

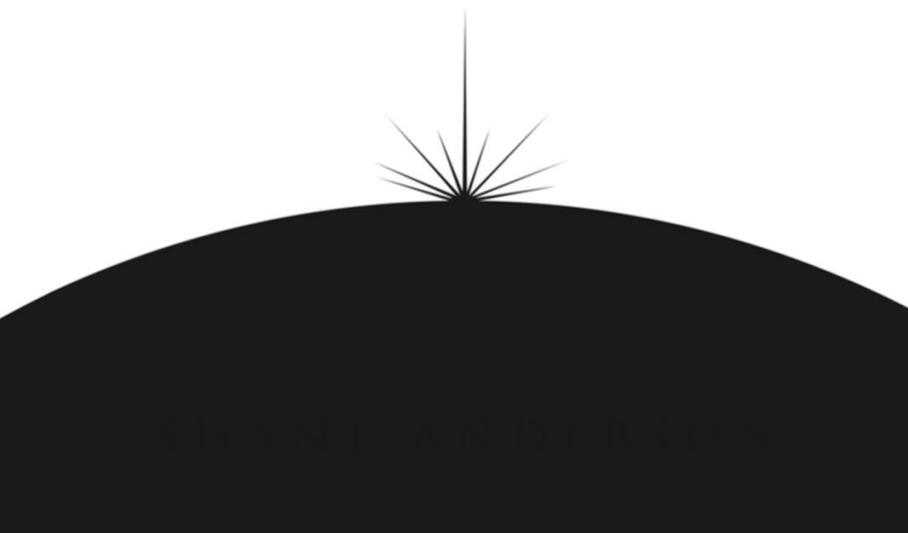
ALL THINGS NEW

PROPHECIES OF HOPE

SHANE ANDERSON

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All Things New – Prophecies of Hope

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Daniel

INTRODUCTION

A captive in Mesopotamia spends the night in a den of ravenous lions yet emerges the next day in perfect health. Six centuries later another captive is exiled to an island in the Aegean Sea, where he claims to have seen the future in astonishing detail. And both men, though separated by vast amounts of time and space, end up writing prophetic books detailing world events literally hundreds of years in advance—and every prophecy they made has come to pass exactly as predicted.

These two ancient prophetic books, known respectively as “The Book of Daniel” and “The Book of Revelation,” are published here for the first time in this explanatory format. Together, they have guided heads of state, predicted accurately the rise and fall of global empires, and in so doing have inspired countless millions to take their message seriously. In fact, the predictions these books make have been amazingly fulfilled.

Furthermore, Daniel and Revelation predict things about *our* day soon to take place. The oppression we see all over the world—and the oppression that perhaps even you or those you care about are suffering from right now—is soon to cease in history’s grand climax. *Justice* is coming; evil is about to end. Given these books’ track record of fulfilled predictions, the thoughtful reader must take them seriously.

But these two books speak of more than justice; they also specialize in *goodness*. Is not a lack of goodness one of the greatest weaknesses in our world today? Countries conquer one another for the sake of sheer ambition. Families are destroyed due to selfishness and

greed. Personal relationships so often falter and crumble because of a lack of compassion and empathy. There is a profound lack of goodness on our planet!

The books of Daniel and Revelation provide the solution to this global problem. Its writers knew firsthand what it meant to live under the oppression of ego-driven societies. And they also experienced firsthand the only answer to selfishness that lasts. Their lives were personally transformed. They learned how they themselves—and anyone else who is willing—can finally become the kind of person the world desperately needs: a person of justice, mercy, honor, compassion, dignity, respect, power, and wisdom. In other words, they found the secret to being a *good* person. And you can too, if you read and apply this book.

These two books also speak of a final theme, the greatest theme of all: *love*. Can you imagine how different the world would be if even half of our planet were populated by people who first and foremost were people of love? We of course are not speaking merely of romantic love, but rather the kind of love that consistently places others first; the love that sacrifices itself for the well-being of another; the love that tirelessly pursues the betterment of others before itself.

Such love, as good as it is, seems like a mere dream, doesn't it? But in the books of Daniel and Revelation, not only is such love revealed, but its Source is revealed. And that Source is made available to you, if you are willing to accept it.

So keep reading and rest assured that the adventure of a lifetime awaits you in the following pages. Best of all, justice, goodness, and love can become yours along the way.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Both Daniel and Revelation are organized by chapters and verses. Daniel has 12 chapters and Revelation 22 chapters. The numbers of the chapters are featured with a bigger font size while the verses that are part of the chapters are numbered with a smaller font size. “Daniel 8:14,” for instance, is a reference to the eighth chapter of Daniel, verse 14, and “Revelation 14:6” refers to the fourteenth chapter of Revelation, verse 6.

This book is designed to give you an overview of the powerful themes the books of Daniel and Revelation present. While most of the verses are self-explanatory, some of them require some clarification. Thus, you will find notes throughout this book illuminating the more difficult parts. They appear with a different font right below the verses. Since you may have some unanswered questions, opportunities for additional study are available through QR codes you can scan with any camera-enabled device.

History's grand conclusion is coming soon! And these two books, read thoughtfully and thoroughly, can help us understand what is just ahead and become people of justice, goodness, and love who are ready for that time.



CHAPTER 1

¹In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ²And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the articles of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the articles into the treasure house of his god.

³Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king's descendants and some of the nobles, ⁴young men in whom there was no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who had ability to serve in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans. ⁵And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king. ⁶Now from among those of the sons of Judah were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. ⁷To them the chief of the eunuchs gave names: he gave Daniel the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abed-Nego.

⁸But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

- Daniel and his friends objected to the king's food for at least two reasons. First, it was unhealthy and would make them weaker physically and mentally. Second, the food almost certainly had been dedicated to the gods of Babylon before being placed on the king's table. To eat the food would have shown allegiance to those gods—something that Daniel and his friends could never do.

⁹Now God had brought Daniel into the favor and goodwill of the chief of the eunuchs. ¹⁰And the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and drink. For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young

men who are your age? Then you would endanger my head before the king.”

¹¹So Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, ¹²“Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³Then let our appearance be examined before you, and the appearance of the young men who eat the portion of the king’s delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants.”

¹⁴So he consented with them in this matter, and tested them ten days.

¹⁵And at the end of ten days their features appeared better and fatter in flesh than all the young men who ate the portion of the king’s delicacies. ¹⁶Thus the steward took away their portion of delicacies and the wine that they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.

¹⁷As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

¹⁸Now at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹Then the king interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore they served before the king. ²⁰And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm. ²¹Thus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus.

- Today we know better than ever that Daniel and his friends were right: A healthy diet that also avoids alcohol and other mind-clouding substances makes us stronger mentally and physically.
- Eating the healthiest foods we can find and avoiding drugs and alcohol will also give us strength as we become people of justice, goodness, and love.
- Daniel and his friends would not compromise their loyalty to the God of heaven and earth. In return, God gave them special skills and abilities that will be dramatically put to the test in chapter 2.



CHAPTER 2

¹Now in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was so troubled that his sleep left him. ²Then the king gave the command to call the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. ³And the king said to them, "I have had a dream, and my spirit is anxious to know the dream."

⁴Then the Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic, "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will give the interpretation."

- From here through the end of chapter 7 the original language of the book of Daniel switches from Hebrew to Aramaic.
- This change is significant. Aramaic was the language of the nations, of trade and commerce, as well as of the common person. This means that, while the entire book is important, what happens in chapters 2 through 7 is crucial for every person. The events concern the fate of all humanity.

⁵The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, "My decision is firm: if you do not make known the dream to me, and its interpretation, you shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made an ash heap. ⁶However, if you tell the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts, rewards, and great honor. Therefore tell me the dream and its interpretation."

⁷They answered again and said, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will give its interpretation."

⁸The king answered and said, "I know for certain that you would gain time, because you see that my decision is firm: ⁹if you do not make known the dream to me, there is only one decree for you! For you have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the time has changed. Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can give me its interpretation."

¹⁰The Chaldeans answered the king, and said, "There is not a man on earth who can tell the king's matter; therefore no king, lord, or ruler has ever asked such things of any magician, astrologer, or

Chaldean. ¹¹It is a difficult thing that the king requests, and there is no other who can tell it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.”

- A profound clash of worldviews is about to occur! The king knew the dream meant something important. But he feared that the interpretation his current court would bring would be manipulative or simply false. Only a truly divine source could both tell him what the dream was *and* accurately interpret it.

¹²For this reason the king was angry and very furious, and gave the command to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. ¹³So the decree went out, and they began killing the wise men; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them.

¹⁴Then with counsel and wisdom Daniel answered Arioch, the captain of the king’s guard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon; ¹⁵he answered and said to Arioch the king’s captain, “Why is the decree from the king so urgent?” Then Arioch made the decision known to Daniel.

¹⁶So Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation. ¹⁷Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, ¹⁸that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. ¹⁹Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

²⁰Daniel answered and said:

“Blessed be the name of God forever and ever,
For wisdom and might are His.

²¹And He changes the times and the seasons;
He removes kings and raises up kings;
He gives wisdom to the wise
And knowledge to those who have understanding.

²²He reveals deep and secret things;
He knows what is in the darkness,
And light dwells with Him.

²³“I thank You and praise You,
O God of my fathers;
You have given me wisdom and might,
And have now made known to me what we asked of You,
For You have made known to us the king’s demand.”

²⁴Therefore Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon. He went and said thus to him: “Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon; take me before the king, and I will tell the king the interpretation.”

²⁵Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king, and said thus to him, “I have found a man of the captives of Judah, who will make known to the king the interpretation.”

²⁶The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, “Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and its interpretation?”

²⁷Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, “The secret which the king has demanded, the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king. ²⁸But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these: ²⁹As for you, O king, thoughts came to your mind while on your bed, about what would come to pass after this; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be. ³⁰But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me because I have more wisdom than anyone living, but for our sakes who make known the interpretation to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your heart.

³¹“You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome. ³²This image’s head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, ³³its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. ³⁴You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. ³⁵Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so

that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

³⁶“This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king. ³⁷You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; ³⁸and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—you are this head of gold.

- With verse 38 a specific and historically accurate progression begins. Babylon is the first empire represented in this dream, symbolized by gold—a fitting symbol, given the immense amount of gold that Babylon had in its possession. The kingdoms that progressively appear in the remainder of the dream are represented by other materials, materials that reflect the characteristics of those kingdoms' respective reigns.

³⁹But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. ⁴⁰And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others. ⁴¹Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. ⁴²And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. ⁴³As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay. ⁴⁴And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. ⁴⁵Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.”

⁴⁶Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, prostrate before Daniel, and commanded that they should present an offering and incense to him. ⁴⁷The king answered Daniel, and said, “Truly your God is the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you could reveal this secret.” ⁴⁸Then the king promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts; and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief administrator over all the wise men of Babylon. ⁴⁹Also Daniel petitioned the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego over the affairs of the province of Babylon; but Daniel sat in the gate of the king.

- The chest and arms of silver represent the Medo-Persian Empire, which overthrew the Babylonians in 539 B.C. (see Daniel 5:31).
- The belly and thighs of bronze represent the Greek Empire, which overthrew the Medo-Persians in 331 B.C. under the leadership of Alexander the Great (see Daniel 8:20, 21).
- The legs of iron symbolize the Roman Empire, which defeated the Greek Empire in 168 B.C. The Romans indeed were strong like iron for centuries.
- The iron mixed with clay in the feet and toes is significant, for Rome did not fall to one particular empire, but rather gradually crumbled through repeated attacks by the peoples of Western Europe during the fifth century A.D.
- Just as iron does not mix with clay, so Western Europe has remained divided into different nations for centuries, despite such leaders as Charlemagne, Napoleon, and Hitler attempting to unite them. Despite the efforts of kings, conquerors, and currency, Europe has never been truly united since the fall of Rome. History confirms all these facts. This is powerful evidence of God's ability to accurately reveal the future.
- God's kingdom, symbolized by the stone, will soon overthrow all earthly kingdoms and be established forever. Just as surely as each previous kingdom was succeeded by another as predicted, so shall this final kingdom in our day.
- God is looking for people of justice, goodness, and love to join Him in that final kingdom! Are you willing to become that kind of person?



HEAD OF GOLD

Babylonian Empire

626-539 B.C.

LION – Daniel 7:4

**CHEST AND ARMS
OF SILVER**

**Medo-Persian
Empire**

539-331 B.C.

BEAR – Daniel 7:5

**BELLY AND THIGHS
OF BRONZE**

Greek Empire

331-168 B.C.

LEOPARD – Daniel 7:6

LEGS OF IRON

Roman Empire

168 B.C. - A.D. 476

BEAST – Daniel 7:7

STONE

God's Kingdom

FEET OF IRON & CLAY

Western Europe

A.D. 476 – PRESENT DAY



CHAPTER 3

¹Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was sixty cubits and its width six cubits. He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. ²And King Nebuchadnezzar sent word to gather together the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ³So the satraps, the administrators, the governors, the counselors, the treasurers, the judges, the magistrates, and all the officials of the provinces gathered together for the dedication of the image that King Nebuchadnezzar had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. ⁴Then a herald cried aloud: "To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, ⁵that at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up; ⁶and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace."

- Nebuchadnezzar, though initially impressed with the interpretation of his dream in chapter 2, is clearly now trying to change the future! He intends his kingdom of gold to be the final kingdom, with no inferior nations to conquer him afterward.

⁷So at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the horn, flute, harp, and lyre, in symphony with all kinds of music, all the people, nations, and languages fell down and worshiped the gold image which King Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

⁸Therefore at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and accused the Jews. ⁹They spoke and said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "O king, live forever! ¹⁰You, O king, have made a decree that everyone who hears the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, shall fall down and worship the gold image; ¹¹and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. ¹²There are certain

Jews whom you have set over the affairs of the province of Babylon: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego; these men, O king, have not paid due regard to you. They do not serve your gods or worship the gold image which you have set up.”

¹³Then Nebuchadnezzar, in rage and fury, gave the command to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. So they brought these men before the king. ¹⁴Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying to them, “Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up? ¹⁵Now if you are ready at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, and psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, and you fall down and worship the image which I have made, good! But if you do not worship, you shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. And who is the god who will deliver you from my hands?”

¹⁶Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. ¹⁷If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. ¹⁸But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up.”

¹⁹Then Nebuchadnezzar was full of fury, and the expression on his face changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. He spoke and commanded that they heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated. ²⁰And he commanded certain mighty men of valor who were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, and cast them into the burning fiery furnace. ²¹Then these men were bound in their coats, their trousers, their turbans, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. ²²Therefore, because the king's command was urgent, and the furnace exceedingly hot, the flame of the fire killed those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. ²³And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

²⁴Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, “Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?”

They answered and said to the king, “True, O king.”

²⁵“Look!” he answered, “I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.”

²⁶Then Nebuchadnezzar went near the mouth of the burning fiery furnace and spoke, saying, “Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, servants of the Most High God, come out, and come here.” Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego came from the midst of the fire.

²⁷And the satraps, administrators, governors, and the king’s counselors gathered together, and they saw these men on whose bodies the fire had no power; the hair of their head was not singed nor were their garments affected, and the smell of fire was not on them.

²⁸Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king’s word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God! ²⁹Therefore I make a decree that any people, nation, or language which speaks anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made an ash heap; because there is no other God who can deliver like this.”

³⁰Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego in the province of Babylon.

- What an incredible test for those three friends! And yet the secret that guaranteed their victory is still available to everyone today: *They trusted God*, no matter what the future seemed to hold.
- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego’s lives show that when we trust in God, He can provide for us in ways that He could not do if we did not trust Him.
- The story of Daniel 3 shows that trust in God does not guarantee freedom from difficulties in our lives. But it also shows that during those difficulties God is just, good, and loving. He will give us strength to prevail, even when powerful forces are oppressing us.



CHAPTER 4

¹Nebuchadnezzar the king,
To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth:
Peace be multiplied to you.
²I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me.
³How great are His signs,
And how mighty His wonders!
His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
And His dominion is from generation to generation.
⁴I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace. ⁵I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts on my bed and the visions of my head troubled me. ⁶Therefore I issued a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream. ⁷Then the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers came in, and I told them the dream; but they did not make known to me its interpretation. ⁸But at last Daniel came before me (his name is Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god; in him is the Spirit of the Holy God), and I told the dream before him, saying: ⁹“Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, because I know that the Spirit of the Holy God is in you, and no secret troubles you, explain to me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and its interpretation.

- Even though Daniel is given a Babylonian name reflective of a Babylonian god, “in him is the Spirit of the Holy God” makes it clear that Nebuchadnezzar has at least some understanding that the power at work in Daniel is a greater power than that which is at work in Babylon’s gods.

¹⁰“These were the visions of my head while on my bed:
I was looking, and behold,
A tree in the midst of the earth,
And its height was great.

¹¹The tree grew and became strong;
Its height reached to the heavens,

And it could be seen to the ends of all the earth.

¹²Its leaves were lovely,

Its fruit abundant,

And in it was food for all.

The beasts of the field found shade under it,

The birds of the heavens dwelt in its branches,

And all flesh was fed from it.

¹³“I saw in the visions of my head while on my bed, and there was a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven. ¹⁴He cried aloud and said thus:

‘Chop down the tree and cut off its branches,

Strip off its leaves and scatter its fruit.

Let the beasts get out from under it,

And the birds from its branches.

¹⁵Nevertheless leave the stump and roots in the earth,

Bound with a band of iron and bronze,

In the tender grass of the field.

Let it be wet with the dew of heaven,

And let him graze with the beasts

On the grass of the earth.

¹⁶Let his heart be changed from that of a man,

Let him be given the heart of a beast,

And let seven times pass over him.

¹⁷“This decision is by the decree of the watchers,

And the sentence by the word of the holy ones,

In order that the living may know

That the Most High rules in the kingdom of men,

Gives it to whomever He will,

And sets over it the lowest of men.’

¹⁸“This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar, declare its interpretation, since all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation; but you are able, for the Spirit of the Holy God is in you.”

- Again, a divine clash is now set to occur. Who will prevail: Babylon's gods? Or the most high God of heaven and earth?

¹⁹Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for a time, and his thoughts troubled him. So the king spoke, and said, “Belteshazzar, do not let the dream or its interpretation trouble you.”

Belteshazzar answered and said, “My lord, may the dream concern those who hate you, and its interpretation concern your enemies!

²⁰“The tree that you saw, which grew and became strong, whose height reached to the heavens and which could be seen by all the earth, ²¹whose leaves were lovely and its fruit abundant, in which was food for all, under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and in whose branches the birds of the heaven had their home— ²²it is you, O king, who have grown and become strong; for your greatness has grown and reaches to the heavens, and your dominion to the end of the earth.

²³“And inasmuch as the king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, ‘Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave its stump and roots in the earth, bound with a band of iron and bronze in the tender grass of the field; let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let him graze with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him’; ²⁴this is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king: ²⁵They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.

²⁶“And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that Heaven rules. ²⁷Therefore, O king, let my advice be acceptable to you; break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps there may be a lengthening of your prosperity.”

²⁸All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. ²⁹At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon. ³⁰The king spoke, saying, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?”

³¹While the word was still in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven: "King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! ³²And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses."

³³That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws.

³⁴And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever:

For His dominion is an everlasting dominion,
And His kingdom is from generation to generation.

³⁵All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing;
He does according to His will in the army of heaven
And among the inhabitants of the earth.

No one can restrain His hand
Or say to Him, "What have You done?"

³⁶At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me. My counselors and nobles resorted to me, I was restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me. ³⁷Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down.

- Nebuchadnezzar has now witnessed three showdowns between his gods and the one true God of heaven and earth: first in chapter 2, when Nebuchadnezzar's royal court failed to interpret his dream; second in chapter 3, when God miraculously preserved Daniel's three friends; and now again in chapter 4.
- At last, at the end of chapter 4, after this bizarre illness lasting seven years, Nebuchadnezzar's view of the most high God appears to have been permanently changed.

- He has clearly seen God's justice, goodness, and love, and his respect for God has changed accordingly.
- What is your opinion of this most high God so far in the book of Daniel?



CHAPTER 5

¹Belshazzar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his lords, and drank wine in the presence of the thousand. ²While he tasted the wine, Belshazzar gave the command to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple which had been in Jerusalem, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them. ³Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken from the temple of the house of God which had been in Jerusalem; and the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. ⁴They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone.

⁵In the same hour the fingers of a man's hand appeared and wrote opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. ⁶Then the king's countenance changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his hips were loosened and his knees knocked against each other. ⁷The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. The king spoke, saying to the wise men of Babylon, "Whoever reads this writing, and tells me its interpretation, shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around his neck; and he shall be the third ruler in the kingdom." ⁸Now all the king's wise men came, but they could not read the writing, or make known to the king its interpretation. ⁹Then King Belshazzar was greatly troubled, his countenance was changed, and his lords were astonished.

¹⁰The queen, because of the words of the king and his lords, came to the banquet hall. The queen spoke, saying, "O king, live forever! Do not let your thoughts trouble you, nor let your countenance change. ¹¹There is a man in your kingdom in whom is the Spirit of the

Holy God. And in the days of your father, light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, were found in him; and King Nebuchadnezzar your father—your father the king—made him chief of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers. ¹²Inasmuch as an excellent spirit, knowledge, understanding, interpreting dreams, solving riddles, and explaining enigmas were found in this Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar, now let Daniel be called, and he will give the interpretation.”

¹³Then Daniel was brought in before the king. The king spoke, and said to Daniel, “Are you that Daniel who is one of the captives from Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah? ¹⁴I have heard of you, that the Spirit of God is in you, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you. ¹⁵Now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing and make known to me its interpretation, but they could not give the interpretation of the thing. ¹⁶And I have heard of you, that you can give interpretations and explain enigmas. Now if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around your neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom.”

¹⁷Then Daniel answered, and said before the king, “Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another; yet I will read the writing to the king, and make known to him the interpretation. ¹⁸O king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father a kingdom and majesty, glory and honor. ¹⁹And because of the majesty that He gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him. Whomever he wished, he executed; whomever he wished, he kept alive; whomever he wished, he set up; and whomever he wished, he put down. ²⁰But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him. ²¹Then he was driven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild donkeys. They fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till he knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses.

²²“But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this. ²³And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do not see or hear or know; and the God who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified. ²⁴Then the fingers of the hand were sent from Him, and this writing was written.

²⁵“And this is the inscription that was written:
MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.

²⁶This is the interpretation of each word. MENE: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it; ²⁷TEKEL: You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting; ²⁸PERES: Your kingdom has been divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.” ²⁹Then Belshazzar gave the command, and they clothed Daniel with purple and put a chain of gold around his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

³⁰That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain. ³¹And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.

- Belshazzar had no doubt heard all the stories of Nebuchadnezzar and his respect for the most high God, but chose not to reign with justice, goodness, or love. As a result, the Babylonian kingdom was destroyed.
- God is ultimately sovereign. He is patient with those who rule over various nations today, and blesses those who govern with justice, goodness, and love.
- But when a government continually oppresses others, eventually God's patience will run out, just as it did with Belshazzar.
- If you are oppressed, remember the prophecy of Daniel 2 and put your trust in God. Justice is coming! The end of all things and the beginning of God's everlasting kingdom of justice, goodness, and love is nearly here.



CHAPTER 6

¹It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, to be over the whole kingdom; ²and over these, three governors, of whom Daniel was one, that the satraps might give account to them, so that the king would suffer no loss. ³Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm. ⁴So the governors and satraps sought to find some charge against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find no charge or fault, because he was faithful; nor was there any error or fault found in him. ⁵Then these men said, “We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God.”

⁶So these governors and satraps thronged before the king, and said thus to him: “King Darius, live forever! ⁷All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions. ⁸Now, O king, establish the decree and sign the writing, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter.” ⁹Therefore King Darius signed the written decree.

¹⁰Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.

¹¹Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. ¹²And they went before the king, and spoke concerning the king’s decree: “Have you not signed a decree that every man who petitions any god or man within thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?”

The king answered and said, “The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter.”

¹³So they answered and said before the king, “That Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, does not show due regard for you, O king, or for the decree that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day.”

¹⁴And the king, when he heard these words, was greatly displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him. ¹⁵Then these men approached the king, and said to the king, “Know, O king, that it is the law of the Medes and Persians that no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed.”

¹⁶So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke, saying to Daniel, “Your God, whom you serve continually, He will deliver you.” ¹⁷Then a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed.

¹⁸Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep went from him. ¹⁹Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions. ²⁰And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, “Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?”

²¹Then Daniel said to the king, “O king, live forever! ²²My God sent His angel and shut the lions’ mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you.”

²³Now the king was exceedingly glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God.

²⁴And the king gave the command, and they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions—they, their children, and their wives; and the lions overpowered them, and broke all their bones in pieces before they ever came to the bottom of the den.

25Then King Darius wrote:

To all peoples, nations, and languages that dwell in all the earth:
Peace be multiplied to you.

26I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom men must tremble and fear before the God of Daniel.

For He is the living God,

And steadfast forever;

His kingdom is the one which shall not be destroyed,

And His dominion shall endure to the end.

27He delivers and rescues,

And He works signs and wonders

In heaven and on earth,

Who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.

28So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

- Remarkably, Daniel served in high office in both the Babylonian and Medo-Persian empires. He dedicated himself to God and His service, and because Daniel was a man of justice, goodness, and love, God was able to trust him with leadership at the highest levels of these two empires.
- It may seem surprising that Daniel did not try to use his formidable political authority (being one of only three governors over the whole kingdom) to harm his enemies, the satraps. But Daniel was concerned first and foremost about God's values, not those of humans. And because of Daniel's faithfulness, God moved mightily on his behalf and saved him from the lions.
- God is still able today to save us from our difficulties and trials. Ask Him for His help. Put your trust in Him, and He will provide the strength and courage you need—just as He did for Daniel.



CHAPTER 7

1In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon [550 B.C.], Daniel had a dream and visions of his head while on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, telling the main facts.

²Daniel spoke, saying, “I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea. ³And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other. ⁴The first was like a lion, and had eagle’s wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man’s heart was given to it.

- As in Daniel 2 Babylon is the first kingdom in the progression, so also here. Instead of a head of gold, Babylon is now depicted as a lion (fittingly symbolizing Babylon’s strength and domination).
- Images of lions were discovered on Babylon’s processional walls and on the Ishtar Gate. The manes of these lions extend like eagle’s wings (the eagle has a formidable range and speed—something Babylon regularly showed in battle).

⁵“And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: ‘Arise, devour much flesh!’

- The nation succeeding Babylon was the Medo-Persian Empire. It reigned from approximately 539 B.C. to 331 B.C. A powerful confederation, the Medo-Persian Empire is fittingly described here as a bear rising to strike its prey. The three ribs in its mouth represent the nations of Lydia, Babylon, and Egypt, three nations the Medes and Persians overran to obtain domination.



⁶“After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it.

- The next world empire would be Greece, which conquered Medo-Persia in 331 B.C. and reigned until about 168 B.C. Under the leadership of Alexander the Great, Greece was noted for its aggression and phenomenal speed in moving its forces to the scene of battle (thus the symbolism of a leopard with not just two wings but four, symbolizing extraordinary swiftness).
- The four heads are intriguing, since in prophecy, heads—and sometimes also horns—usually indicate various divisions of leadership within or coming from a particular kingdom.

⁷“After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. ⁸I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.

- History is abundantly clear that the Roman Empire conquered Greece in 168 B.C. and reigned until A.D. 476. Like the legs of iron in chapter 2, Daniel 7 depicts Rome as a beast having “huge iron teeth” and “devouring, breaking . . . , and trampling.” This description is certainly accurate, as few nations have ever matched the iron grip of ancient Rome.
- But strangely, Daniel spends relatively little time with the fourth beast itself. Instead, his attention turns to its horns, especially a “little one” that has human characteristics and speaks boastfully.

⁹“I watched till thrones were put in place,
And the Ancient of Days was seated;
His garment was white as snow,
And the hair of His head was like pure wool.
His throne was a fiery flame,
Its wheels a burning fire;

¹⁰A fiery stream issued
And came forth from before Him.
A thousand thousands ministered to Him;
Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him.
The court was seated,
And the books were opened.

- Interrupting the symbolic description of nations throughout history comes this startling scene of the judgment of all humanity. The “Ancient of Days” is none other than the most high God, sometimes referred to simply as “our Father” (Isaiah 63:16; 64:8).
- Since He is seen on His throne the scene is in heaven, not on earth. A heavenly court, which will determine the fate of every person who has ever lived, is “seated,” showing its work is beginning. That’s why we see “the books” “opened.”
- The record of all that has transpired in human history from the dawn of time until the end is thus depicted. The judgment process requires such breadth of information because God seeks to bring as many people as possible into His kingdom and is looking for every available means to do so. No piece of evidence from any time or place in human history, therefore, will be excluded. Exactly when this judgment takes place is revealed later in the books of Daniel and Revelation.

¹¹“I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame. ¹²As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

¹³“I was watching in the night visions,
And behold, One like the Son of Man,
Coming with the clouds of heaven!
He came to the Ancient of Days,
And they brought Him near before Him.

¹⁴Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom,
That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him.
His dominion is an everlasting dominion,
Which shall not pass away,

And His kingdom the one
Which shall not be destroyed.

- In chapter 3 we saw the “Son of Man” standing with the three faithful friends in Nebuchadnezzar’s fiery furnace. This “Son of Man” is Jesus Christ. During Jesus’ time on earth in the first century A.D., He was regularly referred to as both “the Son of God” and “the Son of Man.” These are divine titles that also show a profound connection to humanity. Jesus is fully God and fully human. How He can be both is a profound mystery that we will never be fully able to explain. But the results of this mystery are not baffling at all. Jesus’ becoming human while remaining fully divine uniquely qualifies Him to be both our Savior and our Judge—indeed, these are the roles that He plays in the heavenly judgment scene of Daniel 7, as we learn from the New Testament. God the Father presides over the heavenly court. Jesus acts as our Judge (John 5:22). But He is also our Savior, our Advocate, the one who intercedes for us and forgives us our sins (1 John 1:9; 2:1).
- This explains why Jesus is shown “coming with the clouds of heaven”—not to this earth, but into the courts of heaven (also sometimes called “the heavenly sanctuary”). The result of this judgment process is astonishing. Ultimately, it ushers in Jesus’ second coming to earth and the establishment of His kingdom that “shall not be destroyed.”

¹⁵“I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. ¹⁶I came near to one of those who stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: ¹⁷“Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth. ¹⁸But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.”

- Verse 17 interprets the beasts as four “kings.” However, as we saw in chapter 2, Nebuchadnezzar, though an individual king, was nonetheless representative of the whole of the Babylonian kingdom. Similarly, here in Daniel 7 these four kings represent the same four kingdoms we saw in Daniel 2.

¹⁹“Then I wished to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, which devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet; ²⁰and the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, before which three fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance was greater than his fellows.

²¹“I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, ²²until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom.

²³“Thus he said:

‘The fourth beast shall be
A fourth kingdom on earth,
Which shall be different from all other kingdoms,
And shall devour the whole earth,
Trample it and break it in pieces.

²⁴The ten horns are ten kings
Who shall arise from this kingdom.
And another shall rise after them;
He shall be different from the first ones,
And shall subdue three kings.

²⁵He shall speak pompous words against the Most High,
Shall persecute the saints of the Most High,
And shall intend to change times and law.
Then the saints shall be given into his hand
For a time and times and half a time.

²⁶‘But the court shall be seated,
And they shall take away his dominion,
To consume and destroy it forever.

²⁷Then the kingdom and dominion,
And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven,
Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High.
His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
And all dominions shall serve and obey Him.’

28“This is the end of the account. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts greatly troubled me, and my countenance changed; but I kept the matter in my heart.”

- A progression is here repeated three times: The little horn reigns → Heavenly judgment occurs → God's kingdom is established and given to His people (see verses 8-14, 21, 22, and 24-27). This shows that God's kingdom will not be established on earth until the heavenly judgment process is completed, something we'll learn more about in chapter 8 and in the book of Revelation.
- Daniel was profoundly interested in the little horn that comes up from the ashes of the Roman Empire—and no wonder! It was prophesied to oppress the followers of God as no other power had ever done.
- Identifying this little horn is crucial to understanding the timing of both the judgment in heaven and the establishment of God's kingdom on earth.
- Who is this little-horn power? This chapter reveals nine characteristics:
 1. It would come up “among them,” that is, among the 10 horns/nations of Western Europe (verse 8).
 2. It would arise after A.D. 476, when Rome finally fell to the last of these nations (verse 8).
 3. It starts out “little,” not a vast empire like the Greeks or the Romans (verse 8).
 4. Three horns or nations would be uprooted before it becomes a substantial power (verse 8).
 5. It would “speak against the Most High,” that is, it would speak pompous words/blasphemies against God (verses 8 and 25; see also Daniel 11:36).
 6. It would be “different” in substantial ways from other kingdoms (verse 24).
 7. It would “intend to change times and law” (verse 25). Human laws change all the time, so it cannot refer to them. But God's times and laws are eternal. To “intend to change” God's fixed times and laws would fulfill this prediction and explain its blasphemous behavior.

8. It is a power that would “war against”/“persecute” God’s followers (verses 21 and 25).

9. It would initially rule for “a time and times and half a time,” that is, three and a half years, or 1,260 days, with each day symbolizing one year. To discover why a day in prophecy often symbolizes a literal year, please scan this QR code.



- There is only one power in history that fits all nine of these characteristics. It is extremely important to know who or what this power represents, as it plays a key role in history from God’s perspective.
- This power will be more specifically identified when we study Revelation 13, a passage that also deals with this power but in greater detail.
- Daniel 7 finishes with Daniel feeling “greatly troubled” (verse 28). The events he saw predicted in this vision, though shown to some extent in chapter 2, were astonishing in their weight and scope. The oppression God’s people would face through the centuries, and the enormity of the task God the Father and the Son would face as they sought to save as much of humanity as possible, seemed overwhelming to Daniel. He still firmly believed that God’s justice, goodness, and love would triumph! But the cost would be great, and Daniel’s heart sank as he thought about how long it would take.



CHAPTER 8

¹In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me—to me, Daniel—after the one that appeared to me the first time. ²I saw in the vision, and it so happened while I was looking, that I was in Shushan, the citadel, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision that I was by the River Ulai. ³Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and there, standing beside the river, was a ram which had two horns, and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last. ⁴I saw the ram pushing westward, northward, and southward, so that no animal could withstand him; nor was there any that could deliver from his hand, but he did according to his will and became great.

- The ram with two horns, like the bear of chapter 7, represents the kingdom of Medo-Persia (verse 20). The reason Babylon is not represented in this vision is that its end is near.

⁵And as I was considering, suddenly a male goat came from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. ⁶Then he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, and ran at him with furious power. ⁷And I saw him confronting the ram; he was moved with rage against him, attacked the ram, and broke his two horns. There was no power in the ram to withstand him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled him; and there was no one that could deliver the ram from his hand. ⁸Therefore the male goat grew very great; but when he became strong, the large horn was broken, and in place of it four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven.

- The male goat, with its rapid conquest, represents Greece, according to verse 21.

⁹And out of one of them came a little horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious Land.

- The little horn now takes center stage. The grammar of the Hebrew words in verse 8 and 9 makes it clear that the little horn comes out of one of the “four winds,” not one of the four horns.
- As in chapter 7, the power that follows, represented here by the little horn, is the Roman Empire. Since it came from the northwest, the directions of conquest are to the south and east, including the land of Israel, which it conquered in 63 B.C.

¹⁰And it grew up to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and some of the stars to the ground, and trampled them. ¹¹He even exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host; and by him the daily sacrifices were taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down. ¹²Because of transgression, an army was given over to the horn to oppose the daily sacrifices; and he cast truth down to the ground. He did all this and prospered.

- The little horn's direction of conquest goes from horizontal to vertical, even reaching up to heaven. This indicates a significant change in how Rome operated, which will be explained below.

¹³Then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said to that certain one who was speaking, “How long will the vision be, concerning the daily sacrifices and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?”

¹⁴And he said to me, “For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed.”

- As we saw in chapter 7, the day-for-a-year principle means the sanctuary cleansing will begin after 2,300 literal years.

¹⁵Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. ¹⁶And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, who called, and said, “Gabriel, make this man understand the vision.” ¹⁷So he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and fell on my face; but he said to me, “Understand, son of man, that the vision refers to the time of the end.”

¹⁸Now, as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me, and stood me upright. ¹⁹And he said, “Look, I am making known to you what shall happen in the latter time of the indignation; for at the appointed time the end shall be. ²⁰The ram which you saw, having the two horns—they are the kings of Media and Persia. ²¹And the male goat is the kingdom of Greece. The large horn that is between its eyes is the first king. ²²As for the broken horn and the four that stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power.

- Note that the kingdom of Greece is mentioned by name—an astonishing fact given that Daniel was now revealing events more than 200 years in the future! The horn being broken off and four horns that grow in its place refers to Alexander the Great's death in 323 B.C. and the subsequent division of his empire into four separate parts among his generals: Ptolemy, Lysimachus, Cassander, and Seleucus.

23“And in the latter time of their kingdom,
When the transgressors have reached their fullness,
A king shall arise,
Having fierce features,
Who understands sinister schemes.

24His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power;
He shall destroy fearfully,
And shall prosper and thrive;
He shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people.

25“Through his cunning
He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule;
And he shall exalt himself in his heart.
He shall destroy many in their prosperity.
He shall even rise against the Prince of princes;
But he shall be broken without human means.

26“And the vision of the evenings and mornings
Which was told is true;
Therefore seal up the vision,
For it refers to many days in the future.”

27And I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days; afterward I arose and went about the king's business. I was astonished by the vision, but no one understood it.

- After all the amazing things Daniel has seen, it is remarkable that the little-horn power astonishes him! Yet there is good reason for his astonishment: The little horn of Daniel 8 represents two phases of Rome: the imperial phase that ended in A.D. 476 and a second phase that exalts itself “as high as the Prince of the host” and casts down “the place of His [God's] sanctuary.”
- That is indeed astonishing! For as we learned in Daniel 7:13, 14, the sanctuary in heaven is where God's throne is; where Jesus intercedes for us, forgives our sins, and removes our guilt; and where the judgment of all humanity takes place. Such an important location is obviously safe from physical attack by the little horn.
- But while the little-horn power cannot *physically* harm God's sanctuary in heaven, it nonetheless can and, according to the prophecy in Daniel 8,

will inflict *spiritual* harm to the sanctuary in heaven.

- We will learn how that happens as we continue to study Daniel and Revelation. But here's a preview: The little horn will spiritually "cast down" God's heavenly sanctuary by setting up a counterfeit sanctuary system here on earth. To set up this counterfeit, the little horn will claim to have taken God's authority as its own; it will claim to intercede for humanity and to forgive its sins; and it will therefore claim to provide a better judgment process than God does.
- The result of this counterfeit system will be that many people, particularly at the very end of time, will be deceived. They will choose to trust the little-horn power rather than the most high God. They will ignore the abundant evidence that God is a just, good, and loving God. They will instead trust in the little horn's sanctuary system and its offers of earthly power and sinful pleasures—again, even though that system is a forgery and therefore offers nothing of real spiritual value.
- This is a tragedy of global proportions! For God will not force those who do not trust Him to become part of His kingdom. Instead, they will be excluded.
- The predicted work of the little-horn power is thus evil, global, and yes, astonishing. No wonder Daniel was sickened by what he saw.
- But there is hope, for the vision clearly says in verse 14 that after "two thousand three hundred days . . . the sanctuary shall be cleansed." This is extremely significant for several reasons:
 - For Daniel, the "sanctuary" being "cleansed" would first have been a reference to a special time known as the Day of Atonement, a day that was observed for hundreds of years by God's followers at the end of each ritual calendar year.
 - In those days God had two sanctuaries: one in heaven and one on earth. The earthly sanctuary was patterned after the heavenly sanctuary (see Hebrews 8:1, 2, 5). God's people would come to the earthly sanctuary to confess their sins and receive forgiveness.
 - The Day of Atonement was a very solemn time each year for confession of sin and for making any wrongs right that one had done to others or to God. It was seen as a profound time of judgment for God's

people: Would they confess their sins and fully commit themselves to God? Or would they remain in their selfishness and be condemned?

- Thus the sanctuary was a place of judgment, for it was where the followers of God were declared no longer guilty for their sins, while anyone who refused to participate was “cut off” (Leviticus 16:30; 23:29).
- At the end of the Day of Atonement, after the people had confessed their sins and the high priest had performed certain rituals, the sanctuary was declared to be “cleansed.” God’s people were judged to be righteous in God’s sight, and the whole community of God’s people would celebrate.
- But notice carefully: The cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8:14 cannot be referring to those yearly Days of Atonement long ago. Why? Because this particular cleansing is said to occur at the end of 2,300 literal years—far in the future from Daniel’s day, and long after the earthly sanctuary had been destroyed.
- Daniel 8:14 is thus not referring to the sanctuary on earth, but rather to the one in heaven. Therefore it refers, not to an ancient annual Day of Atonement, but to a final “day” of atonement.
- This “day” is not a literal 24-hour period, but a prophetic period of time near the very end of the world in which humanity is called by God to leave their sins behind, to make their wrongs right, and to commit themselves fully to God—to become people of justice, goodness, and love.
- This prophetic “day of atonement” will thus be nothing less than the final judgment process of all humanity (see 2 Corinthians 5:10).
- Daniel 8:14 does leave us with a problem, though: We do not have a date from which to start the 2,300 years. That date will be revealed in chapter 9.
- And don’t forget the three-step pattern we saw in Daniel 7: The little horn reigns → Heavenly judgment starts → God’s kingdom is established and given to the followers of God (see Daniel 7, verses 8-14, 21, 22, and 24-27).
- Do you see what this means? *If we can determine when the 2,300 years begin, we can know for certain when the judgment of all humanity begins, and thus see how close we are to the very end of time.*

- Daniel finished chapter 8 feeling overwhelmed and exhausted by a vision that “no one understood.” In chapter 9 he will pray to God for answers.



CHAPTER 9

¹In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans—²in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the Lord through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

³Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. ⁴And I prayed to the Lord my God, and made confession, and said, “O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments, ⁵we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. ⁶Neither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land. ⁷O Lord, righteousness belongs to You, but to us shame of face, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and those far off in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You.

⁸“O Lord, to us belongs shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. ⁹To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him. ¹⁰We have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets. ¹¹Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him. ¹²And He has confirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us,

by bringing upon us a great disaster; for under the whole heaven such has never been done as what has been done to Jerusalem.

¹³“As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us; yet we have not made our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth.

¹⁴Therefore the Lord has kept the disaster in mind, and brought it upon us; for the Lord our God is righteous in all the works which He does, though we have not obeyed His voice. ¹⁵And now, O Lord our God, who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and made Yourself a name, as it is this day—we have sinned, we have done wickedly!

¹⁶“O Lord, according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people are a reproach to all those around us.

¹⁷Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, and for the Lord’s sake cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate. ¹⁸O my God, incline Your ear and hear; open Your eyes and see our desolations, and the city which is called by Your name; for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies. ¹⁹O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name.”

- God’s people had been taken captive by the Babylonians because of their great, persistent sins. But Daniel also knows that the most high God is a God of justice, goodness, and love. God will forgive His people, just as He does anyone who will place their trust in Him today. You do not need to live a life of guilt or fear! God stands ready to forgive and begin restoring you today.

²⁰Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God, ²¹yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the

time of the evening offering. ²²And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. ²³At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision:

- Gabriel's purpose here is to interpret what was left uninterpreted in chapter 8. That chapter concluded with these words: "And the vision of the [2,300] evenings and mornings which was told is true; therefore seal up the vision, for it refers to many days in the future." Notice the 2,300 days were not explained, and no way of dating them was given. Gabriel now rectifies that.

²⁴"Seventy weeks are determined
For your people and for your holy city,
To finish the transgression,
To make an end of sins,
To make reconciliation for iniquity,
To bring in everlasting righteousness,
To seal up vision and prophecy,
And to anoint the Most Holy.

- Seventy weeks = 70×7 days = 490 days = which, as we have seen, equals 490 years. This is the amount of time Daniel and the rest of God's followers were given to do a number of important things: "finish transgression," "bring in everlasting righteousness," "seal up vision and prophecy," etc.
- These "seventy weeks," or 490 years, "are determined." Some translations say "are decreed." Both are correct. In Hebrew the word translated as "determined" or "decreed" is *khathak*. It literally means "to cut off." This is because important government decrees in ancient times were often cut or carved in stone to preserve them. In Daniel 9, 490 years are being "cut off." But cut off from what? The period left unexplained in the vision of chapter 8. According to the angel Gabriel, *the 490 years are being cut off from the beginning of the 2,300 years*. This is wonderful news, for this means that if we can discover when the 490 years started, we can simultaneously find out when the 2,300 years

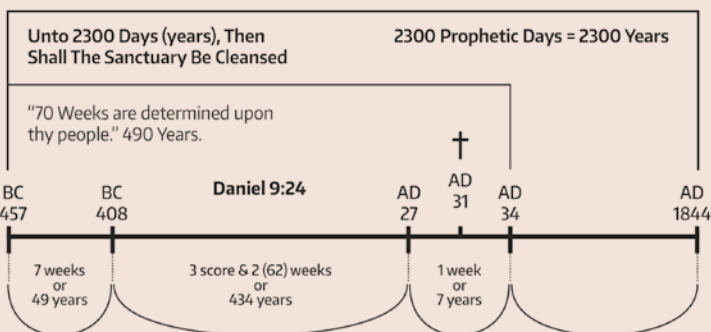
started—and therefore when the judgment process that will end all evil on earth begins.

²⁵“Know therefore and understand,
That from the going forth of the command
To restore and build Jerusalem
Until Messiah the Prince,
There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks;

- “Messiah the Prince” is a reference to Jesus Christ, God the Son, beginning His ministry on earth. Here’s why that is incredibly important:
 - Every one of us has sinned against God. We have broken His laws, ignored His leading in our lives, and oppressed others in various ways. We have chosen oppression over justice, evil over goodness, and selfishness over love. All of these sins have separated us from God, and unless something changes, that separation will last forever, leading to our destruction.
 - But the most high God does not want to be separated from us! He loves us and wants to be with us for eternity. He wants to save us from the penalty of our sins.
- So Jesus did for us what we could never do for ourselves. He came to this earth, fully God yet in the form of humanity, and He became one of us. He lived with us, walked with us, taught us, and showed us the ways of His kingdom. And finally, after three and a half years of ministry, He willingly gave up His life by being crucified on a Roman cross. *Jesus died as a substitute for us, dying for our sins.*
- Because of this substitution, anyone who puts his or her trust in Jesus as their Savior and Master will receive at least two things.
 - First, their sins are forgiven. In the heavenly judgment process we first saw in Daniel 7, our names are moved from “guilty” to “forgiven,” from being “lost” to being “found.” Jesus’ perfect life record is counted as our own in the heavenly judgment, and we are welcomed into Christ’s kingdom as His own family.
 - Second, as we wait for Jesus’ forever kingdom to be established on earth, He gives us another profound gift. After Jesus died on the cross, He was buried in a grave. But on the third day He was raised back to

life. This is known as Jesus' "resurrection." And because of His resurrection and the power He showed over death and sin, Jesus now gives us power to also conquer death and sin. He freely and daily gives us His strength to become the kind of people He has always known we could be: people of justice, goodness, and love. And even if we physically die before His kingdom is fully established, He will resurrect us to life at the end of time to spend eternity with Him. This is the kind of life that Jesus died and rose again to give us!

- And when would this incredible earthly ministry of Jesus begin? Verse 25 is clear: after "seven weeks and sixty-two weeks," for a total of 69 weeks, or 483 literal years. And when would those 483 years start? Precisely when the decree "to restore and rebuild Jerusalem" was given—not to restore just part of Jerusalem, but all of it. Fortunately, we know exactly when that decree was issued: in 457 B.C. by King Artaxerxes I of the Medo-Persian Empire. We now have the start date of the 70-week/490-year and 2,300-year prophecies!



The street shall be built again, and the wall,
Even in troublesome times.

²⁶“And after the sixty-two weeks

Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself;

And the people of the prince who is to come

Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.

The end of it shall be with a flood,

And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

27Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week;
 But in the middle of the week
 He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.
 And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate,
 Even until the consummation, which is determined,
 Is poured out on the desolate.”

- We saw previously that Jesus would start His ministry on earth after “seven weeks and sixty-two weeks,” or after 483 literal years (verse 25). We also now see that after that 483 years Jesus will “confirm a covenant with many for one week,” or for seven literal years (verse 27), and that in the middle of that seven years, “He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.”
- If we count forward 483 years from 457 B.C., we come to the year A.D. 27 (accounting for there being no “zero year” between 1 B.C. and A.D. 1). In A.D. 27 Jesus was baptized and anointed as the Messiah (see Matthew 3:16; Acts 10:38). Three and a half years later (“in the middle of the week” as verse 27 puts it), Jesus was “cut off, but not for Himself” (verse 26) when He was crucified on a cross by the Romans in A.D. 31.
- His crucifixion in the “middle” of that seven-year period also brought “an end to sacrifice and offering.” For thousands of years God had required His followers to offer for their sins the sacrifice of an unblemished animal—often a lamb—at God’s sanctuary on earth. But when Jesus died on the cross, the massive four-inch-thick curtain in that temple “was torn in two from top to bottom” (Mark 15:38). The message from the most high God was clear: No more lambs are to be sacrificed, for THE “Lamb of God,” Jesus Christ, had given His life for “the sin of the world” (John 1:29)—a sacrifice to end all the previous sacrifices that had foreshadowed it. Now people can come directly in prayer to Jesus, confessing and forsaking their sins, and finding abundant forgiveness in Him.
- More than four centuries later *Jesus fulfilled Daniel 9’s prophetic timeline with perfect accuracy*. Bible prophecy is trustworthy, and Jesus is the Messiah and Savior of the world.
- And what of the 2,300-day prophecy and the beginning of the final judgment of all humanity? Using the day-for-a-year principle, if we count

forward 2,300 years from 457 B.C., we end up at the year A.D. 1844 (again, remember that there is no “zero year” between 1 B.C. and A.D. 1). In that year began the final “Day” of Atonement in the heavenly sanctuary.

- Exactly how long this “Day” will last is known only to God. But we do know that when it is completed, Jesus will return to earth a second time and take His people to be with Him in heaven.
- Until the Second Coming, we are called to put sin and selfishness away, to seek forgiveness from God, and to find new life in Jesus Christ as people of justice, goodness, and love.
- The year 1844 is thus filled with significance! We will learn more about this final judgment time and the end of all evil when we study Revelation.



CHAPTER 10

¹In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. The message was true, but the appointed time was long; and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision. ²In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. ³I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.

⁴Now on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, that is, the Tigris, ⁵I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz! ⁶His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude.

⁷And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; but a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. ⁸Therefore I was left alone when I saw this great vision, and no strength remained in me; for my vigor was turned to frailty in me, and I retained no strength. ⁹Yet I heard the sound of his words; and while I heard the sound of his words I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground.

¹⁰Suddenly, a hand touched me, which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands. ¹¹And he said to me, “O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you.” While he was speaking this word to me, I stood trembling.

¹²Then he said to me, “Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. ¹³But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. ¹⁴Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come.”

- Daniel 10 provides a rare look behind the scenes of how the spiritual battle between good and evil is waged on this planet, and introduces chapter 11, the most detailed prophecy in the book.

¹⁵When he had spoken such words to me, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless. ¹⁶And suddenly, one having the likeness of the sons of men touched my lips; then I opened my mouth and spoke, saying to him who stood before me, “My lord, because of the vision my sorrows have overwhelmed me, and I have retained no strength. ¹⁷For how can this servant of my lord talk with you, my lord? As for me, no strength remains in me now, nor is any breath left in me.”

¹⁸Then again, the one having the likeness of a man touched me and strengthened me. ¹⁹And he said, “O man greatly beloved, fear not! Peace be to you; be strong, yes, be strong!” So when he spoke to me I was strengthened, and said, “Let my lord speak, for you have strengthened me.”

²⁰Then he said, “Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. ²¹But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince.

- “Michael” (verses 13 and 21), a name meaning “who is like God,” is a reference to Jesus. The reference to Him as “one of the chief princes” or “your prince” is not inconsistent with Him being God the Son. Jesus condescended to become human and to die on the cross, yet He remained fully God. In Daniel 10 He condescends to play the role of a chief prince, much like earthly kings in the past condescended to fight battles alongside common foot soldiers. Yet those kings remained the rulers of their lands. Jesus is still the most high God, even as He fights for good on our planet.
- Who is “the prince of Persia”? We cannot be certain. But the Bible describes Satan and his evil angels actively fighting against the kingdom of heaven. At one time he was a good angel named Lucifer, who worked closely with Jesus and God the Father. But Lucifer rebelled against the most high God (Isaiah 14:12-14), and consequently was removed from heaven, taking a third of God’s angels with him.
- To this day Satan and his angels are actively fighting for the control of nations, political leaders, and individuals. Satan is responsible for the introduction of evil to our planet. He is the author of war, hatred, oppression, and selfishness. And ultimately, at the end of time, when Jesus’ kingdom is established, Satan, his angels, and all who follow them will be destroyed forever. Evil will thus be exterminated from the universe, never to rise again.
- Daniel 10 makes it clear that Jesus is always fighting to help us, and to help justice, goodness, and love prevail. Are these three things—and most of all, is Jesus—prevailing in your life today?



CHAPTER 11

¹“Also in the first year of Darius the Mede, I, even I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him.) ²And now I will tell you the truth: Behold, three more kings will arise in Persia, and the fourth shall be far richer than them all; by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Greece. ³Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. ⁴And when he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken

up and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not among his posterity nor according to his dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted, even for others besides these.

- This chapter's vision remains one of the richest in the book of Daniel—and the most difficult to interpret. But some clear guideposts will be noted along the way.
- It is clear to nearly all interpreters that verses 1-4 are a review of the prophecies concerning Medo-Persia and Greece, with some additional details given (see our comments on Daniel 8:18-22).

⁵“Also the king of the South shall become strong, as well as one of his princes; and he shall gain power over him and have dominion. His dominion shall be a great dominion. ⁶And at the end of some years they shall join forces, for the daughter of the king of the South shall go to the king of the North to make an agreement; but she shall not retain the power of her authority, and neither he nor his authority shall stand; but she shall be given up, with those who brought her, and with him who begot her, and with him who strengthened her in those times. ⁷But from a branch of her roots one shall arise in his place, who shall come with an army, enter the fortress of the king of the North, and deal with them and prevail. ⁸And he shall also carry their gods captive to Egypt, with their princes and their precious articles of silver and gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the North.

⁹“Also the king of the North shall come to the kingdom of the king of the South, but shall return to his own land. ¹⁰However his sons shall stir up strife, and assemble a multitude of great forces; and one shall certainly come and overwhelm and pass through; then he shall return to his fortress and stir up strife.

¹¹“And the king of the South shall be moved with rage, and go out and fight with him, with the king of the North, who shall muster a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into the hand of his enemy. ¹²When he has taken away the multitude, his heart will be lifted up; and he will cast down tens of thousands, but he will not prevail. ¹³For the king of the North will return and muster a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come at the end of some years with a great army and much equipment.

- Through verse 13 there is reasonably strong agreement that the vision is predicting the ebb and flow of power between Syria and its succession of Seleucid rulers (the “king of the north”) and Egypt and its succession of Ptolemaic rulers (the “king of the south”).

¹⁴“Now in those times many shall rise up against the king of the South. Also, violent men of your people shall exalt themselves in fulfillment of the vision, but they shall fall. ¹⁵So the king of the North shall come and build a siege mound, and take a fortified city; and the forces of the South shall not withstand him. Even his choice troops shall have no strength to resist. ¹⁶But he who comes against him shall do according to his own will, and no one shall stand against him. He shall stand in the Glorious Land with destruction in his power.

¹⁷“He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do. And he shall give him the daughter of women to destroy it; but she shall not stand with him, or be for him. ¹⁸After this he shall turn his face to the coastlands, and shall take many. But a ruler shall bring the reproach against them to an end; and with the reproach removed, he shall turn back on him. ¹⁹Then he shall turn his face toward the fortress of his own land; but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found.

²⁰“There shall arise in his place one who imposes taxes on the glorious kingdom; but within a few days he shall be destroyed, but not in anger or in battle. ²¹And in his place shall arise a vile person, to whom they will not give the honor of royalty; but he shall come in peaceably, and seize the kingdom by intrigue. ²²With the force of a flood they shall be swept away from before him and be broken, and also the prince of the covenant.

- The “prince of the covenant” being “broken” clearly refers to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

²³And after the league is made with him he shall act deceitfully, for he shall come up and become strong with a small number of people. ²⁴He shall enter peaceably, even into the richest places of the province; and he shall do what his fathers have not done, nor his forefathers: he shall disperse among them the plunder, spoil,

and riches; and he shall devise his plans against the strongholds, but only for a time.

²⁵“He shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the South with a great army. And the king of the South shall be stirred up to battle with a very great and mighty army; but he shall not stand, for they shall devise plans against him. ²⁶Yes, those who eat of the portion of his delicacies shall destroy him; his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain. ²⁷Both these kings’ hearts shall be bent on evil, and they shall speak lies at the same table; but it shall not prosper, for the end will still be at the appointed time. ²⁸While returning to his land with great riches, his heart shall be moved against the holy covenant; so he shall do damage and return to his own land.

²⁹“At the appointed time he shall return and go toward the south; but it shall not be like the former or the latter. ³⁰For ships from Cyprus shall come against him; therefore he shall be grieved, and return in rage against the holy covenant, and do damage.

“So he shall return and show regard for those who forsake the holy covenant. ³¹And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation.

- The little-horn power of Daniel 7, and particularly of Daniel 8, is described here.

³²Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits. ³³And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering. ³⁴Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue. ³⁵And some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purify them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time.

³⁶“Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been

accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done. ³⁷He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all. ³⁸But in their place he shall honor a god of fortresses; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things. ³⁹Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain.

- Daniel 11:36-45 have divided interpreters for years, but probably “the king” of verse 36 is the same as the little-horn power of Daniel 7 and 8, because the description matches that of the little horn in Daniel 7 and 8.

⁴⁰“At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through. ⁴¹He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon. ⁴²He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. ⁴³He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels. ⁴⁴But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many. ⁴⁵And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him.

- Most see these verses describing events that are still future and agree that the references to specific geographic areas are symbolic, not literal.
- While many questions remain, it is clear is that Daniel 11 shows two great powers—one good, led by Christ, and one evil, led by Satan—competing in the final battle of earth’s history.
- As we have seen in previous chapters, Christ will triumph in this final battle. Justice, goodness, and love will win out over oppression, evil, and selfishness.



CHAPTER 12

¹“At that time Michael shall stand up,
The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people;
And there shall be a time of trouble,
Such as never was since there was a nation,
Even to that time.
And at that time your people shall be delivered,
Every one who is found written in the book.

- Here is a startling revelation: Before things get better at the end of time, they will get worse. We see this today in nearly every news cycle.

²And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake,
Some to everlasting life,
Some to shame and everlasting contempt.

³Those who are wise shall shine
Like the brightness of the firmament,
And those who turn many to righteousness
Like the stars forever and ever.

- Those who trust in God (“the wise”) will be delivered. These last days are therefore not occasions for fear, but for trust.

⁴“But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”

- At the time of the end, the meaning of the “sealed” (unexplained) portions of the book of Daniel will be revealed. This is good news! Some of these prophecies even Daniel failed to understand, but thankfully, through the book of Revelation, these mysteries have been unsealed, so keep reading!

⁵Then I, Daniel, looked; and there stood two others, one on this riverbank and the other on that riverbank. ⁶And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, “How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?”

⁷Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to

heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished.

- Here reiterated is the 1,260-day-for-a-year prophecy, which we've already studied.

⁸Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, "My lord, what shall be the end of these things?"

⁹And he said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. ¹⁰Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.

¹¹"And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days. ¹²Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.

- Here are two new prophetic time periods: 1,290 days/years, and 1,335 days/years. Nearly all are agreed that both of them are tied to the 1,260-year prophecy but focus on separate events with which this period begins and ends.

¹³"But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days."

- As we have seen in the book of Daniel, Jesus Christ is our high priest in the heavenly sanctuary right now. He is working to bring us into His kingdom, which will be established soon, never to fall. Let's refuse to be distracted by other gods or idols, for every false god in the book of Daniel failed to provide for those who unwisely trusted in them. Put your trust instead in Christ, the most high God, the embodiment of justice, goodness, and love. Only He can save you! And in saving you, as citizens of His eternal kingdom, He will transform you to become a person of justice, goodness, and love, as well.

Revelation

INTRODUCTION

Daniel and Revelation make clear that we are living in the last days of earth's history. Oppression is indeed about to be ended. Justice is coming, goodness will reign, and love will be the rule and no longer the exception.

Before that, the battle of all the ages will have to play out first—the battle between Christ and Satan, between good and evil. We saw glimpses of this in Daniel 10 and 11 where Christ and heaven's angels battle evil angels for influence over entire nations. But what you may not have known then and need to know now is that there is a profound difference between how Christ fights this battle and how Satan fights it.

Satan relies on brute force, manipulation, and coercion. Though he may first offer rewards for serving him, Satan eventually shows his true colors and demands allegiance. Christ, however, is love—and love, to be love, must never be forced. It must instead be freely chosen. Consequently, Christ never manipulates, never uses propaganda, never forces anyone to follow Him. He instead *shows us God's love*, a love shown most clearly on the cross when Christ died for our sins. Moved by this love, we freely choose to give Him our allegiance. Jesus and Satan are completely different.

Sadly, Revelation makes clear that at the very end of time, most people on earth will choose Satan's force over Jesus' love. This means the world is going to get much worse, briefly, before it at last and forever gets better under the rulership of Jesus.

But do not be discouraged! A God of love tells His people ahead of time that dangers are coming, so that they can be prepared and not surprised when they arrive. Jesus is the Best Friend, Savior, and Leader a person can have, and He will not let those who choose Him

be swept away by the coming disasters. At each turn of Revelation's pages, keep your eyes focused on Him. You will be amazed at how He has made abundant provision for your care, even in earth's darkest hour.

ABOUT REVELATION

Before we begin reading the book itself, there are four things you should know. First, the book of Revelation was written by (a man named) John around A.D. 95. He wrote it while he was in exile on the island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea off the coast of modern-day Turkey. We do not know the exact charges against John. But the fact that he was a dedicated follower of Jesus would have been enough for the Roman Empire of that day to imprison him. John knew firsthand what it meant to suffer for following Jesus.

Second, the Book of Revelation is written in what scholars call a “chiastic structure.” To learn more about this unique structure, please scan the following QR code:  This structure shows that the great themes of chapters 12, 13, and 14 are the main reason Revelation was written. It also shows that three angels and their messages portrayed in Revelation 14:6-12 represent the most important messages in the entire book. They are the primary reason God inspired John to write the book and represent God's final messages to the world before Jesus returns a second time. We cannot afford to miss what those three angels have to say!

Third, because of space constraints, there will be many symbols in Revelation that we will not have time to explain. But where possible, we have provided options for further study via QR codes. At the end of this book, we also provide a list of some important symbols and their meaning.

Fourth and last, Jesus is known throughout Scripture by different names, including Jesus, Christ, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Son of Man, the Lamb, etc. When you see these names, know that they all refer to the same person, Jesus.

Let's begin! We trust that Daniel proved to be a worthy adventure for you, and that Revelation will be even better revealing God's plan and earth's final events. Justice, goodness, and love will triumph, and through Jesus Christ we can share in that victory.

CHAPTER 1

¹The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, ²who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. ³Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.

⁴John, to the seven churches which are in Asia:

- Revelation is addressed to seven “churches”—that is, to seven gatherings of Christ’s followers, all located in what is today the nation of Turkey.
- There were far more than seven churches in the first century A.D. But the number seven was then considered the number of perfection, meaning completeness. Thus, the seven churches symbolized the complete number of all Christ’s followers everywhere.
- It’s also clear that Revelation’s message goes far beyond Christ’s followers to all the world, because events affecting all of humanity are described in its pages.
- Thus, while originally addressed to first-century churches, if you are reading this book today, it is written to you.

Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, ⁵and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth.

To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, ⁶and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

⁷Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

- In the book of Revelation, references to those who live “on the earth” or are “of the earth” are nearly always references to those who are

disobedient to God. This is why here in verse 7 there is mourning rather than celebration when Jesus returns to earth the second time.

⁸“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

⁹I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. ¹⁰I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, ¹¹saying, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,” and, “What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.”

- In verse 10 John uses the phrase “the Lord’s Day.” Some have thought that this is a reference to the first day of the week, Sunday. But it is instead a reference to the seventh day of the week, Saturday, a day also known to John and the rest of Jesus’ followers as the “Sabbath.” To learn more, please scan the following QR code:



The Seven Churches of Revelation



¹²Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. ¹⁴His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; ¹⁵His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; ¹⁶He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. ¹⁷And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death. ¹⁹Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. ²⁰The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.

- Jesus' words in verse 18 are deeply important: “I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore.” The fact that Jesus died, was buried in the grave, and came back to life by His own power is what sets Him apart from every other being who has ever lived. And because of that triumph, He now offers victory over death and sin to anyone who is willing to accept him as Savior and Lord.
- Since Christ's death and resurrection are so central to who He is and what He wants to do for humanity, Revelation will reference those events repeatedly in both literal and symbolic ways.

CHAPTER 2

¹“To the angel of the church of Ephesus write,
 “These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: ²“I know

your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; ³and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary. ⁴Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent. ⁶But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

⁷“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.” ’

- Lessons From Ephesus



- Each letter to the seven churches provides important lessons for those who seek truth in every age. To learn more about these lessons, scan the QR code listed with each letter, beginning here:
- Note also that the seven churches are also prophetic. They represent seven successive phases of development of Christ's followers globally through time.
- The state of the church in Ephesus was remarkably similar to the experience of Christ's followers globally from A.D. 31 to about A.D. 100. They too started out fresh and enthusiastic in their love for Christ. But over time, many went from a “first love” experience with Jesus to coldhearted formalism.
- Only in this first letter do some claim to be “apostles” (verse 2), another indication that its prophetic reference ends with the first century.

⁸“And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write,

“These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: ⁹“I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. ¹⁰Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will

have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

¹¹“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.”

- Lessons From Smyrna

- The description of the church in Smyrna describes well the followers of Christ in general from about A.D. 100 to A.D. 313.



- Those were years of often terrible persecution by the Roman government, such as by rulers like Diocletian who brutally persecuted Christ's followers from A.D. 303 to 313 (the “ten days,” that is, ten years, in verse 10).

¹²“And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write,

“These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword: ¹³“I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. ¹⁴But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. ¹⁵Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. ¹⁶Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.

¹⁷“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.”

- Lessons From Pergamos

- The description of the church in Pergamos correlates well with wider church history from A.D. 313 to A.D. 538.



- These were years of compromise, with Christ's followers forming inappropriate connections with pagan practices and earthly governments.

- This era thus marked the beginning of a sad phenomenon that continues to this day: the connecting of the church to the power of the state. History shows that such a union tends to be immensely destructive. As we shall soon see, Revelation predicts that this will prove abundantly true again at the end of time.

18“And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write,

‘These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass: **19**“I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first. **20**Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. **21**And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. **22**Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. **23**I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.

24“Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden. **25**But hold fast what you have till I come. **26**And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—

27‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron;

They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels’—

as I also have received from My Father; **28**and I will give him the morning star.

29“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’

• Lessons From Thyatira

- The description of the church of Thyatira correlates well with the years A.D. 538 to A.D. 1517 in the wider church.

- The church absorbed many people from pagan religions who brought many false ideas and practices into the church during this period.



- During those years the church's connection with the state took on new and global proportions. It developed a rigid structure that often used the state—including its military—to achieve its goals. This is not the way of Christ! But it sadly did become the way of the church in that era.
- Additionally, the Old and New Testaments, the written Word of God, were no longer read by the average person. Many Christians consequently became increasingly ignorant of who God really was.
- The message to the church in Thyatira is a vivid reminder that God will not bless corrupt people. Immorality, false worship, and corrupt alliances with the state are not parts of His plan for His people.

CHAPTER 3

¹“And to the angel of the church in Sardis write,

“These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: “I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. ²Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. ³Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. ⁴You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. ⁵He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

⁶“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’

- Lessons From Sardis
- The mid-1500s, often known as the Protestant Reformation, and the century following it are well represented by the church in Sardis.



- Reformers then helped purify the church by pointing people back to God's teaching and reminding them that salvation in Jesus Christ cannot be earned. Instead, Jesus offers salvation without cost to all who are willing to receive Him as Savior and Lord.
- Unfortunately, in the time immediately following these reformers, the church once again became sterile and cold.
- Jesus loves truth! But the Sardis era shows that truth, apart from a relationship with Jesus, will soon be reduced again to cold facts. Jesus longs for us to know Him *personally*, and not just know things *about* Him.

⁷“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write,

“These things says He who is holy, He who is true, “He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens”: ⁸“I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. ⁹Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. ¹⁰Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. ¹¹Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. ¹²He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.

¹³“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”’

• Lessons From Philadelphia

- The positive condition of Christ's followers in Philadelphia aptly describes the history of the church in general in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Those were years of tremendous faithfulness and growth known as the First and Second Great Awakenings. Followers of Christ all over the world shared the good



news of salvation, and the church grew accordingly, even as believers' energies were severely taxed.

¹⁴“And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write,

‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: ¹⁵“I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. ¹⁶So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. ¹⁷Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked— ¹⁸I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. ¹⁹As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. ²⁰Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. ²¹To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

²²“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’ ”

• Lessons From Laodicea

- Laodicea represents the condition of Christ's followers from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. They with millions of others are saturated with conveniences, sinful media influences, and busyness, all of which distract them from the salvation Jesus offers them.
- Jesus calls to every individual on earth today to answer Him when He knocks on the door of his or her heart, that He may come into their lives and “dine” with them—that is, that He might have genuine fellowship with them. What is your answer to His invitation?



CHAPTER 4

¹After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet

speaking with me, saying, “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.”

²Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. ³And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.

- The One on the throne is God the Father, ruler of all things.

⁴Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.

- These may be 24 angels or, possibly, human beings redeemed from the earth who ascended to heaven with Jesus after His death and resurrection in A.D. 31 (see Ephesians 4:8). Note that they have received many of the rewards promised to those in the seven churches who overcome (verse 4).

⁵And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

⁶Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. ⁷The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. ⁸The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying:

“Holy, holy, holy,
Lord God Almighty,
Who was and is and is to come!”

- The four living creatures are an order of angels nearest the throne who constantly declare who God is.

⁹Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, ¹⁰the

twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying:

¹¹“You are worthy, O Lord,
To receive glory and honor and power;
For You created all things,
And by Your will they exist and were created.”

- God's right to rule all is based on the reality that He is the Creator of all.
- To say that God is the Creator is the most important thing we can say about Him.
- His Creator status will play an extremely important role as we near the heart of this book, as well as at the end of time.

CHAPTER 5

¹And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. ²Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?” ³And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.

⁴So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. ⁵But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.”

- In 1962 a scroll sealed with seven seals was found in caves near Jericho. Further study revealed it to be an ancient legal document. Such scrolls usually contained contracts or wills. In this case it contained heavenly records that were deeply meaningful for the future of God's people.
- John is therefore deeply interested in the contents of this heavenly scroll, for it contains a complete record of God's covenant with His people! It records humanity's response to that covenant, as well as Satan's crimes against it. The seals contain prophecies of how Jesus

would work out the details of that covenant to preserve and care for His followers down through the ages.

- So no wonder John wept! For if evil is ever to be destroyed; if Christ's justice, goodness, and love are ever to rule the universe; then this covenant scroll must be unsealed.

⁶And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.

- Jesus is here portrayed as a lamb that has been killed and resurrected—the very acts that enable Him to take the covenant scroll, open it, and work from the heavenly sanctuary on behalf of His followers.
- This heavenly scene most likely takes place shortly after Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension. But it is also undoubtedly a representation of how Christ's followers will look to Him and His heavenly mediation for them.

⁸Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. ⁹And they sang a new song, saying:

“You are worthy to take the scroll,
And to open its seals;
For You were slain,
And have redeemed us to God by Your blood
Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,
¹⁰And have made us kings and priests to our God;
And we shall reign on the earth.”

¹¹Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, ¹²saying with a loud voice:

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain

To receive power and riches and wisdom,
And strength and honor and glory and blessing!”

¹³And 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, I heard saying:

“Blessing and honor and glory and power
Be to Him who sits on the throne,
And to the Lamb, forever and ever!”

¹⁴Then the four living creatures said, “Amen!” And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.

- The heavenly scene in chapters 4 and 5 indicates that all heaven sees Christ's sacrifice for humanity as completely sufficient and effective. Jesus, our rightful Lord and High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, has “redeemed us to God by [His] blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation” (verse 9).
- Because of what Jesus did on the cross and is doing for us in heaven, humanity now has hope!

CHAPTER 6

¹Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, “Come and see.” ²And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.

- Most of the seals, when opened, reveal scenes that generally correspond to the same eras of church history revealed through the seven churches in chapters 2 and 3.
- In the first seal the color of the horse (white, showing purity) and the fact that its rider has a crown indicates this is most likely Christ, who led the apostolic church to success in spreading the message of salvation.
- This seal corresponds to the period foreshadowed by the church in Ephesus, from A.D. 31 to about A.D. 100.

- Christ “conquered” during this time, not actual armies with swords and spears, but conquered evil with love and compassion as His followers spread the news of His salvation to the world.

³When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, “Come and see.” ⁴Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword.

- “Fiery red” represents two things: heresy coming in (teachings that oppose God’s will—a corruption of the white/pure faith shown in the first horse) and the shedding of blood. Both interpretations can apply to the experience of Christ’s followers from about A.D. 100 to A.D. 313. As we learned previously, Christ’s followers then were terribly persecuted by the Roman government. It was also a time during which various corrupt beliefs entered the wider church.



⁵When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come and see.” So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. ⁶And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine.”

- If red indicates corrupted belief, black would indicate a faith profoundly contaminated and turned into darkness. The pure belief in Christ symbolized in the first seal is now completely gone.
- This seal corresponds to the Pergamos era, or about A.D. 313 to A.D. 538. That was a time of great “famine,” not of physical food, but spiritual—lacking knowledge of God’s Word. The church also became entangled with the state powers, and the good news of salvation through Jesus was obscured.
- For more about the third seal’s other symbols, scan here:



⁷When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, “Come and see.” ⁸So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.

- This seal symbolizes the Thyatira era of God’s followers, from A.D. 538 to A.D. 1517.
- Thousands of Christ’s followers then were slaughtered by the collaboration of earthly governments and unfaithful church leaders.
- But note the promise: Evil forces are granted power over “a fourth of the earth” only. Destruction, both spiritual and physical, would not be permitted to become complete.

⁹When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. ¹⁰And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our

blood on those who dwell on the earth?” ¹¹Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.

- Seals 5 through 7 mark a shift. Seals 1-4 focused on the successes and obstacles faced by the followers of Christ. But the remaining three seals focus on how Jesus would respond to those who oppress His followers.
- Recall that the phrase “those who dwell on the earth” (verse 10) is generally used in Revelation to refer to those who are opposed to God and His people.
- The fifth seal corresponds to the Sardis church era of about A.D. 1517 to A.D. 1720. But again, its focus is on Jesus’ developing response to those who oppress His people, rather than on His people themselves.
- To learn about the symbolic nature of the “souls” that are “under the altar,” scan here:
- Jesus promises salvation (the “white robe”) to all who have given their lives for Him. Victory is coming, even when times seem so dark!



¹²I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. ¹³And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. ¹⁴Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. ¹⁵And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, ¹⁶and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! ¹⁷For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”

- The sixth seal corresponds in part to the period symbolized by the church of Philadelphia, beginning in the 1720s.

- But it also clearly exceeds that period, for the events it reveals extend to the very end of time, when changes in the sky and the earth's geography will make the planet uninhabitable.
- For more on the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century religious awakenings and the signs predicted here in the sun, moon, and stars, scan here: 
- Jesus is incredibly patient. He has allowed those who live on the earth to make evil choices and to oppress His followers for about 2,000 years. But the sixth seal shows that at last, just prior to His second coming, those days of oppression will end. The “wrath of the Lamb” will come at last. After all His offers of mercy and forgiveness have been rejected, Christ will destroy both the surface of the earth and those who have harmed His people.
- Justice, indeed, is coming.

CHAPTER 7

¹After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. ²Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, ³saying, “Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.”

- Chapter 6 ended with a question: “Who can stand” in the great day of Christ’s wrath against evil oppressors? Chapter 7 immediately gives us the answer—but not by opening the seventh seal.
- Instead, there is a break in the progression of seal opening, for Christ in mercy is wanting to show how anyone who wishes can avoid destruction. He does not want anyone on earth to be lost! He instead wants every person possible to receive His free gift of salvation.
- To show who has chosen Him at the end of time, God offers “the seal of the living God.”

- What is this seal? We will discuss this more in chapters 13 and 14—and to prepare for that discussion, please scan the following QR code:



⁴And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:

- ⁵of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed;
of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed;
of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed;
- ⁶of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed;
of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed;
of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed;
- ⁷of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed;
of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed;
of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed;
- ⁸of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed;
of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed;
of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed.

- The 144,000 of verse 4 and the 12 tribes of Israel in verses 5-8 are clearly symbolic. They do not represent the actual number of those who will enter Christ's kingdom, nor will the blood descendants of Israel be the only ones eligible for membership in it.
- We know this because already in the letters to the seven churches it referred to followers of Christ as those "who say they are Jews and are not" (Rev. 2:9 and 3:9). Also, here "Israel" symbolizes the true followers of Jesus, which may include anyone, whether a literal Jew or not.
- We will understand more about the 144,000 when we study chapter 14.

⁹After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" ¹¹All the angels stood around the throne

and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹²saying:

“Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom,
Thanksgiving and honor and power and might,
Be to our God forever and ever.
Amen.”

¹³Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?”

¹⁴And I said to him, “Sir, you know.”

So he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ¹⁵Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them. ¹⁶They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; ¹⁷for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

- The promises given here to this great and innumerable multitude of human beings are fantastic: No more hunger or thirst, nor blazing heat, and no more tears.
- Christ's kingdom of justice, goodness, and love will be worth being a part of!

CHAPTER 8

¹When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. ²And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets. ³Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. ⁴And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand. ⁵Then the angel took the censer,

filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake.

⁶So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

- The seventh seal signals the completion of the work of salvation for humanity.
- The vision of the seven trumpets continues to defy precise explanation. We know what portions of it mean. But some mystery remains.
- There is a correlation between the seven trumpets and the periods of time symbolized by the seven churches and the seven seals.
- The intercession for Christ's followers in the heavenly sanctuary is symbolized by the angel offering up their prayers before the throne of God.
- The seven trumpets also have some substantial differences from the seven churches and seven seals. What is clear is that the trumpets represent seven successive periods of judgment upon God's enemies because of their oppression of His people.
- We believe that before Christ returns, the meaning of the trumpets will become clear. But given the current lack of understanding, our comments on the trumpets will be few and brief.

⁷The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.

- Trumpets in the history of God's people were used for a variety of reasons. They called people to worship, warned of enemies approaching, or reminded people of important events. Trumpets also at times warned that the power of God was about to be shown in a mighty way in judging the enemies of God and His people.
- The seven trumpets seem to follow this same line, in that they warn of powerful judgments that will fall on those who oppress Christ's followers.

⁸Then the second angel sounded: And something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. ⁹And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

¹⁰Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. ¹¹The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter.

¹²Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night.

¹³And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, “Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!”

CHAPTER 9

¹Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. ²And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. ³Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. ⁴They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.

- The seal of God here protects the followers of Jesus from the judgments on the wicked. Even in the midst of global disaster, Christ's people will be preserved.

⁵And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. ⁶In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them.

⁷The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were

like the faces of men. ⁸They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. ⁹And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. ¹⁰They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months. ¹¹And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon.

¹²One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things.

¹³Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, ¹⁴saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." ¹⁵So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind. ¹⁶Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. ¹⁷And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone. ¹⁸By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed—by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths. ¹⁹For their power is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents, having heads; and with them they do harm.

²⁰But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. ²¹And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

- It is astonishing that even after much of the earth is destroyed because of their wickedness, the followers of Satan do not turn from their evil ways.
- Once evil becomes a way of life, we humans often never return to justice, goodness, or love.

- Choosing Jesus today, before our hearts become hardened in wickedness, will be a profound blessing both now and at the end of time.

CHAPTER 10

¹ I saw still another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was on his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire.

- As with the seventh seal at the end of chapter 6, the revealing of the seventh trumpet is also delayed, and instead John is introduced to another prophetic scene.

²He had a little book open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, ³and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars. When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices.

- This “angel,” or messenger, is most likely Jesus Christ, as characteristics mentioned here are also mentioned in chapter 1’s description of Him (see Revelation 1:13-16; compare Daniel 10:5, 6).
- His standing on both the land and the sea shows His authority over the whole earth and that His message is of global importance.

⁴Now when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them.”

⁵The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven ⁶and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer, ⁷but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.

- The book in this mighty angel’s hand is “open” (verse 2), that is, it is unsealed, unlike the scroll in chapter 5, which was sealed seven times over.

- This unsealed book likely represents the prophecies of the book of Daniel that were sealed. To see why this is so, please scan the following QR code: 
- Because the book of Daniel is shown as being unsealed, we can expect that portions of Daniel not previously explained will now be revealed in the remainder of Revelation.
- This is a powerful reason to study the books of Daniel and Revelation together. God has clearly built strong connections between the two.
- Verse 6's declaration that there "should be delay no longer" (literally, "there shall be no more [prophetic] time"—the underlying word is *chronos*) also indicates that since the 2,300-day prophecy of Daniel 8—the longest of all time prophecies God has ever given—reached its fulfillment in 1844, God will no longer give prophecies regarding time. In other words, God is saying that because the planet is nearing its end, no more prophetic time periods are called for. Justice is coming—and is almost here! And the answer to the people of God who cried out in Revelation 6, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood . . . ?" is now given: it will be coming soon.

⁸Then the voice which I heard from heaven spoke to me again and said, "Go, take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the earth."

⁹So I went to the angel and said to him, "Give me the little book."

And he said to me, "Take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth."

¹⁰Then I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter. ¹¹And he said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings."

- Prophecies about the very end of time can be exciting and inspiring. However, *living* through the very end of time will not be easy.
- Revelation makes clear that until Jesus returns, the world will get worse, not better—a bit like eating a sweet dessert, only to have it turn our stomachs sour as time wears on.

- But those who follow Jesus will be given the strength needed to “prophesy again”—that is, to continue to live like Jesus and carry out His just, good, and loving will on earth.
- The phrase “prophesy again” is also significant in that it calls for a special message from Jesus in the last days of earth’s history to be given to all “peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.”

CHAPTER 11

¹Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, “Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there.

- Chapter 10 ended with the call to “prophesy again.” The very next verse (Rev. 11:1) points us to the work of Jesus in “the temple,” the heavenly sanctuary. Thus, a major focus of “prophesying again” is the ministry of Jesus as our high priest in the heavenly sanctuary (see previous discussion on Daniel 7:13, 14; 8:14, etc.). He is our comfort, our strength, and the one who, through His work in the sanctuary above, is helping us become people of justice, goodness, and love.
- We should also expect a reappearance soon of the 2,300-day prophecy of Daniel 8:14, since that prophecy specifically points to Jesus’ work for us as our high priest in the heavenly sanctuary.

²But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months. ³And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.”

- The “forty-two months” in verse 2 is equal to the “one thousand two hundred and sixty days” of verse 3 (an apocalyptic month is 30 days). Both refer to the 1260-year prophecy we first learned about in Daniel 7:25. Those were the 1260 years of persecution by the little-horn power against the true followers of Christ.

- The reappearance here of the 1260-year period is significant. For our readers, it means that the time has come to identify whom this pivotal, end-time, little-horn power is: It is the Papacy, the ruling body of the Church of Rome.
- To see how this is so, please scan the following QR code:
- It is extremely important to note that God, in identifying the Papacy as the little-horn power, is speaking of the Roman governance *system*, and not *individual Catholic members*.
- Millions of Catholics are upstanding individuals who are conscientiously serving God to the best of their abilities. *No one should take God's condemnation of the Roman system and use that as an excuse to disparage individual Catholic members.* Such misguided people, if unrepentant, will certainly not receive the seal of God at the end of time.
- As was pointed out in the preceding QR code, with the deliverance of Rome from the Ostrogoths in A.D. 538, the Papacy began its initial reign of 1260 years.
- During that time the Papacy persecuted millions of sincere followers of Christ.
- The Papacy's initial reign ended in 1798 when the French general Berthier ordered that Pope Pius VI be taken captive. The pope died in 1799 while exiled in the French city of Valence.
- God's prophecies are thus trustworthy and true. The 1260-year prophecy came to pass exactly as predicted.
- As we shall see in Revelation 13, the Papacy is predicted to return to global prominence in the last days of earth's history.



⁴These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. ⁵And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. ⁶These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.

⁷When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. ⁸And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

⁹Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves. ¹⁰And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.

- The “two witnesses” of verse 3-12 most likely symbolize the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. God never leaves Himself without witness even during the 1260 years of papal persecution. To see how this is so, please scan the following QR code: 
- At the end of the 1260 years of persecution the two witnesses are killed (verse 7) in a city that is symbolically called Sodom and Egypt, where Jesus was crucified afresh.
- This refers to the attempts of the late-eighteenth-century French Revolution to destroy the Old and New Testaments. To see how this is so, please scan here: 

¹¹Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. ¹²And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here.” And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them.

- The “three-and-a-half days” of verses 9 and 11 are most likely a reference to the three and a half years from 1793 to 1797. In 1793 the leaders of the French Revolution banned the Old and New Testaments and the churches of those that followed Christ. In 1797 those banishments were lifted.

- Astonishingly, after 1797, France experienced a vibrant time of growth among the churches that followed Jesus, a fact most likely reflected in the words “the breath of life from God entered them” (verse 11).
- This revival struck fear in the hearts of those who previously had tried to outlaw God’s Word and His followers.

¹³In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven.

¹⁴The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly.

¹⁵Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!” ¹⁶And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, ¹⁷saying:

“We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty,
The One who is and who was and who is to come,
Because You have taken Your great power and reigned.

¹⁸The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come,
And the time of the dead, that they should be judged,
And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints,

And those who fear Your name, small and great,
And should destroy those who destroy the earth.”

¹⁹Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.

- While not showing the events causing it, heaven here declares that, with the blowing of the seventh trumpet, Satan has been vanquished (verse 15), and Jesus has won.
- As in Revelation 11:1, John’s focus once again turns to the heavenly sanctuary. But this time we see an even more finely tuned focus. Not only is the heavenly sanctuary revealed, but “the ark of His covenant” in that sanctuary is brought front and center.

- The ark of God's covenant in the temple contains the Ten Commandments, the authoritative expression of God's law and His character.
- The law of God, rightly understood and kept, is a foundational part of God's kingdom of justice, goodness, and love.
- This focus on God's law shows that it will play a crucial role in the last days of earth's history (more on this when we study Revelation 13 and 14).

CHAPTER 12

¹Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars.

- As noted previously, Revelation is written in a chiastic structure (see Introduction). This means that with chapters 12-14 we are now entering into the part of the book that was *the core reason* Revelation was written.
- The pure woman of chapter 12 represents the totality of God's followers during both Old and New Testament times.

²Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.

- The "woman," God's followers, are shown here as giving birth to Jesus Christ, who, as we have seen, was born in the first century A.D.

³And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads.

- This dragon represents Satan working through pagan Rome (see verses 4 and 9).

⁴His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. ⁵She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne.

- “Stars” in both the Old and New Testaments can refer to angels (Job 38:7; Isaiah 14:12; Revelation 1:16, 20, etc.). Thus, in verse 4, Satan is recorded as having taken one third of the angels of heaven with him in his rebellion against God. This happened prior to the creation of the world (more detail on this is given in verses 7-9).
- Though Satan, working through pagan Rome, wanted to “devour,” or destroy, Jesus as soon as He was born, an angel warned Joseph to take Mary and the baby Jesus to Egypt, because King Herod, who was the Roman official ruling in Israel at that time, wanted to kill Him (see Matthew 2:13-16). Despite Satan’s efforts, Jesus, by His death on the cross and resurrection, successfully completed His mission to make salvation available to humanity.
- Shortly after His resurrection, Jesus “was caught up to God [the Father] and His throne” to be our high priest and prepare us for His return to earth.

⁶Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.



- Once again, the 1260-year prophecy of Daniel 7 is mentioned so that Revelation's readers are aware of why "the woman"—that is, the church of Christ's followers—is fleeing into the wilderness. They are trying to escape from papal persecution during the Papacy's initial reign from A.D. 538 until 1798.
- But now in verse 7 the clock in our story turns back for just a moment to a most unusual kind of war:

⁷And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, ⁸but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. ⁹So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

- This war in heaven looks back at the origin of Satan, who was once a holy angel (see Isaiah 14:12-15). To learn more, please scan the following QR code:



¹⁰Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. ¹¹And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. ¹²Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time."

¹³Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. ¹⁴But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.

¹⁵So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. ¹⁶But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.

- Satan pursues the true followers of Jesus during the 1260 years using a “flood” of papal persecution. But the persecution does not destroy Christ’s followers, for the “earth” (verse 16), or wilderness, “helped” her.
- This remained true for centuries, as Christ’s followers, most notably the Waldenses, hid in the wilderness to escape their persecutors.

¹⁷And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

- Satan in verse 17 goes to war against Christ’s followers in the time of the end, specifically those here called “the rest of her offspring.”
- The Greek word (the book of Revelation was originally written in the Greek language) translated as “the rest of” is *loipon*, and it means “remnant”: the last part of something that used to be much bigger.
- Verse 17 crucially points out that this relatively small remnant church, this final group of Jesus’ followers on earth prior to His second coming, will be comprised of all those who do at least two things: keep God’s commandments and have “the testimony of Jesus.”
- Revelation 19:10 identifies “the testimony of Jesus” as being “the spirit of prophecy.” In other words, God’s last-day church will be a remnant people that (a) take all of God’s ten-commandment law seriously, as originally written; and (b) take the gift of prophecy seriously and have the gift of prophecy at work in their midst.
- Do you take God’s law and His prophecies seriously?
- If not, why not start today? And why not begin looking for God’s remnant church—again, a church that takes all of God’s laws and His gift of prophecy seriously?
- The gift of prophecy, being a gift of the Holy Spirit, is always in agreement with the Scriptures, which were inspired by the Holy Spirit.
- The finest hour of Christ’s followers lies just before us! And He is calling *you* to be a part of that finest hour.
- By His strength, you will not be beaten by Satan at the end of time, but instead will find a home with Jesus in heaven.

CHAPTER 13

¹Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.

- At the end of time the dragon, Satan, recruits two other major powers to assist him, the first being this “beast rising up out of the sea” (or sea beast).
- Commentators have often called this evil trio “the unholy trinity,” for they are clearly attempting to impersonate the true holy Trinity in earth’s last days.
- The members of the Trinity are God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit, the three divine persons of the one true God. *God is one God and one God only!* And He is *one* God who reveals Himself through *three* distinct persons. This is a holy mystery. But it is what the two witnesses of the Old and New Testaments clearly describe.
- The unholy trinity will become the organizers of what Revelation refers to as “Babylon,” an evil, global confederation of forces that persecute God’s people in the very last days of earth’s history.

²Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. ³And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. ⁴So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?”

⁵And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. ⁶Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. ⁷It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. ⁸All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

⁹If anyone has an ear, let him hear. ¹⁰He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

- Notice that this sea beast has authority and persecutes God's people ("the saints") for "42 months" (verse 5). This is yet another appearance of the 1260-year prophecy.
- You'll recall also that we stated that the sea beast is the same power as the little horn of Daniel 7. The little horn of Daniel 7 was clearly identified in our study on Revelation 11 as papal Rome.
- To review evidence that the little horn and the sea beast represent the same power, scan the following QR code.
- The sea beast has a deadly wound, but then the deadly wound is healed (verse 3). This wound is a reference to the pope being taken captive by the French in 1798 at the end of the 1260-year prophecy. The Papacy's power had been in decline for years, and 1798 brought that decline to its low point.
- But the wound would be "healed," a process we will talk about more later.
- Note also that this language of "deadly" wounding/healing parallels the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. In other words, the Papacy is portrayed in this prophecy as an imitation of Jesus, the second member of the holy Trinity.
- Consequently, the Papacy here can also be accurately described as the "antichrist" of the end-times.
- To learn more about this term, please scan the following QR code:



¹¹Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. ¹²And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. ¹³He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.

- The beast coming up out of the earth (or, more simply, the earth beast) is the third member of the unholy trinity.
- Since the dragon was an imitation of God the Father, and the sea beast an imitation of God the Son, we can expect that the earth beast will be an imitation of God the Holy Spirit.
- The earth beast represents the United States of America.
- To see how this is so, scan the following QR code:
- Note that according to the prophecy, the United States will attempt to force our planet to worship the Papacy, including by calling fire to “come down from heaven on the earth.” We will see what this symbolizes when we study Revelation 16.



¹⁴And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. ¹⁵He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

- What is this image? While we can never know with certainty every detail of unfulfilled prophecy, we can know at least the following with reasonable accuracy and confidence:
 - It will be
 - (1) a global system that
 - (2) combines religious goals with political power so that
 - (3) all the world will be forced to conform to the false worship of the Papacy.
- To learn more, please scan the following QR code:
- This obviously would require the United States to abandon the principles of its Constitution—in fact, the scene described in Revelation 13 means it will soon abandon support for the separation of church and state, individual freedoms, the rule of law, etc., in favor of a forced religious observance.



¹⁶He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, ¹⁷and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

¹⁸Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.

- The mark of the beast is quite serious and has understandably been the focus of endless speculation by millions. It will be part of a global and deadly attempt to take worship away from the one true God and focus it instead on the dictates of the sea beast and the dragon.
- We therefore *must* know what the mark of the beast is. It will be revealed in our study of chapter 14.

CHAPTER 14

¹Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. ²And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. ³They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. ⁴These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. ⁵And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

- The followers of Jesus are shown, at some time in the future, having overcome, by His power, the evil in their lives. There is no sin standing between them and God. They are indeed people of justice, goodness, and love.

- It's as though Jesus is saying that though the unholy trinity will do horrific deeds, evil will not triumph! Jesus will instead save His people. His victory will be complete.
- The final victory with God's people in heaven, which is how the story ends, is shown here. Verses 6-12 explains how that happens.

⁶Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—⁷saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”

- We have now arrived at the heart of the reason that the book of Revelation was written.
- In verses 6-12 we find what are often referred to as the three angels' messages. They are the core of God's final message to our dying planet.
- Verse 6 makes clear they are for “every nation, tribe, tongue, and people.” No one is to be excluded from hearing them.
- The first angel is described as having “the everlasting gospel.” The word “gospel” literally means “good news,” and among first century A.D. followers of Christ it came to refer specifically to the good news about Jesus and the salvation He offers. It is “everlasting” because God's plan of salvation, like God Himself, is unchanging.
- Then comes the first angel's first words: “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come.” How can any message that starts with the word “fear” and speaks of judgment also be good news?
- Just in this way: *the warning that the final judgment has begun is bad news for the oppressor, but exceedingly good news for the oppressed.*
- So much of the world today is oppressed! Whether it is by other people or simply by Satan and sin, billions of people all over the earth are daily living lives with oppression—and the first angel proclaims that those days are now nearly over.
- “The hour of His judgment has come” is reference to the final judgment prophecies we studied in Daniel 7 and 8. It also points to the end

of the 2,300-year prophecy of Daniel 8:14, which shows that the final judgment of all humanity began in the heavenly sanctuary in the year 1844.



- To learn more about this, please scan the following QR code:
- Since 1844, Jesus, our high priest in the heavenly sanctuary, is working to save as many people as possible in at least two ways. First, His work in the sanctuary helps set us free from sin, both through forgiving our sins when we confess and forsake them, and in giving us power to no longer be slaves to sinful habits. And second, through the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus, our high priest, is daily trying to influence oppressors to stop their oppressive ways. Jesus loves them and wants to save them, if possible. But if they will not stop oppressing others, He will have no choice but to bring their evil ways to an end—bad news for the oppressor, but very good news for the oppressed.
- If you are an oppressor of others today, please stop! Jesus will forgive and transform your life into one of generosity rather than selfishness. But if you choose to continue in your oppression of others, know that the hour of God's final judgment has come. Justice is coming, and soon.
- This word “fear” in the first angel's message can also mean “honor” and “respect.” In this sense, to “fear” God means to honor Him, to respect Him and His ways and His laws. It means to put Jesus first in your life, living for Him.
- Honoring and respecting Jesus gives Him full permission to care for you. For all who accept Jesus as the leader of their lives, they receive eternal life, strength to endure, and power to overcome all obstacles.
- The end of the first angel's message is also profoundly important: “Worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”
- This is a clear reference to the seventh-day Sabbath commandment, the fourth commandment of God's ten-commandment law, found in the Old Testament in Exodus 20:8-11.
- To find out crucial information about the seventh-day Sabbath commandment, please scan the following QR code:
- The implications of the first angel mentioning the seventh-day Sabbath command are profound:



- It means that at the end of time, the days we live in right now, God is specifically calling humanity to worship Him as the one Creator God.
- To obey the weekly seventh-day Sabbath command is a key part of this worship.
- In the end-times, when Satan will try to force the world to worship him through the work of the unholy trinity, the first angel loudly proclaims that the Creator God is the only being to be worshipped.
- This is why to understand that God is our Creator is the most important thing we can know about Him. Nothing is greater than this. To understand and embrace this fact will affect every portion of our lives.
- This is also why the first angel is so insistent that we keep the seventh-day Sabbath holy! It is a weekly reminder of who God really is that keeps us focused on Him and His truth for these last days.
- With all of this in mind, a good way to sum up the first angel's message is this: *Honor and worship the Creator, for justice is coming, and time is running out.*
 - The final heavenly judgment has already begun! Justice will soon triumph over evil!
 - Let us honor and worship our Creator God, for He and He alone is worthy of our allegiance.
 - And as we worship Him, He will also give us the power to become people of justice, as He, as our high priest, is working for justice now.

⁸And another angel followed, saying, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”

- As we saw in our study of Daniel, the Babylonian Empire was a formidable enemy of God's people.
- But at the time Revelation was written, the historical city of Babylon was in ruins, having been destroyed centuries earlier. Clearly, then, the second angel is not referring to *literal* Babylon, but rather to a *spiritual* Babylon.

- Spiritual Babylon takes the dominant characteristics of the ancient historical city of Babylon and uses them as a foundation for a counterfeit system of spiritual beliefs in the time of the end. The unholy trinity, working through spiritual Babylon, will then try to achieve their evil global agenda.
- The Old and New Testaments make clear that there were at least two prominent characteristics that defined ancient Babylon: (1) *the false teaching that we must earn our own salvation (such as through obedience to God's law or through the good things we do)*; and (2) *the false teaching that God's law has been changed or is no longer important*.
 - For more background on this, scan this QR code: 
- "Wine" in the second angel's message refers to the false teachings of spiritual Babylon.
- "Fornication" is also translated correctly as "adulteries." In the second angel's message this is not referring to literal, physical adultery, but rather to spiritual adultery.
- Spiritual adultery occurs when God's people turn away from Him, their true husband, to someone or something else, in violation of His laws. For more on this, scan the following QR code. 
- So bringing the various symbols of the second angel together, we find the following:
- *"Babylon is fallen, is fallen . . ."* Satan is a master of making that which is evil look good! But God here makes it clear that end-time spiritual Babylon, no matter how impressive she may look outwardly, is profoundly morally bankrupt, so much so that the angel says twice: she "is fallen, is fallen."
- *" . . . that great city . . ."* The use of the word "city" here implies that many people are "living" in spiritual Babylon by agreeing with her false teachings, and that she is the sinful, global capital of organized evil.
- *" . . . because she has made all nations drink . . ."* Babylon at the end of time attempts to force the nations of the world to obey its false teachings, particularly that we must earn our own salvation and that God's law has been changed or is no longer important.

- “... of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” Babylon wants the world to come to *her* to supposedly earn their salvation, and Babylon wants the world to either ignore God's law or to keep a version of it that she has altered. All who “drink” this “wine” will commit spiritual fornication/adultery against God and be lost.
- With these things in mind, a good way to summarize the second angel's message is this: *Trying to earn my salvation, or changing or setting aside God's law, won't work.*
- In warning the world of Babylon's *false* teachings, God through the second angel is calling the world back to the *true* teachings of Jesus.
- There is no goodness in Babylon's false “gospel” of earning our salvation and of bypassing God's true law. Instead, it is only through Jesus' salvation and power that anyone can become a truly good person—that is, someone like Jesus.
- The first angel called us to Jesus, in part that we might become people of justice as He is a God of justice. The second angel calls us to Jesus, in part that we might become genuinely *good* people in Him—not merely people that *look* good on the outside, but that truly *are* good people on the inside; people who truly do obey God, and who love other people as Jesus loves them.
- Justice and goodness are two of the greatest gifts we receive as we learn to know Jesus! And through the first and second angels' messages, Jesus is boldly offering these gifts to the world—including to you, right now.
- Will you accept Babylon's false “gospel”? Or will you choose the real, everlasting gospel by accepting Jesus and His transforming gift of salvation?

⁹Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.”

- What is this “mark of the beast” that God is warning the world to reject? It may indeed involve a visible mark of some sort. But since Revelation is largely a symbolic book, the mark of the beast is not simply a physical sign of some sort being placed on our skin.
- Instead, the mark of the beast will be given to those who show loyalty to the beast by either embracing its beliefs and values or at least going along with them. This will be very visible.
- Specifically, their loyalty to the beast will most likely be shown by keeping as holy a counterfeit day of worship—Sunday—instead of the seventh-day Sabbath instituted by God at the creation of the world. Those who thus worship on Sunday at the very end of time will receive the mark of the beast.
- Conversely, those who follow Jesus will show their love and allegiance to Him by loving others and obeying His laws, including the command to worship on God's true day of worship, the seventh-day Sabbath. They will receive the seal of God.
- To be clear, *no one has the mark of the beast today*, including those who currently worship on Sunday. But nonetheless, at the very end of time, Sunday will be claimed by the beast power, the papacy, as a mark of its authority, and the observance of that day will eventually cause one to receive the mark of the beast.
- To see how this is so, please scan the following QR code:
- Our power of choice is sacred to God. He will not force us to follow Him, even at the end of time.
- But God also loves us! And because He loves us, in the third angel's message He tells us the truth about what is coming at the end of time *before* it happens, and in the strongest language possible. He risks using such language in the hope of getting our attention, of breaking the grip Satan and sin have on our hearts, and of turning us back to Him before it is too late.
- To review:
 - The essence of the first angel's message was: “*Honor and worship the Creator, for justice is coming, and time is running out.*”



- The essence of the second angel's message was: *"Trying to earn my salvation, or changing or setting aside God's law, won't work."*
- And a good way to summarize the third angel's message is this: *"Destruction is coming to all who follow Satan. I can choose that destruction if I wish. But God in His love is doing all He possibly can to change my mind."*
- The third angel's message is the strongest verbal warning God has ever given in human history.
- But *God's warning is so strong because His love for humanity is so great.*
- In the face of this greatest threat the earth has ever faced, God refuses to sit idly by, waiting for enemies to harm those He loves. He instead shouts in a loud voice so clear that even the most evilhearted person might hear, turn from selfishness, confess their sins, and accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior before it is too late.
- Jesus died on the cross as a substitute for you dying for your own sins. He lives and reigns today in the heavenly sanctuary as your high priest and Savior, ready to offer forgiveness and power over sin to all who will accept Him as the leader of their lives. He does not want Satan to gain the victory over you! And in His great love, through the third angel's message He tells us the truth about where following Satan inevitably leads.
- These messages of the three angels are indeed God's last offer of salvation to the world. There will not be another. The final judgment of all humanity began in 1844 and will soon reach its conclusion. There will be no second chance after that judgment ends.
- The seal of God and the mark of the beast are the only two options to choose from at the end of time. And ultimately the question will come to every living person on the planet: Will you worship Jesus in His way, on His day? Or will you worship Satan in his way, on his day?
- God has sent these three angels to you because of His justice, goodness, and love. His deep hope is that you will accept His offer of mercy and allow Him to transform you into a person of justice, goodness, and love, as well.

¹²Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

¹³Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’ ”

“Yes,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.”

¹⁴Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. ¹⁵And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, “Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.” ¹⁶So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.

- The “harvest” here refers to Jesus’ coming back the second time to take His followers home to heaven. It follows the three angels’ messages going to the world, which “ripen” this harvest. Their proclamation will give ample opportunity for all final decisions for or against following Jesus to be made in a fair and informed way.

¹⁷Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

¹⁸And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, “Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.” ¹⁹So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. ²⁰And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses’ bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs.

- Verses 17-20 refer to the “harvest” of the wicked.
- The references to “grapes,” wine, and “wrath” remind us of similar language used in the messages of the second and third angels. Their warnings here come true.

CHAPTER 15

¹Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete.

²And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. ³They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying:

“Great and marvelous are Your works,

Lord God Almighty!

Just and true are Your ways,

O King of the saints!

⁴Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?

For You alone are holy.

For all nations shall come and worship before You,

For Your judgments have been manifested.”

⁵After these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. ⁶And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues, clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands.

⁷Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever.

⁸The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.

- The fact that “no one was able to enter the temple” (verse 8) shows that with the seven last plagues Jesus’ work in the heavenly sanctuary as high priest will cease. There will be no more undecided people to plead for. All decisions for or against Christ will at that time become permanent. There will be no second chance.

CHAPTER 16

¹Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, “Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth.”

²So the first went and poured out his bowl upon the earth, and a foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image.

- The first five plagues have some striking similarities to the plagues God sent on Egypt thousands of years ago as punishment for enslaving His people (see Exodus, chapters 7-11).
- Because the plagues on Egypt were literal, we can safely assume that the last plagues will be literal, as well, and not only symbolic.

³Then the second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it became blood as of a dead man; and every living creature in the sea died.

⁴Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. ⁵And I heard the angel of the waters saying:

“You are righteous, O Lord,

The One who is and who was and who is to be,
Because You have judged these things.

⁶For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets,
And You have given them blood to drink.
For it is their just due.”

⁷And I heard another from the altar saying, “Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments.”

⁸Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire. ⁹And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory.

¹⁰Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain. ¹¹They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.

¹²Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings

from the east might be prepared. ¹³And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. ¹⁴For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

¹⁵“Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.”

¹⁶And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.

- The sixth and seventh plagues, while clearly having literal effects on earth, also contain symbolic elements that add greatly to their meaning.
- To find out more about the symbols involved in the sixth plague, scan the following QR code: 
- Verse 13 shows the unholy trinity gathering together wicked rulers on a global scale for the purpose of mounting one final great battle against Jesus: the battle of Armageddon.
- This will be both a literal and a spiritual battle in which the unholy trinity will use spiritualism and demonic manifestations to persuade the rulers of the world to follow them. 
- To learn more about this battle, scan the following QR code: 
- For many, there remains great confusion regarding the battle of Armageddon. For example, some interpreters see it purely as a literal war to be fought between the literal nation of Israel and the forces of evil in the world.
- To find out why this is not an accurate interpretation of prophecy, scan the following QR code. 

¹⁷Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, “It is done!” ¹⁸And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. ¹⁹Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell.

And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. ²⁰Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. ²¹And great hail from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great.

- The seventh plague clearly devastates the planet. It is the prelude to the second coming of Christ.

CHAPTER 17

¹Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, ²with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.”



- Chapter 17 begins by going back in time and giving a more detailed view of the character and actions of end-time Babylon (“the great harlot” in verse 1).

³So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. ⁴The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. ⁵And on her forehead a name was written:

MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT,
THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS
AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS
OF THE EARTH.

⁶I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement. ⁷But the angel said to me, “Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.

- The woman Babylon is “drunk with the blood of the saints.” This clearly shows her history of persecuting the woman of Revelation 12, who symbolizes the true followers of Jesus, millions of whom were martyred during the 1260 years of persecution.
- Her riding on the beast with seven heads and 10 horns shows continuity with the sea beast of Revelation 13:1. This is an end-time manifestation of the same power, but on a global scale.
- The woman is called “the Mother of Harlots,” indicating that she gave birth to other false churches. In contrast, the woman of Revelation 12 gave birth to true followers of Christ, who show their faithfulness to Him by keeping God’s commandments (Revelation 12:17).
- John “marveled with great amazement,” but elsewhere in the book of Revelation only the deceived world marvels at the beast (Rev. 13:3). That’s why the angel asks John with surprise, “Why did you marvel?”

⁸The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

- Revelation 17 here introduces us to the most complex prophetic symbol found in either Daniel or Revelation.
- The woman and the beast the woman rides on are inseparable. Both represent the Papacy, the woman symbolizes its religious power, and the beast symbolizes its political power. For more insight on this interpretation, scan the following QR code:



⁹“Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. ¹⁰There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time. ¹¹The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.

- There are various interpretations of verses 9-11.
- The eighth king is most likely a revived Papacy that, though still future, will help lead the forces of Babylon in its final battle against God.
- To learn more about this interpretation, please scan the following QR code:
- Revelation 17 shows that the Papacy unites with secular powers of the earth to achieve its goals. The union of church and state historically has always led to oppression and bloodshed, and Revelation here predicts such disasters on a global scale.



¹²“The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. ¹³These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. ¹⁴These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.”

¹⁵Then he said to me, “The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. ¹⁶And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. ¹⁷For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. ¹⁸And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.”

- We do not yet know the identities of these 10 kingdoms, because its fulfillment is still future.
- Verses 14-17 provide new information about the battle of Armageddon: The allies of end-time papal Rome will ultimately turn on her and participate directly in her destruction (verse 16).

CHAPTER 18

¹After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. ²And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! ³For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.”

- Verses 1-3 symbolize the great final movement of Jesus' true followers to share globally the good news of salvation through Him. They will again point out the fallen nature of Babylon, and that Jesus is the only way to salvation.

⁴And I heard another voice from heaven saying, “Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. ⁵For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. ⁶Render to her just as she rendered

to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her. ⁷In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, ‘I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.’ ⁸Therefore her plagues will come in one day—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her.

- God’s call in verse 4 to “come out of her, *my people*” makes it clear that just prior to the very last events on earth, many of God’s true followers will be *inside* Babylon. They have been deceived and are unaware of the fallen nature of the religious organizations they are in.
- But when they hear the final proclamation of the good news about Jesus Christ, they will come out of spiritual Babylon and join God’s true remnant church.
- Are you currently in part of spiritual Babylon? Have you been deceived by her teachings, her false claims regarding salvation and goodness?
- If so, God is calling you today: “Come out of her, *my people*”!

⁹“The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning, ¹⁰standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.’

¹¹“And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore: ¹²merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble; ¹³and cinnamon and incense, fragrant oil and frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of men. ¹⁴The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you, and you shall find them no more at all. ¹⁵The merchants of these things, who became rich by

her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, ¹⁶and saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls! ¹⁷For in one hour such great riches came to nothing.’ Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance ¹⁸and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, ‘What is like this great city?’

¹⁹“They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate.’

- The unholy trinity and Babylon together will be a global religious-political confederacy such as the world has never seen.
- Many of those who receive the mark of the beast will quickly gain incredible financial prosperity from trade and economic agreements made on an international scale.
- But this economic and political success will even more quickly come crashing down as Babylon is utterly destroyed, both by the hand of God and from within.

²⁰“Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her!”

²¹Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, “Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore. ²²The sound of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore. No craftsman of any craft shall be found in you anymore, and the sound of a millstone shall not be heard in you anymore. ²³The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore, and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore. For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived. ²⁴And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth.”

- Babylon can promise only short-term—and yet fatal—success. A truly valuable life is far more than mere worldly wealth and power. Jesus is the infinitely better choice!

CHAPTER 19

¹After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! ²For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her.” ³Again they said, “Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!” ⁴And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, “Amen! Alleluia!” ⁵Then a voice came from the throne, saying, “Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!”

⁶And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, “Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! ⁷Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” ⁸And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

- Chapter 19 starts with celebration! Babylon is defeated, and the great “wedding” that brings Christ and His true followers together, after waiting for thousands of years, will at last come to pass!

⁹Then he said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’ ” And he said to me, “These are the true sayings of God.” ¹⁰And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

- Verses 11-21 will now once again take us backwards in time to revisit the battle of Armageddon, this time from heaven's point of view.

¹¹Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹²His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. ¹⁵Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

- This rider is Jesus Christ.

¹⁷Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, ¹⁸that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great."

¹⁹And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. ²⁰Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. ²¹And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.

- The organizations of the Papacy (the beast) and the United States (the false prophet) will be destroyed. Jesus will be victorious. Evil's reign on earth will be ended.



CHAPTER 20

¹Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ²He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

- The “bottomless pit” (Greek *abysson*) is here a reference to the now-decimated earth (see Jeremiah 4:23-26, which foreshadows this time). The seven last plagues have done their work.
- Satan is now bound to the earth. He will have no humans to tempt (all are either dead or in heaven), and no ability to leave. He will have 1,000 years—a millennium—to consider the apocalyptically evil choices he has made.
- This millennium begins at the second coming of Christ, when He will take His faithful followers to be with Him in heaven.

⁴And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

- While Satan is confined to the earth, the followers of Christ will have “judgment . . . committed to them” in heaven. God will open the records in which all the events of earth’s history are recorded. He of course already knows who has been saved and who has been lost, and God’s people will not change those decisions. Rather, the “judgment” done by God’s followers during the millennium is simply reviewing God’s judgments, confirming to their own satisfaction that His decisions are just, good, and loving.

⁵But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. ⁶Blessed and holy is he

who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

- There are two resurrections of the dead. The first is for Christ's followers. They will be raised back to life at His second coming. The second resurrection is for the wicked, at the end of the millennium. They will be raised back to life briefly at the same time Satan is released, as the following verses describe.

⁷Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. ⁹They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. ¹⁰The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

- Even after 1,000 years, Satan has not changed. He gathers the wicked for one last attack. But fire comes down and destroys them all—this time forever.
- Verse 10 states that the torment will last “day and night forever and ever.” But this does not mean “forever and ever” in the sense of being everlasting. The fire will eventually go out, and neither Satan nor his followers will be alive anymore in any sense of the word.
- To see why this is so, scan the following QR code:



¹¹Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. ¹²And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

¹³The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

- Verses 11-15 again take a step back in time and give an overview of the final judgment. John here reminds us that anyone whose name was not found in the book of life would be cast into the lake of fire.
- The question “What will you do with Jesus?” is therefore the most important question a person can ever answer. We encourage you to choose to follow Jesus while His offer of mercy is still so freely given!
- Chapter 20 shows the result of the great battle of Armageddon. The unholy trinity, spiritual Babylon, and all who followed them will be completely destroyed. Evil will not rise a second time.
- After this final judgment it is time for God's new world to begin!

CHAPTER 21

- The remaining two chapters in Revelation give a glorious taste of what life will be like when God's everlasting kingdom of justice, goodness, and love reigns supreme.
- The language used in these remaining two chapters is mostly literal, and the symbols used are straightforward.
- God's kingdom will be infinitely better than anything this world has to offer—anything!

¹Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ²Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴And God

will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

⁵Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.”

⁶And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. ⁷He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. ⁸But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

⁹Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” ¹⁰And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, ¹¹having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. ¹²Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: ¹³three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west.

¹⁴Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ¹⁵And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. ¹⁶The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal. ¹⁷Then he measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. ¹⁸The construction of its wall was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. ¹⁹The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, ²⁰the fifth sardonyx, the

sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. ²¹The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

²²But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. ²⁴And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. ²⁵Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). ²⁶And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. ²⁷But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

CHAPTER 22

¹And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. ²In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

- The “tree of life” in verse 2 is significant. It shows the restoration of humanity to their pre-sin state has now come. To see why, scan this QR code:



³And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. ⁴They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. ⁵There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.

⁶Then he said to me, “These words are faithful and true.” And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place.

⁷“Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”

⁸Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things.

⁹Then he said to me, “See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.” ¹⁰And he said to me, “Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. ¹¹He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still.”

¹²“And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. ¹³I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.”

¹⁴Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. ¹⁵But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.

¹⁶“I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.”

¹⁷And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

¹⁸For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; ¹⁹and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

²⁰He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.”

Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

²¹The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

- Thus ends one of the greatest books ever written. In light of what you've read, do you see the incredible gift that Jesus has prepared for you?
- Currently our planet is often a dark place, and it will get darker still before Jesus returns. *But when Jesus comes back, all will be made right.* And you can be a part of that new kingdom of justice, goodness, and love if you choose.
- If you would like to accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior and the leader of your life, then say to Him the following prayer:
- "Jesus, I am a sinner. I confess that I have broken Your holy law. I have dishonored You, and I have harmed other people. Please forgive me for my sins. I accept Your free gift of salvation that You purchased for me on the cross. I ask You to be my Savior and the leader of my life. Please put Your Holy Spirit in my heart, that I may have the power to live a new life in You. I don't deserve this gift. But I thank You for it. I ask this in Your name, Jesus. Amen."
- If you pray this prayer from an honest heart, you are immediately welcomed into a personal relationship with Jesus! You are forgiven, set free from sin, and will now have the power of God's Holy Spirit working within you to live a new life of justice, goodness, and love.
- Would you like to learn more about Jesus and how to join His remnant church? Or perhaps you'd like to learn more about the books of Daniel and Revelation, or other topics that we've studied in this book.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND SYMBOLS FOR THE BOOKS OF DANIEL AND REVELATION

(Includes only the main terms, symbols, and Bible references)

Abomination of desolation – False religious system operating in opposition to the true worship of God, resulting in the destruction of Jerusalem and the persecution of God's people. Daniel 11:31; 12:11; see also Daniel 8:13; 9:27; Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14; Luke 21:20.

Abaddon/Apollyon – Hebrew and Greek names meaning “Destroyer”; the angel associated with the abyss. Revelation 9:11.

Abyss/Bottomless pit – Realm of demonic activity; place of Satan's temporary imprisonment. Revelation 9:1, 2, 11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1, 3.

Alpha and Omega – The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet used as a divine title to show God's and Jesus' eternal existence and Their universal rule. Revelation 1:8; 21:6; 22:13.

Amen – Means “truly” or “so be it”; a title for Christ as the true and faithful witness. Revelation 1:6-7; 3:14; 5:14; 7:12; 19:4; 22:20.

Angel – Refers to a “messenger,” whether a human or a heavenly angel. Daniel 3:28; 6:23; 9:21; Revelation 1:1, 20; 5:2, 11; 7:1-2, 11; 8:2-6, 13; 9:11, 15; 10:1, 5; 12:7, 9; 14:6, 8, 9-10; 15, 17-19; 15:1; 17:1, 7; 18:1, 21; 19:17; 20:1; 21:9, 12; 22:6, 16.

Antichrist – Term found only in 1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 7, it refers to a power usurping Christ's prerogatives, which antichrist powers in Revelation do; see Revelation 13:1, 5-6; 17:3.

Armageddon – Symbolic location for the final battle between heaven and earth.

Babylon the Great/Harlot – Corrupt religio-political system opposed to God from which God's people are called out. Revelation 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21.

Blood of the Lamb – Refers to Christ's atoning death through which believers receive redemption, cleansing, and victory. Revelation 1:5; 5:9; 7:14; 12:11; 19:13.

Beast – Symbol of a kingdom. Daniel 7:3-7, 11-12, 17, 19, 23; 8:3-8, 20-21; Revelation 13:1-4, 11-12, 14; 14:9, 11; 15:2; 16:13; 17:3, 8, 11-13, 16-17.

Book of Life – God's record of all who profess faith in Christ as Messiah/Savior. Daniel 7:10; Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27.

Bowls/Seven last plagues – Judgments described as God's wrath poured out on the wicked. Revelation 15:7; 16:1; 21:9.

Bride/Wife of the Lamb – Redeemed people of God, symbolized by the holy city, New Jerusalem. Revelation 19:7-9; 21:2, 9; 22:17.

Chaldeans – Founders of the Neo-Babylonian Empire; also refers to a class of wise men who functioned as priests. Daniel 2:4.

Crown – Symbolic of victory and authority. Revelation 2:10; 3:11; 4:4, 10; 6:2; 9:7; 12:1, 3; 13:1; 14:14; 19:12.

Cyrus the Great (c. 600 – 530 B.C.) – Founder of the Achaemenid Empire, unifying the Persian tribes. After conquering Babylon in 539 B.C., he allowed the Israelite captives to return to Judah (Ezra 1:1-4). Daniel 1:21; 6:28; 10:1. See also Isaiah 44:28-45:1.

Day – Symbolizing a year in the time prophecies of Daniel and Revelation.

Dragon – Identified as Satan and the pagan Roman Empire used by him. Daniel 7:7; Revelation 12:3-4, 7, 9, 13, 16-17; 13:2, 4, 11; 16:13; 20:2.

Dura – Means “walled place” and may refer to the area between Babylon's inner and outer walls. Daniel 3:1.

Earth-dwellers – Those whose future is tied to this perishing world, not heaven. Revelation 3:10; 6:10; 8:13; 13:8, 14; 14:6; 17:8.

Edom, Moab, Ammonites – Distant relatives of the Israelites, enemies of God's people, possibly also those saved from spiritual Babylon. Daniel 11:41; see also Revelation 18:4.

Elders – 24 members of the heavenly council. Revelation 4:4, 10; 5:5-6, 8, 11, 14; 7:11, 13; 11:16; 14:3; 19:4.

Eunuchs – Possibly literal eunuchs, but the Hebrew word can also refer to high officials. Daniel 1:7-11, 18.

Gog and Magog – Symbolic of the wicked nations raised in the second resurrection, gathered by Satan to oppose God after the millennium. Revelation 20:7-9. See also Ezekiel 38-39.

Hades – The grave. Death and Hades surrender their dead and are ultimately destroyed. Revelation 1:18; 6:8; 20:13-14.

Harvest – Final gatherings of the saved and the lost at the Second Advent. Revelation 14:14-20.

Horn – Symbol of power, referring to a king or kingdom. Daniel 7:7-8, 11, 20, 21, 24; 8:3, 5-9, 20-22; Revelation 12:3; 13:1, 11; 17:3, 7, 12, 16.

Image of the beast – Church-state union operating like the medieval Papacy. Revelation 13:14-15; 14:9, 11; 20:4.

Ishtar Gate – A monumental entrance to Babylon, built c. 575 B.C. by King Nebuchadnezzar II, having blue-glazed bricks with reliefs of lions, bulls, and dragons.

Jezebel – Symbolic of an apostate religious system like the harlot Babylon. Revelation 2:20-23.

Lake of Fire – Place of fiery judgment and final destruction of the wicked. Revelation 19:20; 20:10, 14-15; 21:8.

Lamb – Symbol of Jesus Christ who was sacrificially slain and yet victorious. Revelation 5:6, 8, 12-13; 6:1, 16; 7:9-10, 17; 13:8; 14:1, 4, 10; 15:3; 17:14; 19:7, 9; 21:14, 22, 23; 22:1, 3.

Lampstands – Source of light identified as the seven churches. Revelation 1:12-13, 20.

Lion of the Tribe of Judah – Messianic title for Christ as the victorious king. Revelation 5:5.

Locusts – Means of divine judgment. Revelation 9:3, 7. See also Joel 1:4; Amos 4:9.

Magicians, astrologers, and sorcerers – These claimed the ability to communicate with the unseen world, practicing divination, magic, exorcism, and astrology. Daniel 1:20; 2:2, 27; 4:7; 5:11; Revelation 21:8; 22:15.

Mark of the Beast – Symbolic of loyalty to the beast and participation in its system of false worship in contrast to the Seal of God. Revelation 13:16-18; 14:9-11; 20:4.

Michael – Name for Jesus meaning “who is like God.” Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1; Revelation 12:7-9.

New Jerusalem – City where redeemed humans live while in heaven during the millennium and thereafter located on the new earth. Revelation 21:2-22:5.

Patmos – Island in the Aegean Sea where John was exiled and received visions. Revelation 1:9.

Rainbow – Symbolic of God's character of love, mercy, and justice. Revelation 4:3; 10:1.

Remnant – End-time believers in Christ who keep God's commandments and have the testimony of Jesus. Revelation 12:17.

Robes/white garments – Symbolic of purity, vindication, and final victory. Revelation 3:4-5, 18; 6:11; 7:9, 13-14; 19:8.

Satrap – Means "protector of the kingdom," referring to a variety of subordinate officials in Babylon. Daniel 3:2-3, 27; 6:1-4, 6-7.

Seal of God – Symbolic of loyalty to God and His commandments in contrast to the mark of the beast. Revelation 7:2-4; 14:1; 22:4.

Second death – Final death and destruction in the lake of fire. Revelation 2:11; 20:6, 14; 21:8.

Seven Spirits of God – Symbolic of the omniscience and omnipresent influence of the Holy Spirit. Revelation 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6. See also Zechariah 3:9; 4:10.

Shinar – Ancient geographical term for the region of Babylonia. Daniel 1:2.

Spirit of Prophecy – The Spirit-imparted gift of prophecy; the testimony of Jesus. Revelation 19:10; 22:9.

Stars – Heavenly bodies, but also symbolic of God's people, messengers, or angels. Daniel 8:10; 12:3; Revelation 1:16, 20; 6:13; 8:10; 9:1; 12:1, 4.

Sword – Word of God by which all are judged. Revelation 1:16; 2:16; 19:15, 21. See also Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12.

Testimony of Jesus – Prophetic messages from Jesus through His prophets that carry divine authority like the Word of God. Revelation 1:2, 9; 12:17; 19:10.

Three Angels' Messages – Three global end-time proclamations: the gospel in the context of the judgment and a call to worship the Creator; announcement of Babylon's fall; and warning against worship of the beast and his image. Revelation 14:6-12. See also Revelation 18:1-4.

Time – Period of 360 days (or years in apocalyptic time prophecies). Daniel 4:16, 23, 25, 32; 7:25; 12:7; Revelation 12:14.

Watcher – A heavenly messenger or angel. Daniel 4:13, 17, 23.

Waters/Sea – Symbolic of peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages. Daniel 7:2-3; Revelation 13:1; 17:1, 15.

Woman clothed with the sun – Symbolic of God's faithful people throughout history. Revelation 12:1-6, 13-17.

Wormwood – Notoriously bitter herb, symbolizing Satan, the great fallen star, who spreads poisonous heresy. Revelation 8:10-11.

Zion – Mount for worship of God, where the Lamb stands with the 144,000. Revelation 14:1.

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