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I dedicate this work to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and also especially to my entire family and friends.

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Preface

It was back in 2009 when I heard a prophecy given by Rev. David Wilkerson, who has since passed away, regarding coming fires and riots, to New York City, the surrounding areas and even the entire world. At that time I had been studying intently the book of Revelation

especially; to see why there were so many differing interpretations regarding end times prophecy.

I needed to see firsthand what the book said and if it was as difficult to understand as some claim it to be, along with re-acquainting myself to things I had heard about the end times prophesies as a child. So when I heard Dave Wilkerson's prophecy, I immediately knew it was describing what will happen at the 6th seal, which is when the earth will experience falling stars and fragments of stars causing millions of worldwide fires.

However, what I did not realize at the time was how close to this event we were. I wondered why Dave Wilkerson would be giving a prophecy about something that most people thought was very far off, possibly sometime in the middle or end of the tribulation .

I knew that many "traditional teachings" on end times taught that the first seal must break before the great tribulation started and the antichrist was the rider on the white horse etc., but what I realized very soon into my study was some of what I had learned through men, did not match 100% what I was seeing in scripture.

The Lord had awakened my spirit to pay attention to what was being said by Dave Wilkerson, because he was not only a **trusted** modern day prophet, but he was also very humble about his calling as well. I recognized that many of the self proclaimed "prophets" of our day are anything but humble.

So I began an even deeper study into what was going on in the world, the deceptions we are led to believe by some, versus the pure unadulterated truth that the scriptures present to us. If you haven't heard what Dave Wilkerson prophesied it is as follows in part: *"I am compelled by the Holy Spirit to send out an urgent message to all on our mailing list, and to friends and to bishops we have met all over the world.*

AN EARTH-SHATTERING CALAMITY IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN. IT IS GOING TO BE SO FRIGHTENING, WE ARE

ALL GOING TO TREMBLE – EVEN THE GODLIEST AMONG US.

For ten years I have been warning about a thousand fires coming to New York City. It will engulf the whole megaplex, including areas of New Jersey and Connecticut. Major cities all across America will experience riots and blazing fires – such as we saw in Watts, Los Angeles, years ago.

There will be riots and fires in cities worldwide. There will be looting – including Times Square, New York City. What we are experiencing now is not a recession, not even a depression. We are under God’s wrath. In Psalm 11:3 it is written, “If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?” God is judging the raging sins of America and the nations. He is destroying the secular foundations.”

The rest of this can be found at his website which is:

http://www.worldchallenge.org/coverletter/an_urgent_message

I would like to point out especially how he said it would be an “earth shattering calamity and everyone would tremble.” This actually matches a description of what will happen at the sixth seal of Revelation when people shall be calling out to the rocks and mountains to hide them from the wrath of God.(Rev: 6:16-17).

However this would not mean as much if there were many other things that had to happen first. The fact is there is nothing that has to happen before this occurs and is one reason why so many will be caught off guard with complete shock and awe when it does.

I also have been warning people all over the world since 2007, on our website www.realChristian.net, that the 6th seal was about to be broken imminently, because of the evidences of the first five seals are being seen and have been for some time. But we have not properly identified where we are on the timeline of end time events.

It was also around 2009, when I was introduced to a ministry called Jerusalem Prayer Team which is overseen by a gentleman named Dr. Mike Evans, who has written many best selling prophetic books on Israel and end times prophesies. He sends all those who are interested

daily emails on what is going on in Israel behind the scenes and you can also get on this list if you visit his website at:
www.jerusalemprayerteam.org.

I found it interesting when just a few months ago he sent out a message saying how “*the hoof beats of the 4 horsemen*” were being heard across the Mideast. This in part was what I had been proclaiming since 2007 but in even more detail. Couple these statements along with what he and others are beginning to notice, which is the signs in the first five seals are already happening all around us and what we must realize is the hour is late.....even later than we imagined.

Israel is under daily pressure from the U.S. *who used to be her ally*, to give into the demands of her enemies which is to give up more land which God gave to them long ago.

Anyone who pushes Israel into dividing more of God’s land that was given to the Jews will be cursed, while anyone who sides with her will be blessed. Unfortunately the U.S. is now on the wrong side of this and we are already seeing glimpses of his judgments being poured out in various places around the globe and here in America just as Dave Wilkerson said. However his prophecy has not yet been fully fulfilled.

We are under a preliminary form of God’s judgment, but it has not yet begun in earnest. The sixth seal will change all of this and the world will never be the same again. That’s what this book is about along with the soon return of Jesus.

Revelation Unleashed
Re-Discovering the Blessed Hope

Introduction:

Biblical Prophecy

An eagle soaring through the heavens cries out: “Trouble! Trouble! Trouble for those who live on the earth because of the remaining sounds of the trumpets that the other three angels are about to blow!”

Talking eagles, a white robed army riding on white horses, prophets who shoot flames from their mouths while summoning plagues to the earth, and demonic locust tormenting people for five months, makes the book of Revelation sound almost “wizard-like.” Although the events described by John the Revelator may sound similar to those described in fantasy classics like the *Chronicles of Narnia* or *Lord of the Rings*, all Bible prophecy is true and will happen exactly as it says it will.

Hundreds of prophecies found in the Bible have already been fulfilled to the letter, some before our own eyes. However, some Christians have been reluctant to read the book of Revelation or other prophetic books in the Bible. With so many conflicting teachings on prophecy today, it is not surprising that some of us put our hands up in surrender and stay away from portions of God’s word.

A very popular misconception is that prophecy is only symbolic and difficult to understand. In fact, you may often hear people promote the philosophy: “Christians win in the end, amen,” saying this is all we need to know about prophecy. “After all,” they say, “unless you are a theologian, you can’t really know what Revelation is saying.” But this perspective is not biblical.

We need to find out what scripture says for ourselves, otherwise we leave it up to others to teach us on what they say the Bible says, and what they say is important to study. For the most part, biblical teachings on the basics of prophecy are not properly taught today. The mainstream approach has become to teach only “practical” or “relevant” topics that will apply to our everyday life, as they say. We hope and pray that church world-wide will realize that the Bible’s prophetic books do indeed contain very practical and relevant topics

for our lives today and for our future readiness for the Lord's return.

Revelation Unleashed will help you rediscover this teaching about the Lord's return also called, "the Blessed Hope." We will look closely at the event where Jesus removes his His ready followers, also known as the "Rapture." We will see that the letters to the churches in Revelation are not just to a people long ago, but are especially for the church today, and anyone who will listen. We will discuss the important message from Jesus to the church which is: "I am coming soon for those who are ready." He is coming for a ready and spotless bride first, but also holding out mercy for more to be saved later on during the tribulation period as well.

We pray the insights here may be a wake-up call for some. For others, a more solid reason to be convinced and excited that Jesus is returning for us and before his concentrated wrath on earth begins. For years, there have been holes in the pre-tribulation camp's doctrine, for a pre-wrath Rapture, which left us unable to give an answer to some in the mid and post positions. This book will show stronger scriptural proof, for a pre-tribulation Rapture of the church than there has ever been before.

This is not a book about who the antichrist might be, or if we should try to identify who he is at this point in time. Instead, we will focus on what Jesus said would be important. It is important for us to be watching the signs He said would precede His return. The Bible says none can know the day or the hour, but Jesus also said we could know when he was "even at the doorstep." These signs are happening today in increasing numbers, as never before in history.

The "birth pangs," as Jesus called them, are getting closer and closer together, because something new is about to be born. We should look for Him on a daily basis and expect He will return for us, as did the early church. They knew they were not to identify who the antichrist was. The early church was given one message and it is ours today, be ready for the Lord soon return. Those left behind at the rapture will

know who the antichrist is soon enough.

As we go through the book of Revelation chapter by chapter, we will see the loving nature of God as he waits for those he left behind to repent and worship him. You may never have heard that there is hope for those who miss the Rapture. Those who will be left behind can still be saved, but only if they endure to the end through much pain and suffering and finally Martyrdom.

The End from the Beginning

Prophecy gives us hope in a world where there is little to find. *Revelation Unleashed* will also help you rediscover another blessed hope, the promise of heaven. Prophecy is not only about doom and gloom, but also describes the exciting future of God's faithful. Jesus said he was going to prepare a place for those who love him. It will be a place of mansions, many rooms and much more.

Heaven will be a real, three-dimensional place where we will live at the end of time and for eternity. This current world is not our home, as we are aliens not wanted by this world, its system or its spirit. Let's think about the possibilities of heaven for a moment:

Try to imagine a city and a land so beautiful, that it's very gates are made from gigantic pearls taller than men. Streets, not just of gold, but so pure is this gold, that they, as well as the rest of the golden city, look like transparent glass. Each base of the city walls are beautifully adorned with every type of precious jewel. Mansions, spires and other unique structures, as far as the eye can see, dot the perfectly groomed landscape. All inhabitants of this happy place dwell in them, and not just their leaders. Incredible Eden-like, perfect gardens, sparkling fountains and other architectural wonders of all shapes and sizes line perfect walkways that lead from one thing of beauty to another.

New streams, rivers, lakes and ponds, lead to more new seas

and oceans all perfectly crystal clear which are all fed from the famed “River of life,” flowing directly from the throne of God down the middle of the transparent golden city. “Trees of life” also line the river and continually bear fruit. All these created things and everything in this land including the inhabitants cry: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lamb and to the one who sits on the throne who made all things.” Echoes of praise rise up from everyone and everything, not only because of the splendor of this magnificent creation, but also because of what Jesus did to allow people to access this amazing eternity. There is no piece of real estate here on earth that compares. Nothing here comes remotely close to the glory of even the least in heaven.

The New Jerusalem is gigantic. It's as tall as it is wide. Revelation says it is 12,000 stadia tall, wide and deep. A stadia is just over one tenth of a mile, so this city is approximately 1,400 miles high and 1,400 miles wide and its length is the same as well. It's a perfect cube.

To put this in perspective, imagine a city from Boston, MA, to St. Paul, MN, then from there down to Texas. Approximately one half the size of the United States is just the ground floor of the New Jerusalem. I say ground floor because the city is also as high as it is wide. This is almost unfathomable, but again, imagine the earth's highest point is Mt. Everest and that is only 5 ½ miles high. This city's height will make Mt. Everest into less than a foot hill. Since God never wastes anything, it is very possible that its height will be filled with levels. How many levels is certainly an unknown, but the possibilities are certainly endless with dimensions as large as these.

In fact, though it's called the “New Jerusalem,” its dimensions alone show it to be more like a new world than just a city. This city or new land is not imaginary, but very real. It will be the capital city of the new world for the Holy people of God. The light of the glory of God, which is a perfect light, will illuminate this new world and there won't even be the hint of a shadow to remind anyone of the way things used

to be.

Those who are invited to be in this glorious new kingdom will be like him, with new bodies that will never die or get sick. We will see his face and he will be our God and we will be his people. Everything we do in this place will be for his enjoyment which will also become ours. No more tedious, boring work or work that produces sweat or decay. Perfection will be everywhere and on everyone and everything. No more sin, no more injustice and no more pain. It is a city and world that the Holy people of God and God himself will live in and no one else, forevermore...

Heaven is more than a fantasy or movie, it is a coming reality. It is hard to believe as we go about our busy lives of doing and planning, but life on earth as we know it will end. We need to put our trust and hope in Jesus more and more, especially in these last days. We are closer to heaven now than we ever have been.

Our Hope is Close

Jesus return is imminent just as it always has been. He could come any day to steal away his ready followers before the final wrath of the great tribulation begins. In fact, the last Great Tribulation can't begin until the Rapture event occurs. Many from around the world who study end-times teachings are also saying this and believe we are in the last-of-the-last days. Thousands from around the world have visited our website at www.realchristian.net. The way visitors find our site is interesting and reflects the reality of our world.

The most popular search term which directs them refers to the signs of the Revelatory seals. They ask, "How many Revelatory seals have been broken?" Why are they asking questions like these? It's because they can see for themselves the evidences of the first five seals going on all around them. We believe, along with an increasing number, that we are not waiting on the first five seals to be broken

because the evidences of these seals have been witnessed for some time.

The signs that Jesus spoke of in Luke 21 and Matthew 24 are the same happenings described in the first five seals and what we are seeing today. More importantly, since the year 2000, these signs have been on the increase in intensity, frequency and convergence. This matches Jesus words which say before his return the signs would be like birth pangs which also come with increased intensity and frequency. We are now deep into the birth pangs phase. Soon, the rest of the events listed in Revelation will be unleashed onto the world. As for the seals, only the evidences of the sixth seal are yet to be seen. We know this for sure because the evidences of the sixth seal are very specific and dramatic. When these events take place the earth will radically change. We also will see that the sixth seal describes the first day of God's wrath which *begins* the seven year great tribulation period. There will be no mistaking it. Life on earth will never be the same again after the sixth seal is broken.

Jesus said He would come at a time when most would not expect him. They won't expect him because life will be considered "normal" when he returns as Luke 17:26 describes. We, in the church, however, are to be looking for the signs of his coming so we will not be unprepared. The signs are those found in the first five seals and are mirrored in Luke chapter 21 as well as Matthew chapter 24. While the world thinks little of the **increased** hate, violence, wars, sickness, and injustice, we, who are looking for Jesus, know these are the signs of his coming. The next thing on the agenda of end-time events is the breaking of the sixth seal and with it, the gathering of His ready followers into the clouds.

Another New Interpretation?

You may be asking, "Is this another new interpretation of Revelation to add to the already too many?" The answer is, "no,"

though it may seem new to some. There are already far too many interpretations as it is, and that is part of the problem. Whose interpretation do you go with? Which theologian do you believe? Would it be the one with the highest perceived education? Obviously, this can't be the way. There can be only one correct interpretation, the one which has already been stated in the Bible itself.

Revelation Unleashed is study of Revelation that promotes what is already stated in the scriptures themselves. We will simply look at prophetic scriptures and then match them to events in Revelation. When this is done correctly, you will see and realize how close we are to Christ's return and that the Rapture happens at the sixth seal, still remains a pre-tribulation event and comes as a surprise. This is not a new interpretation, but a fresh look at the scriptures with a literal lens instead of a "traditional thought" lens.

There are that have existed in pre-tribulation teaching, though it has been strong in spirit. The partial problem lies in where we claim the Rapture occurs in the book of Revelation, which has left questions unanswered. The Bible certainly presents us with scripture that proves a pre-God's wrath and a pre-tribulation early escape for some people. Many pre-tribbers, including myself for a time, have given incomplete arguments to the overall debate because we only knew of some of the scripture that pertains to and supports the position. We have had some scripture strengths, certainly, but we need all of it.

Those who believe in a pre-wrath Rapture should be encouraged, because there is solid proof in scripture that we are to be gathered up *before* the tribulation begins and before God's wrath. We just have missed where it actually occurs in Revelation because it doesn't conform to preconceived ideas and opinions.

We are living in between the 5th and the 6th seals already, but at the same time, the last great seven year tribulation has still ***not yet begun.***

Why is it important to know this? Besides clarifying a

theological discussion, it is important to know where we are in the line of end-times events. It is important to know we are looking for Jesus, and to heed his warning to be ready. If we think he is coming hundreds of years from now, we may not be ready and can be caught unaware as most of the world will be.

It doesn't matter if a writer or commentator has studied longer than you, or perhaps has higher education than you. It seems we have come to a place today where scripture isn't enough, and men's ideas and opinions are given more weight than scripture. We must test what is taught by all Bible teachers with our own reading and study of the scriptures to be sure it is rightly divided. Prophecy teaching, especially in modern times, has been subject to the prophet or the teacher. This goes against scripture. Peter said, "***Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things.***" *2 Peter 1:20*

This verse is significant because it means there can only be one interpretation of scripture, which is the literal one **and no personal interpretation is acceptable**, unless it's in line with **ALL** of scripture, not just some of it.

This does not mean some "new revelation" or truth can't come forth that has not been realized or possibly was done away with for a time. If the revelation is in line with scripture, then it is of God and ***may be needed desperately***. We have gone with consensus teachings on prophecy, yet many have had unscriptural foundations. We have gone with opinions instead of solid scriptural truths. Paul said:

*"So, brothers and sisters, what should you do? When you meet together, one person has a song, and another has a teaching. ***Another has a new truth from God.*** Another speaks in a different language, and another person interprets that language. The purpose of all these things should be to help the church grow strong."* *1 Corinthians 14:26*

This “new truth” Paul talks of is not to replace the scriptures, but if it is a truth from God, it will line up with scripture. This new truth or word is something scriptural, yet something not realized or practiced by the church today as it once was. We need this spiritual gift in the church, since we humans are prone to blindness and forgetfulness in a very short amount of time.

Let’s not forget that while Paul was still alive and in charge of the churches, he had to remind them about truths they had started to abandon. In fact, most of his letters (almost the entire New Testament), were about correcting errors, telling them they must continue in the faith and act like true Christians. If they strayed in Paul’s day, is it possible that perhaps we have done some wandering of our own 1900 years later? It would be reckless to think otherwise. Unfortunately, even today, some hold to the line of associational or denominational positions at the cost of true critical thinking regarding scriptural truth.

It is not about being traditional, but scriptural. If “mainstream” tradition matches the scriptures, we should like it, if it doesn’t we should hate it just as God hates sin and anything that drags us away from pure truth. Today we are fond of diluting pure truth to tickle the ears. We need to get it right with scripture, not right with consensus. Jesus and the apostles were always about confronting the religious traditions of men to see if they lined up with what God really wanted. Usually they didn’t.

Some have said, “If a teaching is new, it can’t be true,” not realizing that the reason a teaching may sound new, is because it went so long unpracticed. Just because something hasn’t been talked about or practiced as much as it once was, does not mean it’s new. More important than a perception of newness, a teaching should be evaluated as being scriptural or not. If some teaching has been “mothballed” for 1800 years, then there is something missing from traditional perceptions and teachings.

In the case of the reformed church movement, for example, we need to remember the church did not start in the 16th century, but 1500 years before. The church reformers of the 16th century may not have gone far enough in reforming to the original. Did they do some good? Of course they did, but partial truth isn't good enough. We need to get it right with scripture by putting aside our denominational opinions, if necessary.

Our Biblical Approach-Literal vs. Symbolic

Some who refuse to take the whole of Revelation literally, pick and choose where they are going to be strict with scripture and this produces confusion and a myriad of interpretations. If a symbol is not explained within the passage or a connecting verse, it must be left as it is and taken literally. This does not mean that there are not some symbols in Revelation, of course there are, but when there is a symbol, it is usually explained right in the same passage. So, we must resist making our own interpretations.

We need to use the interpretation that is the most literal because this is how all previous prophecy has already been fulfilled. The book of Revelation is a chronologically sound narration of events to come and should be read and interpreted in the numerical order as John presented it. Too many today take license with this set order which has only caused confusion.

Revelation is the *final* master plan. All previous end-time prophecies should be plugged into the text when there is matching language and description. Doing this gives us a more complete picture and Revelation provides the chronology that the other scriptures do not. For instance, Daniel's vision of events that describe the last seven years of the Great Tribulation found in Daniel chapters 7 through chapter 12, are fulfilled in the book Revelation beginning at the 6th seal, not beforehand. For the most part, prophetic writings before

Revelation skip around and do not represent the order of end-time events, only descriptions of them.

John presents a narration of events that clearly build one upon the next. The numbered seals beginning in chapter six need to be followed sequentially in the numerical order given. The numbers were given for a common sense reason: order. There are some who take these out of order and claim that some events, which occur much later in Revelation, have already occurred, such as the seven thunders or the water turning to blood. However, when these things happen, none will have to guess at them, as they will be very obvious for all to see. Where there is mystery in a scripture, we accept the mystery. We will not try and jam our own interpretation or philosophy in on these scriptures. Where things are clearly stated, we are dogmatic and very strict with the scriptures as commanded in Rev. 22:18-19:

I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll. 19 And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll“(NIV).

Holy Spirit: The Reminder of Truth

We sometimes have to use a little common sense when it comes to scripture interpretation, along with the most important approach, the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. To attempt scripture interpretation without the Holy Spirit's help is futile. One could have education, but without the Holy Spirit's education, we have knowledge without spiritual wisdom.

*“But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things **and will remind you of everything** I have said to you.” John 14:26 (NIV)*

The original followers of Jesus did not have formal education so valued today. They had much better. They were with Jesus for three years, however, they only could be of use after they received the infilling of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, as described in Acts, chapter two. There were many times before this where they were confused when Jesus told them a spiritual story. This is because they were still weak men not yet empowered by the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit, they would have continued to be wandering cowards without spiritual wisdom or boldness.

*“I am writing this letter about those people **who are trying to lead you the wrong way.** Christ gave you a special gift that is still in you, **so you do not need any other teacher. His gift teaches you about everything** and it is true, not false. So continue to live in Christ, as his gift taught you.” 1 John 2:26-27*

A connecting verse in John 14:26 says: *“But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, **will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.**” NIV*

Luke 24:45-49 also says, *“**Then Jesus opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.** He said to them, It is written that the Christ would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and that a change of hearts and lives and forgiveness of sins would be preached in his name to all nations, starting at Jerusalem.⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. **I will send you what my Father has promised, but you must stay in Jerusalem until you have received that power from heaven.**”*

So it is the Holy Spirit, also known as the gift, the anointing, the promise, the advocate, the helper and more, who is the teacher of what scripture means, not men. Can we have our own opinions and make our own statements in our own words? Yes, as long as it matches original scripture. We have to rightly divide scripture and just as important, we must investigate what others say a scripture teaches.

Above all, you must ask the Holy Spirit to help you, not the biblical commentaries- including this one! We want *Revelation Unleashed* to encourage you to read the book of Revelation for yourself.

According to the words of John, a blessing is promised for those who read the words of Revelation and do what it says. You should read, pray and search the scriptures from your own Bible, as you study the points made here.

Contradictions?

If two scriptures “appear” to contradict each other, they are not. God’s word is infallible. All scripture put together, serve to form a more complete and bigger picture. Both and all scriptures are completely true.

One scripture does not hold more weight than the other. It’s line upon line and precept upon precept. “***All Scripture*** is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2 Tim 3:16-17:16

Ignoring a particular scripture because it doesn’t fit with our opinion is dangerous. Without the entire truth, we become vulnerable to false teachers. There is always someone who is going to try to drag you away from full truth... always.

A simple example of this is when Satan told Jesus to throw himself down from the mountain and said the angels would protect him. It was true, they would have protected Jesus, or He could have even protected Himself. However, it was also true that Satan was trying to put God to a foolish test. So Jesus did what we should do, he used other scripture to combat the incorrect use of the same. Jesus told Satan another true scripture which said we are not put God to a foolish test, so he was misusing truth.

When some confront us with scripture on a given subject,

make sure the person quoting it has the right motives and is quoting all scripture that speaks to the subject at hand, not just the few verses they may like.

There are others, just like Satan, who will quote scripture while at the same time sounding spiritual. There are many teachers today who will skip over some scripture and put more attention on the few that they like. This is typical of people set on defending their ideas over scripture as well as the ploy of a false teacher.

We also see many more examples in the Bible, such as, “We can’t be plucked from Jesus hand,” which seems to be at odds with other passages that speak of some who have already had their names erased from the book of life, such as Ex. 32:33. The fact is both are true. Some have willfully kept on sinning or returned to a lifestyle of sin and thus have put themselves on a path which could lead them to experience great loss. While others remain in Jesus care, by living the life He commanded them to live by the Spirit’s power, and so they will have eternal security.

Again, when it comes to scripture interpretation, the strict literal interpretation is the best method. It means what it says, and says what it means, with little explanation needed from men.

Original Meaning

Occasionally we will go back to the original Greek or Hebrew when we find something that may not agree with what men are saying. A great example of this is Revelation 7:14 which is part of the 6th seal, where we see a great multitude of people from all around the earth in heaven. An Elder asks John who they are and where did they come from? He then answers his own question and says they have “**come out**” of the great tribulation.

Some have said that the passage says, they have “*come through*” the Great Tribulation, when the scriptures clearly state in

every translation, from the original Greek, KJV and the NIV that they have “come out” of it, ***not through it***.

We will find out in our study that this great multitude referred to by the elder, have “come out” at the beginning of the tribulation period, not the end. If you hold to the “come through” interpretation, you could be left thinking we will not be Raptured until after the great tribulation is over. Twisting this scripture causes events to be out of original order which then forces us to believe other things that are not true to the scriptures.

Is this an important distinction to make about the exact meaning of this word or others? Yes, extremely important. We need to take the word literally without changing its meaning, just as it was placed in the text. If we are not strict with this, it’s up to anyone’s idea. The reason some have changed this word is to fit their pre-conceived idea of when events should take place, instead of simply letting the Bible tell us on its own.

So a new world is about to be born, while an old world is about to die. But what about the here and now? How close is this coming new world? Who's going? Who's staying? How could the early church have expected Jesus to return for them in their time, if there were certain things that had to happen before that could take place? What if nothing needs to take place at all, except for the Rapture itself to start the beginning of the end? Could God have simply started all the end time signs we are seeing now, back in the days of the early church? We will be looking at these questions and many more in *Revelation Unleashed*.

Major topics in this chapter-by-chapter study of Revelation are as follows:

- Scriptural proof that the first five seals have already been broken.
- Scriptural proof of a 6th seal ***pre***-tribulation rapture AND

why it is about to occur.

- Encouragement to those who are looking for the 'blessed hope' of Jesus' return.
- Where we are on the timeline of events as described in Revelation.
- How many professing Christians will likely miss the Rapture.
- How many tribulation saints will die at the hands of the Antichrist, but still be saved.
- How Israel and the Jews will be protected and saved by God himself.
- What a person must do if they miss the Rapture.
- Where America could be in end-times prophesies and what may happen to her.
- How the Antichrist is more easily identified in scripture (and it's not numerically).
- Why we are **not** to look for the Antichrist, but Jesus alone.
- What will happen the day of and the day after the Rapture.
- Who the whore, modern-day Babylon, and the revived Roman Empire could be.
- Exactly ***where in Revelation's events*** Jesus steals or raptures his ready followers.
- Why there has been so much confusion regarding the book of Revelation.
- How God's mercy is seen throughout almost all of Revelation.
- The difference between Rapture and 2nd Coming verses & how to more easily identify them.
- Other end-time misconceptions about the Rapture and the Second Coming.

Chapter 1: How to Be Happy!

Revelation Chapter 1

“This is the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him, to show his servants what must soon happen. And Jesus sent his angel to show it to his servant John, who has told everything he has seen. It is the word of God; it is the message from Jesus Christ.” -Revelation 1:1-2

Holiness is Happiness

We live in a time when everyone wants to tell us how we can be happy. Unfortunately, their ideas never really deliver. Very often, we are told we can be happy if we buy a certain thing, or if we divorce our spouse, because we deserve better, or we can be happy, if we save enough for retirement, etc. However, scripture gives us a different formula and it's one that is actually attainable by even the average person, in fact, it is attainable by anyone who really wants it.

Revelation 1:3, of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, is an overview of His entire message, which is blessed or happy are those who read it, hear it, and obey it. *“Blessed is the one who reads the words of God’s message, and blessed are the people who hear this message and do what is written in it. The time is near when all this will happen.”* –Rev 1:3

But what exactly is Jesus telling us to do in Revelation? I used to think that Revelation was just a book about the impending, so-called, “Apocalypse”, but in actuality, it is much more. Some say we only have to believe, but scripture tells us repeatedly, and especially here in Revelation, belief is only part of our overall faith.

We see very plainly, here, how one can be happy, but you have to *do something* to obtain this happiness. With no action attached to belief, faith is dead. Even the demons believe and tremble as James 2:19 tells us. Of course we know that faith is an important ingredient to the Christian life, because of the scriptures that proclaim it. In fact, without faith it is impossible to please God as says in Hebrews 11:6.

Found throughout the entire book of Revelation is the message that faith is completed by action which is also taught in James. We are not saved by faith alone, as James so clearly states in 2:14-26. The NIV reads: *“You see that a person is justified by what he does **and not by faith alone.**”* This is not a new gospel.

What Jesus is telling us to do in Revelation is simple. We will see in Revelation chapters two and three how Jesus expects holiness from those who call themselves his followers, and he expects us to

overcome our sin that he died to defeat. This is possible with the power of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and this is a task that we can **and are expected to do**. If we do not care to listen to that still small voice, we can be defeated. We must remember that the enemy, Satan, has come to kill, steal and destroy as John 10:10 states. If he could not do it, he would not try.

Be Alert

*“The Lord God says, I am the Alpha and the Omega. I am the One who is and was **and is coming**. I am the Almighty.” –Rev 1:8*

As true followers of the Lord, we are to be watching for Jesus soon return and not become like the scoffers who are asking, where is the promise of his coming? Some of these people are even in the churches today. Matt 24:48-51 describes what we see happening within parts of the Christian community today:

*“But suppose that servant is wicked and says to himself, ‘My master is staying away a long time,’ and he **then begins to beat his fellow servants** and to eat and drink with drunkards. **The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of**. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”*

This is a clear picture of scoffers who will be left behind, some of whom will be later be thrown into the lake of fire. If we are alert, we will find words of life that are extremely important throughout the book of Revelation. Being aloof or indifferent to the message here, can quickly turn us into becoming like members of the church of Laodicea, a church of which Jesus had no compliments for and was quite disgusted with 2000 years ago and still is today.

Not all Future

Jesus said to John regarding this revelation, *“Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later.”* -Rev 1:19

We must realize that Revelation is not all future. This simply means, not all of Revelation was to be a list of future events. Some were for John's day, such as the Revelatory letters to the churches and some of the seals, as we will see. The rest would be future events not yet seen in his day.

In addition, some of the seals have been and will be long lasting in their effects. They did not and do not just get open and shut immediately. In fact, the evidences of most of the seals have been felt for the last 2000 years, but even more so today. We will see more detail on this when we come to them in chapter four of *Revelation Unleashed*.

Every Eye Will See Him

*“Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him and **all peoples on earth will mourn** because of him. So shall it be! Amen.”* - Rev.1:7 (NIV)

Revelation 1:7 is the first verse in Revelation which describes partially the Rapture event to be fulfilled later at the sixth seal. We know this because the language of this verse, *“all peoples will mourn”*, matches what is occurs at the sixth seal where everyone is crying out and mourning. There are very few passages in the bible, that show **all the people of earth** crying out and mourning at his appearing, so it is a simple task to put them all together and see how they are speaking of the same event. Though some recent teachings have told us this verse connects with Revelation, chapter 19, we will see why that can't be the case. *“Even those who pierced him”* denotes this will be a supernatural event where Jesus allows even those in Hell to see his coming, supernaturally.

Chapter one in Revelation is only an introduction to

the message of Revelation as told to John by Jesus. The chronology of the end-time events doesn't start until the numerical seals, and especially the sixth seal which begins the last seven year tribulation period.

The term "Rapture", which we will be using quite a bit, is derived from the Latin word, "raptu," which means to be **caught up or gathered**. In the original Greek translation of the Bible, the word used is, "harpazo," which means, "to be carried off or snatched away." This concept is found in passages such as, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 which reads:

*"The Lord himself will come down from heaven with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. And those who have died believing in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive **will be gathered up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air**. And we will be with the Lord forever."*

Matthew 24:30-31 also reads:

*"At that time, the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky. **Then all the peoples of the world will cry**. They will see the Son of Man **coming on clouds** in the sky with great power and glory. **He will use a loud trumpet to send his angels all around the earth, and they will gather his chosen people from every part of the world.**"*

The language of these scriptures also matches other scripture in Revelation, as we will study in more detail.

The charge against some pre-tribbers, and partially correct, is that they have not had a specific scripture passage they can point to, that *clearly* shows without squeezing and adding it in, where in the sequence of Revelatory events that the Rapture event occurs.

However, many more camps of belief are now realizing that the Rapture occurs at the sixth seal, because it is easy to see that it is described there. But what many still do not realize is, it still remains a

pre-tribulation Rapture even at the sixth seal. This is because the sixth seal is where the last great tribulation period begins, not beforehand and the people of the earth actually proclaim that God's first day of wrath has arrived there.

Unfortunately, some have taken to placing the Rapture event to passages where it does not belong, such as in chapter 4 in Revelation, and blindly assuming the great tribulation starts at the 1st seal. This is an easy mistake made by some, including even myself for a time. We will look at this more closely when we come to it and see why the Rapture is at the sixth seal, but still with the surprise of a thief as well.

Another huge misconception about the Rapture is that it will be a **secret event**. Nothing could be further from the truth. It will be one of the most public, out in the open events of all time. Of course, it will come as a huge surprise to everyone, even perhaps, to those Raptured. However, it will not be a secret. Scriptures proclaim that every eye will see him at the Rapture event, along with people crying out and mourning, but not at his physical second coming in Revelation, chapter 19. Though this is "traditional" teaching, it is not a hundred percent scriptural and we will see why.

Matching like kind scripture is something we need to do. It is the duty of Christians to be students of the word, to rightly divide and rightly put together similar scriptures when we find them. When we find similar language in other prophetic passages that match, we will put them together to form a more complete picture, with Revelation getting the final word, because it is the final master plan, put in a numerical and chronological order.

We cannot get a true chronology of end-time events by looking at any one prophetic book or scriptures from the Bible except from the book of Revelation. All we need to do is plug other previous prophecies into Revelation. Then, and only then, will we see things more clearly.

Another common mistake that some make is when Rapture

verses like Revelation 1:7, is confused with the second phase of the second coming as described in Revelation, chapter 19. If we don't separate these two events correctly, we will not have a right understanding of the overall, end-time events chronology.

Rapture Vs. Second Coming

Separating Rapture scriptures from second coming scriptures is a simple task when you know what sets them apart. First, we need to remember that the Rapture is when Jesus takes *His bride out* of the world **before** the last great tribulation begins. The second coming is when Jesus comes back to earth *with his bride* on white horseback to destroy the Antichrist and his army at the "Battle of Armageddon." We can think of the Rapture as the first phase or the beginning of the second coming of Jesus, and the Battle of Armageddon as the second phase of the His second coming. The Rapture, however, is really the most important part of his second coming because it sets off the entire last seven years.

Revelation 1:7, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, and Matthew 24:29-31, along with others, describe the Rapture of the church in one form or another. In these scriptures, we see descriptions of angels, clouds and mourning and crying out by people. However, Revelation 19, for example, describes the second coming of Jesus at the "Battle of Armageddon", which does not show any mourning, angels or clouds. It only describes armies, battle cries, war, and defeat of the wicked.

The Rapture scriptures do not contain **any warlike language, whatsoever**. Instead, Rapture scriptures describe the snatching away of a large group of people from the face of the earth, who are collected with the help of angels. In addition, there are no angels described at the second coming in Revelation 19, only the army of heaven on white horses, and these are saints, not angels.

For instance, we saw in Matthew 24:30-31, how Jesus has His

angels collect His ready elect into the clouds at the Rapture. Some will identify this as the final phase of His second coming for the Battle of Armageddon. However, this portion of Matthew 24 *only describes the Rapture event.*

Just because Matthew included this collecting of the elect by angels along with other events which occur at other various times during the last seven years, does not mean they are all one and the same. Not understanding this correctly leaves holes and questions, which is one reason why the pre-tribulation doctrine has come under more scrutiny lately. Some, including myself for a time, have looked to Matthew chapter 24 and Luke 21 for a **definite order** of end-time events, not realizing that Jesus did not give a definite order in those chapters. Instead, He left that for Revelation to accomplish. In fact, Jesus skipped around quite a bit in both Matthew 24 & Luke 21.

In addition, we should realize there is different language or description given to the Jews in Matthew 24, as opposed to that given in Luke 21, which is for non-Jews, otherwise known as Gentiles. In Matthew 24, Jesus was speaking to the Jews about the Rapture event and some other surrounding events. He describes the Rapture event to them in verse 29-31, along with other end-time events, such as the desecration of the temple by the Antichrist, which he mentions before the Rapture event. However, he does not mention that some can escape it, the way he does for the Gentiles audience of Luke 21:28-36.

This is because most Jews will not be ready to go at the Rapture event, but instead will see it as a sign only. If you only see the Rapture event as a sign and are not part of it, it means that you have missed it. Today, out of 13 million Jews, only approximately three to four percent are Messianic (those who believe in Jesus as their Savior.) Therefore, most of the world and the Jews will see the Rapture event as an end-time sign only, since they will not be ready for it. However, as we know, the Rapture is only the beginning of the end. But, most of the Jews will have to go through the entire great tribulation period, see the

desecration of the temple and have to endure to the very end. This is also known as “Jacob’s trouble” for the Jews prophesied by Jeremiah in Jeremiah 30:7.

The “Trumpet Blower”

*“On the Lord’s day I was in the Spirit, and **I heard a loud voice behind me that sounded like a trumpet.** The voice said, “Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.” – Rev 1:10-11*

Another important distinction that we will look at in more detail is the proper understanding of the various trumpets described in scripture. In the line of Revelation’s events, we read of different times when trumpets are blown and by whom they are blown. Why is identifying these trumpets properly so important? If we confuse when and who blows certain trumpets, we can misplace other prophetic scriptures that include trumpets as well.

We can see here in Revelation 1:10-11, how Jesus can do three things at once as described in 1 Thess. 4:16&17, which is also a partial description of the Rapture event as we just saw, ***“The Lord himself will come down from heaven (1.)with a loud command, (2.)with the voice of the archangel, and (3.)with the trumpet call of God. And those who have died believing in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive will be gathered up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And we will be with the Lord forever”.***

He can do three things at once because he has the voice that sounds like a trumpet as John heard on the Isle of Patmos.

This passage also connects with Matthew 24:29-31, Revelation 1:7, and 1 Corinthians 15:52. These all connect with descriptions at the sixth seal where they are fulfilled in the order of end-time events.

1 Corinthians 15:52 reads:

*“It will take only a second—as quickly as an eye blinks—**when the last trumpet sounds.** The trumpet will sound, and those who have died will be raised to live forever, and we will all be changed.”*

This is sometimes confused with the seventh angel trumpet of Revelation because people doing a quick read of Revelation assume there are no other trumpets being blown during the tribulation. However, other passages, including the Old Testament, describe even more trumpets. In chapter five of *Revelation Unleashed*, we will see why this “last trumpet” of 1 Corinthians 15:52 is a unique trumpet from all others before it and after it, and why it is described as a last trumpet.

The Simplicity of Symbolism

*“I turned to see who was talking to me. When I turned, I saw **seven golden lampstands** and someone among the lampstands who was “like a Son of Man.” He was dressed in a long robe and had a gold band around his chest. His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like flames of fire. His feet were like bronze that glows hot in a furnace, and his voice was like the noise of flooding water. **He held seven stars in his right hand**, and a sharp double-edged sword came out of his mouth. He looked like the sun shining at its brightest time.”*

—Rev 1:12-16

We need to address the symbols in Revelation, for certainly there are some, but the whole of Revelation is not to be understood merely as symbolic or allegorical, if it were, it would be meaningless. **Immediately** after this verse we see what the symbols mean, as Jesus himself tells us in verse 20:

*“Here is the secret of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and the seven golden lampstands: **The seven lampstands***

are the seven churches, and the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches.”

This is a great example of what we see later on in Revelation as well, where Jesus gives us symbols, but most of the time they are explained in the next passage. No guessing needed!

For instance, I have heard some say the angels of the seven churches represent the pastors of these churches. However, when Jesus says they are angels, we must take it literally, otherwise we will be inserting our own interpretations which we can't do.

We see many times in scripture where angels are taking care of things behind the scenes, such as, spiritual warfare. We especially see this in Daniel, as well as many other passages and events. There are sometimes situations when we don't see clear explanations. In these cases, it is okay to make some connections, but we cannot be dogmatic if it is not plainly stated.

However, we should be able to use some plain common sense. In fact, the riders of the horses, which we will discuss in more detail, could be angels or spirits of some kind. Traditional teaching has wrongly insisted that the rider on the white horse has to be the Antichrist without any scriptural proof. With common sense, we can see that the scenario of the riders appears to have more of a spiritual nature rather than a human nature.

People who choose where they are going to be literal, are on shaky ground, because they end up with an inaccurate, overall view of the truth. The fact is, all previous prophecy that has already been fulfilled, such as with Jesus life and death, came true *literally* and exactly down to even the smallest details. We see this in his birthplace, the number of lashings (stripes) he would receive, to the way he would be beaten so severely that he would not even be recognizable as a man, and much more.

If all previous prophecy has come true literally, and it has, then we have every reason to expect all future prophecy to all come true

exactly as it says. Jesus' life and death was not allegorical or symbolic, it was literal. Are there some symbols in the bible? Of course there are, and many such are in Revelation. But many times men seek to minimize the literal truth of God's word, so they don't have to be responsible for its plain truth. Many today have concocted their own doctrines and belief systems that resemble some biblical truth, but few adhere to all of it.

More Faith

Positions that take **more faith** to believe in, such as the pre-tribulation Rapture, have come under heavy criticism lately, even from within the church. It takes more faith to wait for what the Bible describes as the "blessed hope," when we are told it will happen without knowing the day or the hour. Besides knowing the many signs Jesus said would signal His soon return, there is not **one particular** sign that will alert us to the day or hour.

Instead we still must wait on God the Father's timing. It should be enough for us to read and believe the scripture which shows some will escape before God's wrath begins such as Rev.3:10, Luke 21:36 and others. However, this requires faith and trust that God will do what he said he will. Even detractors of the pre-tribulation Rapture have a tough time dealing with these two verses because they clearly show some people are escaping God's wrath early.

Rev. 3:10: *"You have obeyed my teaching about not giving up your faith. So I will **keep you from** the time of trouble that will come to the whole world to test those who live on earth."*

Luke 21:36: *"So be ready all the time. Pray that you will be strong enough **to escape all these things** that will happen and that you will be able to stand before the Son of Man."*

Those who believe that all Saints must go through some or all of the tribulation do not need to have as much faith. Instead of looking

for Jesus first, they wait for the more obvious signs of the trumpet or bowl judgments and or, even the Antichrist himself. But, this was not the posture of the early church, which was to look for Jesus only. This takes more faith, because He said none would know the day or the hour, so be ready all the time.

Once the Rapture occurs, it is a much easier task to figure out the timing of the Second Coming described in Revelation, chapter 19. It is simply three and a half years after the Antichrist desecrates the temple and can even be figured out to the exact day by anyone.

It will require little or no faith to believe at this point, and, in fact, the enemies of God will plan on fighting the Lord God himself at Armageddon, *knowing* that he is coming to fight them. They think they will be able to defeat God because of the temporary miracles he will allow them to perform.

So then, with maximum faith, come maximum rewards, as with other faith positions such as, healing and other gifts. If you believe in a pre-tribulation Rapture, you most likely will be ready to escape the coming wrath of God. You will be keeping your spiritual clothes clean, if you are praying to be strong enough spiritually, as Luke 21:36 tells us.

However, if you believe we are not close to His return because the Antichrist has not desecrated the temple yet, then you may not be ready when Jesus raptures his ready followers. If you are looking for signs like these, you may become like the scoffers who say, "Where is he?" Those left behind will have to endure all the wrath of God to the end of the tribulation in order to be saved; they will not be protected from it. In the next chapter we will be looking at the all important Revelatory letters from Jesus to us.

Chapter 2: The Letters to the Churches

Revelation Chapters 2 & 3

Church Ages?

Only ruins remain of the seven original churches of Asia, a region that is now modern day Turkey. These were literal churches but were not the only churches at that time. The message of these letters was not only for these seven in Asia but also for every church that ever was and will be.

The “church age” theory holds that the church world-wide has gone through different phases over the centuries in a way that resembles each of these seven churches. Those who believe this say we are now in the “Laodicean” church age, citing that the church today is rich and lukewarm. But, this is only mainly true for the American church, not for the rest of the world.

If we are living in the age of Laodicea now, then this would mean all churches worldwide are lukewarm today, which obviously is not the case. Take for instance, the church in Africa or Asia. They are poor, persecuted and far from lukewarm. When this is presented to church-age theorists, they respond, "Well, it's the predominant characteristic, not the rule." But, if this was the case, then that would mean there was also an age when most churches were poor, which is conceivable. However, saying that most churches are rich today just isn't true. Only the

American church is rich. And, America's numbers don't represent the most, when you consider the exploding numbers of believers in the third world.

As a whole, the worldwide church is now and has been predominately poor far more than it has been rich. If one wants to break this down to say only the American church is the Laodicean church, this would be closer to being accurate. So these churches of Revelation represent church types and types of individuals of every church that was then, now, and in the future as we head toward the Rapture event.

Jesus told the church in Philadelphia, that he would keep them from the time of trouble that was coming to test the whole earth. We know this period as the last, great seven-year tribulation. Did Jesus know that the original Philadelphian church of Asia, would be long gone when he actually came back to gather his ready followers into the clouds to be with him?

Yes, of course, he did. This is one way we can know these are types of churches and types of individuals. If you and I are faithful to the Lord, we too, will be kept from the hour of trial that is coming. If he had come back in the first century, then the original church of Philadelphia would have been gathered along with the church of Smyrna(the poor church), and any others who were still persevering in the faith.

There are even churches today which have everything described in all seven letters going on at once. The problems these Revelatory churches had were the same problems found in the church throughout the centuries up to the present. Surely, Jesus is speaking to the church today through these letters written so long ago.

Jesus' Simple Message

While the book of Revelation completes all previous prophetic books, it also completes all previous teachings of the entire Bible. The letters to the churches in Revelation contain the final words of Jesus to the church of yesterday and to the church world-wide today.

Jesus makes a clear message regarding His expectation for the church, which is to simply overcome and beat sin, so we can be ready for his soon return. It really is no more complicated than this, but some in the church have made it more complicated than it needs to be.

Some have added to, and subtracted from, the simplicity of these letters and have cut out the heart of the message which is a message of constant repentance, even for the Christian. Some say Jesus did not really mean what he said in these letters as they do with other scriptures in the Bible, when they don't like the message. You will find that people like this make excuses for their sin instead of

trying to defeat it. They think they are finished works of Jesus even as they willingly wallow in unrepentant sin. They will make excuses for your sin too, if you let them.

Jesus' Finished Work

We hear the phrase more and more lately, “The finished work of Jesus.” But, what does this really mean, in light of scripture? Although Jesus’ work is finished on the cross, the book of Revelation chronicles even more work Jesus will do. Although His work for our redemption is finished for all time, our work is not.

Without repentance, there is no forgiveness of sin, so then repentance is the key for being right with God all the time. Since Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice for us, we need to apply that sin forgiving blood for salvation and whenever we sin, thereafter. We cannot just assume it is an automatic process, since we are to submit daily to his will.

Paul said in 1Cor. 9:27, that he crucified himself daily and he brought his “members” under subjection so that when he preached, he would not be disqualified from the prize of eternal life.

Sin is to be rare in the life of a Christian. If we sin, we need to repent. This is our daily work. His work on the cross is finished. Our work continues. In 1 John 2:1-2, John tells the church that the purpose for his letter was so

that they would not sin in the church. It reads: *“My dear children, I write this letter to you **so you will not sin.** **But if anyone does sin,** we have a helper in the presence of the Father—Jesus Christ, the One who does what is right. He died in our place to take away our sins, and not only our sins but the sins of all people.”*

Do we ever hear anyone speaking like this today from the pulpits of America? It rarely happens. Most beat around the bush, if they get to it at all. Unfortunately when a pastor preaches the topic of sin and holiness, they are harassed by members to the point of discouragement. It is a rare occurrence that anyone today reminds us of our sin and of the scriptural mandate for continual holiness which requires continual repentance if we sin. The word “if” reminds us we do not have to sin.

In Romans, chapters six through eight, Paul reminds us of what our past life of sin was like and how we were once a slave to it. Then in chapter eight, he tells that now, with and through the power of the Holy Spirit, we no longer need to be a slave to it, but instead can overcome it.

Not only can we beat sin it, but we are expected to, even if through much pain and suffering. If we stumble in our walk, we are to go back to Jesus and get clean again. This is the way we continue in the faith, and if we continue, then we will be continually cleansed by his blood. 1 John 1:7, states: *“But if we live in the light, as God is in the light,*

we can share fellowship with each other. Then the blood of Jesus, God's Son, cleanses us from every sin.”

Anyone who becomes lazy about living a blameless, holy life that we are expected to live, Paul says they believed for nothing. He says in 1 Corinthians 15:1-2, “*Now, brothers and sisters, I want you to remember the Good News I brought to you. You received this Good News and continue strong in it. **And you are being saved by it if you continue believing** what I told you. **If you do not, then you believed for nothing.**”*

John also wrote about “continuing” in the book of John, verse 15. If we continue to remain in Christ, he remains in us. There is clearly and active part that we must take even after salvation which is to submit our will daily to the Lord. Jesus tells the believers, in the Revelation letters, to hold onto their first love or their love would wax cold. It is obvious that not all Christians remain where they are supposed to. Our free will still can lead us the wrong way if we choose poorly.

Outline of the Letters

All seven letters share the same outline or pattern. Jesus starts and ends each letter by stating who He is along with His credentials, each with slightly different language. None can argue who it describes.

Each letter contains a compliment, a criticism or both. He warns each church of the punishment for not obeying and the reward for those who do. Each punishment is said in different ways, yet these are the same punishments for all who are lost.

The rewards listed in each letter are also stated with different variations. However, each who perseveres will receive the sum total of these rewards in full effect.

He ends each letter with, “*Whoever has ears let him hear...*” He is speaking to everyone, of course, since we all have ears. But, do we all have spiritual ears tuned into what he is telling us to do?

To the Church in Ephesus

*"Write this to the angel of the church in Ephesus: The One who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands says this: I know what you do, how you work hard and never give up. **I know you do not put up with the false teachings of evil people. You have tested those who say they are apostles but really are not, and you found they are liars.** You have patience and have suffered troubles for my name and have not given up." Rev 2:1-3*

Jesus says we should test those who say they are followers of Jesus to see if they are genuine. How many of

us do this today? Some say that would be judgmental to do this. We are not to judge the world, but we are to judge those in the church who say they are Christians but are not living as a Christian should, as was the practice of Paul and the other apostles.

Part of the problem today stems from the church's lack of teaching about sin and the carrying out of church discipline. The church, especially in America, many times looks like the world, and has not abandoned the ways of the flesh to walk in the new life. Some believe the only verse which speaks of judging is the one where Jesus said, "*Judge not lest ye be judged,*" not realizing he was speaking more about condemnation, than judging right from wrong. It is a Christian's duty to judge what is going on in the church otherwise it will become a messy free-for-all, as we can already see it has in some places.

However, this "judging," should not include condemnation and needs to be based in love. Galatians 6:1 says, "*You who are spiritual should go to that person and gently make him right again.*" We are to be right with God ourselves if we are to do this work of restoration, yet it is to be done.

Also, 1 Corinthians 5:12-13 Paul says it very plainly: "*It is not my business to judge those who are not part of the church. God will judge them. **But you must judge** the people who are part of the church. The scripture says*

you must get rid of the evil people among you.” You can’t deny from this scripture that there is a place for judging and is consistent with the message of Jesus to the churches here in Revelation.

Jesus has a rebuke for Ephesus in verse four:

*"But I have this against you: You have left the love you had in the beginning. So remember where you were before you fell. Change your hearts and do what you did at first. **If you do not change, I will come to you and will take away your lampstand from its place.** But there is something you do that is right: **You hate what the Nicolaitans do, as much as I.**" Rev 2:4-6*

The Nicolaitans were a Pharisaical sect that believed you could still partake in unrepentant sin and still make it to heaven. Jesus hated this teaching then, as he still does today. In this first letter, Jesus himself will take from them their destiny in the kingdom, if they do not heed the message. Removing the “lampstand” is not simply closing up the doors of the church. He is not referring to a physical building. This refers to Jesus removing the Spirit from these churches along with His anointing. Many churches operate fully today, but God is not there.

He ends this letter with a description of His reward to those who win the victory:

"Every person who has ears should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches. To those who win the

victory I will give the right to eat the fruit from the tree of life, which is in the garden of God.” Rev 2:7

The tree of life is for all Christians, of course, not just the faithful of Ephesus. What is this victory and how is it done? We know that the victory over sin was won on the cross. But, it is our role to listen to the Spirit of God so we can obey, change, and overcome sin as we continue in the faith.

To the Church in Smyrna

*“Write this to the angel of the church in Smyrna: “The One who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again, says this: I know your troubles and **that you are poor, but really you are rich!** I know the bad things some people say about you. **They say they are Jews, but they are not true Jews.** They are a synagogue that belongs to Satan. Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer for ten days. But be faithful, even if you have to die, **and I will give you the crown of life.**”*

“Everyone who has ears should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches. Those who win the victory will not be hurt by the second death.” Rev 2:8-11

This is one of two letters where Jesus has no

criticism for anyone in the church. They are poor as far as earthly standards go, but not as far as Jesus is concerned. To him they are rich spiritually and, of course, this does not mean that just because someone is poor they are automatically rich spiritually. However, to those who do not have the distraction of riches to take them away from their faith, it is easier to come to faith and once there, to remain. In addition to persecution, this may be why the church in Africa and Asia is so on fire for God.

What does this church of Smyrna receive as their reward for being faithful? Each reward listed in each of these letters and the crown of life which is described here specifically. But, we also know they will be able to eat fruit from the tree of life along with all Christians in heaven.

To the Church in Pergamum

"Write this to the angel of the church in Pergamum: "The One who has the sharp, double-edged sword says this: I know where you live. It is where Satan has his throne. But you are true to me. You did not refuse to tell about your faith in me even during the time of Antipas, my faithful witness who was killed in your city, where Satan lives.

*"But I have a few things against you: **You have some there who follow the teaching of Balaam.** He*

*taught Balak how to cause the people of Israel to sin by eating food offered to idols and by taking part in sexual sins. **You also have some who follow the teaching of the Nicolaitans.** So change your hearts and lives. If you do not, I will come to you quickly and fight against them with the sword that comes out of my mouth.” Rev 12-16*

Jesus holds the faithful ones responsible for those who are following false teachings and beliefs. This is more proof, we cannot sit idly by while others espouse teachings that contradict scripture.

"Everyone who has ears should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.

"I will give some of the hidden manna to everyone who wins the victory. I will also give to each one who wins the victory a white stone with a new name written on it. No one knows this new name except the one who receives it.” Rev 2:17

This is another reward for those who are doing the right thing. We can add these rewards together with the others, because all true Christians get them all, if we continue in the faith.

To the Church in Thyatira

"Write this to the angel of the church in Thyatira:

"The Son of God, who has eyes that blaze like fire and feet like shining bronze, says this: I know what you do. I know about your love, your faith, your service, and your patience. I know that you are doing more now than you did at first.

"But I have this against you: You let that woman Jezebel spread false teachings. She says she is a prophetess, but by her teaching she leads my people to take part in sexual sins and to eat food that is offered to idols. I have given her time to change her heart and turn away from her sin, but she does not want to change. So I will throw her on a bed of suffering. And all those who take part in adultery with her will suffer greatly if they do not turn away from the wrongs she does. I will also kill her followers. Then all the churches will know I am the One who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you for what you have done." Rev.

2:18-23

Again, see how Jesus holds those who allow false teaching to be responsible for it, even if they themselves are not teaching it. "You let that women Jezebel," refers to this. Also, we see how this woman Jezebel does not want to change. Jezebel is not a real person in our church today, but there are types of Jezebels with her spirit of rebellion working through them. One mission of this spirit is to control and water down pure scriptural teaching.

It may be difficult to believe that these types of things can go on in a church, but recent news, especially, has shown this type of influence at the base of church scandals. Many of these situations have happened in American churches causing church splits and disillusion.

*"But others of you in Thyatira have not followed her teaching and have not learned what some call Satan's deep secrets. I say to you that I will not put any other load on you. **Only continue in your loyalty until I come.***

***"I will give power over the nations to everyone who wins the victory and continues to be obedient to me until the end. 'You will rule over them with an iron rod, as when pottery is broken into pieces.'** Psalm 2:9 This is the same power I received from my Father. I will also give him the morning star. Everyone who has ears should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches."* Rev 2:24-29

For those who continue in the faith and stay strong through whatever and whenever their end is, they will get to rule over the nations. This refers to when Jesus reigns on earth for a thousand years after the great tribulation followed by the Battle of Armageddon. Again, all Christians who are ready for his soon return will get this reward, as well as all the other rewards previously mentioned by Jesus.

To the Church in Sardis

*"Write this to the angel of the church in Sardis: "The One who has the seven spirits and the seven stars says this: **I know what you do. People say that you are alive, but really you are dead. Wake up! Strengthen what you have left before it dies completely.** I have found that what you are doing is less than what my God wants. So do not forget what you have received and heard. Obey it, and change your hearts and lives. **So you must wake up, or I will come like a thief, and you will not know when I will come to you.**" Rev 3:1-3*

There are many churches today, which appear to be lively, such as with their music or other church programs, yet they are just going through the motions of Godliness without the separation from sin, which is required by Jesus. If they do not change, they will be left behind at the first phase of Jesus second coming. Jesus will come as a thief to all who are not expecting him, especially to those who proclaim Jesus as their head, but live another way in private. Jesus calls these who live like this, liars and hypocrites.

"But you have a few there in Sardis who have kept their clothes unstained, so they will walk with me and will wear white clothes, because they are

worthy. Those who win the victory will be dressed in white clothes like them. And I will not erase their names from the book of life, but I will say they belong to me before my Father and before his angels. Everyone who has ears should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.” Rev 3:4-6

Perhaps the most important part of all these letters is here in the letter to Sardis. Jesus is extremely clear that the possibility of name erasure from the book of life can be a reality, if one continues in unrepentant sin. However, this is not the only passage in the Bible that proclaims this principle. In fact, Ex. 32:33 also talks about this erasure when many had their names erased from the book of life, even though Moses pleaded with God for them. Some, who look to soften this message today, may be left behind as well. It is unfortunate how many pastors overlook unrepentant sin and fail to recognize the seriousness of this prophecy.

Another important aspect of this letter is regarding, “*the few who have not stained their clothes.*” These that Jesus refers to, are people who were at one time, given these spiritual clothes and they were saved. It is common sense to see that, at birth, our spiritual clothes were already stained because of Adam and the original sin we inherited from him. So here, the only way these unstained clothes were in their possession was because they were given to

them by Jesus alone. In this passage, the clothes kept “unstained” refer to maintaining of holiness after salvation.

Some wonder, “Is it actually possible to be this perfect?” Some in the church would have us think not, but this scripture implies it to be not only possible, but expected, so the answer is, yes.

How do we do this? This spiritual clothing is not physical clothing. However, the principles we use in the physical realm can apply to the spiritual. What do we do when we get our earthly clothes stained? We launder them, naturally. We need to do the same for our souls, if they once again become stained by sin. We need to go to Jesus who is our "laundry soap," among many other things.

To the Church in Philadelphia

*"Write this to the angel of the church in Philadelphia: "This is what the One who is holy and true, who holds the key of David, says. When he opens a door, no one can close it. And when he closes it, no one can open it. I know what you do. I have put an open door before you, which no one can close. I know you have little strength, but you have obeyed my teaching and were not afraid to speak my name. **Those in the synagogue that belongs to Satan say they are Jews, but they are not true Jews; they are liars. I will make them***

come before you and bow at your feet, and they will know that I have loved you. You have obeyed my teaching about not giving up your faith. So I will keep you from the time of trouble that will come to the whole world to test those who live on earth.

"I am coming soon. Continue strong in your faith so no one will take away your crown. I will make those who win the victory pillars in the temple of my God, and they will never have to leave it. I will write on them the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, that comes down out of heaven from my God. I will also write on them my new name. Everyone who has ears should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches." Rev 3:7-13

This is the other church that Jesus has no criticism for like in the poor church of Smyrna. These people were and are the ones today that are not ashamed of the Gospel, like fakes are. Notice Jesus again calls some in the church liars. This is strong language, indeed. There are many today who call themselves Christians, but live another way. You may have been like this yourself at one time, as I was. Jesus says of these, they are liars and they will have to answer for it, if they don't change. However, Jesus says to those who continue strong in the faith and overcome their sin, they will not have their crown taken away, or in other words, will not have their name erased from the book of

life.

If our crowns could not be taken away, as some claim they can't, then Jesus would not have mentioned it here. We also know Satan is always looking to do just that... to kill, steal and destroy our souls. If all he could do was affect our earthly possessions, then these scriptures that speak of what he can do, and already has done to some spiritually, would be meaningless. We also have a role in protecting what we have been given and a responsibility in sharing the same, with as many as possible.

1 Peter 5:8 says: *“Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”* If he can devour you, this is speaking about spiritually, because obviously no one has ever been physically eaten by Satan.

To the Church in Laodicea

“Write this to the angel of the church in Laodicea: The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of all God has made, says this: I know what you do, that you are not hot or cold. I wish that you were hot or cold! But because you are lukewarm—neither hot, nor cold—I am ready to spit you out of my mouth.” Rev 3:14-16

I have heard some that do not take this letter seriously saying that the “spitting” out of the mouth is not

that serious, it's really just a tongue lashing. Others say Jesus was referring to the water that flowed into the city that was lukewarm, as if that is what matters here.

If they faced the truth of this letter, they too would have to change, for most people that say this about what this scripture says plainly, are likely part of this church themselves, only looking to defend the status quo. We, here in America, truly are in need of nothing in comparison to much of the world and we have become lukewarm and indifferent to many things about God that we should not.

We would rather twist scripture than to admit this may be talking about us. Certainly, this letter describes the state of the American church today, as a whole. We live in a country where even the so-called, "poor," among us, are rich compared to the poorest in the world.

"You say, 'I am rich, and I have become wealthy and do not need anything.' But you do not know that you are really miserable, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked. I advise you to buy from me gold made pure in fire so you can be truly rich. Buy from me white clothes so you can be clothed and so you can cover your shameful nakedness. Buy from me medicine to put on your eyes so you can truly see." Rev 3:17-18

Jesus plainly says those who are rich with worldly wealth are the ones who are the most spiritually poor, because they do not think they have to depend on God for

anything. Notice how he says they are just the opposite of what they think. Then he tells them what they must do to change their standing with him spiritually. They must “buy white clothes.”

This is a significant command, because they obviously are calling themselves Christians, but are not living blameless and holy. If they were, he would have not mentioned the white clothes, which signify purity, repentance and right living. This passage also tells us we can have white clothes now, we do not have to wait for heaven to get them.

Some in the church claim we cannot have white clothing now, because we are not perfect yet. Nevertheless, this passage here and many more that speak about how we are supposed to live holy lives and be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect.

Jesus told the woman caught in adultery to go and sin no more as he forgave her sins. Did Jesus tell her to do something that was impossible? If so, it would have been a cruel request. He did not just tell this woman this, he told everyone this, in one form or another, and he is telling you and me, the same thing today through these letters.

*"I correct and punish those whom I love. **So be eager to do right, and change your hearts and lives.** Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and eat*

with you, and you will eat with me.” Rev 3:19-20

Why did Jesus tell already supposed Christians, that they needed to change if repentance was not to be a constant in the life of a Christian? Why would Jesus need to stand at the door and knock and tell them to listen to his voice if they were all right with him? Why would Jesus ask Christians to open the door and let him in? Did they not already do that once? Jesus is asking here for a relationship with them that they did not have, or if they had it, they lost it.

We, today, in the American church of Laodicea, are in just as much danger of losing what we think we have, if we do not change as well. So, what is needed here? We need to return back to God in America and we need to do it now. As individuals, if we have fallen or are falling away, we need to recapture the same zeal of the Lord we had when we were first saved. If we are falling back into bad habits like the ones, we stopped doing when we became Christians, we need to repent and take on the humbleness of a real Christian.

We need to once again adopt all the following, as a constant: Humbleness, love, repentant spirit, listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit who tells us what right and what is wrong. If we do this, then we are continuing in the faith and will be eternally secure. If we do not continue, then there are no spiritual guarantees on a wrong path since you

don't know what it will lead you to do. If we do the right thing and continue, we will reap the rewards promised in these letters.

"Those who win the victory will sit with me on my throne in the same way that I won the victory and sat down with my Father on his throne. Everyone who has ears should listen to what the Spirit says to the churches."

Rev 3:21-22

The message is for everyone, as it says here, to **all** the churches. However, why should we care about the letter to the poor church, for instance, if we are not part of that church? Because all scripture is useful for teaching and rebuke, as 2 Timothy 3:16 tells us: *"All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for showing people what is wrong in their lives, for correcting faults, and for teaching how to live right."*

It may be that you can learn from the negative elements found in each of these seven churches.

A Message for All

What is the heart of the message in these letters, for all, and especially for those who profess faith in Christ Jesus? It can't be any clearer that it is a message of holiness, which is being set apart, persevering in the faith, and loving God instead of the world. Hebrews 2:1-3 says: ***"So we must be more careful to follow what we***

were taught. Then we will not stray away from the truth. The teaching God spoke through angels was shown to be true, and anyone who did not follow it or obey it received the punishment that was earned. So surely we also will be punished if we ignore this great salvation.”

For some of us, it may take a lifetime to realize we can't do anything apart from accepting Jesus and our Lord and Savior for our salvation. If we accept the Lord, we are born of the Spirit. But, after this, we do have a role in our growth in the faith and protecting it after this initial born again experience.

Anyone who strays from the truth is in danger, the same way an animal may stray from the protection of the pack and be picked off by the enemy. If we stay with Jesus and all his teachings, we will not ultimately fall away, though we may stumble at times. The key to right living then, is minimizing these times we stumble and ***if we do stumble*** (1 John 2:1), we have an advocate in Jesus who will forgive us an unlimited amount of times, ***if we need it.***

Some people like to change this word *if*, to *when*, but we are not allowed to do that, for sin is supposed to be rare in the life of a Christian. It is God's will that we go and sin no more, especially now that we have the Holy Spirit as our guide. We do not all have to wallow in the vomit of our past

sin, if we stay focused on Jesus alone.

This does not mean we are free to sin without any recompense and if we do sin, there is still punishment for that sin, especially in this life, as some of us are experiencing even now. There are some in the church today who say a Christian does not need to repent of future sin after their initial Salvation, but as we have just seen in these letters, that is a dangerous false teaching that we get from modern day Nicolaitans and Pharisees.

The way to avoid punishment in the next life is simply to stay in Christ, and continue in the faith by never looking behind us, but only what is ahead as Philippians 3:13-21 tells us:

*“Brothers and sisters, I know that I have not yet reached that goal, **but there is one thing I always do. Forgetting the past and straining toward what is ahead, I keep trying to reach the goal and get the prize for which God called me through Christ to the life above.***

“All of us who are spiritually mature should think this way, too. And if there are things you do not agree with, God will make them clear to you. But we should continue following the truth we already have.”

“Brothers and sisters, all of you should try to follow my example and to copy those who live the way we showed you. Many people live like enemies of the cross of

*Christ. I have often told you about them, and it makes me cry to tell you about them now. In the end, they will be destroyed. They do whatever their bodies want, they are proud of their shameful acts, **and they think only about earthly things. But our homeland is in heaven**, and we are waiting for our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, to come from heaven. By his power to rule all things, he will change our humble bodies and make them like his own glorious body.”*

There are many other passages in the bible that speak of some who **were in the faith once** and then wandered away from it and were lost. Therefore, the message of continuing and repenting, if needed, is not only reinforced here in the Revelatory letters. We also find this teaching in other passages like these:

Ex. 32:33, John 15:6, 1 Cor. 9:27, 1 Cor 11:27-32, 1 Cor 15:1-2, Phil 2:12, Col:2:6-8, 1 Tim1:18-20, 1 Tim 4:16, 1 Tim 6:10&20, Hebrews 2:1-4, Heb 6:4, Heb.10:26&39, Heb: 12:14, James 5:19, 2 Peter 2:20, 1 John 1:6, 2:24, 3:6, Rev. 2:4, 16, 21, 3:2&3, 11, 16.

Chapter 3: God is in Control of Everything!

Revelation Chapters 4 & 5

“Lightning flashes and noises and thunder came from the throne. Before the throne seven lamps were burning, which are the seven spirits of God. Also before the throne there was something that looked like a sea of glass, clear like crystal.

“In the center and around the throne were four living creatures with eyes all over them, in front and in back. The first living creature was like a lion. The second was like a calf. The third had a face like a man. The fourth was like a flying eagle. Each of these four living creatures had six wings and was covered all over with eyes, inside and out. Day and night they never stop saying: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. He was, he is, and he is coming’

“These living creatures give glory, honor, and thanks to the One who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever. Then the twenty-four elders bow down before the One who sits on the throne, and they worship him who lives forever and ever. They put their crowns down before the throne and say: ‘You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, because you made all things. Everything existed and was made, because you wanted it.’”

Rev 4:5-11

In these next two chapters we see the Living God who has been in complete control of everything from the beginning of time and will remain in control forever. He is the God of Israel, the same God who made everything and allowed all men, not just Jews, the ability to access his throne and eternity, through his son Jesus. His name is the only name that saves.

All other gods are simply a product of someone’s vain imagination. There is no god anywhere like our God. None of these

other gods can do anything for anyone, because they do not even exist in the first place. Even the so-called, “prophets” that some of other religions follow, remain dead in the grave, unlike Jesus. He has risen and lives among us with all power and authority from heaven.

Vision Continued

When the books of the Bible were originally written, there were no chapters or verses. Each book was written without any breaks from beginning to the end. These chapters and verses were added later for convenience in the year 1277, by a gentleman named Stephen Langton. Langton was a professor at the University of Paris and later he became the Archbishop of Canterbury. Naturally, it would be a difficult task to find things in the Bible without this modification.

Why is this important to know? Although helpful, there are times when these chapter and verse assignments causes content to be cut off from the original flow of the writer. We need to remember this, especially when we come to chapters six and seven of Revelation, but it is also important here in chapter four of Revelation.

In the beginning of chapter four, John is seeing heaven. We were told in chapter one that John was “*in the spirit on the Lords day*”, and he is still in the spirit here, as he is throughout the rest of the book. When we left off last, John was writing the letters to the seven churches in Asia, as Jesus instructed. This entire episode of Revelation was given to John as one big vision which included the seven letters. So, here in chapter four, we simply are given the continuation of this same vision. John’s vision started on the Isle of Patmos, where he first sees Jesus behind him. Now in chapter four, he is being moved up to heaven to see what is going on there both in his day and in the future.

Rapture?

*“After the vision of these things I looked, and there before me was an open door in heaven. And the same voice that spoke to me before, that sounded like a trumpet, said, **“Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after this.”**” Rev 4:1*

Jesus is only speaking to John here. One position is that this chapter and verse describes the occurrence of the Rapture event. Those who hold this opinion have added something that is not here, which is an entire group of people, i.e. the Church. When Jesus says, **“come up here,”** they wrongly infer he is talking to a group of people. We must interpret this literally and not add things that are not here. Since they believe the first seal, found in the next chapter of Revelation, is the start of the great tribulation, they feel a need to force fit the Rapture here at chapter 4. It is true, the Rapture does happen before the great tribulation, but there is no valid description of a Rapture event here at all. There is, however, a place in Revelation where the rapture is indeed described, and still it is before the great tribulation, but it is not here.

Let us break it down further as to why this verse only describes John’s experience and is not a reference to a group that was just Raptured:

First, John says here in chapter four, that after the vision of the letters, he was before an open door in heaven. When Jesus says, “Come up here,” the vision is simply continuing for John, but now in the setting of heaven. He gives us a picture of the Glory of God in this part of the vision. We can understand this verse by looking at the context. The entire book is a vision, and John just was given a vision the letters to the churches, now he is getting a vision of heaven.

Second, some will say here that these **twenty-four elders** symbolize the church that was Raptured, but there is no proof of this. *“Immediately I was in the Spirit, and before me was a throne in heaven, and someone was sitting on it. The One who sat on the throne looked like precious stones, like jasper and carnelian. All around the*

*throne was a rainbow the color of an emerald. **Around the throne there were twenty-four other thrones with twenty-four elders sitting on them. They were dressed in white and had golden crowns on their heads.***” Rev 4:2-4

Does the twenty-four represent a multitude? We cannot be dogmatic about an interpretation that says he was speaking about a group, because it's just not here. But, we can be dogmatic about what is literally in the passage. John saw twenty-four elders, plain and simple.

Remember we already saw some symbols in chapter one. Jesus told us what the symbols meant in the very next verses. If these twenty-four elders were a symbol of something else, we would have been told that here, or we could go to some specific verse elsewhere in the Bible that would shed more light on it. There isn't any, so we must accept these 24 elders as a literal exact number of people.

One interpretation is that the twenty-four is made up of the twelve apostles and twelve Old Testament prophets which they say could represent the church. Again, there is no scriptural proof of this, it's just guessing. We can't base a doctrine on guesses and speculation. Since there were more than twelve prophets, it doesn't fit. After all, who would you pick as the top twelve? When you figure it out, another comes along and disagrees. It would be anyone's guess, but not scripturally solid.

If they *are* a representation of the church, it still doesn't indicate that the church is there at this point anyway. Of course, we know Moses, Elijah, John the Baptist and other prophets who are in heaven already, would certainly qualify as being elders and representatives of the church. And, it just may be they are among these elders wearing white and placing their golden crowns before God, as will we all, when it is our turn to go through the gates of heaven. Still, there is no proof that these elders represent a larger mass of people here in this phase of the revelation to John.

Third, Jesus says, “*and I will show you what must happen*

after this.” Fair questions to ask here are, after what, and what will happen? The answer is literally, “after” what he just showed John, and “what” will happen next, is simply the rest of what is about to be shown him. This does not mean that “after this” is a referral by Jesus to events of the great seven year tribulation. The answer is in the context of the surrounding scriptures. There are no mysterious symbolisms to surmise, just commonsense.

The tribulation is marked by definite events and definite descriptions, unmistakable, and earth changing in an instant. There is easy to read proof and evidence without adding to it, that actually shows where the Rapture actually occurs in the sequence of Revelatory events, so there is no need to add it here.

Seven Spirits of God

*“Then I saw a Lamb standing in the center of the throne and in the middle of the four living creatures and the elders. **The Lamb looked as if he had been killed.** He had seven horns and seven eyes, **which are the seven spirits of God that were sent into all the world.**” Rev 4:6*

Perhaps you did not know there are seven spirits of God, not just one. Nevertheless, we see here there are seven. Some have thought that these seven spirits comprise the Holy Spirit. Do we know this for sure? No, but if they do, it is not a problem. If they don't, it is still not a problem. Since God is more complicated than what our human minds can comprehend, we need to accept its mystery much like with God being triune with the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit.

These seven spirits of God are sent into the world. We know that God's spirit is always at work convicting people of sin, but that is not all His Spirit is doing. We also know His Spirit can restrain evil (2 Thessalonian 2: 6-7), do miracles and many other things. Therefore, these seven spirits are simply doing God's will and they will make sure

it happens exactly as the Bible says it will.

Worthy is the Lamb!

*“The Lamb came and took the scroll from the right hand of the One sitting on the throne. When he took the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders bowed down before the Lamb. Each one of them had a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of God's holy people. And they all sang a new song to the Lamb: ‘**You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were killed, and with the blood of your death you bought people for God from every tribe, language, people, and nation. You made them to be a kingdom of priests for our God, and they will rule on the earth.**’*

“Then I looked, and I heard the voices of many angels around the throne, and the four living creatures, and the elders. There were thousands and thousands of angels, saying in a loud voice: ‘The Lamb who was killed is worthy to receive power, wealth, wisdom, and strength, honor, glory, and praise!’ Then I heard all creatures in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea saying: ‘To the One who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power forever and ever.’ The four living creatures said, ‘Amen,’ and the elders bowed down and worshiped.” Rev 4:6b-14

Jesus, the crucified Lamb of God, is getting the scrolls from his father, and then is worshipped as God as well. This worship is going on right now and has been, for at least, the last 2000 years since John saw this vision. We see Jesus is the only one worthy to open the scrolls. Chapter five of Revelation is where we see Jesus open the first seal which starts a definite order of events.

Up until this point, no definite order of events has begun. We will see very clearly in chapter six of Revelation when the Rapture actually does occur and when the great tribulation finally begins. We

will see that it is still a pre-tribulation and pre- God's wrath rapture of the church.

*Then I saw a scroll in the right hand of the One sitting on the throne. The scroll had writing on both sides and was kept closed with seven seals. And I saw a powerful angel calling in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?" But there was no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth who could open the scroll or look inside it. I cried bitterly because there was no one who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. But one of the elders said to me, "**Do not cry! The Lion from the tribe of Judah, David's descendant, has won the victory so that he is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.**"* Rev 5:1-5

He is able to open the scrolls because He has won the victory. The one on the throne gives His son, Jesus, the scrolls and seals to break. We are also told that he has **won the victory**. A fair question to ask is of which victory is he speaking? Since Jesus' victory of Revelation, chapter 19 has not been fulfilled yet, which victory is this here? This is obviously the victory over sin, which Jesus won at Calvary. In fact, we were already told several times in the Revelatory letters that Jesus had "*already won the victory,*" and were told we "*must overcome to win the victory.*"

We know, also, that Jesus wins the ultimate victory at the end of time, and we will too, **if we continue in the faith**. In our next chapter, we find another description of someone who is winning the victory today, and who will also win the victory in the future.

Chapter Five: The Rapture Revelation - Shock and

Awe

Revelation Chapter 6:12-17

*“I watched as he opened the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake. **The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red, and the stars in the sky fell to earth,** as figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind. **The heavens receded like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.***

*Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, **and everyone else,** both slave and free, hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. **They called to the mountains and the rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can withstand it?’**” Rev 6:12-17 (NIV)*

Along with the birth and resurrection of Jesus, this is one of the biggest events in all of scripture. We in much of Christendom have treated this passage as a mere bump in the road on the way to the second coming. But we can't miss this part of John's vision or we will totally miss what it truly represents. It is not symbolism and it is not a foreshadowing description of the second coming of Revelation 19. These will be actual events and this is the exact place where the rapture of the church occurs in the order of end-time events. We know this because of the following evidence.

The Rapture is the next thing to take place and will kick off the last great tribulation period. Most people have no clue this is about to happen because many are teaching that we have to wait for the antichrist to be identified before Jesus raptures the church. If this were true, it would negate what the scriptures teach about him coming as a

thief. For this same reason, the Rapture cannot occur in the middle or near the end of the tribulation, it would be too obvious and expected. Above all, scripture clearly shows that the Rapture occurs before each of those periods.

There are also some who believe that the Rapture is a completely secret event, and therefore it must happen before the first seal is broken. However, the evidences of each seal are already happening today, yet most people won't acknowledge them. We know that Jesus will come to get us with the surprise of a thief, and no one knows the day or the hour that this will occur. However, the Rapture will not be a secret, because scripture says everyone will see it occur in more than one passage.

The details to this are very important in Revelation 6:12-17. We will bring in previous passages of prophesy that get fulfilled here as well. This sixth seal is no blip on the screen; instead, it is a very detailed, massive event that makes for a day of shock, sadness, crying and unparalleled destruction that heretofore was not seen.

God's Wrath Begins!

There are at least two "great" days of the Lord found in scripture. The Rapture "Day of the Lord" is only the first "great day" of God's wrath. He doesn't completely annihilate the earth and all people at this point. This is only the start of the testing period known as the last great tribulation that will last approximately seven years. This "day of the Lord" brings about a punishment and testing period for missing the Rapture. However, He is merciful and will give all on the earth that are not killed, another chance to obey before the final judgment.

The second "great day" of God's wrath is at the second coming of Jesus in Chapter 19 when he comes to fight in the battle of Armageddon with the Raptured church. This will bring complete

annihilation of the Antichrist and his followers, and nearly everyone will be dead at this point.

It is extremely clear in Revelation 6, that this is the first day of God's unmistakable and more concentrated wrath being unleashed onto the world. How do we know this? The people of earth proclaim it themselves in verses 16 and 17. This Rapture of the church, followed by the first day wrath events, happens at the *beginning* of the last great seven-year tribulation, not the middle or the end of it.

Why do we say the sixth seal is a more "concentrated" wrath? We know we have been under God's wrath already, considering the chaos of sin that is allowed to rule the earth today. Unlike the wrath of the first five seals, the sixth seal will be more concentrated and dramatically noticeable everywhere, and will affect everyone. After this day, there will be no more normal life, and no more denying that God is in control.

Unmistakable Events, Unmistakably God

We see descriptions of God's wrath in Revelation 6 in Matthew 24 and Luke 21. Each matches the description of the sixth seal event and includes the signs that will lead up to it and those that will occur after it, such as the antichrist entering and desecrating temple.

World-Wide Earthquake

The first thing at the sixth seal we see is an earthquake. How big is this earthquake? The biggest one yet in the history of the world, "***and every mountain and island was removed from its place.***" The recent earthquakes that have been on the sharp increase in various places, are all leading towards this massive worldwide earthquake.

Red Moon

Secondly, we see that the sun grows dark and the moon red. Jesus also described this in Matt 24:29, "*Soon after the trouble of those days, **the sun will grow dark, and the moon will not give its light.** The stars will fall from the sky. And the powers of the heavens will be shaken.*" We also see this wording in Isaiah 13:10 and 34:4.

These happenings of the sixth seal have clearly not taken place yet. The sun growing dark obviously matches in both Matthew, and the sixth seal. But, what of the moon growing dark? Is growing dark the same as turning red, which the sixth seal specifically states? Does Matthew describe this same event, but with different wording? Yes, it does. For example, if you were to put a piece of red film over the white light of a flashlight, you would darken the brightness of the white light. The red moon can also be classified as growing darker.

Falling Stars

The rest of the passage in Matthew matches *almost* word for word. "*The stars fell from the sky to the earth,*" from the sixth seal scripture compares to "*the stars fell from the sky*" from Matthew. Are they the same thing? Of course, they are. However in this case, Revelation gives a bit more detail. It not only tells us that the stars fell from the sky, but also exactly where they fall. They fall to the earth!

It is the same thing with the moon. Not only does it grow dark in Matthew, but also we see at the sixth seal, it also grows red, showing that it is still being darkened, but with even more detail. This is the benefit of matching scripture together where the language and description fits into the set order of Revelation. We get a bigger and complete picture of the whole.

Sky Recedes

The sixth seal then says, "***The heavens receded like a scroll being rolled up.***" This is a huge and almost strange detail that you will hear few scholars ever try explain. We need to ask, why is

the sky being rolled up like a scroll and where else in scripture do we find this? In Isaiah 34:44: ***The sun, moon, and stars will dissolve, and the sky will be rolled up like a scroll. The stars will fall like dead leaves from a vine or dried-up figs from a fig tree.*** This passage needs to be matched with this passage in Revelation 6, since it clearly has the same language. Along with it, more detail about this event is gained.

2 Peter 3:10, also describes this and gives us more pieces of the puzzle: ***But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The skies will disappear with a loud noise. Everything in them will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be exposed.*** Another amazing detail Peter adds is he says that when the sky recedes; it will make a loud noise.

One reason the sky will be receded or rolled up may be to expose the earth, possibly for the remainder of the next seven years. The other is to allow the people of the earth to see Jesus in the sky clearly with no atmosphere to get in the way, since it is said that “every eye will see him.” We know from the scripture at the sixth seal, the people know it is the wrath of the Lamb, which means it is extremely likely that they all will see him for themselves.

The World Will Cry

Jesus partially described in Matthew 24:29-31 what we also see in the sixth seal:

At that time, the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky. Then all the peoples of the world will cry. They will see the Son of Man coming on clouds in the sky with great power and glory. He will use a loud trumpet to send his angels all around the earth, and they will gather his chosen people from every part of the world.

Where else in scripture do we see *all the people of earth* crying out or mourning? Only in one place.....at the sixth seal! Not at the

physical second coming of Revelation 19. This Matthew scripture is to be placed at the sixth seal event, not the Revelation 19 event. First, there are not many people left at that point. The people who are left on Earth at Revelation 19, after all the destruction of the sixth seal, trumpets and bowl judgments, will be significantly diminished.

Some that remain will be a very small number of Jews who were protected in the desert for the last 3-1/2 years. Zechariah 12:10 speaks of the Jews and matches with the events of Revelation 19: *"I will pour out on David's family and the people in Jerusalem a spirit of kindness and mercy. They will look at me, the one they have stabbed, and they will cry like someone crying over the death of an only child. They will be as sad as someone who has lost a firstborn son."* These are the only people crying at Jesus actual physical second coming, not the Godless.

It is possible that a few stragglers who did not take the mark of the Beast may be alive at this point and scattered about in various hiding places, but this is a very small number. Of course, the evil people who accepted the mark of the beast will have been annihilated, along with the Antichrist.

However, even before their defeat at the Battle of Armageddon, these evil people will not be crying out or mourning anything or at Jesus second coming. In fact, they will look forward to fighting against God himself, thinking they will be able to win, because of the power the Antichrist displayed with his deceptive miracles. They will not be giving out a mourning cry here in Revelation 19, only a war cry if any cry at all.

Jesus said in Matthew 24:30 that all the people of earth would see Jesus in the air and would ***all be crying out*** which matches the sixth seal. ***"They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us. Hide us from the face of the One who sits on the throne and from the anger of the Lamb! The great day for their anger has come, and who can stand against it?" Rev 6***

If you were to hear someone calling to rocks and mountains to fall on them, would you not say they were crying out to them? In addition, what do people do when they are frightened? They cry for help. We must notice who they are asking their help from here. Not God, but to the inanimate objects of stone to protect them. This is much different than the Jews in Revelation 19, who are crying directly to God as He lovingly ministers healing to them.

Son of Man

Now we need to ask ourselves another important question. How is it that the people of earth know to credit Jesus and his Father for what is going on? Notice what they say as they are crying to the rocks: "*Fall on us. **Hide us from the face of the One who sits on the throne and from the anger of the Lamb!** The great day for their anger has come, and who can stand against it?"*

It is a worldwide earthquake and star fragments are falling, but how and why are these Godless people crediting this event to God? What or who do people credit for natural disasters today? Not to God anymore, instead we give credit to Mother Nature, "global warming," or "climate change." So, how are they able to know this is God here?

There can only be one answer and it is again found back in Matthew 24: 30-31: "*At that time, **the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky. Then all the peoples of the world will cry. They will see the Son of Man coming on clouds in the sky with great power and glory. He will use a loud trumpet to send his angels all around the earth, and they will gather his chosen people from every part of the world.***

So what or whom does the scripture say they are seeing here? They are seeing none other than Jesus, himself, which is why they are crediting the events of the sixth seal to God. But why are they crying? Are they crying because they missed the Rapture? Those who are not ready for the Rapture will certainly be distraught that they missed it.

However, those who never learned about the Rapture will simply cry out in fear as they can see the massive destruction of God's wrath happening before them. Since Jesus coming will be with surprise of a thief, there can be no previous sign to tell us it is about to happen.

In fact, when Matthew 24:30 says the sign of the son of man will appear in the sky, all this means is, Jesus, himself, is the sign. Who is he a sign for? The Jews especially, but also he will be an obvious sign to everyone, that the beginning of the end has now officially started.

The “Last Trumpet”

Is Jesus simply being seen in the sky here or is he also doing something else? According to the matching scriptures of 1 Corinthians 15:52, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 and Matthew 24:29-31, there is a trumpet of some sort being blown here at the sixth seal. For instance, it says in Matthew 24: 31, “*He will use a loud trumpet.*” He uses it to get his angels to collect his elect. Jesus has a voice that “*sounds like a trumpet.*” (Rev 1:10 & 4:1) He blows this himself, or perhaps just calls out in that trumpet sounding voice as described by John.

Some say that this Rapture trumpet doesn't happen here at the sixth seal. Some say that the Rapture trumpet will not sound until half way through the tribulation, some say it will sound at the end. Which is it?

We hear of trumpets throughout the Bible and it is popular to hear about trumpets in end-time teachings. Back in chapter one of *Revelation Unleashed*, we touched on the importance of distinguishing the many trumpets mentioned throughout scripture. We need to see here that there is more than one trumpet within the book of Revelation and that they are not all one and the same. If we misplace these verses that mention trumpets, we misunderstand where the Rapture trumpet actually in occurs in the line of all the other events.

This trumpet at the Rapture will be the starting point of the last

great tribulation period. There are trumpets mentioned in various places in the Old Testament that represent historical events. There are also some that are mentioned in prophetic texts that have yet to be fulfilled. We can easily place these unfulfilled trumpet scriptures in with Revelation events by matching their wording and context to form a more complete picture.

In the whole chronological layout of events in Revelation, and with the prophetic texts overlapped in, we see there is more than one trumpet and trumpeters as the end of days unfold. When we do this properly, we can see that the Rapture trumpet is actually not the last literal trumpet being blown in the bible at all.

Rapture Trumpet

The trumpet of 1 Corinthians 15:52, has been incorrectly identified (and understandably so), as the last trumpet that occurs with the last angel trumpet of Revelation 11:15: *“But look! I tell you this secret: We will not all sleep in death, but we will all be changed. It will take only a second as quickly as an eye blinks **when the last trumpet sounds**. The trumpet will sound, and those who have died will be raised to live forever, and we will all be changed.”* The last angel trumpet should not be confused with the “Jesus Trumpet” that must be blown at the breaking of the sixth seal or seconds before the sixth seal is broken. The Rapture trumpet blown by Jesus is a trumpet with a unique purpose, and one that closes a period of time, and ushers in another. This is a “Jesus Trumpet” because it is He that blows it here, not an angel.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, also partially describes the Rapture event: *“**The Lord himself** will come down from heaven with (1.) a loud command, (2.) with the voice of the archangel, (3.) **and with the trumpet call of God**. And those who have died believing in Christ will rise first. **After that, we who are still alive will be***

gathered up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And we will be with the Lord forever.”

Jesus is doing three things at once here. There is no other trumpet anywhere in the Bible that comes remotely close to this description, because it is one of a kind, and a trumpet of this sort is never seen again anywhere in all of scripture. It is the first of its kind and the last of its kind! Why?

Again, John describes Jesus as the one with voice that sounds like a trumpet. So, we can see then how he is able to shout, and blow a trumpet, all with the voice of an archangel, as well.

When does the Rapture trumpet get blown? Since the trumpet will signal Him coming, the collection of the elect by the angels will most likely have to happen in an instantaneous way after it is blown, otherwise people would have a warning. Jesus said he would come like a thief. If it were blown followed by a long interval of time, it would negate him coming as a thief as he promised in many passages. The trumpet will be blown by Jesus before the Rapture occurs, however, the Rapture of the church will happen immediately, so it will likely be simultaneous. It will be too late to respond to God at this point to escape this first day of wrath and beyond.

Let us look where the talk of trumpets actually occurs in Revelation. We will see why the Rapture trumpet cannot be the trumpet that occurs at these other events in Revelation.

Last Angel Trumpet

There are the seven angel trumpets that come after the six seal, which are blown by angels, along with two others after those. The purpose of the angel trumpets is to bring punishment or judgments to earth. The two after the seven are different.

It is clear we have not been appointed to suffer God's wrath as stated in all the following scriptures: 1 Thessalonians 5: 1-9, Revelation 3:10, Luke 21:28, and 21:36. If the Rapture trumpet were the same as

the one blown at the last of the angel trumpet judgments, again, it would be far too obvious that he was coming, but also, it leaves us here during the wrath when we are supposed to be removed from before it starts.

Battle of Armageddon Trumpet

If we look in Zechariah 9:14, we see Jesus blows another trumpet during the Battle of Armageddon. *“Then the Lord will appear above them, and his arrows will shoot like lightning. **The Lord God will blow the trumpet**, and he will march in the storms of the south.”* Some have said that this trumpet here, is the Rapture trumpet of 1 Corinthians 15:5, but it can't be. This trumpet in Zechariah is a war trumpet. The Rapture trumpet, on the other hand, will be to gather the elect to the clouds as a kind of reward trumpet or calling to the clouds trumpet.

The Rapture is at the six seal, not at Revelation 19, which does not have a description of a mass of people gathered up to heaven like we see at the sixth seal. There are no angels involved in Revelation chapter 19 either, unlike what we see described in the Rapture scriptures. The Rapture scriptures match the sixth seal. The sixth seal is an event that is clearly different than the event of Revelation 19, therefore the Rapture trumpet must be matched with the Rapture event alone and not confused with any other.

The End of the Battle Trumpet

The actual last trumpet that is blown in the Bible, which is also described in Isaiah 27:12-13, will be blown to call people from all over the world back to Jerusalem. It is not certain who blows this. The purpose is to call the Jews back to Jerusalem. The Jews are not being collected into the clouds as in the Rapture. They will, however, stay and populate the earth for the last thousand years.

“At that time the Lord will begin gathering his people one by

*one from the Euphrates River to the brook of Egypt. He will separate them from others as grain is separated from chaff. Many of my people are now lost in Assyria. Some have run away to Egypt. **But at that time a great trumpet will be blown**, and all those people will come and worship the Lord on that holy mountain in Jerusalem.*

If we are going to be completely accurate, this trumpet would be the last one blown in the bible. The question then becomes, if this is, in fact, the very last trumpet and it is, is this when the ready church is Raptured? The answer, of course, has to be, “no.” It is because God's wrath has long since been poured out at this point and we have much scripture that tells us true Christians have not been appointed to suffer His wrath.

In fact, all the evil people have been killed and the only ones left are this remnant of the Jews and perhaps a few straggling Gentiles who may have somehow avoided taking the mark of the beast and being beheaded. They will be left to repopulate the earth during the last 1000 year millennial reign of Jesus. Therefore, since this last trumpet is blown after all wrath of God, there is no way this is the same as the Rapture trumpet.

Different Trumpets, Unique Purposes

What are we to conclude about all this trumpet talk? There are many trumpets throughout the book of Revelation and the Bible in general. They are definitely not all the same. They happen at different events, and for different purposes.

Jesus as we just read, blows the trumpet at the sixth seal Rapture event himself. This appears to be the “last” trumpet that will bring to an end of this time period we live in today known as the age of the Gentiles. The sixth seal brings us into a new time period which will be the final testing period for everyone on earth including both Jew and Gentile. Then finally the last 1000 years will be the time where the Jews finally realize the promise of them repopulating and dominating

the earth, with Gentiles being in the minority.

Within the tribulation period there will be trumpets blown by angels that will bring specific judgments to earth. We also saw that Jesus will blow a trumpet during the Battle of Armageddon to direct the armies of Heaven. This will take place at the end of the 7 year tribulation.

And finally, we see a trumpet being used to call the Jews back to Israel. This is literally the last trumpet blown in the line of end-time events and in the Bible.

So it must be that the Rapture trumpet is described as the “last trumpet” for another reason. It is not called this because it is the very last one blown in Revelation as we just saw. It is because it is the last one bringing this current age to a close, while at the same time is the start of another age. Sometimes we must use a little common sense as well.

Chapter Six: The 144,000 and the Raptured Saints

Revelation Chapter 7

*“After the vision of these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth. The angels were holding the four winds of the earth to keep them from blowing on the land or on the sea or on any tree. Then I saw another angel coming up from the east who had the seal of the living God. And he called out in a loud voice to the four angels to whom God had given power to harm the earth and the sea. He said to them, **‘Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we mark with a sign the foreheads of the people who serve our God.’** Then I heard how many people were marked with the sign. **There were one hundred forty-four thousand from every tribe of the people of Israel.**” Rev 7:1-4*

Chapter 7 of Revelation continues with the sixth seal events. This is one place in the Bible, at least, where chapter assignments were not helpfully placed. Ideally, the sixth seal should have been one complete chapter by itself in order not to break up the continuity of the events as they unfold.

With this knowledge, we can have a more critical understanding of the context as we continue to read about the sixth seal in these next passages. We know from matching scriptures that the Rapture took place at the onset of the sixth seal. Also, we saw that on this day, the start of the God’s undeniable wrath unleashed on the earth. In chapter seven, we now see the next event of the sixth seal which is the marking of a finite, literal number of special people, the 144,000.

144,000 Sealed

These people being marked with a special seal are none other

than Jews. But, what they are being sealed for? John tells us that these angels are getting ready to harm the earth and sea, but these special servants are being sealed with a SEAL OF PROTECTION. Since the angels are getting ready to pour out more punishments soon, these selected few will be protected from it.

This is not a seal of Salvation as some want to assign to it. They are already saved. In fact, if they were not, they could not receive this seal. We see later in Revelation 14, that these 144,000 Jews had not defiled themselves with women. Therefore, another characteristic of this group is ***they are all men.***

Some people believe that this group of 144,000 missed the Rapture. But, that is not clear, nor is it probable. There is a better chance that they were Raptured, along with the great multitude we will read about later in Revelation 7.

However, it does not matter if they were sealed on earth or in heaven and are now coming back to do God's work, which is more likely the scenario. All that matters is, they are saved, Messianic Jews and this is clear. In fact, the passage also states specifically that they are from the 12 tribes of Judah, and then painstakingly details the names each of their tribes and the number from each.

“From the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were marked with the sign, from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand, from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand, from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand, from the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand, from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand, from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand, from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand, from the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand, from the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand, from the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand, and from the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were marked with the sign.” Rev 7:5-8

Since Revelation is the master plan that all previous end times' prophecy plugs in to, we can place Isaiah 66 here and know what this group of Jews will specifically do during the tribulation period. We said

that if scripture is not 100% clear on details, and common sense is exhausted, we need to go back to other passages and see if there are some missing pieces to the puzzle. Isaiah states:

“I will put a mark on some of the people, and I will send some of these saved people to the nations: to Tarshish, Libya, Lud (the land of archers), Tubal, Greece, and all the faraway lands. These people have never heard about what I have done nor seen my glory. So the saved people will tell the nations about my glory. And they will bring all your fellow Israelites from all nations to my holy mountain in Jerusalem. Your fellow Israelites will come on horses, donkeys, and camels and in chariots and wagons. They will be like the grain offerings that the people bring in clean containers to the Temple, says the Lord. And I will choose even some of these people to be priests and Levites, says the Lord.” Isaiah 66:19-21

Everything here in Isaiah is speaking about Jews specifically and separately. There is no talk of Gentiles, either here, or at the sixth seal description of the 144,000.

Not the Church or Tribulation Saints

There are those who want to replace this group of 144,000 Jews with the church or tribulation saints. This teaching is called, “Replacement Theology.” The detail of this sealed group is men, which disqualifies them from being a true representative of the church, since the church is made up of women and men. But most of all, the Bible clearly says they are from the 12 tribes of Israel. This makes them clearly Jews.

A reason some seek to replace this group with the church is that they see protection for this group through the tribulation period and there is no protection for anyone else. In their minds, they feel that God would protect the saints during this time. Unfortunately, this is

not scriptural, as you will see when you continue to read Revelation.

For the most part, people who believe this also hold to a mid or post-tribulation Rapture view, as well. Because they do not believe in a pre-wrath or pre-tribulation Rapture, they want to believe there will be protection for the saints or themselves during the tribulation period. But the fact is, there is not even protection for the tribulation saints, nor the Jews as a whole. Only this one small group of 144,000 is protected. This is one reason we need to be ready for the Lord's coming today.

There is a punishment for missing the Rapture no matter who you are. The punishment is that they will have to endure through all the plagues just like the rest of the world. However, those who hold onto their faith through all the testing of the tribulation will be saved.

In fact, Jesus said in Revelation 3:10 that the time of testing would come to the entire world. What we know about testing is some pass and some fail, so certainly, there will be many saved during the tribulation period, but it will not be through protection, instead it will be done through standing strong against and through great persecution.

If God protected all saints during the tribulation with physical protection, then everyone would want to become a Christian. Even today, not all Christians are granted protected through persecution. Some are jailed, some starve to death, and some are martyred which also matches the fifth seal as we already saw.

The Raptured Saints Worship God

*“After the vision of these things I looked, and there was a great number of people, so many that no one could count them. **They were from every nation, tribe, people, and language of the earth.** They were all standing before the throne and before the Lamb, wearing white robes and holding palm branches in their hands. They*

were shouting in a loud voice, ‘Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.’ All the angels were standing around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures. They all bowed down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, ‘Amen! Praise, glory, wisdom, thanks, honor, power, and strength belong to our God forever and ever. Amen!’

Then one of the elders asked me, ‘Who are these people dressed in white robes? And where did they come from?’

I answered, ‘You know, sir.’

And the elder said to me, ‘These are the people who have come out of the great distress.’” Rev 7:9-14a

We must realize the importance of this passage, but first realize that this is still part of the sixth seal, as well. This is where many theologians have gone off the rails, as they have twisted this scripture by adding to and taking away from its plain truth.

Let us not forget all the proof of the Rapture we just saw at the beginning of this seal. This seal is the fulfillment of all the verses about the Rapture and what we have just seen. Now as we continue we will see even more proof that the Rapture just occurred earlier in the seal and that everyone saw it occur.

Here is what is important. We see this crowd described as, “*a great multitude*,” which cannot be numbered, from every nation and people. We learn that “*they have come out of the great tribulation*,” or distress as some translations say. The logical question is: **What portion of the tribulation did they come out of?**

Some have subtracted from this truth, and then added their own words by saying they have “*come through*” the great tribulation, but that is not what the scripture says plainly. It literally says they have **come out of it!** Every translation, including the original Greek, says they have “come out of.” If it were through, then we would be talking

about a post-tribulation Rapture. "Through it" means, they go through the events that make up the tribulation. If you come out of it, you were spared.

Since we know this is still part of the sixth seal and this is the first day of God's wrath that has just begun, then we know that they have come out before the great tribulation starts! This is proof of a pre-tribulation Rapture!

Finishing with the passage, we see the glory this multitude receives:

"They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Because of this, they are before the throne of God. They worship him day and night in his temple. And the One who sits on the throne will be present with them. Those people will never be hungry again, and they will never be thirsty again. The sun will not hurt them, and no heat will burn them, because the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd. He will lead them to springs of water that give life. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." Rev 7:14b-17

It just does not get any better than this. All the scriptures, which proclaim how some will not be experiencing God's wrath, such as Revelation 3:10, Luke 21: 28-36, 1 Thessalonians 5:9, are all fulfilled here at the sixth seal. There is a pre-tribulation, pre-wrath Rapture, but it does not occur where many think it does.

There is no solid proof, other than opinion along with addition and subtraction that the Rapture happens at Revelation, chapter 4. There are two main reasons we have believed this for years. One is because we have overlooked the important sixth seal and misidentified where we are today in the sequence of Revelatory events. Another reason is we miss the mark is because Bible teachers have added to and subtracted from the plain truth of scripture in order to fit their own preconceived ideas of where they think and want the Rapture of the Church to occur, instead of where it actually does.

Chapter 7

The Seventh Seal- 3½ Years of “Silence”

Chapter 8 of Revelation begins with the following:

*“When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, **there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.** And I saw the seven angels who stand before God and to whom were given seven trumpets.”*

What is important here is the period of silence that is coming from heaven for a time, and why heaven is silent. No such silence or calm will be on the earth because of what just happened at the sixth seal, but what we see here is God is giving those on earth time to get over the shock of one of the single greatest events in human history.

No one rebuilds or gets over an event like this overnight. For example we can see the effects of the earthquake in Haiti is still being felt two years later and it is said that one half million Haitians are still homeless. It is the same with the big Tsunami in Indonesia and the earthquake/Tsunami in Japan. Therefore, to think that the effects of the sixth seal will not be magnified worldwide would be shortsighted.

God’s time is not like ours. We see scripture in 2 Peter 3:8 which says a thousand human years is like a day to the Lord and a day like a thousand years. We also see language in Rev. 3:10, that the faithful, ready followers of Jesus "will **be kept from the hour** of trial" that is coming to test the entire earth via the Rapture. What we know about this testing period is it is more like seven years, not just one hour consisting of 60 minutes.

So in this instance there this silence in heaven and it is simply half the time of the hour/seven year testing or..... 3-1/2 years. Therefore, the first part of the tribulation will be relatively calm

in comparison to the sixth seal, and what will start later in chapter 8. No one would notice that there was just 30 minutes of silence in heaven after what just happened. People will be in complete shock for some time.

God is merciful even while doling out justice and in fact though there are some horrific things going on here in Revelation, there is also a lot of Salvation going on. The ones who missed the Rapture, but knew better, are now realizing at this point that they will have to endure to the end through much pain and suffering. I guarantee you no one will ever again doubt the literal nature of scripture after the sixth seal is broken.

Not only that, but the many things that used to be gray and fuzzy because of the fakes who preached falsely, will now become black and white, and serving the Lord will in some respects become easier during the last seven years. Easier because the false doctrines will be exposed, but likely harder in the actual living it out. People will now have to choose finally whether they will serve the Lord 100%, or be against him 100%. There will be no place for the lukewarm during this time, as we have now. The lukewarm who miss the Rapture, and there will be many, will now become either hot or cold.

There will be another thing that happens as far as belief systems of men are concerned. The sixth seal will also be the end of atheism. Because everyone has just seen Jesus in the air collect his elect, everyone will now know there is a God, just as the demons do. However, just because the demons believe and tremble, does not mean they will be saved. Many on the earth will still choose the wrong way, but saying, "There is no God," will no longer be an excuse or something that is seen as viable.

Now the atheist just as others will have to want to be with the God they just saw in the air, or choose the other god who will be for many the antichrist. Continuing in 8:3-5:

"Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden

*pan for incense. He was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all God's holy people. The angel put this offering on the golden altar before the throne. **The smoke from the incense went up from the angel's hand to God with the prayers of God's people.** Then the angel filled the incense pan with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth, and there were flashes of lightning, thunder and loud noises, and an earthquake.”*

Notice it does not say worldwide earthquake here, but even if it is, it will not be nearly as strong as the one at the sixth seal. Now we begin another transition from silence, to the beginning of more punishments that start to become severe. However, this does not yet start the last 3-1/2 years, we will see the start of that in a few more chapters. Therefore, what we also have here is a bit of an interlude that has not been accounted for time wise. We know the first silence is over, but the last half has not yet begun. It is for this reason that some believe, that the last “seven” year tribulation period is a little longer than seven years, possibly 7 1/2 years or so, though certainly not eight.

However even if it were 7 1/2 years or so, we can still call it the seven year tribulation for ease of understanding.

What I especially love about this passage is that the prayers of God's people are still being heard. Certainly many will pray to God at the breaking of the sixth seal to be saved. Though it will be too late for them to go with Jesus at the 1st phase, it will not be too late to be saved afterward. Some believe there will be no Salvation for those who missed the Rapture, but perhaps believed in one, yet were not living as God wanted so they were not ready. Scripture is clear that the prodigal can be saved and Jesus himself said we are to forgive 70X7, so this means he will do the same for us. The earnest prayers of repentance and other prayers by those who are truly in need will always be heard and answered by God, but in his time.

The Seven Angels and Trumpets

“Then the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to blow them. The first angel blew his trumpet, and hail and fire mixed with blood were poured down on the earth. And a third of the earth, and all the green grass, and a third of the trees were burned up.”

Some may wonder why God would dole out these punishments in different stages and severities, because the fact is, God does not have to give anyone time, but we can see here he does. He is simply giving people time to repent of their sin, if they will. Some will look at this Revelation and say what a horrible cruel God, but the reality is he is merciful, but his patience will soon end. Still it does not end abruptly and we can thank God for that.

Now obviously God burning up a third of the grass, trees and earth here at the first trumpet, is going to cause massive disruption and worse inflation than we have now, because the animals and farmlands in these places will also be burned up. However, the rich will likely still be "ok" for a little longer, though not spiritually of course.

*“Then the second angel blew his trumpet, and something that looked like a big mountain, burning with fire, was thrown into the sea. **And a third of the sea became blood**, a third of the living things in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.”*

This is a big one because it sounds so incredible. Today we have some saying this has already occurred at the gulf oil spill and the oil resembled blood. Problem is that did not destroy a third of the ocean, the sea creatures or the ships. That would also be taking this out of order since it has not yet happened. In addition, it would not be taking this literally and saying even the blood is symbolic for something else.

These punishments are so severe they will be no-doubters and no-brainers. In addition, the blood will be actual blood, which is why

the sea creatures will die, and the ships will be destroyed. This blood will obviously be very acidic and destroy the ships. Today an oil spill would not destroy the ships in the same way or the same speed.

*“Then the third angel blew his trumpet, and a large star, burning like a torch, fell from the sky. It fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. The name of the star is Wormwood. And a third of all the water became bitter, **and many people died from drinking the water that was bitter.**”*

This is self-explanatory, but we see more people dying again. The bible does not give specifics as it does in other passages, but it says many people die from this poisonous water. We also can assume that at least some died that were on the ships at the second trumpet and some died from the fires at the first trumpet.

“Then the fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a third of the sun, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars were struck. So a third of them became dark, and a third of the day was without light, and also the night.”

This will be a very depressing punishment. To take away the light of one third of the day and night will be just another thing that many will have to endure.

“While I watched, I heard an eagle that was flying high in the air cry out in a loud voice, “Trouble! Trouble! Trouble for those who live on the earth because of the remaining sounds of the trumpets that the other three angels are about to blow!”

Again sounding very “Narnia-ish” or like Lord of the Rings, but this eagle signals that the next two punishments will be more severe and will be horrible for many, including tribulation saints.

Stinging Locusts from Hell

“Then the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star fall

*from the sky to the earth. **The star was given the key to the deep hole that leads to the bottomless pit.** Then it opened up the hole that leads to the bottomless pit, and smoke came up from the hole like smoke from a big furnace. Then the sun and sky became dark because of the smoke from the hole. **Then locusts came down to the earth out of the smoke, and they were given the power to sting like scorpions.** They were told not to harm the grass on the earth or any plant or tree. **They could harm only the people who did not have the sign of God on their foreheads.** These locusts were not given the power to kill anyone, but to cause pain to the people for **five months.** And the pain they felt was like the pain a scorpion gives when it stings someone. During those days people will look for a way to die, but they will not find it. They will want to die, but death will run away from them.*

This is one of those passages that some love to take license with, because they can't seem to wrap their heads around the fact that something could possibly come out of a portion of hell to torment people on the earth. However, this is not the only time this happens. The next trumpet is similar in that aspect.

Many details here prove the literalness of what will actually happen. Some have exaggerated and hijacked this passage to say these locusts are not actual locust, but instead they seek to replace them with some manmade thing like helicopters or other manmade military aircraft. Why they do this is hard to discern, but what they don't realize they are doing, as well as adding to and taking away from the passage, is they are also giving more credence to what man can do, than what God himself will do directly.

We have *many* proofs right in the passage that prove these are real actual locust, though demonic.

1. The people will be tormented for five months. It just so happens that this is the life span of a locust. This is not a coincidence.
2. They are told not to harm the trees or grass, plant or tree.

Why are they told this? Because the natural inclination of a locust is to do just that.

These two proofs are enough, but we can explore some others as well. There is not nearly enough of any kind of aircraft to torment approximately 6 billion people. I say approximately because there are likely 500 million to one billion people Raptured at the sixth seal and others that died from the other plagues so far. All people would have to do to avoid this “manmade” torment if it was, is go to fallout shelters, or their basement to escape them. Just think of the expense of weaponry that would have to be expended to see this through and all just to torment people and not kill them? In addition, which country or countries would undertake this and why? There is no reason for even the antichrist, which is not even mentioned yet, to do something like this. Also even he will be tormented by these locusts along with other world leaders.

Also at the sixth seal God likely took out much of the hi-tech military might of the world (though possibly temporary), again making a campaign like this even more impossible.

Finally, these locusts are coming out of the bottomless pit. Nothing made on earth could possibly come from there. Now let us look at the next passage.

“The locusts looked like horses prepared for battle. On their heads they wore what looked like crowns of gold, and their faces looked like human faces. Their hair was like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. Their chests looked like iron breastplates, and the sound of their wings was like the noise of many horses and chariots hurrying into battle.”

This is what locusts and grasshoppers look and sound like now. You get a few billion of these flying together and it does sound like squeaky chariot wheels. Now these are demonic ramped up locust mind you, they are not your regular run of the mill regular locusts. If they were people would be able to kill them just as they can a regular

locust or grasshopper, but the people will not be able to kill these, because of the strange armor, they will be wearing to protect them.

*“The locusts had tails with stingers like scorpions, and in their tails was their power to hurt people for five months. **The locusts had a king who was the angel of the bottomless pit. His name in the Hebrew language is Abaddon and in the Greek language is Apollyon.**”*

Just more proof that these are from hell and not earth in this passage. Their leader is a demonic angel from the bottomless pit named Abaddon. Of course these locusts are different in the way they will be able to sting people and it tells us how painful it will be. It will be so bad that they will want to die by suicide, but they will not be allowed to do so.

Lastly and more importantly, we need to realize who is being tormented by these and who isn't. *“They could harm only the people who did not have the sign of God on their foreheads.”* **This is everyone except** for the 144,000 special Jews. The rest of the Jews, which is approximately 13 million today, will be tormented just as the tribulation saints will. This all part of the testing and endurance. If there was protection for the tribulation saints, then everyone would want to become a Christian to avoid the torment, but what we see throughout Revelation is, most will not.

“The first trouble is past; there are still two other troubles that will come”

This is specifically talking about the trouble from the trumpets not the bowl judgments and other things such as the seven thunders that are coming up.

*“Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice coming from the horns on the golden altar that is before God. The voice said to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, **Free the four angels who are tied at the great river Euphrates.**” And they let loose the four angels who had been kept ready for this hour and day*

and month and year so they could kill a third of all people on the earth. I heard how many troops on horses were in their army—two hundred million.

What is important here is realizing that much like the locust, this not an army of anything from this earth. If their leaders are four evil angels/demons and we know they are, because good angels are not tied up, then we know the rest of the army are evil demons as well.

Some like to say this is the Chinese army because they are the only ones who have an army of this size. But there are again many problems with this just on the logistics side alone, much like with the “helicopters” theory of the locust. In addition, we see no countries mentioned here at all, as we see at the battle of Armageddon/ Gog & Magog.

Really, this is not a battle at all, instead it is annihilation, much like Armageddon will be. In addition, this is likely to be a very quick slaughter not a long and protracted one. The goal here is not war for a period of time, but simply to wipe out 1/3 of humanity as quickly as possible. There also would be no reason much like with the locust, for any army or armies of earth, to indiscriminately start killing people for no reason.

Killing this many people in such a short time period, which is in between the first 3-1/2 years and the last 3-1/2 years, would be an impossibility for any army of this earth to do. If we just look at the logistical magnitude of what the U.S. had to do in Iraq and other campaigns for an army of a few hundred thousand troops, we can see that supporting a 200 million-man army would be impossible. So then, these are not men, much as the “4 horsemen” were not men either. Having said this, here is a description of what they will look like:

“The horses and their riders I saw in the vision looked like this: They had breastplates that were fiery red, dark blue, and yellow like sulfur. The heads of the horses looked like heads of lions, with fire, smoke, and sulfur coming out of their mouths. A third of all the people

on earth were killed by these three terrible disasters coming out of the horses' mouths: the fire, the smoke, and the sulfur. The horses' power was in their mouths and in their tails; their tails were like snakes with heads, and with them they hurt people.

This is not describing any sort of military vehicle although some like to jump to this conclusion; this is simply describing demonic horses of some kind with demonic riders. We are looking at somewhere in the neighborhood of 2 billion people being killed here, and the others still would not repent of their ways.

“The other people who were not killed by these terrible disasters still did not change their hearts and turn away from what they had made with their own hands. They did not stop worshiping demons and idols made of gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood—things that cannot see or hear or walk. These people did not change their hearts and turn away from murder or evil magic, from their sexual sins or stealing.”

What was God looking to do here? He is looking to save as many as possible through repentance, but they would not repent, so the punishments keep coming.

Chapter 8

The Mystery

We said earlier in the book, that if and when we come up on a mystery, that we would accept it as such. Chapter 10 of Revelation is one of those mysteries that will not fully be realized until it occurs; however, there are some things to note here. First, we are still in the interlude that started at the breaking of 3-1/2 years of silence in heaven, but we have still not yet begun the last 3-1/2 years. When we do, it will be stated in scripture, just as the other markers have been. Chapter 10 begins:

*“Then I saw another powerful angel coming down from heaven dressed in a cloud with a rainbow over his head. His face was like the sun, and his legs were like pillars of fire. The angel was holding a small scroll open in his hand. He put his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land. Then he shouted loudly like the roaring of a lion. And when he shouted, the voices of seven thunders spoke. When the seven thunders spoke, I started to write. **But I heard a voice from heaven say, "Keep hidden what the seven thunders said, and do not write them down."***

Some so-called prophets today will say they know what the seven thunders are, when scripture here says no one does or will. Worse yet is, they will also say these things which can't be known are going on now and they say things such as: this is the new world order, or the oil spill, or 9-11, or something else they want them to be. They seek to be the only voice of God in these times we are in today and will tell you to listen to them only. Some say God told me this or God told

me that, such as being given a date of the Rapture, or something similar and they do the same thing here.

All of these false teachers and preachers are the same and should not be followed. Jesus said in Luke 21:28: *"Be careful so you are not fooled. Many people will come in my name, saying, 'I am the One' and, 'The time has come!' **But don't follow them**".*

This speaks of the date setters specifically and others who say, "I am the last day prophet of God" and should be the only one listened to. In addition, what did Jesus tell us to do when someone tells us "the time has come," He said: Do not follow them! Jesus was very clear here, don't you think? Now having said that this does not mean we are to have no idea when the time has come, it simply means, no one man knows the exact day or hour. The general period **is to be expected and to be known**. Continuing in the passage:

*"Then the angel I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven, and he made a promise by the power of the One who lives forever and ever. He is the One who made the skies and all that is in them, the earth and all that is in it, and the sea and all that is in it. The angel promised, "There will be no more waiting! In the **days when the seventh angel is ready to blow his trumpet**, God's secret will be finished. **This secret is the Good News God told to his servants, the prophets.**"*

The secret he is speaking of here is not the same thing as the seven thunders. All this is saying here is that the seventh angel trumpet is about to blow and that the secret of the good news is about to be fulfilled through the prophets, especially the two witnesses which are coming up in the next chapter.

"Then I heard the same voice from heaven again, saying to me: "Go and take the open scroll that is in the hand of the angel that is standing on the sea and on the land.

So I went to the angel and told him to give me the small scroll. And he said to me, Take the scroll and eat it. It will be sour in your

stomach, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey. So I took the small scroll from the angel's hand and ate it. In my mouth it tasted sweet as honey, but after I ate it, it was sour in my stomach. Then I was told, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages, and kings."

The Two Witnesses and the start of the last 3-1/2 years

This is where the last 3-1/2 years officially begins, here in chapter 11. It reads:

*"I was given a measuring stick like a rod, and I was told, "Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, and count the people worshiping there.² But do not measure the yard outside the temple. Leave it alone, because it has been given to those who are not God's people. **And they will trample on the holy city for forty-two months.³ And I will give power to my two witnesses to prophesy for one thousand two hundred sixty days, and they will be dressed in rough cloth to show their sadness."***

Here we are told specifically that the two witnesses will prophesy for 1,260 days, which is 3-1/2 years, and so is 42 months.

*"These two witnesses are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. **And if anyone tries to hurt them, fire comes from their mouths and kills their enemies.** And if anyone tries to hurt them in whatever way, in that same way that person will die. These witnesses have the power to stop the sky from raining during the time they are prophesying. And they have power to make the waters become blood, and they have power to send every kind of trouble to the earth as many times as they want.*

This is an amazing thing that these two witnesses get to prophecy, preach the Gospel and send plagues for such a long period of time. Some think they could be Moses and Elijah, however it does not

really matter who they are, as they could even be one of the “least” in heaven.

However it is likely that one is at least Elijah; and this is because of the scripture in Malachi 4:5 which reads:

“But I will send you Elijah the prophet before that great and terrifying day of the Lord's judging. Elijah will help parents love their children and children love their parents. Otherwise, I will come and put a curse on the land.”

This is an important verse as it helps us clarify a few things not only here but in other passages as well. If we recall the first great and overwhelming day of the Lord it was at the sixth seal. The difference between that day and the one that Malachi is describing here is the word **judging**. The day of judging begins with Rev. 19 and the battle of Armageddon, not at the sixth seal, so Elijah is likely the one of the two witnesses here.

“When the two witnesses have finished telling their message, the beast that comes up from the bottomless pit will fight a war against them. He will defeat them and kill them.

To note here is, the witnesses cannot be touched for 3 ½ years. God decides when and if his servants are going to be hurt or killed. The antichrist that is otherwise known as the beast in Rev. Chapter 13, is allowed to kill them at the end because God allows it. This is probably one more reason why the world will get deceived into thinking that the antichrist will eventually be able to defeat even God, because of the temporary “victory” he is allowed here.

“The bodies of the two witnesses will lie in the street of the great city where the Lord was killed. This city is named Sodom and Egypt, which has a spiritual meaning.

This is obviously referring to Jerusalem, which is where Jesus was crucified. Then it continues: ***“Those from every race of people, tribe, language, and nation will look at the bodies of the two witnesses for three and one-half days, and they will refuse to bury them. People***

who live on the earth will rejoice and be happy because these two are dead. They will send each other gifts, because these two prophets brought much suffering to those who live on the earth.”

We are looking at some sick and depraved people at this point who are not just happy about the deaths of Gods servants, but are also throwing a party over it. What they do not yet know is, things are about to get much worse for them. They think their troubles are over, but in reality, they have just begun.

In addition, to note here is how John describes time lines at certain times. We see a picture here of the start of the last 3 ½ years and the ending of it within one passage. Then he goes back telling us about other things that occur during the last 3 ½ years as well after this.

“But after three and one-half days, God put the breath of life into the two prophets again. They stood on their feet, and everyone who saw them became very afraid. Then the two prophets heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Come up here!" And they went up into heaven in a cloud as their enemies watched.”

This is almost a re-creation of what happen to Jesus who was crucified then rose again on the third day. Then they are also taken up to heaven in their own mini-Rapture, while people are watching, much like at the sixth seal.

*“In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city was destroyed. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, **and those who did not die were very afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven.** The second trouble is finished. Pay attention: The third trouble is coming soon.*

It is nice to see that at least some are giving glory to God here. This is one of the few times we see this happen in all of Revelation.

The Seventh Trumpet

*“Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet. And there were loud voices in heaven, saying: **The power to rule the world now belongs to our Lord and his Christ, and he will rule forever and ever.**”*

To note in this passage is Jesus is not technically or physically ruling the world yet until chapter 19, so what this passage means is, he has always had the power to rule, but has subjugated that rule temporarily, so that his will is finally accomplished in the end. It is not as if he had no say or power in the world before this passage, because his spirit(s) is always at work. This is simply giving us a glimpse of what is to come shortly God is always in control and has been from the very beginning. Though Satan is called the “prince” of this world, he is not the king and never has been.

*“Then the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, bowed down on their faces and worshiped God. They said: We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, because you have used your great power and have begun to rule! The people of the world were angry, but your anger has come. **The time has come to judge the dead, and to reward your servants the prophets and your holy people, all who respect you, great and small. The time has come to destroy those who destroy the earth!**”*

Another example here of a preview of what is to come in full. His anger did not just start here, as we already know; now it is just being more pronounced and felt. We also know that the time to “*judge the dead*” as it says here is not yet fully come and does not occur until later in Revelation. At times, we said we have to use common sense as well and this is one of those times.

Also we must remember that time in heaven is very different

than it is here on earth. All this really means is the mystery of the last 2000 years has been fulfilled and the Lord is about to come to earth and reign as was prophesied.

*“Then God's temple in heaven was opened. **The Ark that holds the agreement God gave to his people could be seen in his temple.** Then there were flashes of lightning, noises, thunder, an earthquake, and a great hailstorm.”*

Here we see in heaven, the Ark of the Covenant that was built by Moses to house the Ten Commandments. Some today say they think it is buried under the temple mount in Jerusalem. If it is, it is not going to be there much longer as we see at some point is taking it back to heaven as shown in this passage. It could be because the tribulation temple is soon taken over by the antichrist that God takes it before he comes into the temple, but it is more likely that it is there already. However, time will tell on this one.

The Woman Israel and the Dragon Satan

*“And then a great wonder appeared in heaven: A woman was clothed with the sun, and the moon was under her feet, **and a crown of twelve stars was on her head.** She was pregnant and cried out with pain, because she was about to give birth.”*

This woman who has 12 stars on her head, is symbolic of the literal twelve tribes of Israel, though this number 12, is not the only clue that tells us she is Israel. We said earlier that there are some symbols in Revelation, but usually right in the same passage is the meaning of the symbol. When there is not we need to go to other places in the bible to get the meaning and sometimes common sense tells us. In the next passage, we will see more proof of who the woman is.

*“Then another wonder appeared in heaven: **There was a giant red dragon** with seven heads and seven crowns on each head. He also had ten horns. His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky*

*and threw them down to the earth. He stood in front of the woman who was ready to give birth so he could eat her baby as soon as it was born. **Then the woman gave birth to a son who will rule all the nations with an iron rod.** And her child was taken up to God and to his throne.”*

We know here that the “*son who will rule all the nations with an iron rod,*” is none other than Jesus himself, as we saw in the Revelation 2:27. Remember Jesus told us we would rule with an iron rod with him, if we overcome our sin, which is a reference to his 1000-year millennial reign.

Someone might say, well the mother of Jesus is Mary, which also is true, but the mother of all Jews is Israel as a nation. In addition, we see in just a bit, that Satan the dragon peruses the woman in the end times here, so it cannot be Mary as she has been in heaven for some time now and will stay there.

Of course, we also see the dragon Satan was trying to destroy Jesus when he was born to no avail. This he tried to do through a decree from King Herod that all the first born male children of Israel would die as Matthew 2:16 shows us: “*When Herod saw that the wise men had tricked him, he was furious. So he gave an order to kill all the baby boys in Bethlehem and in the surrounding area who were two years old or younger. This was in keeping with the time he learned from the wise men*”

We then know that Jesus was taken up to Gods throne in heaven after his crucifixion at the resurrection.

*“The woman ran away into the desert to a place God prepared for her where she would be taken care of for **one thousand two hundred sixty days.***

Here is another reference to a 3½ year period-1260 days. This tells us that Israel, or at least a smaller remnant of Israel is going to be taken care of and protected for the last half of the tribulation period. Up until this point, however they were not. They were part of the

stinging locusts and other plagues just like the other people were, except for the 144,000 special Jewish evangelists. The reason they are being taken to the desert here, is that they will be the ones that will repopulate the majority of the earth, during the 1000 reign of Jesus to fulfill the promise made to Abraham in Genesis. In the next passage we will see the positive identification of who the dragon is.

Then there was a war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But the dragon was not strong enough, and he and his angels lost their place in heaven. The giant dragon was thrown down out of heaven. (He is that old snake called the devil or Satan, who tricks the whole world.) The dragon with his angels was thrown down to the earth.

Another thing we see here is this angelic war in heaven. There are some who will take this out of place and say this is something that's past, but this is not past as we can see, it is a future war in the heavens that is fought right here during the tribulation period.

We must remember that Satan is an accuser of the brethren and has been allowed to do this up until this point. After this he has no place at all, only a future place reserved in the bottomless pit, then the lake of fire. There must currently be some sort of court in heaven that Satan is allowed to go to for accusation of the brethren. Why God allows this is a mystery certainly, but that soon will end anyway.

Of course, he already lost his original place in heaven and this is one reason why God will eventually destroy the earth and existing heavens because they have been defiled by Satan, his fellow rebellious angels and now us.

*“Then I heard a loud voice in heaven saying: The salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have now come. **The accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accused them day and night before our God, has been thrown down.** And our brothers and sisters defeated him by the*

blood of the Lamb's death and by the message they preached. They did not love their lives so much that they were afraid of death. So rejoice, you heavens and all who live there! But it will be terrible for the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you! He is filled with anger, because he knows he does not have much time."

When the dragon saw he had been thrown down to the earth, he hunted for the woman who had given birth to the son. **But the woman was given the two wings of a great eagle so she could fly to the place prepared for her in the desert.** There she would be taken care of for **three and one-half years**, away from the snake. Then the snake poured water out of its mouth like a river toward the woman so the flood would carry her away. But the earth helped the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing the river that came from the mouth of the dragon. **Then the dragon was very angry at the woman, and he went off to make war against all her other children—those who obey God's commands and who have the message Jesus taught.** And the dragon stood on the seashore.

This is self-explanatory, but a few notes are the dragon Satan is also known as "the snake." We see this reference in many passages throughout the bible. Again, we see the reference to 3-1/2 years that Israel will be protected in a desert location. Satan is obviously very angry at all of this so he tries to kill the Jews here by sending them a flood, but God opened the earth to swallow it up.

Then since Satan sees God is protecting them, he goes after the other servants of God, which are the tribulation saints. Since there is no protection for them he is able to do with them as he wishes and his wish is to kill them through the antichrist and false prophet that we see rise up in the next chapter.

Chapter 9

The Antichrist and the False Prophet

There is a lot going all at the same time during the last 3-1/2 years of the tribulation. We have the two witnesses preaching, prophesying and sending plagues in chapter 11. We have Satan trying to destroy the Jews, then God miraculously flies them to the desert, and we have both the antichrist and the false prophet doing what they are going to do as described here in chapter 13. This chapter is full of important details regarding these two. It starts with:

*“Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea. It had ten horns and seven heads, and there was a crown on each horn. A name against God was written on each head. This beast looked like a leopard, with feet like a bear's feet and a mouth like a lion's mouth. **And the dragon gave the beast all of his power and his throne and great authority.***

To note here first is where the antichrist, (otherwise known as the beast), has come from. It says he comes up out of the sea. What we know about the sea in Revelation is, it describes peoples, races and nations, so it's not talking about the actual ocean sea. In Rev.17:15 coming up, it tells us this: *“Then the angel said to me, The waters that you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, races, nations, and languages”*

What this means here in chapter 13, is that the antichrist likely rises out of a democratic nation, which many have believed for centuries. However, before we try to identify which nation, we have

some more to cover; we will address that possible nation identification more in chapter 17&18. Continuing in the passage:

“One of the heads of the beast looked as if it had been killed by a wound, but this death wound was healed. Then the whole world was amazed and followed the beast. People worshiped the dragon because he had given his power to the beast. And they also worshiped the beast, asking, “Who is like the beast? Who can make war against it?”

This head wound event, which is mentioned no less than three times in this chapter, is obviously very important in identifying who the antichrist will be. Since this has not yet happened, it may be a complete waste of time trying to figure out whom he is or will be, even though it is interesting to ponder.

Though we have some reasonable clues and descriptions in both here and Daniel to narrow the field down, we still can't say unequivocally who he is yet. Also, the early church was not looking to identify who the antichrist was. They knew then as we know that many antichrists have come and gone and the spirit of antichrist is a constant.

Let us also note how easily the world is deceived here, as well as the worship of not only the antichrist, but also Satan himself who gives the antichrist his power and authority. People are now beginning to worship the both of them in mass numbers and out in the open.

“The beast was allowed to say proud words and words against God, and it was allowed to use its power for **forty-two months**. It used its mouth to speak against God, against God's name, against the place where God lives, and against all those who live in heaven. It was given power to make war against God's holy people and to defeat them. It was given power over every tribe, people, language, and nation. And all who live on earth will worship the beast—all the people since the beginning of the world whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life. The Lamb is the One who was killed.

Important here is how the antichrist is allowed to do these things because God is letting him do so. It is to fulfill God's purposes and prophecy itself. Again, we see the 42-month period, which is 3-1/2 years, where all these things are going on with the others and all at the same time. Make no mistake about it, God would love to have these people repent of their sins and be saved as he wishes for all mankind, but the fact is they won't, instead they will be deceived and follow their own evil ways.

*“Anyone who has ears should listen: If you are to be a prisoner, then you will be a prisoner. If you are to be killed with the sword, then you will be killed with the sword. **This means that God's holy people must have patience and faith.***

This is specifically speaking about the tribulation saints and how they will need faith and patience to make it through the end to gain their Salvation. Most will die by beheading and we will see that coming up in a few chapters. Next we will see the description of the false prophet:

*“Then I saw another beast **coming up out of the earth**. It had two horns like a lamb, but it spoke like a dragon.”*

Very important here is where this beast is coming from in comparison to the antichrist. It is not out of the “sea of humanity” like the antichrist, but it is instead it's out of the earth. You might not think that it is that important a detail until you find out what the Muslim people today are doing and believing about this.

The 12th imam otherwise known as the Mahdi, is believed to be hiding today in *the Jamkaran* well in Iran, which is a place of pilgrimage for believers who drop their requests for help into the well in the hope that the Imam will read them and come to their aid.

They think these letters will eventually conjure him up and they may get their wish soon. Therefore, the twelfth imam who the Muslims are looking to be their messiah or prophet may just be the one who comes up literally out from the earth from this well. This would explain

a lot and would even include why the tribulation saints will be beheaded for their faith as the Muslims choice method of death for the infidels is beheading. Could the false prophet be a Muslim? It is all but certain.

*“This beast stands before the first beast and uses the same power the first beast has. By this power it makes everyone living on earth worship the first beast, **who had the death wound that was healed.** And the second beast does great miracles so that it even makes fire come down from heaven to earth while people are watching. **It fools those who live on earth by the miracles it has been given the power to do.** It does these miracles to serve the first beast.*

*The second beast orders people to make an idol to honor the first beast, **the one that was wounded by the deadly sword but sprang to life again.** The second beast was given power to give life to the idol of the first one so that the idol could speak. **And the second beast was given power to command all who will not worship the image of the beast to be killed.** The second beast also forced all people, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to have a mark on their right hand or on their forehead. No one could buy or sell without this mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of its name. This takes wisdom. **Let the one who has understanding find the meaning of the number, which is the number of a person. Its number is 666.***

The Godless people will make some sort of image or statue of the antichrist, and then the demonic powers will have the image or statue speak and anyone who will not worship this idol will be killed just like in Daniel's day. Then the famous 'mark of the beast' we have all heard about, is instituted and anyone who does not accept it, will be killed and martyred. This group will be the last of the Martyrs and the fifth seal will be completely fulfilled at that point.

The only way to survive at this point as far as food goes, will be

to accept the mark without which, no one will be able to buy or sell anything. Now the last verse in this chapter is important and has been misconstrued by some. This verse says, ***“Let the one who has understanding find the meaning of the number, which is the number of a person. Its number is 666.”***

Many think that this is telling us to go and calculate the antichrist’s name numerically, but that is not quite what it’s doing. Once again, right in the passage we see an answer to a symbol or mystery. It tells us first to *“find the meaning of the number”* then immediately tells us what the meaning is: *“which is the number of a person” and is 666.*

The reason it is telling us this way is because of how many times the word “beast” is mentioned in the passage. If we were not told at the end here that the beast is actually a man, we might want to think it is an actual animal like beast of some kind. In addition, it is telling us that they are both men. The number 6 in the bible always denotes humankind and the number 7 always refers to God and his perfection. Some may think this is too simplistic, but the real identifier will not be numerical, it will be by the head wound assassination attempt, which is mentioned three times!

The 144, 000 in Heaven

Chapter 14 of Revelation starts us out with us seeing the same 144,000 special Jewish evangelists that we saw earlier at the sixth seal.

*“Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb standing on Mount Zion. **With him were one hundred forty-four thousand people** who had his name and his Father’s name written on their foreheads. And I heard a sound from heaven like the noise of flooding water and like the sound of loud thunder. The sound I heard was like people playing harps. And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. **No one could learn***

the new song except the one hundred forty-four thousand who had been bought from the earth. *These are the ones who did not do sinful things with women, because they kept themselves pure. They follow the Lamb every place he goes. **These one hundred forty-four thousand** were bought from among the people of the earth as people to be offered to God and the Lamb. They were not guilty of telling lies; they are without fault.*

I highlighted the 144,000 because it is mentioned 3 times in the passage. Because it is the dominant detail, it is the most important in that it is telling us this is no one else, but the same 144,000 we previously saw at the sixth seal. It is not a different group of people.

Some think they are beheaded by the antichrist, but it is not likely that they do and the reason is, the beheadings do not occur until later in this chapter after this group is already seen in heaven. It is more likely that they get "mini-Raptured" in their own separate event, because it does not make too much sense to protect them only to be eventually beheaded. If they are so be it, but because no death for them is specifically mentioned as it is with so many others, we are not going to assume that here.

The Three important Angels who preach

Chapter 14 continues with three angels that are proclaiming extremely important instructions and truth: *"Then I saw another angel flying high in the air. He had the eternal Good News to preach to those who live on earth—to every nation, tribe, language, and people. He preached in a loud voice, **"Fear God and give him praise, because the time has come for God to judge all people. So worship God who made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the springs of water."***

If we recall that Jesus said in Matthew 24 and Luke 21 that the Gospel would be preached to everyone and then the end would come, so

then, this is that time in the future that he was referring to. An angel fulfills it here and after this, there is only approximately one week left to the seven-year tribulation and we will see why this is in just a bit. In fact, everything from here through chapter 19 occurs within the last week or so before the “battle” of Armageddon is fought.

Also, note what is considered to be the Gospel here in Revelation: *“Fear God and give him praise.”* This is straight to the point. This message of “fear God” is rarely heard in our churches today, but that is the Gospel broken down to its base level. The problem during the tribulation will not be because there is no faith. Everyone has already seen Jesus at the sixth seal. Therefore, the problem is the refusal to fear the God they saw earlier. In addition, they have now put their trust in the antichrist instead of fearing God.

“Then the second angel followed the first angel and said, “Ruined, ruined is the great city of Babylon! She made all the nations drink the wine of the anger of her adultery.”

We will see coming up shortly who the modern day Babylon likely is and what will happen to her.

*“Then a third angel followed the first two angels, saying in a loud voice: If anyone worships the beast and his idol and gets the beast's mark on the forehead or on the hand, that one also will drink the wine of God's anger, which is prepared with all its strength in the cup of his anger. **And that person will be put in pain with burning sulfur before the holy angels and the Lamb. And the smoke from their burning pain will rise forever and ever. There will be no rest, day or night, for those who worship the beast and his idol or who get the mark of his name.**”*

This is an extremely important passage on many levels. First, the angel is making it very clear to everyone on the earth that if you accept the mark of the beast, you will be sent to Hell for an eternity of torment. Another thing that is clear is, the mark of the beast is not likely instituted until the last half of the tribulation period, because that

is when chapter 13 told us it started and this angel is warning of it here, not beforehand. Some will say it is out today in one form or another, but that cannot be true as we see here.

In addition, we see proof here that Hell is a place of eternal torment, not just a giant incinerator where the soul is burned up and no longer exists. This is a growing false teaching in some circles today among some who call themselves Christians. It says that person will be **“put in pain with burning sulfur and the smoke of their pain will rise forever,”** as well as they will have no rest from the torment.

*“This means God's holy people **must be patient**. They must obey God's commands **and keep their faith in Jesus**. Then I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write this: **Blessed are the dead who die from now on in the Lord.** The Spirit says, Yes, they will rest from their hard work, and the reward of all they have done stays with them.”*

Another important passage here because it is setting up what is about to happen to the Holy people of God during the tribulation, otherwise known as tribulation saints. If they have persevered this far and not given up their faith, they are about to be redeemed through death, which will be a victory for them.

The Earth Is Harvested

*“Then I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and sitting on the white cloud was One who looked like a Son of Man. He had a gold crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. Then another angel came out of the temple and called out in a loud voice to the One who was sitting on the cloud, **Take your sickle and harvest from the earth, because the time to harvest has come, and the fruit of the earth is ripe. So the One who was sitting on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested.**”*

This is not as hard to figure out as it may appear at first. We just saw in the previous passage that *“blessed are those who die from now on in the Lord”* and we see here a harvest of sorts, but it is not a harvest of crops. Instead, it is a harvest of souls.

The destroying terror that Jesus spoke of in Matthew 24:15 is instituted here. The antichrist sets it up in both the temple and likely all over the world as well. This terror will likely be guillotines to behead those who would not accept the mark. We see proof of this later where there is a picture of those who had been beheaded in heaven. In Revelation 20:4 it reads in the NIV: *“I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. **And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded** because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”*

We also saw in chapter 13 the order to kill all people who will not accept the mark of the beast, so that is what is going on here at this harvest. In the next passage, we are given a clue to how many are beheaded.

“Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. And then another angel, who has power over the fire, came from the altar. This angel called to the angel with the sharp sickle, saying, Take your sharp sickle and gather the bunches of grapes from the earth's vine, because its grapes are ripe. Then the angel swung his sickle over the earth.

*He gathered the earth's grapes and **threw them into the great winepress of God's anger. They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the winepress as high as horses' bridles for a distance of about one hundred eighty miles.**”*

Whenever we are given details like numbers and distances it is

always important. Some associate this bloodletting here, with the battle of Armageddon in chapter 19, but if we do that then we are going out of the order it was originally given in. This blood bath here is speaking of the saints being beheaded, not Armageddon.

Do not let the anger of God's winepress language distract you. God is angry, but just think about your own kids for a moment. If you had to have them killed or see them get killed would you be angry about it? Of course, you would. That is all that is going on here. Now let us look at a calculation on how many people have just been beheaded because we are given some clues.

A horse's bridle is approximately four to six feet high. Going with the more conservative side of things, we will go with four feet. Therefore, we have blood flowing 180 miles out by four feet high.

While I understand this is a rather morbid thought, it is very important and worthy of some time given to it, so we can estimate the number of people who will not accept the mark and be killed because of it. It also gives us an idea how many are saved through the last seven years, and that should give those left behind hope. A person has approximately one gallon of blood in their bodies and one gallon of blood takes up approximately one eighth of one cubic foot of space.

So four cubic feet high which is how high a horse's bridle is, is approximately 30 people (in gallons of blood). There are 5,280 feet in a mile and the scripture says this blood will flow approximately 180 miles out. $5,280 \text{ feet} \times 180 = 950,400 \text{ feet}$. Multiply this number by four feet high = $3,801,601$. Then we must multiply this number by 30 people = $114,048,030$ (one hundred fourteen million) people and this is a minimum. Now this only if it was in a one foot wide path four feet high the whole length of the 180 miles.

We know that this is not probable and the path or radius from the point of this bloodletting will be much wider than that. Regardless if there are many locations for these executions or if everyone was brought into one central location from around the world to a location

outside the city, it will not matter. The 180 mile and four feet deep number we are given in scripture is likely cumulative as well.

The simplest way to know how far one gallon of fluid would spread out when it is spilled out is to simply do it, but it would have to be on a surface that does not absorb liquid for the most accurate reading. I tested this myself with water, over asphalt, which does absorb fluid, and it still spilled out into an area that is over six feet wide and six feet in length. So at just six feet across, it would be 675 million people and this would be the on the minimum side of things, which is why I think we are looking at around one billion people will likely be killed by the antichrist at this mass execution of people. These are those who will not accept his mark. However, even if it is not this many, the bare minimum is 114,000,000, which is still a very large number.

Couple this with at least two billion people killed (one third of the earth's population which is currently at 7 billion according to the U.S. Census bureau as of Dec. 2011), at the sixth trumpet by the demonic army. Then probably another one billion or so Raptured at the sixth seal, and this killing by the antichrist at chapter fourteen and fifteen, and we are already upwards of four billion+ killed since the beginning of the seven year tribulation.

Now add to that a number which can't be fully known, but has to be significant the people who were killed at the rapture from the earthquake and the stars falling to the earth, from the water turned bitter, ships being destroyed, the seven thunders, and various other judgments. It is not unreasonable to assume that only one to two billion people are left on the earth at this point.

In the next chapter, we see proof of this harvest here, as another group of people is seen in heaven and we are told that they won victory over the antichrist. This is much like the group of people we saw at the sixth seal in heaven. When we see language like this, we must look at what happen beforehand to get this group of people to be

seen in heaven later.

Chapter 10

The Beheaded seen in heaven--Then the end comes

Chapter fifteen of Revelation describes seven more angels bringing the last seven disasters, which signals the end of this age, then the last 1000 years of peace starts under Jesus as Lord and ruler forevermore. Before they do, John sees *another* multitude in heaven to add to the other bigger multitude already described at the sixth seal in chapter 7, and the 144,000 in chapter fourteen. This, like at the sixth seal, is definite proof of what just happened before this. This multitude we are told are the ones who 'won the victory' over the antichrist and his idol and the 'number of his name,' meaning they did not accept the mark and were killed. These are the ones who were just described in chapter 14, verse 14 as being thrown into the 'winepress' of God's anger.

If we were to take things out of the literal and sequential original order they were meant to be in the way some do today, it would cause confusion and is why there are so many differing opinions on when these things take place.

*"Then I saw another wonder in heaven that was great and amazing. There were seven angels bringing seven disasters. These are the last disasters, because after them, God's anger is finished. I saw what looked like a sea of glass mixed with fire. **All of those who had won the victory over the beast and his idol and over the number of his name were standing by the sea of glass.** They had harps that God had given them. They sang the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb:*

"You do great and wonderful things, Lord God Almighty. Everything the Lord does is right and true, King of the nations. Everyone will respect you, Lord, and will honor you. Only you are holy. All the nations will come and worship you, because the right things you have done are now made known."

Now we again need to realize here, that God was not angry with

them in the way we normally think of God being angry, however they did have to pay the ultimate price because they were not ready to go at the Rapture. Again, if you had children that you had to discipline, we know it is not a pleasant thing and there is usually some anger involved, though righteous.

However, at the very least you would be angry that you had to get to the point of discipline in the first place, because if they had obeyed the first time, the discipline would not have been necessary. There are consequences to not being ready for the Rapture as we can see, but at the same time, this is also a reward because they finally get to go to heaven. We also know that to be absent from the body as Christians, is to be immediately present with the Lord.

“After this I saw that the temple (the Tent of the Agreement) in heaven was opened. And the seven angels bringing the seven disasters came out of the temple. They were dressed in clean, shining linen and wore golden bands tied around their chests. Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls filled with the anger of God, who lives forever and ever. The temple was filled with smoke from the glory and the power of God, and no one could enter the temple until the seven disasters of the seven angels were finished.”

The seven Bowls

Chapter sixteen starts with the first angel pouring out his bowl of disaster and it caused ugly and painful sores to come upon all who accepted the mark of the antichrist.

*“Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, go and pour out the seven bowls of God's anger on the earth. **The first angel left** and poured out his bowl on the land. Then ugly and painful sores came upon all those who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his idol”*

Also, to recognize here is, **there are no holy people left** at

this point as they all have just been killed by decapitation. The only ones left at this point are a remnant of Jews being protected in the desert still, and possibly the half in Jerusalem that were not taken captives as described in Zechariah 14:2, when the antichrist went in to trample the city for the last 3-1/2 years and taken half the city captive.

It is also possible that there are a small number of people, who tried to hide from the whole 'mark of the beast' ordeal in the wilderness areas around the world, but this will be a very small number and also they would not have taken the mark. We are also told in Isaiah 13:12, that there will be very few people left alive after all of this. This means relatively few. Out of seven billion people that we have now, even a few million would be considered few in comparison.

*“**The second angel** poured out his bowl on the sea, and it became blood like that of a dead man, and every living thing in the sea died.”*

This will be a devastating blow, which will do away with one major food supply as well as destroy all ships and everyone on them.

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

"Holy One, you are the One who is and who was. You are right to decide to punish these evil people. They have poured out the blood of your holy people and your prophets. So now you have given them blood to drink as they deserve. And I heard a voice coming from the altar saying: Yes, Lord God Almighty, the way you punish evil people is right and fair."

What we have to realize here is once all the water is poisoned everyone will die within one week or so, because we can't live much past a week without water, so this is in fact the very end. The time between this and Armageddon will have to be very short.

*“**The fourth angel** poured out his bowl on the sun, and he was given power to burn the people with fire. They were burned by*

*the great heat, and they cursed the name of God, who had control over these disasters. **But the people refused to change their hearts and lives and give glory to God.***

This shows an incredible, merciful, loving God giving people chance after chance to be saved right until the very end. No one can ever say after this God is not fair or merciful here.

*“**The fifth angel** poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and darkness covered its kingdom. People gnawed their tongues because of the pain. **They also cursed the God of heaven because of their pain and the sores they had, but they refused to change their hearts and turn away from the evil things they did.**”*

Even now, they are still digging their heels in and trusting in themselves along with their evil leaders.

*“**The sixth angel** poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates so that the water in the river was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the east to come. Then I saw three evil spirits that looked 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. These evil spirits are the spirits of demons, which have power to do miracles. They go out to the kings of the whole world to gather them together for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.”*

This is dried up to make way for the kings of the east to come and cross it so they can fight against Jesus and his saints at the 'battle of Armageddon,' which is actually an annihilation, not a battle, since those on God's side can't be killed. John sees three evil spirits come out of the mouths of Satan, the Antichrist and the false prophet and they look like frogs to John. Then they went out to the kings of the earth to call and gather them to battle at the place called 'Megiddo' or Armageddon. We also see language like this in Ezekiel 38:4, where God says he will put hooks in their Jaws to lead them to this battle.

A commercial break from Jesus

Now in Rev. 15:16, Jesus in a complete break in the “action,” reminds the reader to be ready for his return because he is coming as a thief. He does this three additional times after this as well. He says here: *“Listen! I will come as a thief comes! Blessed are those who stay awake and keep their clothes on so that they will not walk around naked and have people see their shame.”*

This simply means that just like in the letters he sent to the churches, that those who are not ready would have to endure all this testing that is coming to the earth, but those who are ready can escape this testing *beforehand*.

Some might think here that perhaps the Rapture has not happened yet up until this point or maybe it is a post tribulation Rapture because of this verse. This is incorrect, because there are no Holy ones at this point left to Rapture, plus we have the escape verses that tell us some are leaving early. Jesus is simply warning all who have lived in the last two thousand years to be ready, for no one knows when their end is, and the ones who “*keep their clothes on*” will not have people gazing upon their shameful sinfulness. Today is the day of Salvation, for no one knows if tomorrow they will be here or not.

Then in verse sixteen without missing a beat, we see the three evil spirits have gone out to call the Godless to fight against Jesus himself at the place that is called Armageddon in Hebrew. *“Then the evil spirits gathered the kings together to the place that is called Armageddon in the Hebrew language.”*

This has to happen relatively quickly in relation to the third angel bowl, which ruined the water; otherwise, everyone would die from lack of water, so we really are looking at the end of the end here, with the new beginning of Jesus earthly rule just around the corner.

“The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air. Then a

loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, "**It is finished!**" Then there were flashes of lightning, noises, thunder, and a big earthquake—the worst earthquake that has ever happened since people have been on earth. The great city split into three parts, **and the cities of the nations were destroyed**. And God remembered the sins of Babylon the Great, so he gave that city the cup filled with the wine of his terrible anger. **Then every island ran away, and mountains disappeared**. Giant hailstones, each weighing about a hundred pounds, fell from the sky upon people. **People cursed God** for the disaster of the hail, because this disaster was so terrible.

Another great earthquake occurs that is so great, the mountains and islands of the earth **are all leveled and disappear**. There has never been so great an earthquake since the earth has been made. **All of the cities of the world are also destroyed**. Then giant hailstones weighing 100 lbs. fall upon people and kill some of them. People again curse God because of this plague, but not all are killed yet, because Armageddon still has to occur in chapter nineteen.

Notice how every city falls here, so those who think America is not seen in prophecy are being a little shortsighted. We obviously are included in this, though not named specifically. The only reason we were not named, is that we were not in existence until just 200 years ago.

The Beautiful Prostitute?

In the beginning of chapter 17, one of the angels with the seven bowls shows John the punishment that will be given to the “great prostitute” which is a symbol of a certain evil nation and capital city who pedals filth, affluence and indulgences of all kinds throughout the world. This influence is felt all over the world and causes all the kings of the earth to sin with her.

“Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came

and spoke to me. He said, "Come, and I will show you the punishment that will be given to **the great prostitute, the one sitting over many waters.** The kings of the earth sinned sexually with her, and the people of the earth became drunk from the wine of her sexual sin."

It then looks like there is a short interlude between here where we see the prostitute being judged and the commencement of the battle of Armageddon. However, in reality this is just describing how when the massive earthquake, the prostitute, modern day Babylon will be all be destroyed and all the cities of the earth will be judged at the same time as well. This is just spelling out in more detail the punishment for the "mother" who has given birth to all this degradation that we have today.

For those who say America is not in end times bible prophecies, I part from them here but I am not the only one echoing this. We are also told that the woman, who is the prostitute, **is the city that rules over the kings of the earth,** in verse eighteen coming up in just a bit. So the prostitute/woman herself is a symbol for a certain literal future city. We are told that it is Babylon, but Babylon itself throughout scripture has also been used as a symbol just like Egypt and Sodom has been a symbol of sin, oppression and the old life that Christians are not to go back to, or indulge in. Therefore, though this symbol might not be as explicit as others might be, this is not that difficult to figure out, if we are in tune with what is going on in the world today.

Some think that Babylon here is also a symbol for the entire world system which has become polluted. While there is some truth in this, there is still one city and nation leading it and is to blame for giving birth to it in the first place.

So who is this prostitute, could it be America? Is this is even a possibility? Let us look at the evidence. In the past, many biblical scholars some of which are no longer with us, have told us that some of

these symbols especially here in this portion of Revelation, symbolize a much larger religious system, or a system of antichrist and or a financial money system, which will be in place and be running things in the end. Though there is some truth in this as well, it has also has been very vague.

Given the information they had at the time, who could blame them for being so general in scope and with such lack of specificity? Who could imagine just back 50 years ago that America would become what she has today? She has turned away from her relational roots with God, which what made the U.S. great at one time. Today we are not the envy of the world because of our morals as we once were, instead we have now become the envy because of our debauchery and wealth, which people want. Unfortunately, other countries, whether we will admit it or not, still want to be like us not realizing we are not what we used to be, which was for the most part a decent responsible people, with biblically based morals.

If some of these biblical scholars of the past were alive today to see exactly what is unfolding now, I think they would have been much more specific in their predictions. But they did the best they could in the times which they lived, because of the information they had then. However, today things have changed drastically and very fast. We will see more proof of all of this in the next chapter.

Chapter 11

The Woman on the Animal

Continuing in chapter 17 we read: “*Then the angel carried me away by the Spirit to the desert. There I saw a woman sitting on a red beast. It was covered with names against God written on it, and it had seven heads and ten horns. The woman was dressed in purple and red and was shining with the gold, precious jewels, and pearls she was wearing. She had a golden cup in her hand, a cup filled with evil things and the uncleanness of her sexual sin. **On her forehead a title was written that was secret. This is what was written: The great Babylon mother of prostitutes and of the evil things of the earth.***”

Being the mother of anything denotes not only giving birth to offspring, but also to influencing the children that the mother birthed. There is no country on the face of the earth, which currently has more worldwide influence than the U.S. Some influence we have had was good, but others such as spoken about here and especially lately, are not good at all. The Muslim nations or others, did not peddle pornography and other indulgences to us; it is unfortunately to our shame the other way around.

In addition, ask yourself what one city has had the most influence financially over the rest of the world, for the last many decades? Perhaps you will come to the same conclusion others and I have, that New York City is that city and the U.S. is that country that has had influence like no other. We only have to go back as far as 9-11-01 to a time where America began to be judged and punished by her enemies. This of course happened because God allowed it to happen, if not causing is directly through evil people. We see many times in

scripture where God used the enemies of Israel to bring them warning, punishment and judgment.

We can see that in this book of Revelation, God uses evil men and spirits to judge and punish other evil men, nations and peoples. We can think all day long that America is as pure as the wind driven snow, but the reality is, while we might have been this way in the past or at least more so, we are no longer there and we have long abandoned what we once held dear. Our moral standing in the world which was based on the Ten Commandments and that once stood as a beacon for the entire world has now become polluted. The only way to delay what is inevitable is to cry out to God with a repentant heart and perhaps he will give us a little more time. However, talk without action is cheap.

Modern day historic Babylon which is still in Iraq today, has no such influence as the U.S. does and though they are being rebuilt somewhat as we speak, it is because of the U.S. that they are doing so. We are still in control of that as well, and even though our troops are being pulled out, we will still have bases there for a long time to come.

In verse two that we just read, we see that the kings of the earth sinned sexually with her. We need to ask ourselves how can anyone sin sexually with a city, which is an inanimate object? Because it is not just a city, it is also a spirit, system, a network and the nation who created the filth to distribute to everyone else. The indulgent country that is and will be in charge now and in the future, sits on many waters, which simply means its influence is felt worldwide. Just think about the internet for a moment and ask yourself who started it?

It is said the U.S. Government did many decades ago now and it has spread to everyone, everywhere and it is always on. Of course the internet is not inherently evil on its own, but what we can access through it certainly can be. As we read this, millions are sinning right now looking at images that God never intended them to see. Millions are addicted to internet pornography, while at the same time Jesus is saying especially to the church, come out of her my people and stop

sinning!

If there is a city today that most resembles the ancient city of Babylon is certainly N.Y.C., in New York. There are many reasons for this with the most important being the financial control that it and the USA proper wields. So which nation has more influence upon all the others right now? The U.S. does and has for some time.

“Then I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of God's holy people and with the blood of those who were killed because of their faith in Jesus.

*When I saw the woman, I was very amazed. Then the angel said to me, “Why are you amazed? **I will tell you the secret of this woman and the beast she rides—the one with seven heads and ten horns.**”*

Here we go again where we have an angel telling John what the “symbol” means.

“The beast you saw was once alive but is not alive now. But soon it will come up out of the bottomless pit and go away to be destroyed. There are people who live on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life since the beginning of the world. They will be amazed when they see the beast, because he was once alive, is not alive now, but will come again.”

This is simply talking about the antichrist and his rising back from death or near death with the head wound event. We already saw in chapter 13 as well, that the beast is the antichrist. Some will also say here, that the names of those who have not been written in the book of life since the beginning of the world were predestined for Hell. This is not true, as they had the same chance to repent that everyone else has. This is simply showing us that God foreknew what they would eventually choose. He wants everyone to be saved, but they chose the wrong path and stayed on it.

*“You need a wise mind to understand this. The seven heads on the beast are seven mountains where the woman sits. **And they are***

seven kings.”

This is not as difficult as it may seem on the surface. Some want to key on the seven mountains here and say because Rome is surrounded by seven mountains it must be Rome, but this is not what it is saying. In fact, the more important thing is that the seven mountains ***are also seven kings***. Therefore, the symbolic mountains are simply symbolizing literal kings.

Remember now Rome, though it may have some religious influence, does not nearly have the influence that the U.S does in many more aspects. In addition, Rome and the Catholic Church do not peddle pornography the way the U.S. has and does. Did they have a problem with some priests? Of course, but it was the exception not the norm and we could easily point at several famous protestant pastors and preachers who have gone down the same road. Therefore, this is not likely speaking of Rome. Let us continue with the importance of the kings.

*“Five of the kings **have already been destroyed**, This is obviously referencing kings and nations in the past. “One of the kings lives now.” This is likely referencing a king that was alive when John was seeing the vision. Then he speaks of a future king “And another has not yet come. When he comes, he must stay a short time.” It does not really matter much who these past kings were as much as the future king that this next passage is referring to, who is the antichrist.*

“The beast that was once alive, but is not alive now, is also an eighth king. He belongs to the first seven kings, and he will go away to be destroyed.”

The fact the antichrist belongs to the first seven kings, is simply saying that the major leaders of the past who were in control of an ungodly world system then, and who also were controlled by the spirit of antichrist that has always been with us, is still here now and will be in control in the future. Again, realize God is still in complete control of all of it, he is simply letting this happen to serve his purposes and plan

as well as fulfilling prophecy.

Then we see another reference to future kings who will rule during the great tribulation period along with the antichrist.

"The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet begun to rule, but they will receive power to rule with the beast for one hour."

The one hour here is obviously speaking of a period of time that is more than just 60 minutes; instead, it is the entire seven-year tribulation period as we previously discussed. Remember in Rev. 3:10, we saw that the faithful followers of Jesus will be "kept from" this **hour** of trial and testing, by escaping it early. We also saw at the seventh seal a period of silence in heaven for about a half hour, or half, this time which will be 3-1/2 years.

We can easily see how this passage is also speaking of future world powers and leaders because it says they will rule with the beast. We are then told what their purpose is:

"All ten of these kings have the same purpose, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will defeat them, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings. He will defeat them with his called, chosen, and faithful followers."

This is fulfilled in chapter 19, coming up in just a bit.

"Then the angel said to me, "The waters that you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, races, nations, and languages."

Again, we are told what one of the symbols mean. So while we can see that a system of antichrist is at work here, which entails religion, financial and social aspects of all peoples, there is also **one nation** in charge of it all as well as one leader who is in charge of that one country. The antichrist will not just be acting alone; instead, he will have incredible military might to back his actions so he can enforce all that he will.

However, let us not ever just assume anything without actual evidence. It may be easy to label the Pope as the antichrist or false prophet and Catholicism as the one world religion, but we need some meat on those bones. The antichrist will not be purporting family values and the evils of Gay marriage, the way the Pope does today. The Pope by the way, has come under heavy criticism and attacks by the Godless today because of his stance.

There are more reasons that the “one world religion” if in fact there will be, will not likely be Catholicism. It is Islam that is noted for beheading the infidels as they call them, not Christians or Catholics. If there were to be a one-world religion, it would likely be Islam, not Catholicism. However, more likely than even Islam being the final religion, is that whatever religion you want to practice besides Christianity, will likely be ok. We can already see this today where every religion is gaining tolerance except for Christianity. We also see the direct worship of the antichrist and Satan himself here in Revelation, so it is possible that all religions will be thrown under the bus so to speak and only the worship of the antichrist will be allowed at some point.

This does not automatically mean the antichrist will have to be 100% Muslim, though the false prophet will likely be.

“The ten horns and the beast you saw will hate the prostitute. They will take everything she has and leave her naked. They will eat her body and burn her with fire. **God made the ten horns want to carry out his purpose** by agreeing to give the beast their power to rule, until what God has said comes about. **The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth.”**

This passage alone proves that this is more than just a system at work and in charge, but a single specific leader and specific nation. The last "big ten" leaders of the world will hate the prostitute. Think just for a moment what this means. Why would they hate a system or

nation that has brought them wealth and power? How could they destroy a system, and nation, which they have been a part of? Why would they want to? First, we see that God made them do it. In the natural, they would not want to “bite the hand” that has fed them and given them much of what they had, but we are nearing the end here. This is in fact the last week before the battle of Armageddon.

In addition, the woman is a city, not a nation, though she is the most prominent city of all. God will have them destroy her, just as we saw a precursor of this on 9-11-01. The amazing thing is they will be sad about this after they have done it. We will see this in a bit. Nevertheless, a question some might have here is, is it possible that the antichrist could even turn his back on his own country and people at the very end if he is from that same country? The answer is of course yes. Since we know from the descriptions in Daniel that he is out for himself only, we cannot disqualify him from being from the same country that the prostitute is.

America's influence and affluence, is such, where even the so-called poor among us, are very rich as compared to the real poor of third world countries. We have products and inventions of every kind to make peoples' lives more comfortable and though that is not a sin by itself, it has lead to idle hands and idle minds wandering to places God never intended for people to go.

We also need to realize the whole world will eventually be punished as well, so no one will be skating out on the punishment that is coming. It simply is saying here, that the brunt of the punishment goes to the controller and mother of all the degradation.

We need to only look at the scriptures to see this is talking about a city, a country, a network and a system that has influence over the rest of the world. The bible says it is Babylon, not Rome; however, it likely represents the Babylon of old in today's modern world. Bottom line is whatever city it is; it will be the center of commerce, pornography and anti-God influence of all sorts. Right now, you would

be hard pressed to give this award to any city but New York City and America. Could this change? It could, but let us remember too, that there are much-respected modern day prophets who have foreseen fires coming to NYC, the surrounding tri-state areas and the world, for some time now. The chance that the U.S. will be "dethroned" from its status is highly unlikely.

The fall of Babylon

Now in chapter 18, we see a continuance of sorts and we see another great angel comes down into the darkness of the earth, (because of the bowl of darkness that was poured on everyone), and he brightens the earth with his light and proclaims in a loud voice:

“Ruined is the city of Babylon. She has become a home for demons and a prison for every evil spirit. She is ruined because of the evil desires of people to sin sexually and because the kings of the earth sinned with her and they also sinned by growing rich from her great wealth and luxury.”

Now we know being rich is not a sin all by itself, but it is when it becomes your only desire and love. While many in the world go to bed hungry, we here in America are fat, selfish and feel as though we are entitled to more. In verse four, we see another voice from heaven saying to all who will listen: ***“come out of her my people, so you will not share in her sins and receive the disasters that will come to her.”***

This is like another "mini-commercial" from Jesus, much like in 15:16. What is interesting here is, there are no holy people left at this point and this city has already fallen as are the rest of the cities of the world. Therefore, God is speaking here **to us now** to come out of her and not to wait to come out of her when she is being judged, for it will be too late then.

We know a city is also an inanimate object, so the city itself is

not sinning, but it is the people in it, around it, and part of it, that are sinning. So even though N.Y.C. is likely the great prostitute and will be eventually burned by the “ten horns,” it will not excuse the others who sinned with her as well. Everyone will be punished, not just the whore.

“Her sins have piled up as high as the sky, and God has not forgotten the wrongs she has done. Give that city the same as she gave to others. Pay her back twice as much as she did. Prepare wine for her that is twice as strong as the wine she prepared for others.

She gave herself much glory and rich living. Give her that much suffering and sadness.

*She says to herself, 'I am a queen sitting on my throne. I am not a widow; I will never be sad.' **So these disasters will come to her in one day: death, and crying, and great hunger, and she will be destroyed by fire, because the Lord God who judges her is powerful.***

Verse eight it says these disasters will come to her in one day and she will be destroyed by fire. In fact, in the next verse it says this ruin will come in one hour of that one day. So all these cities will fall and everyone will lose everything they had in the span of one hour. Then the rest of the chapter we see the people who were addicted to the indulgences of this earth, will mourn as they see everything that mattered to them burned up in one hour.

Therefore, this will no doubt make them hate God even more, because he put it in their hearts to do it, but now they will be even angrier than they were before and they will be looking to get even with God in the next chapter. The rest of this chapter is simply describing how sad the people of earth are, even though they are the ones who destroyed her. It is a dissertation of extreme sadness and depression.

“The kings of the earth who sinned sexually with her and shared her wealth will see the smoke from her burning. Then they will cry and be sad because of her death. They will be afraid of her suffering and stand far away and say: "Terrible! How terrible for you,

great city, powerful city of Babylon, because your punishment has come in one hour!" And the merchants of the earth will cry and be sad about her, because now there is no one to buy their cargoes of gold, silver, jewels, pearls, fine linen, purple cloth, silk, red cloth; all kinds of citron wood and all kinds of things made from ivory, expensive wood, bronze, iron, and marble; cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, olive oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle, sheep, horses, carriages, slaves, and human lives.

The merchants will say, "Babylon, the good things you wanted are gone from you. All your rich and fancy things have disappeared. You will never have them again." The merchants who became rich from selling to her will be afraid of her suffering and will stand far away. They will cry and be sad and say: "Terrible! How terrible for the great city! She was dressed in fine linen, purple and red cloth, and she was shining with gold, precious jewels, and pearls! All these riches have been destroyed in one hour!"

Every sea captain, every passenger, the sailors, and all those who earn their living from the sea stood far away from Babylon. As they saw the smoke from her burning, they cried out loudly, "There was never a city like this great city!" **And they threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and being sad.** They said: "Terrible! How terrible for the great city! All the people who had ships on the sea became rich because of her wealth! But she has been destroyed in one hour! **Be happy because of this, heaven! Be happy, God's holy people and apostles and prophets! God has punished her because of what she did to you.**"

Then a powerful angel picked up a large stone, like one used for grinding grain, and threw it into the sea. He said: "In the same way, the great city of Babylon will be thrown down, and it will never be found again. The music of people playing harps and other instruments, flutes, and trumpets, will never be heard in you again. No workman doing any job will ever be found in you again. The sound

*of grinding grain will never be heard in you again. The light of a lamp will never shine in you again, and the voices of a bridegroom and bride will never be heard in you again. **Your merchants were the world's great people, and all the nations were tricked by your magic. You are guilty of the death of the prophets and God's holy people and all who have been killed on earth.***"

Of course, this is all very sad, but it is God avenging what was done to the Holy people as well at the same time bringing the prophetic scriptures to pass literally, as they must. Let us at least realize here even if one does not want to believe America is the whore of Babylon, she will be destroyed, as all will anyway.

We should not be upset because of these things, instead they must wake us up to what is happening around us and why. But even more important than this is, what is going to happen in the future. God is in control of all of this and it should make us want to worship him now, and not when it may be too late. This is why the bible says today is the day of Salvation, because no one knows precisely when his or her end will come. We will not all have to be a part of the prostitutes punishment, if we come of her "system" now.

There is a number of ways we can do this, but paramount is Holiness and being set apart from the rest of the world. If no one knows you are a Christian now, then you need to press in with God now, before it may be too late. Just going to church does not make anyone a Christian. Instead, we must have a personal relationship with our creator. Many people go to church, but then live as they please the rest of the week and thereby forgetting what they claim to purport.

Do not wait for an angel to be proclaiming the Gospel from the air to accept Jesus, if you are even given that chance, accept him and live for him now, because none of us knows when our time is up. If you are away from him because of distractions or sin, which you know you are engaged in; he is always waiting to accept back those who want forgiveness. But the sooner the better.

Chapter 12

The “Battle” of Armageddon

Chapter nineteen of Revelation is where Jesus finally comes and destroys all his enemies, at least the ones who have not been killed up until now, and accepted the mark of the antichrist. Before he does this, we see another quick description of what just happened in chapter 18, with people in Heaven Praising God because of the punishment of modern day Babylon right here in the beginning of chapter 19:

“After this vision and announcement I heard what sounded like a great many people in heaven saying: "Hallelujah! Salvation, glory, and power belong to our God, because his judgments are true and right. He has punished the prostitute who made the earth evil with her sexual sin. He has paid her back for the death of his servants. Again they said: "Hallelujah! She is burning, and her smoke will rise forever and ever.”

“Then the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures bowed down and worshiped God, who sits on the throne. They said: "Amen, Hallelujah!" Then a voice came from the throne, saying: "Praise our God, all you who serve him and all you who honor him, both small and great!" Then I heard what sounded like a great many people, like the noise of flooding water, and like the noise of loud thunder. The people were saying:

"Hallelujah! Our Lord God, the Almighty, rules. Let us rejoice and be happy and give God glory, because the wedding of the Lamb has come, and the Lamb's bride has made herself ready.

This is when the marriage supper of the Lamb occurs. It is not at the beginning of the tribulation period or at the Rapture as some believe. It is here towards the end of the tribulation period, right before the saints descend out of heaven to annihilate the antichrist and all who are against God.

While some call the battle of Armageddon a battle, in reality it

will be a total and complete annihilation of evil people with zero casualties suffered on God's side. The saints will all have their new spiritual bodies and will not be able to be killed or injured in any way. Then the next passage reads:

*"Fine linen, bright and clean, was given to her to wear." (The **fine linen means the good things done by God's holy people.**) And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who have been invited to the wedding meal of the Lamb!" And the angel said, "These are the true words of God."*

Those who think good deeds are not important in the life of a Christian are mistaken. If you have never done a good thing since you have become a Christian, then you might not be a real Christian. Paul said in 2 Cor.13:5, we must test ourselves to make sure we are **still in the faith.**

Though good works or faith alone does not save us, we obviously are saved **to do them.** James said faith without works is dead, in other words, you cannot be a Christian and never do a good work because they go hand in hand. Works without faith can't save anyone and faith without works is the same and instead is much like what the demons have. They believe in God, but they tremble, because they know that they are headed for the lake of fire with others who believe and live falsely. They once were eternally secure, but lost what they had because of rebellion.

"Then I bowed down at the angel's feet to worship him, but he said to me, "Do not worship me! I am a servant like you and your brothers and sisters who have the message of Jesus. Worship God, because the message about Jesus is the spirit that gives all prophecy."

Then John sees heaven opened again and before him was a white horse with Jesus riding upon it. So there are obviously animals in heaven (answering the age-old question), and we see more proof than just this here in other passages as well. He also sees the armies of heaven all on white horses as well and that is a large number of horses.

So now, we are getting into the actual physical second coming of Jesus Christ to earth as conqueror and ruler of all to set up his kingdom, finally.

The Rider on the White Horse

*Then I saw heaven opened, and there before me was a white horse. The rider on the horse is called Faithful and True, and he is right when he judges and makes war. His eyes are like burning fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him, which no one but himself knows. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven, dressed in fine linen, white and clean, were following him on white horses. Out of the rider's mouth comes a sharp sword that he will use to defeat the nations, **and he will rule them with a rod of iron.** He will crush out the wine in the winepress of the terrible anger of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his upper leg was written this name: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.*

Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he called with a loud voice to all the birds flying in the sky: "Come and gather together for the great feast of God so that you can eat the bodies of kings, generals, mighty people, horses and their riders, and the bodies of all people—free, slave, small, and great."

19 Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth. Their armies were gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army. *But the beast was captured and with him the false prophet who did the miracles for the beast. The false prophet had used these miracles to trick those who had the mark of the beast and worshiped his idol. The false prophet and the beast were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. And their armies were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds ate the bodies until they were full.*

All of the prophecies in the old testament from Isaiah through Malachi that speak of end times war, fighting, battle cries and the 'great day of the Lord's **judging**', are referring to this here in Revelation 19:19.

While it is also true that the day the Rapture occurs, and the 24hrs.subsequent are also considered to be another 'great day of the Lord', that is only the first one. If you look closely at the two separate descriptions, you can separate them easily by simply recognizing that anything that does not mention war, fighting or battle cries is referring to the rapture and the 6th seal, and all else is referring to the physical second coming here in 19:19.

In addition, the 1st day of God's wrath at the sixth seal is described as only a day of punishment, not a day of judgment as this one is. This is a very important distinction to make. The first great and overwhelming day of the Lord at the sixth seal, he is still allowing some still to live, while here he is not.

The first time Jesus came, he came as a humble, meek lamb who willingly gave up his life for the sins of humanity. This time it will be quite the opposite. This is the second phase of his second coming. In chapters, six and seven at the sixth seal we saw the first phase as he stepped out of heaven for a brief moment to collect his elect who were ready to go at that time in the Rapture, so they would escape the coming wrath as so many scriptures proclaim. At that time, it was, ready or not, here I come.

This here is a very different picture, because we see an army amassed against Jesus and **ready to fight** against him and planning to fight against him. There is no coming as a thief here to steal anything or anyone away as he does at the Rapture. The people who are alive at this time will no doubt be hungry, thirsty and quite desperate to try and get revenge on the one who caused all this pain and suffering for them.

The amazing thing is, anyone of them could have opted out

of this by simply repenting of their sins, calling on God and not accepting the mark as the angel told them not to do, but they chose poorly and refused so great a Salvation. Jesus died for them just like he died for everyone else, but they would not accept his sacrifice and anyone who rejects it, will be lost forever and be thrown into the lake of fire, where they too will be in burning pain forever.

For some this just seems to harsh, but the reality is they have just come through a time where they saw the power of God on display dozens of times, saw Jesus in the air, heard his voice through angels and heard his message of Salvation and prophecy through the two witnesses for 3-1/2 years, so they have no excuse. The problem is, for too many people they think they can enter heaven on their terms, when the terms have already been laid out and they are very narrow, not broad. There is only one way through Jesus.

So now we see probably somewhere in the neighborhood of one to two billion people left on earth and they all have accepted the mark except for the remnant of Jews still being protected in the desert.

In verse seventeen of chapter nineteen we saw another angel who calls out to the birds of the heavens, to come and gather for the great feast of God so they can eat the bodies of those that will attempt to fight against Jesus. We also see talk like this in almost all the Old Testament end times prophecies which speak of a future war between God and his enemies. Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39 which describe the battle with Gog and Magog in great detail, is also likely describing this battle here in Rev. 19 and we will see why.

While some think the Ezekiel battle is separate from this here, let us see why it might not be. One thing we do not want to do is mix these wars up if possible, because it can once again cause confusion. However, this battle described in Ezekiel 38&39, is one of the more difficult events to place, because some language sounds like Rev. 20, which describes the millennial rule of Jesus, and some sounds like here in Rev. 19. What is almost certain however is that it can't be during or

before the tribulation period because of what is found in scripture.

There are very clear clues in Rev. Chapter 20 later and in Ezekiel itself, that tell us that the final Gog and Magog mis-labeled “battle” after the 1000 year millennial reign of Jesus, is not an actual battle being fought. This is because during the 1000 years no one will train for war or have weapons of war. Instead, it will be a complete time of peace with Jesus in control. Though Satan and “his army” will later march across the earth to surround Jerusalem to try to start a war, it will not happen. At that time God simply calls fire down from heaven and burns everyone up with no war between two armies actually being fought whatsoever.

This here in Rev. 19, is describing a battle where there are actually two opposing armies, which meet at a place called Armageddon as we saw in chapter 16. Though there is a valley there where they gather, there are also mountains surrounding the valley. Therefore, Ezekiel describes the war as being fought in the mountains, where the armies against God all die. They die in the mountains and no so much in the valley, though they will gather there initially.

At the end of the thousand years, we see that God is burning everyone up, with no need for a burial. Here in both Rev.19 & Ezekiel 38&39, we see a similar description of birds feasting on the dead and a burial needed to cleanse the land.

Likewise, in both Ezekiel and here in Rev. 19, we see a very short war where God is likely defeating them within a one-day period; it is not a long protracted war as some guess at, especially in Ezekiel.

Since Israel is actually being attacked here, they begin to try to fight back, and then Jesus appears above them in the air with his army to defeat all of them. Zech 9:14-17, gives us another description of this. Verse 14 reads, *“Then the Lord will appear above them, **and his arrows will shoot like lightning.** The Lord God will blow the trumpet, and he will march in the storms of the south”*.

We also saw that Jesus was holding a bow in his hand at the

first seal and here we can see he is using it. Therefore, Ezekiel 38&39 is likely speaking of this battle here in Rev.19, because of the following two very important verses. One is in Ez.39:7, where God tells us he will not be dishonored anymore after this battle. *"I will make myself known among my people Israel, **and I will not let myself be dishonored anymore.** Then the nations will know that I am the Lord, the Holy One in Israel."*

Since we clearly see, God is being dishonored through the entire seven-year tribulation period by the Godless and now as well, we know this battle cannot be fought during or beforehand. In addition, God is saying he will not let ***himself*** be dishonored anymore. This is important because it is describing exactly what is going on during the tribulation period where God is allowing the Godless, to defame and dishonor not only him, but those in heaven as well.

Ezekiel 39:29 also tells us that God will put his spirit into the Jews after this battle is fought. *"I will not turn away from them anymore, **because I will put my Spirit into the people of Israel, says the Lord God.**"*

We know that God definitely turns away from them again during the tribulation period as he allows the antichrist to trample Jerusalem for 3-1/2 years. This is also when the antichrist will likely take 1/2 the city away to other lands as captives. Zech 14:1-3, shows us this clearly and the rest of the same chapter describes this war here in Rev. 19, which sounds identical to Ezekiel 38&39.

We know that the Jews already have his spirit in Rev. 20 during the last 1000 years, and they do not have his spirit now or during the last seven-year tribulation period. So again there can only be one place where his spirit is imparted...which is at the end of the tribulation period.

Since we know coming up in Revelation chapter 20 that there is not an actual battle being fought at the end, because no one trains for war at that time (Is. 2:4), then this Gog and Magog talk here in Ezekiel

can only fit in one spot...which is here at the battle of Armageddon of Revelation 19.

Some say and think this Gog and Magog description in Ezekiel is describing a war that may start any day or during the tribulation, but these passages are clear that it can't be. Some will also point to the specific countries or territories mentioned in Ezekiel and think that it can only be those few specific counties mentioned, when it also says many other countries which will also be with them, are unnamed. In reality, this is also describing a world war against God himself, as Revelation 19 is as well.

Though Ezekiel says they are initially going in for some sort of loot or booty that some think is oil, it is more likely that they are going in thinking they will be getting food or water at least initially. Oil at this point will be of little help, with so much already destroyed.

Now the description of Jesus here is amazing. Not only is he on a white horse but his eyes look like burning fire and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but himself. He is wearing a robe that is dipped in blood. Right here I can hear someone say, oh so he is wearing a red robe.

A robe dipped in actual blood, is going to look very scary to his enemies make no mistake about it. Out of his mouth, it says he had a sword that he will use to defeat the nations, but we cannot assume that Jesus will be the only one fighting, since there are millions of other holy ones with him to help. Not that he would need their help, for if he wanted to he could have just spoken the word and people could be completely obliterated without anyone even touching them.

This will be a very fast war with no casualties in the Lord's army, since they are already spiritual beings that will never die again. In fact, it probably will not last more than one day and we have other scripture that describes this war as well that shows this as being just one day. Then we have the antichrist and false prophet being captured and thrown alive into the lake of fire as well as their armies being killed

as well. In later scripture, we will see that the smoke from their torment will rise forever and ever.

For those that say there is no torment in hell, or that people and their spirits and souls are just burnt up and no longer exist, this scripture opposes that thinking. In addition, to think that only the antichrist and false prophet, who are men not spirits yet, are the only ones who will be tormented in hell is shortsighted. We have many scriptures throughout the bible that say otherwise. Not a happy thought of course, but if we are going to believe truth, then we need to believe all of it, not just the comfortable.

Binding Satan for 1000 years

Chapter 20 starts with an angel coming down from heaven with a key to the bottomless pit and a chain to bind Satan for one thousand years. The angel ties him up and throws him into the bottomless pit.

*“I saw an angel coming down from heaven. He had the key to the bottomless pit **and a large chain in his hand**. The angel grabbed the dragon, that old snake who is the devil and Satan, and tied him up for a thousand years. Then he threw him into the bottomless pit, closed it, and locked it over him. The angel did this so he could not trick the people of the earth anymore until the thousand years were ended. After a thousand years he must be set free for a short time.”*

Imagine the feeling of falling for one thousand years, which is Satan’s soon demise, but this is only the beginning of his judgment. God will use him once more after the one thousand years are over, to tempt the repopulated world one more time, then he is also thrown into the lake of fire forever.

Some have asked here, why is God doing this and letting Satan loose again? The simple answer is, because he is God and has an exact plan in mind. Letting Satan loose one more time to tempt people before the new heaven and new earth is needed, because no one enters

heaven except through testing and trials of some sort. Because the last 1000 years is a time of unprecedented peace, there is no testing until the end. It is also likely that the people of earth during this time will also be able to live extended periods as it was back in Noah's day, because God is lifting the curse during this time.

Some who only see Revelation as a bunch of allegories and symbols also ask here, do you actually think God is using a real chain to bind Satan? My answer to this is simple, but first yes, the same way God has literally fulfilled all previous prophecy to the letter and smallest detail. If we look at this with human eyes only, we would wonder where one would get a chain strong enough to bind and hold Satan, as if Jesus is going to go down to Home Depot or Lowes to buy a chain.

Is it possible that God the maker of all things, will have a special chain made from substance that we have no idea even exists? Of course it is. In heaven, there are no impossibilities. With God, all things are effortless, he speaks it and it is so. Revelation chapter twenty, verse four reads:

“Then I saw some thrones and people sitting on them who had been given the power to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been killed because they were faithful to the message of Jesus and the message from God.

In both the NIV and KJV we see how the people in the mass execution of Revelation 14:14 were killed. Revelation 20:4(NIV) reads:

*“I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. **And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus** and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. **They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.***

“They had not worshiped the beast or his idol, and they had

not received the mark of the beast on their foreheads or on their hands. They came back to life and ruled with Christ for a thousand years. (The others that were dead did not live again until the thousand years were ended.)” This is simply speaking of the evil dead here who will soon be judged.

“This is the first raising of the dead. Blessed and holy are those who share in this first raising of the dead. The second death has no power over them. They will be priests for God and for Christ and will rule with him for a thousand years.”

There are some who confuse this “first raising of the dead” of this new age, with the Rapture event. However, this is simply the first raising of the dead of the new millennial age with Jesus as the head. The Rapture resurrection of the dead as described in 1Thess. 4:16&17, is the last resurrection of the old age when the earth was still under the curse. That also occurred at the “last trumpet” of the old age.

In addition, the “second death” here is simply speaking about Hell, which is considered by God to be death, though no one is actually dying. The second death is a figure of speech because the smoke of their torment will rise forever as we saw earlier in chapter 19.

The First Judgment

John also saw thrones and people who sat on them with the power to judge. This is before the thousand year millennial reign of Christ begins, and then there is one last judgment at the end of the 1000 years. The ones who were killed by beheading, at the hands of the antichrist and who would not accept his mark, otherwise known as tribulation saints, came back to life, and their souls which were in heaven immediately after their death, are reunited with their bodies the same way the Christians at the rapture were transformed.

They also then, will get to reign and rule with Christ for 1000 years, just as the Raptured saints at the sixth seal will get to do as well.

So the thousand-year reign of Jesus starts here and all the wording from the Old Testament on the future of Israel, which says how they will be finally, be blessed in the end, gets fulfilled here.

“When the thousand years are over, Satan will be set free from his prison. Then he will go out to trick the nations in all the earth—Gog and Magog—to gather them for battle.

God has always since the beginning of time, been looking for a separate Holy people who depend on him for their Salvation and not themselves. God lets us live our lives and does not force anyone to choose him over their sinful desires. For the few who choose him, his ways and his desires, they get to live with him and his incredible perfect creation in heaven forever. They get to rule over this new creation, in a new world that we can only begin to imagine. Therefore, during these 1000 years, this choice will have to be made at the end, just as we choose now.

Though scripture also says he chose us before we chose him, all that means is, he chose all of mankind for Salvation to start with. Then it is up to us to choose his way.

*“There are so many people they will be like sand on the seashore. And Satan's army marched across the earth and gathered around the camp of God's people and the city God loves. **But fire came down from heaven and burned them up.** And Satan, who tricked them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur with the beast and the false prophet. **There they will be punished day and night forever and ever.***

Someone might ask who is left to repopulate the earth here. This is mainly the protected remnant of Israel with a few straggler Gentiles that God allowed to live through the tribulation. There will be a portion of the 13 million today, that will be 'flown' with the wings given to the woman with twelve stars on her head, into the desert for three and one half years to be protected to the end of the great tribulation. After that, they repopulate the earth as they were promised

so many times in Old Testament prophecy, from Abraham in Genesis all the way through.

Some here confuse this “battle” with the other battle of Gog and Magog during the tribulation period. It is not the same thing, but as we can see here and in other places in the bible, history does tend to repeat itself. Just as with the battle of Armageddon, this will be annihilation, not an actual battle being fought. In fact, this one here at the end of time, will even be less of a battle, as no armies of heaven are needed here at all. God simply incinerates them all, though they thought a battle would be fought. There is also no feasting on the dead by the birds, or burial of any kind needed.

Satan is finally getting his promised punishment as well and he is thrown in with the antichrist and false prophet, where they were already being tormented for the previous 1000 years. The scripture says “they” will be punished forever. Since the antichrist and false prophet are both men, this once again shows how men are tormented in Hell forever, not just angels that have become demons.

Everyone becomes a spiritual being in Hell by the way. Obviously, our flesh cannot inherit a place like this because we would be burned up and exist no longer. Therefore, it is common sense to know that God is not only giving an immortal body to those in heaven, but he is also giving one to those in Hell.

This is one of the mysteries that I hope will be answered one day which is; why not just incinerate the spirit and soul of these evil people and angels so they no longer exist? For now, we must be content with not knowing all God’s purposes and plans. For whatever reason and it must be a good one, God made everyone’s soul to be an immortal one. The only question then becomes where will that soul reside.... in heaven or in Hell? Since God made a way out with Jesus, it proves he is merciful and is wishing that none perish in the place called Hell. However, we are the ones who choose this, not him.

The Second Judgment

Chapter 20 ends with the second and final judgment:

*“Then I saw **a great white throne** and the One who was sitting on it. Earth and sky ran away from him and disappeared. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne. Then books were opened, and the book of life was opened. The dead were judged by what they had done, which was written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them. Each person was judged by what he had done. **And Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire.** The lake of fire is the second death. And anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.*

If you thought that Hades and Death were Hell itself, which is what I used to think as well, you would be not in complete agreement with scripture. We saw at the fourth seal that Death and Hades are actually evil spirits who ride spirit horses and kill people by a number of different methods, so then here they are giving up the dead that they were **allowed to collect**. Is it possible that Hades is still some section in Hell as well? It is possible, but either way it does not matter because they are done away with here.

Chapter 13

Heaven

Chapters twenty-one and twenty-two, which are the last chapters of Revelation are nothing short of astounding as John describes the heavenly reward that all who embrace Jesus get. Everyone who suffered, persevered, lived and died for Jesus all receives the same basic reward: Heaven and all its glory.

While it may be true that some will get a "higher place", existence, or more rewards than others who 'did less' for God, we all still get heaven and all that entails if we lived the holy life which we were taught from the beginning. If we kept the faith of Jesus and guarded the gift we were given, to whatever our end is to be, we will be happy.

Those who invested a lot of time and resources in the kingdom here on earth will certainly be rewarded with much in heaven and put in charge of more in the afterlife, but even King David said he would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of his God, than to be the king of nothing. What he meant was, just to make heaven at the lowest possible rung, whatever that may be, is infinitely more desirable than to be the owner of all the world's riches, only to lose it all in the end anyway.

When you read and understand the description of John's vision it is so almost unbelievable, and it is hard to fathom at times. Nevertheless, his description is so detailed and exact, down to even the dimensions of the heavenly city that one has to come to the realization that John was shown the real deal in amazing detail.

He saw in verse one of chapter twenty-one that he saw a new heaven and new earth, but before that we know that Christ had just reigned and ruled for one thousand years on the earth in a type of heaven on earth, but not the final one by any stretch. To be certain we know that during those thousand years things had certainly gotten

better, because Jesus is there, but that is not the be all end all that John describes at the very end.

The New Heavens and New Earth

*“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The first heaven and the first earth had disappeared, and there was no sea anymore. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. It was prepared like a bride dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “Now God's presence is with people, and he will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them and will be their God. **He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death, sadness, crying, or pain, because all the old ways are gone.**”*

Any of us would rather live anywhere were Jesus was the actual king, because wherever that it is, surely it will be more heaven like than we are experiencing now. But the final heaven that we read about here, is off the charts in its scope and breathtaking beauty. In many regards the thousand years is a transitional period from the old to the new, but it is also ***another time of testing*** at the end of the 1000-year millennial reign, of those who will repopulate the earth.

This is mainly the Jews. Most of the inhabitants of the earth during these 1000 years will certainly be Jewish along with the Christians who were raptured, rose from the dead and were already in heaven. Also the beheaded tribulation saints will be part of that number as well. These people will rule over the earth with Christ, with an 'iron rod' for the millennial period.

We can now see here why a remnant of the Jews were protected during the tribulation period. It was simply to repopulate the earth to fulfill God's promise to Abraham and his people the Jews.

After the 1000 years is over, it is time to go into the heavenly

realm forevermore without the threat of Satan's deceptions and temptations ever again.

*“The One who was sitting on the throne said, **“Look! I am making everything new!”** Then he said, “Write this, because these words are true and can be trusted. The One on the throne said to me, “It is finished. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. **I will give free water from the spring of the water of life to anyone who is thirsty.**”*

If you were wondering, what the reason is that God has to make all new heavens and a new earth; it is because Satan defiled heaven and man defiled the earth. This does not mean there will not be anymore new seas or mountains and other things we have now, it just means, the old ones are gone.

Note here that **anyone** who is thirsty for this can have it, but it's not without trials, pain and suffering. In fact, it will even cost some their life to gain Salvation as we just read about here in Revelation. Though Salvation is a "free gift", this means we are not able to earn it by our own works or without faith. Of course preachers love to say that is free and they may even say that this makes it easy, but that is 100% accurate.

Jesus did not promise us a comfortable Christianity. Though the rich American church is fond of preaching and believing this, it is not a message that is the reality of most of the church outside of the U.S. We just learned in the fifth seal alone, that many already have and will in the future be martyred to gain their Salvation.

In addition, the "anyone" here refers to John 3:16, as well as other passages that tell us God is not willing that any perish spiritually, but that all come to the knowledge of the truth and are saved. The reality that most won't is not God's fault, but man's. The elect only became that way because they chose correctly. They did not just choose to serve God once, or to say a prayer once. They chose to live for God everyday and they did not give up their faith, as some inevitably will. In

the next passage, we see that eternal life is something to be won.

“Those who win the victory will receive this, and I will be their God, and they will be my children. But cowards, those who refuse to believe, who do evil things, who kill, who sin sexually, who do evil magic, who worship idols, and who tell lies—all these will have a place in the lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.”

To have a place in the lake of fire means just as we have seen in previous passages, that one is there for eternity. If one had no place, they would not exist there; it is no more complicated than this. It is a life sentence without chance for parole. That chance is now gone for the people who chose poorly.

The New Jerusalem-The Capital City of Heaven

“Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last troubles came to me, saying, “Come with me, and I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.” And the angel carried me away by the Spirit to a very large and high mountain. He showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. It was shining with the glory of God and was bright like a very expensive jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. The city had a great high wall with twelve gates with twelve angels at the gates, and on each gate was written the name of one of the twelve tribes of Israel. There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south, and three on the west. The walls of the city were built on twelve foundation stones, and on the stones were written the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”

The new capital city of heaven is enormous.

“The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod made of

gold to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. The city was built in a square, and its length was equal to its width. The angel measured the city with the rod. The city was 1,500 miles long, 1,500 miles wide, and 1,500 miles high.

Some translations use the term stadia instead of miles and some say furlongs, but the NCV puts it into terms we understand today....miles. The ground floor is half the size of the U.S., but its height is equal to its length and width so it's a perfect cube.

“The angel also measured the wall. It was 216 feet high, by human measurements, which the angel was using. The wall was made of jasper, and the city was made of pure gold, as pure as glass. The foundation stones of the city walls were decorated with every kind of jewel. The first foundation was jasper, the second was sapphire, the third was chalcedony, the fourth was emerald, the fifth was onyx, the sixth was carnelian, the seventh was chrysolite, the eighth was beryl, the ninth was topaz, the tenth was chrysoprase, the eleventh was jacinth, and the twelfth was amethyst. The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate having been made from a single pearl. And the street of the city was made of pure gold as clear as glass.

It's hard to imagine a wall of this size with all the jewels that will be a part of it. If we were able to put a price tag on this today, it would be incomprehensible. There is not enough money in the world that could equal this, but it is real. To God the things that we hold so dear such as material wealth, are a drop in the bucket compared to what he has. Of course, we know he has it all. It is all his, always has been and always will be.

“I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the city's temple. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, because the glory of God is its light, and the Lamb is the city's lamp. By its light the people of the world will walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. The city's gates will never be shut on any day, because there is no

*night there. **The glory and the honor of the nations will be brought into it.** Nothing unclean and no one who does shameful things or tells lies will ever go into it. Only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life will enter the city.*

It is important to realize this is talking about heaven still; it is speaking of literally “heaven on earth.” For those who were more heavenly minded than earthly minded, this is their reward. We not only will rule with Jesus for 1000 years on earth, we then get to rule for eternity in the new heaven, new earth and new universe. What we will be in charge of is not fully clear yet, but whatever it is, it will be glorious. One thing is certain though, besides the unsurpassed perfect beauty, there will still be kings and nations!

There will be more than enough room for every believer from every time period to dwell there. The difference here will be that every part of heaven will be habitable, where on earth there are many places that are uninhabitable, such as the top of many of the tallest mountains.

Levels in Heaven?

Could there be physical levels in heaven? If there are, and I am not speaking here about rewards, but actual physical levels almost like floors in a building. If these levels were for example five miles high, and again I am just using a bit of imagination here, but you can imagine the possibilities if it is anything close to this. The future new heaven could have 280 levels with each one being five miles deep. If this in fact the case and of course some levels could be as small as one mile and some could be as big as ten miles or larger, the geographical possibilities will be endless. In addition, the actual livable surface could be much larger than the earth is now, if it is structured in a 'level style' world if you will.

In fact, it could be even hundreds of times larger, depending on the design. We were all given imaginations for a reason and we see

scripture that tells us to think on things that are lovely, noble, upright and heavenly, so why not think about what heaven may be like? We are given limited biblical descriptions, but in my opinion, it is more than enough to form possibilities and visions of this coming new world. For the true Christian, it is what our hearts long for.... that city and land that we can almost see now. Even though John says in Revelation 21:1 that the first heaven and earth had disappeared and there was no more sea, this does not mean the new heaven will have no seas, lakes, rivers or mountains.

In fact we will see in chapter twenty two that there is a river in the new heaven and we know that there were mountains, seas and other waters in the first heaven, so to think there won't be new similar geographical structures in the new heaven would be short sighted. What is certain is, the new one will be even better than the first one was and the first one was obviously incredible as well, but just defiled by Satan.

The River of Life

John tells us in chapter 22 which is the final chapter in Revelation, that he saw a river of life running through the middle of the city and on either side were trees of life that were for the healing of the nations and they bared fruit once a month.

*“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life. It was shining like crystal and was flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb, down the middle of the street of the city. The tree of life was on each side of the river. **It produces fruit** twelve times a year, once each month. **The leaves of the tree** are for the healing of all the nations. Nothing that God judges guilty will be in that city. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and God's servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. There will never be night again. They will not need the light*

*of a lamp or the light of the sun, because the Lord God will give them light. **And they will rule as kings forever and ever.***

We also know just from this description as well, that we are going to eat in heaven, as well as the other biblical passage that tells us about the marriage feast of the lamb, who is Jesus. Since there can be no defiling in heaven, we know there will be no human waste like we know now. Nothing will die or decay in heaven, we will not perspire while we do our new heavenly work, whatever that may be, and so the need for soap or showers will be zero.

There will be no insects in heaven that would destroy anything or bite anyone the way they do now. There will be no dirt or dust, or at least anything that would resemble our dirt now, because our dirt contains many things that have decayed and there is no decay in heaven. It would be just like God to replace our dirt with diamond dust or something similar. Nevertheless, whatever it will be it will have no blemish.

The great street of the city is of course also made from pure gold like most everything else, but here we see that the river of life which is also clear as crystal, runs from the throne of God, down the middle of the street and on each side of the river and street, is the tree of life. This obviously means there is more than one tree, so 'trees of life' must line the river on both sides.

These trees bear fruit once a month and obviously we will be eating it otherwise there would be no value in it. In addition, we know there is value because it tells us what the tree is for. It says its leaves are for the healing of the nations. Note it does not say its fruit is for the healing, but its leaves are. There will no longer be any curse as there is now.

There will be no sun or moon because God the father and Jesus the son's glory, will light heaven for us, so this will be a perfect light and no sunglasses will be needed ever! There will be no night as well. John says we will also get to see God's face and this by itself is

incredible because no man or woman in their current state can see God's face and live. Chapter 22:5 also says again that we will rule as kings forevermore, so even after the 1000-year millennial reign of Jesus is over on earth, we still will be ruling something, which will most likely be the entire universe as if this gigantic new city wasn't enough.

*"The angel said to me, "These words can be trusted and are true." The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants the things that must happen soon. **"Listen! I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who obeys the words of prophecy in this book."***

Here in verse 22:7 Jesus **again** interjects as he did in previous spots in Revelation, that he is coming soon and we should listen and obey the words and prophesy of this book and if we do we will be happy. We will be happy if we obey the warnings and change our hearts, then we will be ready at all times for the coming theft of his followers that are ready for it.

In addition, this is more proof that his previous similar verses, is to wake us up in our current state of lukewarmness now. He is interjecting this and other warnings here and there in Revelation, not because the Rapture occurs at any of these warnings, but because he is telling us we can avoid the whole time of testing which is the great tribulation, by being ready now.

"I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. When I heard and saw them, I bowed down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed these things to me. But the angel said to me, "Do not worship me! I am a servant like you, your brothers the prophets, and all those who obey the words in this book. Worship God!"

Then the angel told me, "Do not keep secret the words of prophecy in this book, because the time is near for all this to happen."

Very interesting and important here is in verse 22:10, where the angel tells John **not to keep secret** this prophesy the way Daniel

was told about his prophecy, because the time is near for all this to happen. Daniel was told by an angel to seal his prophecy up, because his was not to be fulfilled until the last seven years tribulation period begins. So it is again obvious here, that Revelation prophecy has begun already, though not yet completely fulfilled.

We many times think 2000 years is a long time for a lull to be in between the 5th and 6th seals, but the fact is, to God it has only been a couple of days.

We can see for ourselves the words of Jesus in Matthew chapter 24 and other places, which speak about the way the world will be before Jesus returns. This is in fact happening all around us and has been occurring since at least 1948, when Israel again became a nation again. We are the final generation that will see the end of all things as we know it and if for no other reason, than the increase in the number and intensity of the earthquakes that we cannot deny are multiplying at rates never before seen.

*“Let whoever is doing evil continue to do evil. Let whoever is unclean continue to be unclean. **Let whoever is doing right continue to do right.** Let whoever is holy continue to be holy. **“Listen! I am coming soon! I will bring my reward with me, and I will repay each one of you for what you have done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.***

Jesus again here in 22:12 says listen again, then he says he is coming soon and **his reward** is with him, to repay us for what we have done for his namesake and to others. We cannot overlook the importance of this “reward” Jesus is speaking about here. Some would love to add one letter here and make it *rewards*, but we cannot do that. We need to ask what this reward is exactly. It is simply heaven and all its wonders and glories by itself, as we saw detailed in the seven Revelatory letters and here in the last two chapters of the book. We also see that we are repaid for what *we have done* and not necessarily,

what we have believed. This is not to say faith is not important, because obviously one has to believe first, but that is only the beginning. If your belief never turned to action as it did with even the thief on the cross who had so little time, then you believed for nothing so says James.

He Jesus says he is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, much as he did in the beginning of the book. Then in verse fourteen, he reiterates something that he talked about in the seven letters. ***"Blessed are those who wash their robes so that they will receive the right to eat the fruit from the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. Outside the city are the evil people, those who do evil magic, who sin sexually, who murder, who worship idols, and who love lies and tell lies."***

He says happy are those who wash their robes, so they will have the right to eat from the tree of life, denoting how ***we must fight*** to stay holy and keep spiritually separate from the worldliness around us. Also this denotes that we have a role in our own Salvation. Notice it says *we must wash our robes*. Of course it is through Jesus alone that this is done, but our role in choosing repentance cannot be de-emphasized. We wash our robes through repentance of sin and it is not automatic. We need to wash them as many times as it takes to **keep** them clean.

Then in verse fifteen right before he ends the book he tells us who will be outside the city and not allowed in. They will be the evil people who do magic, who sin sexually, who murder, who worship idols and who love lies and tell lies. Moreover, all these sins are the sins that all the others are born out of.

"I, Jesus, have sent my angel to tell you these things for the churches. I am the descendant from the family of David, and I am the bright morning star." The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" Let the one who hears this say, "Come!" Let whoever is thirsty come; whoever wishes may have the water of life as a free gift.

He then reiterates how this is for the church which is **us now** sent through his angel. This means the whole book is very important to those who claim to be his people, whether Jew or Gentile. Then in verse seventeen, he says a beautiful thing. He says **whoever** thirsts can come and *whoever* wishes and wants the water of life can have it as a free gift, proving that he wants *all men* to come to saving grace and he wishes that none perish, but he leaves that to the choice of human free will, just as the angels also have free will.

In the end, we will choose where we spend eternity, by either neglecting this great Salvation or thinking we can obtain it on our own and by our own devices or goodness without God's intervention. However, this is not a cakewalk either, and it was never meant to be. It is a spiritual war and a huge test to see who will not only choose the blessed life, but also who will fight to keep it.

For even though Salvation is a 'free gift, it's a gift so valuable that it has to be protected constantly. God gives us the tools to protect it, such as his word, prayer and his powerful Holy Spirit. Some try to get through life without one or more of these tools and they find they are fighting a losing battle. We cannot ever take the gift for granted, because it is far too valuable to lose and make no mistake about it, it can be lost, stolen or neglected so bad, that by that neglect it dies completely.

"I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to these words, God will add to that person the disasters written about in this book. And if anyone takes away from the words of this book of prophecy, God will take away that one's share of the tree of life and of the holy city, which are written about in this book. Jesus, the One who says these things are true, says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen."

In verse eighteen, we are given another different kind of

warning as the book ends. It says anyone who reads Revelation and then decides to add to it will share in the disasters of the book. Anyone who takes away from the book, **God will take away that ones share of the tree of life and the holy city**, which are written about in the book of Revelation.

This alone is an astounding way to end the book, but it cannot be overlooked, because even here at the end we see that from some people God will in fact take away “the reward,” from those who think they have it locked up and secure. Instead, they will find because they did not do what the message here proclaims, which is to repent and to stay holy; they will miss the entire thing.

Adding to, taking from, or twisting prophecy is serious business which comes with a serious punishment. The reason it is so serious, it because it changes meaning to suit our own selfish desires, agendas and manmade doctrines. In addition, when we change original meaning, we may be looking to excuse our hidden sin that we do not want exposed.

Then Jesus ends the book and the entire bible with the words, “*Yes I am coming soon*” and John says, “*Amen Lord come!*”
The grace of the Lord be with all. Amen.”

Chapter 14

Conclusion

If you get nothing else from this book, I hope you at least understand the following: That no prophecy came about because the prophet wanted it. Jonah did not want to preach to Nineveh, Moses did not want to go back to Egypt and many of the other prophets did not want to deliver the message that they were given to deliver. Very few today want to hear all the truth, instead they prefer some, mixed in with their own understanding. The full truth is rarely comfortable, though it is freeing if accepted.

My prayer is that you discovered or re-discovered at least one new thing you had not realized about Revelation beforehand. I also hope and pray that at the very least, it drives you back to the scriptures for you to find out what they say in a "new way", apart from your previous understanding, that may have been acquired through the teachings of men.

For years, I too just believed what I had heard through men and denominational doctrine, not even realizing that some of what I was taught was not 100% scriptural. Though it was close and some of what I learned was from right motives, it still was incomplete.

No man is free to add to or take away from original meaning not just here in Revelation, but anywhere in the bible, yet many are doing it today and have been since the beginning just as Satan has been doing. We need to remember that one biblical truth does not negate another; instead, it is in addition to all other truth. People love to camp out on one truth that they like and when they are approached with another truth that seems to rebuff, they want to pass on it and say, "that can't mean that," or "scripture doesn't say that".

This person says this and that person says that, instead of what does the bible say? It is amazing today that a simple scripture such as "no one knows the day or the hour of the coming of the Lord" is almost

completely ignored by some. Instead, we have people coming out with all kinds of dates and they have figured it out mathematically. Others say, “The Lord told me when he is coming.” They would otherwise sound spiritual, but when their dates come and go without incident, instead of people calling them what they should, which are false prophets, they continue to follow them, after Jesus clearly said not to follow them.

However, scripture is clear and simple. We are the ones that want to make it difficult and complicated. We are also fond of going to others including Pastors, Priests and Rabbis to see what they think about truth, rather than standing on all the word of God for ourselves. We think that just because someone has the label of a Pastor, theologian or biblical scholar, that they automatically know more about the bible than we do. The fact is, some of them may study less than you do and certainly many today are not dividing it rightly, as we are commanded to do. Of course dividing rightly has a lot to do with taking it literally, and not many are today.

We would rather relegate our responsibility and command to search the scriptures ourselves, to others who may be more educated than us. However, worldly wisdom and knowledge does not equal spiritual wisdom. If knowledge equaled spirituality, then the smartest people in the world would all be Christians, but instead sometimes the opposite is true.

What we see is, most times the intellectual among us have the more difficult time understanding scripture, because first, they do not have the fullness of God’s spirit and secondly, not enough faith to seek it, or realize it is still valid today.

Review

So let us see what we learned together by going through the scriptures literally:

1. We discovered that there is a pre-tribulation, pre God's wrath, Rapture of the ready followers of Jesus, that occurs either simultaneously with, or seconds before the sixth seal is broken.
2. We found that we are deeper into Revelation than we thought and the first seal is not the start of God's wrath, but the sixth seal is.
3. We discovered that the rider on the white horse at the first seal is not the antichrist, but most likely Jesus himself. We also discovered that none of the riders in seals 1-4 are men, but spirits whether good or evil. We also found there to be five riders not four.
4. We found that in Chapter 4 of Revelation, there is no Rapture described there, but instead it is only speaking of John the Revelator being called to heaven to see what happens next.
5. We discovered that the great multitude of people from all over the world, described at the 6th seal, is in fact the Raptured saints that were taken earlier in the seal. We also found they had come out at the beginning of God's wrath and not through it as some teach.
6. We found that there are many saved after the sixth seal is broken and now just a few, possibly even up to one billion, but they have to endure to the end and die for their faith to receive their Salvation.
7. We discovered there to be no protection for tribulation saints during the last great tribulation, but only for the 144,000 special sealed male Jewish evangelists and a small remnant of Jews who are flown to the desert during the last 3-1/2 years.
8. We discovered that the antichrist does not really rise to final power until the last 3-1/2 years and the only way to really positively identify him, is when he is assassinated and then comes back to life.
9. We found that the sixth seal is the single most important event in end time's prophecy, because it officially starts the great tribulation, includes the great escape of the ready followers of Jesus and is imminent.

10. We discovered that some could "lose their Salvation" if they do not continue in the faith, but others will be eternally secure if they abide in Christ and endure to whatever end God has appointed for them. Salvation is conditional, always has been and always will be, just as the eternal security of some of the angelic host was lost because of their defiance. They chose to turn from the truth, just as many do today. God leaves it up to men to choose not only initially, but also to abide in the truth on a daily basis.

Saving Faith

In connection with this, we also found that some in the church as well as in the world do not want to change and conform to the way of holiness. We found that Jesus called many in the first century church liars and still does today, because they live another way apart from what they claim to be. We found that not everyone who attends church is in fact a real Christian.

This is a fact that has been with us since the beginning and unfortunately will be until the end when Jesus separates the sheep from the goats as described in Matthew 25:31-46. I will leave you with this thought and parable from Jesus, as this simple parable is not one that is spoken of much in many churches today.

The reason it is not is because it goes against the grain of perhaps 50% or more of the American churches today who only preach that faith is enough to save a person. What is clear in this parable and in so many other scripture passages through the entirety of the bible is, without good works of some kind (after Salvation), one cannot enter the kingdom of God period. However, follow the entire thought process here.

Of course we are not saying faith does not have any part in Salvation just as James points out. It is the initial driving force that one must have to be saved. However, what James and Jesus himself showed

us is repeatedly throughout scripture is what we do after initial Salvation is just as important or more so, than what we believed at first.

This is perhaps just one more reason that Revelation is so rarely preached in our churches today. If you do a word search for the word "faith" by itself in Revelation you will have a tough time finding it because it is only mentioned twice, once in Rev.2:13 and once in Rev. 2:19. It is not mentioned again after Chapter 2 and the reason it is not is important to realize.

The problem in the end times that we are living in now is not a problem of faith by itself because everyone believes in something. The problem comes as to where is that faith placed and if it is still alive at all. For most, it is placed in their own concocted belief system, which is a mixture of some truth, but the rest is of their own making.

Many people in America today say they believe in God, in fact some 80% or so do if the polls are correct. Then if you press them further and ask if you believe in God then why you live as you do, you would get a hundred excuses.

The reason faith is not mentioned after Chapter 2 of Revelation is because it will take more than faith to be saved after the Rapture and the start of the great tribulation. Because Jesus will be seen in the clouds by everyone at the Rapture, there will be no more atheism. Even the scientists and very educated who do not believe that there is a God today, will have to admit that they were wrong.

However, will this knowledge and even sighting of Jesus himself turn into a saving knowledge? We already know that for some it will, but for most it will not as they still choose to follow their own evil desires even after seeing what Jesus can do.

Is this unlike what the children of Israel did in the desert after seeing firsthand the power of God repeatedly? He delivered them from Egypt through several miraculous signs and plagues, split the Red Sea for them to walk across and protected them and fed them in the desert. Did they have a faith problem? No faith was a given for them. They

had an obedience problem.

It will be the same in the end and is now. We have an obedience problem. Jesus asked Peter three times, do you love me? If so then prove it and feed my sheep.

Are we proving our love of Jesus today by feeding those in need, or would we rather attack others who may be more spiritual than we are? The parable of the sheep and goats show us that even those who are finally cast into Hell believed in God, but they refused to do the work required to do for the least among us. To Jesus as should be with us, talk is cheap and actions speak louder than words.

Therefore, the final or most important ingredient to real Christianity is Love. The goats are cast into Hell because they did not love their fellow man, though they may have preached about it.

Another group that Jesus is not happy with at the judgment are those who did works, but not with the right motives. However, in both these instances a lack of faith was not the missing ingredient. Jesus did not say to either group because of your lack of faith; you will not enter the kingdom of God. It will be because of the lack of love and right motives of the heart.

Is God Only a God of Love?

Lastly and shifting gears a bit, too many today in the church forgo their responsibility of judging false teachings and sin in the church and thereby letting the spirit of Jezebel have free reign, when Jesus told us in Revelation not to let it happen. Some are fond of the verse “judge not lest ye be judged” and act as if it was the only scripture that speaks of what we are to judge.

They claim God is only a God of love only and miss the other half of scripture some of which we are told that God hates sin and even some who partake in it.

The following scripture passages you will rarely hear about in

most American churches today:

Proverbs 3:32

*“The **Lord hates** those who do wrong, but he is a friend to those who are honest.”*

Proverbs 6:16-19

“There are six things the Lord hates. There are seven things he cannot stand: a proud look, a lying tongue, hands that kill innocent people, a mind that thinks up evil plans, feet that are quick to do evil, a witness who lies, and someone who starts arguments among families.”

Proverbs 11:20

*“The **Lord hates** those with evil hearts but is pleased with those who are innocent.”*

Proverbs 16:5

*“The **Lord hates** those who are proud. They will surely be punished.”*

Malachi 2:16

*“The **Lord** God of Israel says, “I **hate** divorce. And I **hate** people who do cruel things as easily as they put on clothes,” says the **Lord** All-Powerful. So be careful. And do not break your trust.”*

John 7:7

*“The world cannot **hate** you, but it **hates** me, because I tell it the evil things it does.”*

Romans 9:13

*“As the Scripture says, “I loved Jacob, but I **hated** Esau.”*

So what do all these scriptures have in common? They show that God does hate certain people who act a certain way. Anyone who does not obey the Holiness commands laid forth by Jesus in this book of Revelation and other places will be opposed by God in the end.

This is the balance of scripture. It tells us that what and who God loves, and what and who he hates.

Current Events

We will end this with a picture of what is going on in our world today and why it is important to end times prophecy. The fact is all end times prophecy is being fulfilled right in front of our eyes every day. From the earthquakes which are off the charts in scope, frequency and magnitude, to the extreme weather of all sorts that the whole world is experiencing, to the way people are acting, and finally to what is going on over in Israel, it can't be denied that scripture is coming true.

It can sometimes be difficult to see all of this as the reality when you are a part of it, because we are like the proverbial frog in the kettle. As things heat up, we can become immune to it and not realize we are about to be boiled. Then it becomes too late to do anything about it. So we must always be on guard for the coming of our Lord Jesus because he is coming as a thief to those who don't expect him, but to us who expect him at the culmination of all the signs, this should not be the case.

stood and issued this cry for the defense of Israel from the threat posed by Iran. The Prime Minister said:

Some are prepared to accept...a world in which the Ayatollahs have atomic bombs. Sure, they say, Iran is cruel, but it's not crazy. It's detestable, but it's deterrable. My friends, responsible leaders should not bet the security of their countries on the belief that the world's most dangerous regimes won't use the world's most dangerous weapons. And I promise you that as Prime Minister, I will never gamble with the security of the State of Israel.

From the beginning, the Ayatollah regime has broken every international rule and flouted every norm. It has seized embassies, targeted diplomats. It sends its own children through mine fields; it hangs gays and stones women; it supports Assad's brutal slaughter of the Syrian people; it is the world's foremost sponsor of terrorism.

It sponsors Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas in Gaza, and terrorists throughout the Middle East, Africa, even South America.

Iran's proxies have dispatched hundreds of suicide bombers, planted thousands of roadside bombs, and they fired over twenty thousand missiles at civilians. Through terror from the skies and terror on the ground, Iran is responsible for the murder of hundreds, if not thousands, of Americans.

In 1983, Iran's proxy Hezbollah blew up the Marine barracks in Lebanon, killing 240 US Marines. In the last decade, it's been responsible for murdering and maiming American soldiers in Afghanistan and in Iraq. Just a few months ago, it tried to assassinate the Saudi Ambassador to the US in a restaurant just a few blocks from here. The assassins didn't care that several Senators and members of Congress would have been murdered in the process.