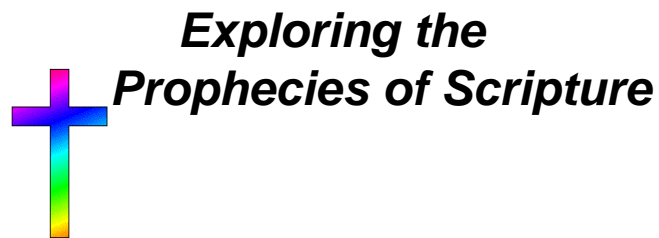


BIBLE PROPHECY

The Bible's Book of Revelation Part 1 Letters to the Seven Churches



"This is the revelation given by God to Jesus Christ so that he in turn could tell his servants about the things which are now very soon to take place. The Lord sent his angel to make these events known to his servant John, and John has written down everything he saw, and swears it is the word of God guaranteed by Jesus Christ. Happy the man who reads this prophecy, and happy those who listen to him, if they hold fast to all that it says -- because the Time is close."

Revelations 1:1-3

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Couching a vast flood of prophecies in a numerology of sevens, the Book of Revelation addresses the scattered Christian Churches which had begun springing up across the world in the first century A.D.

At first glance, only seven specific churches dotting the western landscape of Asia Minor (now Turkey) seem to be addressed. But that observation gives way rapidly to an underlying, and infinitely larger quantity whose hidden breadth is quickly explained to John by Jesus, Himself.

A universal interpretation, the explanation given to John resulted in the book's inclusion in the Bible as a message for all Christians on earth -- a message that would stay current for all time.

The seven churches, Jesus explained, have a secret meaning and that meaning is a set of lampstands which are identical to, and match perfectly seven golden lampstands in heaven which surround the throne of God.

In Christ's right hand He holds seven stars. These are the angels that govern Christianity's seven churches.

Surrounding Him in heaven are seven golden lampstands. The seven lampstands, Jesus revealed, are the churches themselves.

There can be no doubt that the seven churches of Asia secretly stand for all the Christian churches spreading across the world. The numerology incorporates the number seven in its full symbolic sense: perfection and completion in the eyes of the Holy Spirit.

Designed by God, John indicates that the Book of Revelation is a letter that emanates from three sources. From God; from the angels that guard the seven churches; and from Jesus

Christ.

And even though the seven angels participated in the letter's flow into the world, they also stand in the direct path of its injunctions, its blessings and its warnings.

These are sobering dictates, and they are meant to be listened to by every Christian citizen on earth. 'Do not be complacent in your faith', they tell us. 'Take stock of yourself', they say.' See where you stand in God's eyes'. 'Look closely at your life and measure it against Jesus and His Gospel'. Heaven is not a guarantee. It is an offer that requires action. Not just action yesterday, but now -- today, tomorrow and forever.

God's words scream 'change'. Repentance and contrition echo all across revelations pages and righteous behavior booms relentlessly from every line.

Laodicea is lukewarm and God intends to spit it out of His mouth. Sardis, reputed to be alive, is dead; and the little that has not already succumbed is dying fast. Thyatira is gobbling down false prophecy. Pergamum is being seduced by worldly doctrines. And Ephesus has fallen out of love.

"Think where you were before you fell; repent, and do as you used to at first, or else, if you will not repent, I shall come to you and take your lampstand from its place." The warnings involve angels and churches and people alike. No one is immune.

This is one in a series of three examinations we will take of the Book of Revelation, and it covers the first part of the book -- the letters to the Seven Churches.

A LETTER TO SEVEN CHURCHES

"From John, to the seven churches of Asia:"

"grace and peace to you
from him who is, who was, and who is to come,
from the seven spirits in his presence before his throne,
and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the First-born from the dead, the
Ruler of the kings of the earth. "

"He loves us and has washed away our sins with his blood, and made us a line of kings, priests to serve his God and Father; to him, then, be glory and power forever and ever. Amen."

"It is he who is coming on the clouds, and everyone will see him, even those who pierced him, and all the races of the earth will mourn over him".

"This is the truth. Amen. **'I am the Alpha and the Omega'** says the Lord God, 'who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty'."

Standing on the island of Patmos, 'on the day of the Lord', the Spirit of God possessed John and he heard a voice behind him 'shouting like a trumpet.'

"Write down all that you see", said the voice, "in a book -- and send it to the seven churches -- to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea."

John turned around to see who it was that had spoken to him and as he turned he saw standing there **"seven golden lamp-stands"** and, surrounded by them, a figure like a Son of man, dressed in a long robe tied at the waist with a golden girdle.

His head and his hair were white as white wool or as snow, his eyes like a burning flame, his feet like burnished bronze when it has been refined in a furnace, and his voice like the sound of the ocean.

**In his right hand he was holding seven stars,
out of his mouth came a sharp sword, double-edged,
and his face was like the sun shining with all its force.**

When I saw him, I fell in a dead faint at his feet, but he touched me with his right hand and said,

'Do not be afraid; it is I, the First and the Last; I am the Living One, I was dead and now I am to live for ever and ever, and I hold the keys of death and of the underworld.'

Now write down all that you see of present, happenings and things that are still to come.

THE SECRET OF THE SEVEN STARS

"The secret of the seven stars you have seen in my right hand, and of the seven golden lamp-stands is this: **the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lamp-stands are the seven churches themselves.** "

1. EPHESUS

'Write to the angel of the church in Ephesus and say, "Here is the message of the one who holds the seven stars in his right hand and who lives surrounded by the seven golden lamp-stands:

I know all about you: how hard you work and how much you put up with. I know you cannot stand wicked men, and how you tested the impostors who called themselves apostles and proved they were liars. I know, too, that you have patience, and have suffered for my name without growing tired.

Nevertheless, I have this complaint to make; you have less love now than you used to. Think where you were before you fell; repent, and do as you used to at first, or else, if you will not repent, I shall come to you and take your lamp-stand from its place.

It is in your favour, nevertheless, that you loathe as I do what the [Nicolatians](#) are doing.

If anyone has ears to hear, let him listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches: those who prove victorious I will feed from the tree of life set in God's paradise."

2. SMYRNA

'Write to the angel of the church in Smyrna and say, "Here is the message of the First and the Last, who was dead and has come to life again:

I know the trials you have had, and how poor you are -- though you are rich -- and the slanderous accusations that have been made by the people who profess to be Jews but are really members of the synagogue of Satan.

Do not be afraid of the sufferings that are coming to you: I tell you, the devil is going to send some of you to prison to test you, and you must face an ordeal for ten days. Even if you have to die, keep faithful, and I will give you the crown of life for your prize.

If anyone has ears to hear, let him listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches: for those who prove victorious there is nothing to be afraid of in the second death."

3. PERGAMUM

'Write to the angel of the church in Pergamum and say, "Here is the message ; of the one who has the sharp sword, double-edged:

I know where you live, in the place where Satan is enthroned, and that you still hold firmly to my name, and did not disown your faith in me even when my faithful witness, Antipas, was killed in your own town, where Satan lives.'

Nevertheless, I have one or two complaints to make: some of you are followers of [Balaam](#), who taught Balak to set a trap for the Israelites so that they committed adultery by eating [food that has been sacrificed to idols](#);

and among you, too, there are some as bad who accept what the [Nicolatians](#) teach.

You must repent, or I shall soon come to you and attack these people with the sword out of my mouth. If anyone has ears to hear, let him listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches:

to those who prove victorious I will give the 'hidden manna and a white stone -- a stone with a new name written on it, known only to the man who receives it."

4. THYATIRA

'Write to the angel of the church in Thyatira and say, "Here is the message of the Son of God who has eyes like a burning flame and feet like burnished bronze:

I know all about you and how charitable you are; I know your faith and devotion and how much you put up with, and I know how you are still making progress.

Nevertheless, I have a complaint to make: you are encouraging the woman Jezebel who claims to be a prophetess, and by her teaching she is luring my servants away to commit the adultery of eating food which has been sacrificed to idols. I have given her time to reform but she is not willing to change her adulterous life. Now I am consigning her to bed, and all her partners in adultery to troubles that will test them severely, unless they repent of their practices; and I will see that her children die, so that all the churches realize that it is I who search heart and loins and give each one of you what your behavior deserves.

But on the rest of you in Thyatira, all of you who have not accepted this teaching: or learned the secrets of Satan, as they are called, I am not laying any special duty; but hold firmly on to what you already have until I come.

To those who prove victorious, and keep working for me until the end, I will give the authority over the pagans which I myself have been given by my Father, to rule them with an iron sceptre and shatter them like earthenware.

And I will give him the Morning Star. If anyone has ears to hear, let him listen to what the Spirit; is saying to the churches."

5. SARDIS

'Write to the angel of the church in Sardis and say, "Here is the message of the one who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars:

I know all about you: how you are reputed to be alive and yet are dead. Wake up; revive:

what little you have left: it is dying fast. So far I have failed to notice anything in the way you live that my God could possibly call perfect, and yet do you remember how eager you were when you first heard the message? Hold on to that. Repent. If you do not wake up, I shall come to you like a thief, without telling you at what hour to expect me.

There are a few in Sardis, it is true, who have kept their robes from being dirtied, and they are fit to come with me, dressed in white. Those who prove victorious will be dressed, like these, in white robes;

I shall not blot their names out of the book of life, but acknowledge their names in the presence of my Father and his angels. If anyone has ears to hear, let him it listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches."

6. PHILADELPHIA

'Write to the angel of the church in Philadelphia and say, "Here is the message of the holy and faithful one who has the key of David, so that when he opens, nobody can close, and when he closes, nobody can open:

I know all about you; and now I have opened in front of you a door that nobody will be able to close -- and I know that though you are not very strong, you have kept my commandments and not disowned my name.

Now I am going to make the synagogue of Satan -- those who profess to be Jews, but are liars, because they are no such thing -- I will make them come and fall at your feet and admit that you are the people that I love.

Because you have kept my commandment to endure trials, I will keep you safe in the time of trial which is going to come for the whole world, to test the people of the world. Soon I shall be with you: hold firmly to what you already have, and let nobody take your prize away from you.

Those who prove victorious I will make into pillars in the sanctuary of my God, and they will stay there for ever; I will inscribe on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem which comes down from my God in heaven, and my own new name as well. If anyone has ears to hear, let him listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches."

7. LAODICEA

'Write to the angel of the church in Laodicea and say, "Here is the message of the Amen, the faithful, the true witness, the ultimate source of God's creation:

I know all about you: how you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were one or the other, but since you are neither, but only lukewarm, I will spit you out of my mouth. You say to yourself, 'I am rich, I have made a fortune, and have everything I want', never realizing that you are wretchedly and pitifully poor, and blind and naked too.

I warn you, buy from me the gold that has been tested in the fire to make you really rich, and white robes to clothe you and cover your shameful nakedness, and eye ointment to put on your eyes so that you are able to see.

I am the one who reproveth and disciplines all those he loves: so repent in real earnest. Look, I am standing at the door, knocking. If one of you hears me calling and opens the door, I will come in to share his meal, side by side with him.

Those who prove victorious I will allow to share my throne, just as I was victorious myself and took my place with my Father on his throne. If anyone has ears to hear, let him listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches."

Following these vastly important letters is a graphic prelude to the visions of prophecy (covered in Part 2) which give the Book of Revelations its essential character.

A VOICE LIKE A TRUMPET INVITES JOHN INTO HEAVEN

In the next part of John's vision he saw a door to heaven open and heard the same voice speaking to him, the voice like a trumpet. It called him to come up into the celestial palace:

"Come up here: I will show you what is to come in the future".

THE THRONE OF GOD

The Spirit of God immediately possessed John. He was lifted up through the doorway and there he saw a throne standing in heaven. On it, God Himself was seated there. Trying to describe what he saw, John said that the Almighty "looked like a diamond and a ruby".

"There was a rainbow encircling the throne -- a rainbow that looked like an emerald", he said.

THE 24 ELDERS

All around the throne in a circle were 24 thrones, and on them John saw twenty-four elders sitting. They were dressed in white robes with golden crowns on their heads.

Flashes of lightning were coming from God's throne, and the sound of crashing thunder reverberated all around him.

In front of the throne there were seven flaming lamps burning, the seven Spirits of God. Between the throne and John was a sea that seemed to be made of glass, like crystal.

FOUR HOLY ANIMALS

In the center, grouped round the throne itself, were four animals with many eyes, in front and behind. The first animal was like a lion, the second like a bull, the third animal had a human face and the fourth animal was like a flying eagle.

Each of the four animals had six wings and had eyes all the way round as well as inside; and day and night they never stopped singing this song:

**"Holy, Holy, Holy
is the Lord God, the Almighty;
he was, he is and he is to come".**

Every time the animals glorified and honored and gave thanks to the One sitting on the throne, the twenty-four elders prostrated themselves before him to worship the One who lives forever and ever.

They threw down their crowns in front of the throne, saying,

'You are our Lord and our God, you are worthy of glory and honor and power, because you made all the universe and it was only by your will that everything was made and exists'.

THE SCROLL WITH SEVEN SEALS

I saw that in the right hand of the One sitting on the throne there was a scroll that had writing on back and front and was sealed with seven seals. then I saw a powerful angel who called with a loud voice, 'Is there anyone worthy to open the scroll and break the seals of it?' But there was no one, in heaven or on the earth or under the earth, who was able to open the scroll and read it.

THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH

I wept bitterly because there was nobody fit to open the scroll and read it, but one of the elders said to me, 'There is no need to cry: the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed, and he will open the scroll and the seven seals of it'.

THE LAMB THAT SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN SACRIFICED

Then I saw, standing between the throne with its four animals and the circle of the elders, a **Lamb that seemed to have been sacrificed**; it had seven horns and it had seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits God has sent out all over the world.

The Lamb came forward to take the scroll from the right hand of the One sitting on the throne, and when he took it, the four animals prostrated themselves before him and with them the twenty-four elders;

each one of them was holding a harp and had a golden bowl full of incense made of the prayers of the saints. They sang a new hymn:

'You are worthy to take the scroll and break the seals of it, because you were sacrificed, and with your blood you bought men for God of every race, language, people and nation and made them a line of kings and priests, to serve our God and to rule the world'.

In his vision, John heard the sound of an immense number of angels gathered round the throne and the animals and the elders; there were ten thousand times ten thousand of them and thousands upon thousands, shouting,

'The Lamb that was sacrificed is worthy to be given power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory and blessing'.

Then John heard all the living things in creation -- everything that lives in the air, and on the ground, and under the ground, and in the sea, crying,

'To the One who is sitting on the throne and to the Lamb, be all praise, honor, glory and power, forever and ever'.

And the four animals said, 'Amen';
and the elders prostrated themselves to worship."



Also See:

[The Book of Revelation, Part 2, "Trumpets and Visions"](#)

[The Book of Revelation, Part 3, "The Wedding Feast of the Lamb"](#)

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**"Go Out to the Whole World:
Proclaim the Good News to all Creation"**

Mark 16:16



The Teaching of the Nicolaitians

This was a religious doctrine that began to flourish in the first century A.D. which tolerated compromise with pagan cults, allowing participation in their sacred banquets, etc. It is thought by scholars to be the forerunner of the great Gnostic concepts that tried to hide God's word behind a mask of secret knowledge, not accurate, and offered for sale to the unwary in an endless series of lessons.

We can see elements of the Gnostic concept metaphorically repeated in the writings and religion of L. Ron Hubbard's Scientology, among others.

Nicolaitian teaching combines and dilutes the Gospel with a variety of philosophies contrary to Christ's basic message. The intent, of course, is to create the illusion of Christ while scuttling the 'hard parts' of His Gospel.

A current label now in vogue is 'new age' religion. But there is nothing really new here. Simply a wide spectrum of compromises of the Gospel teaching.

Many churches have arisen whose entire function is structured in the sale of tapes and books detailing extraneous religious formulas for life enrichment. The Church of Religious Science, for instance, uses this approach to a large extent.

Paganistic religions are those which promote the secular gods of this world. They rarely present in the form of rock statues like those that dot Easter Island. Instead, they are seen most clearly by the love for worldly possessions and values exhibited by those who avariciously cling to them.

Gold and silver idols are simply the material elements themselves: money and all the luxurious trappings which the gold and silver buy. BMW's & Porche's for instance. Perhaps a Lexus or a swimming pool home with a sweeping city or ocean view. All the trappings and etiquette of a society antagonistic to the Gospel's tenants.

Metaphorically, the philosophy of Babylon is a type of food. A food sacrificed (dedicated) to idols. The idols are the baubles which acknowledge a successful embodiment of Babylon's philosophy.

They are the signet rings of a 'found life'. This is why Jesus said, "Those who find their lives will lose it, but those who lose their lives for the sake of the Gospel will find and inherit eternal life."

A purely pagan approach would be to ignore Christ and His Gospel completely, but in Nicolaitian teaching, a compromise between the two is reached.

RETURN TO 'THE BOOK OF REVELATION':

[1. Ephesus](#)

[3. Pergamum](#)

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Balaam and Balak

Balaam was not Hebrew. He was a soothsayer from the Euphrates who had embraced Yahweh after learning about Him from Hebrew sources. Even so, he was not friendly to Israel.

Against his will, God forced Balaam to praise the Israelites three separate times, even though Balak, king of Moab, had ordered him to renounce this people. (Numbers 22-24).

Later, scripture indicates that Balaam advised the women of Peor to pervert the sons of Israel, causing them to renounce God. (Numbers 31:15-16). Succumbing to this debauchery, the Israelites who settled in Shittim joined the daughters of Moab in sacrifices to their own gods (collectively called Baal), eating and bowing down to them in defiance of scripture's divine orders. (Numbers 25:1-3).

It is this 'secularization' (perversion) of the religion -- honoring and worshipping foreign gods -- that the admonition in the Book of Revelation refers to, and that is why it is used there in conjunction with food sacrificed to idols.

The 'food' eaten during the pagan sacrifices in Moab was physical, but the Book of Revelation centers on spiritual food. It refers to eating philosophic ideologies which run contrary to the teachings of the Gospel; embracing such worldly 'gods' (both social and physical) by choosing to bow down before them instead of and in place of the teachings of Christ.

See also: ['Food Sacrificed to Idols'](#)

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[3. Pergamum](#)

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Food Sacrificed to Idols

Before Christ came and changed the world of religion on earth, pagans employed a variety of rituals, virtually all of them centered on food offered to stone, gold or silver idols in the name of various gods.

Christ taught that the food God wanted was not physical, but philosophical. More than that, Jesus said that God's food was a certain kind of behavior. (John 4:34). To explain exactly what that behavior was, Jesus presented to the world the Gospel. It was a teaching, He said, that came, not from earth, but from heaven, directly from the throne of God. (John 3:31-36).

It was a food, Jesus said, that held the secret of eternal life.

His message was explosive and it changed the world almost instantly.

All across the earth the idols were torn down, the blood sacrifices eliminated; and a new kind of food appeared. Instead of man offering food to God, God offered food to man -- a spiritual food that enriched the soul and, in the case of Jesus, gave eternal life to those who 'ate' it.

In keeping with this extraordinary change from physical food to philosophical food, the dictates of the Bible took on a much deeper meaning.

Metaphorically, the philosophy of Babylon (this world) is a type of food. A food sacrificed (dedicated) to idols. The idols are the baubles which acknowledge a successful embodiment of Babylon's philosophy. They are the signet rings of a 'found life'. This is why Jesus said, "Those who find their lives will lose it, but those who lose their lives for the sake of the Gospel will find and inherit eternal life." (Matt.16:24-25).

For more information see: ['The Teaching of the Nicolaitians'](#)

RETURN TO 'THE BOOK OF REVELATION':

[3. Pergamum](#)

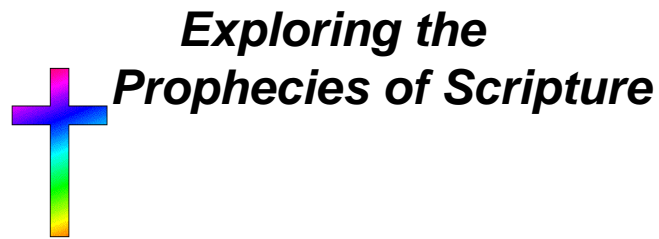
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BIBLE PROPHECY

The Bible's Book of Revelation Part 2 Trumpets and Visions



"This is the revelation given by God to Jesus Christ so that he could tell his servants about the things which are very soon to take place ..."

Revelations 1:1

Subjects covered in this paper are listed below. If you wish to go directly to any specific subject, please click on the following headings.

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The [First Bowl](#); the [Second Bowl](#); the [Third Bowl](#); the [Fourth Bowl](#); the [Fifth Bowl](#); the [Sixth Bowl](#); the [Seventh Bowl](#).

[The Christian New Testament](#)

[The Bible's Book of Revelations](#)

Of all the books in the Christian New Testament, none is more mysterious than John's Book of Revelation.

Steeped in 'sevens' it is filled with images that ignite the imagination: seven angels blowing seven trumpets; seven angels emptying seven bowls of God's anger onto the earth; seven churches and their seven angels; seven hills and seven heads and seven emperors with mayhem in their hearts.

Bible prophecy at its ultimate, the book cascades with symbols of all kinds: numerology, imagery, metaphors and perplexing mystical illustrations graphically describing the planet's future; all of it with deep roots penetrating to the very core of the Old Testament -- tying prophecy to prophecy.

And every word of this prophecy is built on God and on His Son Jesus Christ. Every statement in this book has been designed by the Holy Spirit to shake us from our worldly complacency and direct us back to the Gospel of Christ's salvation.

The imagery in its pages is timeless. God is omnipotent, crystalline, spiritual. And His kingdom shines like precious jewels in an absolute Sonlight of glory, radiating a spectrum of colors that erupt like a fountain of rainbows from a billion diamond prisms.

Arising from an abyss of utter darkness and opposing the shimmering brilliance of God, a great prostitute with seven horns and ten heads is portrayed standing on the sea.

Four angels whose duty it is to devastate this prostitute, are shown to be tied up at the Euphrates river. Their assignment is to bring ultimate ruin to both land and sea of a world mesmerized by the rulers of the darkness -- a pretentious and deceitful trinity of beast, false prophet and dragon.

Serving this unholy alliance are the monsters of the future: Gog and Magog from the far north, and the kings of the East, whose hordes of soldiers are scheduled to combine with one another to form the lethal armies of the final ruin.

Drawing on the visions of Ezekiel, Zechariah, Jeremiah and Daniel, the imagery is a graphic representation of a world growing perpetually more wicked despite its intellect, and finally, at the end, overflowing with great armies mobilizing for a gargantuan war

whose last battle is set to occur at a place the Book of Revelations calls 'Armageddon'.

The Old Testament imagery of Ezekiel calling for the sun in the last days to turn dark and for the moon to become as red as blood is repeated and emphasized. The sound of thunderclaps reverberates through its pages. Massive earthquakes are foreseen. Earthquakes whose power and force have never been known before by man.

If that were not enough, there are descriptions of cosmic hailstones -- hailstones the size of great boulders, weighing more than a talent each, falling indiscriminately out of the sky and crashing across the earth's surface.

Accompanying these events, wormwood is scheduled to appear -- poisoning all the waterways with bitter wormwood. And solar fires are predicted to sweep across the planet.

The flames of the sun, the pages of Revelation's say, will touch the earth during the fateful days described, and the raging fires which erupt from this nuclear brush will blacken the world's skies with smoke so thick and dark that the days will appear like midnight at high noon.

John's book shows not a peaceful coexistence of nations for the world tomorrow, but a future filled with unprecedented violence and devolving into catastrophic and terminal combat and warfare -- a chaos unimaginable in which even the elements of the universe join in the fray.

All of these catastrophe's -- from the wars, the violence, and the earthquakes -- to the earth-girdling fire and the hailstones, John says, have been written in advance on a scroll sealed with seven seals.

After an opening plea for the seven churches to return to the faith of their beginning, the mood of the book becomes somber as it focuses on the war between the people of God and the forces of Satan.

Unveiling the hidden codes behind the seven seals, John describes in divine imagery the warfare that emerges, relentlessly restating and tracing it from its beginning to its end. All of Christian history is related. And except for the sound emitted by the seven thunderclaps, nothing is missing.

As the pages of the Book of Revelations unfold, all seven seals in John's vision are opened by the Lamb of God. And as the words hidden behind each seal burst into light, a catalog of world history is unveiled, beginning with the appearance on earth of Jesus Christ on a white horse -- bringing a double-edged sword, His Gospel of Righteousness, into the wickedness of Babylon.

A peaceful silence, the Bible says, had quietly encompassed the earth, and night had run more than half its six- thousand- year course, when suddenly there appeared from heaven --

coming down from the royal throne -- the Word of God.

Into the heart of this doomed land God's great warrior leapt. Touching the sky, yet walking the earth, he carried God's commands like a sharp sword, and in wielding it he filled the universe with death and the judgment of God.

Slaying the wicked, He wrested from their grasp the prisoners they held, lifting out of Satan's darkness every survivor He found. Wrapping each one in a white robe, He has carefully placed these survivors in a secure place underneath the throne of God -- a process that has continued since He first appeared.

Rising up in the East, where the sun also rises, He has journeyed like the sun, His salvation girdling the globe, traveling from the East to the West in a 2000-year trek around the world.

The first seal in John's litany of prophecy begins with the dawn of the Christian era. The seven seals portray what God considers to be the greatest events within that era leading from Christ's momentous and shattering appearance in Galilee to the day of Armageddon and the dawn of the final judgment.

Still encased in the symbolism of the Holy Spirit, prophecy on top of prophecy is allowed to unfold before the reader's eyes. The words of the Book of Revelations show that the breaking of these seals are fundamentally tied to the Gospel of Christ which is portrayed in the book as four animals which surround the royal throne of heaven.

Seven times God's word is set into motion with the breaking of the seals. Given full power of judgment, each time the Lamb of God breaks a particular seal, one of the four animals (i.e., one of the four Gospels) calls into action the events which lay hidden behind it.

God has given these four Gospels, remember, the power of all judgment on earth (Jn. 12:47-50), so they rule here with an iron fist, pushing into motion through God's sentinels all the effects dictated by the causes they condemn.

Replete with symbolism and imagery, the Book of Revelations is the New Testament counterpart to the Old Testament works of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah and Daniel. The great difference in the Christian volume is the involvement of angels in the revelations. In John's book, angels are everywhere. They are involved in every vision. God's army of the millenium, they have made everything go by the Book.

Beginning with the trumpet blast of the first angel and ending with the trumpet of the seventh angel, the revelations sent by God to Babylon throughout the pages of this book are warnings that demand repentance and conversion into righteous behavior.

As we watch our current world sink deeper and deeper into the kind of profligate behavior the angel's words were meant to countermand, John's revelations flash a warning light

whose pulsing redness grows more intense with each passing day.

So accurate is its portrayal of modern times, Christian's scurry by the millions into its pages every time an event recalls to memory one of its passages -- an occurrence so repetitious it has become a perpetual ritual of our age.

This was why the book was written. Its divine imagery has been designed by God to break the prostitute's hypnotism and to lead those who were held in trance back to the divine Creator. The book stands as God's witness -- the great "I told you so" for the ages.

But with understanding has also come blindness. Because the larger the comprehension of the visions and the greater their fulfillment, the more enormous also has become the spell. Under the mounting influence of dragon, false prophet and beast, the prostitute of Babylon is rising again from her deathbed, and she is bringing with her a power of deceit greater than any that has ever been known before.

This prostitute the Bible calls 'Babylon' is a secular world that lives outside the rule of God. Her prostitution is the hedonistic behavior the Book of Revelations was written to warn about -- the prostitution of a profligate empire renouncing its creator and absorbing itself in its own wickedness.

A deadly combination of Hollywood, Wall Street and sexual perversion, it has clutched the imagination of the world in a mortal grip.

Ready to kill this great prostitute and burn her remains in the fire, the kings of the east gather at the Euphrates waiting for the moment when the last of the four angels tied there is released. These are the four angels which God has implaced and whose task it is to take away the last remnant of peace from the earth.

All the works of God go in pairs by opposites. These angels, the famous 'Four horsemen of the Apocalypse', come to us in the same way. On one hand they are spiritual, and they start with Christ Himself, but they have physical counterparts -- the four invaders of Persia described by Daniel.

The first of these four horsemen was released spiritually in the year one. Called the Prince of Peace, He did not come to bring peace to this wicked world, but a sword; and since His appearance, the world has never known peace. He has set mother against daughter and father against son and a man's enemies have become those within his own household.

From the bitter persecutions of the Caesar's, through the Crusades, through the Schalmaldic League and the wars of Europe to the grotesque hatred of Northern Ireland, the Word of God has left in its path a trail of blood.

Carrying their sickles into the harvest, heaven's apocalyptic horsemen have ridden like the wrath of the Valkeries into the strife that stalked the Middle Ages, and the sword of their

slaughter has graphically defined all the years since, rising to a crescendo in the Twentieth Century.

When Gog and Magog come from the far north, God will give the last of the three riders a final set of directions, and then the worst that these divinely commissioned horsemen have to offer will come to pass -- the full wrath of the apocalypse.

Joining this apocalyptic battalion of dominions and powers unseen by man have ridden across the Euphrates three kings of Persia, penetrating deep into Christianity's strongholds, coming just as this book foretold they would. And, like Plague and Hades, a fourth now stands in the wings.

Trumpet after trumpet sounds, but few hear the notes. The great beast stirs in the Abyss, but few take notice that all these things were predicted and laid out for all to see and take notice of far in advance.

The word 'Armageddon', itself, the doomsday label used so widely today, even by the secular world, comes from revelations in this book. It is a revelation that speaks to us about a fourth kingdom of Persia -- a fourth horseman of the Apocalypse -- riding in like a hot wind from the east and burning up the earth in the flames of its fury.

This final rider of the skies is mysteriously termed in the prophecies 'a servant of God'. (See Rev. 17:17). Yet his sword is anything but godlike. For in a time not far away, Babylon and all its neon glamor will dissolve into cinder and ashes under the footsteps of the marching eastern hordes this last rider will unleash across the world.

All because the people of Babylon were filled with violence and greed and rejected the peaceful righteousness of God's message from heaven -- choosing to turn it into warfare instead.

Armageddon is the Bible's code-word for the final gathering of the nations: the kings of the east and the forces of the far north -- Gog and Magog -- as they torch Babylon and then gather themselves against Jerusalem and the last remnant on earth of the people of God.

Armageddon takes a part of its name from the valley of Megido in the plain of Esdralon, between the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean, a few miles southwest of Nazareth where Jesus grew up as a boy.

Armageddon is the place where the final battle between righteousness and wickedness has been predicted to occur.

Gog and Magog will be there, ready to crush Jerusalem and eradicate the House of Israel from the earth once and for all. But no battle, the Bible says, will be fought that day. The lone warrior at Armageddon will be God. Instead of missiles and bombs there will be earthquakes -- and hailstones from space will rain down from the sky.

The great prostitute (Babylon), her flesh stripped and her body burned in fire will lie in ruins under the hoofbeats of the riders of the apocalypse -- and when it is all done, the kings of the east, the beast, and the armies of Gog and Magog will disappear in the fires and dense smoke which surround the return of Christ.

Gog and Magog will be no more. The prostitute called Babylon will be dead. The four horsemen of destruction will disappear into eternity. The kings of the east and those of the far north will disappear as well along with the apocalypse they nurtured; and Christ will reign supreme, never to be dethroned again.

The beast, the false prophet, the dragon who is Satan -- all these things will vanish in the flash of light that accompanies the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

No one can say when this Second Coming will take place, but the signs of its arrival have been clearly defined in the books of the Bible and carefully chronicled in the Book of Revelations.

With an eye to these signs, we can watch history unfold, and in its unfolding, hear the mysterious sound of the seven trumpet blasts and watch the angels empty their seven bowls filled with the anger of God onto the earth in response to wickedness -- God's answer to the dragon's deadly seed.

Today the entire Abyss is astir. The earth is in turmoil. The dragon has been released and his consummate goal, says the Great Book, is to raise his beast and mobilize the nations of the world for war.

To this end he has commissioned his false prophet and beast to go out and hypnotise the populations and lead them in a great revolt against God. All the signs show that we are in the middle of that revolt. And the Bible says that it is this rebellion which will seal the fate of Babylon once and for all.

This is the first in a series of three examinations we will take of the Book of Revelations, and it covers the second part of the book -- the great visions. Especially those of the 'sevens': Seven seals, seven trumpets and seven bowls of plague.

The Book of Revelations is filled with flashbacks, amplifications and restatements of events. But there is a common theme and a spiritual continuity in its words, showing that its language has been carefully knitted together by God Himself.

THE SEVEN SEALS

The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse

When the first seal is broken, the Book of Revelations shows that Jesus Christ (sent by

the Word) is able to make His appearance among men and to ride His white horse -- a steed called 'Integrity' -- across the earth. With His arm in full swing, He brings a sword, not peace to the planet, and victoriously cuts a path of righteousness wherever He goes. See Rev. 6:1

When the second seal is broken, the Gospel calls out once again, and this time it brings a red horse whose rider wields a huge sword that takes away peace from the earth and sets people killing each other. As this rider guides his red steed across the planet, war and violence rise to a fever pitch all across the globe. See Rev. 6:3

When the third seal is broken, the black horse of commerce appears. Toil and labor and greed consume the nations in the wake of its hoofbeats. Confronting one another, the red horse of war and the black horse of commerce battle for supremacy over the earth, setting the stage for the fourth horseman of the apocalypse to make his appearance. See Rev. 6:5

When the fourth seal is broken, a deathly pale horse whose rider is called plague appears, and Hades follows at his heels. A fourth of the earth, the Bible says, will be destroyed in the famine brought by Plague and Hades. The Black plagues of Europe, the Irish Potatoe famine, Syphillus, Gonorrhah, Tuberculosis, AIDS and Ebola all had their conception in the silent hoofbeats of this fourth spiritual equestrian. And there is much more to come from this last rider of the Apocalypse and from the companion who follows at his heels. See Rev. 6:7

When the Lamb of God broke the fifth seal, John, in his vision, saw underneath the altar the souls of all the people who had been killed on account of the word of God, for witnessing to it. The angel told John that all these terrible things were happening for judgment and that patience was needed because God intended to carry out His entire secret plan to a pre-determined end. See Rev. 6:9

When the sixth seal is broken, there will be a violent earthquake and the sun will go as black as sackcloth; the moon turn red as blood, and the stars of the sky will fall onto the earth like figs dropping from a tree in a high wind. The sky itself will disappear like a scroll being rolled up and all the mountains and islands will be shaken from their places.

It is at this point that all the earthly rulers, the governors and the commanders, the rich people and the men of influence, the whole population, slaves and citizens, will take to the mountains to hide in caves and among the rocks for fear of what is about to happen, and to shield themselves from the boulder-sized hailstones which come raining down out of the sky, bombarding the earth. For the great Day of the anger of God and Lamb will have arrived. See Rev. 6:12

Because all the works of God go in pairs by opposites, we will see all these visions occur in two ways. Spiritually, the sun is Christ. His going black portrays a reigning Gospel trashed and thrown on the fire by a rebellious people who replace it with wormwood -- the

poison of pagan minds. The moon is Christ's reflected light -- the Church. Attacked by the nations, it will be left crippled, bleeding and dying.

The stars that fall from the skies are the angels who have protected the Church and its people throughout the millenium of Christ's victory on earth. They will be torn from their places and fall to the ground under the onslaught of the spiritual battalions of the dragon as he rises to power in the vacuum of faith that is about to descend on the earth.

Accompanying these spiritual events, a literal fulfillment of the books words will blast the cosmos. The thermonuclear fires that power the sun will touch the earth; the seas will roar with rogue waves; comets and meteors will appear; the moon will turn red, and the sky will disappear behind roiling black clouds of soot rising up from Babylon's burning. And all this will be accompanied by earthquakes greater than any ever known on earth before.

Sealing the 144,000

Despite all these disasters, the servants of God will be kept safe from harm -- all who have been marked on their foreheads by baptism into the covenant of Christ.

It was at this point that John noticed four angels. They were standing at the four corners of the earth, and they were holding the four winds of the world back to keep them from blowing over the land or the sea or in the trees. Then another angel appeared. He rose up in the east where the sun rises, and he was carrying the seal of Almighty God who lives forever.

He called in a powerful voice to the four angels whose duty it was to devastate land and sea, 'Wait before you do any damage on land or at sea or to the trees, until we have put the seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God'.

Then John heard how many were sealed: **a hundred and forty-four thousand** out of all the tribes of Israel.

The Salvation of the Pagans

After that John saw a huge number, so large it was impossible to count, of people from every nation, race, tribe and language. They were standing in front of the throne and in front of the Lamb, dressed in white robes and holding palms in their hands. They shouted aloud, 'Victory to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!'.

These two passages of scripture show that God's salvation involves both the tribes of Israel as well as the pagans. While only a specified number of the original twelve tribes of Israel are to be marked for survival, an immense number of pagans, a number impossible to count, will be allowed to join them.

Numbers in the Bible are always symbolic. While they have exact meaning to God, they do not follow the kind of arithmetic we are familiar with here on earth. This is true of virtually every number in scripture. The seven churches which led off John's book, for

instance, or the six days of creation or the seventh day of rest. These all have profound meaning but none follow the kind of mathematics we use.

So even the 144,000 figure described above has a special meaning to God that effectively divorces itself from our literal interpretation.

As all these tribes and people appeared before the eyes of John, he could see God's angels standing in a circle around the throne. They surrounded the elders and the four animals. Prostrating themselves before the throne, they touched the ground with their foreheads, and worshipped God with these words, 'Amen,. Praise and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and strength to our God forever and ever. Amen.'

One of the elders then spoke to John, 'Do you know who all these people are, dressed in white robes, and where they have come from?'

John answered him, 'you can tell me, my lord'. Then the elder continued, 'These are the people who have been through the great persecution, and because they have washed their robes white again in the blood of the Lamb, they now stand in front of God's throne and serve him day and night in his sanctuary.

The Lord, who sits on the throne, will spread his tent over them. They will never hunger or thirst again, nor will the sun or scorching wind ever bother them, because the Lamb who is at the throne will be their shepherd and he will lead them to springs of living water; and God will wipe away all tears from their eyes.'

The seventh seal cannot be broken until all the lost children of God have been located and baptised into the safety of heaven. As the end approaches and plagues and troubles mount, the people of God -- those who have been sealed in water with the sign of the cross on their foreheads -- will be bypassed by these angels of death. Those with the mark of the beast, however, will be confronted by Hades, and fall under the wrath of the judgment God has sent against them.

The four angels whose duty it is to devastate land and sea and poison the waters with wormwood, have instructions by God to wait until the seal has been placed on the foreheads of God's people and all His servants before they carry out the worst of their damage.

This time of waiting and quiescence, while the people of God are being marked in the waters of Christ's baptism, although filled with troubles, has allowed the Gospel of God to span the globe and seek out for salvation every lost soul in the creation. It has created a millenium for the white horse and its rider to reign supreme.

When the Lamb breaks the seventh seal, there will be silence in heaven for about half an hour. On earth, however, no such silence will occur. The silence in heaven translates on earth to the rise to power of the beast.

Victorious over the forces of God on earth, the beast will go from victory to victory as heaven appears to be silent and not to care about the Church's devastation -- all the terror that is destined to follow the final trumpet. See Rev. 8:1

To show that God is cognizant of the anguish, an angel with a golden censer appeared to John in the course of his vision to say that the prayers of the victims will all be heard -- that they will have been carried up to the presence of God to empower heaven's response.

At the end of the silence, taking fire from God's altar in heaven, this angel will fill the censer and hurl great fire down onto the earth, producing peals of thunder, lightning flashes, and massive earthquakes.

THE SEVEN TRUMPETS

Associated with this wrath, seven angels appeared before John with seven trumpets. One by one, each angel sounded his trumpet. And as each trumpet sounded, it brought the plagues of the anger of God and the Lamb. Spiritually, this wrath of God began long ago and has continued up to the present day. It is still continuing and will rise to a crescendo at the apex of the reign of the beast who is still to come. And when it does, All these events will become physical, proving once again that in God all things go in pairs by opposites.

The first angel blew his trumpet and as soon as the mysterious notes sounded, hail and fire, mixed with blood, were dropped on the earth; a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of all trees, and every blade of grass was burnt. See Rev. 8:7

In reading these visions, remember that two fulfillments are always involved. One is spiritual, the other is literal. As these trumpets sound, spiritual warfare, catastrophe and violence sweep the earth, taking away the peace from a third of its people. At the very end, John's spiritual visions will invert and become physical -- providing a literal reality to his words. This is true of all the visions listed in the Book of Revelation's pages. In most cases, only the spiritual parts of these visions are explored. Their final physical realities are self-explanatory.

The second angel blew his trumpet, and it was as though a great mountain, all on fire, had been dropped into the sea; a third of the sea turned into blood, a third of all the living things in the sea were killed, and a third of the all ships were destroyed. See Rev. 8:8

The sea is the people. It is also the universe -- the lower waters. The mountain of fire is rage and the hatred which drives it.

The third angel blew his trumpet, and a huge star fell from the sky, burning like a ball of fire, and it fell on a third of all rivers and springs. This was the star called Wormwood, and a third of all water on earth turned bitter with wormwood, so that a great many people died from drinking it. See Rev. 8:10

Out of the rage come philosophies of anger which seduce the mind and hypnotise the wicked into committing terrible sins. We have witnessed this in the teachings of Marx, Trotsky and Lenin and the raving philosophies of human extermination that flowed from the writings of Adolph Hitler. More of this antichrist wormwood is now stirring up a great violence in the Middle East.

Jesus told His disciples, "I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning." (Luke 10:18). The draconic source of the world's wormwood is made clear in this passage.

The fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were struck, so that the light went out of a third of them and for a third of the day there was no illumination. The same was true of the night.

The Gospel will be banned. The Bible will be declared outlaw and burned. The churches of Christ will be expelled and the borders of the dragon's lands, a third of the earth, will be sealed to prevent the message of Christ's salvation from coming in.

John heard the sound of an eagle calling aloud as it flew high over his head, "Trouble, trouble, trouble, for all the people on earth at the sound of the other three trumpets which the three angels are going to blow." See Rev. 8:12

When the fifth angel blew his trumpet, the first of the three great troubles heralded by this eagle came to pass.

John, in his vision, saw a star that had fallen from heaven on to the earth, and this fallen star was given the key to the shaft leading down to the Abyss. When he unlocked the shaft of the Abyss, smoke poured up out of the Abyss like the smoke from a massive furnace so that the sun and the sky were darkened by it. Out of the smoke dropped locusts which were given the powers that scorpions have on earth: they were forbidden to harm any fields or crops or trees and told only to attack the wicked -- those who were without God's seal on their foreheads. See Rev. 9:1

Here we see reference to the mark of God -- baptism in Christ. Anyone who has been baptised will be made immune to the troubles that flow from the trumpet of the fifth angel. This is a key argument in favor of infant baptism. The infants in Egypt whose houses had been washed in the blood of the paschal lamb were spared the ravages of the Avenger at the time of the Exodus. For more on this, refer to Chapter 13 of the 'Clock of God'. This vision in John's sequence initiates the 'three great troubles' which terminate the final moments of the millenium and which precede the arrival of the day of Armageddon.

The locusts which descend on the earth from the smoke pouring out of the Abyss had as their emperor, the angel of the Abyss, whose name in Hebrew is 'Abaddon', or 'Apollyon' (the destroyer) in Greek. That was the first of the troubles; there are still two more to come. We will see further on that when the shaft leading to this Abyss is unlocked,

accompanying all this smoke will be the re-emergence of the dragon who Christ had kept locked there throughout the millenium. Freed, he will come up in fury and mobilize all the nations for war.

When the sixth angel blows his trumpet, the second trouble will begin to occur. John heard a voice come out of the four horns of the golden altar in front of God. It spoke to the sixth angel with the trumpet, and said, 'Release the four angels that are chained up at the great river Euphrates'. These four angels had been put there for this specific moment in time, and now they are to be released to destroy a third of the human race. John was told that this army measured twice ten thousand times ten thousand mounted men. This is the fourth Persian empire, the beast with iron teeth that Daniel spoke about, and it will hurl at the West a huge force. See Rev. 9:13

As this massive army began to build, **seven thunderclaps were heard** to speak, but the angel forbid John from revealing their words. These thunderclaps are words of prophesy, but they are reserved for the final age, and so their messages cannot be revealed until their own time has come. The words that these thunderclaps have been instructed to blare out are already beginning to sound and be heard -- but they are muffled by distance, so few are paying attention. See Rev. 10:4

For forty-two months the outer court of God's sanctuary was handed over to the pagans and for those twelve hundred and sixty days, **two witnesses appeared and prophesied**. These are the two olive trees and the two lamps that stand before the Lord of the world. They are the two Testaments of God which have been preached across the earth, warning the people to return to the way of Christ and be saved. See Rev. 11:1

Like Peter and Paul in whose images they come, fire will issue from their mouths, so that they have power to kill. Whoever's sins they forgive will be forgiven, but whoever's sins they retain, will be retained by God forever. When they have completed their witnessing, the beast that comes out of the Abyss in the last days is going to make war on them and overcome them and kill them.

Their corpses will lie in the main street of Jerusalem -- the Great City known by the symbolic names Sodom and Egypt -- the same city in which their Lord was crucified.

Men out of every people, race, language and nation will stare at their corpses for three-and-a-half days, not letting them be buried, and the people of the world will be glad about it.

We can already see a world in revolt against Christianity. Right now this revolution is in its infancy, but this passage in the Book of Revelations shows that the today's revolt will soon grow into a full-blown war.

The war against Christianity will be at its apex when the two prophets are killed in Jerusalem. The people of the world will celebrate this victory over their nemesis by giving

presents to each other, because these two prophets have been a plague to the people of the world. See Rev. 11:7.

After the three-and-a-half days, God will breathe life into them and they will stand up, and everybody who sees it happen will be filled with terror at what this resurrection portends. Then a loud voice from heaven will say to them, 'Come up here', and while their enemies are watching, they will be transported up to heaven in a cloud. See Rev. 11:11

Immediately, Jerusalem will be wrenched by a violent earthquake and a tenth of the city will collapse. Seven thousand persons will die in the earthquake, and the rest, overcome with fear, will praise the God of heaven. That will complete the second of the troubles. The third will follow quickly after it.

When the seventh angel blows his trumpet, voices will be heard shouting in heaven, and praising and worshipping God. The nations were all seething with rage and now the time had come for God's own anger, and that of the Lamb's -- and for the dead to be judged, and for God's servants the prophets, for the saints and for all who worship the Lord, small or great, to be rewarded. With the sounding of the seventh trumpet, the time will have come for God to destroy those who have been destroying the earth.

Then the sanctuary of God in heaven will open, and the ark of the covenant will be seen inside it. Then will come flashes of lightning, peals of thunder and an earthquake, and violent hail. The hail will be the worst plague of all, and when it is over, so intense will it have been, the earth will be left shattered into fragments.

This was the third trouble and, according to the Book of Revelations, it, together with the seven bowls of plague will complete the anger of God. See Rev. 11:14 and Rev. 15:5.

The Seven Bowls of Plague

Associated with the sounding of the heavenly trumpets, seven bowls of plague will be poured out onto the earth. The seven bowls of plague and the seven trumpets each describe similar events, but from amplified perspectives.

John, in his vision, saw the sanctuary, the Tent of the Testimony, open in heaven, and out of it came seven angels with seven plagues. One of the four animals (the voice of one of the Gospels) gave the seven angels seven golden bowls filled with the anger of God. A voice from the sanctuary was then heard shouting to the seven angels, 'Go, and empty the seven bowls of God's anger over the earth'. See Rev. 15:5.

When the first angel emptied his bowl over the earth, there came to John's sight, nauseous and virulent sores on all the people who had been branded with the mark of the beast and on all who had worshipped its statue. See Rev. 16:2.

The baptism of Christ is shown to have a counter mark. Those who refuse baptism in Jesus

accept another mark in its place -- the signature of Babylon.

The second angel emptied his bowl over the sea, and, just as it did with the second trumpet, the sea filled with pollution, turning to blood, like the blood of a dead body, and every living creature in the sea died. See Rev. 16:3.

By restating the troubles that accompany the seven trumpet blasts in terms of the products that pour out of the seven bowls of God's anger, the Book shows that all these plagues come in pairs by opposites. Each plague and each trouble has two parts to it.

The sea is the lower waters -- that part of God's creation that Satan contaminated. It includes the area we call our universe. The water of the sea is our world, the world Jesus came to rescue us out of before the anger of God destroys it. All who refuse Christ's baptism will succumb in unison to the fate of the world -- when every living creature in the sea will die. Death was not God's doing. He made everyone to live forever. It was Satan's envy that brought death into the lower sea, filling it with blood instead of the pure water of God.

The third angel emptied his bowl into the rivers and watersprings and they also turned into blood, just as had the sea. Then I heard the angel of water say, 'You are the holy One who Is and who Was and who forever will be, and this is a just punishment: they have spilled the blood of the saints and the prophets, and blood is what you have given them to drink; it is just what they deserve'. See Rev. 16:4.

The wormwood of the third trumpet is the content of the third bowl of God's anger. Spilling into the philosophic waterway of the world, poisonous beliefs contaminate the minds of the people, turning them from the Gospel of Christ and leading them astray.

The fourth angel emptied his bowl over the sun and it was made to burn the people with its flames; but though people were scorched by the fierce heat of it, they cursed the name of God who had the power to cause such plagues, and they would not repent and praise him. See Rev. 16:8.

This vision amplifies on that of the fourth trumpet. In the vision of the trumpet we can see a world in which the light of Christ has been taken away, and here, two visions are added. One shows the sword of Christ filling the universe with death and judgment, and the other the nuclear end. They have been cataloged together because all three are related.

The fifth angel emptied his bowl over the throne of the beast and its whole empire was plunged into darkness. Men bit their tongues on account of the pain, but instead of repenting for what they had done, they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and sores. See Rev. 16:10.

The fifth bowl of anger and the fourth trumpet seem to be identical. But the Holy Spirit has chosen to relate the fifth bowl with the fifth trumpet instead, showing a close relationship

between both. The darkening of the sun relates to a declining faith on earth as more and more people abandon the Gospel. The fifth trumpet shows that this happens because Satan has been released from his prison in the Abyss and has reappeared on earth to mesmerize its people and lead them astray.

Terrible tribulations accompany this fall from faith, but the people of the world cannot correlate the disasters of the times with the fall from faith, and so they blame God for striking them unjustly.

The sixth angel emptied his bowl over the great river Euphrates; The water of this river dried up so that a way was made for the kings of the East to come in. Then from the jaws of dragon and beast and false prophet John saw three foul spirits come forth; they looked like frogs but were actually demon spirits, able to work miracles, and they went out to all the kings of the world to call them together for the war of the Great Day of God the Almighty. See Rev. 16:12.

See "The Last Days of Babylon" for in-depth review of all of these visions and an analysis of their relationship with the prophecies of the Old Testament. This review, which shows that virtually all of John's visions in the Book of Revelations have Old Testament corollaries, proves the intricate integration of these prophecies by the Holy Spirit.

The visions in this book are real and they have been broadcast in one way or another since the beginning of scripture. God's messages have never changed their focus. Righteousness will be rewarded with eternal life. Wickedness will only bring pain and suffering and death.

ARMAGEDDON

The voice that came out from the sanctuary giving orders to the seven angels, then told John, 'This is how it will be: **I shall come like a thief**. Happy is the man who has stayed awake and not taken off his clothes so that he does not go out naked and expose his shame.'

The clothing this passage speaks about is the white raiment of heaven that cloaks everyone who is baptised in the name of Jesus Christ. Those who turn back to sin after they have been cleansed, discard this wedding garment.

The demon spirits that emerged from the jaws of the dragon, beast and false prophet ordered the kings of the world together at the place called, in Hebrew, **Armageddon**. See Rev. 16:16.

The seventh angel emptied his bowl into the air, and a voice shouted from the sanctuary 'The end has come'. Then there were flashes of lightning and peals of thunder and the most violent earthquake that anyone has ever seen since there have been men on the earth. See Rev. 16:17.

The Great City was split into three parts and the cities of the world collapsed; Babylon the Great was not forgotten: God made her drink the full winecup of his anger. Every island vanished and the mountains disappeared, and hail, with great hailstones weighing a talent each, fell from the sky onto the people. Those still alive cursed God for sending a plague of hail; it was the most terrible plague of all. See Rev. 16:19.

The seventh trumpet and the seventh bowl of God's anger are intimately related to each other. They both describe the terrible tribulations that are to reverberate across the planet at the end. The intensity of this catastrophe was announced many years earlier, appearing in Isaiah's apocalypse (Is. 24), which states that the earth will shatter into fragments under the weight of God's cosmic bombardment.

THE MOTHER OF JESUS AND THE DRAGON

A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman, ornamented with the sun, standing on the moon, and with the twelve stars on her head for a crown. She was pregnant, and in labor, crying out loud, for she was in the pains of childbirth. See Rev. 12:1.

This is a flashback which portrays Mary about to give birth to the Savior of the world. The wording illustrates her immense stature in heaven, indicating a close relationship with Christ's spiritual mother, the Holy Spirit.

Then a second sign appeared in the sky, **a huge red dragon** which had seven heads and ten horns. Each of the ten horns had crowns on them like a coronet. The dragon's tail pulled a third of the stars out of the sky and dropped them onto the earth. Stopping in front of the woman as she was having the child, the dragon positioned himself so that he could eat it as soon as it was born from its mother. See Rev. 12:3.

The dragon, of course is Satan. The stars he pulled from the skies and dropped onto the earth were the third of heaven's angels whom Satan corrupted before the time of Adam and Eve. Both the woman and her child are his mortal enemies.

The woman brought a male child into the world -- the son who was to rule all the nations with an iron sceptre -- and the child was taken straight up to God and to his throne, and the woman escaped, fleeing into the desert where God had made a place of safety ready for her to be looked after in the twelve hundred and sixty days. See Rev. 12:5.

Only two beings from heaven are mentioned in this passage of scripture, showing that the fight between Satan and God is being waged on earth against Christ and His mother. This fact is underscored a few passages further on when the book states that all Christians on earth constitute the rest of her children. There is a mutuality in these passages which unite mother and child.

At this point, war broke out in heaven. Michael with his angels attacked the dragon. The dragon fought back with his angels, but they were defeated and driven out of heaven. The dragon (the primeval serpent known as the devil or Satan, who had deceived the world) was hurled down to the earth and his angels were hurled down with him. See Rev. 12:7

Then John heard a voice shout from heaven, 'Victory and power and empire forever have been won by our God, and all authority for his Christ, now that the persecutor, who accused our brothers both day and night before God, has been brought down.

They have triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the witness of their martyrdom, because even in the face of death they would not cling to life.

Let the heavens rejoice and all who live there; but for you, earth and sea, trouble is coming -- because the devil has gone down to you in a rage, knowing that his days are numbered. '

That rage is transferred into men by a spiritual process. It is present in all who are violent. It can only be removed by the Holy Spirit of God which is gentleness.

As soon as the devil found himself thrown down to the earth, he set off in pursuit of the woman, the mother of the male child.

Having come back to the earth in a rage, Satan renews his war against Mary, but he is thwarted by God who gives her a huge pair of eagle's wings to fly away from the serpent into the desert, to the place where she was to be looked after for a period of time John calls 'a year and twice a year and half a year'. See Rev. 12:13.

Tracking her path, the serpent vomited water from his mouth, like a river, after the woman, to sweep her away in the current, but the earth came to her rescue; it opened its mouth and swallowed the river thrown up by the dragon's jaws.

Here we can see a campaign of hatred, a smear campaign trying to corrupt Mary's image among Christians. But despite its torrent, it fails to achieve its goal, because its most virulent advocates all die and pass away.

Then the dragon was enraged with the woman and went away to make war on the rest of her children, that is, all who obey God's commandments and bear witness for Jesus.

Our relationship with Mary is graphically defined in these passages. The mother of Jesus, John says, is mother of all who believe in her Son. And because of this, she is the primary target of Satan's venom. These words show that the loathing now found and promoted on earth regarding this holy lady (Christ's mother), have their birth in a vomit that flows from the dragon's mouth.

Swallowing the dragon's emesis, those who do not know what kind of a God they are

dealing with regurgitate it like a river toward the woman to sweep her away in the current. But God has not allowed her to be consumed.

THE BEAST EMERGES FROM THE SEA

Standing on the seashore, John saw a beast emerge from the sea. It had seven heads and ten horns, with a coronet on each of its ten horns, and its heads were marked with blasphemous titles. See Rev. 13:1

John's first vision was that of a woman, ornamented with sunshine, standing on the moon. she had a crown of twelve stars -- the twelve tribes of Israel -- and she was pregnant, and about to give birth to God's Son, Jesus.

Opposite her, the beast of the sea appeared. He had seven heads marked with blasphemous titles, and ten horns.

John observed that the beast was like a leopard, with paws like a bear and a mouth like a lion. These are three of the world's most vicious carnivores. And they are the same images (lion, bear and leopard) Daniel used to describe the first three empires of Persia. (Dn.7:1-6).

Again, for a deeper examination of all of these visions, see 'The Last Days of Babylon'; especially chapters 14 through 21.

The dragon handed over to this beast his own power and his throne and his worldwide authority.

THE FATAL WOUND

John could see that one of the beast's heads seemed to have suffered a fatal wound but, deadly as it was, it had somehow healed and, after that, the whole world had marvelled and followed the beast. See Rev. 13:3.

The head receiving this fatal wound was the sixth -- the militant and pagan Roman Empire of the Caesar's. It disintegrated under Christian conversion. With the proclamation of Theodosius, the Christian victory and pagan collapse became official. A few years later, the Barbarians invaded Rome and completed the physical demise of the empire of the Caesars.

For almost 1500 years, Christ ruled this city. But during the last two centuries, the Christian victory over Rome has been reversed. Haltingly at first, this reversal gained great momentum with the rise of Mussolini who effected a permanent separation of Church and state in this so-called 'eternal' city.

In the days to come, John's words foretell the re-birth of a pagan state in the land of the Caesar's-- a complete healing of the mortal wound delivered to this city by the Gospel of Jesus. The sixth head of the beast will come back to life.

All of this will signify the moral collapse of a Christian-powered western civilization. Rome will mirror the western world, and both will resurrect pagan Babylon.

Abandoning the faith of their ancestor's, the world prostrated themselves in front of the dragon because he had given the beast his earthly authority; and they prostrated themselves in front of the beast, saying, 'Who can compare with the beast?' they asked, 'How could anybody defeat him?'

For forty-two months the beast was allowed to utter its boasts and blasphemies and to do whatever it wanted. It railed against God, against his name, his heavenly Tent and all who are sheltered there. See Rev. 13:5.

It was allowed to make war against the saints and conquer them, and was given power over every race people, language and nation. Most of the people of the world, John said, will worship it -- everyone whose name has not been written down since the foundation of the world in the book of life of the sacrificial Lamb. Rev. 13:7.

If anyone has ears to hear, let him listen: Captivity for those who are destined for captivity; the sword for those who are to die by the sword. This is why the saints must have constancy and faith.

While our physical lives have pre-determined fates, our spiritual lives can countermand the impact of worldly events. Understanding this calls for great faith. Especially since we live in a world where blessings seem to flow only to the rich and powerful.

The fact that the beast has been given power to make war on the saints and conquer them must be understood. We are born to destinies that stand apart from our relationship with God's word. Our conversion does not protect us from our birth fates, but it transports us to eternal life beyond these tribulations.

Those who preach a gospel of prosperity do not understand these passages of scripture. That is why the saints must have constancy and faith.

THE FALSE PROPHET

After this, John saw a second beast emerge from the ground. It had two horns like a lamb, but made a noise like a dragon. This second beast was servant to the first beast, and extended its authority everywhere, making the world and all its people worship the first beast, which had absorbed the fatal wound which later healed. See Rev. 13:11

And it worked great miracles, even calling fire from heaven down onto the earth while the world's people watched.

Through the miracles which it was allowed to do on behalf of the first beast, it was able to win over the people of the world and persuade them to put up a statue in honour of the beast that had been wounded by the sword and still lived. It was allowed to breathe life

into this statue, so that the statue of the beast was able to speak, and to have anyone who refused to worship the statue of the beast put to death. Rev. 13:14.

He compelled everyone -- small and great, rich and poor, slave and citizen -- to be branded on the right hand or on the forehead, and made it illegal for anyone to buy or sell anything unless he had been branded with the name of the beast or with the the number of its name.

This, of course, is the antithesis of baptism.

There is need for shrewdness here: if anyone is clever enough he may interpret the number of the beast: it is the number of a man, the number 666. See Rev. 13:16-18.

THE MESSAGE OF JUDGMENT

Then John saw another angel, flying high overhead, sent to announce the Good News of eternity to all who live on the earth -- to every nation, race, language and tribe. He called out, 'Fear God and praise him, because the time has come for him to sit in judgment. Worship the maker of heaven and earth and sea and every waterspring'. See Rev. 14:6.

A second angel followed him, calling, 'Babylon has fallen, Babylon the Great has fallen, Babylon which gave the whole world the wine of God's anger to drink'. See Rev. 14:8.

A third angel followed, shouting aloud, 'All those who worship the beast and his statue, or have had themselves branded on the hand or forehead, will be made to drink the undiluted wine of God's fury from his cup of anger. In fire and brimstone they will be tortured in the presence of the Lamb and his holy angels, and the smoke of their torment will go up forever and ever. There will be no respite, night or day, for those who worshipped the beast or its statue or accepted branding with its name.' This is why there must be constancy in the saints who keep the commandments of God and faith in Jesus. See Rev. 14:9.

Anyone who has faith in Christ must not let go of that faith, no matter how bitter the trials they are made to endure. Christ emphasized this to His Apostles, and it is further emphasized here:

The Destiny of Good Deeds

Then John heard a voice from heaven say, 'Write down these words: Happy are those who die in the Lord! Happy indeed, the Spirit says; now they can rest forever after their work, since their good deeds go with them.' Rev. 14:13.

THE HARVEST OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Next in his vision John saw a white cloud and, sitting on it, one like a son of man with a gold crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. Then another angel came out of the sanctuary, and shouted aloud to the one sitting on the cloud, 'Put your sickle in and reap:

harvest time has come and the harvest of the earth is ripe'. At this point the one sitting on the cloud put his sickle to work on the earth, and the earth's harvest was reaped. Rev. 14:14.

THE GRAPES OF WRATH

Another angel, who also carried a sharp sickle, came out of the temple in heaven, and the angel in charge of the fire left the altar and shouted aloud to the one with the sharp sickle, 'Put your sickle in and cut all the bunches off the vine of the earth; all its grapes are ripe'. So the angel set his sickle to work on the earth and harvested the whole vintage of the earth and put it into a huge winepress, the winepress of God's anger, outside the city, where it was trodden until the blood that came out of the winepress was up to the horses' bridles as far away as sixteen hundred furlongs. See Rev. 14:17

THE PROSTITUTE AND THE SCARLET BEAST

One of the seven angels that had the seven bowls came to speak to John in his vision. 'Come here', he said, 'and I will show you the punishment given to the famous prostitute who rules enthroned beside abundant waters -- the one with whom all the kings of the earth have committed fornication -- the one who has made all the population of the world drunk with the wine of her adultery'. See Rev. 17:1 +.

He took John in spirit to a desert, and there was shown a woman riding a scarlet beast which had seven heads and ten horns which had blasphemous titles written all over them.

The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and glittered with gold and jewels and pearls. She was holding a gold winecup filled with the disgusting filth of her fornication. On her forehead was written a cryptic name: 'Babylon the Great, the mother of all the prostitutes and all the filthy practices on the earth'.

John could see that she was drunk, drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. When he saw her, he was completely mystified. The angel said to him, 'Don't you understand? Now I will tell you [the meaning of this woman](#), and of the beast she is riding, with the seven heads and the ten horns.

'The beast you have seen once was and now is not; he is yet to come up from the Abyss, but only to go to his destruction. And the people of the world, whose names have not been written since the beginning of the world in the book of life, will think it miraculous when they see how the beast once was and now is not and is still to come.

The scarlet beast is the dragon. The Word of God imprisoned him in the Abyss, mortally wounding one of his heads. But John explains in these passages that a time will come when the beast will be let up out of the Abyss and the wound on the sixth head will heal and the people of the world will marvel at it. This is happening now.

Here there is need for cleverness, for a shrewd mind;

the seven heads are the seven hills, and the woman is sitting on them.

The angel explained to John, 'The seven heads are also seven emperors.' Five of them have already gone, one is here now, and one is yet to come; once here, he must stay for a short while. The beast, who once was and now is not, is at the same time the eighth and one of the seven, and he is going to his destruction.

The one 'here now' in this passage was the sixth head of the beast -- the Roman Empire of the Caesar's. It passed away under the iron scepter of Christianity.

'The ten horns are ten kings who have not yet been given their royal power, but will have royal authority only for a single hour and in association with the beast. See Rev. 17:12.

These ten are the nations which will form the republic of the fourth kingdom of Persia.

(For more information on these ten kings, see [footnote](#), or refer to "The Last Days of Babylon", [Chapter 19](#)).

They are all of one mind in putting their strength and their powers at the beast's disposal, and they will all go to war against the Lamb. But the Lamb is the Lord of lords and the King of kings, and he will defeat them and they will be defeated by his followers, the called, the chosen, the faithful.'

The angel continued, 'The waters you saw, beside which the prostitute was sitting, are all the peoples, the populations, the nations and the languages. But a time will come when the ten horns and the beast turn against the prostitute, and strip off her clothes and leave her naked. At that point, they will eat her flesh and burn the remains in the fire. See Rev. 17:16.

In fact, God influenced their minds to do what he intended, to agree together to put their royal powers at the beast's disposal until the time when God's words should be fulfilled. The woman you saw is the great city which has authority over all the rulers on earth.' See Rev. 17:18.

THE FALL OF BABYLON

After this, John saw another angel come down from heaven -- an angel to whom great authority had been given. The entire earth was lit up with his glory.

In a commanding voice he shouted aloud, saying: 'Babylon has fallen, Babylon the Great has fallen, and has become the haunt of devils and a lodging for every foul spirit and dirty loathsome fowl.'

'All the nations have been intoxicated by the wine of her prostitution; every king on earth has committed fornication with Babylon. And every merchant has grown rich through her debauchery.'

Then John heard a new voice speak from heaven; it said, 'Come out my people, get away from her, so that you do not share in her crimes and therefore have the same plagues to bear. Her sins have reached up to heaven, and God has all her crimes in mind: she is to be paid in her own coin. She must be paid double the amount she exacted.'

'She is to have a doubly strong cup of her own mixture. Every one of her shows and orgies is to be matched by a torture or a grief. "I am the queen on my throne", she says to herself, and "I am no widow and shall never be in mourning".'

'For speaking like this, within a single day, the plagues will fall on her: disease and mourning and famine. She will be burnt right up. The Lord God has condemned her, and he has great power.' See Rev. 18:8

'There will be mourning and weeping for her by the kings of the earth who have fornicated with her and lived with her in luxury. They will witness the smoke as she burns, while keeping a safe distance from fear of her agony. '

These visions expand on those of Revelations 17:16. They describe the time when the kings of the East join the forces of the North and turn against world civilization, burning it to the ground.

'Her fate will cause weeping and great distress among all the traders of the earth when there is nobody left to buy their cargoes of goods; their stocks of gold and silver, jewels and pearls, linen and purple and silks and scarlet; all the sandalwood, every piece in ivory or fine woody in bronze or iron or marble; the cinnamon and spices, the myrrh and ointment and incense; wine, oil, flour and corn; their stocks of cattle, sheep, horses and chariots, their slaves, their human cargo.'

'All the fruits you had set your hearts on have failed you; gone for ever, never to return, is your life of magnificence and ease.'

The commercial empire of Babylon will cease to exist. The goods and services that characterized and so graphically defined our civilization will be no more. The glass enshrined cathedrals born of Wall Street will crash in flames into the streets and melt under the heat of the inferno that John's words predict.

Once a queen on her throne, independent of God, bathed in riches and sedated to complacency by her intellect, she thought she would live forever. Never would she be a widow -- never would the prophecies of this book cloak her in the gowns of mourning.

'Now heaven, celebrate her downfall, and all you saints, apostles and prophets: God has given judgement for you against her.'

Then a powerful angel picked up a boulder like a great millstone, and, as he hurled it into

the sea, he said, 'That is how the great city of Babylon is going to be hurled down, never to be seen again.' See Rev. 18:21.

THE FIRST BATTLE OF THE END

John saw heaven open, and a white horse appeared. Its rider was called Faithful and True. He is a judge with integrity, a warrior for justice. His eyes were flames of fire, and his head was crowned with many coronets; the name written on him was known only to himself; his cloak was soaked in blood. He is known by the name, The Word of God. See Rev. 19:11.

Behind him, dressed in linen of dazzling white, rode the armies of heaven on white horses. From his mouth came a sharp sword to strike the pagans with; he is the one who will rule them with an iron sceptre and tread out the wine of Almighty God's fierce anger.

On his cloak and on his thigh there was a name written: The King of kings and the Lord of lords.

John saw an angel standing in the sun. This angel shouted aloud to all the birds that were flying high overhead in the sky, 'Come here. Gather together at the great feast that God is giving. There will be the flesh of kings for you, and the flesh of great generals and heroes, the flesh of horses and their riders and of all kinds of men, citizens and slaves, small and great.'

At this point, John saw the beast, with all the kings of the earth and their armies, gathered together to fight the rider and his army. But the beast was taken prisoner, together with the false prophet who had worked miracles on the beast's behalf and by them had deceived all who had been branded with the mark of the beast and worshipped his statues.

The beast and the false prophet were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulphur. All the rest were killed by the sword which came out of the mouth of the rider, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.

THE REIGN OF A THOUSAND YEARS

Then John saw an angel come down from heaven with the key of the Abyss in his hand and an enormous chain. He overpowered the dragon, that primeval serpent which is the devil and Satan, and chained him up for a thousand years.

He threw him into the Abyss, and shut the entrance and sealed it over him, to make sure he would not deceive the nations again until the thousand years had passed.

At the end of that era he must be released, but only for a short while.

Then John saw some thrones set up, and he witnessed those whom God has given the power to be judges take their seats on these thrones.

He also saw the souls of everyone who had been martyred for God come to life again. These included all who had been beheaded for having witnessed for Jesus and for having preached God's words, and those who refused to worship the beast or his statue and would not have the brandmark on their foreheads or hands. They all came to life, and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

This is the first resurrection; the rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were over. Happy and blessed are those who share in the first resurrection; the second death cannot affect them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and reign with him for a thousand years. See Rev. 20:5.

For a more detailed examination of this first resurrection, please refer to ["The Clock of God", Chapter 20](#).

THE SECOND BATTLE OF THE END

When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison and will come out to deceive all the nations in the four quarters of the earth **Gog and Magog**, and mobilise them for war. See Rev. 20:7.

No one can deny this mobilization today. This century has seen the entire world mobilize for war, not once, but three times. Never before in history has there been so much war on such an immense scale. And John's words show that we have seen only the beginning of what is predicted to come.

Satan's armies will be as many as the sands of the sea; they will come swarming over the entire country and besiege the camp of the saints, which is the city that God loves.

But fire will come down on them from heaven and consume them. Then the devil, who misled them, will be thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet are, and their torture will not stop, day or night, forever and ever. See Rev. 20:10.

THE LAST JUDGMENT

Then John saw a great white throne and the One who was sitting on it appear. In his presence, earth and sky vanished, leaving no trace. See Rev. 20:11.

John noticed the dead, both great and small, standing in front of God's throne, while the book of life was opened, and other books opened which were the record of what they had done in their lives, actions by which the dead were judged.'

The sea gave up all the dead who were in it; Death and Hades were emptied of the dead that were in them; and every one was judged according to the way in which he had lived. See Rev. 20:14.

Then Death and Hades were thrown into **the burning lake**. This burning lake is **the**

second death; and anybody whose name could not be found written in the book of life was thrown into the burning lake.

Also See:

[The Book of Revelation, Part 1, "Letters to the Seven Churches"](#)

[The Book of Revelation, Part 3, "The Wedding Feast of the Lamb"](#)

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**"Happy The Man Who
Puts His Trust In The Lord"**

Psalm 40:4

BIBLE PROPHECY

The Bible's Book of Revelation Part 3

The Wedding Feast of the Lamb

Exploring the Prophecies of Scripture



"Alleluia! The reign of the Lord our God the Almighty has begun; let us be glad and joyful and give praise to God, because this is the time for the marriage of the Lamb. His bride is ready, and she has been able to dress herself in dazzling white linen, because her linen is made of the good deeds of the saints."

Revelation 19:7-8

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[The Warning](#)

The collapse of Satan and the victory of God bring to an end the cataclysmic battle of the universe over the control of stolen souls. This world, Satan's last stronghold in his war against God, is brought down in flames as the final seige unwinds.

The world ends in catastrophe and salvation. This incomprehensible final sequence is not so much a last gasp attempt by Satan to turn the tide of battle, but to inflict as much casualty on the process as possible before he is committed to the flames of eternal death. He has lost and he knows it.

All of scripture comes to a focus in the victory of Jerusalem and the people of God over the malignancy of Satan and the poisonous dictator he raises up at the end of our age to mobilize the world for war against Christ.

Throughout the pages of the Book of Revelation, readers are introduced to the themes of a hostile "Babylon" re-appearing in a post Nebuchadnezzar world where then 600 year-old concepts are extrapolated symbolically to bring to light predicted events which, in their most dire respects, still remain unfulfilled 2000 years later. Eerie circumstances, however, clouding the present moment, bear disturbing testimony that the terminal aspects of those visions have suddenly loomed menacingly close to fulfillment in our own time.

We have been born to watch the Book of Revelation come to its final page. The paramount principal in John's writing revolves around a world population philosophically divided by ideologies emanating from two competing spiritual city-state empires.

The concept of two competing city-states fighting for control of the people of God took root in scripture during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon (604-562 B.C.).

Previously, Israel's enemies had been defined in the Bible in nationalistic terms -- and almost always with respect to 'Egypt'.

The fact that the patriarchal family of Jacob (Israel) and his children moved to Egypt and never left (blossoming there into an entire community of tribes which finally fell into bondage under the unscrupulous domination of a hostile Egyptian government) weighed powerfully in the prophetic writings of early scripture. God's role in Israel's escape from that bondage was the defining moment of the Old Testament.

In light of the Exodus, the Hebrew visionaries saw the 'Promised Land' as a holy destination on this planet -- a terrestrial nation of God and a place of eternal peace and prosperity right here on earth. That concept, therefore, permeates Old Testament scripture as the overriding goal of God's purpose for Israel. It is a concept that glorified the Jews and the city that they occupied while rejecting all the rest of mankind.

When Nebuchadnezzar came along and whisked the Jewish community away from their earthly paradise into a different captivity in another foreign country, the prophets had to deal with a new and more powerful reality.

Two of the three most influential books of Old Testament prophecy, those of Ezekiel and Jeremiah were written during the dark days of this new enslavement. The third, that of Isaiah, dealt with its preceding, but connected diaspora, the catastrophic enslavement and world-wide dispersion of the Northern section of the House of Israel a hundred years earlier -- an event that seemed to eradicate forever ten of Israel's twelve tribes from earthly existence.

These prophetic writings and the circumstances under which they were penned whirled scripture on its axis. Their new visions changed the theological direction of the Bible 180 degrees, pointing it away from time-worn Jewish expectations and toward a Messianic appearance all Israelites had contemplated for centuries, but unlike any they had foreseen.

Key to that new perception was the idea of a world divided by two competing cities. Not just cities, but city-states, i.e., empires defined by the name of the city that rules them. On one side of this equation there is a place antagonistic to God symbolically called 'Babylon' and on the other, the golden city of God -- Jerusalem. Here there is a need for spiritual understanding.

That is why God directed the writing of the Book of Revelation. All Bible scholars agree that this book was written symbolically. No one can take Revelation literally and be successful in its interpretation.

God's purpose in drawing public consciousness away from a single malevolent country like the Egypt that confronted Moses, and toward a world-ruling collective like the Babylonian empire was so that the people of God would understand the true structure of the war between heaven and Satan and the exact purpose and nature of His rescue of those who were chosen for eternal life by Jesus.

This rescue was, and remains to this day, focused in two kingdoms: one, this world ruled by Satan, from which we are being called to leave; and the other, the new kingdom of heaven ruled by Christ - our new destination.

Jesus said that the city of God is "not of this earth". That statement erases any idea of the kind of terrestrial city-state envisioned by the Jewish theologians.

Despite this, many still come (not just in the name of Moses, but in the name of Christ as well) to try to resurrect and promote that false concept. The idea of a thousand-year reign of God on this earth (a tradition popular with many Christians) is a compromise theory on this Mosaic premise, for instance.

But there can be no compromise with something God has already ordained to be otherwise. That is the power of inspired scripture. God has declared in the prophetic writing of the Book of Revelation that the whole of creation will be made new when the Day of Judgment occurs. See Rev.21:5.

This planet, God's Book states, will not live to see that moment. The earth is destined to vanish forever the moment God becomes visible on His throne -- an event that will transpire just before the Last Judgment occurs. This is so written by the Holy Spirit. See Rev. 20:11.

The idea of terrestrial continuity and prosperity is a powerful one. We can see this in the persistence and determination of its adherents. But, in the end, as always, the Bible and Jesus will be proved right.

The city-state Jerusalem (the new Jerusalem of God) is not of this earth. It is being kept safe in heaven where it cannot be tarnished or ruined by the wickedness of this earth. That unrighteousness is also why God did not choose to build an empire here.

He set up no earthly kingdom. Instead, Jesus came to this earth to announce a rescue. He is gathering a flock of pilgrims and leading them away to safety. This is an 'exodus' that has been proceeding inexorably and quietly (almost invisibly) for almost 2000 years now.

During the period of that rescue (so that Christ's purpose would proceed expeditiously and successfully) God quieted the revolt of this world temporarily by installing powerful servants both on earth and in heaven to keep the peace. When Christ's gathering is complete, God's temporary Christianization of this world will come to an end. Satan will return to his ruling throne. The secular population, freed from Christianity's moral restraints, will return to the amorality of the ancients, preparing themselves to embrace with vigor the coming Mad-man whose imminent appearance has been so clearly defined.

All of these things had been blocked by God, wrote Paul, and could not occur until Christ's rescue had been achieved. So we must assume that the current processes active in the

world today prove that the 'Great Revolt' (as Paul called it) has now begun. The rescue is almost complete.

A process of divine transformation has emptied this world of those who choose to follow righteousness and transported their souls to God's city in heaven where they will live forever.

That is why the call of scripture is to "Leave that place!" -- to "touch nothing unclean and to follow Jesus along the path He leads!" "Get out of her, you the people who carry the vessels of God!" These cries were being trumpeted at the very infancy of Babylon, by prophets as early as Isaiah. We can see now that the theme and the call had a common and unforeseen purpose.

The "Her" that we are called to leave is 'Babylon'. The malignant city-state of worldly human ideology -- the terrestrial empire of man governed by Satan.

Babylon is the cumulative empire that rules this world. Its people are all who are hypnotised by Satan's evil influence (evil by Christ's standards, not by this world's).

Unless we read the Bible and listen to Jesus, we would easily see Satan as benevolent and understanding, just as the world does. Only when his philosophical standards are compared with those of Christ can we see Satan as he appears to God -- as eternal death and the destroyer of life.

First and foremost, Babylon is a spiritual concept. It embraces all the cities and empires on the planet. It embraces all the philosophies and concepts which most of us were first raised to accept.

Jesus did not come to call us out of our land or nation. Instead, He has called us out of our philosophic state, and out of our behavior. Instead of grasping to succeed, we are cautioned to give and serve without pay or worldly reward. Instead of hating and competing against our neighbor, we are called to love and compassion. Instead of warfare, we are called to forgive and turn the other cheek. All these actions are foreign to the ways of Babylon.

We are being called to give up the code of conduct of this world and embrace the behavior and philosophy of God -- the code of conduct of the new Jerusalem in heaven.

And there is little time left for this conversion. Jesus warned that this world's end would occur very soon. His call for rescue, therefore, is an urgent one. Time is running out. Anyone who fails to grab on to His offer will perish in the catastrophe, the titanic forces of which are building so impendently behind Him.

In its final pages, the Book of Revelation describes in eloquent symbolic detail just what the world's end will be like, and contrasts that destruction with an unequalled description anywhere in the Bible of the never-ending brilliance and calm of the kingdom of heaven

that will replace it.

Where here there is pain, suffering, violence and hatred, the kingdom of heaven is filled with joy and peace. It is a place where disease and death do not exist, and where violence is unknown. The light of Christ and God are never interrupted by darkness. Instead, the Book of Revelation shows us a city filled with the brilliance and shimmering colors of precious jewels -- crystalline and infinite in a beauty unsurpassed anywhere in creation.

That is where scripture ends. Those who have turned to Christ and stayed true to His word will live forever in the unequalled beauty and majesty of the Creator and His Son. Like conquering heroes, we will be embraced and adored in a love whose depths are unknown on earth.

When the moment comes, we will all be given robes of state and showered with the gifts of eternal life in the ultimate goodness of our God who has prepared for those He has chosen, a banquet unlike any ever known in the history of creation. It is called the 'Wedding Feast'.

At its apex, Christ will be led in and crowned with the glory of divine Kingship and presented the glistening new creation as His alone to rule forever with God.

And as He serves God, He will serve us as well. That was His promise. So we are urged to stand fast in our faith and hold on to it to the very end despite all the circumstances that Satan has created to try to block our resolve. The victory of God is inevitable. Happy will be those who do not fall away!

THE DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

The commercial empire of Babylon will cease to exist. We pick up the final scenes of scripture where we left off in the second part of our examination. Babylon is brought to ruin by a madman. Under his assault, the goods and services that characterized and so graphically defined our civilization will be no more. The cathedrals of Wall Street will crash in flames into the streets of the world and melt under the heat of the inferno that John's words predict.

Once a queen on her throne, independent of God, bathed in riches and sedated to complacency by her intellect, she thought she would live forever. Her capital she called the "eternal city". Never would she be a widow -- never would the prophecies of this book cloak her in the gowns of terminal mourning.

'Now heaven, celebrate her downfall, and all you saints, apostles and prophets: God has given judgement for you against her.'

As John watched, a powerful angel picked up a boulder which looked like a great millstone, and he hurled it into the sea, saying, 'That is how the great city of Babylon is going to be hurled down, never to be seen again.' See Rev. 18:21.

The angel continued, "Never again in you, Babylon, will be heard the song of harpists and minstrels, the music of flute and trumpet; never again will craftsmen of every skill be found or the sound of the mill be heard; never again will shine the light of the lamp, never again will be heard the voices of bridegroom and bride. Your traders were the princes of the earth, all the nations were under your spell."

Who are these traders who rose to become the princes of the earth, captivating the world under the spell of Babylon's siren call? We know them by the empires of their wealth: railroads; shipyards; oil fields; munitions; newspapers; broadcasting; computers, and so forth. Their trade has made them the barons of Babylon. The storied successes of their affairs is the fine weaving in the fabric of their spell.

"In her you will find the blood of prophets and saints, and all the blood that was ever shed on earth." See Rev. 18:24.

Every plot against God; every war ever fought; all the violence of history proceeds from these princely traders of human cargo. Paul said that "money is the root of all evil". It must be, for its power has reached even into the church. From the selling of indulgences to the evangelist on television begging the widow for her last mite, the spell of Babylon can be seen rusting the glory of God's edifice on earth.

Suddenly, in a single day, it all comes to an end. The spell is broken. It will never come again.

FROM HEAVEN, A CRY OF VICTORY!

"After this", said John, "I seemed to hear the tumultuous sound of a huge crowd in heaven, singing, 'Alleluia! Victory and glory and power to our God! He judges fairly, he punishes justly, and he has condemned the famous prostitute who corrupted the earth with her fornication; he has avenged his servants that she killed'. They sang again, 'Alleluia! the smoke of her will go up forever and ever'." See Rev. 19:1

Then the twenty-four elders and the four animals prostrated themselves and worshipped God seated there on his throne, and they cried, 'Amen, Alleluia'

What follows are some of the most interesting revelations in the Bible. For one thing, here we learn that the 'bride' (a common subject of prophecy throughout the Old Testament) is the New Jerusalem, i.e., the kingdom of heaven. Jesus is her bridegroom. The marriage weds a creation with its king. Thus we see why the ancient visions of scripture talked of two kings, not just one.

The Bride of Christ

John then heard a voice coming from the throne; it said, "Praise our God, you servants of

his and all who, great or small, revere him." At this point, John seemed to hear the voices of a huge crowd, "like the sound of the ocean or the great roar of thunder, answering, 'Alleluia! The reign of the Lord our God Almighty has begun; let us be glad and joyful and give praise to God, because this is the time for the marriage of the Lamb. His bride is ready. She has been able to dress herself in dazzling white linen, because her linen is made of the good deeds of the saints.'" See Rev. 19:8.

This is an astonishing revelation. Here, the wedding garment Jesus talked about in the Gospels, is revealed. It is made of the substance of good deeds. The reference is obviously symbolic. The bride is the new Jerusalem (the kingdom of heaven). Her white garment is likened to fine linen, 'dazzling' in its appearance. Good deeds has made the garment of the kingdom of heaven pure and fit for her wedding with God.

"The angel said, 'Write this: Happy are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb', and he added, 'All the things you have written are true messages from God'.

Hearing these words, John felt compelled to kneel at the angel's feet to worship him; but the angel said, 'Don't do that: I am a servant just like you and all your brothers who are witnesses to Jesus. It is God that you must worship.' The witness Jesus gave is the same as the spirit of prophecy." See Rev.19:11.

The Punishment of the Pagans

At this point John saw a great white throne, and suddenly God appeared, sitting on it.

This same moment was chronicled by the prophet Daniel who wrote:

"Thrones were set in place and one of great age took his seat. His robe was white as snow. The hair of his head as pure as wool. His throne was a blaze of flames, its wheels were a burning fire. A stream of fire poured out, issuing from his presence. A thousand thousand waited on him, ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. A court was held and the books were opened."

"As I watched, the beast was killed and its body destroyed and committed to the flames."

"I gazed into the visions of the night, and I saw, coming on the clouds of heaven, one like a son of man. He came to the one of great age and was led into his presence. On him was conferred sovereignty, glory and kingship, and men of all peoples, nations and languages became his servants." See Daniel 7:9-14.

"In his (God's) presence, the earth and the sky vanished, leaving no trace." See Rev. 20:11.

There is no reference here to a thousand years of continued life. The earth vanishes the moment God appears on His throne. Both this world and the sky. And they never return. Both are gone forever without a trace.

John noticed the dead, all of them, both great and small, standing in front of God's throne. "While they stood there, the book of life was opened, and other books were opened which were the record of what they had done in their lives. Everyone was judged by the deeds written in these books." See Rev. 20:12,

As John watched, "the sea gave up all the dead who were in it; Death and Hades were emptied of the dead that were in them; and every one was judged according to the way in which he had lived." See Rev. 20:14.

"Then Death and Hades were thrown into **the burning lake**. This burning lake is **the second death**; and anybody whose name could not be found written in the book of life was thrown into the burning lake. "

John's description of the burning lake, as seen in this vision from God, is the genesis of a burning hell. From this moment forward, hell's fire and damnation would be keynote precept's in the preaching of almost all Christian evangelist's. Further, this burning lake is shown to be associated, not with the death of the body (the first death) but with the death of the soul (the second death). It is eternal death.

THE JERUSALEM OF THE FUTURE

A Vision of the Heavenly Jerusalem

After everyone had been judged according to the way that they had lived and after Death and Hades and all whose names were not written in the Book of Life had been thrown into the fire of the burning lake, which was the second death, the Apostle John looked over and saw an incredible sight manifest itself before him.

A New Heaven and a New Earth

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; the first heaven and the first earth had disappeared now, and there was no longer any sea."

He continued, "I saw the holy city, and the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, as beautiful as a bride all dressed for her husband. Then I heard a loud voice call from the throne, 'You see this city? Here God lives among men. He will make his home among them; they shall be his people, and he will be their God; his name is 'God-with-them. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes; There will be no more death and no

more mourning or sadness. The world of the past has gone." See Rev. 21:1.

God Makes the Whole Creation New

Then the One sitting on the throne spoke: '**Now I am making the whole of creation new**' he said."

'Write this: that what I am saying is sure and will come true.' And then he said, 'It is already done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. See Rev. 21:6.

The kingdom of heaven immediately replaces the world of the past. God's new creation is not a 'thousand-year' kingdom. It is eternal. What comes will never leave. God and Christ will rule it forever and ever. There will be no death in it. No sadness. No disease or malformation or malignancy. It will be a place of everlasting peace and joy, bathed in the perpetual light of the Creator. Those whom God chooses will dwell within it for all eternity.

"I will give water from the well of life free to anyone who is thirsty; it is the rightful inheritance of the one who proves victorious and I will be his God and he a son to me."

"But the legacy of cowards, for those who break their word, or worship obscenities, for murderers and fornicators, and for fortune-tellers, idolaters or any other sort of liars, is the second death in the burning lake of sulfur."

One of the seven angels that had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came to speak to John and said, "Come here and I will show you the bride that the Lamb has married." See Rev. 21:9.

The New Jerusalem Appears

In the spirit the angel took John to the top of an enormous high mountain, and showed him Jerusalem, the holy city, coming down from God out of heaven.

"It had all the radiant glory of God and glittered like some precious jewel of crystal-clear diamond. The walls of it were of a great height, and had twelve gates; at each of the twelve gates there was an angel, and over the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel; on the east there were three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates."

"The city walls stood on twelve foundation stones, each one of which bore the name of the one of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."

The city is described in terms of crystal and radiance. The depictions evoke a spiritual image of spectacular grandeur. Obviously the substance of creation is to be changed. We will not find ourselves imprisoned by the iron construct that chains us to this mortal earthly prison. In its new construct we will have a freedom beyond imagining in a creation of luxurious beauty that defies earthly expression.

The immense eternal honor bestowed on the twelve tribes of Israel shows that the tribe of Judah will not succeed in pre-empting its missing relatives. God told Jeremiah that these missing tribes left in chains, but would return as conquerors. Christianity is the essence of that return. See Jer.13:20-21 & 16:14-15. The restoration of all twelve tribes to glory is central to the redemption Jesus came to effect. The recovery of those missing tribes was the whole essence of the preaching to the pagans (among whom these missing Israelites had been so invisibly scattered). This is why the Jews were made blind for a time.

Today the Jews gather at a small portion of the foundation wall of Herod's temple, the only stones still standing that once supported that ill-fated edifice. In heavenly Jerusalem, all the walls will sit on twelve foundation stones each of which will bear the name of one of the twelve apostles of Christ. How much more worthy of reverence will be these eternal stones when the memory of Herod and everything he made has vanished forever?

Looking at the angel who spoke to him, John saw that he was carrying a gold measuring rod to measure the city and its gates and wall. The plan of the city is perfectly square, its length the same as its breadth. The angel measured the city with his rod and it was twelve thousand furlongs in length and in breadth, and equal in height.

The symbolism of the square stands for perfection. The symbolism of the size (12,000) stands for immensity, i.e., twelve (apostles & tribes) times 1000.

A City of Crystal and Precious Stones

"The angel measured the city's wall, and this was a hundred and forty-four cubits high."

Here, as in Revelation 7:4, the symbolic number 144,000 is derived from 12 (the sacred number) squared and multiplied by 1000 to represent totality and immensity.

"The wall was built of diamond, and the city of pure gold, like polished glass. The foundations of the city wall were faced with all kinds of precious stone...diamond, lapis lazuli, turquoise, crystal, agate, ruby, gold quartz, malachite, topaz, emerald, sapphire and amethyst. The twelve gates were twelve pearls...and the main street of the city was pure gold, transparent as glass. See Rev. 21:18.

The transparent and delicately faceted images evident in these descriptions seem to portray an exquisite spiritual reality unknown on earth. Rare, and valuable beyond comprehension, the kingdom of heaven is seen in the most beautiful expressions of light. The colors are those of the rainbow, vivid and emanating from elegant crystalline structures meticulously ornate and faultless.

"I saw that there was no temple in the city since the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb were themselves the temple, and the city did not need the sun or the moon for light, since it was lit by the radiant glory of God -- and the Lamb was a lighted torch for it." See Rev. 21:22

John's observation that there is to be no temple in the kingdom of heaven is one of the most startling visions in all of scripture. His stunning observation and statement shows just how universally Jesus re-routed the direction of the Bible. Even dedicated Christians still have trouble with this revelation. The traditions driving no small number of theologies are replete with visions of a rebuilt temple. Fundamental errors like this show how difficult it is for even the faithful to grasp the transition from material worship (temples, walls, statues & stained glass) to spiritual concepts like behavior.

Jesus said that the temple of God is inside us. When we carry Jesus in our hearts (when His Word directs our behavior) we serve notice to the world that the temple of God has been rebuilt in a perfection no earthly edifice could ever match. Here, John's words bear witness to that different kind of cathedral -- a glorious temple that is still beyond the understanding of most people on earth.

"The pagan nations will live by its light and the kings of the earth will bring it their treasures. The gates of it will never be shut by day -- and there will be no night there -- and the nations will come, bringing their treasure and their wealth. Nothing unclean may come into it: no one who does what is loathsome or false, but only those who are listed in the Lamb's book of life." See Rev.21:27.

The River of Life

The angel showed John the river of life flowing inside the holy city. It rose up from the throne of God and of the Lamb and surged crystal-clear down the middle of the city street. On either side of the river was [the tree of life](#). The tree bears twelve crops of fruit in a year, one in each month. The leaves of the tree are the cure for the pagans. See Rev. 22:1

"The ban will be lifted."

The 'ban' is the first death. It occurred when Adam and Eve were banished from the Garden of Eden. The ban is the reason no one can see God face to face. It was made manifest the moment God clothed us in this foreign and temporary linen of flesh which begins falling apart as soon as it is made. The ban is the substance of the world which is passing away. When the ban is lifted, that world of chaos and blindness will be gone forever.

"The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in its place in the city; his servants will worship him, they will see him face to face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. **It will never be night again** and they will not need lamplight or sunlight, because the Lord God will be shining on them. They will reign forever and ever." See Rev. 22:5.

We cannot even imagine this incredible world of God, because our only reference is this corrupt world ruled by Satan. In the kingdom of God in heaven, there is no Satan. His

presence does not exist and is totally unknown. There is no night. No darkness of any kind.

The angel turned to John and said to him, "All that you have written is sure and will come true: the Lord God who gives the spirit to the prophets has sent his angel to reveal to his servants what is soon to take place. Very soon now, I shall be with you again."

"Happy are those who treasure the prophetic message of this book."

"I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. When I had heard them all and had seen them all, I turned to the angel who had shown them to me, and knelt at his feet to worship him; but he said, 'Don't do that: I am a servant just like you and like your brothers the prophets and like those who treasure what you have written in this book. It is God that you must worship.'" See Rev. 22:9

The Time is Close

"This, too, he said to me, 'Do not keep the prophecies in this book a secret, because the Time is close. meanwhile let the sinner go on sinning, and the unclean continue to be unclean; let those who do good go on doing good, and those who are holy continue to be holy.

Very soon now, I shall be with you again, bringing the reward to be given to every man according to what he deserves. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. Happy are those who will have washed their robes clean, so that they will have the right to feed on the tree of life and can come through the gates into the city.

Those others must stay outside: dogs, fortune-tellers, fornicators, murderers, idolaters and everyone of false speech and false life."

The angel's references to false speech and false life, and to lump those in with the sins of murderers and fornicators, shows just how essential it is before God that we not allow the world to coerce us to say something different than what comes from Jesus, or to engage in activities that belie our Christian duties.

EPILOGUE

The Book of Revelation ends with an epilogue from Jesus meant to define the validity of John's visions and to establish once and for all Christ's personal relationship with scripture's Davidic and star prophecies.

"I, Jesus, have sent my angel to make these revelations to you for the sake of the churches. I am of David's line, the root of David and the bright star of the morning."

"The Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come. Let everyone who listens answer, 'Come'. Then let all who are thirsty come: all who want it may have the water of life, and have it free."

"This is a solemn warning to all who hear the prophecies in this book: if anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him every plague mentioned in the book; if anyone cuts anything out of the prophecies in this book, God will cut off his share of the tree of life and of the holy city, which are described in the book." See Rev. 22:19.

"The one who guarantees these revelations repeats his promise: I shall indeed be with you soon. Amen; come, Lord Jesus."

May the grace of the Lord Jesus be with you all. Amen.

Also See:

[The Book of Revelation, Part 1, "Letters to the Seven Churches"](#)

[The Book of Revelation, Part 2, "Trumpets and Visions"](#)

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**"Happy The Man Who
Puts His Trust In The Lord"**

Psalm 40:4