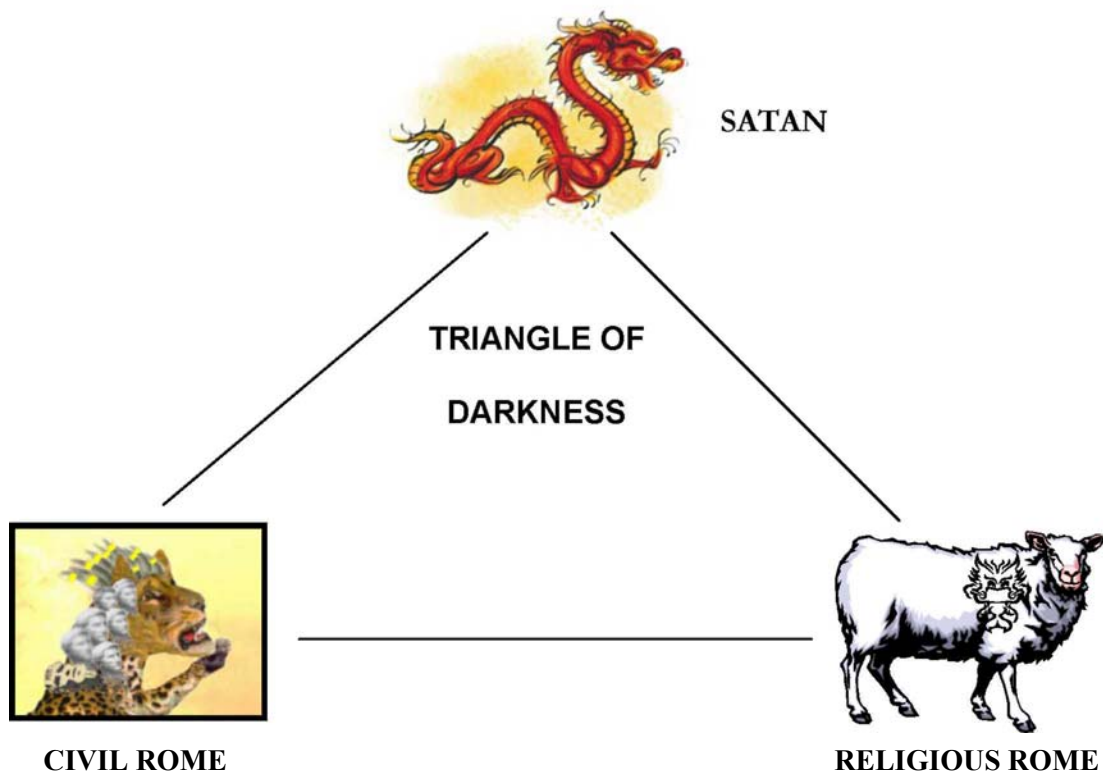
3. (13:12) "exerciseth all the authority of the first beast"- -has the authority of Rome in it.
4. "he maketh the earth . . . to worship the first beast"- -Rome with its religious clothes on.

First Beast, Sea Beast ----Roman Military — Civil Power

Second Beast, Earth Beast----- Rome: The Religious Pervert

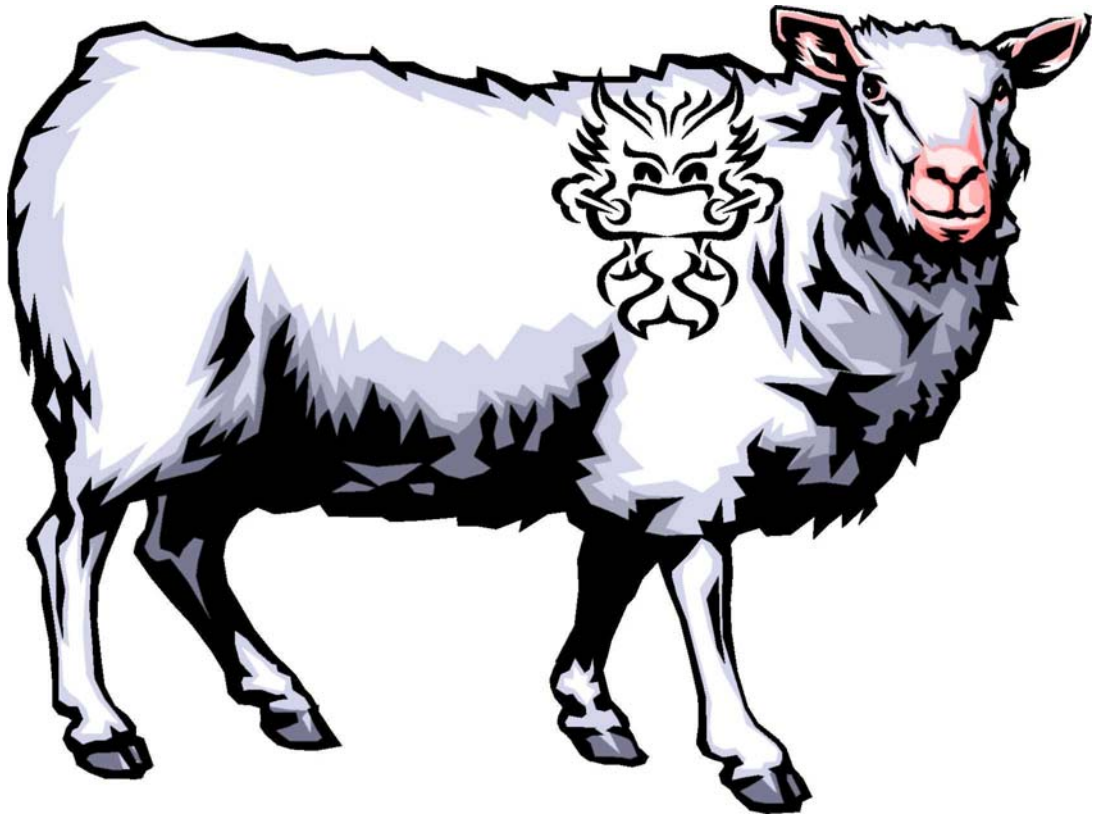
Throughout Rome there were religious councils which promoted both empire and Caesar worship. There were shrines everywhere, priests, and pagans by the thousands, and then Domitian who attempted to force it on others.

5. "death stroke was healed"- -Nero died but his character arose even worse in Domitian.
6. (13:13) "he doeth great signs"-----cons people, magic, false miracles, sorcery-----2 Thess. 2:1-12. The priests were expert magicians and ventriloquists.
7. (13:14) "Make an image to the beast"- -Busts and statues were acclaimed as divine. Pliny tells us that Christians were faced with busts of the Caesars and asked to make the confession: "Caesar is Lord."
8. (13:15) "to give breath to it . . . that the image should speak" -----They made people believe that Rome was worthy of worship. Magicians did the same in Moses' day.

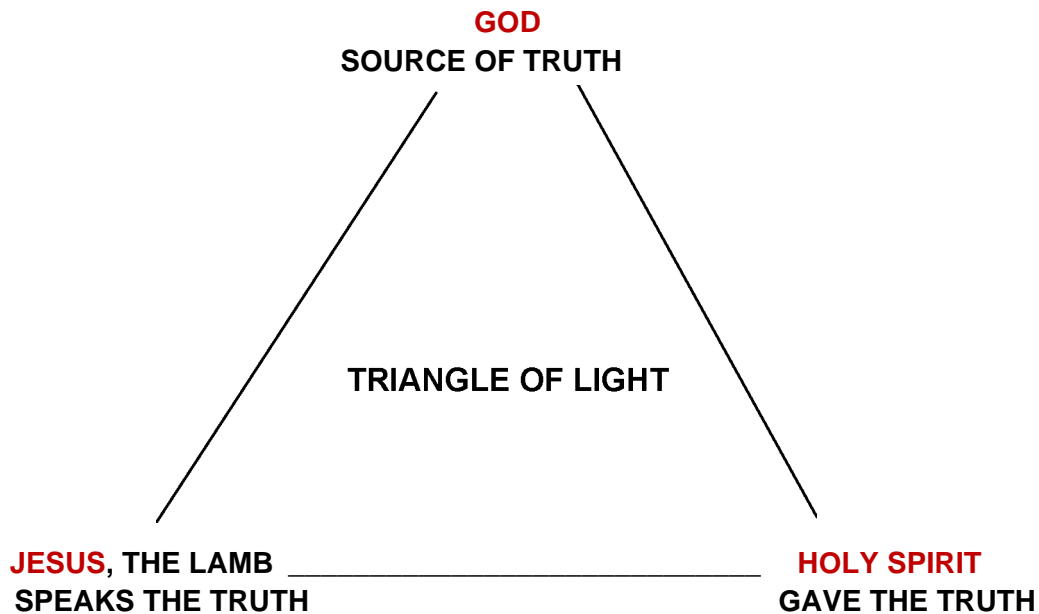


REVELATION 13:11-6; 16:13; 19:20

THE FALSE PROPHET BEAST: RELIGIOUS ROME



**LOOKS LIKE A LAMB BUT SPEAKS LIKE A DRAGON:
CAESAR WORSHIP AND CULT TEACHERS OF ROME**



9. (13:16) "a mark on their right hand, or upon their forehead" -----Counterpart of the name written on the disciples -----Lord, Jesus, God. A literal mark is no more involved here than in the first.
10. (13:17) "no man should be able to buy or to sell" -----Great economic pressure was brought to bear against the believers, those who didn't worship Caesar!
11. (13:18) applies to the sea beast, but can also apply to the earth beast since both are of human origin and fall short of the truth and God. The beast is 666 instead of 777.

VII. THE ULTIMATE TRIUMPH OF THE SAINTS DEPICTED (14:1-20).²⁸

- A. **(14:1-5)** The Lamb and the 144,000: In contrast to those who wore the mark of the beast, this chapter shows those bearing the mark of the Lamb. The 144,000 had been sealed on the earth in Chapter 7. Now we see that entire throng — none have been lost during the great conflict — safe in heaven with the Lamb. Here is assurance and comfort! The saints are assured that their ultimate salvation is guaranteed so long as they "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth."
 1. (14:1) "saw . . . lamb stand on the Mount Zion" ----- This lamb speaks of comfort, peace. It gives encouragement and assurance. He is standing- - -once dead and slain and now alive.
 2. "144,000 having His name" -----the church
 3. (14:3) "they sing . . . a new song" ----- (Isa. 42:9, 10----- songs of wonderful deliverance from Egypt) ----- song of deliverance from the beasts.
 4. "learn the song" . . . Only those who are saved in Christ can sing it.
 5. (14:4) "not defiled with women" -----examples of purity.
 6. "follow the Lamb"- - -no matter where He leads, they follow.
- B. **(14:6-7)** The first angel: good tidings: This angel announces the judgment of God against His enemies. This will bring glory to God throughout the earth.

²⁸ Shelly, pp. 17-18 (See footnote 18 to see the sections to which this footnote applies).

1. (14:6) "saw another angel . . . good tidings"- -The beast is not unbeatable. Only God is worthy of our worship.
 2. (14:7) "the hour of his judgment is come" -----Domitian is murdered and the whole empire begins to sink into the tomb. It tried raising itself time and time again until Constantine.
- C. **(14:8)** The second angel; fall of Babylon: This angel specifies one aspect of the judgment of God upon His enemies — the fall of Babylon (i.e., Rome).
1. (14:8) "a second angel . . . Fallen is Babylon" ----- Certainty of the fall of Rome.
 2. "her fornication" ----- Rome is viewed as a Harlot. She seduced others nations by her beauty (civil power).
- D. **(14:9-11)** The third angel; fate of those who worship the beast: With the fall of Rome, it is inevitable that all those who worship its emperor will suffer. They will taste the "unmixed" (not watered down or diluted) wrath of God.
1. (14:19) "any man worshippeth the beast and his image . . . shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God"- -Reward of idolatry and unfaithfulness.
 2. (14:10) "tormented with fire and brimstone"- -Used in Isa. 66:24; Matt. 10:28ff. Not intended to be taken literally but it illustrates the utter doom of God's enemies. Hell is spoken of in different terms . . . fire and brimstone, outer darkness, endless pit, lake of fire, utter desolation, worms that never die, etc. There is no rest for wicked. However, the question is, is this hell eternal punishment or simply a way of emphasizing the terrible and of the beast and those who worshipped him? Notice the next statement.
 3. "in the presence of the holy angels"- -Is eternal hell in heaven in the presence of God and His angels? No.
 4. "in the presence of the Lamb" ----- The same question can be asked here as in #3. Paul says this of the eternal destruction ----- "who shall suffer punishment even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His might." - -2 Thess. 1:9.
 5. (14:11) "they have no rest day and night" -----There is no real happiness and peace in serving Satan and the beast.
- E. **14:12-13)** The state of the righteous dead: On the other hand, those who remain faithful to Christ — even if it be at the cost of their lives — are pronounced "blessed." Their troubles are now gone and they can rest.
1. (14:12) "here is the patience of the saints . . . keep the commandments . . . and the faith"- -Remain faithful to Him and He will remain faithful to thee.
 2. (14:13) "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord" -----One could only know this by Revelation. There are only two places to die; in Christ or out of Christ. See Gal. 3:26, 27.
 3. "rest from their labors"- -No toil in their service, no strife, no persecution.
- F. **(14:14-16)** The fourth angel; harvest of earth: This scene depicts not the final judgment of the world but the judgment that will occur when the announcements of the first three angels are fulfilled. The evil and righteous will be distinguished and rewarded accordingly.

1. (14:14) "white cloud . . . one sitting like unto a son of man" ----- Picture of deity----- purity, majesty, victory. Same image used in Psalm 18:9ff; Isa. 19:1; Psalm 104:3; Jesus the King and Conqueror. Used in regards to destruction of Jerusalem-----Matt. 24:29-34.
2. "golden crown . . . sharp sickle"- -the King will harvest. The bad will be punished. The good will rest.

G. (14:17-20) The last angels; Fire and vintage: Here is the tragic fate of the wicked. Rome and all its allies would be trampled in the great winepress of the wrath of God. The judgment would be complete.

1. (14:17) "another angel . . . having a sharp sickle" -----Special harvest assignment.
 2. (14:18) "another angel . . . power over fire . . . gathers clusters of the vine . . . fully ripe" ----This is the winepress of the wrath of God.
 3. (14:19) "vintage of the earth . . . cast it into the winepress . . . the wrath of God" -----Redness of grape- -blood, God's judgment on Rome and beast worshippers.
 4. (14:20) "winepress was trodden outside the city"- -Usually where the winepress was kept. (See also Isa. 63- -God, His winepress outside the city, and treading of His people's enemy, Edom).
 5. "blood . . . unto the bridles of the horses . . . 200 miles long"- -Incredible carnage, a river of blood. Premillennialists try to make this literal, but there is not enough blood in the entire world to accomplish this. It is a figure which represents much death and suffering, (figure taken from Enoch Chapters 1, 3).
- SUMMARY:** This is a picture of triumphant saints who are pure, loyal, and obedient. The enemy will pay for its wickedness. The grapes are as sure as trampled already.

NOTE: Before seals were opened in Chapter 6 there were assurance pictures of the saints' prayers being answered. And now before the bowls of wrath are poured out an assurance picture is given.

VIII. THE SEVEN BOWLS OF WRATH (15:1-16:21).²⁹

A. (15:1-4) An introductory vision: Seven angels are seen holding the last plagues. The martyrs of the Roman persecution praise God for His righteousness which is about to be revealed in the pouring out of His holy wrath.

1. (15:1) "another sign in heaven. . .seven angels have seven plagues. . .the last. . .in them it finished the wrath of God."- -The saints who then read this book and saints who are under persecution today who read this book would have at this point a "well-here-it-comes-at-last" look. Like Moses said, 'One more plague and you'll be let go'. Does God deal with nations like this today? YES See Rom. 13.
2. (15:2) "sea of glass"- -holiness of God; "fire"- -purification.
3. "them that come off victorious from . . . beast . . . image . . . and number. . ." - -The faithful one is a victor.
4. (15:3) "sing the song of Moses . . . and the song of the Lamb"- -Joyous singing after the enemy is defeated.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 18 (See footnote 18 to see the section to which this footnote applies).

- B. **(15:5-8)** The seven angels commissioned: With the doom of the wicked sealed; the bowls containing God's wrath was delivered to the seven angels.
1. (15:6) "seven angels. . .seven plagues. . .seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God"- -God's cabinet members come from the inner sanctuary to do God's bidding against the enemy
 2. (15:8) "the temple was filled with smoke"----- This shows the solemnity of the occasion, God's presence.

SUMMARY: THEY ARE GETTING READY FOR THE FINAL OUTPOURING OF GOD'S WRATH.

- C. **(16:1-2)** The first bowl; earth: Men are pictured as receiving "that recompense of their error which was due." The successive bowls show the sure and speedy approach of total judgment for sins. The first bowl brought terrible sores to the bodies of those marked with the name of the beast.

1ST BOWL

1. (16:2) "the first went, and poured out his bowl . . . grievous sores . . . men . . . that worshipped the beast"- - Similar to 6th plague on Egypt.
 2. "mark of the beast"- - those who gave homage to Caesar.
- D. **(16:3)** The second bowl; sea: The second bowl caused the waters of the sea to become blood and thus brought about the destruction of living things within it.

2ND BOWL

1. (16:3) This is a similar message found in Zephaniah 1:2-4. This is not literal nor is it in Rev. See also (Jeremiah 5:23ff) regarding the judgment brought on Judah by Nebuchadnezzar.
 2. This picture helps us to see the horror more vividly by use of apocalyptic language. Read also of the Fall of Babylon in Isa. 13:10-13, 17-22.
- E. **(16:4-7)** The third bowl; fresh waters: As surely as Rome had once caused the blood of Christians to flow throughout the empire, all they could find to drink themselves was blood after the third bowl had been emptied.

3RD BOWL

1. (16:4) Water supply is effected- -turned to blood.
2. (16:7) Similar to Moses' plagues on waters of Egypt.
3. "heard the altar saying"- -Where the slain were previously.
4. "true and righteous are thy judgments"- -God's judgments against Rome.

NOTE: Rome wanted and blood they got. The seashore waved it, the rivers flowed, and the springs gurgled it. For those Roman soldiers who raped and plundered; for those howling mobs who watched our brethren and sisters writhing in torture; for that Nero, for Domitian, Diocletian, Decius, and Galerius, and the rest of their tribe- -their day came in history. There is yet a day to come when all the victims will

watch while the cut-throats and villains are placed on trial-----THAT DAY IS YET TO COME!

- F. **(16:8-9)** The fourth bowl; sun: The fourth bowl was emptied on the sun which then scorched men with great heat. Even amidst great calamity, these hardened men continued to blaspheme God.

4TH BOWL

1. (16:8) "the sun . . . to scorch men with fire" ----- Christians had been burned; now it's their time. The Christians would not suffer from the scorching heat (7:15-17)
 2. (16:9) "they repented not" ----- As in the days of Moses in Egypt their hearts were hardened.
- G. **(16:10-11)** The fifth bowl; throne of the beast: Whereas the first four bowls were emptied upon nature, the fifth one was poured directly upon the throne of the beast (i.e., the seat of the evil Roman government). Darkness followed and the agony of mankind increased.

5TH BOWL

1. (16:10) "upon the throne of the beast . . . kingdom was darkened"—similar to plague #9 on Egypt. The Christians won't be affected, the upper echelon of Rome will be. The leaders become confused in their moral darkness.
 2. (16:11) "they gnawed their tongues for pain" ----- wild with pain.
 3. "they repented not" ----- stubbornness of heart.
- H. **(16:12-16)** The sixth bowl; Euphrates River: The sixth bowl had the effect of drying up the Euphrates River and thus permitting the Roman Empire to be invaded from the east. The dragon, beast and false prophet see their desperate situation and call, by means of their false teachings and empty promises; (i.e., the "unclean spirits"), for "the kings of the whole world" (i.e., all their followers) to gather with them for a great battle. The battle was to be fought on the battlefield of Armageddon (Har-Magedon, A.S.V). This battle was not to be a carnal combat on a literal battlefield but represented the final great struggle between Rome and the church. As Rome was invaded from the east, she would strike her final blow in an effort to destroy the people of God. She would not only fail in her effort to crush the church but would herself be dismembered by the armies coming from the east!

6TH BOWL

1. (16:12) "river Euphrates. . ." - - As before Euphrates stood for military might and power where battles were fought and boundaries established. This is the area of Assyria and Babylon- - the enemies of God's people.
2. "dried up"- - the defeat of armies (See Isa. 8:7, 8: 17:12ff; 11:15, 16).
3. "that the way might be made ready for the kings . . . from the east"- - These kings are on their way to the battle Armageddon to face the foes on the beast's side. The battle is briefly described in Rev. 19:11-21. On one side you have the dragon, the sea beast, and earth-beast with their supporters. On the other side is Jesus and His loyal allies, the redeemed.
4. (16:13) "out of the mouth of the dragon . . . beast . . . false prophet, three unclean

spirits" ----Lying spirits that deceive the people into warring against the saints (See 1 Kings 22:19-23).

5. (16:15) "I come as a thief----- The coming of Rev. 1:7 -----Judgment of God upon the Lord's enemies.
6. (16:16) "Har-Magedon" ----- Armageddon, Hill of Megiddo, not the valley. This is where Israel defeated Jabin into oblivion. Where Necho the king of Egypt on an errand for God slew Josiah (2 Chron. 35:20-27). Napoleon remarked of the place "All the armies of the world could make battle here." This was true in John's time and Napoleon's time. But it's not true in our time. Remember this is apocalyptic language depicting a battle between Satan's army and God's army in a place where many battles between good and evil had been fought for 1,000's of years before.

- I. **(16:17-21)** The seventh bowl; air: This final bowl of wrath was emptied into the air. It signified the final and decisive blow against all evil — "It is done." Babylon (i.e., Rome) was dashed to pieces! The tormentor and murderer of the saints has fallen! This was the message of Christ to the churches amidst their persecutions! Righteousness will triumph and all that has opposed its progress will be devastated!

7TH BOWL

1. "poured out upon the air"-----place of the Devil's power; Eph. 2:1ff. All of evil is being punished.
2. "voice . . . it is done . . . lightning's . . . earthquake"----- God's final judgment on Rome.
3. "great city was divided into three parts"- - utter destruction of Rome as command center of the world.
4. "the cities of the nations fell"- - allies of Rome
5. "Babylon the great . . . fierceness of his wrath"- - Rome will no longer be great.
6. "every island fled away . . . mountains were not found"- - Destruction everywhere (Micah 1:2-4; Nahum 1:5; Psalm 97:4, 5; 18:7-15).
7. "great hail . . . weight of a talent"- - 100 lbs. GET THE PICTURE! No water in the oceans, no water in the rivers or fountains and when you do receive it, it comes down in 100lb. balls. Talk about discouragement. But do they yell uncle? No. They blaspheme. This is a reminder of the plagues of Egypt again.

SUMMARY: This is a preview of Rome's fall. Chapters 17 & 18 describe it. The final defeat is in Chapter 20.

DETAILS OF ROME'S FALL:

IX. THE FALL OF BABYLON THE GREAT (17:1-19:21). So momentous was the event brought about by the pouring out of the fifth, sixth and seventh bowls (i.e. the fall of Babylon) that three chapters are used to give the details of Rome's overthrow. It is very much as if a camera has swept the great panorama of the general struggle between Rome and the church so as to allow one to see what is happening and now begins to zoom in its lens on the single event of the overthrow of the capital city.³⁰ (SEE CHART, p. 78)

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 19-20 (See footnote 18 to see the sections to which this footnote applies).

- A. **(17:1-6)** Vision of the "Mother of Harlots:" Rome, the capital city of the empire, is here pictured as the mistress of the world. (Cf. 17:18). She is a harlot in that she has not only been wicked and immoral herself but has also enticed many other peoples and nations to follow her lead. She "sitteth upon many waters" (i.e., has extensive influence) and rides a scarlet-colored beast which will shortly be identified. She is rich, proud and haughty

1. (17:1)---- "show ye the judgment of the great harlot"-----There is much conjecture about who the harlot is. Several points of view exist; the Catholic Church, worldliness as a whole, Jerusalem, and Rome. If what has been said thus far is true then the Harlot is Rome. Here is a list of several reasons.
 - a. She sits on seven hills; 17:18
 - b. She rules the earth in John's day; 17:18
 - c. She is a terrible persecutor of the saints; 17:6; 18:20, 24.
 - d. She is the leading commercial power on earth; 18:3, 11ff., 15-19
 - e. She is supported by the military might of Rome; 17:3, 7
 - f. She is destroyed by her own military power, etc.;

NOTE: Rome was built on seven hills and is referred to as such by writers of the ancient past----- Ovid, Virgil, Horace, etc. Rome ruled in John's day, persecuted the saints, led in commercial power and was finally destroyed by her own power. Her alliances became her doom.

2. "sitteth on waters" ----- the nations over which she rules, v. 15.
3. (17:2)---- "with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication"----- Other nations came running to Rome and participated in her evils. See Nahum 3:4. This made them rich, Rev. 18:3, 11ff, 15, 17, and 18.
 4. (17:3)-----"wilderness.. woman sitting on a scarlet — colored beast . . . seven heads, ten horns"- - This woman in the wilderness is a harlot being supported by a Satanic (scarlet-colored) Civil-Military (heads and horns) Rome.
5. (17:4)- - -"arrayed in purple and scarlet"- - -a well-dressed tramp.
6. (17:4)- - -"having . . . a golden cup full of abominations"- - -She offered success to other nations. Same description given to Babylon in Jer. 51:7.
7. (17:5)---"a name written . . . MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH"- - -She taught the little harlots how to be a success. She paraded her shame.
8. (17:6)- - -"the woman drunken"- - -Disgusting sight.

- B. **(17:7-14)** Mystery of the beast explained: The beast represents the power of evil which has been incarnated in successive emperors of the Roman Empire. These have lavished attention, wealth and power upon the harlot.

1. (17:7)- - -"angel said. . .I will tell thee the mystery of the woman. . .the beast"
2. (17:8)- - -"the beast. . .was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss"- - - Nero persecuted the saints, he died, and his attitude was resurrected in Domitian
3. (17:9)- - -"seven heads are seven mountains . . . and seven kings"- - -Rome was built on seven hills. Kings are the Caesars of Rome.
4. (17:10) --- "five are fallen, the one is, not yet come . . . he must continue a little while"- - -Augustus (fallen), Tiberius (fallen), Caligula (fallen), Claudius (fallen), Nero

(fallen), Galbo, Otho, Vitellius are plucked up in Daniels dream), Vespasian (is), Titus (not yet come, must continue a little while).

5. (17:11) --- "was, and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is of the seven; and he goeth into perdition"- -Domitian existed in Nero, died, came alive again but will not reign forever.
6. (17:12)- - "ten horns . . . are ten kings . . . receive no kingdom . . . with the beast for one hour" -----Provinces of Rome, client kings system. Herod was such a king. Rome fell from within. Without their cooperation Rome was weakened (Read about iron and clay of the image in Daniel 2 which represents Roman Empire).

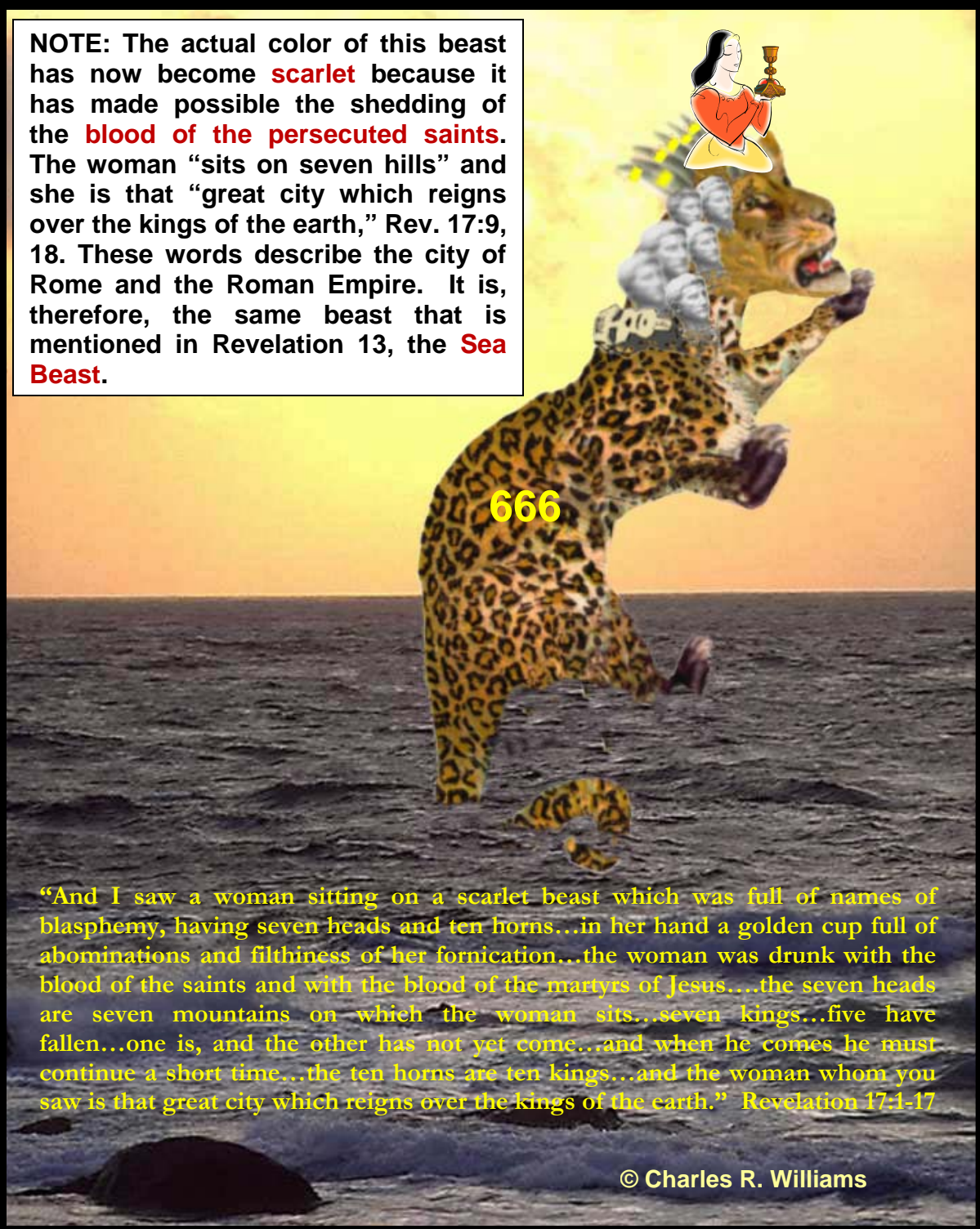
C. **(17:14-18)** Mystery of the harlot explained: The once-favored city of Rome was headed for hard times. The ten horns (i.e., the kings of the earth) and the beast (i.e., the evil personified in the emperors of Rome) would turn upon Rome and destroy it! Rome's former allies and friends would destroy her! From history, we know this is precisely what happened.

1. (17:14)- - "these shall war against the Lamb and the Lamb shall overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings"- -Not will be but is Lord.
2. "they also, shall overcome . . . called . . . chosen . . . faithful"- -A beautiful description of those on the Lord's side.
3. (17:15) --- "the waters" -----peoples and nations
4. (17:16) --- "the ten horns . . . shall hate the harlot . . . eat her flesh" ----- They will turn against her. Inward weakness and turmoil consumed her.
5. (17:17) ---- "God put in their hearts" ----- Similar to Pharaoh who hardened his heart and sinned more. God allowed them to reach great heights so their fall would be even worse. ("The bigger they are the harder they fall.")
6. (17:18)--- "the woman . . . is the great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth- -Rome reigned over the kings in John's day.

REVELATION 17

THE BEAST AND THE HARLOT

NOTE: The actual color of this beast has now become **scarlet** because it has made possible the shedding of the **blood of the persecuted saints**. The woman "sits on seven hills" and she is that "great city which reigns over the kings of the earth," Rev. 17:9, 18. These words describe the city of Rome and the Roman Empire. It is, therefore, the same beast that is mentioned in Revelation 13, the **Sea Beast**.



"And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns...in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication...the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus....the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits...seven kings...five have fallen...one is, and the other has not yet come...and when he comes he must continue a short time...the ten horns are ten kings...and the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth." Revelation 17:1-17

- D. **(18:1-24)** The fall of Babylon described: The details of the fall just predicted are now narrated. Rome did not fall until 350 years after John penned Revelation, but so sure was its fall that the language of Chapter 18 is put in the past tense rather than the future tense! Rome would fall and all the earth (i.e., wicked men involved in her sins) would lament the fact. But so final was her fall that it is illustrated at the end of the chapter by the casting of a great stone into the sea.
1. (18:2)- - "angel. . . Babylon is fallen"- -So sure is God's promise the narrative now reads in the present tense- -Rome is as good as fallen. (See Isa. 53 which speaks of Christ as already being crucified).
 2. (18:3)- - "all the nations are fallen"- -Rome brings them down with her. (See description in Isa. 13:17-22 of Babylon's fall). (See description in Isa. 13:17-22 of Babylon's fall).
 3. Men were made rich by her luxury.
 4. (18:4)- - "a voice saying . . . have no fellowship with her sins"- -Those Jews who were taken to Babylon in O.T. settled down and became like the Babylonians and when Babylon fell they suffered with her.
 5. (18:5)---- "God hath remembered her iniquities" -----True also of today.
 6. (18:6, 7)- -She will reap what she has sown.
 7. "she glorified herself . . . I sit as a queen"----- Taken from Isa. 47:8ff; Zeph. 2:15. She had to eventually eat her own words. She thought she was big stuff but where is she now?
 8. "shall the plagues come, death . . . mourning . . . famine. . ." - -Pride and haughtiness go before the fall.
 9. "kings . . . shall weep"- -She loses, they lose. . .
 10. (18:2-19)- -Her days of commercial power are over.
 11. "Rejoice over her . . . ye saints . . . God hath judged your judgment on her" ----- This is encouragement to hang in there.
 12. "Thus with a mighty fall shall Babylon be brought down."
 13. (18:22)- -She will be made silent
 14. (18:23)- -no more light or joy in her.
 15. "in her was found the blood . . . of all slain. . ." ----- 160 million died in Rome's wars. Worst of all she killed the saints.

E. **(19:1-10)** Thanksgiving over the fall of Babylon: Although wicked men on the earth would wail over Rome's destruction, a hymn of praise to God for overthrowing it would be heard in heaven!

1. (19:1)- - "multitude in heaven . . . hallelujah"- -All of heaven rejoices over the harlot's fall. Hallelujah "Praise to Jah or Yah"
2. His judgments are true and righteous
3. Nero's fire could be put out but no man could put out this fire. Compare these verses with Isa. 34:8ff, God's judgment on Edom.
4. (19:5)- - "fear him small and great"--Second Hallelujah
5. (19:6)---- "the Almighty reigneth"---Third Praise
6. (19:7)- - "The marriage of the Lamb is come"- -The victory of the Lamb and His church is worth an occasion of rejoicing. The rejoicing is illustrated by a marriage feast. Christ and the church were married before this (Eph. 5:22-33; 2 Cor. 11:3; Rom. 1ff).
7. (19:8)- - "arrayed in fine linen, bright, and pure"- -the righteous deeds.

8. (19:10) --- To be a part of the feast is a blessing.
9. (19:10) --- "I fell down. . .to worship Him" -----Give our praise only to God
10. "I am a fellow-servant"- - -Even angels are with us in service to God.
11. "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy"----- Jesus is the center of all prophesy.

F. **(19:11-16)** Vision of the victorious army: Now the attention turns to Christ as the Victorious Warrior. He comes forth identified as "King of Kings and Lord of Lords." He is followed by heavenly armies and comes to conquer.

1. (19:11)- - -"white horse . . . He that sat thereon called Faithful and True"- - -Jesus makes war in righteousness.
2. (19:12) --- "a name no one knoweth but He Himself - - See notes on 2:17, p. 37, C.6.
3. "arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood"- - -His blood? Their blood?
4. (19:13)- - -"name is called The Word of God"- - -The "Logos" (See John 1:1-8--"In the beginning was the Word. . .").
5. (19:14) --- "armies . . . in heaven followed Him"----- The saints follow Him. The angels follow Him.
6. (19:15) --- "sharp sword . . . mouth"----- His word is powerful (Rom. 1:16).
7. (19:16)- - -"**KING OF KINGS, LORD OF LORDS**"- - -What a title! Only He could make that claim.

G. **(19:17-21)** Doom of the beast and false prophet: So sure is Christ's victory that an angel calls for birds of prey to gather and prepare to eat the flesh of his enemies! The battle is soon finished. The beast and false prophet were cast into hell and the rest were killed with the sword from his mouth

NOTE: This is not the end of the world but the end of the Roman Empire. It is a vivid representation of the final victory of the church over the empire. The beast (i.e., the emperor) and the false prophet (i.e., the priests of the state religion) were destroyed and the Christians are no longer threatened by them!

1. (19:17-18)- - -"angel . . . saying to all the birds . . . eat the flesh"- - -Similar to supper speech in Ez. 39:17-20.
2. (19:19) --- "I saw the beast . . . the kings . . . their armies . . . to make war against him . . . and his army" ----- The three frogs that went on their roundup in Rev. 16:13-16 and which gathered at Har-Magedon; the valley of Jezreel near Megiddo where great battles had been fought between good and evil.
3. (19:20)- - -"the beast was taken . . . the false prophet . . . the two were cast alive into the lake of fire. . ."- - -The utter defeat of the enemy. (See comments on D. 2, page 73 concerning the lake of fire. Isa. 66:24).
4. (19:21) --- "the rest were killed with the sword"-----Again a symbol of the enemy being defeated "rest." . .kings, armies, served the beast
5. **BUT WHERE IS THE DRAGON? HE COMES NEXT.**

X. THE DRAGON'S DOOM AND JUDGMENT AGAINST HIM (20:1-15).³¹

From Chapter 12 forward, three powerful enemies (i.e., the dragon, the beast and the false prophet) have been allied against Christ and His church. The overthrow of the beast and

³¹ Ibid., pp. 20-21 (See footnote 18 to see the sections to which this footnote applies).

the false prophet — an event still future in John's day — has been represented in 19:19-20. But what of the dragon? And what will be the ultimate outcome of all these events?

A. **(20:1-3)** Binding of Satan: Many students of Revelation hold that the binding of Satan took place at the death of Christ; but this explanation hardly fits the context. His binding was to come on the heels of the overthrow of the beast and false prophet and this did not occur until the fall of Rome. Thus it seems more logical to view the binding of Satan not as an event which was accomplished at one particular moment in history but as a continuing action.

1. To understand these closing chapters it is crucial for us to bear in mind again that we are looking at pictures. Jim McGuiggan in his commentary on Revelation makes this important observation.

NOTE: McGuiggan makes the following important points: Now it is crucial for us to bear in mind we are looking at pictures. Up to this point, we've been looking at the picture of a Red Dragon, recognizing it to be a figure and saying: Now, what is the truth conveyed under this figure? We've seen an "earth-beast" and said: That's the figure, now what's the truth conveyed under it? We've seen a "sea-beast" and said: That's the figure, now what's the truth conveyed under it? When we saw the eternally-burning city, we said: That's the picture, now what's the truth being conveyed? When we get to the binding of Satan, we'll say: That's the resurrection of the righteous, we'll say: That's the picture, now what's the truth being taught under that picture? When we see the Devil loosed and getting the huge army, we'll say: That's the picture, but what's the truth taught under? When we get to the resurrection at the end of Chapter 20, we'll say . . . what? What do we usually say? We usually say, "That's no picture, that's the truth literally told." This just won't do. We've had a binding and losing of Satan and called it a figure for some truth. We have had a resurrection of saints and called it a figure for some truth. We've had one 1,000-year period of reigning while the "rest of the dead" stayed dead, and we called it a figure for some truth and then we get to a resurrection involving the wicked and we drop the figurizing and make it literal.³²

Then in Chapter 21, we read of a new heaven and a new earth and we immediately begin to figurize again — we don't want that "new earth" business (that's Premillennial). We get down to where there's no death or tears and we literalize again. It is not surprising that premillennialists' people are upset with us. Let's attempt to be consistent. It looks just as good on us as on them!³³

2. (20:1)---- "angel down out of heaven having the key of the abyss." Satan had the key in Chapter 9 but now he is viewed as a defeated foe.
3. (20:2)---- "dragon . . . bound him for 1,000 years" ----- The number means perfection, a perfect or complete binding. Again we must ask what is the truth being taught here? The devil is perfectly defeated and bound as far as his working through Rome is concerned to defeat the church. See Psalm 105:8; 50:10; Deut. 7:9; 1 Chron. 16:15.
4. (20:3)- - "cast him into the abyss . . . seal it. . ."- -Is the truth being taught here a mere limitation or a complete stoppage? It seems to represent a complete stoppage,

³² McGuiggan, *Looking into the Bible Series: The Book of Revelation*, pages 271-272.

³³ Ibid., p. 272.

a total defeat in regards to his usage of the beasts (ROME) against the kingdom of Christ. Notice the following;

5. "that he should deceive the nations no more, until the 1,000 years should be finished"- -When Rome was defeated and the church came forth victorious the nations could see how false Rome was. Her Caesars and her idols were not gods after all. They were false.
6. "after this he must be loosed for a little time." What truth is being taught here? Satan will take hold of other opportunities to defeat Christ and His kingdom. Rome is gone but others who will allow themselves to be used by Satan will arise. The following verses show, however, that no matter who or what Satan uses God can give them the strength to be victorious.

B. (20:4-6) The Thousand-Year Reign of Christ: Contemporaneous with the fall of Rome and the subsequent binding of Satan, the martyrs of the great Roman persecution are represented as being raised to reign with Christ for a thousand years. They are no longer crying for their cause to be vindicated on earth but are on thrones and reigning with Christ.

1. (20:4)- -"I saw thrones . . . they sat upon them"- -These are the victorious saints who lived faithfully through the crisis and have been given the kingdom (Rev. 2:26ff; 3:21). Read again all of Daniel 7 and compare it with Rev. 17 to the end. Judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. . ." Dan. 7:22-26. See also Rev. 18:20; 2:26ff; 3:21 again. Rev. 11:15 pictures the saints getting their reward because Rome is defeated.
2. "and I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God. . .worshipped not the beast. . .received not the mark"- -John is still describing those faithful Christians who did not give up under the Roman threats and were willing to die. There is no defeat in death for the saint (1 Cor. 15).
3. "they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years"- -Though beheaded they live (Greek- -"they came to life again"). In verse 5 we are told "this is the first resurrection." This not the resurrection of the soul because souls do not die. He sees "them: rising from the dead. But what truth is taught by this vision of a resurrection?

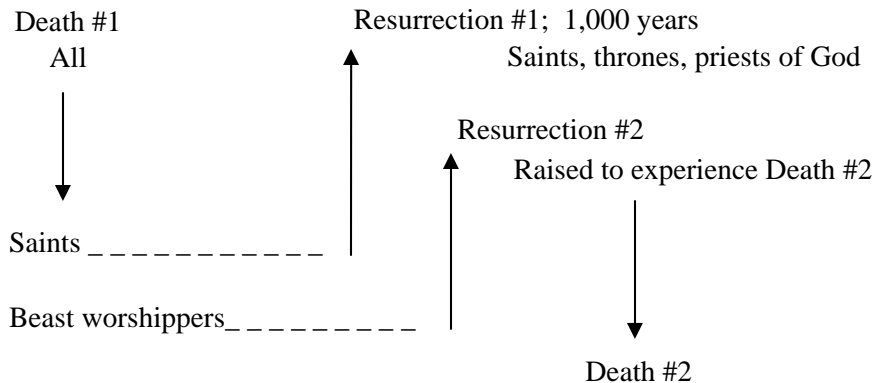
What does it represent? In the Old Testament it meant restoration of God's people. Ezekiel 37 speaks of a national restoration from captivity. A nation comes out of its graves. In Isaiah 26:11-21 we have pictured the resurrection of Israel. These are bodily resurrections. In the Revelation John sees the souls of the martyred enter their bodies come alive again, and sit on thrones along with other "living" saints.

4. (20:5)-----"The rest of the dead lived not until the 1,000 years should be finished." This part of verse five is parenthetical. To get the proper sequence you must skip this part and go to the end of verse 5; (1) He saw the souls of the beheaded, (2) They lived again, (3) This is the first resurrection. BUT who are the rest of the dead? Rev. 19:20, 21 tells us- -those who died serving the beast. There are only two groups who are faithful to Christ- -the dead in Christ and the living in Christ. The only other dead are those who died but out of Christ. But why do they not live again until the 1,000 year reign is completed? Remember our study already? It is perfect victory

in Christ. Only the saints can experience it. Those out of Christ are losers whether living dead or living again.

5. "This is the first resurrection." The resurrection of the martyrs is called the first because he is about to see a "second." He has seen a "first" death and he will see a "second" death. Saints and sinners alike died under the first death (some in service of the beast and some serving Jesus), but the saints are in the "first resurrection" so the second death holds no fear for them. The "first" resurrection is to life and a throne, but the "second" resurrection will be to a "second death."

PROGRESSIVE CHART:



NOTE: This chart is not an indication of heaven, hell, Hades or such like but a line chart indicating the process described in Rev. 20:4-6. Keep in mind these are figures of something.

Additional comments: Some see the "first" resurrection as baptism (Rom. 6:3ff), but John says those who will experience this are already saints. Jesus is simply telling John and other Christians that the dead in Christ will share the victory when Rome is defeated. Jesus is telling them what they could not see for themselves. These words will definitely give courage to those who will find it necessary to give their lives for Christ. They will live again. They will share the victory with Jesus and the living on earth saints.

(20:3) 1,000 year binding of Satan = Satan's absolute defeat in rising Rome against the Lord and saints.

(20:4b) 1,000 year reign with Christ = Lord and saints total victory in the battle against Rome.

(20:4a) Living saints enthroned = victory of the saints living on earth as they reign with Christ.

(20:5b) Martyred saints resurrected — Saints who died also sit on thrones with their brothers to reign with Christ.

(20:5a) 1,000 year death = Those who worshipped the beast.

(20:4a) 1,000 year life — Martyrs with Christ

(20:6) First death (implied by second death) = Physical death which all experience.

(20:5) First resurrection = Experienced by the dead in Christ; those who died for Jesus in the Rome persecution.

Second resurrection = Experienced by those who worshipped the beast.

(20:14) Second death = Experienced by those who worshipped the beast.

6. (20:6)----"Blessed . . . he that has part in the first resurrection." Those who die in the Lord are blessed. They will live again, not die again.
 7. "over these the second death hath no power"----- This is a symbol of utter defeat for the beast worshippers and victory for the saints. It is only by the revelation of Christ that we can know that the Christian who dies is better off than the non-Christian. The church is the eternal city, not Rome. Again let us be reminded we must search for the truth that is taught by these symbols. The losers must endure death for 1,000 years and then be raised only to die again symbolized by lake of fire. Again we must be reminded that this is figurative language which represents certain truths. **Neither resurrection is to be understood literally. Nor are the sequences if we are to remain consistent.**
 8. "they shall be priests . . . and shall reign with Him a thousand years." This is the second time John speaks of the reign as being "with" Christ; therefore, this is not speaking of the total reign of Christ over His kingdom. These verses are not about how long Jesus rules but how the saints rule. For instance, it is said that Ahaz ruled with his father, Jotham, for 12 years. This says nothing about Jotham's reign and the real issue is Ahaz's reign, not Jotham's. In the Old Testament many fathers and sons reigned together. The son was a co-regent king. The saints' rule will be perfect and complete however long it is. They are priests before and after they die.
- C. (20:7-10) Satan loosed and destroyed: The combat between God and Satan has been joined and the result is victory for righteousness! This is the ringing assurance of Revelation to the saints enduring Roman persecution — and to the suffering people of God in any generation. The victory is ours through Christ!
1. (20:7)---- ". . . thousand years finished, Satan shall be loosed. . ." -----The 1,000 years must be permitted to expire to have their full symbolic force. It is for this same reason that the "rest of the dead" do not live again until it is complete. Verse 3 says he shall be loosed for a little time which is in contrast to the 1,000 years. It is a period of loosing. He is permitted to continue to come after the saints on earth but he will still be a loser. The 1,000 year reign of the saints is a comparison with the "little time" of Satan. The "little time" indicates the weakness of Satan. The devil is under control. He is only permitted to do what he is now doing. He will not continue forever.
 2. (20:8)- - -"shall . . . deceive the nations . . . Gog and Magog."- - -He was bound, limited, and defeated in his use of Rome so that the rest of the world could see who he really was, a con-man. Has the world learned? Did Pharaoh or Nebuchadnezzar? Have we learned? God and Magog are used in Ezekiel 39 to represent Israel's enemies. In the Ezekiel battle there are so many corpses it takes them 210 days to bury them. On the basis of burying 2 per 24 hours per Israelite (2 million) the number would be 840 million. There isn't and never has been such an army. The large number in Ezekiel and Revelation ("sand of the sea") is used to stress the inability of the enemy to overcome the people of God no matter their size.
 3. (20:9) "they . . . compassed the camp of the saints about . . . the beloved city. . ." - - -Any and all of the Devil's assaults against the church during and after the Roman defeat will end in failure.
 4. (20:10)----". . . the devil . . . was cast into the lake of fire. . ." ----- This again is the total defeat of Satan symbolized by a lake of fire; for, no one comes out of the lake to do anything. Foy E. Wallace, Jr., Jim McGuiggan, and others believe that these

passages were not written as a dissertation on eternal punishment. I am also convinced that this is "a book full of pictures teaching truths dealing with the distress of the church in the early days of its life." The pictures set forth truths which lie behind the pictures...

5. "where are also the beast and the false prophet" - -The devil will be as utterly defeated as Rome and the false teachers of Rome.
6. "they shall be tormented day and night forever and ever." Again showing utter defeat. Greek- - -"unto the ages of the ages."

D. **(20: 11-15)** The judgment: Thus far we have seen how the saints are victorious over Rome and they are assured that God will be with them always (vs. 4-10). Verses 11-14 tell us the outcome of the losers. This is what will happen to the "rest of the dead" and their resurrection to the second death.

1. (20:11) ----"And I saw a great white throne . . . him that sat upon it. . ."----- Thus far there have been several judgments of God and other judgment scenes (20:4). These were not general judgment scenes. The picture of sitting in judgment is a common one (Psalm 9:4-7). Most conclusive of all is the fact that Daniel describes the same judgment scene and depicts it as a specific judgment on the fourth beast. Every commentary I know of identifies the fourth beast in Daniel as Rome.

"I beheld till thrones were in place, and one that was ancient of days did sit: his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and wheels thereof burning fire. And a fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousands of thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld even till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed, and it was given to be burned with fire. And as for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time." Daniel 7:9-12

NOTICE: There is a judgment, a throne occupant, books opened, fire, etc. in both the Daniel and Revelation judgment scene, and there is no doubt that the Daniel scene is a judgment against Rome and her allies. This is what Revelation has been referring to all along also.

2. (20:11) --- "from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them." The phrase "no place was found for them" is used in Daniel regarding the giant image which represented Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. When the stone or kingdom of God hit the image it broke in pieces all the image and it "became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." (Daniel 2:31-25). In interpreting the image Daniel says the image represents four kingdoms beginning with Babylon then follows Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. Regarding the stone that grew into a mountain and smote the image he says that in the days of the fourth kingdom (Rome) God shall set up a kingdom (the church) which shall not be destroyed and it shall break in pieces all kingdoms. No place was found for them (Dan. 2:35-45).

3. (20:12) ---"I saw the dead. . .standing before the throne. . .books were opened"
 "another book was opened. . .the book of life. . .dead were judged out of. . .books"
 In this (verse 12) is pictured the second resurrection and in (verse 15) is pictured the second death to which those of the second resurrection will go never to be resurrected again. Those who participated in the first resurrection were holy and blessed (vs. 4-6) because they were raised to live and reign, and share the victory with Jesus the Lamb. Those who are pictured here in the second resurrection on the contrary are unholy and will not be blessed. They die too and are raised but only to die a second time (vs. 15). They were judged according to their works and recorded in the books that were opened and whether their names were in the book of life. Are there real books in heaven or is this a picture or figure representing God's judgment on those who were unholy and followed the beast? These are not literal any more than the horse, the altar, the locust, the dragon, etc. God remembers our works and he judges accordingly.
4. (20:13) ---"sea gave up the dead . . . Hades gave up the dead . . . every man judged according to his works." Death and Hades as you recall were personified in Rev. 6:8. Here we see them personified again when they give up, turn loose, or let go of those who died in service to the beast. Again a contrast with those who died for the Lamb of God. Not a one of those who served the beast will escape. They will not escape in death, or the grave, or in Hades where all spirits of dead bodies go.
5. "death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire." Death and Hades are enemies. Christ had already defeated them by His resurrection. The dragon was mortally wounded by His resurrection. Now they are being dealt with in regards to Rome and its persecution of Christians. Notice again that death and Hades are being personified as characters. The martyrs had overcome death and Hades by being in Christ and serving Him during the Roman crisis. By putting death and Hades into the lake of fire speaks of their defeat then and always. Notice very carefully that the lake of fire is a second death only to those who died in service to the beast and experienced a second raising to be judged and then thrown into the lake of fire, the second death. The two beasts, the Devil, death, and Hades however, were cast alive into the lake
6. (20:15) --- ". . . any was not found written . . . was cast into the lake of fire." They were defeated because they weren't in Christ, followers of the Lamb; therefore, their names were not written or recorded in heaven. This justifies the judgment made upon them.

SUMMARY:

- 1,000 Year Binding of Satan = Perfectly and totally defeated in his use of Rome against the Lord and His church.
- Loosed a little time = Any efforts by Satan to defeat the church then and now.
- 1,000 year reign with Christ = Those who died in Christ and for Christ are raised to reign with those still alive. This results from the first resurrection
- Second resurrection = After a 1,000 years of death (cursed instead of blessed) those who serve the beast are raised to die again.
- Second death = Utter, complete defeat, will not rise again.

XI. THE BLESSED STATE OF THE REDEEMED AND FAITHFUL (21:1-22:5).³⁴

³⁴ Shelly, pp. 21-22 (See footnote 18 to see the sections to which this footnote applies).

- A. **(21:1-8)** The church has now defeated her enemy by the leadership of the Lamb of God their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The closing chapters describe the triumphant church of God, the bride of Christ. The bride is in a new situation, a new environment, beautiful, pure, and holy. She is spoken of as new heaven and earth, a precious city beyond description, and a great force of influence on the world around her.

In picture or figure these chapters present truths about the church here and in eternity. However, there are some truths presented that are true only of the church on earth. Again we have to be very careful about being too literal and instead be consistent by reminding ourselves that we are still reading apocalyptic language pictures and therefore we must look for the truths behind them. The one main problem with the eternity view of this section is that it is followed by the words, "These words are . . . true: . . . the things which must shortly come to pass. And behold, I come quickly . . . Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand." (Rev. 22:6, 10).

1. (21:1) ----"I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first . . . are past away. . ." -----
There is no indication that John's vision has moved from something highly symbolic to something being literally described. Actually this symbolic language had already been used in the Old Testament. When God prophesied by Isaiah about His judgment upon Babylon by the Medes He spoke of the earth being moved out of her place and the heavens were being disrupted. This was an apocalyptic description of God's attack on the world of the Babylonians (Isaiah 13:6-22).

Again we have the same language used in God's judgments on the nations who were enemies to Israel, especially Edom when He said, "And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and all their host shall fade away. . ." (Isa. 34:1-10).

This was God's way of describing to the prophet the end of these particular nations, not the end of the literal world and/or universe. When God brings justice upon an ungodly nation He attacks their world, their land, and their skies. Notice the graphic speech used to describe God's judgment on Nineveh, ("Jehovah taketh vengeance on His adversaries . . . the clouds are the dust of His feet. He rebuketh the sea and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers, the mountains quake. . .the hills melt. . .the earth is up heaved. . .yea the whole world, and all that dwell therein." (Nahum 1:1-6).

In His judgment on Judah He gives this apocalyptic description: ("The mountains shall be melted under Him, and the valleys shall be cleft as wax before the fire..." (Micah 1:1-6). Because of Israel's idolatry God says He will "utterly consume all things from off the face of the ground . . . consume the birds of the heavens, and the fishes of the sea . . . I will cut off man. . ." (Zephaniah 1:2-6).

When God judges the ungodly at any time He is said to turn the whole universe upside down by destroying the heavens above, the lands beneath and the mountains and seas in between.

WHAT HAS JOHN SEEN THUS FAR?

He has seen the destruction of the ungodly Roman world. It was to be turned upside down just as Babylon, Edom, Nineveh, etc. were. This LANGUAGE OF JUDGMENT. But what is the LANGUAGE OF BLESSING???? It is just the OPPOSITE!!!! Waters pour forth and deserts bloom. This is a description given the church in Isaiah 35:1-10. Be sure to read it and see for yourself. Also be sure to use a cross reference to see where in the New

Testament these verses are quoted to show that Isaiah's prophecy has already come true. It becomes like another Garden of Eden. It brings forth abundantly- -life is everywhere. It is a new heaven and a new earth; a new environment, a new state of affairs, a new beginning for God's people. Isaiah 35:10 is quoted in Rev. 21:4; "sorrow and sighing shall flee away." This is the church on earth, not in heaven. This is language that symbolizes blessings in the church then and now.

But what about the "new heaven and new earth"? Isaiah 65 is a description of how the Jews hardened their hearts and provoked God to anger. But because of the blessing in it, He promised to not completely destroy them all. Instead He would save a few out of the seed of Jacob and his elect shall inherit it. The church as God's elect shall inherit it. The church is God's elect in Matt. 24:22 and Rom. 11:5-26. The Roman text also speaks of how Israel turned away. God then tells Isaiah that the sheep would multiply. God speaks of the elect as eating but the rest going hungry; of the elect drinking but the rest being thirsty; of the elect rejoicing but the rest being ashamed. God's elect shall sing but not sorrow. They shall be called another name (Christian). God says the former troubles shall be forgotten because He will create a new heaven and a new earth for the former way will be gone. In other words God shall bring about a new situation when Christ comes and builds His church. When Christ built His church on Pentecost the former things did indeed pass away. We now have better promises, a better mediator, a better covenant (Heb. 8:6-7). He also tells Isaiah that He will create Jerusalem "a rejoicing" and her people a "joy." The church is now Mt. Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the general assembly, the church (called out) of the firstborn enrolled in heaven, a kingdom that cannot be shaken (Heb. 12:22-29). Its members will not consist of infants or empty old men. They will be renewed each day, but old sinners will be accursed (2 Cor. 4:16). The elect will enjoy the work of their hands. Figuratively speaking he says that the wolf and lamb shall feed together. This same phrase is found in Isaiah 11:6. In (verses 1-5) he tells of the birth and life of Jesus. These verses are fulfilled in (Acts 13:22-26; Matt. 3:16; 1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 1:17, 18; John 2:25). The 10th verse is quoted in Rom. 15:12 as having already been fulfilled. In Rom. 15:8 Paul says that these promises have already been confirmed.

A new heaven and a new earth is the same as creating Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy. He isn't making a Jerusalem or a people but He is affecting their condition or situation. Peter says we look for a new heaven and earth, a new condition or state of the church. The new heaven and new earth in Revelation is not the church for it says he saw the church (vs. 2) come down out of heaven. Jesus tells John that shortly the old earth and heaven, the old situation will be passing away and a new one will be created. This would be the removal of the Roman world of persecution and the bringing in of a new environment, a state of blessing.

2. (21:1) ". . . the sea is no more." The earth and sea from which came the two beasts are no more. It's a new world, a new situation.
3. (21:2) ". . . the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God," - - - The church is of divine origin. This is the opposite of the origin of the beasts.
4. (21:2) ". . . as a bride adorned for her husband." She is innocent true and loyal. This is the opposite of the harlot which represented Rome (Rev. 17:4-6).
5. (21:3) ". . . the tabernacle of God is with men and He shall dwell with them. . ."The church is the dwelling place of God here on earth; 1 Cor 3:16; Eph. 2:20ff; 1 Pet. 2:5. He approves of the church and lives in her.
6. (21:4) "and He shall wipe every tear." - - -Because past troubles are passed away they

will sorrow no more over them. This phrase is used in similar and different ways in the Old Testament to refer to circumstances which have already passed and have been fulfilled. In Isaiah 14:3 Judah is promised that she shall receive rest from her sorrow and trouble when Babylon the oppressor has ceased and its staff has been broken. In 14:7 he says "the whole earth is at rest and they break forth in singing." The next few verses speak of God bringing Babylon down to Sheol where the worms will cover her. In Isaiah 65:19 he says in the church there will be "no more the voice of weeping and voice of crying." In reference to the Assyrian threat to Judah, God promises in Isaiah 30:19 to take care of them. If they put their trust in Him they will "weep no more." That is to say Assyria will give them no more cause for sorrow and tears. In Isaiah 35:9-10 he says that if the Jew follows Jesus when he comes "sorrow and sighing shall flee away." In God's promise to deal with the nations that gave death to Israel he says in 25:8, "He hath swallowed up death forever; and the Lord Jehovah will wipe away tears from off all faces." In verse 10 one of her enemies Moab is specifically pointed. When God took care of those wicked nations around Israel they had peace, a new situation. Read it for yourself and see if it doesn't apply to a period long ago, even before the church was built. Those verses dealt with the immediate problem of Israel.

Are Revelation 20 and 21 dealing with immediate problem of the church in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd centuries or an event thousands of years after it was written? I believe it is dealing with the church of the first 3.5 centuries. At least we have the contextual uses of these phrases for immediate problems in the Old Testament.

7. (21:4) "and death shall be no more; neither. . .mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more:"- -We have already seen death personified in Revelation; for, it is an enemy of God's people. Rome used it against the church. God dejected her; therefore, Rome would martyr no more. Isaiah pictured blessings in the church with such expressions as 'infants who if they die will be 100 years old, men will live as long as trees and death will be abolished' (Isaiah 65:20ff).

These thoughts are in association with the vision of the resurrection to 1,000 years of life in Rev. 20:4. Assyria, the enemy of God's people in the Old Testament, was personified by death. That nation was called death (Isaiah 28:14-18) and Sheol. Because she had the power of death she could destroy nations. But God brought Assyria down in one night (Isaiah 29, 36, 37). Later under Babylonian captivity the Jews were viewed as in their graves with Babylon having the power of death (Ez. 37:12ff). But God brought Babylon down one night (Daniel 5:25-30). In defeating these nations, God defeated "death." In defeating Rome, death is defeated for the Christians. They will no longer suffer pain or death from Rome, for she is defeated.

8. (21:4) "the first things are passed away . . . Behold, I make all things new." Rome the oppressor is gone. It is a new situation.
9. (21:6) ". . . I will give . . . the water of life freely." The Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end has promises in store for those who overcome the beasts and dragon.
10. (21:8) ". . . for the fearful and unbelieving . . . in the lake that burneth. . ." God also has promises for those who serve the beasts and dragon. A person has the choice of living water or endless fire.

B. (21:9-22:5) The Holy City is described:

1. (21:9) "I will show thee the bride, the Wife of the Lamb." This is the church. IT IS

IMPORTANT TO KEEP THIS IN MIND FOR THE COMPLETION OF THIS STUDY. See Eph. 5:22-23 and all related scriptures which we have studied thus far. The church is the bride, the wife of Christ. John is seeing the church symbolically.

2. (21:10) "carried me away.. .to a mountain . . . holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God." The city's origin is divine. The church's origin is divine.
3. (21:11) "having the glory of God" ----- The church reflects God's righteousness. The Wife of the Lamb gives glory to her husband Jesus Christ.
4. (21:11) "her light was like unto a stone most precious . . . great high wall . . . twelve gates." The number twelve you recall symbolizes God's people. This city IS NOT A LITERAL CITY. We have already been told it is the Lamb's wife (vs. 9). The city therefore, represents God's people.
5. (21:15) "twelve foundations.. .names of the twelve apostles. . ." ----- Another symbol to assure us of its identification, an image of the church of God (Eph. 2:20).
6. (21:15) "a golden rod to measure the city.. .the gates. . .the wall. . .the city lieth foursquare. . .twelve thousand furlongs. . .the wall. . .hundred forty-four cubits. . ." - -Ezekiel had the same kind of experience (Ez. 40-43). The measurement stresses the holiness, glory, and perfection of the city, God's people. Being a perfect cube it is a giant "holy of holies." Notice the numbers again; foundation = 12,000 (12 X 1,000); walls = 12 by 12 cubits. These are the numbers of God's people, His holy city Zion, and His church.
7. (21:18) "... .jasper.. .gold.. .precious stones.. .gates were twelve pearls. . ." ----- This is similar to Isaiah 54:11ff. God's people are precious. They have been purchased with the precious blood of the Lamb (1 Pet. 1:18, 19).
8. (21:22) " . . . I saw no temple therein: . . . God . . . and Lamb are the temple. . ." - - Unlike the tabernacle and temple of old God dwells in His people and they in Him.
9. (21:23) "hath no need of the sun.moon.for the glory of God did lighten it. . ." - - -Isaiah long ago said the same of Jerusalem (60:19ff). While others would stumble in darkness it was to be a new day for Jerusalem. The church is so well lighted people from other nations will come to her. Because of God's glory in her she has spiritual illumination.
10. (21:24) "... .the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof. . ." - - -If this is a description of eternity then where do the "nations" come from? The unsaved have already been cast into the lake. (In the Revelation "nations" is used to mean outsiders, the unsaved, strangers to God's will).
11. (21:24) "the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it." Isaiah spoke of this in relation to Jerusalem's being vindicated (Isa. 60:10ff). Earlier in Revelation the church was under the whip, but here she is seen as having been vindicated. Once the nations sought her destruction, now they seek her light and her gates that they might enter.
12. (21:25) "the gates. . .shall in no wise be shut by day (for there is no night there)." Isaiah uses this same language in 60:19, 20. Here again is the use of light as a symbol. Since the Lord acts as our sun, we have no night in our lives. Remember again that the light is shining only on the city of Jerusalem. The nations and kings (the unsaved) have to walk in her light, but they are not the light. The church has Christ as her light. The body of Christ shines because she is in Him and He is in her. Notice also that **the gates to the city are open**. People can enter or exit. This would be true of the church on earth, but would not be true in heaven. Otherwise you would have people being saved after the judgment.

13. (21:27) 'no unclean thing will enter into it' - -These are similar words to Isaiah 52:1. Only the saved can enter this city. This is true of the church. In heaven there will be no entering or exiting. After the general judgment our place will be eternal.
14. (21:24) ".only they that are written in the Lamb's book of life." Only the names of the saved are written in the book. When is one saved? When he is baptized for the remission of his sins (Acts 2:38). The baptized believers (the saved) are then added to the body of Christ (Acts 2:39-47). A person's name is written in the book of the Lamb when he is baptized into Christ for the remission of sins, cleansed by the blood of Christ. After being saved the Lord writes his name in the book and then adds him to the church, the kingdom, the holy city of God.
15. (22:1) ".. a river of water of life." Jesus spoke of "living water" to the woman of Samaria (John 4). Water was an important symbol of blessing to those who had little of it. All we need for spiritual survival can be found in the church and its head, Christ. The prophets spoke of this; (Ez. 47:1-12; Zechariah 14:1, 8; Joel 3:18). Be sure to read the Ezekiel text. It is a picture of hope and blessing for God's people. God shall provide for His people. To have those blessings we must follow His authority; for, the water comes from the throne of the Lamb and God, a symbol of authority. Here is God's mercy (water) and God's authority (throne) combined.
16. (22:2) ". . . tree of life . . . twelve manner of fruits"- -All of this brings to mind the Garden of Eden. But notice the number 12, a symbol again. God's people shall be provided for. Only God through His church provides blessings and eternal life.
17. (22:2) ". . . the leaves of the trees were for the healing of the nations." Remember, we have already seen these nations mentioned. They were outside the city, lost. Those outside the city (the church) are offered the water and the fruit.
If this is a picture of heaven in eternity, then where do the nations come from? In addition, what kind of healing do they need, spiritual or physical? But will there be any need for spiritual healing in heaven? No, because no one can sin in heaven. The word translated healing occurs 48 times in the New Testament. It does not mean to "maintain good health." It means to heal that which is sick or wounded.
18. (22:3) "And there shall be no curse anymore." This phrase is also seen in Zechariah 8:13; 14:9-11 to refer to Jerusalem when she would no longer be a curse among the nations.
19. (22:3) "The throne of God and of the lamb shall be therein." Christ rules in His church from His throne in heaven.
20. (22:4) ". . . they shall see His face; and His name shall be on their foreheads." The phrase "face to face" is found a number of times in the Old Testament and has the meaning "to come to a better understanding or maturity. It is used by Paul in 1 Cor. 13:8-13 in reference to the completion of God's word which would bring about a better understanding of self and God's will. It also means to have a closer communion with Him; Isa. 33:17-21; Job 42:5; Deut. 34:10; Num. 12:1-8; Psalm 11:7; 17:15; 140:13; Isa 6:5; Matt. 24:30.
21. (22:5) ". . . there shall be no night. . ."- -In apocalyptic language "night" stood for gloom and evil. The Lord shines in His people continually. He is always there.
22. ". . . they shall reign forever and ever." Rev. 5:19 told us that Christians reign now with Christ. They continue to do so in this passage.

XII. CONCLUSION: This Will Shortly Take Place; The Time Is At Hand (22:6-21).³⁵

A. (22:6-9) Validation of the book:

1. (22:6) "these words are faithful and true." Because they are from God.
2. "... the things which must shortly come to pass." To be fair to this book one must take this expression into account.
3. "... behold I come quickly." The word "quickly" comes from the Greek word *taku* and means speedily, without delay. His coming would bring immediate judgment on the beasts, the dragon, and those who worshipped the beast, Rome and her Caesars. (See Acts 22:18 and Phil. 2:19 for use of this same word). John the Baptist referred to Jesus as the "Coming One," Luke 7:19-20; See Mt. 10:5-23 regarding Jesus' coming in His kingdom on the Day of Pentecost.
4. "... worship before the feet of the angel ... do it not ... worship God." Angels are greater than we in many ways but only God is divine and therefore Him only are we to worship. Angels are fellow-servants to God.

B. (22:10-20) A Warning to Heed The Message of Revelation:

1. (22:10) "Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand." The opposite command was given to Daniel in 8:26 for the opposite reason; it was a long ways off. Daniel's prophecy was fulfilled within 500 years. This would make John's prophecy require even less time for its being fulfilled. **(See p. 12 for details)**
2. (22:11) "He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness." See Dan. 12:10; Isaiah 32:5-8. The righteous and unrighteous will be clearly recognizable.
3. (22:12) "I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is." His judgments on God's enemy will begin soon.
4. (22:14) "Blessed ... wash their robes ... have right to tree of life." Those who have been cleansed by Christ's blood are in the church where they have the right to the tree of life. That right, however, can be taken away if they become unfaithful (Rev. 22:19). This is another reason for not believing this is referring to eternity in heaven.
5. (22:14) "may enter in by the gates into the city." The cleansed person enters the church, the bride and wife of Christ.
6. (22:15) "outside are dogs ... fornicators. ..." These are sinners outside the church.
7. (22:16) "I am the root and offspring of David. ..." He is the promised Redeemer. He is the fulfillment of prophesy.

C. (22:17) The Invitation is extended:

1. (22:17) "... the Spirit and the bride say come. ..." ----- The Holy Spirit through the word, and the church through the mouths of its people invite others to come to Jesus, be cleansed, enter the gates, and have access to the tree of life.
2. "... take the water of life freely. ..." - - It is yours for the asking in response to your trust and faith in God and His word.

D. (22:18, 19) The Warning is Given:

1. (22:18) "If any man shall add.. .God shall add unto the plagues." We must teach the truth.
2. (22:19) "... if any man shall take away. ..." We must teach the truth.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 22 (See footnote 18 to see the sections to which this footnote applies).

E. **(22:20, 21)** The Promise and Benediction:

1. (22:20) "Yea: I come quickly." His judgment on Rome is coming soon.
2. (22:20) "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints. Amen." Amen.

SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE OF REVELATION 19, 20, 21, 22

Language of Defeat and Discouragement

1. Cast alive into the lake of fire
2. Killed with the sword
3. Bound for 1,000 years
4. Cast into the abyss
5. Loosed for a little time
6. Live not until after 1,000 years
7. Will die a 2nd death
8. Devoured by fire
9. Tormented day and night
10. If name not in book of life then
cast into fire
11. Will know only torment, darkness
and fire.
12. Will suffer punishment.

Language of Victory and Encouragement

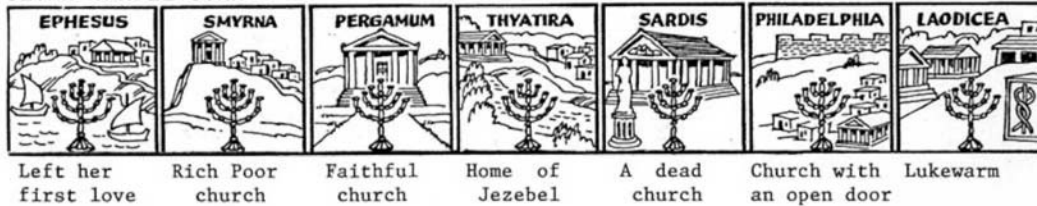
1. They lived
2. Reigned with Christ 1,000 years
3. Second death has no power over them
4. Priests of God and of Christ
5. New heaven and new earth
6. New Jerusalem
7. God shall live with them and in them
8. Every tear wiped away.
9. No more death or pain
10. Precious walls of protection
11. Nations will come to the city (church)
for healing (sins).
12. Have access to water and tree of life

REVELATION IN PICTURES

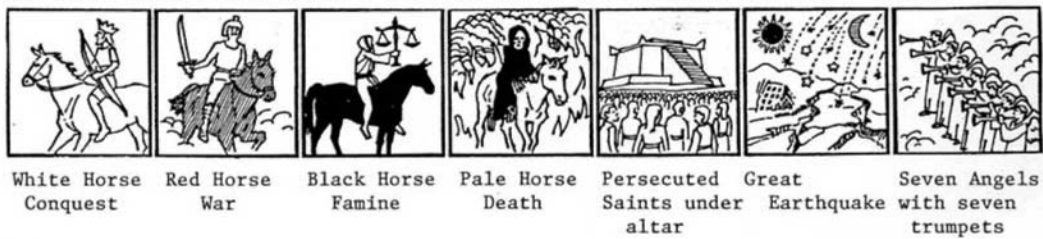
"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show unto his servants, even the things which must shortly come to pass: and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." Revelation 1:1

"What thou seest, write in a book and send it to the seven churches." Revelation 1:11

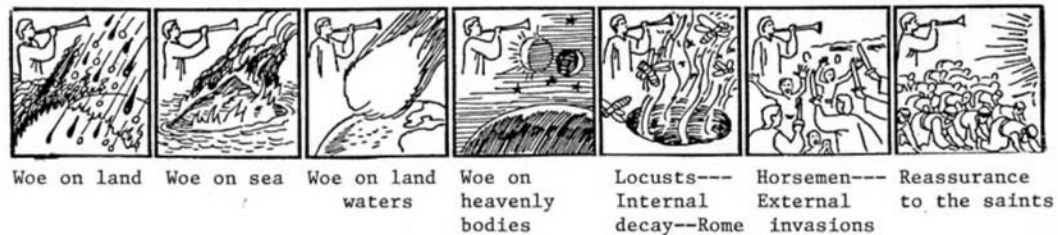
SEVEN CANDLE STANDS---SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA



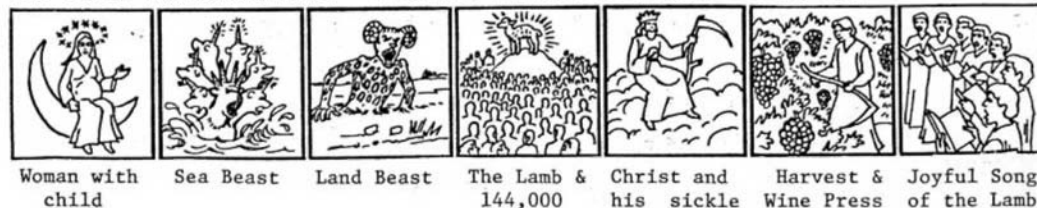
THE BOOK WITH SEVEN SEALS---THE NEAR FUTURE OF THE SAINTS AND ROME: 5:1-8:1



THE SEVEN TRUMPETS---JUDGMENTS ON ROME: 8:3-11:9



THE SEVEN ANNOUNCEMENTS---JUDGMENTS ON ROME AND ALLIES: 11:19-15:4



THE SEVEN BOWLS OF WRATH PLAGUES---MORE SEVERE JUDGMENTS ON ROME: 15:5-16:21



Curse on land Curse on sea Curse on the rivers Curse from the sun Curse on the beast's throne Curse on the Euphrates Curse on air & Rome

THE SEVEN JUDGMENTS---FALL OF ROME: 17:1-18



The Harlot City of Rome brought down Fall of Babylon Rejoicing of the saints Faithful & True---Word of God--- Lord of Lords King of Kings Angel makes a feast of the enemy Battle of Armageddon Between Good and evil Satan cast into abyss

THE SEVEN GREAT PROMISES---VICTORY IN CHRIST: 20:4-22:5



Martyr's reign with Christ Judgment on good and evil The New Heaven & New Earth Assurance for Believers The New Jerusalem The City of God's glory The River and Tree of Life

"And he said unto me, These words are faithful and true: and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass. And behold, I come quickly, Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book. Revelation 22:6,7

"And he saith unto me, Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand." Revelation 22:10

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come...let him take the water of life freely." Revelation 22:17

NOTE: I no longer have the book from which these pictures came. If anyone knows the source, please let me know so that I can give proper credit.

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*Jim McGuiggan published his book on the Revelation twice using two different publishers. The pagination in the books are slightly different.