

A 21st Century Guide
Through the Book of Revelation

REVELATION

and the Age of
the Antichrist



STEVE MAGILL

**REVELATION
AND THE AGE OF THE ANTICHRIST**

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Scripture quotations are from the King James Version unless otherwise noted. Author replaced some old English words with modern English, such as thee, thou, didst, etc.

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The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that reads, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

-Revelation 1:1-3

Dedicated to my wife, who proves herself over and over to be a great treasure worth far more than the rarest diamond.

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

THE BOOK OF REVELATION outlines the age of the Antichrist and the last seven years of earth's history. Its message is to inform the church of the horrors to come and to encourage the church to focus on the inheritance that will be theirs and not on the horrors it will experience. Its message also is a warning to everyone else to prepare by repenting of their sins and having faith in Jesus Christ.

Revelation and the Age of the Antichrist is a brief commentary on the Book of Revelation. It focuses on the ordering of the revelation given to the Apostle John, following the revelation's natural sequence of events. This sequence is seen first when the Apostle

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John is told to "Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter" (Rev. 1:19). What John saw was the vision of the glorified Christ in Revelation 1. The things which are presently taking place were recorded in Revelation 2 and 3. The things that will occur in the future are recorded in Revelation 4-22, which outlines the coming of the Antichrist, the last seven years of earth's history, and the coming of God's eternal kingdom. From our perspective the same ordering still applies, except for the things which John saw in Revelation 1. The apostasy (things which are) of Revelation 2 and 3 continue to increase and the things future are still future since they begin when the Antichrist appears, as will be outlined throughout this book.

The ordering of events also is seen with the seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven vial judgments. The seven seals are opened first before any of the other judgments take place. Out of the seventh seal, the seven trumpets of Christ's judgment are released, and out of the seventh trumpet, the seven vials of God's judgment are released. When this natural ordering of Revelation is followed, the events of the Revelation fall into their proper ordering: apostasy, the Antichrist, Great Tribulation, release of Christ's judgments, return of Christ, rapture, and the release of God's judgments.

Introduction

This book is not intended to be an exhaustive commentary. It is meant to be a guide focusing on the ordering of events and the main emphasis of each chapter in the Book of Revelation.

As you journey through this book, find a nice quiet place where you can meditate prayerfully on John's Revelation, beginning a journey that will both astound and shock. Begin first by studying the chart of Revelation in Appendix I. This will give you a bird's-eye view of the order of the Book of Revelation, which is key to understanding how the recorded events fall into place.

May God bless you in your journey.

Steve Magill

Mark 1:15

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CHAPTER 1

Blessed!

Revelation 1

“Blessed is he that reads, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.” –Revelation 1:3

ONE OF THE UNSETTLING facts we face when reading the Book of Revelation is that it is not a pleasant book and may be considered the horror story of all horror stories. Though at first we may enjoy studying it, at some point, most of us will be like the Apostle John, who found what he was shown to be pleasant at first, but then extremely disturbing when he understood the reality of what was going to take place (Rev. 10:9). This is why it is important to

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know from where the Revelation originates. If it is just a tale told by a first-century man, then I can ignore it—but if it is truly a revelation sent by God, then I need to pay close, very close attention to it.

So where did this Revelation come from?

It originated with God, and not just *any* God, but from the One who has already come to the earth and will return to the earth again (Rev. 1:1, 7). The revelation was then given to Jesus (1:2, 5). This is the same Jesus with whom John walked and talked when Jesus was upon the earth and who now was in His glorified body. Jesus then gave this revelation to His angel to reveal to His church what is going to happen in the future (1:1).

What makes Jesus worthy to receive and fulfill this revelation? Because He is the first begotten of those who will die and receive God's eternal inheritance. He also is the king above all kings of the earth. He is the only One who can make us clean to inherit God's inheritance and make us kings and priests in God's kingdom because He is the One who died on the cross to defeat sin and death (1:5).

When the revelation was given to John, it did not come to him as a writer inspired, striving for clever ways of interpreting his own thoughts. In this case, he merely recorded the events as he saw and heard them. Too many times, we hear how John was a first-century man trying to explain twenty-first century

Blessed!

technology. However, he was a first-century man who merely recorded the images as he saw them. In our twenty-first century, we now understand how literal John's record truly is. John was told to write what he saw, not to interpret what he saw into images he could understand.

Though John may have been perplexed by much of what he saw, we who live in John's future are not so mystified, as we find the revelation relevant to our present age with little that is not understood. Regardless of all its horrors, above everything else, the Book of Revelation is a book of hope. It is meant to encourage and to let us see the light at the end of the tunnel. In this case, it allows us to see the eternal reward at the end of all the hard times that are coming.

We also find that John was not the one to determine which churches would first receive the revelation. It was God who told John to distribute it to the churches that were in Asia Minor. It would be the character of these churches that would characterize all churches in all future generations. We know they represent all generations of Christians because they represent the *"things which are"* (1:19), referring to the condition of the church from the time of John to the appearing of the Antichrist. Through understanding the Book of Revelation, the church is

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given strength and hope during the time when the very foundation of the earth will be shaken.

Perhaps the most interesting contrast to our view on the Book of Revelation today is 1:3. I hear many talk of how confusing Revelation is or how they don't like reading such a depressing book, yet the angel told John, "Blessed is he that reads and they that hear the words of this prophecy" (1:3a). *The New Englishman's Greek Concordance and Lexicon*¹ defines blessed as "fortunate, happy." Now let that sink in for a moment. The Revelation is given to bring happiness to us. How does it do that? It fills us with hope and comfort when it is read and embraced, because it tells us what will take place after all the horrors.

Comfort and hope do not come through warm fuzzy pats on the head with words of assurance that "it's all going to be okay." On the contrary, comfort and hope comes from knowing what is going to happen, what the outcome will be, and who is in control of the situation—and that is what the Book of Revelation gives to us concerning the final seven years of earth's history.

The Revelation was given to Jesus by God to let Him know what is going to happen, when it would happen, and when He would return to the earth.

¹ Wilgram-Green, *The New Englishman's Greek Concordance and Lexicon* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1982), 537.

Blessed!

When Jesus was upon the earth, He told His disciples that no one knew when the end would take place or when He would return—and that not even He knew until His Father reveals it to Him (Mark 13:32). Through this revelation, Jesus is given this knowledge. He has told us so we might also know and be prepared for what is to come. Having received the revelation, Jesus also received the authority to follow its game plan and to bring it to fulfillment.

The revelation outlines specific, observable events to show us where we are throughout the earth's last seven years. Though we may not know the specific day that Christ will appear, it looks as if we will know when that day comes. It will be the day that three angels are seen flying in the sky, preaching final messages to those on the earth (Rev. 14:6, 8, 9). When this day comes, though we may know this day has arrived, we are without understanding as to which hour of this day Christ will appear and we are raptured out (14:14-16).

We can have confidence in this revelation given by Jesus because He is God's "faithful witness," the "first begotten of the dead," and "the prince of the kings of the earth." He is the One who loved us and demonstrated His love by dying upon the cross to remove the penalty of our sins, enabling us to become "kings and priests" in God's eternal kingdom

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and to share as “joint-heirs” the inheritance that Jesus Christ received (Rev. 1:5-6).

The Revelation was given to John while he was on the prison island of Patmos for believing and speaking God’s Word and for testifying about Jesus Christ. Here, on this particular day, he heard a powerful voice that sounded like a trumpet. When he turned to see who was speaking, he saw an astonishing vision of Jesus in His glorified body. So overpowering was this sight that John fell at His feet as if he were dead, which probably indicates that he had fainted. Then, Jesus laid His right hand upon John, saying, “Fear not; I am the first and the last” (Rev. 1:17), then proceeded to tell John, “Write the things which you have seen (Rev. 1), and the things which are (Rev. 2 and 3), and the things which shall be hereafter (Rev. 4-22)” (1:19).

John is an eyewitness to the resurrected, glorified Christ. Though he had seen Him after the resurrection several times before, never had he seen Him in the glory he now sees. So different and frightening was this encounter that John records, “I fell at his feet as dead.” John had seen Him before He was crucified, after He was resurrected, and now here in all His splendor. John is certainly qualified to verify that Jesus is alive—He gave the revelation—God has given Him authority and He can be trusted.

CHAPTER 2

The Great Apostasy

Revelation 2-3

“He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” –Revelation 2:7

IN THESE TWO CHAPTERS of Revelation, John saw the condition of the church in his time, our present time, and what the church would be like before the events of the last seven years of earth's history are unleashed. He saw a deceived and compromised church. The Devil began his great deception the day the church was born. It gained momentum when popery and Constantine joined forces and took Christianity captive; deception continued its increase with the breakdown into denominations. Today the majority of those claiming the name of Christ only

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resemble the church of the first three centuries. This deceived church looks like the true church, but without the power of the Holy Spirit to be the church (2 Tim. 3:5). This apostasy may be seen as the *great retreat*. Instead of becoming stronger through the years, the church retreated through compromise. This compromise is outlined in more detail in Appendix A and shows the movement of compromise from the early church through Constantine and then Martin Luther. A couple of books I like that contrasts today's church with the church of the first three centuries are *The Pilgrim Church* by E.H. Broadbent and *Pagan Christianity* by Frank Viola.²

As we continue our study through the Book of Revelation, keep in mind that, throughout the horrors described, we are not to retreat, but to engage the battle, and when the going gets tough, we are to be even tougher and filled with the strength and power of the Holy Spirit greater than ever before (Heb. 10:25).

The apostasy of the church leading to earth's last seven years was also described by the Apostle Paul. In 2 Thessalonians 2:3, the Apostle warned of this great apostasy (falling away) taking place before the

² E.H. Broadbent, *The Pilgrim Church* (Grand Rapids: Gospel Folio Press, 1999), 166-167.

Frank Viola and George Barna, *Pagan Christianity* (BarnaBooks; Revised edition, 2008).

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Antichrist appears: “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.” The phrase *that day* refers to the return of Christ to the earth. The *falling away* is the apostasy of the church. The *man of sin* is the Antichrist. This apostasy removes the restraining power of the Holy Spirit that has kept the Antichrist from rising upon the earth (2:7-8). An active, Spirit-led church is the light that holds the darkness back. However, light merged with compromise (sin) is a great darkness—a darkness that deceives a person into thinking he is Christian when he is far removed from the Spirit of God (Matt. 6:23).

The apostasy of Revelation 2 and 3 is the welcome mat that invites the Antichrist to make his appearance upon the earth in Revelation 6. Because we are living in the day when the Antichrist could appear at any time, we must also recognize that the majority claiming the name of Christ are living in a fallen condition, thinking they are *the* church and are *Christians*. However, Revelation 2 and 3 indicate the majority of the church today is far removed from God’s Holy Spirit, which is the distinguishing mark of the true church. Without the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul teaches that we are not Christian: “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (Rom. 8:9b).

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WHAT ARE WE TO DO THEN?

Because the messages to the seven churches were not written only for those named by John, it would be wise to give careful consideration to these messages and to ask ourselves, “Do I need to change how I think about God and how I live my life?” After each message, Jesus makes the statement, “He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, and 22). Now ask yourself, “Do I hear what Jesus is saying to me? Am I willing to do what is necessary to repent and become a true Christian?”

As much as we may not want to admit that we may be deceived, it is important to understand the deceived do not know that they are. Webster’s Dictionary defines “deceive” as misleading the mind, to cause to err, and to cause to believe what is false or to disbelieve what is true.³ In the time before the arrival of the Antichrist, the majority claiming the name of Christ will be misled to believe they are Christian when their spirit is far from Christ. Revelation 2 and 3 and Romans 8:9 are clear that good Christian works and correct doctrines and

³ *American Dictionary of the English Language*, Noah Webster 1828: Deceive: To mislead the mind; to cause to err; to cause to believe what is false, or disbelieve what is true; to impose on; to delude.

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practices do not make us Christian if we don't have the Holy Spirit.

This can be a difficult position to be in, especially when one is a pastor and believes everything is okay with their Christianity. I had to come to this point in my own life in 2005 when I realized I might be deceived and not know it. My first reaction was, "I'm okay in God's eyes." After all, I had been a Christian for over twenty-nine years. When I realized people do not know they are deceived, I began to question my own Christianity and role as a pastor through an intensive search of the New Testament concerning what a real Christian is. I came to the conclusion that I did not measure up when I compared my Christianity with God's Word. This caused me to make changes to my life. These changes included stepping down from my position as a professional, career pastor after over seventeen years behind the pulpit. Like the Apostle Paul, who was a tentmaker, and the other New Testament disciples who were a mixture of occupations (fishermen, doctors, farmers, herdsman, and whatever the good occupations of the day were), I now serve God in the good occupations of our day managing properties and operating a natural health business with my wife. My "ministry" remains strong. Nearly every day I pray with people, share the gospel (online and in person), pass out tracts, share my books, and teach in churches and

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homes.” Often I tell people that in 1976 I gave up sin, and then in 2008 I gave up everything I thought I knew about Christianity and the church and became a “true” Christian.

As the movement of the Holy Spirit continues to awaken His church, many will come to similar revivals. Many will feel unrest about who they are as a Christian and whether they are truly Christian. They will seek for something more than what they presently have. In their hunger and thirst they will find a greater intimacy with God.

Continuing our look at Revelation 2 and 3, notice how God acknowledges many noteworthy characteristics of the seven churches. He acknowledged they were hard workers for Christ, patient, untiring, defenders of correct doctrine, charitable, faithful, and appearing to be devout Christians—all traits any Christian would want to emulate. However, Christ condemned five of the seven because they also were living without the power of God, or were Christians for monetary gain, or tolerated sin, or were involved with immorality, or submersed themselves in the occult, or allowed teachers to teach false doctrine, or lived on their reputations, or would not take an all-out stand either for or against Christ, preferring to compromise.

In these last of the last days, it is important that we pay close attention to Christ's words, change what

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is not appropriate to God, and move further from the way of the world. Through these messages we are encouraged to reexamine our Christianity, to turn toward God, to repent, and to hold on to our faith no matter what might impact our lives.

Just a word about repentance; it is not just asking God to forgive you, it is making changes in your behavior and life, stepping away from that which is not of God and turning toward that which is of God. Often those changes can be hard to make and come with a price. To be in the position where we can see our true condition and are able to repent, we must be able to hear the Holy Spirit's voice. At the end of each message to the seven churches, Jesus emphasized this point when He said, "He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." That's us. We are the church. Which begs the question: Do we hear the Holy Spirit when He speaks?

Even though the majority claiming the name of Christ in Revelation 2 and 3 are not faithful, two of the churches are identified without any encouragement to repent. The first faithful church was the church in Smyrna (Rev. 2:8-11). Notice that it is different from all the others: it experienced much tribulation, lived in poverty, and was lied about and criticized by those who said they belonged to God.

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They were also thrown into prison and killed because they placed their trust in Jesus.

The church in Philadelphia was the second church Jesus spoke to without condemnation. It also was persecuted (3:7-13). The contrast between these two churches and the other five should stir up fear in everyone claiming the name of Christ, causing each individual to cry out to God for understanding and repentance. As unsettling as it may be to many, persecution and Christianity go together like the positive and negative charge of a battery. Both are necessary to move our vehicle forward.

Dear brothers and sisters, Do not think that when we are a Christian that we are exempt from troubles. Jesus warned that "In the world ye shall have tribulation" (John 16:33). Paul reminds us that, "Yes, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12). Too often prosperity and freedom from trouble are looked upon as God's blessing. In light of what we just read, there is the great possibility the devil is bringing the "blessing" in order to keep you from trusting God.

Though we must go through much trouble as a Christian, we do not have to look at trouble as a negative. We are given a future hope that makes our present troubles worth it all. With the Apostle Paul, we are to "reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory

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which shall be revealed in us” (Rom. 8:18). The Apostle James also records that as we make patience a part of our day-to-day activities, our faith is strengthened:

“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into various temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith works patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing” (James 1:2-4).

Patience is the key to holding firm to your faith in the most difficult of times and for growing in faith. Learning patience in the day-to-day humdrums of life will give the strength to endure the greater challenges that are coming.

After the great apostasy permeates the church, the appearance of the Antichrist and the events outlined in the Book of Revelation are then able to take place. The apostasy gives an open door for the Antichrist to walk through.

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CHAPTER 3

Wrath of the Antichrist

Revelation 4-6

“And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals...behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.” – Revelation 6:1-2

REVELATION 4-6 BEGINS THOSE events that John said would take place in his future, after the church enters the apostasy of Revelation 2 and 3. While his physical body remained on the island of Patmos, through the Holy Spirit John enters into heaven

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where he sees what will take place to set in motion the revelation on earth.

PREPARING FOR THE WRATH OF THE ANTICHRIST

In Revelation 4 and 5, we are shown those events in heaven that must take place before the events beginning in Revelation 6 can be released on earth. These two chapters make it clear that not even the Antichrist and his horrors have power to come about on their own, They must be released and permitted by God in His timing.⁴

In Revelation 4, we are given a glimpse of the throne of God and shown several creatures that worship before it. The main point of this chapter is to confirm the Lord God Almighty is worthy to sit upon the throne and to possess the seven-sealed book (4:11). What gives Him this right and not some other god? because He is the One who created all things seen and unseen for His pleasure.

In Revelation 5, the concern is with the question, "Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" (5:2). The book in question is the seven-sealed book that will release the Antichrist and

⁴ Job is another great illustration where the Devil was not permitted to bring harm to him until God permitted him. See Job 1:12; 2:6.

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the final seven years of our present age upon the earth. Those in heaven confirm the Lamb, Jesus Christ, is the only One worthy to receive the book from the hand of God and to unleash its contents upon the earth. Why does He have this privilege? Because He redeemed mankind, was given all authority by God, and is the One who makes us to be kings and priests before God. Therefore, He has the authority to release judgment on those who reject Him and God's people. With the book in hand, Jesus then opens the seals to release the events of earth's final seven years.

THE WRATH OF THE ANTICHRIST

In Revelation 6, Christ opens six of the seven seals to release on the earth that perilous time called the Great Tribulation, spoken of by Jesus in Matthew 24:21, 29 and by Daniel in Daniel 7:21, 25; 11:31-36. This tribulation is not the wrath of Christ or the wrath of God poured out upon the earth. It is the wrath of the Antichrist. For more information on the Antichrist, see Appendix B.

Too often the ordering of the events of Revelation is not understood because all the horrors of Revelation are viewed as either the Great Tribulation or the wrath of God. However, as we will discover throughout this book, the wrath of the Antichrist is different from the wrath of Christ, and

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the wrath of Christ is different from the wrath of God. As this distinction is understood, the events falling under them will be clear and the ordering of events will be known. See Appendix C.

When the first seal is opened, the Antichrist is revealed on the earth and is given power to make war and to conquer God's people (Rev. 6:1-2). He will come from the Middle East with great military might at his command (See Appendix D). So great will be this military that fallen angels will be part of it. When he is given authority he is the cause of the destruction unleashed in seals two through five. This is not God's judgment, but the judgment of the Antichrist on God's people. This is represented when the Antichrist on the white horse is shown with a bow, but not arrows. The bow signifies judgments ready for offenders (Ps. 7:11, 12) lying and falsehood (Ps. 64:3; Jer. 9:3). It also signifies a weapon of war and the military (Zech. 9:10; 10:4). There is no arrow with the bow because the arrow signifies calamity or disease sent by God (Job 6:4; 34:6; Ps. 38:1,2; 21:12; Deut. 32:23). This calamity is not at the hands of God, but the Antichrist. God releases the Antichrist to fulfill his will and to permit sins full reign and to end His indignation upon Israel through the Great Tribulation.

The second seal gives the Antichrist authority to take peace from the earth, so much so that people

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fight and kill each other—strangers, neighbors, co-workers, family members (Rev. 6:3-4, see also Matt. 24:9-10 and Luke 21:16-17).

The third seal (Rev. 6:5-6) releases great famines throughout the earth, yet at the same time there are the super-rich indicated by the words, “See that you hurt not the oil and the wine” (6:6). Oil and wine represent the rich, and when it says to “hurt not,” it indicates they will be permitted to keep their wealth. There will be no middle class, only the very rich and the poor—kings and serfs—as the Antichrist redistributes the world’s wealth, causing hyperinflation. We see confirmation of this in Revelation 6:6: “A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see that you hurt not the oil and the wine.” One author interpreted this as “a severe shortage of food where a loaf of bread may cost an entire day’s wages.”⁵ During such a time, we need to grasp and embrace Matthew 6:25-34 and how Jesus explains that even the lack of essentials (food, clothing, a place to stay) should not be a source of pressure and worry. He will take care of His people.

The fourth seal (Rev. 6:7-8) releases much death upon the earth caused by the opening of the previous

⁵ Dr. N.W. Hutchings, *Revelation for Today* (Oklahoma City: Hearthstone Publishing, 2003), 67.

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seals: war, famine, and even the animals of the earth as they look for food. This fourth seal reveals that one-fourth of the earth's population will be killed, or two billion people based on our present population of almost eight billion. The majority of the dead are revealed with the opening of the fifth seal to be God's people (6:9-11). We know this because they are identified as "the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held" (6:9).

This slaughter by the Antichrist is also revealed in Daniel 7:21, 25 and 11:31-36. These Scriptures reveal that a main goal of the Antichrist is to come against God, kill God's people, and be successful in his undertaking. Revelation 12:17 also confirms this:

"And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

The dominate manner of death for those not supportive of the Antichrist's system is beheading,⁶ as Revelation 20:4 states:

⁶ Though beheading will be the dominate killing method, Scripture also brings out that God's people will also be killed by military might, burning, imprisonment, fellow "Christians," family, friends, etc. (Daniel 11:33; Matthew 24:9,10; Luke 21:16; Revelation 2:10, 13:10. Beheading has been a normal manner of

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“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”

These martyrs are now crying out from under God’s altar, asking, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, do you not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” (6:10). They were told, most likely from angels, that “they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled” (6:11).

Notice that after the Antichrist appears, none of the five seals we’ve looked at reveal that God’s people have been raptured out, but were in the heat of persecution and martyrdom. Prior to Revelation 4 and 5, there is no indication of a rapture of Christians. Revelation 2 and 3 reveal a deceived, apostate church, unfit to be raptured, and the two churches that were ready were encouraged to remain faithful as they endured persecution, even if it meant death

killing throughout the Bible: Mark 6:16; Luke 9:9; Revelation 20:4; 1 Samuel 5:4, 17:46,51; 31:9; 2 Samuel 4:5-7, 16:9, 20:22; Acts 12:2; 2 Kings 10:6-8.

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(2:8, 10-11; 3:7, 12-13). Revelation 3:10 also is clear that God's people will not be removed from the earth until it is time for the seven vials of God's wrath to be released after the seven seals (wrath of the Antichrist) and seven trumpet judgments (wrath of Christ):

"Because you have kept the word of my patience, I also will keep you from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."

This "hour" of judgment is recorded in Revelation 14:7 and refers to the pouring out of God's wrath through the seven vial judgments.

The one verse that some use to prove the rapture takes place before the Great Tribulation is when John is told to "Come up here, and I will show you things which must be hereafter" (4:1).

However, John was told to "come up here" to see the vision, not to report an escape from what is to take place. To see a rapture here is to move from the clear teaching of this verse. As we follow the natural ordering of the Book of Revelation, we will find that the rapture takes place after the wrath of the Antichrist and the wrath of Christ, but before the hour of God's wrath. More will be said about the rapture in Revelation 11 and 14.

Wrath of the Antichrist

When the sixth seal is opened (6:12-16), a great earthquake violently shakes the earth, the sun stops shining for a brief time, the moon turns red, stars fall to the earth, the sky disappears, and every mountain and island are moved from their longitude and latitude positions. Never has such events taken place upon the earth. Everyone is afraid and recognize these events as signaling the pouring out of the wrath of Christ upon the earth—not the wrath of the Antichrist or the wrath of God the Father, but the wrath of Christ as the Son of man, the Son of God (Rev. 6:16-17).

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CHAPTER 4

Wrath of Christ

Revelation 7-11

“And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.” –Revelation 8:2-3

THE PREVIOUS CHAPTER REVEALED the Antichrist's supremacy over the earth for three and a half years. Beginning with this chapter his supremacy comes to an end. It is now time for Christ to release His judgment upon the Antichrist and his kingdom. These judgments are not the day and hour of God's

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judgment, but come from the hands of Christ, the Lamb of God (Rev. 6:16).

We know the trumpets are Christ's judgment because those left on earth perceive what is about to come. Everyone on earth are terrified and cries out "to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sits on the throne, and from the *wrath of the Lamb*" (6:16, emphasis added). Apparently, people are running to their emergency shelters and underground bunkers for protection, but there is no hiding from the wrath of Christ. No amount of physical preparation will shield us from these times of trouble. The only preparation that will give true hope is to repent of your sin, live in the Holy Spirit, and remain firm with Christ.

PREPARING FOR THE WRATH OF CHRIST

Before Christ's judgments are poured out, there are preparations in heaven that must take place, identified here in Revelation 7. These events set in motion the events that will now be released on the earth.

To prepare for Christ's judgments, the four angels in charge of releasing these judgments upon the earth and seas are told not to do any harm until after the 144,000 Israelites, who kept themselves pure before God, were sealed with God's protection.

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These people will not experience Christ's judgment (7:3-4).

There is nothing in this passage to suggest these are symbolic or spiritual Jews and everything to suggest these are literal, natural-born Jews for the following reasons: first they are taken from the twelve tribes of Israel, indicating they are taken from the bloodline of Abraham (7:4-8). There also is the distinction of these from the great multitude who came out of "all nations, people, and tongues," identifying them with the land of Israel and not with the multitude outside of Israel (7:9). This great multitude of martyred ones, who were given white robes in Revelation 6:9-11, now rejoice, knowing that Christ's judgments will bring their salvation (7:9).

When these preparations are complete in heaven, Christ will release His wrath upon the earth.

THE WRATH OF CHRIST

I find the contrast of Christ's wrath with the wrath of the Antichrist interesting. The seven seals indicated a quiet, almost imperceptible arrival of judgment, while the trumpets indicate a loud announcement of coming destruction. Christ keeps nothing hidden as He informs His prophets (Amos 3:7) and encourages His disciples to shout from the rooftops what He tells them in secret (Matt. 10:27). Christ's wrath, as outlined in Revelation 8-11,

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introduces us to the seven trumpet of judgment that come out of the seventh seal.

This is important to understand as we consider the ordering of last day events. Note again the seven trumpets appear out of the seventh seal. The events of the seven trumpets are the seventh seal (Rev. 8:1-2). Grasp what this means: the events of the seven trumpets cannot come before or during the events of the six seals. This is also how it is with the seven vial judgments of God. The vials appear when the seventh trumpet is blown and is the seventh trumpet judgment, which means the events released through the vials cannot take place before or during the time the seals are opened or the trumpets are blown. Through this sequence of judgments, the natural ordering of the Book of Revelation is known. It is this ordering, given by God, which is to be followed for an understanding of the ordering of last day events.

When the seventh seal is opened, heaven is filled with silence for half an hour as the seven angels standing before God are given the seven trumpets of Christ's wrath (Rev. 8:1-2). After the trumpets are handed out, an angel offers much incense with the prayers of all God's people on the golden altar that is in front of God's throne. The time has come to answer all the prayers of God's people since the time of Noah. To do so, an angel takes a censer, fills it with fire from the altar, and casts it into the earth (8:3-5).

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Everything is now ready for the angels to blow the seven trumpets of judgment to answer these prayers.

In contrast to the Antichrist, who used military might, economic power, and government law to martyr God's people, Christ unleashes His wrath upon the Antichrist's kingdom using what He has made—the forces of creation and the demons reserved for such a day and hour.

When the angel with the first trumpet blows, hail and fire mingled with blood burn up one-third of all trees and green grass (8:7). When the second trumpet blows, something resembling a burning mountain is thrown into the sea and one-third of it becomes blood, one-third of the creatures within it die, and one-third of the ships are destroyed (8:8-9). The description of a burning mountain with fire, without question, refers to a volcano, which is a mountain burning with fire, and can certainly do the damage described with volcanic lava and ash recorded here.

After the third trumpet sounds, a large burning star causes one-third of all fresh water to become bitter and undrinkable, and countless people die (8:10-11). The reference here refers to something coming from above the earth. It refers to a burning star hitting the earth and is, without doubt, a reference to a large comet or meteorite.

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When the fourth trumpet sounds, one-third of the sun, the moon, and the stars become so dark that the day loses one-third of its light (8:12). As bad as these four trumpets are, another angel flies through the sky, greatly saddened by the horror of the three trumpets which are about to release their judgments upon the earth. So horrible are these trumpets that the angel calls them woes (8:13).

In Revelation 9, the first woe comes when the fifth angel blows his trumpet (9:1-12). At this time, an angel is given the key to open the bottomless pit, releasing a great number of locusts with scorpion tails to torment for five months everyone who does not have the seal of God on their forehead. So terrible is this judgment that people want to die, but will not be able to. Many have thought these locusts were some type of earthly, technological war machines; however, because they rise up out of the bottomless pit, it appears these are what they are pictured as, demonic creatures reserved for this particular day and hour.

The second woe accompanies the blast of the sixth trumpet, releasing four fallen angels who are imprisoned in the Euphrates River (9:13-14). These angels motivate an army of two hundred million from the east of the Euphrates to kill one-third of the people still alive on the earth (9:15-17). Those killed are west of the Euphrates. The people to the east of

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the Euphrates are mostly Muslims, with China in the Far East. When added to the one-fourth already killed, when the fourth seal was opened, more than one-half of the world's population is now dead (9:18). With all that has happened, it is incredible that people still refuse to repent and turn toward God (9:19-21). It amazes me that even though the people left acknowledge the judgments are coming from God, they continue to blaspheme and come against Him.

The second woe continues in Revelation 10, here we find a mighty angel with the seven-sealed book of the Revelation open in his hand (10:1-3). He encourages John to take and eat it (10:8). When John does, the book is sweet until fully digested and the understanding of what is taking place becomes reality. John becomes extremely sick (10:9-10). Now knowing the horrors that are coming, the angel tells him to “prophecy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings” (10:11).

We, who understand this revelation, also have the responsibility to warn others so they might trust their lives to God and find hope during these most troubling of times. The prophet Daniel wrote that in these difficult days, “they that understand among the people shall instruct many” (Dan. 11:33). Will you be an instructor or a defector in the days to come?

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It is a dreadful thing to have knowledge of the danger ahead and not warn others of their danger. Who would walk by a burning house and not warn the occupants inside of their danger? Neither should God's people have knowledge of future, perilous events and not warn others.

The second woe continues in Revelation 11 with the appearance of God's two witnesses (11:3-4). They appear during Christ's wrath to execute judgment upon the earth in the same manner that Elijah and Moses released God's judgment upon the kings and Pharaoh of their day. Many have thought the witnesses were two men who may be Elijah and Moses returned to the earth. A closer look at the clear teaching of Scripture reveals these could be none other than the church and Israel.

The key to identifying these witnesses is the description given in Revelation 11:4 of two olive trees and two candlesticks. Through Scripture, we know the olive tree represents Israel and the candlesticks the church. Because the focus of this book is on the ordering of the Book of Revelation, check out Appendix E for more detailed information about Israel and the church being the two witnesses.

As amazing as this may sound to us now, the church and Israel will have the power to stop rain from falling, turn water into blood, and bring a variety of plagues upon the earth as often as they

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choose (Rev. 11:6). This power given to Israel and the church is also spoken of in Daniel 11:32 as “exploits” and spoken of by the prophet Joel in Joel 2:28-30 as the pouring out of the Holy Spirit. This pouring out of the Holy Spirit is the great awakening/revival that God’s people have anticipated and talked about for a long time, yet has not taken place. There will be no global reawakening until after the Antichrist is on the scene. Even then it will not be the hopeful, world changing mass revival that so many are looking for. It is through the fire God’s people are purified and filled with power like it has never experienced in all of church history.

This earthly revival will take place during the global holocaust of God's people. This is also the time Daniel 7:18 refers to God’s people taking back the Antichrist’s kingdom. When their witness to the world is finished, the Antichrist will be permitted to kill them (Rev. 11:7). Three days after their death, they will rise from the dead and ascend into heaven, along with any other Christians alive during this time. This is what is known as the rapture (11:11-12). The same hour they ascend, a great earthquake occurs and one-tenth of Jerusalem collapses, killing seven thousand (11:13). This ends the events of the second woe.

The third woe begins when the seventh trumpet sounds (11:14-15). In preparation for what comes

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out of the seventh and last trumpet, the kingdoms of the world are turned over to Christ. He unites fully with His great power as God, no longer sitting at God's right hand and now sitting on the throne of God. This uniting is also spoken of in Matthew 19:28, 16:27, 25:31, 1 Corinthians 15:24-28, and Hebrews 10:12, 13.

This infuriates the nations as they realize the hour for the release of God's anger has now come. The dead will now be judged, rewards will now be given to God's people, and God will destroy all those who destroyed the earth. All things have now come to their end and will enter into the eternal life promised to God's people and the eternal hell promised to those who reject God and Christ. When Christ unites with His Father, God's throne, and God's power, He is no longer our Advocate or Redeemer—He becomes our Judge.

The temple of God is now opened in heaven in order to receive God's people into their eternal inheritance. This seventh trumpet brings us into a new eternal dispensation of man, who are now fully kings and priests and sons of God (11:16-19).

Everything that has happened up to this point completes the events of earth's last seven years. The remainder of the Book of Revelation focuses upon details of what has already taken place and on the judgment and eternal inheritance that are coming.

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Revelation 12 and 13 focuses on why things have happened as they have and offers more details on the events already revealed. Revelation 14-19 focuses upon God's hour of wrath. Revelation 20 focuses on the thousand-year rule of Christ on earth. Revelation 21 and 22 concludes the Revelation with a peek into the new heavens and new earth that will soon be here.

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Historical Reference

Revelation 12

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” –Revelation 12:7-9

MUCH HAS TAKEN PLACE after the seals were opened and the trumpets had blown. To understand why the events of the previous chapters have taken place, Revelation 12 gives insight into the cause for all the horror already released and that will be

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released with the pouring out of the seven vials. What we find is a great war taking place in heaven and played out on earth. This war increased greatly with the introduction of a great wonder in heaven, identified here as a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars (12:1).

Without question, this woman is Israel. The sun represents God's great favor upon her (Psa. 84:11). The moon at her feet signifies that time is submissive to her and the world's destiny is weaved together with Israel's (Gen. 1:14; Psa. 136:9). As we observe Israel and understand what is happening to her, we then understand how close the world is to its final days. The stars represent the twelve sons of Jacob, through whom God unfolds His plan for our present age (Gen. 37:9; 49:1-28).

The second personality in this heavenly war is the Devil, appearing here in his spiritual form as a great red dragon (Rev. 12:3). He is pictured as having seven heads and ten horns with seven crowns upon his heads. These heads, horns, and crowns represent empires and kings. More will be said about these in the next chapter. This great dragon incites a rebellion in heaven which caused one-third of the angels to follow him to the earth where he is within the air (Eph. 2:2). His purpose is to prevent the birth of Christ by influencing Herod to kill all children two

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years and younger (Rev. 12:4, Matt. 2:16). However, God intervenes, and the Christ child grows into adulthood, fulfills His ministry, dies on the cross, and then rises from the dead to sit on His throne at the right hand of God (Rev. 12:5).

To protect Israel, after Christ's ascension, she is scattered into the wilderness, representing her dispersion into the Gentile nations, where she has lived in relative peace (Rev. 12:6; Ezek. 20:35). She has been here until the last of the last days began, when she began returning to Israel in 1948, determined never to be run off her land again. Having returned, another battle takes place between God's angels, led by the archangel Michael, and the Devil and his angels. The Devil loses the battle. He is thrown out of heaven and *into* the earth. This means the Devil and his angels are no longer within the air, but are now "into" the earth, indicating they are under the surface of the earth, inside what a growing number believes is a hollow earth. I find it interesting that it was at this time, when Israel became a nation, that what is called the UFO phenomenon began to gain momentum. UFOs are most likely these fallen angels who have entered the earth after the battle with Michael (12:7-12).⁷

⁷ This author agrees with many who believe that it is under the surface of the earth and not from "outer space" that the fallen angels

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If UFOs are not fallen angels, then we need to ask, "Where are the Devil and his fallen angels now that they are with us?" Until this question can be answered differently, there is no doubt in this author's mind that the UFO sightings are not aliens in the popular understanding, but fallen angels. They are not extraterrestrials, but from within the earth.

Concerning the timing of the UFO phenomenon with Israel reforming as a nation in 1948, *Life* magazine's April 7, 1952 issue⁸ had on its cover as a secondary story the heading "*There Is a Case for Interplanetary Saucers.*" At this time, UFO sightings were a new phenomenon, starting about four years before the publication of the article. This dates the beginning of these sightings to around 1948. *Life* documents that "For four years the U.S. public has wondered, worried or smirked over the strange and insistent tales of eerie objects streaking across American skies."

Another observation made by *Life* was that these UFOs "for several years have been, and may be now, actually present in the atmosphere of the earth." This again confirms that just a few short years prior to 1952, there were no or only rare UFO sightings, but

and their UFO's originate. See Appendix G for more information on this.

⁸ H. B. Darrach Jr. and Robert Ginna, "There Is a Case for Interplanetary Saucers," *Life*, April 7, 1952.

Historical Reference

now they take place on a regular basis, since 1948, producing “literally dozens of incidents defying simple explanation.” Since the *Life* article, there have been hundreds and thousands of unexplained sightings, reaching over seven thousand reported sightings in 2013.⁹

I find the timing of UFO’s and Israel’s nationhood more than a coincidence, seeing it as the consequence of this battle between Michael and the Devil (12:7).

It appears the number of reported sightings will continue to increase until the Devil is ready to make his appearance on the earth with his legions of fallen angels. Because we know there are more than one hundred million angels (5:11), and that one-third have fallen with the Devil (12:4), that means at least thirty-three million of these creatures are here. Since their arrival, they have been busy preparing the earth for the arrival of one of their own, the one we call the Antichrist. The results of their preparations have been the increase in the world’s problems and antichrist spirit, which will continue to increase until the door is opened for the Antichrist to walk through.

This time of trouble and invasion by the fallen angels was revealed to John in Revelation 12:12:

⁹ Richard M. Dolan, *UFO’s for the 21st Century Mind* (Rochester: Dolan Press, 2014), 356

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“Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has but a short time.”

Now that the Devil and his angels are in the earth, he will eventually launch an all-out attack against Israel through the Antichrist. He is angry with her because she gave birth to Christ, the one who will inherit all that God created; but we also know God protects Israel. The Devil rages because of this intervention and sets out to kill every Israelite still scattered throughout the earth and every person who keeps the commandments of God and are Christians (12:17). This is the Great Tribulation set loose when the five seals are opened in Revelation 6.

CHAPTER 6

The Beast and False Prophets

Revelation 13

“And he causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” –Revelation 13:16-17

REVELATION 12 ENDED WITH the Devil and his angels entering the interior of the earth. With him and his minions now here, we find in Revelation 13 how he will take control and cause the global havoc

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outlined in Revelation 6, and the wrath of Christ released in Revelation 7-11.

THE DEVIL'S EARTHLY BODY

This chapter gives to us insight into how the Devil appears on the earth to control it as its "god." He appears in the form of a body and that body takes the form of empires.¹⁰

In his spiritual form Revelation 12:3 shows him as a "great red dragon." Here in Revelation 13:1 we see him in his earthly form as a beast rising up out of the sea with the same "seven heads and ten horns" as the dragon. Revelation 17:15 interprets the sea as peoples, multitudes, nations, and various languages. The "rising up" indicates the Devil's body develops on earth progressively throughout history as he puts the pieces in place to prepare for his rule over the earth through the one called the Antichrist. The Devil's seven heads represent empires which develop progressively throughout history.

These are the same empires as those found in Daniel 2, 7:7, 20, and Revelation 12:3; 17:3. A study of Daniel, chapters two and seven, along with a study of history, identify these empires as Babylon, Persia (Iran), Grecian Empire, Roman Empire, Great

¹⁰ Empires are distinguished from nations in that empires refer to a group of nations under the authority of one country.

The Beast and False Prophets

Britain/United States, Russia, and a leopard empire—most likely a coalition of Islamic nations represented by the four wings on the leopard's back and four heads (Dan. 7:6). These empires develop throughout history to grow the Devil's body and to enforce his will for two purposes: to blaspheme God and to oppose Him (Rev. 13:1). See Appendix F for more information concerning the identity of these empires.

Daniel 2, 7, and Revelation 13:2 reveal these empires as specific members of the Devil's body. Here's how Scripture relates the Devil's body with the empires:

BODY PART	EMPIRE	SCRIPTURE
Head	Babylon	Dan. 2:32, 38
Shoulders/Arms	Medes/Persia	Dan. 2:32, 39
Belly/Thighs	Grecian	Dan. 2:32, 39
Legs	Roman	Dan. 2:33, 40
Voice	Great Britain/US	Dan. 7:4
	Rev. 13:2	
Feet	Russia	Dan. 7:5
	Rev. 13:2	
Body/Flesh	Islam	Dan. 7:6
	Rev. 13:2	
Ten Toes	New World Order	Dan. 2:41-44,7:7-8
		Rev. 13:1

Note the development of the individual body parts is almost complete. Only two things remain: the connecting of all the body parts with the flesh/body

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of Islam, and for the ten toes to grow. When Islam assimilates the other empires to itself, the global ten-region realignment will then take place. The assimilation has begun with Islam moving into and taking control of cities in Europe, North and South America, Russia, and other places throughout the world. Concerning the Islamic transformation of the United States, take a look at the book, *Crescent Moon Rising* by Paul L. Williams.¹¹

This global ten-region realignment is represented by the ten horns and are the same as the ten toes in Daniel 2:41-44. After the seven empires of the Devil's body are complete, the world will then be divided into ten political/economic unions ruled by ten kings. From this new world order, the Antichrist will appear. He will not be one of the ten kings, but is a different king who did not rise up out of this earthly political system (Dan. 7:23-25). When he is given the leadership, he will remove three of the ten kings, take control of the new world order, and enforce the ultimate will of the Devil through this global realignment. This eleventh king is the little horn mentioned in Daniel 7.

In Revelation 13:1-10, the Antichrist is nowhere to be found. It only describes the development of

¹¹ Paul L. Williams, *Crescent Moon Rising* (Amherst: Prometheus, 2013).

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empires and the new world order, not the one who will take control. The Antichrist is revealed beginning in Revelation 13:11.

The ultimate purpose of this final global government is to blaspheme God, His name, His tabernacle, and all who live in heaven (13:6). It is also to kill everyone who belongs to God (13:7). As much as we like to think this won't happen, understand this new world order is given the authority by the Devil to achieve its goals (13:5, 7), and it is God who has given the Devil authority. Understandably, many will feel they must do something to resist this new world order. The disheartening truth is that no matter how we might try to resist, we will be overcome (13:10).

This ten-region global new world order and its antichrist agenda will be in place before the Antichrist takes control. As we move closer to the arrival of the Antichrist, Christians and Jews will increasingly be targeted, but the persecution, though intense, will not be as extreme as when the Antichrist takes control. We already are witnessing the increasing persecution of Christians throughout the world, as recorded by the following authors.

In 2003, David Limbaugh published the book *Persecution*, which outlines how "Christians are increasingly being driven from public life, denied their First Amendment rights, and even actively discriminated against for their beliefs" here in the

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United States.¹² On a worldwide scale, the authors of the 2013 book, *Persecuted: the Global Assault on Christians*, recorded that “Christians are the single most widely persecuted religious group in the world today.”¹³ In the book, *The Global War on Christians*, also written in 2013, John L. Allen Jr. observes that “estimates of the annual casualties in this global war range from a high of 100,000 to a low of 7,300. Even if we take the low-end number, it would work out to 146,000 new Christian martyrs over the past twenty years. If the higher end estimates turn out to be closer to the truth, then we’re talking about 2 million.”¹⁴

Another book, *Blood on the Altar*, published in 2014, records how persecution has moved from the political realm, from non-Christians, and we are now witnessing the persecution of true Christians by those claiming the name of Christ. Author Thomas Horn observed, “Yet, when discussing this end-times scenario, and in particular the subject of rigorous persecution, often overlooked is the role that

¹² David Limbaugh, *Persecution* (Washington DC: Regenery Publishing, Inc., 2003).

¹³Paul Marshall, Lela Gilbert, Nina Shea, *Persecuted: the Global Assault on Christians* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2013), 4.

¹⁴ John L. Allen Jr., *The Global War on Christians* (New York: Image, 2013), 25.

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religious ‘Christians’ are being shaped today to play against the true body of Christ.”¹⁵ The bottom-line is that regardless of how much Christians contribute to society and how much they strive for freedom, more and more they are considered the enemy and are persecuted as such—even by “fellow Christians.”

The symbolism in Revelation 13:1-10 is clear that the Devil enters the earth through empires. On the earth, these belong to him and he is their ruler, leading them to come against God and all who put their trust in Him (Luke 4:5-6; Matt. 24:21; Rev. 12:13, 17; Dan. 7:21, 25; 11:28, 30-33; 12:1, 7). From the seven empires, Satan will create a new world order that will be the eighth and last to rise upon the earth. When it is in place, the leopard (Islam) will be its main body. Russia will be its feet to carry out Satan’s plans against Israel. Great Britain and the United States will be Satan’s voice, articulating his agenda and giving direction to all the nations in preparation for the arrival of the Antichrist (Rev. 13:2).

Revelation 13:3 reveals that one of the empires is wounded and looked as if it were dead. To understand which empire this is, all that is necessary is to look at it after it has been healed. This picture is

¹⁵ Thomas Horn, *Blood on the Altar: The Coming War Between Christian vs. Christian* (Crane, MO: Defender, 2014), 6.

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given in this composite first beast of Revelation 13:2, where we discover this healed beast is the leopard empire (Islam). This revived empire attaches to itself the other empires of the Devil's body to establish the global, ten region new world order. This Islamic leopard is now very much alive and is the key empire in this age of the Antichrist. This composite, revived beast is also the fourth dreaded and terrible beast of Daniel 7:7-8.

Being Islamic would mean this wounded beast would not have come from the Western leg of the Roman Empire, but from the Eastern leg, known in the past as the Byzantine and Ottoman empires having developed from the Babylonian and Medes-Persian empires. Though the Roman Empire was brought down from the height of its glory, it has never been completely dead—remaining very much alive through the United States, Great Britain, and Europe, continuing to be a dominant world force. On the other hand, the Islamic empire has been dead after reaching its heights and is presently coming back to life and returning as the dominant power within the world today.

Author Joel Richardson also sees this revival. In his book, *Mideast Beast*, he writes, "When we generically refer to the 'Islamic Empire,' or the 'Islamic Caliphate,' we are including the various

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aforementioned dynasties,¹⁶ which together ruled the Islamic world for more than thirteen hundred years. But this pan-millennial Muslim government was, in fact, beheaded in 1924 when Turkish secular reformer Mustafa Kemal Atatürk abolished the universal Islamic government known as the caliphate and the office of the universal Islamic leader known as the caliph. The formerly unified empire was fractured into modern nation-states. Today, as the Western powers vacate the Middle East, the power of the Ottomans is regenerating. The head wound is being healed, and the Islamic Empire is reviving.”¹⁷

Until recent years, the Islamic empire had little global influence. Today it now impacts world affairs in major ways: assimilating into other nations; striving to change civil, national, and international laws; and entering local and national politics of the cities and countries in which it exists. To put all this in perspective with current events, let’s look at the following Scripture from Daniel 7:

¹⁶ Joel Richardson, *Mideast Beast* (Washington D.C.: WND Books, 2012), 156 identifies the dynasties from a historical perspective as Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Medes-Persian, Grecian, Roman, Islamic. I take the empires only from the ordering found in the book of Daniel: Babylon, Medes-Persians, Grecian Empire, Roman Empire, Great Britain/United States, Russia, Islamic.

¹⁷ *Ibid*

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“After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and break in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things” (Dan. 7:7-8).

In verses 19-23 we read:

“I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, break in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spoke very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon

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earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.”

This fourth beast completes the path for the Antichrist to appear. This beast is different from the previous empires with more cruelty and brutality in the advancement of its goals. This beast is the same composite beast revealed in Revelation 13:2. It appears the Islamic State, formerly named ISIL and ISIS, may be this fourth beast in its development stage. If it is, when this beast reaches maturity, the new world order and the Antichrist will appear.

The brutality of this fourth beast is described in Daniel 7 with these adjectives: teeth of iron, nails of brass, devour, break in pieces, and stamping of the residue with his feet. These adjectives also describe the Islamic State. The group’s acts of brutality are so cruel that other terrorist groups, including al-Qaeda, have condemned and distanced themselves from them, as the following author observed:

“And after al-Qaeda rejected AQI because of tactics such as this, tactics so depraved and brutal that they even repulsed al-Qaeda leader

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Osama bin Laden, what did AQI become? The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. It became ISIS.”¹⁸

The brutality of the Islamic State is described by author Jay Sekulow in his book, *Rise of ISIS*, in this way:

“ISIS is brutal beyond imagination to anyone—Christians, Jew, Yazidi, and even Shiite Muslim—who is not aligned with its jihadist form of Sunni Islam. In Syria, ISIS has slaughtered Shiites, Christians, and Alawites (an obscure Islamic sect). In Iraq, it has done the same, giving Christians in conquered territories a chilling ultimatum: “Convert, leave your homes, or die?”¹⁹

While driving my son to school in the fall of 2014, I heard a guest on a radio show give an illustration of the brutality of the Islamic State. He told how the Islamic State gave a captive a choice: “Either convert or be shot.” When the person converted, they then informed him he would now be beheaded. The captive protested and received the chilling explanation: “I said I wouldn’t shoot you. Now that you’ve converted, we’ll take off your head to make sure you stay Muslim.”

¹⁸ Jay Sekulow, *Rise of ISIS* (New York: Howard Books, 2014), 4.

¹⁹ *IBID*, 8

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Another example is this one from the website pamelageller.com:²⁰

“Militants from the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) beheaded eight Syrian rebels who had surrendered in a town on the border with Iraq last week despite pledges of an amnesty, a monitor said Monday.”

“The men surrendered in Albu Kamal because the Islamic State had offered amnesty to people who fought them if they turned themselves in,” Observatory director Rami Abdel Rahman told AFP.”

In an article on theguardian.com, Martin Chulov observed that the brutality of the Islamic State has no boundaries, even with other Muslims, as they are presently killing hundreds of Iraq and Syrian Muslims as the following quotes confirm:²¹

“Mass killings have become synonymous with the jihadists’ rampage through western Iraq and eastern Syria, in which large numbers of captured soldiers and civilians on both sides of the border have been murdered and their bodies gruesomely displayed.”

²⁰ Pamela Geller, *ISIS Beheads 8 Syrians Who surrendered: Monitor* (PamelaGeller.com, November 4, 2014).

²¹ Martin Chulov, *Isis kills hundreds of Iraqi Sunnis from Albu Nimr tribe in Anbar province* (theguardian.com, October 30, 2014).

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“Since then up to 800 captured Syrian troops have been murdered after their bases were overrun in eastern Syria. And at least 1,000 Iraqi troops—all Shia—remain missing after they were captured in Tikrit.”

It appears the cruelty of the Islamic State will continue to increase and become more brutal to pave the way for the new world order and their Mahdi, our Antichrist. The fear and terror it causes throughout the world likely will be another reason the nations give up their sovereignty and religion in favor of a new world order, blindly believing peace will come.

Since 2013 the Islamic State has been on steroids exercising an aggression, cruelty, and brutality that hasn't been seen since the wholesale massacres of Genghis Khan. In the short time the Islamic State began its reign of terror, it has taken large amounts of territory in Eastern Syria, as well as throughout northern and western Iraq. The Islamic State does what it will to resurrect the Islamic Caliphate, which is a state ruled by a single political and religious leader, and Sharia law. We know this leader will be the one we call the Antichrist.

The Islamic State's goal is to do whatever it takes to establish the caliphate. Its greatest weapons are fear, terror, and not submitting to any law but their own. When the caliphate is re-established, the new

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world order is able to take place and the Antichrist (Mahdi) is able to come to power.

The purpose of the new world order is to develop a world without the Creator God. Under the new order everything that has to do with the true God will be blasphemed. All God's people will be persecuted and killed. When the ten region realignment is in place, it will have the authority to throw into prison and kill Jews and Christians, as well as anyone opposed to this new world order. As we saw in Revelation 6, the majority of Christians and Jews will be killed when this empire is in place and the Antichrist is in control. This is known as the Great Tribulation and will require much faith (holding on to the promises of God, though we can't see them) and patience (enduring without anger, bitterness, or wrong thoughts or feelings anything that might impact us) (Rev. 13:10). Learn these fruits of the Spirit now.

Up to this point Christians have not yet been raptured. Most of us will be killed during the Great Tribulation, being among the two billion killed when the fourth seal is opened (6:7-11). It appears Islam will be the great persecutor; pay attention to how the Middle East and Islam dominant the news. Watch how Islam is rapidly increasing. We know the arrival of the Antichrist is soon. Pay close attention to the

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stranglehold Islam increasingly is having on world affairs.

As we have seen, this first beast out of the sea refers to the rising up of specific empires to pave the way for the new world order and the Antichrist. Some have considered this first beast also refers to the Antichrist because of the use of the pronouns *his* and *him*. However, these refer back to the term “first beast” and not to another unidentified personality in this passage. Other students of prophecy have reasoned that because this passage refers to the Antichrist’s kingdom, and every kingdom has a king over it, then this first beast must also reference the Antichrist. However, there are no indications this passage refers to anything or anyone else other than the first beast, which is clearly identified as a composite of empires. The Antichrist will be identified in later verses.

Others reason that because Scripture is clear about the Antichrist and a false prophet, this first beast must refer to the Antichrist because the false prophet is identified as the second beast, beginning with 13:11. However, when we look at the second beast, there are strong indicators that it is also the Antichrist. Revelation 20:10 also confirms this. Here we find three personalities identified: the Devil (first beast), the beast (Antichrist), and the false prophet. These are clearly three different entities. If the

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Antichrist was this first beast, he would then be the Devil on earth. He could not be both the Devil and the Antichrist (beast) described in Revelation 20:10. It is clear this passage does not support the first beast and the Antichrist being the same entity.

So, where does the Antichrist fit into this picture? Let us now look at the second beast.

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The above political structure creates a closed system giving the Antichrist access to every Christian and every person in the world who is sympathetic to God. When it is in place, the Antichrist will rise up to lead the final global uprising against God and His people.

Whereas the first beast entered the earth through the various people and languages as empires, this second beast rises up “out of” the earth (13:11). The two words “out of” indicate this second beast will not originate from people and the nations, but from another place that is below the earth’s surface. In chapter five and appendix G, it is explained how the Devil and his fallen angels are presently living below the earth’s surface until they are given permission to surface in mass and take control of our

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present age. This second beast comes “out of” the earth, therefore must be fallen angels.²²

This second beast has “two horns like a lamb” (Rev. 13:11) and speaks with great power and authority, having been given this power from the Devil. We have already seen that a horn represents a king (Rev. 17:12; Dan. 8:20); therefore it would also represent a king here in Revelation 13. Since these horns are “like a lamb,” and the lamb represents Christ, these two kings would represent false Christs or false prophets. Also, like Christ, they come from outside earth’s system to rule over the beliefs and hearts of people. For the people, especially God’s people, to accept the new, global ten-region new world order, the Devil needs to change what they believe. This is where the two horns of the lamb enter the picture.

The big question is: who are these kings? The clues reveal there are two kings represented by the horns and that they are like a lamb, similar to Christ (Rev. 13:11). Because we are living in the day when we anticipate the coming of the Antichrist and the return of Christ, that means these two kings are

²² Check out the book, *The Broken Bible* by John E. Chitty for more information concerning the Devil and his angels living below the earth’s surface.

John E. Chitty, *The Broken Bible* (New York: Writers Club Press, 2002).

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already upon the earth. To identify them, we only need to ask what two religions are most like the lamb and have great influence over the beliefs and hearts of people right now? Without question these two would be Islam, established in the seventh century, and Catholicism, established in the fourth century. The Devil raised up Islam to distort Judaism and deceive the East, and Catholicism to distort Christianity and deceive the West.

Catholicism is presently the second largest religion in the world, with a little more than 1.1 billion Catholics worldwide, according to the *Washington Times*.²³ Its present structure took form when Constantine and the Popes merged Christian terms with pagan customs and holy days to bring peace to the two conflicting groups. Through mutual compromise, peace came to the Roman Empire. However, the cost of compromise set in motion the great forces of deception and corruption which now have peaked in our twenty-first century. This apostasy is the welcome mat giving the Antichrist permission to rise up on the earth. Perhaps the number one trait of Catholicism is putting the Pope in place of Christ on the earth.

²³ Jennifer Harper, *84 Percent of the World Population Has Faith; a Third are Christian* (*WashingtonTimes.com*, December 23, 2012).

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Islam is now the largest and fastest growing religion in the world with over 1.6 billion Muslims worldwide.²⁴ It claims to be the restoration of monotheism and truth, superseding both Judaism and Christianity. Islam distorts the story of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac by substituting Ishmael in Isaac's place. It also claims Ishmael is the rightful heir to the promises given to Isaac. Islam does not believe that Jesus is the son of God, is divine, nor does it believe in the triune nature of the Godhead. Perhaps the number one trait of Islam is putting Allah in the place of God.

These religious systems embrace close to three billion people under the Devil's direct authority to prepare them to receive the coming cashless new world order—and this number will increase greatly as we get closer to the appearance of the Antichrist. The Devil is fully aware that when God's people do not have correct knowledge about God, they will be moved from their faith, or as the prophet Hosea pointed out, they will be destroyed (Hosea 4:6).

According to the *Washington Times* article, one billion people are Protestant, Evangelicals, and so forth.²⁵ According to our study in this book, the majority of these are not true Christians. Combined

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ Ibid.

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with the other religions, almost half the world embraces a false or distorted form of Judaism and Christianity. The other half just doesn't have anything to do with God.

It is important to understand that Catholicism and Islam are of the Devil in origin, having received their influence and power from "out of" the earth, speaking under the Devil's power, influencing great multitudes of people to receive the economic mark (Rev. 13:11-12). Having this understanding will help keep us from the great deception they will eventually promote by encouraging everyone to receive the economic mark of the new world order. Their ultimate purpose for coming to power is to cause all to give their allegiance/worship to this newly formed world government (13:12-18).

When this global economic system and mark of the beast arrives, it appears the heads of Catholicism (the Pope) and Islam (the Mahdi) will have the power from the Devil to do many miracles in order to deceive people into accepting this new economic system as a good thing, to make an image of this global beast/empire, and cause everyone who does not accept this new world order to be killed (Rev. 13:7, 15). This image is, no doubt, some sort of computerized, cashless, economic system. It will have an identifying mark/image that everyone must receive in order to buy or sell anything (13:16-18).

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Though the mark appears to have to do with computer technology, what this image is appears to be anyone's guess at this time. Recognizing the beast as an empire, it may be the logo or symbol representing this new government. We do know that when an economic system is mandated, requiring that we take some sort of mark or implant on or in our body to buy or sell, that system must be rejected—at whatever the cost. When this economic system has been established and strongly encouraged by Islam and Catholicism, it will be turned over to the final false prophet, the one we call the Antichrist.

The deception of Islam and Catholicism throughout history will peak with this final false prophet. In the same way the seven empires developed throughout history under the first beast, and will culminate with the global, ten-region new world order, so does Islam and Catholicism develop throughout history to culminate with the Antichrist and his false prophet, known together as the second beast. Islam and Catholicism were raised up by the Devil to prepare the minds and hearts of people to receive the realignment of all nations into ten economic regions and to receive the economic mark of the beast. With all the effort the Devil puts forth to deceive the world into accepting his new order of the ages, it appears the natural inclination of people is to

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know and serve the true God, and the Devil is doing everything in his power to hinder our knowing Him.

Presently, as we saw in previous paragraphs, the majority of religious people are either Muslim or Catholic. Through these, the Devil is setting the final stage for an all-out global war against God, the Jews, and Christians. If we are to endure the coming hard times, we must be students of God's Word and be in relationship with God through the Holy Spirit as never before. Without real fellowship with God, there will be no real power to motivate us to endure the hard times coming.

When this global, cashless, economic system has been established, it will be turned over to the final false prophet, the one we call the Antichrist. He will be Islamic and most likely is Islam's anticipated savior, known as "the Mahdi." For more information on this Islamic savior, check out chapter four of *The Islamic Antichrist* by Joel Richardson.²⁶ Eventually, the Antichrist/Mahdi will depart from his Abrahamic and Islamic heritage and religion to serve another god, a military god of force, that he uses to exert his will (Dan. 11:37-38). He will stand in the place of God and all religions as God. Whoever does not receive him and his mark will be killed. Islam and

²⁶ Joel Richardson, *The Islamic Antichrist* (Los Angeles: WND Books, 2009), 21.

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Catholicism also will embrace the Antichrist's religion when he makes the claim that he is God.

From what we have said, the Antichrist will be Islamic. In Appendix D, we identified him as coming out of Syria. Since the last empire will connect the seven empires of the Antichrist's kingdom to the leopard (Islam), this also identifies him with Islam. To further connect this second beast with Islam, we only need to ask if Muslims are anticipating a religious leader to rise up with the character of the Antichrist? The unequivocal answer is—yes. Richardson writes in *The Islamic Antichrist*, “The most anticipated and central sign that Muslims await is the coming of a man known as ‘the Mahdi.’” He goes on to write, “The coming of the Mahdi is the central crowning element of all Islamic end-time narratives. So central to Islamic eschatological expectation is the coming of the Mahdi that some Muslim scholars do not even refer to the Minor Signs as such, but instead refer to them as ‘the signs accompanying the Mahdi.’”²⁷

In chapter five of his book, Richardson compares the Antichrist and the Mahdi. The similarities can only be called identical. Here are the subheadings he uses throughout chapter five in comparing the two:²⁸

²⁷ Ibid, 21.

²⁸ Ibid, 33-50.

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- “A Powerful Political and Military World Leader”
- “Targeted Campaign Against Jews and Christians”
- “A Military Attack Against Israel”
- “Signing of Seven-Year Peace Treaty”
- “Changing the Laws and Times”
- “Rider On A White Horse”

Richardson confirms that the Antichrist appears to be none other than this much anticipated messiah—the Mahdi. With him will be a prophet. Jesus. Of course, this is not the Jesus sent by God, but an imitator, a false Christ, who is a faithful Muslim, a subordinate of the Mahdi, who will institute Islamic law, abolish Christianity, and, alongside the Mahdi, kill Jews and Christians. Here’s what Richardson observes about this Islamic Jesus:

“...the Muslim Jesus, in both his nature and actions, is *far* different from the biblical Jesus. Rather than coming to reign as king and messiah over all the earth from Jerusalem, Jesus instead comes to convert the world to Islam—or kill those who refuse to do so. Instead of coming to

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save and deliver faithful Christians and Jews, he comes instead to slaughter them."²⁹

Since the Pope is in the place of Christ on earth, and is one of the horns of the false prophet, he will be the false Jesus working with the Antichrist to hand over the keys of Peter to him.

This second beast of Islam and Catholicism progresses throughout history to end with their final leaders, the Mahdi and the final Pope (who will claim to be Christ returned from heaven). Even now, there is great anticipation for the arrival of the Mahdi and the return of Christ. Both Islam and Catholicism are presently preparing the world for the return of their final leaders.

To prepare ourselves now to stand unmovable in the true Christ requires that we are truly in relationship with God through His Holy Spirit. The deception, so prevalent among God's people, does not grab hold because of lack of good, Christian works and knowledge, but because of lack of an actual personal relationship with an actual, living God.

²⁹ Joel Richardson, *The Islamic Antichrist* (Los Angeles: WND Books, 2009), 59.

CHAPTER 7

Wrath of God

Revelation 14-16

“And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in your sickle, and reap: for the time is come for you to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.” –Revelation 14:14-16

UP TO THIS POINT, seven years have gone by from Revelation 6-13 with the opening of the seals and the blowing of the trumpets. Starting with this chapter, we now come to the end of all things as we know

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them when God's wrath is poured out. Christ has now reunited with His divine power and is no longer sitting at God's right hand, but is on the throne of God never to be separated from His power again. Everything in Revelation 14-18 takes place within one hour and is that time known as the "day and hour of God's wrath" (Rev. 14:7, 3:10; Matt. 24:36). It is this wrath that God's people do not go through, the wrath of God.

PREPARING FOR THE WRATH OF GOD

Before God's wrath is released upon the earth, Christ returns to Mt. Zion with the 144,000 Israelites of Revelation 7 who are now martyred and in heaven. These are a special group of Israelites determined to follow Christ with all of their heart, soul, and mind wherever He leads them. These Israelites never married, never spoke deception, were found without fault, and were the unblemished, spotless ones of God's people who are now received as the first-fruits to God (Rev. 14:4). In the Old Testament, the first-fruits of the grain offering were to be offered before the Hebrews could harvest the rest of their crop (Lev. 23:10, 14). It is the same with the 144,000 Jews. After God receives them, then the rest of God's people can be received (Rom. 11:15-16).

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After Christ returns with the 144,000, the rapture then takes place before God releases His hour of judgment (Rev. 14:14-18). This is the receiving of all Christians after the 144,000 first-fruits have been received. This rapture is also recorded in Matthew 24:30-31 and takes place when the two witnesses are killed and then resurrected (Rev. 11:11-12). It also may include any of God's people who have not been killed by the Antichrist. After the rapture, another angel follows behind Christ to gather those who are left behind to cast them into the great winepress of God's wrath (14:19-20), which is the pouring out of the seven vials.

Before the rapture takes place, God pours out His love and compassion one last time to a people who have rejected Him. The angels identified here are not people or preachers encouraging repentance, as some have suggested, but are literal angels. The first angel is sent to preach the everlasting gospel, to compel one last time all to fear God and give glory to Him because His hour of judgment has now come (14:6-7). A second angel follows, proclaiming the message that Babylon/earth is fallen because she made all nations to blaspheme God and commit sin (14:8). A third angel follows to warn everyone left on the earth that they will now experience God's hour of judgment and be sent to the lake of fire because they

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have worshipped the Antichrist or received his mark (14:9-11).

Please understand that any torture or beheading we may experience under the Antichrist will seem like a bee sting compared to the eternal judgment given by God to those who do not receive Him. Our focus must be on the eternal reward that will be given. As the reality of heaven and hell are perceived, any pain and sorrow and pressure we experience at the hand of the Antichrist will pale in comparison. We must not hold on to the things of this world so strongly that we find ourselves accepting the Devil's economic system to preserve our lives. Let us learn to be like the disciples and prophets who loved not their lives, even if it meant they would die.

After the reapings take place, the seven angels with the seven last plagues stand ready with all who were martyred by the Antichrist to pour out God's wrath. This is a joyous day in Heaven for the martyred saints as they sing a song of deliverance (song of Moses) and a song of triumph (song of the Lamb) because vengeance will now take place and all their prayers will be answered (15:1-4).

At this point, no one is permitted to enter God's temple until after the wrath of God has been released and completed (15:7-8).

THE WRATH OF GOD REVEALED

In Revelation 16, the seven angels with the seven vials of God's wrath are given permission to pour out God's judgments upon the earth (16:1). These seven vials come out of the seventh trumpet and are the events of the seventh trumpet. When this takes place, the earth and the elements for sustaining life are destroyed.

When the first vial is poured out, *all* people break out with unbearable sores (16:2). With the second vial, *all* saltwater becomes like blood, and *every* living creature in the water dies (16:3). The third vial contaminates *all* fresh water, making it like blood and undrinkable (16:4). After the fourth vial is poured out, *all* people are scorched by the sun, but still choose to blaspheme the name of God instead of repenting (16:8-9). When the fifth vial is poured out, darkness covers the earth (16:10). It is incredible that those left believe these plagues are from God, yet they still choose to reject Him and spit out blasphemes (16:11). When the sixth vial is poured out, the Euphrates River dries up to prepare the way for the militaries from the East (16:12). Three demons are then sent out to gather the militaries of the world together at a place called Armageddon to fight against God—the one causing all their grief (16:13-16). I find it astonishing that there is no

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power to act unless God permits it—even their warring against Him must have God's permission.

When the seventh vial is poured out, a powerful voice from God's throne announces, "It is done!" (16:17). The great city Babylon (earth) is torn into three parts by an earthquake, causing all the cities to fall and every island and mountain to disappear. Great hail, weighing one hundred pounds, falls upon every person left on the earth. Yet, the people who are left continue to blaspheme God because of their great discomfort (16:18-21).

CHAPTER 8

Judgment of Babylon

Revelation 17-18

“And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying to me, Come hither; I will show to you the judgment of the great whore that sits upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” –Revelation 17:1-2

IN THE LAST CHAPTER, the militaries of the earth were being gathered at Armageddon to fight against God. Before this battle takes place in Revelation 19, Revelation 17 and 18 gives understanding as to why the judgment of God in Revelation 16 was poured out

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upon the earth and toward whom His judgments were directed.

In Revelation 17, we are introduced to a new personality—the great whore. The loves of this particular whore are identified as riches, all kinds of sinful acts, and physical lusts. She is called “the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth” (17:5) because these originate upon the physical earth from her. She is called “Mystery, Babylon the Great” (17:5), because she is not easily known. We cannot point our finger at her and say, “There she is,” because she is not a physical structure/city or person. Babylon is the system/spirit of the earth, deceiving people into thinking they can trust and participate in the riches and pleasures of this world and other gods without trusting fully in the Creator God.

This is our greatest battle on earth. We are at war with what belongs to God and what is of the earth. Jesus warned we cannot serve two masters (Matt. 6:24). We cannot be lukewarm in our trust in God (Rev. 3:15), nor can we be a Christian without the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9). We are repeatedly warned because the Devil works hard to convince us to compromise our faith and to trust in the things that can be seen instead of Christ and God alone. While the world is motivated with the pleasures of this great whore, God’s people are not motivated by these

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and are persecuted and martyred for their choices. In the same way that Abel was killed because his works were righteous and his brothers were unrighteous, so are we in this world often mistreated for no other reason than that we strive to live life God's way (1 John 3:12).

In Revelation 17:2, we are told these riches, pleasures, and sins motivate the kings, rulers, and people of our nations in such a great way that they become like drunkards. The senses of a drunkard are desensitized. His ability to speak, walk, or relate to life is greatly impaired. In the same way, overindulgence in what is in this world also desensitizes our senses toward God. Our ability to speak, to walk, or to relate to those around us in a righteous way is greatly impaired. When the things of this world become life's focus, the things of God take a back seat and God becomes the enemy, along with all who serve Him. His people are persecuted and martyred.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, we must examine ourselves to recognize the bondage we are in to the things of this world. It is great blasphemy to say we trust God when it is actually paychecks, people, and pleasures that keep us at peace. Would we still have peace and hope if all that we possessed were taken from us? Would we still have the assurance of God's love for us if all hell broke out in

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our life? That day is coming. Now is the time to develop our faith in an unseen God and wait patiently for Him.

The beast that the great whore sits upon to carry her evil lovers throughout the earth is the scarlet beast that has seven heads and ten horns (17:3). These have already been identified in chapter six of this book as the empires of Babylon, Persia (Iran), Grecian Empire, Roman Empire, Great Britain/United States, Russia, and the leopard. Through these, and the future reign of the ten kings, this whore's riches, lusts, and persecution against God and His people are distributed throughout the world.

The nations have been raised up for one main purpose—to come against God, represented by the names of blasphemy upon the heads of this great beast. For U.S. citizens, who have long believed that our great land has been raised up for Christian purposes, this is a sobering thought. For a reality check and food for thought, read a couple of books listed in the endnote.³⁰ In hindsight, we now understand how the Devil used the United States to

³⁰ Manly P. Hall *The Secret Destiny of America* (New York: Penguin Group, 2008).

James Wasserman, *The Secrets of Masonic Washington* (Rochester, VT; Destiny Books, 2008).

Robert Hieronimus, PHD. *Founding Fathers, Secret Societies* (Rochester, VT; Destiny Books, 2006).

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cleverly merge Christianity with the things of this world, so we often equate God's blessings and presence with material prosperity. The U.S. has taken the lead in teaching the world how to merge capitalism (mammon) with Christianity, helping to advance the apostasy of the church to receive the Antichrist.

Another incredible thought concerning this great whore is that she is called "that great city" (17:18); this information is astounding. That great city, Babylon, is the earth itself! I say this because the description in Revelation 18 can refer to none other than the earth—not a city on the earth. See Appendix H for more information on Babylon being the earth.

Babylon's judgment is described in Revelation 18:2 with an angel coming out of heaven filling the earth with the light of his glory. Her judgment begins with a strong voice crying out that Babylon/earth has come to its end because Babylon/earth has become the home of demons, evil spirits, and every unclean and hateful bird. This is not figurative language or a reference to the spiritual realm, but the entrance of these entities actually upon the earth. An unsettling thought is that since we are living in the last days, these unclean spiritual entities are with us now.

Babylon's/earth's judgment also comes because of its focus on the things which can be seen, heard, and felt: the desires of the flesh, the desires of the

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eyes, and the pride of life—all that is of the earth (1 John 2:16). As God's people, we are to come out of the earth by being in the earth but not of it (John 17:14-15). The pleasures and riches the world offers should not be what motivates us, in where we find our pleasure, or cause us worry, even when we don't have the necessities to sustain our life (Matt. 6:25-34). We are to relate to all the earth offers with temperance (Titus 1:8; 1 Cor. 6:12). When we separate from the things that belong to the world, we will not be part of the judgment that comes upon it. We will be removed and spared from God's hour of wrath through the rapture.

This time of judgment brings great distress upon the earth as men, women, and children watch its destruction, which comes as vengeance on behalf of heaven, the apostles, and prophets (Rev. 18:20). When judgment comes, the earth's system, as we know it, will no longer exist, never to rise again. All activity will cease. There will be no more buying and selling, no more dancing and celebration, no more business of any kind, and no more marrying and giving in marriage. Everything we equate to life and living will end.

Take a close look at Revelation 18:23. I find it incredible that God calls the businessmen and bankers of our world "sorcerers." Why? Because they participate in the Devil's work of promoting those

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things that do not encourage trust and faith in Christ. They practice their sorcery on every continent and in every nation, deceiving people to trust in pleasures and riches and all the things that can be seen—instead of the unseen Creator God—for their health, wealth, and happiness.

This word sorcery, in the Greek, is *pharmakeia*, which is where we get our word for pharmacy. Its basic meaning is the use or administration of drugs and of poison.³¹ Having this word merged with merchants indicates that drugs will be big business. It appears the great explosion of healthcare (allopathic and natural) is a major player in distributing drugs to people as a means to poison their minds to make them susceptible to demonic influence and preparing for the appearance of the demonic on the earth. With a pill or healthcare solution for almost every mental, emotional, and behavioral issue out there, the Devil is making it easy to influence people with his will. And what is his will? To get us to trust everything in the world for our health, wealth, and happiness instead of trusting God. I must admit, it all sounds beneficial and benevolent, but I think we need to rethink what

³¹ *The New Thayer's Greek English Lexicon* defines *pharmakeia*/sorceries as a. the use or the administration of drugs b. poisoning c. sorcery, magical arts, often found in connection with idolatry and fostered by it.

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we actually trust in for our health, wealth, and happiness.

This word *pharmakeia* also refers to witchcraft, indicating that drugs and the demonic go hand-in-hand. With healthcare as big business, greatly supporting the economy, with illegal drug use a constant major national issue, and with the legalization of marijuana, it should be a wake-up call to how dominate the demonic is within our culture today.³² Each person who claims the name of Christ should rethink who they are in Christ and what their focus is really on and then take the words of the Apostle Paul to Archippus to heart, “Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you fulfill it” (Col. 4:17). I often paraphrase this verse in this way: “You know what is to be done – do it!

In this great earthly system called Babylon, God’s people will be considered earth’s enemy and will be persecuted and killed. Because the Devil is the earth’s god (2 Cor. 4:4), and we are in the enemy’s territory, we must always be vigilant and alert since he is out to

³² *Health Care Is the Fastest-Growing Sector of the Economy*, PolicyMic.com. “The health care industry has experienced a steady 22.7% increase in jobs compared to the slight 2.1% increase among other employment sectors over the past decade. And according to a study by the Altarum Institute, the national unemployment rate would be at 8.8% (a point higher than it currently is) if the industry hadn’t started growing immediately following the recession in 2007.”

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destroy us with the world system he has developed (1 Peter 5:8). Christ warned that if those of the world mistreated Him, they would also mistreat us (John 15:18-20). 1 John 3:12 also reminds us the world's hatred toward us has to do with our choice to live a righteous life in contrast to their choice to live an unrighteous life.

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CHAPTER 9

The Great Battle

Revelation 19-20

“And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments: for he has judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and has avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.” –Revelation 19:1-2

THERE IS GREAT REJOICING in heaven because the earth’s system (Babylon) has now been judged. Through this judgment, the prayers of God’s people are answered, they are avenged, and God is revealed to all that He is *the* Lord God omnipotent. This final

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judgment of the earth now puts the final pieces in place in preparation for the marriage of the Lamb. The first order of business is to prepare the marriage supper. Those who are invited are God's people (Rev. 19:9).

To prepare this feast, Christ, who is now one with God's throne and power, physically appears riding upon a white horse to make war with the remnant left upon the earth. Following Him are the angelic armies, also riding white horses. Christ's weapon is a sword coming out of His mouth, representing God's Word, which overcomes all His adversaries. So fierce and powerful is God's Word that it overcomes His enemies as if they were grapes in a winepress. All people left on the earth will now be dead. It is this carnage of bodies of kings, captains, soldiers, and all people that provides food for the marriage supper of the Lamb (19:11-16). An angel then calls to the birds to come and eat of this great feast to remove their bodies off the earth (19:17-18).

This battle at Armageddon began when the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered to make war against Christ in Revelation 16 (16:14-16). The battle is short-lived with the beast (Antichrist) and false prophet taken captive and cast alive into the lake of fire (19:19-20). The words "cast alive" make it clear that their bodies are cast into a very physical lake of fire. It is also clear the Devil is

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not the same personality as the beast or the false prophet because they were cast into the lake of fire while the Devil is taken captive, chained, and placed in the bottomless pit for one thousand years. Christ also kills everyone who comes against Him. After the battle, the great marriage supper of the Lamb begins. (20:1-3)

After this great battle, Revelation 20:4-5 tells us that those martyred by the Antichrist will have the great privilege of ruling with God on the earth for one thousand years. This is called the first resurrection. This privilege is reserved for those martyred by the Antichrist who will be considered blessed and holy and are called the priests of God and of Christ (20:6). It appears these martyred Christians will assist Christ in rebuilding the now desolate and broken earth.

After the thousand-year period is over, the Devil will be released from the bottomless pit to once again deceive the nations (20:7-8). Apparently, the people who make up the nations in the millennium are the children of those who have been martyred by the Antichrist and raised to rule with Christ during the thousand years.

Each time God ushered in a new world order, the children came from those God used to begin the new world. When Adam and Eve departed Eden to enter the new world order of sin, they populated the earth. It was Noah, his sons, and their wives that

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repopulated the new world order after the flood. It appears that those martyred by the Antichrist, and now ruling with Christ for a thousand years, will begin the repopulation of the earth and the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham that his seed will be as numerous as the grains of sand and the stars in the sky. We are talking about trillions times trillions of descendants of Abraham that will eventually populate God's kingdom.

After the Devil is released from his bottomless pit prison, he again deceives the nations to gather them in one last battle to attempt to destroy the Jews and Jerusalem (20:8-9). The Devil's instrument for gathering the armies is Gog, who is the chief prince over the land area of Magog (Ezek. 38:2-3). As the chief prince, Gog is the angel who has authority over the countries of Meshech and Tubal in the land of Magog. This understanding of angels in authority over nations is clear in Daniel 10:13, 20-21. In these verses the angels in authority over Persia, Greece, and Israel are identified. Michael is identified specifically as Israel's prince (Dan. 10:21).

During this battle, the Devil is taken captive and thrown into the lake of fire to join the beast and false prophet. From this point on, the source of sin is completely removed from heaven and earth—never to impact God's work again.

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After this final battle, God appears, sitting on a great white throne. When He appears, the heavens and earth disappear (Rev. 20:11). The Apostle Peter tells us that a great fire will melt and dissolve the present heaven and earth so there will be nothing left of them (2 Pet. 3:10-12). Peter uses the plural “heavens,” implying more than one. We know there are three heavens. The heavens that Peter refers to would be the heaven of the sky and clouds and the heaven of the stars and galaxies. The third heaven is where God is. When God appears, His heaven will replace the sky and all that is in it—visible and invisible; and space and all that is in it, seen and unseen, so that God’s kingdom encompasses all creation.

The rest of the dead, who were not part of the first resurrection in Revelation 20:1-6, are now resurrected and stand before God to be judged. Anyone whose name is not written in God’s Book of Life is cast into the lake of fire (20:12-15). The horror of it all is that the souls and spirits who are there continue to exist in excruciating, unbearable pain. Concerning the Book of Life, your name is already in the book. The only thing that can remove your name is sin (3:15; 17:18; 20:15; 22:19).

Those who read this have a choice to make for either eternity in God’s kingdom or eternity in hell. No decision equates to choosing hell.

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CHAPTER 10

A New Heaven and New Earth

Revelation 21:1–22:6

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.” –Revelation 21:1-2

GOD’S ETERNAL PLAN FOR creating the new creature, man, now enters its fulfillment. All God’s people enter eternal life where there will be a new heaven and a new earth. As we saw in the previous chapter, this will not be a rebuilt or repaired earth to

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replace our present heaven and earth, but a completely new earth. The heavenly Jerusalem, or New Jerusalem, will now be unveiled by God, coming out of heaven, prepared as a bride dressed for her husband. Revelation 21 makes it clear the New Jerusalem is the “tabernacle” of God. This is confirmed by the great voice saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men” (Rev. 21:3). I find this description as a tabernacle enlightening, since a tabernacle is not a permanent structure like a temple. Using this word, instead of temple, indicates a mobile city, perhaps traveling the universe and overseeing all of God’s trillions times trillions of galaxies, which one day will be populated with the children of Abraham and his adopted children.

The New Jerusalem also is described as the bride of Christ, where God’s people will live. A bride is one who is merged as one with her bridegroom (Gen. 2:24; Eph. 5:31). It appears this represents that this city is where God will become one with His new creation—man in the glorified flesh. In this city, God will walk and talk and work alongside His new creation. There will be no tears, no pain, no death, no crying, and no sorrows because these have all been removed and cast into the lake of fire because the source of all these, the Devil, has also been cast into this fiery lake (Rev. 21:4, 20:10). There will be no temple in God’s city because God and Christ will be its

A New Heaven and New Earth

glory. It's incredible to consider, but there will be no need for a sun or moon because God will be its light. There will be no night in God's city (21:22-23). Imagine that—one day, we will never sleep (21:25).

As we consider God's inheritance to man, we understand the Devil's great hatred for man and Christ. In heaven, he and the angels were the most powerful of all God's creation. When he saw all that God created, he no doubt assumed he and the angels would rule with God over it all. Instead, God revealed His plan to create a new creature similar to the angels, but different in that God would place in man His Spirit and man would inherit all He created—including angels who would serve man. Realizing this grand and crowning work of God would not be his, the Devil's pride, greed, and lust for power kicked into high gear and he chose to become God's adversary. He determined to steal the inheritance from God's Son and man, even insisting he would sit on God's throne to replace Him (Isa. 14:12-14). This fact also is brought out in the parable of the landowner who killed the master's servants and son in order to take possession over all that the Son would inherit (Luke 20:9-19). However, the Book of Revelation is clear that the Devil never comes out as the victor.

The New Jerusalem will be a separate city from all the other cities and nations in existence in God's

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kingdom. It appears the New Jerusalem, with God's glory shining out from it, will take the place of the sun (Rev. 21:23-24). It seems most likely, because it is mobile and almost the exact size of our moon, this city is actually a planet. This also seems credible since, in Revelation 17 and 18, the great city Babylon could not be one city among many on planet earth, but is actually the planet earth (as outlined in Appendix H). Because planets appear to be cities in God's kingdom, it would be probable that galaxies and solar systems are countries. From God's perspective, we presently live in the city of earth, in the country of the Milky Way, in the kingdom of God.

The only ones permitted in God's city are those with their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life, who were redeemed from the earth (21:27). In this great city, there will be nothing that defiles or works abominations or speaks lies. All sin will have been removed. What an incredible plan God has for man. No wonder the Apostle Paul encourages us to focus on the glory that will be given instead of our present troubles (Rom. 8:18). What a tremendous gift God is offering to His people, and to anyone who will accept this gift through His Son Jesus. Let me speak to each person directly for a moment. Are you 100-percent certain that if you were to die tonight you would inherit this glorious, soon-to-come world? I exhort

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you to seriously consider what is written in chapter thirteen of this book.

In the New Jerusalem, the water of life (the Holy Spirit) will flow from God's throne. The tree of life, which was once in the Garden of Eden, will now be accessible to all God's people in the New Jerusalem. There will be no more curse of sin because God will sit on the throne ruling everything (the Devil will no longer be the god of this world) and we will be His servants. We will see God face-to-face and His name will be forever on our forehead, indicating that we will always belong to Him forever with no possibility of ever being removed from Him. We will rule with God forever and ever as joint-heirs with Jesus (Rom. 8:16-18).

What will we rule? As joint-heirs with Jesus, we will rule over all that Jesus rules over—all the trillions times trillions of galaxies and all that God has created, seen and unseen. I have to admit, it's hard to imagine, but it's all true. God has all this—things we cannot even imagine or think of—reserved for His people. God sent His angel to John to let him know about all that will be given to His people. Hold on just a little while longer, and all that God promises will be ours. Until we receive our inheritance, it will be patience and faith that will get us through this life and the horrors that are coming (Rev. 13:10;

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14:12).³³ Learn these now before the hard times grow excruciatingly intense.

³³ See also 2 Thessalonians 1:4, Hebrews 6:12, and James 1:3. In many ways, patience is the key to living the Christian life.

Six Encouragements

Revelation 22:7-21

“And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” –Revelation 22:12-14

The Book of Revelation finishes with six encouragements. Embrace these and find your joy and hope in the God who created us and His Son, Jesus:

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1. *Christ will come quickly, and you will be blessed if you keep what is written in this prophecy (Rev. 22:7).*

The Revelation is not a message to run from, but to embrace. We are not able to keep and obey a message we have not considered or meditated upon.

2. *Continue in your righteousness and faith in God—don't let go! (22:11).*

The Devil is working hard to destroy your relationship and compromise your walk with Christ. Now is the time to be stubborn and unmovable in your faith. Now is the time to be “so much the more,” as the Apostle Paul encouraged in Hebrews 10:25.

3. *Christ will come quickly and bring your eternal rewards with Him—hold on! It won't be long (22:12).*

Even the worst of troubles become bearable when the rewards of enduring are realized. Romans 8:18 says, “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

4. *Continue to obey the Word of God: the commandments of God and teachings of Jesus (22:14).*

Steadfast obedience to God's Word requires that we continually read and study God's Word. Romans 10:17 tells us, “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

Six Encouragements

5. *If you do not have the Holy Spirit actively living in you, repent and put your trust in Jesus Christ today (22:17).*

Nothing we do in the name of Christ matters if God does not live in us through His Holy Spirit. The evidence of being a true Christian is having the Holy Spirit active and alive within us. “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (Rom. 8:9b).

6. *Do not add to the words of this prophecy and do not remove any words from this prophecy (22:18-19).*

God has revealed what He desires for us to know about the last seven years of earth’s history through the Apostle John. Although we may not understand much of what is written in the Book of Revelation, we must accept what we do understand and trust God for what we don’t understand.

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CHAPTER 12

In Summary

“And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show to his servants the things which must shortly be done.” –Revelation 22:6

THROUGHOUT THIS BOOK, MY emphasis has not been to expound on a detailed commentary of the Book of Revelation, but to highlight its main focus to show the order of the events of the final seven years of earth’s history. In this chapter, I will further summarize everything in a nutshell commentary for a bird’s eye view of the three wraths/judgments outlined in the Book of Revelation. Understanding

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these judgments will help us to understand the ordering of last day events.

THE WRATH OF THE ANTICHRIST (SEVEN SEALS)

Since the inception of the church, the Devil has been working hard to deceive it. He will continue to do so until the deception is so great that even the strongest of Christians will find it difficult not to conform (Matt. 24:24). In this apostate environment, the world will be willing to receive the man called the Antichrist (Rev. 2-3).

When this apostasy reaches its peak, preparations are then made in heaven to release the Antichrist and let him rule on earth (Rev. 4-5). When the Antichrist is released, He will bring war, famine, death, and the killing of Jews and Christians for about three and a half years, killing one fourth of the world's population (Rev. 6). Many of those killed are revealed in 6:9-11 to be those who belong to God. The majority of God's people will be killed at this time.

THE WRATH OF CHRIST (SEVEN TRUMPETS)

During the Antichrist's three and a half years of terror, God sends a great earthquake upon the earth

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as if to say, "Antichrist, that's enough!" In heaven, preparations are made to release the wrath of Christ. A distinction is made here between the wrath released by the Antichrist, the wrath of Christ, and the wrath of God. In this preparation, 144,000 birth-born Israelites are sealed with God's protective seal (Rev. 7). After the preparations, the wrath of Christ is poured out in the form of the trumpet judgments (Rev. 8-11). During this time, the Jewish and Christian remnants will be empowered through the Holy Spirit to execute judgment in Christ's name in the manner of Elijah and Moses (Rev. 11:6). Through tribulation fire the church awakens.

HISTORICAL REFERENCE

So much has happened in Revelation's 2-11 that Revelation 12 and 13 give more details concerning the personalities involved and the great battle of the ages that has been revealed up to this point. In Revelation 12, Israel is revealed as a woman clothed with the sun who gives birth to the Christ. The great red dragon (the Devil) incites a rebellion in heaven, causing one-third of the angels to rebel and enter the earth with him to destroy the Christ child, but doesn't succeed. After completing His mission, Jesus then dies at the hand of the Devil, overcomes death, and ascends into heaven to sit at the right hand of God and His throne. Israel and the temple are destroyed,

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and the Jewish people are scattered into the nations of the world. When Israel became a nation again, another war broke out in heaven between Michael and his angels and the Devil and his angels. The Devil loses this war and is cast out with his angels into the physical earth. Now in the earth, he and his angels influence the world to receive the Antichrist through the politics, religion, education, culture, and the various systems of the nations. To help him in this task, the two horns of the false prophet, Catholicism and Islam, influence the beliefs and hearts of the people toward the Antichrist and will culminate as the final false prophet of Catholicism, the Pope, and the final messiah of the Muslims, the Mahdi.

THE WRATH OF GOD (SEVEN VIALS)

Next, we are shown the preparations taking place in heaven to release God's hour of wrath upon the earth. Christ will physically return to Mt. Zion with the martyred 144,000 Israelites. He comes to complete the judgment of the earth, which is Babylon. Before He does, He raptures out His people and brings them to Him. Those left upon the earth then suffer God's wrath through the pouring out of the seven vial judgments (Rev. 14-15).

God's wrath is poured out upon everyone left on the earth, for none are His people. All water, the sun,

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and every city, island, and mountain disappear (Rev. 16). We are given understanding as to why the earth/Babylon is judged (Rev. 17-18). All the nations of the earth gather at Armageddon to fight against Christ, who appears on a white horse with His angelic army. All people are killed, and the marriage supper of the lamb begins in order to clean up the dead bodies that are everywhere (19:1-9; 17-18).

After the battle, those martyred by the Antichrist have the privilege to rule with Christ for one thousand years. After these one thousand years, the Devil is released from his prison to deceive many nations to once again fight against God's people. The battle is short as God swiftly defeats the Devil and throws him into the lake of fire. God's great white throne appears, and the present heaven and earth are completely melted and dissolved. The judgment of all—saint and sinner—will now take place at the great white throne of judgment (20:3-15).

After the final rewards and punishments are given, a new heaven, a new earth, and a New Jerusalem are revealed (Rev. 21). God's people begin their eternal life with God as kings and joint-heirs with Jesus (22:7-21).

LAST THOUGHTS

God has given the Book of Revelation to offer hope, strength, and courage during the most difficult

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time in history. As the prophecy is read and understood, allow it to strengthen your faith and increase your patience as you realize the hard times we will soon experience will be short and lead to eternal life and rule with God.

When I was in the Navy, many of my shipmates couldn't wait for their future discharge. What gave them hope and patience to endure what they felt were extreme injustices was knowing their discharge date. As they focused on that date, they were able to endure whatever came their way. So it is with our faith. No matter what the future has in store, focusing on our eternal reward will give the strength to persevere. Let us hold firmly to the faith of the Apostle Paul, who said, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).

There is no doubt that we are the generation witnessing the fulfillment of this revelation. Let us muster all the gusto we can so that we may live as people of faith with patience as our dominant characteristic. May God bless us as we continue our journey.

Preparing for the Days Ahead

“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” –Revelation 22:17

AS HORRIBLE AS THE events of Revelation are, nothing will compare to the horror of waking up one day and finding yourself in hell. Take a minute right now and try to imagine what hell will be like—with you in it! The horrors of Revelation that are coming will last only for a short time. The horrors of hell will be excruciating torment forever with no hope of

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relief. Please pay close attention to the words of this chapter and prepare yourself for the day you will leave this life and enter your eternal destiny. In one million years, you will be alive in either God's kingdom or hell—100-percent guaranteed.

IF YOU ARE NOT A CHRISTIAN

If you are not a Christian, I encourage you to read the gospel of Luke, as well as the other gospels. Luke tells us about the life of Jesus while He was on earth. Luke also tells of Jesus' words, actions, and purpose for coming and the revelation that Jesus is the Son of God, that He and God are one, and that He came to give His life for your sins and mine. Only through believing in and committing yourself to Jesus can you escape the horrors of hell and spend eternity in God's kingdom.

The book of Luke records that Jesus was born in Bethlehem and was without an earthly father, having been conceived of God and born of the Virgin Mary. He lived His early life in a town called Nazareth with His mother, brothers, and sisters. He learned the carpenter's trade from His stepfather, Joseph. Jesus was baptized by His cousin, John, in the Jordan River where the Holy Spirit then rested upon him. Jesus then spent the next forty days in the wilderness, fasting and praying, and was tempted by the Devil to turn from God's purpose for His life on earth. After

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resisting the temptations, He openly taught about God's soon-coming kingdom, healed many, and performed miracles, thereby confirming His authority for what He taught. He taught and performed miracles mostly in Galilee, some in Judea, and occasionally in Jerusalem, the capital of Judea (Luke 2:1–22:46).

His earthly life ended in Jerusalem when He was arrested and put to death by crucifixion during the time of Passover. God raised Him from the dead three days later. He appeared to His disciples and hundreds of others over a period of forty days. With His disciples watching, Jesus then ascended back into heaven where He now sits on a throne at the right hand of God's throne, in order to make intercession on behalf of all who accept Him as Lord and Savior. Before leaving the earth, Jesus gave the promise to His disciples that He would return to take them to be with Him. Until He returns, He gave final instructions to His disciples to be witnesses throughout the world, starting where they lived. To be this witness, they were told to receive the Holy Spirit, God's power, who would teach and give them boldness and courage (22:27–24:53).

After reading the gospels and believing what is written, the next step is to repent. Repentance is nothing more than to stop what you know is not acceptable to God and others and do what is

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acceptable. Brief summaries of what God does not find acceptable are found in Romans 1:18-32, Galatians 5:19-21, Matthew 5:19-7:27, and Exodus 20:3-17. These are a good starting point for seeing how your behaviors and attitudes might be vastly different from God's.

I would not want to see anyone reading this book end up in hell. I encourage all to escape hell by believing what is written in the gospels, repenting of your sins, receiving God's Holy Spirit, and putting your trust in Jesus Christ.

IF YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN

If you are a Christian, it is important to understand that the Devil is working hard to discourage and deceive you. He wants you to give up your faith and believe his lies. The greatest lie is to claim the name of Christ while conforming his teachings to the ways of the world. Jesus warned that even the strongest of Christians will be tempted to compromise and conform their faith and hold to the world's standards while claiming the name of Christ (Matt. 24:24). The Apostle Paul also taught that in the last days "Christians" will look and sound like Christians, but not really be Christians (2 Tim. 3:5). Since we are two thousand years closer to Christ's coming, we also are two thousand years further into this deception.

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The deception of our age is great and requires a determination and diligence from God's people to be immersed in prayer, God's Word, and filled with an active Holy Spirit. A lack of making prayer and Scripture study a priority will certainly put us in danger of compromising our Christianity to the point that we behave and think no differently than those without Christ (2 Thess. 2:9-12). A lack of an active Holy Spirit will keep our prayers and Scripture reading without power and our Christian life without Christ.

In Revelation 2 and 3, we are given a description of the conformed, deceived church. Most of these churches were in danger of losing their candlesticks, meaning each one claiming to be a Christian was in danger of going to hell if they did not repent. These messages are especially pertinent to our present age. I encourage you to read what God thinks is extremely important for you and me. Get out your Bible and Bible dictionary. Leave the Bible commentaries and other books on the shelf as you and the Holy Spirit meditate together on repentance and righteousness.

There are way too many Christians who have become so dependent upon other books, DVDs, preachers, and teachers that God's Word is actually blocked from reaching them because it is filtered through the views and opinions of the writers of these other materials. It is through the Holy Spirit

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and our interaction with Him in our study of Scripture that brings truth and understanding to us (1 Cor. 2:13). Let the Bible be your number one guide and source book for understanding God and life. The Bible is God's message to people. The many writers of this book did not write their own thoughts. They were inspired by God to write His thoughts (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21). What the Bible says about God also can be trusted because the Bible has been proven to be credible. In my book, *100% Guaranteed: You Have An Appointment With Destiny*, I wrote:

“The Bible has been scrutinized by countless archaeologists, historians, scholars, and scientists for hundreds of years and has been found superior to other religious texts in numerous ways.”³⁴

These ways include archeological evidence, historical evidence, scientific evidence, fulfilled prophecy, internal consistency of the Bible, and the test of time. Because each religion's concept of God comes from its religious writings, when its writings are credible, we can have assurance in what it says about its God. There is only one book that has stood up to the scrutiny—the Bible. To freely read or listen

³⁴ Steve Magill, *100% Guaranteed: You Have An Appointment With Destiny* (Tulsa: Genesis Group, 2007), 17.

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to *100% Guaranteed*, visit my website, AgeofAntichrist.com.

I also think it's important to be continually conscious of the great battle of the ages between trusting an unseen God and trusting what we can see. This battle began with Eve being deceived by the serpent into trusting that which was good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and would make her wise (Gen. 3:6). The Apostle John warns, everything that appeals to our flesh, appeals to our eyes, and appeals to our pride could ultimately compromise our faith (1 John 2:16). In our present age, this battle is fiercer than ever. Things and the desire for things to make life convenient, to entertain us, and to “enhance” our experience with God continually bombard and deceive us into thinking these are compatible with God. Perhaps the greatest evil of all this stimulus is that it takes away our ability to settle our minds and spirit so we can “be still and know God” (Psa. 46:10).

Are we deceived? Have we compromised our relationship with God—even thinking that we need to be emotionally stimulated to experience God? We need to ask these questions: Is God real? Is He living today? Then *He* is what we need to fully experience Him and not the external trappings that the majority of denominations offer.

Let us learn to depend upon God and God alone, and learn to be temperate with all things belonging to

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this world as if they do not belong to us. Jesus warned that we must make a choice between the things seen and felt and possessed and those that are unseen and belong to God's kingdom. He taught that even the very necessities of life—food, drink, and clothing—should not have such a hold on us that we feel highly pressured and worried without them (Matt. 6:24-34). How much less should anything else in this world be a concern? Listen to Jesus' warning: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matt. 6:24). Let us learn to depend upon the *living* God and to detach ourselves emotionally and mentally from dependence upon anything the world offers. We have a great hope and inheritance that will one day be ours. Let us make it our number one focus and pleasure (Matt. 6:33).

I also think it's important to live with an understanding that the disciples and prophets had. They did not love their lives even if it meant they would die for Christ (Phil. 2:8; Rev. 2:10, 12:11). Perhaps the greatest hindrances to Christianity are the fear of man and the fear of death. I think we should keep in mind that death has been defeated (1 Cor. 15:54-56). When our spirit leaves our earthly bodies, we now have the assurance that we will live eternally with Christ in His kingdom. Understanding

Preparing for the Days Ahead

that death is defeated and acts as the doorway to meeting Christ and receiving eternal life, should be the greatest event that we look forward to—even above marriage and having a baby.

How can we conquer our fear of death? Look at these words from 1 John 4:18: “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear: because fear has torment. He that fears is not made perfect in love.” Love conquers the fear of death. We all have heard stories of husbands, wives, fathers, and mothers not having any concern about any danger around them in order to save a loved one from danger. Their love spurred them to action without concern or fear that their own lives might be in danger. It is this love for others, coupled with the knowledge that they are headed toward an eternal hell, that motivates us regardless of any danger we might be in. It is this love for others that overcomes our fear of any danger we perceive from man or death.

Finally, through all that we might be faced with, there is never a time to retreat and always a time to muster all the gusto we can and move forward, being “so much the more” about the work of God in the midst of the growing storm (Heb. 10:25).

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APPENDIX A

The Great Takeover of Christianity

REVELATION 2 AND 3 are clear that the great takeover of Christianity paralleled true Christianity from its beginnings. Jesus was aware of this and taught that not all who receive him and his teaching would be a true Christian. We see this in the stories of the parable of the sower, the ten virgins, the ten talents, the parable of the wheat and tares, as well as those who call him “Lord, Lord” all warn the majority claiming the name of Christ do not belong to Christ (Matt, 13:1-23; Matt, 25:1-12, 25:14-30; Matt, 13:24-30, 36-43; Luke 6:46).

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Before His death and resurrection, Jesus warned His disciples they would be hated by all nations and foretold persecution would follow...and follow it did (John 15:18-25; Matt, 24:9). For the first three hundred years, Christianity found itself in great conflict with the world. Some of the fiercest persecution came from the religious, those claiming the name of Christ, and from family and friends (Matt, 24:10, Luke 21:16; Mark 13:12). The largest and most horrific of persecution came from the Roman government. After 300 years of persecution by the Romans, peace finally came—but not without a price; that price would cost Christianity its power—its very soul.

Constantine, the Emperor of the Roman Empire, brought peace in the early 300s by making Christianity a state religion to bring unity among the various conflicting religions. Christianity then spread rapidly. Constantine became the head of the Roman Church, instead of Christ, and began to make changes. Under his leadership, and in cooperation with the Popes, the Sabbath was changed to Sunday, a regular day of worship was established, buildings of worship were erected, hierarchies were established, and images were created. All manner of rituals and customs unheard of in the first 300 years of Christianity were received wrapped in the cloak of Christianity. Many embraced this new form of

Appendix A: The Great Takeover

Christianity for fear of returning to persecution. This new form of Christianity developed into the institution known as Catholicism. The compromise and conformity moved true Christians away from a real, living, fellowship with Christ with Him as its head to an institutional relationship governed by regulations, rituals, and traditions. From this point the great takeover of Christianity accelerated.

As this new form of Christianity moved ahead under the leadership of the Pope, coupled with the state, it did so essentially unbridled. This eventually led the new religion into horrendous and oppressive acts that would have destroyed the takeover if not for those who thought it could be reformed. Martin Luther rose up in the early 1500s as the head of the reformation and unwittingly advanced the great takeover of Christianity, moving it to its next level of deception. The result of the reformation was the removal of those works which were blatantly unscriptural, oppressive, and horrendous. However, instead of reforming the Catholic Church and taking it back to the Christianity of the first century, Luther replicated the Catholic structure. The two institutions were essentially the same: both were man created institutions lead by men through doctrine, rituals, and good works cloaked in the language of Christianity. This gave the great takeover power to embrace the majority of those inclined toward

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Christianity to either serve God through works in the Catholic churches or through works in the Protestant churches. Both have led people away from a real, living fellowship with Christ through the Holy Spirit. The Catholics and Protestants have become so much a part of the world's system that few today even consider that both are essentially without the Spirit of God, making those inside the denominations pagan Christians...or as Martin Luther, father of the Protestant denominations, said—"utter heathen." Here's the quote by Martin Luther:

"If we look aright at what people now do who reckon themselves as Evangelical and know how to talk much about Christ, there is nothing behind it. Most of them deceive themselves. The number of those who began with us and had pleasure in our teaching was ten times greater; now not a tenth part of them remains steadfast. They learn indeed to speak words, as a parrot repeats what people say, but their hearts do not experience them. They remain just as they are; they neither taste nor feel how true and faithful God is. They boast much of the gospel and at first seek it earnestly, yet afterwards nothing remains; for they do what they like, follow their lusts, become worse than they were before and are much more undisciplined and presumptuous...than other people, for peasants, citizens, nobles, all are more covetous and

Appendix A: The Great Takeover

undisciplined than they were....we are almost utter heathen with the name of Christian...."³⁵

In our twenty-first century this great takeover appears to be at its peak in preparation for the rise of the Antichrist. In the midst of this great deception, God is calling His people to return to a relationship with Him through the Holy Spirit. Jesus gave stern warnings in Matthew 25:1-30 that we must be connected to the Holy Spirit before His return. Without the Holy Spirit we cannot belong to God (Rom. 8:9). Without the Holy Spirit we will not enter God's eternal kingdom.

³⁵ E.H. Broadbent, *The Pilgrim Church* (Grand Rapids: Gospel Folio Press, 1999), 166-167.

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APPENDIX B

The Antichrist

SINCE THE TIME OF Adam and Eve, when God cursed the serpent to crawl on the ground and the Devil's darkness permeated all creation, Satan has been preparing the world for the day when he would exert his will fully on earth to oppose God and His people through that man known as the Antichrist.

Paul refers to this man as the "man of sin," the "son of perdition," and "that Wicked," because he will come against God and even exalt himself as God on earth (2 Thess. 2:3, 4, 8).

This man of sin, whose goal is to oppose God, replace God, and to kill God's people, will not reflect evil, nor will his plans cause much concern. How can

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a well-spoken political leader, who causes the world's economy and businesses to prosper and who talks so much about bringing peace to the world, be so bad? Isn't he an answer to prayer? This is exactly what the prophet Daniel cautions us about in Daniel 8:23-25:

“And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. Through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.”

Many who call themselves “Christian” will follow this man, having been deceived into believing his lie to bring peace and economic prosperity to the world. This deception will be given power through the miracles he performs (Matt. 24:24; Rev. 13:13,14). Following this man of sin they will unwittingly join with his goal to eliminate the world of Jews and Christians, even as Christians followed Hitler in killing millions of Jews, Christians, and others. Politicians are skilled at redirecting people from their

Appendix B: The Antichrist

real agenda by catering to the public's wants and desires. The Antichrist is the master politician. People will follow him like the children followed the pied piper of Hamelin and will be bewitched by the prosperity he brings and his verbiage about peace; after all, only "someone sent from God" could do so many "good" works. Through peace and prosperity, he deceives people into accepting his plan to remove Jews and Christians from the world, thinking that they are pleasing God.

The prophet Daniel gives to us more insight into this man of sin than any other book in the Bible. Daniel tells us that the Antichrist will:

1. Be a skilled and intelligent orator (7:20)
2. Project arrogance in his countenance (7:20)
3. Command great military power (8:24)
4. Cause businesses to prosper (8:25a)
5. Magnify himself (8:25b)
6. Confirm the covenant with Israel (9:27a)
7. Break his covenant with Israel (9:27b)
8. Stop temple sacrifice and oblations (9:27b)
9. Be vile and despicable (11:21a)
10. Win people to himself with flatteries (11:21b)
11. Be a willful king (11:36a)

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12. Exalt himself above God (11:36b)
13. Have no regard for desire of women (11:37)
14. Honor a god of forces/military might (11:38)
15. Kill God's people in mass (11:41-42)

To prepare ourselves against the deception of this man, we must immerse ourselves in God's Word and prayer, and ask ourselves if we truly know God. Knowing *about* God is not the same as *knowing* God. In these last of the last days, many who claim the name of Christ will know a lot about the Bible and doctrine, do many good works, and work hard to be "good" people, but they will not know God (Matt. 7:21-23).

We can truly know God in a relational sense. When Christianity is equated with "good works" and being a "good person," this causes many to struggle with sin. The truth is that God's goal is not for us to be "good." He wants us to come into relationship with Him through His Holy Spirit. He is real and living and can be known even as we know our best friend, husband, or wife. Out of this relationship flows our goodness and our good works and the transformation of our character and behavior, which makes us people filled with the character of God. God wants us to be conformed to His image.

Appendix B: The Antichrist

This does not come through principles or life lessons gleaned from Scripture, but through a relationship with Him. The words of the Bible do not transform us; a relationship with God does. As this relationship develops, the Bible comes alive, and the sins that can so easily beset us will no longer be so troubling. The less we are prone to sin, the stronger we will be in overcoming the Antichrist's deceptions and standing firm in the most challenging of situations.

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APPENDIX C

THE 3 WRATHS

THE RELEASE OF THE seal, trumpet, and vial judgments are important to understanding the ordering of earth's last seven years. When we understand when and how the judgments are released, we will not be tempted to reorganize the seals, trumpets, and vials into an order that seems to make sense. The order is already given...let's follow the course already set for us.

7 SEALS

With the seal, trumpet, and vial judgments a clear ordering of the events of the last days is given. This is seen, first of all, in that the seals cannot be

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released until Christ opens the first seal. Revelation 6:1 records:

“And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.”

It is this first seal that usher's in the following six seals and releases all the events of earth's last seven years. It releases the *wrath of the Antichrist*. It is the release of the six seals that prepares the earth for the next set of judgments with the blowing of the seven trumpets.

7 TRUMPETS

The trumpet judgments cannot take place until after each of the seven seals have been opened. It is out of the seventh seal that the seven trumpet judgments are released. This means that the events of the six seals have already been released on the earth. This is made clear in Revelation 8:1, 2:

“And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.”

Appendix C: The Three Wraths

It is important to note that the seven trumpets are given to the angels only after the seventh seal is opened. That means the events of the trumpets cannot take place before or during the seal judgments.

It is also clear that the trumpet judgments are the *wrath of Christ* poured out upon the earth. This is seen after the sixth seal was opened, preceding the opening of the seventh seal when the people of the earth cried out:

“And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” (Rev. 6:15-17 underline added)

The people understood that when the sixth seal was opened, releasing the great earthquake and the shaking of the heavens, that the events that would follow would be the *wrath of Christ* upon the earth, which is the blowing of the seven trumpets.

After the events released with the blowing of the six trumpets had appeared upon the earth, then the seventh trumpet would blow. It is out of the seventh

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trumpet that the seven vials are able to be released upon the earth.

The trumpets cannot blow until the seven seals have been released. The seven vials cannot be poured out until after the events of the seven trumpets have taken place.

7 VIALS

When the seventh angel blows his trumpet much activity begins to take place in heaven. It is at this time that Christ gets off of His throne, at the right hand of God, and sits on the throne of God to unite fully with His divine nature (Rev. 11:1-17). Now that Christ has reunited fully with His divine nature, He is ready, as God, to pour out God's wrath upon the earth. The people of the earth understood that the blowing of the seventh trumpet meant that the *wrath of God* is now being released (underline added):

“And the nations were angry, and your wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that you should give reward unto your servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear your name, small and great; and should destroy them which destroy the earth.” (Rev. 11:18)

Many events take place from Revelation 11-16 in preparation for the earth's final vial judgments.

Appendix C: The Three Wraths

These judgments are the *wrath of God*, confirmed also in the following verses (underline added):

“And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.” (Rev. 15:1)

“And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.” (Rev. 16:1)

When the seals were opened, they were not associated with God’s wrath; neither were the blowing of the trumpets associated with God’s wrath. Now, when the vials are to be poured out, they are recorded as being the pouring out of God’s wrath upon the earth.

IN SUM

As we have seen in this chapter, the seal, trumpet, and vial judgments do not all fall under the great tribulation or the wrath of God. The seal judgments are the *wrath of the Antichrist*, released upon God’s people. The trumpet judgments are the *wrath of Christ*, released upon the Antichrist’s kingdom; and the vial judgments are the *wrath of God*, poured out upon the entire earth and all who have been left behind.

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As we understand the ordering of the three judgments, we then understand the ordering of last day events and when God's wrath will be released upon the earth.

APPENDIX D

Where Does The Antichrist Come From?

WHEN IT COMES TO the Antichrist, no one gets more airtime than he does when it comes to prophetic things. When it comes to where he comes from, there is much discussion with the popular belief that he comes out of Europe. I understand why he gets so much airtime; I do not understand why there is so much discussion about *where* he is coming from; the Bible is clear on this matter in Daniel 11.

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When we look at Daniel 11, and how it has been fulfilled historically, there are few disagreements about its fulfillment. Most commentators and historians agree that after the three Persian kings rose up, a fourth, Xerxes, came into power. He invaded Greece and was defeated by Alexander the Great at Salamis around 480 B.C., which transferred world power to Greece. When Alexander's kingdom broke up because of his early death, his four generals took control of the empire. General Ptolemy controlled Egypt and the Southern kingdom. Seleucis, one of Ptolemy's leaders, separated from the Egyptian kingdom, went north, and developed a powerful kingdom identified as Syria. After the Syrian kingdom became powerful, Daniel 11:5-35 records the conflicts both nations had with each other. History and commentators have no problem identifying these as the Syrian and Egyptian empires.

Now here comes the problem.

We know the King of the North is Syria and the King of the South is Egypt. We also know that one of the later Syrian kings was Antiochus IV, who is seen by commentators as a type of the coming Antichrist (Dan. 11:21-35).³⁶ We also know the final Antichrist

³⁶ Some have taught that Titus, the son of the 11th Caesar of Rome, who destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD, may have been the Antichrist. Since he is a Roman, and the Scripture in Daniel is clear that the Antichrist is Syrian, he could not be Antichrist. It is also clear

Appendix D: Where the Antichrist Comes From

is identified by commentators as being the last Northern king recorded here in Daniel 11:36-45. Because the Northern king has been identified as Syrian, and the Antichrist comes out of this Northern kingdom, directly following the sequence of Syrian kings, then we must recognize that the Antichrist is one of these Northern kings. This would make him Syrian. The prophets Isaiah and Micah also make this connection in Isaiah 10:12-14 and Micah 5:5. We can conclude from Daniel 11 that the Antichrist is not a Roman, nor does he come out of Europe. He is a Syrian coming out of the Middle East and the Northern kingdom specifically.

Though the Antichrist may rise up out of Syria, look Syrian, and behave and think Syrian, he may only have a Syrian body. In actuality, he originates from “up out of the earth” (Rev. 13:11). The final false prophet, rising out of the earth in Revelation 13, is identified as being the Antichrist. This means that he appears upon the earth from below the surface of the earth, which no doubt makes him a fallen angel. He cannot be the Devil since he is a separate personality who gave the Antichrist his power. Chances are he is presently on the earth preparing for the day he is permitted to take control.

that Titus did not establish a seven year treaty with Israel nor did he set up an abomination of desolation in the temple.

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When he appears, he will not be alone. Revelation 12:7-9 lets us know the Devil and his angels were cast out of heaven and “into” the earth. We know that one-third of the stars/angels of heaven rebelled with the Devil (12:3-4). We also know that there are “ten thousand times ten thousand” angels, which equals one hundred million, and then there are “thousands of thousands” more than these (5:11). This means there are more than thirty-three million angels under the surface of or “into” the earth, waiting for permission to come to the surface in full force with the Antichrist. No wonder the Apostle John became violently sick when he understood what was coming on the earth (10:8-10). The Alien invasion is definitely coming—and soon.

APPENDIX E

Two Witnesses

REVELATION 11 CONTINUES THE second woe (11:14) with the appearance of God's two witnesses, who have been given great power through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This power allows them to release judgment on the earth in the same manner as Moses and Elijah. Often these two are interpreted as two men, yet the Bible reveals something different. These two are not men as many have supposed, but are identified as *two olive trees* and *two candlesticks* (11:4). With this identification, we know these two are Israel and the Church (as the evidence below will make clear) which have reawakened to the power of Christ having been

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purged and made white through the great tribulation of the Antichrist (Dan. 11:35; Rev. 6:9-11).

The witnesses, now filled with power, appear at the end of the three-and-a-half years of great tribulation during the same time period in which Christ's wrath is poured out. They will be a witness for Christ for three and a half years, releasing His judgments on earth in a similar manner as Moses and Elijah. These power-filled witnesses are a small remnant who was not martyred by the Antichrist in the global holocaust of Jews and Christians. They now experience a true revival and the fullness of the Holy Spirit, and they fully trust Christ during this period that has seen most of God's people, and over one half of the earth's population up to this time, killed. Through the fire, the church and Israel are awakened and become power filled. The great revival that the church has longed for for so many years takes place at this time. For years, I taught the traditional view that these two must be Moses, Elijah, or Enoch; but then it struck me that to draw this conclusion was without clear scriptural support. I began to look again at this passage and realized the passage tells us who these two are—they are actually four—two olive trees and two candlesticks:

“I will give power to my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the

Appendix E: Two Witnesses

two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth” (Rev. 11:3-4).

I then had to ask if Scripture had anything to say about olive trees and candlesticks. It did, and what I discovered was that Scripture is clear concerning who the olive trees and candlesticks are—they are Israel and the church. Here are two Scriptures clearly identifying the olive trees:

“If some of the branches be broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree” (Rom. 11:17).

“The LORD called your name, A green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit” (Jer. 11:16a).

These two Scriptures clearly identify Israel as the natural and green olive tree and the church as the wild olive tree grafted into Israel. To understand these witnesses as two men is to move away from the clear teaching of Scripture.

Scripture also clearly identifies the church as candlesticks:

“The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks

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which you saw are the seven churches” (Rev. 1:20).

Though each of the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3 are a candlestick, yet the two candlestick witnesses are not seven in number, but only two. The reason is because there were only *two* of the seven churches that were faithful witnesses of Christ, without any of their members encouraged to repent—the church at Smyrna and the church at Philadelphia (2:8-11; 3:7-13). Smyrna was encouraged to be “faithful, even to the point of death” (2:10). Philadelphia was honored “because you have kept the word of my patience” (3:10). The other five churches were condemned and encouraged to repent because the majority of those claiming to be Christian did not have the Holy Spirit alive within them. They conformed their Christianity and tolerated sin. Scripture is clear, the candlesticks refer to the church.

A second confirmation that Israel and the church are the two witnesses is the fact that God has called Israel and the church His witnesses, as these verses reveal:

CONCERNING ISRAEL

“Ye are my witnesses, says the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he:

Appendix E: Two Witnesses

before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me” (Isa. 43:10; cf. Deut. 7:6-8).

CONCERNING THE CHURCH

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses to me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

Scripture is clear, the two witnesses are Israel and the church. To see them as two individual people moves us from the clear teaching of Scripture. As we understand the implications of you and me being the witnesses, there is absolute awe as we consider what we will soon experience. Reread these Scriptures about the two witnesses. Discern the reality of these witnesses and let them move you to great expectation and a renewed search for the power of the Holy Spirit within you.

Have you received the Holy Spirit since you committed your life to Jesus? It’s entirely possible to think you are committed to Jesus when your relationship with Him is only a works oriented and doctrine-based relationship without having the power of the Holy Spirit alive and active within you. Ask yourself: Is the Holy Spirit alive and active within me?

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Let us strive to be people who are doers of the word we know and allow the Holy Spirit to rise up in us like a mighty wind.

Timeline of Nations

IMAGINE HAVING AN OUTLINE of the dominant empires that will rise and fall from the beginning of recorded history until Jesus returns. This is what we have in Daniel chapters 2 and 7. In these two chapters, the outline of history is given beginning with Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, around 608 B.C., until the present world ends with the arrival of the Antichrist, the coming of Christ, and the establishment of God's kingdom. By looking at this timeline, we can be confident Christ will come in our twenty-first century.

The empires in Daniel's two chapters identify the times of the Gentiles, which began when king

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Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem, taking the Jews captive, and began to end in 1967 after the Jews regained control over Jerusalem.

The first four empires in Daniel 2 begins our timeline. In this chapter, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, has a disturbing dream. He wanted his wise men to tell him what he had dreamed. None were able to do this except for Daniel, the prophet of the true God. In verses thirty-one through thirty-five, Daniel repeats the dream the king had seen and then interprets the dream in verses thirty-six through forty-five.

The great statue that Nebuchadnezzar saw represented specific empires. King Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon was the head of gold (2:32, 36-38). Next in succession from the head, were the chest and arms of silver (2:32, 39) representing the Medes-Persians who conquered Babylon. Next came the belly and thighs of brass (2:32, 39), which was the Grecian Empire after conquering the Medes-Persians (5:24-31). The fourth kingdom, represented by the legs of iron (2:32-33, 40), was the Roman Empire overtaking the Grecians. This is the last and longest-standing Empire, moving into the last of the last days until it is assimilated into the global government of the feet and toes of iron and clay (2:33, 41-43). These toes are called kings (2:44) and are established in the last of the last days as the new world order. God will destroy

Appendix F: Timeline of Nations

this final ten-toed kingdom and establish His eternal kingdom (2:44-45).

With these four empires, we have the timeline of history from about 608 B.C. until Christ returns to establish His eternal kingdom. When we add the Creation period, pre-flood period, and the period of the Patriarchs, Judges, and Kings, we have the history of the world from the beginning of Creation to the end of all things when God's kingdom is revealed, Daniel 2's timeline would look like this:

TIMELINE 1

4004 BC	Creation of Man Pre-flood Flood	Gen. 1-9
1922 BC	Israel Patriarchs Judges Kings	Gen. 10-50
608 BC	Babylon	Dan. 2:38
538 BC	Medes/Persia	Dan. 2:39; 5:29,30
333 BC	Grecian	Dan. 2:39; 5:31
160 BC	Roman	Dan. 2:40
476 AD	Divided Roman	Dan. 2:41
20?? AD	Ten Toed New World Order	Dan. 2:41-43
20?? AD	God's Kingdom	Dan. 2:44,45

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The second group of four empires identified is recorded in Daniel 7. These rise up after the empires in chapter two. We know these exist in Daniel's future because the angel told Daniel that they "shall arise out of the earth" (7:17). If they were already on the earth, they would not need to rise up at a future date. These empires are identified by their animal symbol, because they were not known at that time in history. They do not follow the succession of empires revealed in Daniel 2 and would arise much later in the last of the last days. We know these rise up in the last of the last days for the following reasons:

1. These are four kings/empires which *shall rise up*, indicating they are separate from the empires already revealed and will rise up after the empires outlined in Daniel 2 at a much later date (7:17).

2. We are told God's people will overcome these empires and rule an eternal kingdom in the same time period that these empires appear (7:18, 22, 26). This happens only in the very last of the last days when Christ returns.

3. The fourth beast is the kingdom of the Antichrist. The Antichrist appears on the earth only in the last of the last days (7:19-21).

Appendix F: Timeline of Nations

These empires are identified in Daniel 7 by their animal symbol and may be identified through these symbols in our world today. Understanding who these empires are may astound and perhaps even shock you.

The first empire is referred to as a lion with eagle's wings (Dan. 7:4) and refers to Great Britain and the United States. In our world today there is no question that the U.S. is known as the eagle, taking the eagle as its national symbol. The U.S. (eagle) separated from the lion (Great Britain) in 1776. According to Revelation 13:2, the lion is the voice of the Devil, articulating his agenda to the world. Ever wonder why Great Britain and the United States articulate and lead the world's agenda? They are the Devil's voice, leading the world according to his agenda.

The second empire is referred to as a bear with three ribs in its mouth (Dan. 7:5) and refers to Russia. This bear is the feet of the Devil mobilizing the Devil's forces to fulfill his blasphemous plan (Rev. 13:2). Ever wonder why we hear so much about Russia's aggressive encroachment into other nations and alliances with Islamic nations? Russia is the feet of the Devil, aligning the Middle East through his encroachments in preparation for the arrival of the Antichrist.

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The third empire is referred to as a leopard with four wings and four heads (7:6). This is most likely Islam. Because we know the lion and the bear are presently in power, we only need to ask which peoples are presently in power and dominating the world stage with the character of a leopard; the answer is, without question, Islam. We also know from Revelation 13:2 that the leopard will be the body and flesh of the Antichrist's kingdom. Also, in Appendix D I show how the Antichrist and his kingdom come out of the Islamic countries of Syria and the Middle East.

The fourth beast (Dan. 7:7-8) refers to the empire that will give birth to the Antichrist. Many commentators see this dreadful beast as the Antichrist himself. It cannot be the Antichrist because he comes out from among the ten horns that are on the head of this beast. This great and terrible beast is the composite beast of Revelation 13:2. The empires of Great Britain (the lion) and Russia (the bear) are shown to be attached to this fourth Islamic beast as it establishes its new world order, global governance, and reign of terror throughout the entire world.

When not connected with this Islamic beast, neither Great Britain, the United States, Russia, nor Islam is able to bring forth the new world order. Together, under the agenda and tactics of Islam, they

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are able to take control of the entire world, fulfilling the Islamic desire to rule the world.

Though there have been many nations with these animal symbols, never in the history of the world have there been empires dominating the world with these animal symbols at the same time, until our present age. We know these empires refer to Great Britain/United States, Russia, and a leopard empire because Daniel speaks of these as “great beasts” (Dan. 7:3), indicating they were not small territories or individual nations, but empires. An empire is defined here as a group of nations under the authority of a particular country. Each of Daniel’s empires are true empires. Each also exist as world powers at the same time, setting the stage for the arrival of the Antichrist and the return of Christ. No other group of countries with these animal symbols fit this description in our world today, or at any other time in history. If we acknowledge that we are living in the last of the last days when the Antichrist and the return of Christ could take place at any time, then we must also acknowledge that Great Britain/United States, Russia, and Islam (the leopard) are the last great empires spoken of here in Daniel 7.

With these four empires we have the timeline for history that leads us to the final seven years of earth’s history. This timeline would look like this:

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TIMELINE 2

1707 AD	Great Britain	Dan. 7:4; Rev. 13:2
1776 AD	United States	Dan. 7:4; Rev. 13:2
1922 AD	Russia	Dan. 7:5; Rev. 13:2
CURRENT	Islam	Dan. 7:6; Rev. 13:2
20?? AD	NWO	Dan. 7:7
20?? AD	4 th Beast Antichrist	Dan. 7:8
20?? AD	God's Kingdom	Dan. 7:9-14

In light of current events, and the fact that all prophetic signs point to our now living in the last of the last days, it is most likely that the terrible fourth beast is the Islamic State which has, since the end of 2013, reared its head and flexed its muscle on the world stage in such brutal ways that we have to refer back to Genghis Khan to find a people so cruel. So brutal is this Islamic State that even al-Qaeda has condemned its actions and distanced itself from it. More can be read of its brutal exploits in chapter six of this book.

If the Islamic State is indeed this fourth beast, and I believe it is, that would mean its prophetic destiny is to bring forth the ten region economic unions from which the Antichrist will appear. It appears we are witnessing the setting of the stage for the Antichrist's arrival. As with Daniel's dreadful

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beast, its strength is great and its tactics are horrifically brutal as it seeks to devour, break in pieces, and stamp out any remains of those who oppose it. Once this revived Islamic Empire is in place, out of it will come the one we call the Antichrist and Islam calls the Mahdi.

Two of these empires, Great Britain/United States and Russia, have already risen up. The leopard empire and the fourth beast are presently preparing the way for the arrival of the Antichrist. Once the dreaded fourth beast is in place, the ten region economic unions will be established, and the Antichrist will then come out from among the ten kings and into power. The time is near. Pay attention to world news.

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APPENDIX G

Where Are the Fallen Angels Today?

I AGREE WITH A growing body of believers that it is under the surface of the earth, and not from “outer space,” that the fallen angels, popularly called UFO’s, originate. One author stated that “flying saucers are atmospheric vehicles created by a super race living in the hollow interior of the earth and are not spaceships that came from other planets.”³⁷

³⁷ Dr. Raymond Bernard, *The Hollow-Earth* (New York: Bell Publishing, 1969), 194.

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Another author wrote: "Remarkably, there's a library of books detailing bright glowing UFOs entering or departing from large bodies of water. Some reports even entail brightly radiated craft seen traveling underwater. These types of aquatic sightings have not only been reported by ships and planes, but witnessed from shore by people who observed these unexplainable glowing craft enter or withdraw from large lakes, rivers, seas and oceans."³⁸

Many agree with these observations, but the important thing is what Scripture says on the subject of a hollow earth?

From a biblical perspective, the center of the earth is an active place. Before Christ's resurrection, we find that both paradise and hell were in the center of the earth. This is brought out when Jesus told about the rich man and Lazarus who, upon death, have one entering paradise and the other hell. The rich man in hell looked up to see Lazarus in paradise (Luke 16:19-31). Also, when Jesus was on the cross, the thief beside Jesus asked Him to remember him when He entered His kingdom. Jesus' response was that the man would be with Him that same day *in paradise* (Luke 23:39-43). When Jesus died, He entered into the "lower parts of the earth" (Eph. 4:9).

³⁸ John E. Chitty, *The Broken Bible* (New York: Writers Club Press, 2002), 263. For our study, I refer you also to the chapter titled, *Isaiah and Jeremiah*.

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What this tells us is that hell and paradise were not in some place away from the earth, but were actually under the earth's surface. This seems to indicate that perhaps the earth is not solid from its surface to its core as many believe, but is actually hollow as a growing number believe. In the story of the rich man and Lazarus, hell would be as far center as one could go, being what we call the earth's inner core. Paradise would have surrounded hell and most likely been in earth's outer core.

Psalm 139:15 reveals some fascinating information: "My substance was not hid from you, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." This is not figurative language. The psalmist reveals it was in the lowest parts of the earth that we were created. Again the implication is that we were not created in the "lowest parts" of a solid earth.

Also, look at these Scriptures:

- Psalm 63:9: "Those that seek my soul, to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth."
- Exodus 20:4: "You shall not make unto you any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth."

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- Job 28:5: “As for the earth, out of it comes bread: and under it is turned up as it were fire.”
- Philippians 2:10: “That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth ...”
- Revelation 5:3: “No man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.”
- Revelation 5:13: “Every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be to him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever.”

Now ask yourself, how can water, things, other creatures, or people be *under* a solid earth? The implication is that the earth is not a solid mass, but has enough space to occupy hell, water, creatures, and people under its surface. Even science, is more and more seeing this hollow-earth concept as a reality. Arjun Walia writes the following in his book, *Mind Blowing Research That Earth Could Be Actually Hollow*:

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“Several prominent individuals have supported the hollow-earth theory, and it is no joke of a list. A number of physicists, astronomers, mathematicians and high ranking military personnel share the same belief. They share their stories through experience, research and more. There really is some mind blowing information that suggests the Earth could actually be hollow.”³⁹

A recent article from the NewScientist.com website blared the headline “Massive ‘Ocean’ Discovered Towards Earth’s Core.”⁴⁰ It went on to state: “A reservoir of water three times the volume of all the oceans has been discovered deep beneath the Earth’s surface. The finding could help explain where Earth’s seas came from.”

However, I have to admit that science doesn’t have a lot to say about a hollow-earth or what is within the crust or mantle of the earth. Neither theorists nor scientists have shown more than a little evidence about what is under our feet. This is where I stand with Scripture that lets us know there is

³⁹ Arjun Walia, *Mind Blowing Research Suggests That Earth Could Actually Be Hollow* (Collective-evolution.com: August 26, 2013).

⁴⁰ Andy Coghlan, *Massive ‘Ocean’ Discovered Towards Earth’s Core* (NewScientist.com: June 12, 2014).

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something more taking place under our feet than we realize. Science is often slow in catching up to Scripture. Science taught us, contrary to Scripture, the world was flat and we evolved from monkeys, in spite of what Scripture outlined more than 5,000 years ago.

To answer the question, “Where are the fallen angels today?” is, without question, that they are under the earth’s surface and not living on other planets. They may have at one time been out there somewhere in space as well as inter-dimensional creatures with access to both God’s kingdom and earth’s dimension. However, Revelation 12 makes it clear that after Israel became a nation again, they were sent “into the earth” to live here. It is obvious we do not recognize these fallen angels among us. The reason is the majority are confined under our surface preparing themselves for when they are given permission to arrive in full force on the surface of the earth with the Antichrist.

Babylon Is the Earth

REVELATION 17 AND 18 interjects a mystery. This great mystery is identified as Mystery Babylon. She is a mystery because she is not easily identified. One cannot point their finger at an earthly city or nation and say, "There she is!" Babylon is not physical or tangible, but is the spirit system that motivates the kings and people of the earth.

In Revelation 17, Babylon is identified as riding upon a seven-headed beast with ten horns and full of blasphemy. These seven heads are identified as seven mountains, to be interpreted as the seven empires from which the Antichrist will rule, making a new empire to be the eighth and final manifestation of the

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Devil upon the earth (Rev. 17:9-11). The ten horns, also known as the ten toes, are ten kings receiving a kingdom and power to rule with the Antichrist when he appears (17:12-13). It is through these empires and kings that the spirit of evil and blasphemy permeates the earth, symbolized as Mystery Babylon, and distributed by this seven-headed beast. Even as the spirit of a man is not distinguishable from the man, neither is Mystery Babylon distinguishable from the physical earth.

To look at Babylon as anything but the earth would not make sense in its context in Revelation. Consider that from Revelation 1 through 13 there is no mention of Babylon when all the destruction is taking place upon the earth. Then, in Revelation 14:8, Babylon is mentioned for the first time as “having fallen.” Why is this verse interjected, appearing out of nowhere and out of context, unless Babylon refers to the earth? The second reference to Babylon appears in Revelation 16:19. Here she is referred to as a “great city.” The judgment poured out in verses two through eighteen was the wrath of God upon Babylon. Yet, this great city encompasses all the cities and nations of the earth, as indicated in this verse. What city has ever encompassed all the cities and nations of the earth? None. Only the earth has that distinction.

Appendix H: Babylon Is the Earth

When Babylon is judged with a great earthquake, it divides the earth into three parts, causing all cities to collapse. This again reveals this “great city” is more than an earthly city called Babylon. How can one city cause all cities on earth to collapse? Only the earth has that distinction. The judgment on Babylon can be none other than the judgment of the earth.

The next reference to Babylon is found in Revelation 17:5. Here understanding is given as to why all the destruction and judgment has come to Babylon/earth and its full destruction is ready to be revealed. Revelation 18:2 informs us that Babylon/earth has become the home for demons, unclean spirits, and a cage for every unclean and hateful bird. These vultures, buzzards, and other carrion birds will be numerous because death will be so pervasive.

God will now cleanse the earth of its Babylonian influence. This judgment will take place within one hour (18:10). The last mention of Babylon is found in Revelation 18:21. Here an angel announces that all this destruction takes place to completely destroy Babylon. When we look at the destruction that took place in the previous chapters, it is clear the earth had been destroyed, not a physical city called Babylon. Therefore, the conclusion is, Babylon is the earth.

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After these six verses, there is no further reference to Babylon. After the earth/Babylon is destroyed, the thousand-year millennium begins, the judgment of all people takes place, and the new heavens and the new earth are revealed. If Babylon were a literal physical city, God's judgment would have come upon it alone, as it did upon Sodom and Gomorra—not upon the whole earth. Babylon is the spirit/system of the earth motivated by the Devil and sin and inseparable from what we know as the earth. That is why, when the Revelation speaks of the judgment of Babylon, it is the earth that we see being judged.

APPENDIX I

Chart of the Book of Revelation

A LARGER, FULL COLOR chart may be downloaded free at AgeofAntichrist.com.

The book of Revelation reveals the timeline of earth's last seven years. This is the time when the Antichrist appears, the great tribulation takes place, Christ returns, and the earth as we know it ends.

The book of Revelation reveals that we are now living in the time of great apostasy. The apostasy is the welcome mat that welcomes the Antichrist.

The time is near.

The Antichrist will soon be here.

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THINGS SEEN – Introduction – 60 AD

Chapter 1 – The Glorified Christ

THINGS PRESENT – Apostasy – 60 AD - Present

Chapter 2 & 3 – The Church in Apostasy

THINGS FUTURE – Future Events – 20?? AD

Chapters 4 & 5 – Prep for Wrath of the Antichrist

Chapter 6 – Wrath of the AntiChrist

7 Seals – 3 ½ Years

Chapter 7 – Prep for Wrath of Christ

Chapters 8-11 – Wrath of Christ

7 Trumpets – 3 ½ Years

Chapter 12 – Reference – Heavenly Conflict

Chapter 13 – Reference – New World Order

False Prophets

Chapters 14 & 15 – Prep for Wrath of God

Chapter 16 – Wrath of God

7 Vials – 1 Hour

Chapters 17 & 18 – Reference – Babylon Judged

Chapters 19 & 20 – Final Events

Armageddon

Marriage Supper

Millennium

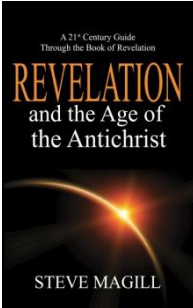
Gog/Magog Battle – 30?? AD

Great White Throne

Chapters 21:1-22:6 – New Heaven & Earth

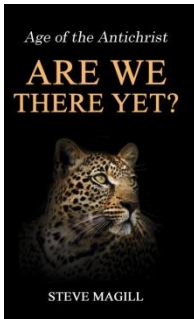
Chapter 22:7-21 – Final Words

Resources



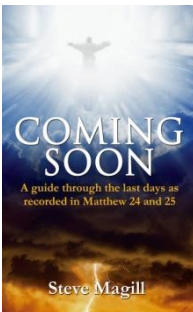
Book: *Revelation and the Age of the Antichrist* is a brief commentary on the book of Revelation. The Revelation is the timeline of the age of the Antichrist and earth's final seven years.

Chart: **CHART OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION** is a companion to the book, *Revelation and the Age of the Antichrist*.



Book: *Age of the Antichrist: ARE WE THERE YET?* focuses on the timelines recorded in the books of Daniel, Matthew 24, and the book of Revelation to form a comprehensive timeline of the last days.

Chart: **THE CHART OF THE PROPHETIC TIMELINE** is a companion to the book *The Age of the Antichrist, ARE WE THERE YET?*



Book: **COMING SOON.** Understanding the last days does not have to be complicated. Jesus made this clear when in Matthew 24 He outlined the events and ordering of last day events in only 28 verses.

Study Guide Available



Book: *100% Guaranteed, You Have An Appointment With Destiny* is a forty-eight-page book that explores the evidence for God and eternity. It is an excellent follow up after sharing the Gospel and a practical handbook that puts the essential arguments for God at a person's fingertips.

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