
Volvitur

Judæo-Christian doctrine, belief,
practice, and eschatology

A detailed study of Judæo-Christianity in the
1st-, early 2nd-, late 20th- & early 21st-centuries

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To the memory of Sh'muel

A study in four volumes:

Volume 1:	Origins
Volume 2:	Prophecy
Volume 3:	Doctrine
Volume 4:	Issues

Acknowledgements

To Rivka, for the original stimulus that led to these expositions, beliefs, and insights being committed to writing;

To Shabtai—despite being a son-after-son descendant of Aaron, the brother of Moses, and, thus, a Jew of the highest levitical rank before God—for undertaking to read the completed work, a work which is, after all, wholly Judæo-Christian;

To my late father, James, for sourcing the rootage of it, horribly tangled though it was, though not through any further befuddling on his part, it must be said. It was, after all, merely the early formations;

To my late mother, Martha, for encouragement in study built on the last, and instilling an overwhelming desire and appetite for God's truth; and,

To all the sources noted in this study, and to those of a more general nature too numerous to be mentioned specifically.

Quotations & Excerpts

'There is this great difference between the works of men and the works of God, that the same minute and searching investigation, which displays the defects and the imperfections of the one, brings out also the beauties of the other.'¹ 'All things mortal are full of imperfections.'²

'If you study science deep enough and long enough, it will force you to believe in God.'³

'As a man who has devoted his whole life to the most clear headed science, to the study of matter, I can tell you as a result of my research about atoms this much: There is no matter as such. All matter originates and exists only by virtue of a force which brings the particle of an atom to vibration and holds this most minute solar system of the atom together. We must assume behind this force the existence of a conscious and intelligent mind. This mind is the matrix of all matter.'⁴

'No astronomer can be an atheist.'⁵ 'God is in the details.'⁶

'When you're up against an impossibility, you're on the edge of a discovery.'⁷

'Everybody is ignorant. Just in different subjects.'⁸ 'Nothing is as it seems.'⁹

¹ Alexander Hislop.

² Michel Eyquem de Montaigne.

³ William Thompson, First Lord Kelvin.

⁴ Max Planck.

⁵ Sir James Jeans.

⁶ Ludwig Mies Van der Rohe.

⁷ William Thompson, First Lord Kelvin.

⁸ Will Rogers.

⁹ sadly, unattributable; mainly a comment on political deception which may also be extended to science and religion, inter alia.

'In [Glasgow] university of 1929, religion was laughed at as being something quite useless.'¹⁰

'The fool doth think he is wise, yet it is the wise man that knows himself to be the fool.'¹¹

'Do not confuse your wit with wisdom.' 'Wisdom sounds foolish to fools.'¹²

'Christianity has not been tried and found wanting; it has been found difficult and not tried.'¹³

'I cannot preach to you without sighs, nor speak without tears, of the approaching consummation of all things, and of that most blasphemous and terrible one who shall put the whole earth in confusion, and shall infuse cowardice, negligence, and infidelity into the hearts of men, and do signs, work wonders and dreadful sights, *'insomuch that if it were possible he should deceive the very elect,'*¹⁴ and seduce all mankind by lying wonders and miraculous appearances that shall be wrought by him. For by the permission of the righteous God he hath power to deceive the world, because the pleasure of their iniquities is filled up, and all places are full of all kinds of abomination. And for this cause the holy God will suffer the world to be tempted by the spirit of error because of their iniquities, because men have forsaken the God of truth, and loved a lie. My brethren, great will be the tribulation of the last days, especially to the faithful.'¹⁵

'If lukewarmness mark your character, so that you scarcely care so much for the faith as it is in Jesus, as to trouble yourself at all to act on it as a truth, or to question whether it be true or false; if the alienation of your heart from the living God be so great, that no bias of judgement is needed to sustain a practical infidelity like yours; if, wedded to the world, and bigoted to sense, you mind only earthly things, and place all your love, and happiness, and confidence in them, and care for none of these things which pertain to life, to godliness, to your peace, and to immortality; if the tidings of salvation have no charm for you....[then where is the worth in your life?]....

Could any, by their own sagacity, have foretold events that were to happen hundreds and thousands of years thereafter, seeing that like all mortal men they knew not of themselves, what a day or an hour would bring forth? The probabilities were infinite against them. For the mind of man often hangs in doubt and uncertainty over the nearest events, and the most probable results; but in regard to remote ages, when thousands of years shall have passed away, and to facts respecting them, contrary to all previous knowledge, experience, analogy, or conception, it feels that they are as dark as death to mortal ken.'¹⁶

¹⁰ Rawlins, Clive L., *Barclay: The Authorized Biography*, p.75 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹¹ William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, Act 5, Scene 1.

¹² Euripedes, *The Bacchae*, Tiresius to Dionysus and Dionysus to Cadmus, respectively.

¹³ Gilbert K. Chesterton.

¹⁴ Mat 24:24c

¹⁵ Ephraim Syrus.

¹⁶ Alexander Keith (with added comment and clarification in square brackets).

Purpose

Basically, this book is a work of research and study—not an argument—prompted by an ever-mounting frustration at the myriad deficiencies and anomalies in what evidences today as mainstream, organized Christianity, with its patently deeply pagan roots and ‘its faith reduced to an easy “believism” of facile formulas and stereo-typed phrases....[and] which pretends that no....difficulties exist [within it].’¹⁷ First- and early-second century Judæo-Christianity did not evidence any such wantings for it constituted the belief, practice, and hope of the nascent church, wholly untrammelled by pagan myth, superstition, and ritual.

The research and study involved has been extensive and detailed—even comprehensive, if by that is meant having the power of comprehending much—intended to elucidate Judæo-Christianity for the ‘elect’ and those approaching that unique status.¹⁸ In addition, in order to place things in context and crystallize certain matters, the main religions of this world are also touched on and compared to Judæo-Christianity in order to give an appreciation of the vast differences between the religions of the world and the religion of the Bible.

It is the urgent attempt to regain that complete belief system—by stripping away centuries of accretion (whether worthless, apostate, or simply contemptuous) and revealing the great beauty, reality and hope which lies beneath—allied to the desire to build on an increasing understanding of prophetic end-time events (and in the process bringing out much that is new and pressingly relevant to these times) that has propelled this work to

¹⁷ Rawlins, Clive L, *William Barclay: The Authorized Biography*, pp.42,606,607,610,611 (attributed even more widely than Rawlins’ script, with added comment and clarification in square brackets), also expanded to investigate many claims by ‘radical critics who delight in finding a discrepancy [in the Bible] because they can then use it “either to prove that the people who wrote the Bible are untrustworthy, inaccurate or unreliable, or that the story never happened at all, and that it is no more than a blundering fiction.”’

¹⁸ it is not ‘entry-level.’

the point where it can be offered to the general public, completely free of charge,¹⁹ as a coherent and sensibly comprehensive entirety. Christ's direction in this matter is unambiguous: '*Freely ye have received, freely give.*'²⁰ There cannot be a charge.

This, then, is proper Judæo-Christianity: pure, complex, detailed, exact, and very, very challenging.

¹⁹ where publishing in the form of an e-book—individually or through a book club, etc.—stipulates that an unwaivable and thus unavoidable mandatory charge be made, then the charge will be the minimum possible, and any royalties accruing to the author will be used for charitable purposes; no financial gain arises from this undertaking; q.v. inf.

²⁰ Mat 10:8b

Notes

1. The title of this study, *Volvitur*, a Latin word,²¹ has, as its principal meaning, 'to roll' or 'to turn,' and, in its secondary and apposite meaning, 'to turn the pages' of a book: Let it be opened!
2. The basic references quoted from the Holy Bible are from the King James Version unless otherwise stated. Usually, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek references are taken from Strong's or Young's Concordances, or from Gesenius' or Thayer's Lexicons;
3. While, for the Old Testament, the Masoretic text—the vocalised textual form which has been with us for certain for about a millennium—is used, deviations from that form, usually taken from various Massorah emendations or the Septuagint, or, very occasionally, from a vorlage, are sometimes adopted or compared to help elucidate difficult texts and otherwise obscure or fragmented passages;²²
4. As for the New Testament, the textus receptus²³ is used, but comparisons with several literal translations and targums are occasionally made to help elucidate the occasional difficult text or passage;

²¹ from Latin: volvere.

²² Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, p.29:

'There came into Hebrew religious life something which greatly accentuated the development of this idea of the word of God. For a hundred years and more before the coming of Jesus, Hebrew was a forgotten language. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew but the Jews no longer knew the language. The scholars knew it, but not the ordinary people. They spoke a development of Hebrew called Aramaic which is to Hebrew somewhat as modern English is to Anglo-Saxon. Since that was so, the scriptures of the Old Testament had to be translated into this language that the people could understand, and these translations were called the Targums. In the synagogue, the scriptures were read in the original Hebrew, but then they were translated into Aramaic and Targums were used as translations.'

²³ in 1481AD—incidentally, just in time for its use in countering the Reformation—a manuscript was 'discovered' in the Vatican archives, which was to become known as 'Vaticanus B,' and which was found to be in conflict with the Received Text in many key areas.

Garrett, Les, *Which Bible Can We Trust?* p.15 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

5. Conjectural emendation has been eschewed, except on the rare occasion where rather obvious but minor scribal slips and errors are corrected. Instances of patent scribal redaction are always adjusted and corrected, and disambiguated wherever necessary;

6. As a convention, and in order to easily differentiate between the two eternal Jehovahs,²⁴ one is referred to consistently as God the Father, and the other as the Word, but only until His human incarnation, when He became the Messiah, Jesus Christ. The same, upon His ascension, became the immortal Son of God.²⁵ Consequently, the frequent use of the names God the Father and God the Son;

7. Another convention adhered to, despite lacking biblical foundation, is that of referring to the Old Testament and the New Testament. While there is no such division in Holy Scripture—the taxonomy is an emendation—it has been maintained as an easy form of differentiating the two general periods of formation of the Scriptures. The New Testament convention of annotating the gospels as the gospels of *saints* Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John is not used as it runs wholly contrary not only to the original text of Holy Scripture, but also to the sense and tenor of the testament;

8. The order of the books of the Bible, as appearing in listings of the books and texts, especially in footnotes, is Hieronymic—a word referring to Jerome’s order of the fourth-century A.D. which he did not originate but merely adopted from the conventional Christian order of the time—the same book order that appears in the K.J.V.;

‘We need to understand that many of the new translations are taken from old manuscripts. In actual fact, they are saying, that in a manuscript found [in 1844] in a waste paper basket in a cave in [so-called] mount Sinai and questionable manuscripts from Alexandria in Egypt, are more reliable than the Received Text.’

This manuscript, called Sinaiticus Aleph, was found to have been heavily and frequently palimpsested—scratched off and overwritten many times—rendering it so thin as to be useless, and finally had been discarded.

The resulting ‘Minority Texts’—so called because they represent, at best, almost 5% of the extant manuscripts—have lesser volume and contain many alterations and redactions, but, nonetheless, have found their way into the newer, twentieth century Bible translations.

By comparison, the early Christian church at Antioch used the Syrian Bible translated from Hebrew and Greek and that text, out of Antioch, extant to this day, is older than even the Masoretic text of the Jews. This formed the Received Text, the Textus Receptus, which represents over 95% of the extant manuscripts, almost two thousand in total. The same Textus Receptus, both in its original form and later in the form of translations into several European languages of the time, was placed on a prohibited list by Rome. Anyone found in possession of same in a territory controlled by the Roman Catholic Church was liable to be executed. This sanction, however, did not apply to the church’s own Vulgate Bible, in Latin, a work which found its source in ancient Alexandrian Egypt and which was, and is, in Douay Rheims and similar versions, found on comparison to be severely redacted and decidedly Aryan in theology.

Dean Burgon summed the matter thus: ‘That at the end of eighteen hundred years, nine hundred and ninety-five copies out of every thousand are supposed to prove untrustworthy; and that the one, two, three, four, or five which remain, whose contents were till yesterday were as good as unknown, will be found to have retained the secret of what the Holy Spirit originally inspired.’

²⁴ cf. Appendix for discussion on correct spelling and most likely pronunciation.

²⁵ Prov 30:4, ‘*Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son’s name, if thou canst tell?*’ (sublinear emphasis added).

The taxonomy recited should be distinguished from the minority, erroneous belief of Adoptionism, which holds that Jesus only became the Son of God either upon His baptism, His resurrection, or His ascension.

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9. Yet another convention is the use of twenty-four hours in a day, sixty minutes in an hour, and sixty seconds in a minute, despite these being derived from ancient Babylonian use which had a counting base of sixty, not ten;
10. Where dates are printed in this work, they follow the British mode of 'day-month-year' rather than the North American 'month-day-year';
11. The division of time into 'the common era' and 'before the common era' is given as AD and BC respectively;
12. Another convention is that of using the term 'Gentile.'²⁶ This means '*nation*,' or '*nations*' in the plural, and in the Bible may refer to any nation, including the Israelites or the Jews, depending on context. In view of this, the terms 'Gentile' and 'Gentiles' are used whenever and wherever they would normally be, with the context making clear exactly what is encompassed by the terms;
13. A further, quasi-convention which has been adopted is that of describing the Holy Land, on occasion, as Palestine. While the word was first introduced by the Romans as an intended and calculated affront to the Jews—Syria-Palæstina²⁷ being etiologically based on the Philistines, the ancient arch-enemies of Israel—it has since lost its original overtones, was used for the mandated land under the British, and has become a common English-language general name for the Holy Land. It is not to be confused with the Palestinian Autonomous Area or putative independent 'state-in-the-making' in the West Bank and Gaza;
14. This study includes many excerpts and extracts from other works, occasionally in extenso. These could have been bowdlerized, précised, or paraphrased, making the finished text more consistent and altogether an easier read, but that would have been unfaithful to the research and study which underlies the entire. Also, it would have failed to show the real root of the belief and would have been unfair on those who produced the referenced excerpts;
15. Excerpts and extracts from referenced works quoted herein, and originally accredited in the text—designed to suit the whim of the first recipient of the first edition—are now dealt with by way of footnotes, with the rele-

²⁶ K.J.V. translation of Hebrew: *goy*, pl. *goyim*, and Greek: *ethne*; the English word derives from Latin: *gentilis*, 'of or belonging to a clan.'

²⁷ Roman province between 135 and c.390AD. Silberman, Neil Asher, *Heavenly Powers, Unraveling the Secret History of the Kabbalah*, p.21:

'In the land of Israel—now renamed Palæstina to rub the noses of the defeated rebels in the Latinized name of their ancient Philistine enemies—the Romans evinced particular interest in wiping out or at least domesticating all native and independent traditions. They used the sticks of arbitrary arrests, unfair taxation, and land expropriation to break up traditional communities and families. And they used the carrots of material prosperity and social status to lure ambitious merchants and craftspeople to put aside their people's traditions and join in the free-for-all of an expanding consumer culture.'

vant authors and publications listed in the extensive Bibliography.²⁸ The inclusion of any such excerpt or extract, whether or not in approbation, implies neither approval of, nor agreement with anything else contained in the referenced works on the part of this author. In some cases, sections of referenced works have been amended due to error in the original, or certain parts have been paraphrased, or highlighted, discussed, and later clarified for the self-same reason. In these circumstances, agreement thus lies between the amended extracts or excerpts and this expository study. Sadly, this modus has proved to be unavoidable, on occasion, since there has been found an unfortunate admixture of error with truth in some of the excerpts or extracts from cited works. On other occasions, paraphrasing has been undertaken for the purpose of brevity, and where this has been effected, it is noted accordingly. Regardless of this, every redaction has been made clear in the text, with insertions, comments and clarifications appearing in square brackets or in footnotes. It is not the purpose of this work to confuse the reader or to confer unwarranted credibility on extraneous writings and other sources;

16. Where texts are excerpted from the Bible, they are reproduced in *italics* in order that the reader can discern, at a glance, the biblical excerpts from the commentary thereon: in other words, to discern the sacred from what should be regarded as being, by comparison, profane. This format also spares the reader the tedious task of looking up and vetting the vast number of texts involved. Almost all have been reproduced in whole or substantial part. On occasion, where only a textual reference is incorporated, this is usually because it is either duplicative, or ancillary, or marginal to the main narrative, or dealt with more fully elsewhere. As will be seen from the content of this book, the *italicised* element is considerable. As an aid to ease of use, exhaustive General and Scripture Indexes have been incorporated in the Appendix (but only in bound hardback form), augmented by a full Bibliography and a wide-ranging Glossary;

17. As an aid to the reader, excerpts and extracts from other works, together with those from various translations of Scripture, have been reproduced in dark grey to distinguish them from the main narrative of this work, in black. Similarly, footnotes, with accreditations, appear in dark grey;²⁹

18. When first countenanced in nineteen ninety-seven, this work was intended as a relatively brief exposition of the book of Revelation for an eminent Rav in the Holy Land, although the initial proposition was wider than that. As matters developed, however, the work took on larger dimensions, covering a wide purview of prophecy, related background and historical context, important areas of doctrine, exposés of the root of other religious beliefs, and so on, resulting in extensive supplementation;

²⁸ which also provides a general essay on the sources utilized.

²⁹ certain PDF applications may fail to register this distinction with the original clarity.

19. Given the original purpose of the book, and its intended recipient, it was found necessary to embark upon several recitals of fundamental Judæo-Christian doctrine in order to set a background for the later exposition. These have been retained in this edition;

20. The Preamble to this book contains the following admonition in respect of certain matters prophetic: ‘On the rare occasion where any form of human speculation is incorporated into this work, it is annotated accordingly, and the reader warned of its likely deficiencies; otherwise it is made perfectly obvious from the context.’ It is felt that this is a most sensible approach, for in no manner is this a work of speculative theology;

21. The first edition of this study was completed in November, nineteen ninety-eight. This extended edition was substantially completed by February, two thousand and thirteen,³⁰ with the final chapter, on Creation, added in August, and with a Technical Paper on Millennial Language added in December. The substantial task of final editing the entire work took place in two thousand and fourteen;

22. Other than in the ebook version, blank pages are intentional, largely mirroring those in the original bound hardback; and,

23. Formerly, compact disc (C.D.) copies were available, but now ebook copies of this research and study can be ordered, free of charge, or otherwise accessed, again, free of charge, through the Internet;³¹

24. This research and study is an entirely non-commercial undertaking, conforming to the relevant provisions of “fair dealing” contained in Sections 29 & 30 of the Copyright, Designs, and Patents Act, 1988.³²

³⁰ with a late insertion in March: the identity of the then newly-elected pope.

³¹ again, where publishing in the form of an e-book—individually or through a book club, etc.—stipulates that an unwaivable and thus unavoidable mandatory charge be made, then that charge will be the minimum possible, and any royalties accruing to the author will be used for charitable purposes and be deemed as such, no financial gain arises from this undertaking.

³² this being the U.K. equivalent of copyright disclaimer under the U.S.A. Copyright Act, 1976, Section 107, ‘Fair Use,’ defined as being, inter alia, for the purposes of criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research, especially for non-profit, educational, or personal purposes.

Introduction

The Bible reveals the counsels and purposes of the divine, dyadic spirit-beings usually called God³³ in the English language. It contains knowledge and information which, otherwise, would remain unavailable. Without its detailed, progressive divine revelation, and the gift of the Holy Spirit,³⁴ God's counsels and purposes would be utterly inaccessible, unknowable, and unintelligible.

The Bible shows how to live a godly life;³⁵ tells why all should live that life; offers the power to live it, and displays in most graphic terms the dire consequences of not doing so. It records history—social, political, legal, ecclesiastical, and much more—whilst, in parallel, it portrays the future, particularly the eschatological, in considerable detail, as will be seen. And running through all of this is the divine purpose, the wonderful gift of eternal life held open to mankind, resulting from our Saviour's sacrifice and resurrection. If ever there were essential knowledge, then surely it is here, in The Holy Bible!³⁶

Judæo-Christianity

The term Judæo-Christianity, in this work, is almost exclusively used in reference to the early Christian church's beliefs and practices as recorded in the Bible.³⁷ To the reader progressing through this study, it will become clear exactly what those beliefs and practices were, and how they are sustained and kept today.

³³ amongst other names.

³⁴ i.e., the Power and Will of God.

³⁵ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, p.151:

'A man is either on the way or in the way.'

³⁶ Latin: semper habet aliquid relegendibus—'However frequently we read it, we shall always meet with something new.'

³⁷ 'Judæo-' does not refer to the religious belief system known as Judaism, in any of its guises, q.v. inf.; the term also encompasses much end-time eschatological research, almost all of which is excitingly new and very specific, q.v. inf.

It is well known that Jesus was a Judæan, living, variously, in Judæa and Samaria, and born of the tribe of Judah. That said, the New Testament points up a matter which is apposite. The Greek word translated 'Jew' in the New Testament³⁸ is, more correctly, 'Judæan' or 'of Judah,' and imports the sense of belonging to a country or territory, not one in connection with a specific religious belief. There is, however, a Greek word that does import the meaning of the religious belief of the Pharisees, etc., in the first century, and, by implication, the various religious beliefs which derived from it, collectively known as 'Judaism.'³⁹ It is used very sparingly in the New Testament where it is mentioned but twice,⁴⁰ both times correctly translated in the K.J.V. as the '*Jews' religion*.'⁴¹

Judæo-, in Judæo-Christianity, therefore, refers to the root connection of Christianity through the region of Judea / Palestine and the events at the time of Christ, together with numerous events thereanent, which, in turn, link it to the religious beliefs and practices of the Old Testament,⁴² and *not* to the religious beliefs of some of the local people of the time—beliefs that loosely constituted a system which, over the centuries, developed and transmuted from early Pharaseeism to later full-blown Orthodox Judaism and its 'Judaism-lite' variants.

Prophecy

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, as given to and recorded by John, sets before us the cataclysmic events of the end-time in all their fearful grandeur, but it has perplexed many down through the Christian era. In common with other related books in both the Old Testament and the New Testament—Daniel and Ezekiel being good examples in the former—it is complex in structure and difficult to comprehend. This is not made any easier by the frequent use of prophetic language, prophetic images, prophetic names, and a mixing of events, time-scales, and perspectives. To most people, it appears to be little more than a vapid pot-pourri of ciphers, opacities and encryption, giving off a mass of prophetic paradoxes.

However, in common with many other complex issues, what at first appears intractable can be found to yield itself reasonably readily when the basic elements are identified and set in context, and the whole can be viewed as a coherent entity,⁴³ with all relevant passages taken into consideration. In other words, there is found to be a sort of 'unifying theory' of biblical understanding, to borrow a phrase from theoretical physics. That a unity must exist in the Bible is held to be both essential and self-evident because the ultimate author of it all is

³⁸ Greek: ioudaios.

³⁹ Greek: ioudaismos.

⁴⁰ Gal 1:13,14

⁴¹ any form of Christianity claiming to arise out of Judaism—an oxymoron, if ever there were one!—would, presumably, be termed Judæsmo-Christianity.

⁴² save for the Old Testament substitutionary sacrificial system.

⁴³ Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 1, p.29:

'Bishop Horsley: 'Every single text of prophecy is to be considered as a portion of an entire system, and to be understood in that sense which may best connect it with the whole.'

God, and He is not the author of confusion. The fundamental difference in the instance of prophecy, in common with other biblical studies, is that the gift of the Holy Spirit is necessary to securing a sound understanding of the truth, since, without it, prophecy remains confusing and largely indecipherable, and, as a result, so much of its glorious detail is missed. It is the Holy Spirit, or Power of God, that opens the mind of man to the things of God.

Upon intensive study under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit, the book of Revelation—the last and closing book in the New Testament—in particular, yields a fascinating preview of future events completely unprecedented in the history of man on earth. It also reveals the means and method whereby God—by His predeterminate, divine condescendence—expunges sin from the putrefying record of mankind and finally unites all whose names are written in the book of life from the foundation of the world in His kingdom here on earth. It is, at once, exciting, and horrifying; filled with hope, and confidence; but containing dread warnings, suffering, and stern judgement.

Roots

'We all began, as children, with an unlimited ability to believe what we were told. We were credulous long before we became critical. God, Santa Claus, fairy stories, and all manner of things in profusion were gleaned or given in unquestioning confusion, inevitably becoming utterly confounded in our nascent minds. Our thinking was altogether imitative, as was our talking. We had no independent knowledge of our own. Reliance on authority was our only route to knowledge, our only route to truth. One prescription served adequately for our every need of information: ask our parents and be told.

This settled situation, paradoxically, was the occasion of our first unsettling: we discovered the fallibility of our parents. They failed to tell us what we wanted to know, or they confessed how much they did not know, or we found to be untrue what they had said. To some, this was a shock, especially if it were in the latter category of untruth and error. To find that one's parents are not omniscient can come as a cardinal blow, but for most of us the subsequent transfer of our confidence in our parents' authority to some other basis of belief is easily and painlessly achieved. But a simple shift in allegiance does not make any of our new convictions independently our own; we have never fought for them, or thought them through. They are still founded on the say-so of authority. What we wish to know we ask another, or it is given to us by another. Either way, what is told us we are enjoined to believe implicitly.⁴⁴

The time inevitably comes, however, to a normally developing mind, when such an attitude of unquestioning credulity becomes impossible to maintain. The curious "Why?" of the growing child that began in early years to besiege all statements of fact now ranges out to call into question the propositions and very found-

⁴⁴ in this way, prejudices, biases, and false estimates of the worth of other men's opinions and irrationality come to form by far the largest part of the befuddled belief system of the average person.

ations of that received knowledge. The enlarging intellect now demands cogent reasons rather than cold dogmas. Authority's hold immediately weakens as received dogmas, at their strongest, become downgraded in our minds to mere propositions open to serious question and which, at their weakest, are derided to scorn. So normal is this period of interrogation that it is, or rather was, regularly slated on the timetables of psychological development.

At whatever time and in whatever special form this period of doubt arises, the characteristic quality of its outcome is easily described. In the end, the fully awakened, if entirely carnal mind, is ill-content to accept any authoritative statement that dare not be questioned, opposed, or denied. The right to question everything is unconditionally reserved.⁴⁵

Authority's all too frequent response in the face of this is the limp: 'Everyone thinks or does it this way, for it is the way it has always been'—in short, the age-old defence of the indefensible: tradition. But dogged tradition, for its own sake, forms no allure to the enquiring mind. It is a repetition, and a mindless, tired repetition at that. The mindless iteration of something that started long ago in man's response to different circumstances, in a different culture, using different tools, with different knowledge and understanding, is unlikely to be pressingly relevant today. Simple, unthinking replication—the very grist of the political correctness that originated with Lenin and his failed dogma of communism which has now become near all-pervading in Western education and culture today⁴⁶—can avail nothing; failed and stagnant, it putrefies rapidly.

Tradition, ceremonial, and unthinking replication can never replace new, exciting, radical thinking. Finding ourselves socially-constrained to repeat the mistakes of the past through mindless repetition is the precondition inevitably leading to perdition. It can never be a substitute for thinking the unthinkable and doing the barely possible, the essential ground of innovation and development. Flair, drive, enthusiasm, intellect, curiosity, originality, inventiveness, intrepidity, tenacity, application, patience, leadership, honesty, equity, inclusiveness, indefatigability, and the highest ethical standards—the basic components of all-round ability—have no place in the sterile, dumbed-down, politically-correct world of modern education and society, and those, in turn, bear no relation to reality.

'For thirty years the minds of our children have been vacuumed and sanitized, leaving them open to anyone exploiting their trained biases, their materialistic desires, and their programmed gullibility. The model is not universally true—particularly for children who have been taught a value system at home—but you don't

⁴⁵ based on and around a writing by the late Professor William Barclay, University of Glasgow.

⁴⁶ in education, remarkably many ill-informed and ill-educated, self-appointed 'intellectuals' believe that higher education—often vocational, but not exclusively so—will ineluctably lead to their elevation to the ranks of the so-called elite. What they overlook, however, amongst many things, is that vocational education is open to many; it is not esoteric. Since elitism is bounded by secrecy, and is most certainly not founded on meritocracy, it doesn't naturally reside in properly-conducted halls of higher education. To the contrary, it is grounded in 'club, clique, and claue,' with no merit, or love, or human empathy to be found in it. Relying for its appeal on the occultism, greed, avarice, vanity, and narcissism of deluded neophytes, it is dead, leading only to the grave.

have to look far to see just how pervasive this model has become....This kind of brainwashing is incredibly strong in the university setting.

During the entire history of modern society, since at least the Elizabethan era, the university campus has always been the haven of the intellectual whose primary right is the freedom to think whatever he likes, to learn from any source he chooses, and to come up with his own conclusions and state those in a public forum without restraint. Today that right no longer exists on the college campuses in this country.⁴⁷ Students and professors are not free to think what they like or speak openly in a public forum.⁴⁸

Rebellion?

Given the limitations and inexperience of youth, the 'rebellion,' as authority insists on seeing it, can be inchoate, unregulated, and ill-directed, but mixed amongst it there may be found some valuable seeds of great potential. The treatment accorded to the enquiring youth passing through this stage often determines, in a fine or lamentable way, his subsequent attitude to authority. If authority's inability to answer reasonable points and respond to carefully considered issues is backed by veiled threats of the most serious retribution,⁴⁹ then the worthlessness of that authority becomes starkly crystallized. Negative, threatening repression of real questions is the most fatal of all responses, for it shows the paucity and fundamental weakness, at all levels, of the authorities and institutions involved, and, of course, that of any underlying clandestine club or society.

The same weaknesses also stifle ability and clear-headed new thinking, and without clear-headed thinking, and the energy and ability to put the fruits of that thinking into operation, our nations and economies are condemned to go down the same old dirt road—a road so well known, so well worn, a road meandering and deeply-rutted—repeating the same old mistakes, time, and time, and time again. *'We would have healed Babylon, but Babylon is not healed.'*⁵⁰

⁴⁷ U.S.A.

⁴⁸ Robertson, Pat, *The New World Order*, pp.218-220 (writing in 1991AD)

⁴⁹ e.g., in terms of severe restriction or even extirpation of professional development and the ability to secure gainful employment, depressingly often involving covert activities on the part of one or more secret society. To threaten peremptorily any young person with having no future in the profession or the industry to which he has dedicated his future professional and working life—on the combined grounds of his technical reasoning and questioning and his refusal to join a prescribed secret society—is morally repugnant and risible, but in our society it happens, and happens all too frequently, often to the very best of our young people. Any society that discriminates in this way against the very best it has, preferring nepotism over merit, wantonly importing risk without any concern for its good or gain, has but one end: total collapse. And that is the chasm into which we succide.

⁵⁰ Jer 51:9a

Environment

A work of this type is not undertaken lightly. It is not the product of normal circumstance, complacency, and comfortable living, for, under such overtly sterile conditions, with human nature as the only potential driver, little of worth is ever attempted, and even less achieved. While the cold and dead orthodoxy of religious formalism knows nothing of struggle and growth,⁵¹ it is the unstinting striving for the truth in adversity—with its attendant uncertainty, hardship, and privation—that has produced the conditions necessary for the cultivation and exposition of the revealed Word of God portrayed in these following pages. It is an unavoidable characteristic of human existence that while hardship and persecution can breed focus, perseverance, and a searching for truth, those traits waste to nothing in a secular society devoted to self-gratification, comfort, and consumption. When, in addition to this basic 'adverse' environment, the gift of the Holy Spirit is graciously conferred, truth blooms, light drives out darkness, and understanding takes the place of confusion, conjecture, formalism, mysticism, apostasy, and that latest of fashionable maladies, political correctness. It is then, and only then, that truth blossoms and becomes readily intelligible.

Outcome

In researching, compiling, and writing this study, there has been brought to mind the words accredited to the inventor of the celebrated 'H-5'⁵² which so greatly assisted in securing Great Britain's position in the nineteenth-century as *The Ruler of the Waves*, although the endeavour in this instance has been diminutive in comparison: 'I have indeed had a long deal of labour, but I thank God I've got it through.'⁵³ Continuing on the same basic theme, there is a nautical quotation that is germane: 'There must be a beginning of any great matter, but the continuing to the end until it be thoroughly finished yields the true glory.'⁵⁴

Whilst there is no personal glory in this work—for much was learned as the process developed and crystallized—there has been great personal gain in many respects, not the least being the sheer joy in eliciting the truth. The value of setting down in writing settled Judæo-Christian exposition is manifold, for the root of all apostasy is clearly revealed, and the lord of this world shown for whom and for what he is, and what he is doing.

In the context of biblical prophecies in particular, the events, sequences, and even the tentative dates can be checked as they unfold, although there may be a significant difference here: whilst the dates projected

⁵¹ Jewish Orthodoxy, for example, was and largely remains a matter of practice rather than belief. The Pharisees' 'righteousness' was that form of 'righteousness' which was set upon vain ceremonial, arbitrary disciplines, numbing minutiae, false shows, and dead works.

⁵² a pocket-sized ships' chronometer used for determining true longitude at sea. An earlier version, the H-4, finished in 1759AD, took 19 years to develop, was 5 inches in diameter, and weighed 3lbs. The H-5 in particular represented a major advance in horology.

⁵³ John Harrison.

⁵⁴ Sir Francis Drake.

are, in the last analysis, imbued with the product of human deduction, however biblically well-informed they may be,⁵⁵ the events and sequences are those of the sure and certain prophecies of our Lord Jesus Christ, and are immutable.

⁵⁵ although the literal translation of the Greek term ei me, appearing in both Mat 24:36 and Mark 13:32-33 (discussed in the chapter '*When Shall These Things Come to Pass?*'), while appearing to interdict any form of purely human deduction, does, conditionally, permit of divine propositional revelation, and, in so doing, denies any implied blanket proscription.

Preamble

This study was not intended to be a didactic work, but an aid and encouragement to further study and research, written for the thoughtful and earnest. The format adopted is that of the normal commentary with key sections referenced and footnoted. While this book is still not easy or light reading—it was never intended to be—it is a serious, detailed, and closely argued work on a subject of extreme importance.

The scope of prophecy and prophetic works covered encompasses the book of Revelation and related passages and prophecies contained in other New Testament⁵⁶ and Old Testament books. In addition, in order to crystallize certain matters, the work also covers certain historical events, setting them in context, and relating them to past and future prophecies. It shows what Judæo-Christianity is, why it is, whence it came, and how it compares with other religions. The aim is that of comprehension.

When dealing with future events, there is a commonly voiced caveat: ‘But the writings upon how the present may evolve in the future, even if they discuss trends which are already underway, can lay no claim to being historical truth. Not only do the raw materials change, from archivally-based monographs to economic forecasts and political projections, but the validity of what is being written about can no longer be assumed. Even if there always were many methodological difficulties in dealing with ‘historical facts,’ past events....did indeed occur. Nothing one can say about the future has that certainty. Unforseen happenings, sheer accidents, the halting of a trend, can ruin the most plausible of forecasts; if they do not, then the forecaster is merely lucky. What follows, then, can only be provisional and conjectural, based upon a reasoned surmise of how present tendencies in global economies and strategy may work out, but with no guarantee that all, or any, of this will

⁵⁶ the council of Laodicea attempted to delete the book of Revelation from the canon, but the councils of Hippo (393AD) and Carthage (397AD) declared the book of Revelation to be what it always was: canonical.

happen.⁵⁷ Worse still, all mystics, psychics, and clairvoyants like to keep their predictions as vague as possible, simply to increase their chances of appearing to be right. Deliberately mystical and enigmatic prophecies, profoundly amphibolous, have no proper interpretation and therefore can have no proper fulfilment. Where language ceases to have any set and fixed meaning, anything can mean anything, or nothing at all.

In starkest contrast, the Revelation of Jesus Christ is divine revelation, handed down from on high, and is not subject to such vagary and subterfuge. When interpreted correctly, it is found to be very specific, with extreme detail and a divinely ordered plan way beyond the vain imaginings of man. Behind that, of course, there is also the divine power to bring it to pass, exactly as prophesied.

Prophecy is the light that shineth during this night, which, thankfully, *'is far spent, [for] the day is at hand,*⁵⁸ *'when the bright and morning star shall arise.*⁵⁹ To those who would contend that eschatology⁶⁰ is mere speculation, and best left alone, or, at most, not taken too seriously, there is this: *'The testimony of Jesus Christ is the spirit of prophecy.*⁶¹ The study of it, therefore, links us closely to Christ, and occupies us with Him, and His gospel, the gospel of the soon-coming kingdom of God. Those who long for His glorious appearance, who wait, and watch, and look for that blessed hope,⁶² are the same who know the position and role of divine revelation in that plan of salvation. Not to look for that blessed hope, or not to wait for the return of Christ from heaven is contrary to, and subversive of, the teaching of the Bible, and the divine plan of God,⁶³ the Parousia being mentioned more than three hundred times in the New Testament alone. It is not aleatory.⁶⁴ Indifference isn't an option; neither is disdain, nor disregard. One's lamp is either lit, or it isn't. There can be no flickering, spluttering median.⁶⁵ You are either in and of this, or you aren't.

⁵⁷ Kennedy, Paul, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers, Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, p.565.

⁵⁸ Rom 13:12

⁵⁹ Rev 22:16; K.J.V. corrected translation gives Greek: othrinos as 'dawn' rather than 'morning'; cp. Rev 2:28, *'And I will give him the morning star,'* where Greek: proimos is correctly translated 'morning.' This should be compared to but not confused or conflated with either Isa 14:12c *'son of the dawn,'* referring to Lucifer, or the occult 'light of Venus which is associated with resurrection in Free- and Accepted Masonry, where the newly-elevated Master Mason is brought back from figurative death to the light of the planet Venus rising in the morning, just before sunrise in the east. The kings and pharaohs of ancient Egypt were considered to be the sons of god through their being resurrected to the light of Venus rising from the direction of 'The Way of Horus' over the Sinai,' Knight, C. and Lomas, R., *The Hiram Key*, pp.150-156 (paraphrased).

⁶⁰ from the Greek: eschata, meaning 'last things.'

⁶¹ Rev 19:10

⁶² cp. Heb 9:28b, *'and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.'*

⁶³ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, p.35:

'Heraclitus....held that all change and flux was not haphazard; it was controlled and ordered, following a continuous pattern all the time....that not only was there a pattern in the physical world; there was also a pattern in the world of events. He held that nothing moved with aimless feet; in all life and in all the events of life there was a purpose, a plan, and a design.'

⁶⁴ dependant upon chance or luck.

⁶⁵ an unattributed statement from the Internet confirms and explains the underlying modus and the bar set against the hypocritical and apathetic (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

Limits

Judæo-Christianity is *the* exoteric religion—suitable to be imparted freely to the general public—par excellence. Indeed, it is the only truly exoteric one. All others have a mix of esoteric beliefs, secret societies, inner cliques, occult rites and ceremonial, covert activities, degrees of initiation, veiled inner meanings, and so on. One even has the political standing of an independent state. The manifold religions of this evil world, founded, at best, on highly selective scriptural exility and much pagan admixture, have nothing to do with the religion of God.

This book reflects, records, and expounds proper Judæo-Christian understanding of biblical prophecy, insofar as it exists at the time of writing, in the latter part of the last decade of the twentieth-century, and the formative years of the twenty-first. That said, there remains one further consideration: 'Remote as we are from perfect knowledge, we deem it less blameworthy to say too little rather than nothing at all.'⁶⁶ The decision on where the proper balance lies has been, nevertheless, a difficult one, especially in view of the curse and dire consequences contained in the twenty-second chapter of Revelation, brought down on the heads of those found adding to the textual content, particularly in the form of additional, spurious 'scriptures.' Indeed, various admonitions and curses are found in the Bible, particularly pertaining to additions to or transmutations of the Law, and, in general, adding to or twisting the words of God.⁶⁷

Even with the Holy Spirit, some difficulty continues for the simple reason that this study was initially intended for a relatively limited number of readers. With its expansion, and the wide spectrum of background, biblical understanding and belief of the likely readership, the matter at once becomes more complex, since, in His own good time, God will take this work wherever and to whomsoever He wills. So the decision on how much detail is required has been a fine one, one that has been moderated by the rather sporadic nature of the time available for research and writing, although the facility of the Sabbatical year⁶⁸ has proved to be invaluable in bringing this work to a fit and proper conclusion.

⁶⁶ 'The Bible makes it perfectly clear that the truth is hidden from all except those few whose minds and hearts are pleasing to God [Isa 55:8; Mat 7:13,14,11:25,26,13:11-15,20:16,22:14,24:12,13; Mark 4:11; Luke 8:10,10:21,13:23,24,18:8; I Cor 2:14; II Tim 4:3,4]. Divine truth is not a common thing to be proved by every curious scholar [I Cor 1:17-29,2:1-16,3:18-20]. Unless a man sets his heart to seek God and sets his life to conform to God's will, he can no more find the truth of the Scriptures [Deut 4:29; I Chron 28:9; II Chron 15:2,31:21; Prov 28:5; Isa 55:6; Jer 29:13; Amos 5:14; Mat 6:33,7:7; Luke 11:9-13,12:31,32,13:23,24; Acts 17:27; Rom 12:2; Heb 11:6] than the men of Sodom could find the door of Lot's house [Gen 19:11]. God has said that he will send a strong delusion upon all those who receive not the love of the truth, that they should believe a lie [II Thes 2:10,11].'

⁶⁶ Jerome, in Latin: Sicut enim a perfecta scientia procol sumus, levioris culpae arbitramur saltem parum, quam omnino nihil dicere.

⁶⁷ e.g., Gal 1:8,9

⁶⁸ ending in early April, 2013AD.

Dangers

Simply to say little or nothing was never an option, as that would have precluded exposition entirely, so great care has been taken to produce as comprehensive a work as possible. While this can be by no means exhaustive, it rigorously guards against going dogmatically beyond the scope of Revelation and related books of the Bible in matters prophetic. To the diligent and honest expositor, the real danger lies not in inventing or importing additions and extraneous matters, or in sciolism,⁶⁹ but in simple misconceptions / misinterpretations of the existence and meaning of divine revelation. This is, after all, a notoriously difficult subject, revolving around a book, the Bible, which, although widely published, is little read, and is probably the most complex, condensed, and convoluted ever written.

Halley describes some of the dangers to the unwary inherent in such an undertaking: 'As Whaley states,⁷⁰ "Single texts of scripture may be so interpreted, if not compared together, and explained by each other, as to contradict one another, and to be each one of them at variance with the truth. The scriptures, if so studied, will no less mislead you than if they were actually false; for half the truth will very often amount to absolute falsehood."⁷¹

The result of rough and wilful textual manipulation, often with the imposition of self-interest, is noted by Halley: 'A thing that strikes one who browses around in the vast literature that has been written on the book of Revelation is the utter dogmatism with which so many put forth their own opinions, not as opinions, but in categorical statements, as to the meaning of certain texts and passages, as if they know all about it, and their say-so settles the matter. Whereas, in fact, reverent humility, and openness of mind, would be more becoming in those seeking the truth of a book like this.'⁷²

Without the Holy Spirit, which '*guide[s] into all truth....and shew[s] things to come*,⁷³ and due diligence, simple human importation or conjecture on a wholesale manner has been a frequent and fatal failing of most of the previously published expositions on Revelation, with axiomatic adjuncts and common nostrums becoming incorporated all too easily, rendering worthless any attempt at structured, composite exposition.

Nothing avoided

It is not the purpose of this work to promote or persuade by dint of intellectual disputation and argument or by citing any part of the manifestly deficient, anaemic and otiose intellectual conceptions and philosophical speculations of man, for these have no part or lot in it. Rather, this is a lively work, thankfully spared such

⁶⁹ superficial knowledge.

⁷⁰ Whaley, J., *Future State*, Lect. VI, p.120—Phila. Edn.

⁷¹ Halley, John W., *Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible*, p.7

⁷² Halley, *Halley's Bible Handbook*, p.684

⁷³ John 16:13

‘intellectual’ input. On the rare occasion where any form of human speculation is incorporated, it is annotated accordingly, and the reader warned of its likely deficiencies; otherwise it is made perfectly obvious from the context. That which is even remotely eclectic is described and attributed accordingly.⁷⁴ Beyond that, much is new, and cogent, and pressingly relevant.

Despite the highly condensed nature of the Scriptures—an intentional characteristic—no attempt has been made in the writing of this book to finesse the more intractable prophetic passages; neither has there been any intentional obfuscation, nor partisan manipulation.⁷⁵ Nothing has been avoided, no matter how unyielding it may have seemed at the outset. By virtue of this, the completed work can be regarded as sensibly untrammelled by most, if not all, of the commonplace inadequacies, wantings, and tendenz inherent in conventional exposition. As a result, it can be read as a floruit.

Reaction

To some, parts of the analyses of nominally Christian and other religious beliefs may seem dissonant, little more than a litany of indelicate philippics with the ready potential to arouse umbrage and resentment in the incredulous and disaffected reader. Others may find it not to their view, while some may think it nothing more than uncharitable, troublesome, and narrow-minded. However, very careful note should be made of the strident censure of apostasy made by Christ and Paul in the New Testament, as it is this that drives the message, and not any consideration of the sensitivities of the ill-informed and misguided reader, or, indeed, of any remote intramural doctrinal disputation.

‘We should never be afraid of adventurous thought. If there is such a [thing] as the Holy Spirit, God must ever be leading us into new truth....And yet our standards of orthodoxy [in the church] are far [removed from that]. The man with something new has always to fight.’⁷⁶

There is always an inertial response to new thinking: ‘We sometimes find ourselves changing our minds without any resistance or heavy emotion, but if we are told that we are wrong, we resent the imputation and harden our hearts. We are incredibly heedless in the formation of our beliefs, but find ourselves filled with an illicit passion for them when anyone proposes to rob us of their companionship. It is obviously not the ideas themselves that are dear to us, but our self-esteem [and comfort] which [are] threatened....We like to continue to believe what we have been accustomed to accept as true, and the resentment aroused when doubt is cast

⁷⁴ to avoid the ‘cafeteria theology’ effect.

⁷⁵ II Cor 4:2, ‘*But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.*’

⁷⁶ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, p.65 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

upon any of our assumptions leads us to seek every manner of excuse for clinging to it. The result is that most of our so-called reasoning consists in finding arguments for going on believing as we already do.⁷⁷

A ready example is found in the indignant remonstrances shown time and again in the course of Jeremiah's addresses to his people. As an illustration of his invective, his attack on Jehoiakim⁷⁸ serves well. Other prophets and apostles, and, indeed, Christ Himself, levelled very strong words against the self-righteous and complacent who were in error, who were leading others into error, and who countenanced no reason to change.

Many who read those warnings can see well their appropriateness, and appreciate the dire moral and religious state of the recipients, and the pressing need of what was said and of immediate action in remedy. But these same people, when faced with the most mild invective or protest—if it be even that, for more often it is observation or propositional revelation—when levelled at them in connection with errors and omissions in their own religious belief or practice, will immediately become indignant, sometimes aggressively so. Choosing insult and umbrage over externally-induced personal disquiet or discomfort—for that is where the egocentric heart of the reaction lies in the person of the recipient—reveals profound deficiencies in a matter of extreme personal importance: one's own salvation. It is not unknown for the recipient to so wholly misconstrue the affair as to cite the '*love*' or '*charity*' chapter,⁷⁹ in riposte, the defence being that had the person evidenced Godly or Christian love, then that person would not have said what was said or, at the very least, not said it in that way. This form of deflection, for it is that rather than defence, appears to evidence all too easily in politically-correct, misplaced religious sensitivities. Here it is especially dangerous, for not only is it a gross abuse of the writings of Paul to the Corinthians, it utterly ignores the vital substance, while seeking to place blame wholly or substantially on the party making the initial counterpoint or observation.

Since the remonstrance or observation was given out of concern that something in error be righted to the benefit of the recipient, then, logically, it is a very strange reaction. To seek to insulate oneself from the inconvenience of having to think and respond in a positive manner on a matter of such crucial importance, rather than adopt the Berean strategy of assiduously searching the Scriptures to see if '*these things be so*,' is self-defeating in the extreme. This is even more calamitous when some of what is said is admitted to be of considerable worth by the recipient, for in that case the 'cafeteria theology' attitude of choosing the delicacies that appear attractive and palatable while avoiding the distasteful, if not arrested, leads in the long run to nothing other than perdition, such is the entropic and self-feeding destructiveness of human nature. By such device, any potential gain, in this manner, is resolutely declined.

⁷⁷ Robinson, James Harvey, *The Mind in the Making* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁷⁸ Jer 22:13-19

⁷⁹ I Corinthians chpt. 13

The offer

Christianity introduces the munificent grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and, through His blood sacrifice, the general opportunity of salvation for all, with entry into the very kingdom of God: *'Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.'*⁸⁰

Scope

As any interrogation and statement of true Christian belief and practice, were it to be expounded comprehensively, would fill a veritable library ten thousandfold, and still fall significantly short, so this study, even in its limited field, by definition, is inherently deficient. While many subjects which have direct bearing on the exposition of the book of Revelation would each properly merit, at the very least, a full book, some attempt is made in this work to explain the underlying doctrine, the historical setting and the genealogy, as they are considered appropriate. This results in some 'excursions' or digressions, but all are essential for any human work which even attempts to demonstrate the reality and complexity of an important part, but only a part, of what many regard to be but a 'simple faith.'

Nowhere in the Bible is Christianity termed a 'simple faith.' Not only is this a misnomer, it is a serious misconception. The textual reference often adduced is: *'But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.'*⁸¹ The word translated '*simplicity*,' however, comes from the Greek meaning sincerity, generosity, and singleness, without dissimulation or self-seeking.⁸² It has nothing to do with the plain or obvious. The idea of singleness comes from the twin root, meaning a union of things folded together,⁸³ and braided, or plaited.⁸⁴ Thus in Christ there is a singleness composed of something actually composite in nature, but having a singular and tightly bound unity: in other words, truth.

⁸⁰ I Peter 1:18-23

⁸¹ II Cor 11:3

⁸² Greek: haplotes.

⁸³ Greek: haplous.

⁸⁴ Greek: pleko.

The Bible contains a warning against following false teachers in the church: '*which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned,*'⁸⁵ and, '*For if he that cometh preacheth another*'⁸⁶ Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another⁸⁷ spirit, which ye have not received, or another⁸⁸ gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.'⁸⁹ Scripture also says that Christ wishes His own flock to be '*wise*'⁹⁰ unto that which is good, and simple⁹¹ concerning evil.' Simple—here meaning singular and harmless as opposed to duplicitous and evil—is what underpins the '*simplicity which is in Christ,*' and not any wayward human notion of the straightforward, plain, or transparent. Luke records God's strategy: '*At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent,*'⁹² and hast revealed them unto babes.'^{93 94}

Why complex?

As already noted, the Bible is probably the most condensed and convoluted book ever written. In addition, the literary styles of the forty or so writers of the books of the Bible reflect their individual personalities, cultures, and experiences. They used differing phraseology and images, different techniques, even different languages with which to communicate, resulting in a decidedly complex ensemble.

One reason sometimes given for this compression and convolution is 'filtration,' a necessary device separating those keen and willing to search the scriptures and '*earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints,*'⁹⁵ from those who are merely complacent, indifferent, or feckless. This neatly divides the sheep from the goats. Those attempting to read the Bible as a simple, straightforward recital of God's will, readily understandable by the simplistic, gullible, and foolhardy, are doomed to misunderstanding virtually all of its content and import.⁹⁶

⁸⁵ Rom 3:17-19; Greek: skandalon, means '*traps,*' '*snare,*' and '*impediments*' as well as the lesser '*offences*'; cp. Luke 17:1b.

⁸⁶ Greek: allos, '*different*'

⁸⁷ Greek: allos, '*different*'

⁸⁸ Greek: allos, '*different*'

⁸⁹ II Cor 11:4

⁹⁰ Greek: sophos men, '*truly wise*' or '*wise indeed*'

⁹¹ Greek: akeraios, '*harmless*' or '*innocent*'

⁹² better as: '*sophisticated and cunning*'

⁹³ Greek: nepios, '*untaught,*' or '*not speaking*'

⁹⁴ Luke 10:21

⁹⁵ Jude 3b

⁹⁶ Mencken, H. L., cited in *Business Week*, 21 April, 1980, '*For every complex question there is a simple answer, and it is wrong*'; Mobil Oil Co. advertisement, 1972, '*For every problem there is a solution: simple, neat, and wrong*'; both cited by Deming, William Edwards, *Out of the Crisis*, p.388. The world is complex; creation is complex; so, naturally, God's Will should be expected to be both complex and comprehensive.

True belief

Many imposters have come preaching a different Jesus than that found in the gospel message. Satan is the great counterfeiter, so it not surprising that he has attempted to produce many counterfeits of true Christianity to divert people from the truth. As a result, there are ‘*many*’ false versions of Jesus and His gospel proclaimed, fabrications of man’s wicked mind⁹⁷ acting under the influence of Satan; but there is only one true Jesus, one true gospel, and one true salvation. That true belief is found in the gospels and in the works and practices of the early Christian church recorded in the Acts and Epistles. It is vastly different than the wholesale mockery of Christianity that masquerades today as the visible so-called Christian church.

The early church kept God’s Laws, and worshipped in accordance with the Law on the Sabbath (not on Sunday). There was no Easter, no Christmas, no Mass, no Marian worship, no transubstantiation, no purgatory, no crucifixes, no rosaries, no sale of indulgences, and so on. You will not find one of these in the Bible, for they are all pagan in their origin. Once we become divested of these Satanic rites and beliefs—and, sadly, there are many others—and we revert to the true gospel and belief, then that belief rapidly crystallises and becomes pressingly relevant and pertinent. The true beliefs and practices haven’t changed. How could they?

Limited

And finally, in consideration even of the core exposition of the book of Revelation, this work is by no means complete: neither shall it become so, until the Messiah returns, and our lack of understanding is made good, by which time, of course, its deficiencies will have become all too apparent, and it will have been rendered utterly superfluous, and redundant. So whereas all Holy Scripture is in perpetuam rei memoriam, this book will have but a brief life. Paul summed up the matter most exquisitely, in its temporary and current condition: *‘For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.’*⁹⁸

This book has no price in monetary terms,⁹⁹ but the subject has price beyond imagination in the eyes of God: the sacrifice of His very Son, His resurrection to glory, and the ultimate creation of the completed family of God. Accordingly, it is not to be taken lightly. It is a serious work, with profound implications for all.

⁹⁷ See listing under Rome’s / Papal Innovations.

⁹⁸ I Cor 13:9,10

⁹⁹ other than where unavoidable, such as with certain formats of ebook, q.v.sup.

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Volume 1

Origins

Chapter 1

Background & Common Ground

‘The empire of the Romans *filled the world*; and when that empire fell into the hands of a single person, the world became a safe and dreary prison for his enemies. The slave of imperial despotism, whether he was condemned to drag his gilded chain in Rome and the senate, or to wear out a life of exile on the barren rock of Seriphus or the frozen banks of the Danube, expected his fate in silent despair. To resist was fatal, and it was impossible to fly. On every side he was encompassed with a vast extent of sea and land, which he could never hope to traverse without being discovered, seized, and restored to his irritated master. Beyond the frontiers, his anxious view could discover nothing except the ocean, inhospitable deserts, hostile tribes of barbarians of fierce manners and unknown language, or dependent kings who would gladly purchase the emperor’s protection by the sacrifice of an obnoxious fugitive. ‘*Wherever you are,*’ said Cicero to the exiled Marcellus, ‘*remember that you are equally within the power of the conqueror.*’”¹⁰⁰

‘The basic fact was that by the time Christianity entered the world, Rome was mistress of the world, and the Roman citizen was convinced that work was beneath him. The work of the world, as far as he was concerned, was done by slaves. This meant that in Rome there were about 150,000 people who had literally nothing to do; and there were another 100,000 whose work was finished by noon. Some safety-valve had to be found for this mass of people; somehow they had to be kept fed and amused. Hence there came the famous

¹⁰⁰ Gibbon, Edward, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chpt. 3., para. 37, cited in *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, pp.22,23

phrase that all that the populace now wanted was 'bread and circuses.'¹⁰¹ Fronto said that the Roman populace were absorbed in two things—food and the shows.'¹⁰²

'It was the age of chariot-racing....It was not only the prospect of disaster that lured in the crowds; it was the betting in which the millionaire betted in his thousands and the man on the dole staked his last penny. There was even a transfer system whereby the most famous riders were lured away from one faction to another. Chariot-racing in Rome and big-time sport today bear a close resemblance, not least in the way that the financial rewards of sport make nonsense of all real values.'¹⁰³

'It has been pointed out that Rome had more public holidays than any society in history has ever had. On these public holidays everything stopped, and the populace thronged to state-provided amusements. In the time of Augustus, sixty-six days were public holidays each year; in the time of Tiberius, eighty-seven; in the time of Marcus Aurelius, one hundred and thirty-five; in the fourth century, one hundred and seventy-five. When the Coliseum was dedicated under Titus, there were one hundred consecutive days of shows and holidays. When Trajan celebrated his Dacian triumph, there were one hundred and twenty-three consecutive days of public holiday and entertainment. The hardest work that the Roman did was his pursuit of pleasure.'¹⁰⁴

Over time, 'by wars and conquests, the Romans bare down all opposition, and reduced almost every kingdom or state in the known world into some kind or degree of dependence; drew all the spoil and wealth of many conquered nations to enrich their proud capital; and tyrannised over all that did not quietly yield obedience to their authority.'¹⁰⁵

Religious 'toleration'

'Even before the time of the early church, there had been no meaningful advance in religious toleration in the empire, either when Rome had identified the gods of Greece with her own, or when she gradually received the gods of all the conquered nations into her vast pantheon. The Roman state might authorise new worships, but the individual was as much as ever forbidden to go outside the prescribed 'legal' list.'¹⁰⁶

'Public life was everywhere fenced with worship of the gods. The Senate began its debate with a libation on the altar of Victory, the general took the auspices before a battle, and the soldier swore his oath of loyalty before the gods. The public games were either murderous or immoral, and almost always consecrated by some foul worship or other. Even private life was beset with idolatrous observances. If a man walked on the shore at Ostia, his heathen friend would throw a kiss to an image of Serapis. If he paid him a visit, he would find

¹⁰¹ Juvenal, *Satires*, 10.77-81

¹⁰² Barclay, William, *Ethics in a Permissive Society*, pp.116,117

¹⁰³ Barclay, William, *Ethics in a Permissive Society*, pp.118,119

¹⁰⁴ Barclay, William, *Ethics in a Permissive Society*, pp.116,117

¹⁰⁵ *Scott's Bible Commentary*

¹⁰⁶ Barclay, William, *Ethics in a Permissive Society*, pp.116,117

the household gods beside his hearth;¹⁰⁷ if he went to a dinner party....(in an idol's temple)....the meal would begin with a libation, and might consist of meals offered to idols, and be enlivened with lascivious dances. Of the pictures which might adorn the room, the less said the better....Offence was everywhere, and could not always be avoided without complicity in heathen worship or immorality.¹⁰⁸

'A religious Babel!¹⁰⁹....so could ancient Rome be most fitly named from the spiritual point of view. There was a medley of religions. Rome was the meeting-place of cults and creeds without number. The classic gods of the Græco-Roman West were joined by those of the mystery eastern cults. There was an infinite variety of beliefs and of worship. A philosophical scepticism was not wanting, to fill up the measure. Religious liberty of a sort prevailed, for men might believe anything, everything, or nothing, on condition that they rendered overt homage to the State religion. There was thus a peculiar unity in diversity. A religious Babylon indeed!'¹¹⁰

'In a world of polytheism, almost anything went, and, in the main, people were relaxed about religious belief: 'how various, how loose, and how uncertain were the religious sentiments of Polytheists. They were abandoned, almost without control, to the natural workings of a superstitious fancy. The accidental circumstances of their life and situation determined the object, as well as the degree, of their devotion; and, as long as their adoration was successively prostituted to a thousand deities, it was scarcely possible that their hearts could be susceptible of a very sincere or lively passion for any of them.'¹¹¹

'As a rule, the Roman emperors respected the worships of conquered nations.¹¹² and Rome's attitude and conduct towards [one] religion—Judaism, which although generally despised throughout the empire, still enjoyed significant protection under the law—is telling: Nor was it [Rome's] policy to insult the national worship. She treated it with official respect just because it was a national worship, and interfered more than once to protect it in the Greek cities. [In Jerusalem] the cohort in the Tower of Antonia was only there to guard the peace. The sanctity of the Temple was fully recognised. The emperor made regular offerings, and no Gentile was allowed to set foot in the court of Israel. The Jews had express permission to put to death even a Roman citizen, if he was found inside the 'middle wall of partition.' The wall of division in the Temple¹¹³ served to separate the Jews / Israelites from the Gentiles.¹¹⁴ The Jews, moreover, had exceptional privileges, like freedom from military service, and from legal business on the Sabbath.'¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁷ or prominently displayed in the atrium, the central hall of a house in Roman times.

¹⁰⁸ Gwatkin, Henry Melvill, *Early Church History to AD 313*, Vol. 1, pp.237-239 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁰⁹ cp. Atbash, a cypher based on a reversal of the twenty-two characters of the Hebrew alphabet, so Sheshach means Babel in Jer 25:26.

¹¹⁰ Pankhurst, Christabel, *The World's Unrest: Visions of the Dawn*, pp.76,77

¹¹¹ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.53,54

¹¹² Barclay, William, *Ethics in a Permissive Society*, pp.116,117

¹¹³ Hebrew: chel

¹¹⁴ there was, and is, no such division in Judæo-Christianity: Gal 3:27-29, 'For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female:

'In view of [the] absolute refusal of the Jews to fight or bear arms on the Sabbath day, the Romans [had]...exempted them from military service. Josephus¹¹⁶ quotes an edict of Dolabella, the governor of Asia, giving this exemption: he says that the Jewish envoy came to Dolabella and told him that his countrymen could not go into the Roman armies because they were forbidden either to travel or to fight on the Sabbath day, and because their laws about food could not be kept in army circumstances. Dolabella decreed: "I do therefore grant them a freedom from going into the army, as the former prefects have done."¹¹⁷

'According to the maxims of universal toleration, the Romans [ended up] protect[ing] a superstition they detested. The polite Augustus [even] condescended to give orders that sacrifices should be offered for his prosperity in the Temple of Jerusalem.'¹¹⁸ '[He] had a daily burnt-offering brought for him there of two lambs and a bullock; and ever afterwards this sacrifice was regarded as indicating that the Jewish nation recognised the Roman emperor as their ruler.'¹¹⁹

As a consequence of its eclectic, transmuting system, 'the Roman Empire¹²⁰ at no time had anything we could identify as a specific and unique culture. Like many imperia, all that the Romans had was borrowed directly from Ancient Greece and elsewhere in the region. In this sense, the Roman Empire resembles any of our 'modern' civilizations, having only a flimsy mishmash of relic ideas and values as its cultural frames of reference, while its real mission was to conquer and expand, until it collapsed.'¹²¹

First contact with Jews

'The Romans had first come into contact with the Jews when Judas Maccabæus made an alliance with them,¹²² and even when Palestine had become part of the Empire, they continued to treat the Jews as an allied nation, and therefore left them free to live by their own religion and their own laws. By the normal Roman practice, this freedom would not have been extended to Jews who had become citizens either of Rome or of any provincial city, except where they constituted a separate politeuma, as at Alexandra and Cyrene; for it was a principle of Roman law that no man could be a citizen of two cities at one time.¹²³ But Julius Cæsar had

for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise,' and Col 3:11, 'Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.' All are one in Christ Jesus.

¹¹⁵ Gwatkin, Henry Melvill, *Early Church History to AD 313*, Vol. 1, p.46 (slightly paraphrased, with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹¹⁶ Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, 14,10,12; Josephus' writings date to the last quarter of the 1st-c. AD.

¹¹⁷ Barclay, William, *And He Had Compassion*, pp.135,136

¹¹⁸ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, p.3 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹¹⁹ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Temple—Its Ministry and Service*, §6 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹²⁰ of about 500BC–450AD.

¹²¹ McKillop, Andrew, and Newman, Sheila, editors, *The Final Energy Crisis*, p.258

¹²² I Macc 8:17-32

¹²³ Cic. *Balb.* 28; *Caec.* 100

realised that if the Jewish religion was to be tolerated at all, it must be granted special privileges. He therefore allowed the Jews to become citizens of other cities without thereby forfeiting their Jewish nationality, and this lenient policy was maintained by his successors.

To the Jews, then, whatever their political status, [substantial] religious freedom was assured. When Augustus 'suppressed all but ancient and lawful associations,'¹²⁴ the Jews were exempted as a collegium licitum....Their right to send the Temple tax to Jerusalem was safeguarded, even against the interference of provincial governors.¹²⁵ Prayers for the emperor in the synagogues were accepted in lieu of participation in the imperial cult. In Palestine, Roman tolerance went to even greater lengths. The daily sacrifice for the emperor, which took the place of the imperial cult, was provided, according to Philo,¹²⁶ out of imperial funds. Copper coinage was minted locally without the image of the emperor.¹²⁷ And when the Roman armies had occasion to enter Jewish territory, they left their signa behind them out of deference to Jewish scruples....In Palestine, Roman generosity was repaid in hostility. Only the Sadducean aristocracy, whose interest was to maintain political stability [and their jealously-guarded positions of privilege and national authority along with it], made any pretense of friendship toward the imperial power. The Pharisees, who had no political interest, unjustly regarded the Romans as a threat to their religious purity, which they were fanatically ready to defend. The common people treated Rome as a scapegoat on which to load all their economic and political grievances. The grievances were real enough, for Palestine was over-populated [and] the Jew lived under a double system of taxation....But in most respects the Roman administration deserved a more appreciative response.

Against the weight of such antagonism, the official policy of [privilege, accommodation, concession, and] appeasement could make no headway, and relations between Rome and the Jews steadily deteriorated until the disastrous rebellion.¹²⁸

In terms of governance, '[a]ll Roman provinces [of which there were about forty-five] were divided into two classes. Those which required troops stationed in them were in the direct control of the Emperor and were imperial provinces; those which did not require troops but were peaceful and trouble-free, were in the direct control of the senate and were senatorial provinces.

Palestine was obviously a troubled land; it needed troops and therefore it was in the control of the Emperor. Really great provinces were governed either by a proconsul or a legate; Syria was like that. Smaller provinces of the second class, were governed by a procurator. He was in full control of the military and judicial administration of the province....It was a procurator that Augustus appointed to control the affairs of Palestine, and the first one took over in 6AD. Pilate took over in 26AD and remained in office until 35AD....But as a

¹²⁴ Suet., *Aug.*, xxxii; cf. Jos., *Antiquities*, xiv.10.8

¹²⁵ Josephus, *Antiquities*, 6.2-7; cf. Cic., *Pro. Flacc.* 28. 66

¹²⁶ Philo, *Leg.* 23, 40

¹²⁷ the coin brought to Jesus was not a 'penny,' but a denarius, a silver coin.

¹²⁸ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, pp.30-33 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

governor, Pilate was a failure. He seemed to begin with a complete contempt and a complete lack of sympathy for the Jews [and careered downhill rapidly from there].¹²⁹

Early contact with Christians

‘Although Judaism involved nationality as well as religion, the door had always been open for a Gentile to enter the commonwealth of [Judaism] as a proselyte on equal terms with the native [Jew]. There is no doubt that Jewish theology and ethics held a strong attraction for the serious pagan, weary of polytheism and its attendant moral corruption; but two factors combined to limit the number of proselytes. The Roman government refused to extend to proselytes the privileges and immunities granted to those who were Jews by birth, and most Gentiles hesitated to undergo the rite of circumcision, which [in Judaism] would bind them to obey not only the moral but also the ceremonial Law. Accordingly, in most synagogues of the Dispersion there could be found Gentiles who were satisfied to participate in the worship and instruction without becoming more deeply involved. They were considered by the Jews to be sufficiently free from Gentile contamination if they avoided the more obvious moral offences, kept the Sabbath, and observed the Jewish food regulations.’¹³⁰

‘Given the extent of the empire’s accommodations for [native born] Jews, at first sight there may appear to be no very evident reason for the enmity of the Roman state toward the early Christian church. Christ’s message was spiritual; His kingdom not of this world; His refusal to rebel against Rome immutable. He told the Jews to pay to Cæsar what was due to Cæsar. His disciples taught men to honour the emperor, to obey the powers that be, and to submit, for His sake, to the ordinances of man. Only when these proved antipathetic to the tenets of true Christianity were His followers to follow God’s will rather than the emperor’s. His followers were a quiet, civilised sort of people, neither seditious nor immoral, content to pay their taxes and live peacefully with their fellow man. Moreover, within their own limits, Christians had solved almost by the way the social malaises which had baffled Rome and have continued to baffle the greater part of mainland Europe until the present day. They had uplifted woman to her rightful place; restored the dignity of labour; abolished beggary, and drawn the sting of slavery.’¹³¹

‘If we seriously consider the purity of the Christian religion, the sanctity of its moral precepts, where practice matched precept, and the innocent as well as austere lives of the greater number of those who, during the first ages, embraced the faith of the Gospel, we should naturally suppose that so benevolent a doctrine would have been received with due reverence even by the unbelieving world; that the learned and the polite, however they might have derided the miracles, would have esteemed the virtues of the new sect; and that the magistrates, instead of persecuting, would have protected an order of men who yielded the most passive

¹²⁹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2,’ pp.237,238 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹³⁰ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, p.29 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹³¹ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, pp.30-33 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

obedience to the laws, though they declined the active care of war and government. If, on the other hand, we recollect the universal toleration of Polytheism, as it was invariably maintained by the faith of the people, the incredulity of philosophers, and the policy of the Roman senate and emperors, we are at a loss to discover what new offence the Christians had committed, what new provocation could exasperate the mild indifference of antiquity, and what new motives could urge the Roman princes, who beheld, without concern, a thousand forms of religion subsisting in peace under their gentle sway, to inflict a severe punishment on any part of their subjects who had chosen for themselves a singular, but an inoffensive, mode of faith and worship.¹³² 'Yet the emperors found serious reasons for enmity and persecution; reasons at once many, dark, and convoluted.'¹³³

'A real difficulty was the position of slaves in the Christian church. In the Roman Empire there were sixty million slaves. It was always one of the terrors of the Empire that these slaves might rise in revolt. If the structure of the Empire were to remain intact, they must be kept in their place; nothing must be done to encourage them to rebel, or the consequences might be terrible beyond imagining.

Now the Christian church made no attempt to free the slaves, or to condemn slavery; but it did, within the church at least, treat the slaves as equals. In its treatment of slaves the Christian church must necessarily have seemed to the Roman authorities a force which was disrupting the very basis of civilization, and threatening the very existence of the Empire by giving slaves a position which they should never have had, as Roman law saw it.¹³⁴

'[So] even with their law-abiding, peaceful, non-violent ways, almost without exception the Christians were singled out for special persecution, and persecuted by most of the emperors, and by especial cruelty by some of the otherwise best of them. Perhaps the root of the answer to why this happened lies [in part] in the extant system of Roman jurisprudence.'¹³⁵

Roman jurisprudence

'Roman jurisprudence,¹³⁶ administered to strangers, was a rough average of the customs of all the neighbouring nations, and the process of striking off the peculiarities of each of them was denoted by the word 'levelling.'¹³⁷ As the empire and the jurisprudence were extended further and further, Rome came into contact with Greece, and found philosophers preaching a Law of Nature. The two processes, patently similar, essentially became coalesced, so that the jurisprudence became the Law of Nature, and from the mere

¹³² Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, p.69

¹³³ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, p.33

¹³⁴ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1, pp.377,378

¹³⁵ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, pp.30-33 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹³⁶ Latin: ius gentium.

¹³⁷ Latin: aequitas.

'levelling' was developed the idea of equity—a higher right to which the enactment and the interpretation must be as nearly as possible conformed.¹³⁸

Predictably, the underlying 'structural' difficulties remained unaddressed. A constantly transmuting system of 'levelling' disparate and conflicting legal systems could never be made compatible with true equity—an immutable standard. And there was a further, compounding difficulty: Rome's inordinate suspicion of any new or nascent religion, or any new religion from beyond the limits of empire.¹³⁹ If '*not of this world*,' then what was Christianity's provenance? Certainly it was not of the empire, or of any known extraneous country, and it was not an established national religion in either.

'[All this leads to another] reason [that] has been assigned for the conduct of the emperors towards the primitive Christians, which may appear the most specious and probable as it is drawn from the acknowledged genius of Polytheism. It has already been observed that the religious concord of the world was principally supported by the implicit assent and reverence which the nations of antiquity expressed for their respective traditions and ceremonies. It might therefore be expected that they would unite with indignation against any sect of people which should separate itself from the communion of mankind, and, claiming the exclusive possession of divine knowledge, should disdain every form of worship, except its own, as impious and idolatrous. The rights of toleration were held by mutual indulgence; they were justly forfeited by a refusal of the accustomed tribute.'¹⁴⁰

And then, on top of all of it, this: 'Since the Jews, who rejected with abhorrence the deities adored by their sovereign and by their fellow-subjects, enjoyed, however, the free exercise of their unsocial religion, there must have existed some other cause which exposed the disciples of Christ to those severities from which [a part of] the posterity of Abraham was exempt. The difference between them is simple and obvious; but, according to the sentiments of antiquity, it was of the highest importance. The Jews were a *nation*; the Christians were a *sect*; and, if it was natural for every community to respect the sacred institutions of their neighbours, it was incumbent upon them to persevere in those of their ancestors....But this principle which protected the Jewish synagogue afforded not any favour or security to the primitive church. By embracing the faith of the Gospel, the Christians incurred the supposed guilt of an unnatural and unpardonable offence. They dissolved the sacred ties of custom and education, violated the religious institutions of their country, and presumptuously despised whatever their fathers had believed as true, or had revered as sacred,'¹⁴¹ [or so it seemed].

'The personal guilt which every Christian had contracted, in thus preferring his private sentiment to the national religion, was aggravated, in a very high degree, by the number and union of the criminals. It is well known, and has been already observed, that Roman policy viewed with the utmost jealousy and distrust any

¹³⁸ Gwatkin, Henry Melvill, *Early Church History to AD 313*, Vol. 1, pp.22-25 (slightly paraphrased)

¹³⁹ Latin: *religio nova et illicita*.

¹⁴⁰ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.70,71 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁴¹ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, p.73 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

association among its subjects, and that the privileges of private corporations, though formed for the most harmless or beneficial purposes, were bestowed with a very sparing hand. The religious assemblies of the Christians, who had separated themselves from the public worship, appeared of a much less innocent nature; they were illegal in their principle, and in their consequences might become dangerous, nor were the emperors conscious that they violated the laws of justice, when, for the peace of society, they prohibited those secret and sometimes nocturnal meetings. The pious disobedience of the Christians made their conduct, or perhaps their designs, appear in a much more serious and criminal light.’¹⁴²

[Through time, initially and especially in government circles], ‘the early Christians were called cannibals and incendiaries, and were accused of immorality, gross and shameless, because their service included a Love Feast.’¹⁴³ Such an accusation is perverse in the extreme for agap  ,¹⁴⁴ the Christian love, is the love of God, outgoing, concerned, active, ever seeking ways to help; looking for nothing in return. It is love without preconditions, and it is love eternal, into the everlasting in eternal life.

‘Love had....to incarnate itself in action, costly sacrificial identification, to remain true to itself. [What love is not, and can never be, is conditional, sporadic, corrosive, destructive, or founded on ulterior motives. To the contrary, love is intense, constant, ever-searching for and to do good, outgoing, selfless, tender, concerned, watchful, and, above all, Godly].’¹⁴⁵

The mob & vested interests

‘It was not only that the government persecuted the Christians; the mob¹⁴⁶ hated them. Why? It was because the mob believed certain slanderous things about the Christians. There is no doubt that the Jews were at least to some extent responsible for these slanders. It so happened that they had the ear of the government.

¹⁴² Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, p.76

¹⁴³ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, p.166; Greek: agap   (feast)

¹⁴⁴ Barclay, William, *Ethics in a Permissive Society*, pp.70,71 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): ‘In Greek there are four words for love. There is eros, which means passion; there is always sex in eros. There is philia, which is friendship-feeling, the warmest word for love, for it describes a man’s love for his closest and truest friends; there [can be, depending on circumstances, but there is usually not] physical love in philia, but there is loyalty and companionship as well. There is storge, which is love in the family circle; there is no sex in it; it is the love of a father for a daughter, a son for his mother, a brother for a sister. And there is agape; this is the word. Agape is unconquerable goodwill; it is the determination to seek the other man’s highest good, no matter what he does to you. Insult, injury, indifference—it does not matter; nothing but goodwill. It has been defined as purpose, not passion. It is an attitude to the other person.

This is all important, because if we talk about this kind of love, it means we can love the person we don’t like. This is not a matter of the reaction of the heart; it is an attitude of the will and the whole personality deliberately directed to the other man;’ cp. man’s ‘doctrine of convenience,’ which is based on love of this world. These people only act if it is ‘convenient’ to them, and, usually, beneficial in kudos or some material sense.

¹⁴⁵ Birkbeck, John, chapter by Reid, Alan A. S., (edited by), *The Word for All Seasons*, p.29 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁴⁶ in terms of control, the well-known fickleness of the crowd lends itself to being led by strong, charismatic individuals. The crowd is peculiarly susceptible to suggestion and emotional manipulation.

To take but two examples, Nero's favourite actor Aliturus, and his harlot empress Poppæa, were both adherents of the Jewish faith. The Jews whispered their slanders to the government, slanders which they must have known well to be untrue, and four slanderous reports were spread about the Christians:

1. They were said to be insurrectionaries. We have already seen the reasons for that. It was futile for the Christians to point out that in fact they were the best citizens in the country.¹⁴⁷ The fact remained they would not burn their pinch of incense and say, "Cæsar is Lord," and so they were branded as dangerous and disloyal men.

2. They were said to be cannibals. The charge came from the words of the sacrament. "*this is my body which is broken for you.*" "*This cup is the new covenant in my blood.*" On the basis of these words, it was not difficult to disseminate amongst ignorant people, prepared to believe the worst, the story that the Christians' private meal was based on cannibalism. The charge stuck, and it is little wonder that the mob looked on the Christians with loathing.

3. They were said to practice the most flagrant immorality. The weekly meal of the Christians was called the Agape, the Love Feast. When the Christians met each other in the early days they greeted each other with the

¹⁴⁷ Barclay, William, *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp.3,4 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'When a man writes a book he does so for a reason, and maybe for more than one. Let us consider now why Luke wrote Acts.

(i) One of his reasons was to commend Christianity to the Roman government.

Again and again he goes out of his way to show how courteous Roman magistrates were to Paul. In Acts 13:12, Sergius Paulus, the governor of Cyprus, becomes a Christian. In 18:12 Gallio is absolutely impartial in Corinth. In 16:35ff., the magistrates at Philippi discover their mistake and apologize publically to Paul. In 19:31 the Asiarchs in Ephesus are shown to be concerned that no harm should come to Paul. Luke was pointing out that in the years before he wrote, Roman officials had often been well-disposed and always just to Christianity.

Further, Luke takes pains to show that the Christians were good and loyal citizens, and had always been regarded as such. In Acts 18:14, Gallio declares that there is no question of wickedness or villainy. In 19:37, the secretary of Ephesus gives the Christians a good testimonial. In 23:29 Claudius Lysias is careful to say that he has nothing against Paul. In 25:25, Festus declares that Paul has done nothing worthy of death, and in the same chapter Festus and Agrippa agree that Paul might well have been released had he not appealed to Cæsar.

Luke was writing in the days when Christians were disliked and persecuted; and he told his story in such a way as to show that the Roman magistrates had always been perfectly fair to Christianity and that they had never regarded the Christians as evil men. In fact, the very interesting suggestion has been made that Acts is nothing other than the brief prepared for Paul's defence when he stood trial before the Roman Emperor.

(ii) One of Luke's aims was to show that Christianity was for all men of every country.

This was one of the things the Jews found so hard to grasp. They had the idea that they were God's chosen people and that God had no use for any other nation. Luke sets out to prove otherwise. He shows Philip preaching to the Samaritans; he shows Stephen making Christianity universal and being killed for it; he shows Peter accepting Cornelius into the Church; he shows the Christians preaching to the Gentiles at Antioch; he shows Paul travelling far and wide winning men of all kinds for Christ; and in Acts 15 he shows the Church making the great decision to accept the Gentiles on equal terms with the Jews.

(iii) But these were merely secondary aims. Luke's chief purpose is set out in the words of the Risen Christ in Acts 1:8, "*You shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judæa and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*" It was to show the expansion [and operation] of Christianity.'

kiss of peace. It was not difficult to spread abroad the report that the Love Feast was an orgy of sexual indulgence, of which the kiss of peace was the symbol and the sign.

4. They were said to be incendiaries. They looked to the Second Coming of Christ. To it they had attached all the Old Testament pictures of The Day of the Lord, which foretold of the flaming disintegration and destruction of the world.¹⁴⁸ *"The elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up."*¹⁴⁹ In the reign of Nero came the disastrous fire which devastated Rome and it was easy to connect it with people who preached of the consuming fire which would destroy the world.

There was actually another charge brought and for this fifth charge there were understandable grounds. It was that Christians "tampered with family relationships," divided families, split up homes and broke up marriages. In a way that was true. Christianity did not *'bring peace, but a sword.'*¹⁵⁰ Often a wife became a Christian and the husband did not. Often children became Christians and parents did not. Then the home was split in two and the family divided.

These were the charges which were spread about the Christians with the help of the Jews. It is little wonder that the name of Christian was hated.¹⁵¹

Cæcilius gives a brief taste of the heathen suspicions and deep prejudices, even of their philosophers: "It is deplorable that ignorant men should pretend to certainty, when the philosophers have never been able to agree on the existence of a god themselves. Nature is blind and works by fixed laws without regard to the goodness or badness of men. It is therefore best to worship the gods of our ancestors. Every nation has its gods, and Rome has won the empire of the world by paying due respect to all of them. The only exception to the fixed belief of all nations (beyond an atheist or two....) is this gang of skulking desperadoes [the Christians]. They collect men of the scum of the earth and silly women, and cement their conspiracy with nocturnal abominations. It flourishes as wickedness does flourish, and ought to be thoroughly rooted out. They know each other by secret marks; and promiscuous fornication is a positive religion with these 'brothers and sisters.' I hear that they worship a donkey's head; and that is not the worst that is told of them. Some of it may be exaggerated, but they would not be so mysterious if it were not mostly true. Why have they no altars? no temples? no images? [no ostentatious processions?] no open meetings? For some shameful reason, doubtless. But where did they get their forlorn God of theirs? No civilised nation knows of him; only those wretched Jews, who at least worshipped him with a decent ceremonial—and were conquered after all! But what bugbears these Christians invent! The enduring earth is to be burnt up: yet they fancy they will live again themselves, and that for ever!

¹⁴⁸ or so was thought and perceived at that time.

¹⁴⁹ II Peter 3:10, which is actually a reference to the end-Millennium 'Day,' and not to the time of the Second Coming.

¹⁵⁰ Mat 10:34

¹⁵¹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, pp.183-185

Your god will raise you from the dead forsooth, while he cannot even protect you from cold and hunger while you dream of immortality, from drudgery and sickness, from the cross and death of fire. Rome rules the world and you without your god's help. Meanwhile your life is miserable. For your fancied resurrection you renounce all lawful pleasures. You abstain from the games, and social meetings, the holy meals—such is your dread of the gods you deny. Give up philosophizing, if you have any decency left. Boors like you cannot understand affairs of state, much less things divine. If you really must speculate, the least you can do is to leave things in doubt.’¹⁵²

‘Despite being regarded as ‘ignorant,’ the early Christians were no worse educated than the mass of ‘civilised’ society. In fact, in many ways they had the advantage, for their studies and literature were of the Scriptures, a higher learning, and not the vain frivolities of the heathen.’¹⁵³

There were even strong and deep-running commercial considerations to the general loathing, for ‘[Judæo-Christianity brings] an economic revolution. A non-Christian society is an acquisitive society where each man is out to amass as much as he can get. A Christian society is a society where no man dares to have too much while others have too little, where every man must get only to give away.’¹⁵⁴

There is no doubt that Christianity seriously affected certain vested interests connected with heathen religion. When Christianity came to Ephesus, the trade of the silversmiths was dealt a mortal blow, for far fewer desired to buy the images they fashioned¹⁵⁵....It is clear that the spread of Christianity meant the abolition of certain trades and activities; and those who lost their trade and lost their money not unnaturally resented it.

Christianity preaches a view of man which no totalitarian state can accept. Christianity....obliterates certain trades and professions and ways of making money....and therefore the Christian is liable to persecution for his faith.’^{156 157}

This is important, for it set the real Christian church—a Law-abiding, pacific, outgoing, love-generating church—at odds with its rivals, all of which wallowed in antinomianism, paganism, occultism, blood-letting, and worse, and which were infested by strong, vested commercial interests. Some even had the brazen effrontery to call themselves by the new and unique name ‘Christian.’

¹⁵² Felix, Minucius, *Octavius*, 5-13 (in condensed form, with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁵³ Gwatkin, Henry Melvill, *Early Church History to AD 313*, Vol. 1, pp.181-183

¹⁵⁴ Isa 58:7

¹⁵⁵ Acts 19:24-27

¹⁵⁶ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, p.10 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁵⁷ Barclay, William, *Ethics in a Permissive Society*, pp.161,169:

‘A man's character, his honesty or dishonesty, his straightness or his crookedness, can be seen, and nowhere better, in his daily business and financial dealings....How did we get our money? Did we get it in a way which harmed or injured no one, but helped and enriched the community? Did we get it in utter honesty, with every item open to the light of day? Did we get it without exploitation, and by giving value for it in honest work and service? Did we earn it always to the welfare and never to the hurt of the community, or any individual in the community? To apply these tests would be never to go wrong in the getting of money.’

Early church characteristics

In the early church, the hungry were fed, the poor clothed, the widows cared for, the heartbroken consoled. All these are social, caring activities, engaging with the people and their problems and concerns. Judæo-Christianity is God-focused and outgoing; not inward-looking and isolationist. The early Christian church was clearly and characteristically a healing church.

‘When we read the literature of the early church it would almost seem that care of the sick was the test of a Christian. This, in fact, the heathen noted with astonishment. According to the heathen idea, God did not want the sick. He sought only the sound to be his worshippers. The sick and the sinful were the prey of the powers of darkness. ‘Let them recover their health and then come to God.’¹⁵⁸ Celcus sneered at the Christians precisely because they said that sick and sinful people were dear to God. Julian the Apostate condemned as unintelligible the infamous Galileans who give themselves to that sort of people.¹⁵⁹ The Christian care for the sick had brought something quite new into the world.’¹⁶⁰

‘Such is the constitution of civil society that, whilst a few persons are distinguished by riches, by honours, and by knowledge, the body of the people is condemned to obscurity, ignorance, and poverty. The Christian religion, which addresses itself to the whole human race, must consequently collect a far greater number of proselytes from the lower than from the superior ranks.’¹⁶¹

‘It is incumbent on us diligently to remember that the kingdom of heaven¹⁶² was promised to the poor¹⁶³ in spirit, and that minds afflicted by calamity and the contempt of mankind cheerfully listen to the divine promise of future happiness; while, on the contrary, the fortunate are satisfied with the possession of this world; and the wise abuse in doubt and dispute their vain superiority of reason and knowledge.’¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁸ Harnack, A., *The Expansion of Christianity*, Vol. 1, p.125

¹⁵⁹ Weatherhead, Leslie D., *Psychology, Religion, and Healing*, p.79

¹⁶⁰ Barclay, William, *And He Had Compassion*, pp.235,236

¹⁶¹ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, p.63

¹⁶² i.e., the kingdom of God.

¹⁶³ Barclay, William, *Ethics in a Permissive Society*, p.150:

‘The Old Testament uses three words for ‘poor.’ It uses the word dal which means poor and weak and even emaciated. It is, for instance, the word that is used of the lean cattle in Pharaoh’s dream (Gen 41:19). The R.S.V. usually translates it ‘poor’ (Prov 2:9,16,22; Amos 4:1,5:11,8:6), but sometimes it translates it ‘weak’ (Psa 41:1, margin; Psa 82:3,4). It uses the word ebion, which the R.S.V. regularly translated ‘needy’ (Job 5:15; Psa 69:33,140:12; Prov 14:31; Jer 20:13). This word expresses the state of the man who is not only poor, but whose poverty has brought to him oppression and abuse. It uses the word ani. This is what we might call the most developed word. It describes the man who is poor, without influence, oppressed. This man has no human help and no human resources; and in such a state his only help is in God, in whom he has put his trust. So it comes to mean the poor and humble man, whose whole and only trust is in God (Psa 34:6,40:17,68:10,86:1; Prov 14:21; Isa 66:2). Here there emerges something which is very much a dominant part of the pattern—the fact that the poor man is specially the concern of God.’

¹⁶⁴ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, p.66

‘In a sense, the highest compliment that you can pay a man is to persecute him. It shows that that man can only be regarded, not only as dangerous, but as an effective force.... True Christianity may be hated, but as an effective force it can never be disregarded.’¹⁶⁵

Henry addresses the causes and consequences of bigotry. “You will find”:

1. “That the effect of the preaching of the gospel will be division.” Not but that the design of the gospel, and its proper tendency, are to unite the children of men one to another, to knit them together in holy love, and, if all would receive it, this would be the effect of it; but there being multitudes that not only will not receive it, but oppose it, and have their corruptions exasperated by it, and are enraged at those that do receive it, it proves, though not the cause, yet the occasion, of division. While the strong man armed kept his palace, in the Gentile world, his goods were at peace; all was quiet, for all went one way, the sects of philosophers agreed well enough, so did the worshippers of different deities; but when the Gospel was preached, and many were enlightened by it, and turned from the power of Satan to God, then there was a disturbance, a noise and a shaking.¹⁶⁶ Some distinguished themselves by embracing the Gospel, and others were angry that they did so. Yea, and among them that received the Gospel there would be different sentiments in lesser things, which would occasion division; and Christ permits it for holy ends,¹⁶⁷ that Christians may learn and practice mutual forbearance,¹⁶⁸ [and also to bring to light those that would defend the truth].”

2. “That this division will reach into private families, and the preaching of the Gospel will give occasion for discord among the nearest relations.”¹⁶⁹ ‘The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father,’¹⁷⁰ when the one turns Christian, and the other does not; for the one that does turn Christian will be zealous by arguments and endeavours to turn the other too; as soon as ever Paul was converted he disputed;¹⁷¹ the one that continues in unbelief¹⁷² will be provoked, and will hate and persecute the one that by his faith

¹⁶⁵ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.35, reproduced verbatim from *Matthew Henry’s Commentary*, Vol. 5, p.414, on Luke 12:29-53, q.v. inf.

¹⁶⁶ cp. Ezek 37:7

¹⁶⁷ cp. I Cor 11:19; correct translation of ‘heresies’ is ‘factions.’

¹⁶⁸ Rom 14:1,2

¹⁶⁹ Luke 12:53

¹⁷⁰ Mat 10:35

¹⁷¹ I Cor 7:16

¹⁷² reasons for unbelief: some become tendentious or are inured to religion because in youth they accepted an immature philosophy of life, and have never changed it; others because they happened to have attended in their youth churches or organisations which urged upon them an irrational faith, or which through dogmatic authoritarianism and mindless totalism turned their minds against religion—in short, alienating their minds to religion by crystallising a perpetual rebellion against it. In all of this, the victims—for that is what they are—fail to perceive that irreligion implies a creed just as surely as religion does. Atheism, for example, is redolent with false and unfounded assumptions, and contains its own panoply of mores and shibboleths. But just as irreligion sows doubt in the mind of the unwary, the superficial, and the careless, the same level of questioning of irreligion often brings on doubts of that doubt. Then what of the unsettled mind? A retreat, perhaps? And, if so, to where, or to what? Surely the only sure refuge, in such a case, is found in Judæo-Christianity.

and obedience witnesses against, and condemns, his unbelief and disobedience.¹⁷³ A spirit of bigotry and persecution will break through the strongest bonds of relation and natural affection.¹⁷⁴ Even mothers and daughters fall out about religion; and those that believe not, are so violent and outrageous, that they are ready to deliver up into the hands of the bloody persecutors those that believe, though otherwise very near and dear to them. We find in the Acts, that, wherever the Gospel came, persecution was stirred up; it was everywhere spoken against, and there was no small stir about that way. Therefore let not the disciples of Christ promise themselves peace upon earth, for they are sent forth as sheep in the midst of wolves.^{175 176}

The 'spirit of bigotry and persecution' is well known to true Judæo-Christians, even from within their own families. "*Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division.*"¹⁷⁷ His coming would inevitably mean divisions. In point of fact it did. That was one of the great reasons why the Romans hated Christianity—because it tore families in two. Over and over again a man had to decide whether he loved his kith and kin or Christ better. The essence of Christianity is that loyalty to Christ has to take precedence of the dearest loyalties of this earth. A man must be prepared to count all things but loss for the excellence of Jesus Christ.¹⁷⁸

'Nothing in this world warps a man's judgment as hatred does. Once a man allows himself to hate, he can neither think nor see straight, nor listen without distortion. Hatred is a terrible thing because it takes a man's senses away....Hatred is a terrible thing and does not hesitate to twist the truth [into the most vile lies. It can all too easily slip into a maddened hysteria: the hysteria of hatred].'¹⁷⁹

Christ had warned His followers of what lay ahead: '*And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.*'¹⁸⁰ His followers' conduct in face of this was that of unremitting courage. 'The sober discretion of the present age will more readily censure than admire, but can more easily admire than imitate, the fervour of the first Christians; who, according to the lively expression of Sulpicius Severus, desired martyrdom with more eagerness than his own contemporaries solicited a bishopric. The epistles which Ignatius composed as he was carried in chains through the cities of Asia breath sentiments the most repugnant to the ordinary feelings of human nature. He earnestly beseeches the Romans that, when he should be exposed in the amphitheatre, they

¹⁷³ Acts 9:29

¹⁷⁴ Mat 10:34,24:7

¹⁷⁵ *Matthew Henry's Commentary*, Vol. 5, p.414, on Luke 12:29-53:

'In a sense, the highest compliment that you can pay a man is to persecute him. It shows that that man can only be regarded, not only as dangerous, but as an effective force....True Christianity may be hated, but as an effective force it can never be disregarded.'

¹⁷⁶ and the wolves are not divided, for they have a common master; William Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, p.150:

'If the prince of evil is lending his own power to defeat his own emissaries he is finished.'

¹⁷⁷ Luke 12:51

¹⁷⁸ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, p.174

¹⁷⁹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, pp.234-236 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁸⁰ Mat 10:22a

would not, by their kind but unseasonable intercession, deprive him of the crown of glory; and he declares his resolution to provoke and irritate the wild beasts which might be employed as the instruments of his death. Some stories are related of the courage of martyrs who actually performed what Ignatius had intended; who exasperated the fury of the lions, pressed the executioner to hasten his office, cheerfully leaped into the fires which were kindled to consume them, and discovered a sensation of joy and pleasure in the midst of the most exquisite tortures.’¹⁸¹

Paul added to Christ’s warning: ‘*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness*¹⁸² *in high places.*’¹⁸³ And he expanded on the theme: ‘*And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.*’¹⁸⁴ ‘*Reprove*’¹⁸⁵ is not passive; it is an act of bringing to the light—an act of exposure. Dark deeds must be exposed; not hidden. Exposing wickedness in high places is an obligation on the Christian, and it brings on the most severe form of persecution. The Christian’s struggles are the highest and most demanding of all possible struggles. ‘It is always a dangerous thing to speak the truth; and yet the man who allies himself with the truth, may for the moment end in gaol or on the scaffold, but in the final count he is the victor.’¹⁸⁶

Jewish incitement against Christians

‘Unfortunately, Christianity [found that it] had much more active and vociferous enemies [than the mob and vested interests], often utilising devices intended to foment public riot and commotion. The most constant and vociferous of all were the Jews, the very people who had rejected the Messiah and who had somehow got a footing in the empire as licensed non-conformists.’¹⁸⁷

Caird gives an approximate estimate of the numbers and disposition of Jews in the Roman Empire at the time of Christ: ‘Of all the peoples subject to Rome the most scattered and yet the most conscious of national identity were the Jews. Estimates of their numbers in the Empire range from four-and-a-half to seven millions, and by any computation the inhabitants of Palestine were but a small fraction of the total. (These figures take no account of the large Jewish colonies beyond the eastern frontiers of the Empire, particularly in Babylon).’¹⁸⁸

‘Among the Sadducees, the aristocratic families who supplied the majority of the temple priesthood, and into whose hands had fallen such political power as Rome allowed to her subject nations, the natural opinion

¹⁸¹ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.101,102

¹⁸² better, ‘*wicked spirits*’ or ‘*evil spirits.*’

¹⁸³ Eph 6:12

¹⁸⁴ Eph 5:11

¹⁸⁵ Greek: *elegcho*, ‘*to confute,*’ ‘*to correct,*’ ‘*to expose,*’ ‘*to bring to light.*’

¹⁸⁶ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, p.31

¹⁸⁷ Gwatkin, Henry Melvill, *Early Church History to AD 313*, Vol. 1, pp.181-183 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁸⁸ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, p.20 (and footnote)

had grown up that only by compromise with their pagan neighbours could they hope to preserve national identity and the cultus on which their own prestige so largely depended.¹⁸⁹ Their surrender to the entices of Hellenism stopped short of disloyalty to the Torah, meaning 'teaching,' which they professed to follow to the letter, but they strenuously resisted the attempts of their more zealous compatriots to impose upon them any interpretation of the Law which would render intolerable their position in the Gentile world....

An entirely different attitude to the Gentile problem was assumed by the Hasidim and their lineal descendants, the Pharisees. They believed that obedience to the Torah [as they perceived it] involved strict separation from defilement and especially from contact with 'sinners,' in which category they included both the Gentiles and the lax Jews.¹⁹⁰ Being unable to achieve physical isolation, they established for themselves an elaborate system of spiritual quarantine regulations to which they gave the name 'tradition.'¹⁹¹ This erected an impenetrable partition, on the other side of which were placed the Christians, who were grouped together with the Gentiles.

Not all Jews were or have been antagonistic, however. 'C. G. Montefiore, himself a Jew and not a Christian, writes: "Christianity does mark a new era in religious history and in human civilization. What the world owes to Jesus and to Paul is immense; things can never be, and men can never think, the same as things were, and as men thought, before these two great men lived." Even a non-Christian freely admits that things could never be the same now that Jesus had come.'¹⁹² But the preponderant view in Jewry was unremittently antagonistic: 'In Christian times, [The Jews] abounded in Babylonia,'¹⁹³ [but they] were especially numerous in Rome itself. The prisoners brought to the city by Pompeius¹⁹⁴ were very unprofitable servants, so that they soon obtained their liberty, and formed a Jewish quarter in the unfashionable district beyond the Tiber. Julius Cæsar treated them with special favour, and by the time of Augustus they were counted in Rome by thousands. They were far from welcome settlers. Jewish beggars and noisy costermongers were the plague of the streets, and even the temples were not sacred from their pilfering. As money-changers and shopkeepers, they thrived unpleasantly well, and in every occupation they ran the Gentiles close. The Jew was even better than the Greek at fortune-telling and imposture generally. So, between disgust and fear and envy, the populace of Rome was as ready as any Vienna mob to hunt out the Jews. The emperors more than once expelled them from the city, but they always returned.

And it was their frequent incitements to riot over the conduct and very existence of the Christians, almost wherever and whenever they came into contact with them, which were seen by the Roman

¹⁸⁹ John 11:48

¹⁹⁰ Hebrew: am ha-aretz.

¹⁹¹ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, pp.23,24 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁹² Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 2, p.7

¹⁹³ Gwatkin, Henry Melvill, *Early Church History to AD 313*, Vol. 1, p.38 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁹⁴ in 63BC.

establishment, in terms of their laws, as disturbances of the peace solely occasioned by the existence of the new Christian religion. To the Roman legal and administrative mind, these disturbances, if left unchecked, potentially could lead to the undermining of Roman society and with it the whole empire. But that was not all, for there were other vested interests: vested commercial interests and vested religious interests. Christianity, spreading quickly and gaining great numbers of adherents, was eating away at the core of existing pagan religions. Temple attendances and takings were down, sometimes drastically; idol makers could no longer sell their wares, and pagan priests were losing status, authority, and wealth. These, too, incited against the early Christians, often in loose alliance with the Jews. And behind it all, of course, lay an unique and extreme form of persecution: *‘Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman [the Judæo-Christian church] which brought forth the man child.’*^{195 196}

At the time, the Jews’ national religion was not faring well. ‘One critical factor limit[ing] the number of proselytes at the door of Judaism [was]....the rite of circumcision.’¹⁹⁷ This state of affairs served as an effective limit to the geographical spread and numbers in Judaism. This compared badly with the spectacular growth of Christianity, and merely served to stoke the fires of Jewish resentment and opposition. Indeed, ‘there is the strongest reason to believe that before the reigns of Diocletian and Constantine the faith of Christ had been preached in every province, and in all the great cities of the empire.’^{198 199} In such circumstances, resentment could but only increase. There was also a reaction in Jewish quarters to Judæo-Christians’ conduct towards slaves in welcoming them into the church as equal members and treating them as human beings. This reaction was founded on the main source of livelihood for the Roman Jews, especially in the second century: their strong participation in the slave trade,²⁰⁰ which resulted in extreme Jewish sensitivity to anything or anyone perceived as impacting their lucrative trafficking in human misery. This, in turn, led to self-interested Jewish persecution of Judæo-Christians, driven by the darkest of commercial considerations.

The Jews of the time, especially in the Diaspora where presentation in Greek would be both the written and spoken medium, were not adverse to twisting Judæo-Christian phraseology to their own ends. An example

¹⁹⁵ Rev 12:12,13 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁹⁶ Gwatkin, Henry Melvill, *Early Church History to AD 313*, Vol. 1, pp.39,40 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁹⁷ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, p.29 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁹⁸ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, p.56

¹⁹⁹ paradoxical though it may seem to some at first glance, the Judæo-Christian church isn’t inclusive, neither is it exclusive: rather, it is exceptive—perhaps ‘exclusively so.’

²⁰⁰ Landman, Isaak, *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*: ‘The trade in slaves constituted the main source of livelihood for the Roman Jews’; Marcus, Jacob, Jewish historian, *Encyclopædia Britannica* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): ‘In the dark ages, the commerce of Western Europe was largely in his [the Jew’s] hand, in particular the slave trade’; Grayzel, Solomon, *History of the Jews from Babylonian Exile to the End of WWII* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): ‘Jews were among the most important slave dealers [in European society].’

is seen in ‘*These [Christians] do all contrary to the will of Cæsar, saying that there is another king,*²⁰¹ *one Jesus.*’²⁰² The word used was the official Greek title of the emperor.²⁰³ This was used to its ultimate against the Christians, whom the Jews impuned with claims that they were setting up a rival empire on earth, an empire designed to supplant the Roman.

‘But the perusal of the ancient apologies was sufficient to remove even the slightest suspicion from the mind of a candid adversary. The Christians, with the intrepid security of innocence, appeal from the voice of rumour to the equity of the magistrates. They acknowledge that, if any proof can be produced of the crimes which calumny has imputed to them, they are worthy of the most sever punishment. They provoke the punishment, and they challenge the proof. At the same time they urge, with equal proof and propriety, that the desire is not less devoid of probability than it is destitute of evidence; they ask whether anyone can seriously believe that the pure and holy precepts of the Gospel, which so frequently restrain the use of the most lawful enjoyments, should inculcate the practice of the most abominable crimes.

It was not long, perhaps, before the Jews themselves, animated with a fiercer zeal and a more jealous faith, perceived the gradual separation of their [former] brethren from the doctrine of the synagogue; and they would gladly have extinguished the dangerous heresy in the blood of its adherents.’²⁰⁴

“[I]n the time of the martyrdom of Polycarp, who was called ‘The Father of the Christians,’ even among the heathen, the Jews of Smyrna were amongst the most bitter enemies of Christians, and amongst the most violent in demanding the death of Polycarp.

Eusebius says that when Polycarp was apprehended, and brought before the Proconsul at Smyrna, the Jews were the most furious of all in demanding his condemnation. When the mob, after his condemnation to death, set about gathering fuel to burn him, ‘the Jews,’ he says, ‘being especially zealous, as was their custom—ran to procure fuel.’ And when, as the burning failed, the martyr was transfixed with weapons, the Jews urged and besought the magistrate that his body might not be given up to the Christians.’^{205 206 207}

‘But the decrees of heaven had already disarmed their malice; and though they might sometimes exert the licentious privilege of sedition, they no longer possessed the administration of criminal justice; nor did they find it easy to infuse into the calm breast of a Roman magistrate the rancour of their own zeal and prejudice. The provincial governors declared themselves ready to listen to any accusation that might affect the public safety; but, as soon as they were informed that it was a question not of facts but of words, a dispute relating only to the interpretation of the Jewish laws and prophecies, they deemed it unworthy of the majesty of Rome

²⁰¹ Greek: basilius, from basileus.

²⁰² Acts 17:7b (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁰³ Greek: basilius.

²⁰⁴ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.78;81 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁰⁵ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, iv. 15

²⁰⁶ Barnes, Albert, *Notes Explanatory and Practical on the Book of Revelation*, p.91

²⁰⁷ Hoffman, Michael, *Judaism Discovered*, p.590

seriously to discuss the obscure differences which might arise among a barbarous and superstitious people. The innocence of the first Christians was protected by ignorance and contempt; and the tribunal of the Pagan magistrate often proved their most assured refuge against the fury of the synagogue.’²⁰⁸

Roman view

‘In all this, of course, Rome’s overall position was hardly beyond reproach, even in terms of its own laws; charity had become corrupted, inward-looking, and debased, [later] transmuting to a monetary ransom for sin in the form of papal indulgences of all kinds. Utterly futile, they pandered to vanity, superficiality, and selfishness.’²⁰⁹

The Twelve Tablets had long before forbidden Roman citizens to have gods in private, or to worship new gods, or foreign gods unauthorised by the state.²¹⁰ Though the law might have been partly obsolete, the empire still enforced the substance of it. Roman citizens, however, were not immune to Christianity, a religion which not only poisoned Roman domestic life, but also appeared to deliberately set out to destroy the ancient customs on which the empire and civilisation rested. While all extant and established national worships within the empire were authorised, Jesus patently was not a national god. To the contrary, the early Christian churches were viewed as secret societies comprising of the lowest of the people—an uncivilised rabble originating with the troublesome and barbarous Jews—who gave their allegiance to one Jesus as a quasi-emperor: in short, a pure heresy springing out of irascible Judaism. Roman suspicions were based on experience with other religions, almost all of which exhibited highly secret, esoteric, inner elites or adepts. The fear was of a Christian insurrection against the empire, and the numbers of politically- and socially-disaffected Christians were by no means trifling, even though true Judæo-Christianity, uniquely, was utterly exoteric and transparent—evidencing unconcealedness²¹¹—with no inner clique or society. What is more, it was completely non-violent.

Crucially, in the context of Roman suspicions, the mode of taking the Passover in the church, in strict accord with Christ’s example, was attacked with a special fervour because it excluded the non-baptised. To the vested interests, this presented an unique opportunity. They could malign and smear the Christians with fabrications of lewd and obscene secret practices in absolute safety. The mob, and the authorities to a certain extent, proved eagerly receptive of their lies. In addition, public calamities of all sorts were written down to the practice of Christianity and blamed on the refusal of the worship due to the Roman gods, bringing down the wrath of heaven, and leading to the irrational public outcry: “Away with the Christians.”

²⁰⁸ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.78,81

²⁰⁹ *Jer. Bk. 1* pp.38,39

²¹⁰ Latin: separatim nemo habessit deos neque novos sive advenas nisi publice adscitos privatum colunto.

²¹¹ Greek: aletheia.

Rome's chronic ambivalence should be evident to even the most casual observer. Whilst forbidding new religions and new gods within the empire, the state permitted Mithraism,²¹² and the cult of Isis—both fairly recent foreign imports, although admittedly not terribly different from parts of the existing pantheology—and proclaimed Cæsar as a new god, demanding universal worship and obescience to him on pain of death.²¹³

'Octavian [had] closed the doors of the temple of Janus²¹⁴ to mark the return of peace, which for two hundred years had been an exile from Roman soil. Five days later an enthusiastic Senate bestowed upon the vindicator of the Roman people's liberty the venerable title of Augustus. Soon the court poet, less restrained, was to celebrate the emperor's sacred Presence, and the eastern provinces, long accustomed to invest their royal benefactors with divine honours, were keeping the emperor's birthday as the birthday of "the god and saviour of the whole human race".

By grafting emasculated forms of local religions onto the universal worship of the emperor, the Roman Empire merely succeeded in founding a false universalism and a false universal worship through a complex process of accretion, adoption, assimilation, manipulation, and transmutation, while patching the whole hotch-potched ensemble under an overarching emperor worship. The Roman emperor was a god on earth, surrounded in a halo²¹⁵ of divinity, and his worship was the most real part of the state religion. In such circumstances, conflict with the religion of Christianity—also claiming universality, but in an entirely different way—soon became inevitable.²¹⁶

Roman world, Roman 'peace'

Conditions presenting at that time in the Roman Empire showed improvement in certain areas, but not in morals and religion, which were in constant decay: 'In the centuries that followed,²¹⁷ travel became safe and trade prospered.

The Roman peace was guarded by a small fleet and an army which can hardly have exceeded three hundred thousand men. Its twenty-seven legions²¹⁸ were concentrated at points where trouble could be

²¹² although permitted much earlier, Mithraism became the official cult of the Roman Empire during the reign of the emperor Elagabalus (218–222AD), after whom it was termed Elagabalism.

²¹³ Gwatkin, Henry Melvill, *Early Church History to AD 313*, Vol. 1, pp.39,40

²¹⁴ on 11 January, 27BC

²¹⁵ Didron, in his *Christian Iconography*, describes three Byzantine miniatures of the tenth century, in which Satan is depicted with a nimbus, or circular glory, the recognized sign of the Sun-god in Pagan times. As the Church became Paganized, the nimbus began to appear in images and pictures of Christ and the saints. At the same time the Church was corrupted by the introduction of other customs—such as the circular tonsure, and the practice of turning to the East—which had been connected with sunworship from hoar antiquity; cf. Odor, Daniel Vincent, *Mystery Babylon*, pp.103ff.

Halo, also known as a nimbus or a glory.

²¹⁶ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, pp.7-20

²¹⁷ 27BC

²¹⁸ a Roman legion comprised 3,000 to 6,000 men, with a compliment of cavalry.

expected, and as commander-in-chief of the army, the emperor governed these frontier provinces where the presence of the army was required. The more peaceful provinces were left to the Senate....However, the power of the emperor was almost without restriction, for he possessed the [authority]²¹⁹ which gave him a legal right to intervene in senatorial provinces as well as his own; and his instructions to his representatives by edict, mandate, or rescript tended more and more to have the force of law.

Good communications, free trade, and the mingling of races in cosmopolitan seaports accelerated the spread of a superficial unity across the heterogeneous peoples that composed the Empire. In the East, the process had been going on for nearly three hundred years and, in what remained of Alexander's conquests, Greek was the universal language and Greek culture was universally esteemed. The name "Greek" was no longer a national but a cultural term.²²⁰ In the newer provinces of the West, a similar spread of the Latin language and Roman education has already begun.

For the administration of his imperial provinces Augustus instituted a bureaucracy which his successors developed into a civil service of many departments. But it was typical of the Roman genius that this strong central government should be combined with many forms of local independence. There were cities which possessed the full Roman franchise: coloniae which had been settled by Roman citizens and municipia where citizenship had been given to a previously autonomous community. There were free states, some with their rights guaranteed by a perpetual treaty, others enjoying independence at the discretion of Rome. In the outlying districts there were client kingdoms ruled by native kings like Herod the Great. And where no such privileges existed, every town was entrusted with municipal self-government. In each province, too, a concilium was held in which the leading men of every city could meet to discuss provincial affairs.

Beneath this apparent multiformity a common loyalty was being evoked and a common civilisation established by the leavening influence of the Roman citizen....In some cities municipal office carried with it Roman citizenship and created a local Roman aristocracy. Apparently the honour could also be bought, though we do not know on what terms. But bought, earned, or inherited, the citizenship of Rome was a source of pride to those who possessed it and a coveted prize to those who did not.....

All that legislation could effect Augustus achieved, but the real problem of the Empire lay deeper than politics. The welcome peace could not undo the havoc of the long wars. Farmland had fallen into the hands of a few proprietors, and rural populations were drifting to the cities. The slaves captured in many campaigns were a source of cheap labour with which the free peasant could not compete. Prolonged military service had reared a generation accustomed to receive a living from the state. And everywhere there were displaced persons, uprooted from the old social order and unable to find a place in the new.

²¹⁹ Latin: proconsulare imperium maius.

²²⁰ e.g., Mark 7:26, 'A Greek woman, Syro-Phoenician by race.'

The yearning of such people for a community to which they could belong led to the formation of every conceivable type of club.²²¹ So popular were these clubs that in the interests of public order Augustus had to regulate their proceedings by law. But the camaraderie of the club provided only a superficial escape from the tedium of the loneliness and left a feeling of deeper need to which the fellowship of the Christian church would appeal. In a world which had been swept to the brink of doom by forces which seemed beyond the control of a man there was also a widespread sense of the futility of human endeavour. Man's destiny appeared to be dominated by an indifferent or even hostile power, and it mattered little whether you called that power Luck, Fortune, Necessity, or Fate. This pessimism, which so often goes hand in hand with political impotence, was reinforced by a pseudo-science from the East. Horace's famous dictum that "captive Greece took captive her fierce conqueror,"²²² is only a half-truth; for Greece herself had already undergone a similar conquest at the hands of the conquered Orient. It was but an hybrid Hellenism from which Rome took her culture, and one constituent was the astrology of Babylon. "Astrology fell upon the Hellenistic mind as a new disease falls upon some remote island people."²²³ To a few, astrology was a mystic faith in the kinship between the order in the soul and the orderly courses of the stars, between the flame within and the divine fire which feeds the lights of heaven.²²⁴ For others, the belief in a cosmic dominion may even have been the ladder by which they ascended from polytheism to the worship of [some form of] a creator. But to the many, astrology was a horror of great darkness, a rule of principalities and powers, which robbed life of its purpose and meaning.

When men live without either the incentive of a hopeful purpose or the natural sanctions of a settled community, it is hardly surprising that their morals are not high. For the degeneracy of Roman society we can call to the witness-box of history almost any of the Latin authors of the period. Under the Republic, Sallust had already complained that the filth of the world drained into Rome as bilgewater into the hold of a ship,²²⁵ and more than a century later his complaint still found an echo in Juvenal: "The Syrian Orontes has emptied itself into the Tiber."²²⁶ Half of the vast, crowded population of Rome were slaves. Of the free inhabitants, some two hundred thousand received a dole, and were kept out of more serious mischief by the sinister entertainments of the amphitheatre. Nor could the upper classes boast of any moral superiority. The emperor was in theory no more than the leading citizen of a restored Republic, and it was considered undignified for his equals to take service under him. Cæsar's household, therefore, to which fell an increasingly large share of the administration of the Empire, consisted of slaves and freedmen. Survivors of the old regime might despise the imperial palace

²²¹ Johnston, G., *The Doctrine of the Church in the New Testament*, pp.5,6

²²² Horace, *Epist.* ii.1.156

²²³ Murray, G., *Five Stages of Greek Religion*, p.144

²²⁴ Angus, S., *The Religious Quests of the Greco-Roman World*, pp.254-320, and Cumont, F., *Astrology and Religion among the Greeks and Romans* (in its entirety).

²²⁵ Sallust, *Catil.* 37. 5

²²⁶ Juvenal, *Sat.* iii. 62

as a “gloomy sweatshop,”²²⁷ but they themselves, deprived of a large measure of their ancestral responsibilities, tended to drift into an even gloomier self-indulgence. Their aimless existence led to a fall in the birthrate which not even family allowances could check; and the education of such children as they produced was left almost entirely to slaves, who were less likely to discipline their charges than to pander to their vices....²²⁸

Believing that the moral crisis was due to neglect of the national religion, Augustus attempted to initiate a religious revival. His own record, preserved in the monument of Ancrya, tells of the rebuilding of eighty-two temples.²²⁹ But the twilight of the gods was already at hand, and no power of man could halt their plunge into oblivion. To the Romans, religion meant the awe which they felt in the presence of a numen—the gods of agriculture, the Lares and Penates of the home, the spirits of tree and spring, and those darker beings from beyond the grave, manes, larvæ, lemures; and worship was the propitiation of these unseen presences by the strict observance of an elaborate ritual. This animism was a breeding ground for magic and enchantment, necromancy and divination, and was to survive for many centuries in rustic superstition.²³⁰ But as a source of spiritual satisfaction and moral power its value was slight. Long since the men, and still more the women, of Rome had been turning elsewhere for comfort and for hope. The aristocratic priesthood, resenting any encroachment on its preserves, had yet been powerless to prevent the growth of competition. In the provinces, the old gods still had a hold on the minds of the uneducated, but in many places they survived only by coming to terms with new foreign deities, and everywhere the ferment of the times had had an unsettling effect on established religion. The civic authorities, both in Rome and the provincial cities, could demand observance of the civic cult as a condition of citizenship, and could prosecute on a charge of atheism those citizens who failed to conform. But such conformity was little than a proof of patriotism, and carried with it no truly religious significance [other than for Judæo-Christians, in a negative sense, for they could not observe pagan rites in any way]. Among the educated, the vacuum left by the decay of religion was filled, in part, by philosophy.²³¹....The Roman world needed a faith which could bring the emotions as well as the mind into the service of a divine Purpose not restricted to the realm of change and decay.

²²⁷ Sen., *De Ira*, iii. 15. 3.

²²⁸ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, p.12:

‘The entry of a child into a family is two things. First, it is the greatest privilege which life can offer a man and a wife. It is something for which to thank God. Second, it is one of life’s supreme responsibilities, for that child is a bundle of possibilities, and on parents and teachers depends how these possibilities will or will not be realized.’

²²⁹ Horace, *Odes.*, iii., 6

²³⁰ Glover, T. R., *The Conflict of Religions in the Early Roman Empire*, chpt. 1.

²³¹ Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 1, p.127 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

‘The different kinds of gods are divided into three: the philosophical, the political, and the poetical.

Philosophers follow their own fancies (God cannot be apprehended by human senses, I Cor 2:14).

Political religion [in Babylon] was founded on the authority of the Magi and was considered certain by the heathen, and they called these gods ‘political’ which were received by the common consent of all.

Poets have fabled whatever pleases them....all the theatres resound with their vain imaginations....for we know human dispositions are ever prone to vanity.’

The desire to escape from “the bondage of corruption”....[such as in] Stoicism, where the belief in a universal purpose was cancelled out by the cyclic theory of history in which all things were periodically reduced to the primordial Fire....accounted for much of the popularity of the mystery cults. These cults had sprung up independently in many parts of the Orient, but with minor variations they ran true to a common type. In most of them, a mother goddess was worshipped with a male deity who was either her consort or her son—Cybele and Attis, Ishtar and Tammuz,²³² Atargatis and Hadad, Aphrodite and Adonis, Isis and Osiris (there was no mother goddess in the Bacchic or Orphic cults, or in the Persian-derived cult of Mithras which became popular among [Roman] soldiers in the latter half of the first century AD). The worship included a ritual drama depicting the death and resurrection of the god, which represented either the daily setting and rising of the sun or the annual decay and rebirth of vegetation. By initiation into the mysteries, the worshipper was identified with the god, and so made to participate in his immortality.

The mystery cults had spread from the lands of their origin when soldiers and refugees, merchants, and travellers settled in foreign cities. Greece had her indigenous mysteries of Demeter and Persophone at Eleusis, but already in Socrates’ time the Thracian goddess Bendis had arrived at the Piræus. Cybele reached Rome during the second Punic war, and Isis, in spite of many ejections, was well established there by the beginning of the Christian era. Rome tried to expel these Nature cults with a pitch-fork, but they kept coming back. The meeting of religions soon led to syncretism,²³³ and Isis in particular tended to absorb the persons and functions of her rivals....

To the ordinary worshipper, the mysteries offered a colourful symbolism and the emotional outlet of ecstasy, but their chief appeal lay in the sympathetic figure of the Great Mother. For the initiate were reserved the higher benefits of freedom from the dominion of the stars and a hope of life beyond the grave. But initiation cost Lucius all his money,²³⁴ and there were few who could afford the price of immortality. The Roman world needed a living hope freely offered to all who were thirsty for the life everlasting.

From the Greek kingdoms of the East there came yet another candidate for the religious loyalty of men—emperor worship. In Greece the boundary line between the human and the divine had always been a

²³² Semiramis’ son, held in pagan lore to be the divine conception of a ray of the sun’s light called Damu, later became the Babylonian Dammuzi, the Tammuz of the Old Testament.

²³³ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, p.30:

‘There is ample evidence....of syncretism between Judaism and various pagan cults. In the New Testament we hear of Jews who were practicing magic (Acts 19:13-19), and the magical papyri are full of references to the Septuagint. Several of the tracts of the corpus hermeticum reveal a similar influence. These two collections are admittedly much later than our period, but they are generally thought to include earlier material and ideas.

A close correlation, to say the least, is found by Patai, Raphael, *The Jewish Mind*, p.91, in the *Letter of Aristeas*:

‘This presents Judaism as identical in the main with Greek philosophy, but characteristically tries to bridge the gap between the Greek and Jewish religions by arguing that originally all peoples had one God, like the Jews, but called him by different names. Among the Greeks he was known as Zeus, therefore Zeus is identical with the Jewish God.’

Indeed, Zeus, the Greeks’ ‘god of gods,’ is identical with the Jewish god.

²³⁴ Apul., *Met*, xi. 28.

shadowy one. Zeus could take human form either in myth and poetry or in the chryselephatine splendour of Pheidias' statue at Olympia. Heracles could be elevated from manhood to the ranks of the gods. A god could be identified with a local hero to form a syncretistic deity, such as Zeus Trophonius at Lebadeia. And there were some deities—Asclepius, for example—of whom none could tell whether they had begun their existence as gods or men.

There was in Greek philosophy²³⁵ a strong strain which helped to accentuate this native tendency of the Greek mind. The Pythagoreans, Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics all taught that there is in man that which is akin to the divine, and that the chief end of man is to liberate this divine spark so that it may enter into the life immortal.²³⁶ At a less exalted level there was the theory propounded by Euhemerus in the third-century BC, that the gods were but men who had been promoted to divine honours in recognition of their benefactions to their fellows.

Philosophers might theorize, but it was Aristotle's most distinguished pupil, Alexander the Great, who took the actual step of laying claim to the worship of his subjects. No doubt he was prompted in this by the practice of the Egyptian kings, by his visit to the oracles of Ammon, where he was hailed son of the god, and by the ceremonial protestation which the kings of Persia expected of their people; but his claim was the logical development of Greek religious thought. His example was followed by his successors, who adopted such divine surnames as Soter, Euergetes, Epiphanes. Antiochus IV even had himself designated 'god'²³⁷ on the coinage. These claims were readily accepted by the populace, because the kings often proved capable of conferring benefits which the older deities failed to supply. If a king could be the saviour of his people, it was felt that he had earned the right to be regarded as an incarnate deity.

When the eastern dynasties fell before the stronger power of Rome, the common people were quite ready to transfer their loyalty and their worship, and Julius Cæsar²³⁸ showed himself ready to accept both. It

²³⁵ Barclay, William, *The Letter to the Romans*, p.10:

'There had been a time when Greek philosophy had been speculative. Four and five hundred years before this, men had spent their time discussing the problem—what is the one basic element of which the world is composed? Philosophy had been speculative philosophy and it had been natural philosophy. But, bit by bit, as the centuries passed, life fell in. The old landmarks were destroyed. Tyrants and conquerors and perils surrounded men. Degeneracy and weakness haunted them, and philosophy changed its emphasis. It became, not speculative, but practical. It ceased to be natural philosophy, and became moral philosophy. Its one aim was to build "a ring-wall of defence against the advancing chaos of the world."'

²³⁶ e.g., Aristotle, *Nic. Eth.*, X. vii. 8

²³⁷ Greek: theos.

²³⁸ Ross, David, *The Celts of the British Isles*, p.97:

'Julius Caesar, like many other eminent Romans, was a flamen, or initiated priest.'

Bunson, Matthew, *Encyclopedia of the Roman Empire*, pp.158,159 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'One of the most influential groups of priests in Rome. The flamines were given the task of honouring the 15 major and minor deities of the Roman state cult....each was assigned his own god....The flamines were divided into two groups: 12 minores of lesser deities and 3 maiores, the priests of the greater gods of Rome: Jupiter, Mars, and Quirinus. These three flamines possessed tremendous power and influence....Jupiter commanded the Roman pantheon and the Flamen

was this more than anything else that led the Republicans to suspect that he intended to found an oriental monarchy. Rome was not yet prepared to worship a living Cæsar. But a dead Cæsar was a different matter, and within a year of his death he had been deified by the Senate, and the superstitious were declaring that a comet which appeared that year was nothing other than the soul of the dead Julius ascending to heaven.

Warned by the fate of his predecessor, Augustus was in no haste to accept worship during his lifetime. At Rome, he allowed himself to be addressed as the son of the divine Julius, but refused any nearer approach to divinity. In the eastern provinces, where the custom of ruler-worship was well established, he gave permission for the institution of an imperial cult, but with the proviso that the name of the goddess Roma must be conjoined with his own. At his death, however, he, too, was voted the title divus, and in his case deification had constitutional as well as religious import. For the acta or authoritative pronouncements of the emperor had during his lifetime the effect of law, but this effect ceased with his death. Deification, therefore, meant that these acta had a permanent validity. Henceforward, whenever an emperor died, the Senate had to decide whether to ratify his acta by making him a divus or to allow him to suffer damnatio memoriæ, which meant that his acta would become a dead letter....

In spite of this chequered history, the imperial cult maintained its influence in the provinces, where even Nero was regarded with enthusiasm. The next development came in the reign of Domitian.²³⁹ The year of the four emperors had proved how precarious an emperor's tenure of office could be, and Domitian lived in constant dread of being supplanted. In an attempt to enhance his personal reputation, he had himself proclaimed dominus et deus, and arraigned on a charge of atheism all prominent persons who for any reason failed to acknowledge his divinity.'

Cæsar worship

'Throughout the century, the cult of the emperor had in the eastern provinces an undiminished popularity. The Empire had given to the people peace and prosperity, and they were happy to express their loyalty and gratitude to its supreme citizen. But there were two reasons why emperor-worship could never become the universal religion which the Empire needed to give it spiritual cohesion. The character of many of the emperors was a contradiction of the dignity of the office they occupied, and even the best emperors could provide for their

Dialis wielded a parallel importance....Mar's priest [was called] the Flamen Martialis....and Quirinus' the Flamen Quirinalis.

Under the Empire and with the development of the imperial cult, new flamines were appointed. Julius Cæsar was declared divine in 42BC, and many rulers were subsequently deified. A flamen was named for each new divine emperor. Augustus received one, and the cult of the emperors could thereby magnify itself in importance.'

In this, the Roman Cæsar bound together in one personage the concept of both temporal and religious rulership.

²³⁹ Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 2, Dissertation 15, p.257:

'Domitian was the first emperor who generally persecuted, and who, during his lifetime, assumed the title of the Lord God, and insisted upon being worshipped as a deity.'

subjects only material benefits which distracted their attention from their deeper and more permanent needs. It is the tragedy of Rome that, in the interests of imperial security, she persecuted the one religion that could have brought unity to her heterogeneous peoples.’²⁴⁰ ²⁴¹

‘In her great days, Roman justice and Roman impartiality was famous....The seas were cleared of pirates and the roads of brigands. A man might make his journeys in safety and live his life in peace, thanks to the Roman peace.’²⁴² Quite spontaneously, men began to talk of Roma, the spirit of Rome, as something divine.

[As to] the emergence of compulsory Cæsar worship, as far back as 195BC the process began which was to end in the head-on collision between the Roman Empire and the Christian church. In that year in the city of Smyrna there was erected the first temple of the divinity of Rome. This was no compulsory thing; it was completely spontaneous. Rome [within the limitations of its system] brought to these provincials such even-handed and impartial justice, such peace, safety and security, as under selfish and capricious tyrants they had never known. They felt that there was something divine about a power which could rule like that, and so the temple was erected to the spirit of Rome. In 48BC, the Asiatic cities had set up an inscription to Julius Cæsar hailing him as “God manifest and universal Saviour of human life.” Similarly, Augustus was recorded as “Ancestral God and Saviour of the whole human race.”²⁴³

But [in all this] something was started which had a long way to go. The spirit of Rome, the divinity of Rome, was clearly centred and incarcerated in one man. Many a time in the far away days earthly heroes on their death had been elevated to the rank of deity. And so there came another step in 29BC, for in that year a temple was erected in Ephesus to the godhead of Julius Cæsar after his death. First, the [abstraction of the] spirit of Rome had been deified; then the dead emperor had been deified; and then almost exactly at the same time there came the last step. In Pergamum there was erected a temple, not to a dead Emperor, but to the living Augustus; and Emperor-worship had begun.’²⁴⁴

‘[This] religious bond was essential to the imperial unity. The Roman Empire must have such a bond; it was not to be found in the multifarious Roman religions existing, nor in the exotic religions, and so the imperial religion was set up. Augustus allowed himself to be made Pontifex Maximus²⁴⁵ in 27AD, and thus became head of religion as well as head of the State. There followed the centralisation of worship round the person of the emperor. At first in Rome, though not in the provinces, this worship did not come to the emperor while alive [as

²⁴⁰ when, at last, the Empire devised rather than adopted its ‘Christian’ universal religion, it was merely another internally-generated, syncretised pagan construct, thinly overlaid with Christian-sounding phraseology, devised with the dual intent to appeal to as wide a paganistic public as possible while remaining implacably set against true Judæo-Christianity.

²⁴¹ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, pp.7-20 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁴² Latin: pax Romana.

²⁴³ Barclay, William, *Ethics in a Permissive Society*, pp.176,177; *Many Witnesses, One Lord*, pp.98-102 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁴⁴ Barclay, William, *Many Witnesses, One Lord*, pp.98-102 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁴⁵ now the formal papal title.

stated]. In the provinces, where the religious bond was above all important, the living and reigning emperor did receive the worship of a god....Augustus encouraged the worship, not of himself, but of his Genius, a distinction of but little difference for the uneducated masses. There was a gradual assimilation to a divine monarch of the oriental type.’²⁴⁶ ²⁴⁷ ²⁴⁸

[While] at first, the emperors really and truly did not want this, [and] they were embarrassed with the whole business...bit by bit the Roman state began to see a far-reaching use for this Cæsar worship....It became ‘the keystone of the imperial policy,’ that which held the empire together....So the Roman government laid it down in the end that every citizen should once a year burn a pinch of incense to Cæsar and say: ‘Cæsar is Lord’; and then he would get a certificate to say that he had done so....The worship of Cæsar was a test of a man’s political loyalty far more than of his religion. But the one thing that the Christians would not say was: ‘Cæsar is Lord.’ For them, Jesus Christ is Lord—and no one else. So persecution broke out and as William Watson the poet put it:

‘So to the wild wolf hate were hurl’d,
The panting, huddled flock whose crime was Christ.’²⁴⁹

At its most basic level, ‘[t]he formal fulfilment of [the Roman state’s] prescribed acts of worship upon official occasions offended no conscience but that of the Christians [and, it must be said, many of the Jews], for Christianity was unique in being exclusive [the Jews having secured a working accommodation within the

²⁴⁶ Pankhurst, Christabel, *The World’s Unrest: Visions of the Dawn*, pp.74,75

²⁴⁷ Halliday, W. R., *The Pagan Background of Early Christianity*.

²⁴⁸ based on Professor Bertram Windle’s writings.

²⁴⁹ *Foxe’s Book of Martyrs*, pp.13f. (largely paraphrased, with added comment and clarification in square brackets): Among other falsehoods, [Christians] were accused of indecent nightly meetings, of a rebellious spirit; of murdering their children, and even of being cannibals; and at this time, such was the infatuation of the pagans, that if famine, pestilences or earthquakes afflicted any of the Roman provinces, it was charged on the Christians. These persecutions naturally multiplied the number of informers; and many, for the sake of gain, swore away the lives of the innocent. The various kinds of punishments and inflicted cruelties were, during this persecution [Domitian’s] imprisonment [in loathsome prisons], racking, searing, [spearing], [beheading], being put to the sword in various other ways, shot to death with arrows, broiling, burning, being thrown into burning limekilns, boiling in oil, head shaved and loaded thereon with red hot coals, [beating with clubs], scourging, stoning, and hanging. Many were lacerated with red-hot pincers, and others were thrown upon the horns of wild bulls. Some were beaten with iron rods, then set upon a wooden horse and had their limbs dislocated, or fastened to a large grid-iron with a slow fire under it, that death might be more tedious. After having suffered these cruelties, the friends of the deceased Christians were refused the privilege of burying their remains.

Some of the martyrs were obliged to pass, with their already wounded feet, over thorns, nails, and sharp shells, others were scourged till their sinews and veins lay bare; and after suffering the most excruciating [root meaning: ‘from the cross’] tortures, often with salt being rubbed into open wounds, they were destroyed by the most terrible deaths. On other persecutions, Foxe lists many inflicted upon innocent, pacific Christians: some were sewed up in the skins of wild beasts, and then worried by dogs till they expired [or sewn in nets and thrown to wild beasts]; others dressed in shirts made stiff by wax, fixed to axle-trees, and set on fire; they also suffered confiscation of their estates, crucifixion, strangulation, being torn asunder, with arms and legs sheared off, etc.

All the while, the experience of the Christian captive was, and is, described in *Foxe’s Book of Martyrs*, p.16: ‘The more benefits they received at my hands, [the more they] behaved so much the worse unto me.’

empire], hence emperor-worship offered a test of loyalty by which Christians alone necessarily failed, and refusal to comply with its formal requirements inevitably brought them to the hostile notice of the secular power.²⁵⁰ The refusal: “I pray to my God for the emperor,” said a martyr, “but sacrifice in his honour ought not to be demanded nor presented. How can divine honours be accorded to a man?”²⁵¹ ²⁵² The result: predictable.

[N]otwithstanding all their meekness and peacefulness, Christians became seen by the state as the anarchists of their time, derided as ‘atheists’ for denying the Roman pantheon and for refusing to worship Cæsar. Atheism²⁵³ ²⁵⁴ in Roman law was defined simply as refusal to do so, so the test concerned loyalty as much if not more than religious belief, for it was not Jupiter but Cæsar that was the link of religion which held the Roman world together. Refusal meant beheading for men of rank, while meaner men were burned or given to the beasts. It also made free men liable to the rack, the flames, and the cross like slaves. Anonymous informants, frequently prompted by their previous failures in blackmail, invented malicious and slanderous accusations against Christians and, despite being guilty themselves of *calumnia gratia*, were encouraged in such self-interested devices by officials attempting to expunge the threat of the new religion from the empire. Public outcry was also used as a cover for official or unofficial and illegal action against adherents, incongruously sheltering under the guise of authorities’ keeping the peace.’²⁵⁵

‘It is of importance to note the very year that the Roman emperor was elevated to the position of head of the Roman state religion.²⁵⁶ This was the same year in which Jesus’ ministry started, the year of the Jubilee or Yobel, ‘*the acceptable year of the Lord*.’²⁵⁷ As a pathetic mimic of the true religion, Satan inaugurated a false state religion based on the worship of a sinning and sinful human being. The title *Pontifex Maximus*, an even more ancient pagan title deriving from the pagan Etruscan priesthood in Rome, was assumed by the papacy [or proto-papacy] in 382AD, and is held, to this day, by the head of the Roman Catholic Church. Prior to that, the Roman emperors held the title from 12BC.

²⁵⁰ Halliday, W. R., *The Legacy of Rome*, (various)

²⁵¹ Pankhurst, Christabel, *The World’s Unrest: Visions of the Dawn*, pp.76,77 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁵² Pressensé, *Martyrs and Apologists*, pp.75,76:

‘Christians, for whom there was no question of worship of the emperor, were exposed to the severest persecution. They were even labelled ‘Haters of the human race,’ so different their conduct and antipathetic their loyalty to the true God. The same will apply in the latter days.’

²⁵³ Barclay, William, *The Mind of St. Paul*, p.31:

‘John Buchan described an atheist as a man who has no invisible means of support.’

²⁵⁴ on the difficulties inherent in maintaining atheism, Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, pp.207,208 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

‘As Sir James Jeans has said, “No astronomer can be an atheist. The [complexity and] order of the world [and the complexity and order of the universe] demands the mind of God behind it”....When we look in upon ourselves and out upon the world, we are driven to God. As Kant said long ago, “the moral law within us, and the starry heavens above us,” drive us to God.’

²⁵⁵ Barclay, William, *Ethics in a Permissive Society*, pp.176,177; *Many Witnesses, One Lord*, pp.98-102

²⁵⁶ 27AD

²⁵⁷ q.v. inf.

The Pontifex Maximus, originally the high-priest of the pre-Christian pagan Roman religion, was a distinctly religious office under the Roman Republic. It gradually became politicised until, beginning with Augustus, it was subsumed into the imperial office. The Pontifex Maximus was the most important of the Pontifices (plural of Pontifex) positions in the main sacred college (Collegium Pontificum), which he directed. The Pontifex was not simply a priest. He had both political and religious authority, a trait that maintains in the Roman Catholic papacy, the head of the Roman church, in the world's only ecclesiastico-political church organisation.^{'258 259}

Serving which God?

'Whilst the happiness and glory of [what seemed to the heathen to be] a temporal reign were promised to the disciples of Christ, the most dreadful calamities were denounced against an unbelieving world. The edification of the new Jerusalem was to advance by equal steps with the destruction of the mystic Babylon, and, as long as the emperors who reigned before Constantine [and after] persisted in the profession of idolatry, the epithet of Babylon was applied to the city and the empire of Rome.'²⁶⁰

'The non-Anabaptist exegete John Glas also decried the concept of state Christendom...."Christianity never was, nor could be, the established religion of any nation without becoming the reverse of what it was when it was first instituted....Christ did not come to establish any worldly power, but to give hope of eternal life beyond the grave to people He chooses of His own sovereign will."²⁶¹

'One of the tragedies of religion has been that men have so often thought that they were serving God by persecuting those whom they believed to be heretics.'²⁶² '[T]he appellation of heretics has always been applied to the less numerous party.'²⁶³

'No man ever more truly thought that he was serving God than Paul did, when he was trying to eliminate the name of Jesus and to wipe out the church.'²⁶⁴ The torturers and the judges of the Spanish Inquisition²⁶⁵ have left a name which is loathed, yet they were quite sure that they were serving God by torturing

²⁵⁸ Pankhurst, Christabel, *The World's Unrest: Visions of the Dawn*, pp.74,75

²⁵⁹ both the Antichrist and the false prophet owe an overpowering allegiance to the beast empire. The former because he is the head of it, the latter because he is the head of an ecclesiastico-political organisation structured upon the Roman Empire. They are but two expositions of the same basic structure, a structure which binds them together in a common bond to the very end, q.v. inf.

²⁶⁰ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, p.23

²⁶¹ Hoffman, Michael, *Judaism Discovered*, p.84

²⁶² Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.190

²⁶³ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, p.57

²⁶⁴ Acts 24:9-11

²⁶⁵ Savage, Katherine, *The History of World Religions*, p.185:

'Latin America was infused with the spirit of Roman Catholicism, obedient to the pope, and subject, in a moderated degree, to the Inquisition.'

heretics into accepting what they considered to be the true faith.²⁶⁶ They were serving the interests of their own 'god,' of course, the god of false religion,²⁶⁷ the god of the false prophet:²⁶⁸ Satan.

'The world acutely dislikes people whose lives are a condemnation of it. It is, in fact, dangerous to be good.'²⁶⁹ ²⁷⁰ God's people were being treated as the outcasts of this world, and things were about to get much, much worse.

Nero's persecution

'The cadence of accusation during the reign of Nero was firstly 'arson' and, were that failing, 'hatred of the human race,' and, finally, 'failure to worship the emperor.' Throughout the protracted period of numerous Roman persecutions, the supposed secret rites of Christians were held suggestive of a further charge of magic,²⁷¹ for which they could be burned under the law,²⁷² but the most convenient course was to try them for treason.²⁷³ Men who belonged to unlawful societies²⁷⁴ were prima face traitors if they refused the ready test of swearing by Cæsar's genius and doing him loyal worship. In that case they committed treason in open court²⁷⁵ and could be sent straight to execution. In an age when duty to the state and Cæsar was the greatest of all duties, the charge was graver than one can easily realize. From the heathen point of view, the process was quite fair. It was only tendering an oath of allegiance to persons reasonably suspected of treason. While the full process was chiefly used for Roman citizens, many Christians, being non-citizens, were commonly dealt with summarily,²⁷⁶ and then the course taken was very much at the magistrate's discretion, with swift and predictable results. For them there was no protection whatsoever under the Roman system of jurisprudence. The tension and jeopardy of living a Christian life in a heathen state were inescapable, and much in Paul's writings in his epistles address a Christian's difficulties in having to live in a heathen society.

²⁶⁶ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.190

²⁶⁷ Makow, Henry: "Once man gives over to false religion, he is no longer rational because he originates no thought. His life is controlled by whomever controls his religion."

²⁶⁸ It is interesting to note that the word 'prophet,' in the biblical sense of speaking God's word rather than being restricted to presaging future events and personalities, is applied in scripture to the false prophet, who speaks the word and does the will of his god, Satan. Indeed, the epithet personae dramatis can, and has been applied to both the Antichrist and the false prophet.

²⁶⁹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, pp.185,186:

'That was why men killed Socrates; they called him the human gadfly. He was always compelling men to think and to examine themselves, and men hated that and killed him. It is dangerous to practice a higher standard than the standard of the world. Nowadays a man can be persecuted even for working too hard or too long.'

²⁷⁰ John 16:33b, '*In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*'

The closer one gets to the keeping the correct way, the more intense the opposition from Satan.

²⁷¹ Latin: malefici.

²⁷² Latin: lex cornelia.

²⁷³ Latin: majestas.

²⁷⁴ Latin: collegia illicita.

²⁷⁵ Latin: impietas circa principes was a form of majestas.

²⁷⁶ Latin: cognoscere.

The beginning of the Roman persecution of the Christian church had a certain almost accidental quality about it....On 19 July²⁷⁷ 64AD the great fire of Rome broke out and it raged for a week, destroying alike the most sacred buildings and the homes of the common people, and leaving the people of Rome bound together in a community of misery.²⁷⁸

'[T]he capital of the empire was [thus] afflicted by a fire which raged beyond the memory or example of former ages. The monuments of Grecian art and of Roman virtue, the trophies of the Punic and Gallic wars, the most holy temples, and the most splendid palaces, were involved in one common destruction. Of the fourteen regions or quarters into which Rome was divided, four only subsisted entire, three were levelled with the ground, and the remaining seven which had experienced the fury of the flames displayed a melancholy prospect of ruin and destruction.

The voice of rumour accused the emperor Nero²⁷⁹—'whose name has become a synonym for infamy, and who to pagan and Christian alike seemed an unholy monster'²⁸⁰—'as the incendiary of his own capital; and, as the most incredible stories are the best adapted to the genius of an enraged people, it was gravely reported, and firmly believed, that Nero, enjoying the calamity which he had occasioned, amused himself with singing to his lyre the destruction of ancient Troy.'²⁸¹

'It [seemed] impossible to convince the citizens of Rome that Nero himself had not been responsible for the fire, for he had a passion for building and it was his ambition to rebuild Rome. In an effort to divert suspicion from himself, Nero²⁸² 'resolved to substitute in his own place some fictitious criminals.'²⁸³

"With this view²⁸⁴ he inflicted the most exquisite tortures on those men, who, under the vulgar appellation of Christians, were already branded with deserved infamy. [After all,] they derived their name from Christ, who, in the reign of Tiberius, had suffered death by the sentence of the procurator Pontius Pilate. For a while this dire superstition was checked; but it again burst forth, and not only spread itself over Judæa, the first seat of this mischievous sect, but was even introduced into Rome, the common asylum which receives and protects whatever is impure, whatever is atrocious. The confessions of those who were seized discovered a great multitude of their accomplices, and they were all convicted, not so much for the crime of setting fire to the city, as for their [deemed] hatred of human kind.'²⁸⁵

²⁷⁷ day of the occult heliacal rising of Sirius, the dog-star, occult signifier of Satan, q.v.inf.

²⁷⁸ Barclay, William, *Ethics in a Permissive Society*, pp.176,177; *Many Witnesses, One Lord*, pp.98-102

²⁷⁹ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.82-84

²⁸⁰ Barclay, William, *Many Witnesses, One Lord*, pp.98-102

²⁸¹ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.82-84

²⁸² Barclay, William, *Many Witnesses, One Lord*, pp.98-102

²⁸³ nowadays, a device termed 'false-flag.'

²⁸⁴ recorded by Tacitus.

²⁸⁵ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.82-84 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

'They died in torments, and their torments were embittered by insult and derision. Some were nailed on crosses; others sewn up in the skins of wild beasts, and exposed to the fury of dogs; others again,'²⁸⁶ '[they] rolled alive in pitch'²⁸⁷ 'and smeared them all over with combustible materials, [and] were used as torches to illuminate the darkness of the night'²⁸⁸ and to light his gardens.

'Those who survey with a curious eye the revolutions of mankind may observe that the gardens and circus of Nero on the Vatican, which were polluted with the blood of the first Christians, have been rendered still more famous by the triumph and abuse of [a pagan imposter of] the persecuted religion.'²⁸⁹

'On what is now the broad piazza in front of St. Peter's Church there could be heard in the days of the first Christians the cracking of whips, the thunder of horses' hooves on the trembling ground, and the roar of thousands of throats filling the air. The emperor Caligula²⁹⁰ had built a chariot racecourse there, of which the only evidence now is the tall, slender obelisk on the piazza which Caligula himself had brought by sea from Egypt....[There was] a pagan burial-ground on the Via Cornelia, behind the stone structure of the arena. This pagan cemetery lay on a knoll called Vaticanus: the Latin word "vatis" means a 'prophet' or a 'soothsayer.' In days gone by there had been an Etruscan oracle on this spot.'²⁹¹

'The sheer cruelty of the Neronic persecution left an indelible impression on the minds of the Christians.'²⁹² 'In the early church, the Christian martyrs called the day of their death their birth-day.'^{293 294}

'In due time, Nero's reign came to an end in utter chaos.'²⁹⁵ It was said that the people danced in the streets at the news that Nero was dead. But soon a rumour was sweeping the city and the country; it was said that Nero was not dead; he seemed immortal in his wickedness; it was said he had gone to Parthia to wait there and that he would soon descend on Rome from Parthia with the Parthian hordes. This belief came to be known as Nero Redivivus, the 'Nero Resurrected' legend. It was so powerful a legend that in the years 69, 80, and even as late as 88, pretenders claiming to be the Nero Redivivus arose in Parthia.²⁹⁶

²⁸⁶ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.82-84

²⁸⁷ Barclay, William, *Many Witnesses, One Lord*, pp.98-102

²⁸⁸ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.82-84

²⁸⁹ Barclay, William, *Many Witnesses, One Lord*, pp.98-102 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets) 37–41AD

²⁹¹ Keller, Werner, *The Bible as History*, pp.368f. (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁹² Barclay, William, *Many Witnesses, One Lord*, pp.98-102

²⁹³ Barclay, William, *And He had Compassion*, p.113

²⁹⁴ Pankhurst, Christabel, *The World's Unrest: Visions of the Dawn*, pp.74,75:

'But all in all, ghastly as are the records of heathen persecution in the time of the empire, the work of blood was never done with the infernal thoroughness of papal Rome.'

²⁹⁵ in 68AD

²⁹⁶ Barclay, William, *Many Witnesses, One Lord*, pp.98-102 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The number of the Beast is 666 (Rev 13:8), and that is the sum total of the letters in the name Nero Cæsar in Hebrew, when the letters are taken as numbers (Greek and Hebrew had no signs for the numbers, and the letters stood for the numbers....). Such was the reputation of Nero and so strong was the Nero Redivivus legend that Nero was [incorrectly] identified with [the ultimate] Antichrist and [also incorrectly] with the Beast.'

Ever changing, never changing

Despite its first-century cruelty and barbarity, the Roman Empire still had much mileage left in it. By the time of Romulus Augustulus's abdication in the fifth century,²⁹⁷ at the instigation of the barbarian Odoacer, the Roman Empire had been an enormous fact of life for some seven or eight hundred years. That it should be no more was a tremendous shock, one that has reverberated down through the centuries.

The Holy Roman Empire²⁹⁸ that was to follow, explicitly proclaiming itself to be the successor of the Western Roman Empire under the doctrine of translatio imperii, proved short lived in its first manifestation, lasting only thirty years after the death of Charlemagne.²⁹⁹ It was partitioned at the treaty of Verdun,³⁰⁰ and subsequently twice or thrice before the ninth-century was out. Its character changed down through the Middle Ages as the power of the emperor gradually weakened in favour of the princes. It ceased to exist early in the nineteenth-century³⁰¹ when Napoleon abolished it, but reappeared, in severely adumbrated form, a few years later, thanks to the treaty of Vienna.³⁰² It finally came to an end when the Papal States were overwhelmingly voted out of existence.³⁰³

²⁹⁷ in 476AD

²⁹⁸ The Holy Roman Empire was the term used after 1157AD; before that, the epithet sacrum, holy, was not applied to the realm.

Marsh, David, *The Germans: Rich, Bothered and Divided*, p.40:

'But the Empire was never a whole; over the centuries it functioned as a shifting tectonic plate which either overstretched Germany by conquest to well beyond its national borders, or else shrank back to cover only part of the German people within its limits. Under a combination of external attrition and internal particularism, the diffuse organisation entitled 'The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation' went into decline. The beginning of the 16th century was the high water mark; thereafter came the deluge.'

²⁹⁹ Charlemagne was hailed as the 'Great and peace-bringing emperor who rules the Holy Roman Empire.'

³⁰⁰ in 843AD

³⁰¹ in 1807AD

³⁰² in 1814AD

³⁰³ in 1870AD

Chapter 2

‘Dimly-lit’ Centuries

‘The book of Revelation was written by the Apostle John while in exile on the isle of Patmos towards the end of the first-century³⁰⁴—during the reign of the Roman Emperor Domitian³⁰⁵—and also after his release. The date is assigned by Irenæus who was a disciple of Polycarp who, in turn, was a companion of John. At that time John would have been about one hundred years old. His crime is said to have been a refusal to worship the image of the emperor.³⁰⁶ Eusebius mentions that he was banished to the island by Domitian and released eighteen months later by his successor, Nerva.³⁰⁷ John also wrote four other New Testament books: John, one of the gospels, and the three Johannine epistles.

³⁰⁴ most probably c.95 / 96AD

³⁰⁵ 81–96AD

³⁰⁶ Silberman, Neil Asher, *Heavenly Bodies, Unravelling the Secret History of the Kabbalah*, pp.24,25 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

‘After the assassination of the emperor Commodus in 192[C.E.], when Septimus Severus emerged victorious from a bitter struggle between Roman generals and began to establish a multi-ethnic empire, Jewish leaders in Palestine sought ways for Jews—as a distinct community, not individually—to participate in the new imperial reality. Their offer of loyal participation in the empire was wholeheartedly accepted. The edicts of Septimus and his successor Caracalla officially recognized the religious office of *Nasi* or Patriarch—initially filled by Judah I (170–220C.E.), his son Gamaliel III (220–230C.E.), and his grandson Judah II (230–270C.E.)....[The Nasi] conscientiously preached the obligation of Jews to pay all applicable taxes and avoid displays of resistance to Rome at all costs. Ritual law and purity regulations were adapted to this political effort: Jews of priestly lineage were even allowed to contract ritual impurity in their obligation to pay homage to the images and person of the emperor.’

³⁰⁷ Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 3.20. 8,9, therein noted as banished in 95AD.

The reign of Domitian³⁰⁸ was characterised by severe persecutions against the early church. For as long as Judæo-Christianity was regarded by the Romans as a sect of Judaism, it shared the contempt the Romans had of the Jews, but it was also afforded the legal protection bestowed on what was seen as an ancient religion. Part of the Roman accommodation, in place of sacrifice to the emperor, was a special tax, the fiscus judaicus.³⁰⁹ Although burdensome, this allowed 'crypto-Jewish religions' which proscribed the worship of the emperor to survive in relative tranquillity, but when the Jews expelled the early Christians from their synagogues, [all and pretense of] that legal cover was lost. The Romans then came to regard the exposed 'nascent' or 'new' and vibrant religion of Christianity—claiming universal validity and application while adamantly refusing acknowledgement of the gods of the Roman pantheon—as subversive and treasonable, a religio illicita, importing on its thus 'patently atheistic' adherents the full rigours of the law regarding mandatory sacrifice to the emperor and participation in certain heathen rituals. Given that Christians could never comply, under any circumstances, they often found themselves on trial for their lives or in receipt of very severe punishment. A frequent reproach of Christians of that time was: 'You have no right to exist!'³¹⁰

John's persecution

It was part of this persecution that resulted in John being placed in exile on Patmos:³¹¹ *'I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation,*³¹² *and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that was called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.'*³¹³ Patmos, a small rocky island consisting mainly of volcanic hills, about ten miles long and six miles wide at its northern end, extends, in all, to about sixteen square miles. It lies in the Dodecanese in the Ægean Sea, situated about thirty-five miles south-west of Miletus.³¹⁴ Tacitus, the Roman historian, records that it was used as a penal colony and a place of political banishment during the time of the empire.³¹⁵ Many were set to hard labour in its copper mines. In those days, copper mining and smelting were extremely arduous manual processes, exclusively

³⁰⁸ 81–96AD; the third and last emperor of the Flavian dynasty.

³⁰⁹ introduced by Vespasian, increased first by Domitian (81-96AD) and later by Hadrian.

³¹⁰ Schaff, Philip, *History of the Christian church*, Vol. 2, pp.40,41

³¹¹ Latin: relegatio ad Patmos; known as 'the Jerusalem of the Ægean,' cf. *Eyewitness Travel Guides, The Greek Islands*, p.158.

³¹² Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 2, pp.21,27 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'Not only severe but lengthened trials are said to await the faithful, which must afflict their minds with weariness, unless the hope of a better issue propped them up....[but] the trials by which the sons of God were to be oppressed should not be perpetual, because God had prescribed and defined for a fixed period, and the removal of all obstacles which Satan places in our way, either to delay us or turn us aside.'

³¹³ Rev 1:9; the form of death of John is not stated specifically in Scripture, but Christ's admonition and prophecy in Mat 20:20-23 suggests his execution by some means, as his brother James was executed with a sword, q.v. Acts 12:1,2.

³¹⁴ now called Melas.

³¹⁵ Tacitus, *Annals*, 3.68; 4.30; 15.71

carried out by slaves and prisoners. An ancient tradition has it that despite his advanced years, John so laboured. Patmos, meaning 'mortal,' is now called Patino.'³¹⁶

Intermittent persecution

Persecution continued over the next two centuries or so, intermittently, and to varying extent. 'The answer of Trajan,³¹⁷ to which the Christians of the succeeding age have frequently appealed, discovers as much regard for justice and humanity as could be reconciled with his mistaken notions of religious policy. Instead of displaying the implacable zeal of an inquisitor, anxious to discover the most minute particles of heresy and exulting in the number of victims, the emperor expresses much more solicitude to protect the security of the innocent than to prevent the escape of the guilty. He acknowledges the difficulty of fixing any general plan; but he lays down two salutary rules, which often afforded relief and support to distressed Christians. Though he directs the magistrates to punish such persons as are legally convicted, he prohibits them, with a very humane inconsistency, from making any inquiries concerning the supposed criminals. Nor was the magistrate allowed to proceed on every kind of information. Anonymous charges the emperor rejects, as too repugnant to the equity of his government; and he strictly requires, for the conviction of those to whom the guilt of Christianity is imputed, the positive evidence of a fair and open accuser....If they failed in their proofs, they incurred the severe, and perhaps capital, penalty which according to the law published by the emperor Hadrian was inflicted on those who falsely attributed to their fellow-citizens the crime of Christianity. The violence of personal or superstitious animosity might sometimes prevail over the most natural apprehensions of disgrace and danger; but it cannot surely be imagined that accusations of so unpromising an appearance were either lightly or frequently undertaken by the Pagan subjects of the Roman empire.

The edicts of Hadrian³¹⁸ and of Antoninus Pius expressly declared that the voice of the multitude should never be admitted as legal evidence to convict or to punish those unfortunate persons who had embraced the enthusiasm of the Christians.

Punishment was not the inevitable consequence of conviction, and the Christians whose guilt was the most clearly proved by the testimony of witnesses, or even by their voluntary confession, still retained in their own power the alternative of life or death. It was not so much the past offence, as the actual resistance, which excited the indignation of the magistrate. He was persuaded that he offered them an easy pardon, if they consented to cast a few grains of incense upon the altar, they were dismissed from the tribunal in safety and with applause. It was esteemed the duty of a human judge to endeavour to reclaim, rather than to punish, those

³¹⁶ Barclay, William, *Letters to the Seven Churches: A Study of the Second and Third Chapters of the Book of Revelation*, various excerpts, paraphrased and slightly edited.

³¹⁷ Roman Emperor 98–117AD

³¹⁸ Roman Emperor 117–138AD

deluded enthusiasts....If threats and persuasions proved ineffectual, he had often recourse to violence; the scourge and the rack were called in to supply the deficiency of argument, and every art of cruelty was employed to subdue such inflexibility and, as it appeared to the Pagans, such criminal obstinacy. The ancient apologists of Christianity have censured, with equal truth and severity, the irregular conduct of their persecutors, who, contrary to every principle of judicial proceeding, admitted the use of torture, in order to obtain not a confession but a denial of the crime which was the object of their inquiry.

But it is certain, and we may appeal to the grateful confessions of the first Christians, that the greater part of the magistrates who exercised in the provinces the authority of the emperor, or of the senate, and to whose hands alone the jurisdiction of life and death was entrusted, behaved like men of polished manners and liberal education, who respected the rule of justice, and who were conversant with the precepts of philosophy. They frequently declined the odious task of persecution, dismissed the charge with contempt, or suggested to the accused Christian some legal evasion by which he might elude the severity of the laws. Whenever they were invested with a discretionary power, they used it much less for the oppression than for the relief and benefit of the afflicted church. They were far from condemning all the Christians who were accused before their tribunal, and very far from punishing with death all those who were convicted of an obstinate adherence to the new superstition. Contenting themselves, for the most part, with the milder chastisements of imprisonment, exile, or slavery in the mines, they left the unhappy victims of their justice some reason to hope that a prosperous event, the accession, the marriage, or the triumph of an emperor might speedily restore them, by a general pardon, to their former state. The martyrs, devoted to immediate execution by the Roman magistrates, appear to have been selected from the most opposite extremes. They were either bishops and presbyters, the persons distinguished among the Christians by their rank and influence, and whose example might strike terror into the whole sect, or else they were the meanest and most abject among them, particularly those of the servile condition, whose lives were esteemed of little value, and whose sufferings were viewed by the ancients with too careless an indifference.

A modern inquisitor would hear with surprise that, whenever any information was given to a Roman magistrate of any person within his jurisdiction who had embraced the sect of the Christians, the charge was communicated to the party accused, and that a convenient time was allowed him to settle his domestic concerns and to prepare an answer to the crime which was imputed to him. If he entertained any doubt of his own constancy, such a delay afforded him the opportunity of preserving his life and honour by flight, or withdrawing himself into some obscure retirement or some distant province, and of patiently expecting the return of peace and security.

The provincial governors, whose zeal was less prevalent than their avarice, had countenanced the practice of selling certificates (or libels as they were called), which attested that the persons therein mentioned had complied with the laws and sacrifices to the Roman deities. By producing these false declarations, the

opulent and timid Christians were enabled to silence the malice of an informer and to reconcile, in some measure, their safety with their religion.³¹⁹

Therein lies a clear indication of one of the many patently non-Christian acts and operations allowed by the so-called Christian church of the time—penance for sin, in the form of purchased libels—whereas flight from persecution and death is in complete accord with biblical injunction. Christ prophesied, *‘And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in the Judæa flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.’*³²⁰ The church had to flee Jerusalem and its hinterland to avoid total destruction of its very core. God’s punishment for repeated and unrepented sin then fell on the Jews, and the Jews alone.

Christ previews these days of persecution of the Christians, amongst others, when He warns that *‘they shall persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into the prisons,’* and that they *‘shall be betrayed by parents and brethren, and kinsfolk, and friends, and some of you shall be put to death,’* and that *‘ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake.’*³²¹ And again, when addressing the Smyrnan era of the church: *‘Fear none of these things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.’*³²² And finally, it exposes where the *‘woman,’*³²³ the church, flees into the wilderness for her own safety from the face of the *‘great red dragon,’*³²⁴ Satan. This flight from persecution, sensibly after the Smyrnan one, was from the face of the incredibly destructive, ecclesiastical power that arose after the demise of the Roman Empire, for it would stand in diametrical and implacable opposition to true Christianity. It would take more than a thousand years before true Christianity could once more appear—visibly, though still persecuted—in the more tolerant and amenable regions of the West.

‘Notwithstanding the general rules established for the conviction and punishment of the Christians, the fate of those sectaries, in an extensive and arbitrary government, must still, in a great measure, have depended on their own behaviour, the circumstances of the times, and the temper of their supreme as well as subordinate rulers. Zeal might sometimes provoke, and prudence might sometimes avert or assuage, the superstitious fury of the Pagans. A variety of motives might dispose the provincial governors either to enforce or to relax the execution of the laws; and of these motives the most forcible was their regard not only for the public edicts, but for the secret intentions of the emperor, a glance from whose eye was sufficient to kindle or to extinguish the flames of persecution. As often as any occasional severities were exercised in the different parts of the empire,

³¹⁹ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.90,91,93-95,103-105

³²⁰ Luke 21:20,21

³²¹ Luke 21:12-19 (subscripted emphasis added)

³²² Rev 2:10

³²³ Rev 12:6,14

³²⁴ Rev 12:3-4,7,9,13,17

the primitive Christians lamented and perhaps magnified their own sufferings; but the celebrated number of *ten* persecutions has been determined by the ecclesiastical writers of the fifth century,³²⁵ who possessed a more distinct view of the prosperous or adverse fortunes of the church from the age of Nero to that of Diocletian. The ingenious parallels of the *ten* plagues of Egypt and of the *ten* horns of the Apocalypse [may have] first suggested this calculation to their minds; and in their application of the faith of prophecy to the truth of history they were careful to select those reigns which were indeed the most hostile to the Christian cause. But these transient persecutions served only to revive the zeal, and to restore the discipline, of the faithful: and the moments of extraordinary rigour were compensated by much longer intervals of peace and security. The indifference of some princes and the indulgence of others permitted the Christians to enjoy, though not perhaps a legal, yet an actual and public toleration of their religion.³²⁶

‘Under the reign of Severus,³²⁷ the fury of the population was checked; the rigour of ancient laws was for some time expended; and the provincial governors were satisfied with receiving an annual present from the churches within their jurisdiction as the price, or as the reward, of their moderation....[n]or was the peace of the church interrupted till the increasing numbers of proselytes seemed at length to have attracted the attention, and to have alienated the mind of Severus. With the design of restraining the progress of Christianity, he published an edict which, though it was designed to affect only the new converts, could not be carried into strict execution without exposing to danger and punishment the more zealous of their teachers and missionaries. In this mitigated persecution, we may still discover the indulgent spirit of Rome and of Polytheism, which so readily admitted every excuse in favour of those who practiced the religious ceremonies of their fathers.

But the laws which Severus had enacted soon expired with the authority of that emperor; and the Christians, after this accidental tempest, enjoyed a calm of thirty-eight years. Till this period they had usually held their assemblies in private houses and sequestered places. They were now permitted to erect and consecrate convenient edifices for the purpose of religious worship;³²⁸ to purchase lands, even at Rome itself, for the use of the community; and to conduct the elections of their ecclesiastical ministers in so public but at the same time in so exemplary a manner as to deserve the respectful attention of the Gentiles.³²⁹

³²⁵ originally and correctly based on Rev 2:10's ‘*ten days’ persecution*’ of the Sardis era of the church.

³²⁶ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.90,91,93-95,103-105 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³²⁷ Roman Emperor 193-211AD

³²⁸ the true Judæo-Christian church did not do this.

³²⁹ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.107,108

Elagabalus

However, the long-standing, deep-seated Roman desire for an all-encompassing official religion—one which, in course, would serve to exclude and isolate Judæo-Christianity—was to receive a trial under emperor Elagabalus.³³⁰ A little earlier, Caracalla had granted universal citizenship³³¹ throughout the Roman Empire and a universal religion was seen as a necessary and natural consequence. Unfortunately for the enterprise, Elagabalus was not fitted to the undertaking: ‘With all his unashamed enthusiasm, Elagabalus was not the man to establish a religion; he had not the qualities of a Constantine or yet of a Julian; and his enterprise would perhaps have met with little success even if his authority had not been annulled by his idiosyncrasies. The Invincible Sun, if he were to be worshipped as a sun of righteousness, was not happily recommended by the depraved acts of his Invincible Priest.’³³² The time for a unified religion may have been right when Elagabalus tried to institute it, but because of his flamboyance and failure to behave like a proper Roman, he failed. It was to take another century before Constantine could impose a universal religion.

Edict of Diocletian

‘The twenty-third of February,³³³ which coincided with the Roman festival of the Terminalia, was appointed (whether by accident or by design) to set bounds to the progress of Christianity.

The next day the general edict of persecution was published; and, though Diocletian, still averse to the effusion of blood, had moderated the fury of Galerius, who proposed that every one refusing to offer sacrifice should immediately be burned alive, the penalties inflicted on the obstinacy of the Christians might be deemed sufficiently rigorous and effectual. It was enacted that their churches, in all the provinces of the empire, should be demolished to their foundations; and the punishment of death was denounced against all who should presume to hold any secret assemblies for the purpose of religious worship.³³⁴

The last was a direct threat to the true church, which had never erected vain edifices for the purposes of worship, always choosing to assemble in private houses, temporary rented premises, or in the open. House churches, especially, were regarded by the authorities as inherently secret since they could be moved from house to house with comparative ease, resulting in no religious meetings taking place in ‘authorised’ buildings. That meant that private houses, commercial halls, and other buildings could be demolished, and those involved executed.

³³⁰ Roman emperor 218-222AD; also known as Heliogabalus; named after the Syrian sun-god, and a priest of that god.

³³¹ Latin: *Constitutio Antoniniana*, 212AD; also known as edict of Caracalla.

³³² Bury, J. B., *History of the Later Roman Empire*, Vol. 1

³³³ in 303AD

³³⁴ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.118,124,126-131

'Diocletian had no sooner published his edicts against the Christians than, as if he had been desirous of committing to other hands the work of persecution, he divested himself of the imperial purple. The character and situation of his colleagues and successors sometimes urged them to enforce, and sometimes inclined them to suspend the execution of these rigorous laws....during the space of ten years which elapsed between the first edicts of Diocletian and the final peace of the [then visible] church.

After Diocletian had divested himself of the purple,³³⁵ Italy and Africa were administered under the name of Severus, and were exposed, without defence, to the implacable resentment of his master Galerius....The sanguinary temper of Galerius, the first and principal author of the persecution, was formidable to those Christians whom their misfortunes had placed within the limits of his dominions [Illyricium]....But when Galerius had obtained the supreme power of the government of the East [where most remaining Judæo-Christians were to be found], he indulged in their fullest his zeal and cruelty, not only in the provinces of Thrace and Asia, which acknowledged his immediate jurisdiction, but in those of Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, where Maximin gratified his own inclination by yielding a rigorous obedience to the stern commands of his benefactor. The frequent disappointments of his ambitious views, the experience of six years of persecution, and the salutary reflections which a lingering and painful distemper suggested to the mind of Galerius, at length convinced him that the most violent efforts of despotism are insufficient to extirpate a whole people or to subdue their religious prejudices. Desirous of repairing the mischief that he had occasioned, he published....a general edict....of toleration. But this treacherous calm was of short duration; nor could the Christians of the East place any confidence in the character of their sovereign. Cruelty and superstition were the ruling passions of Maximin. The former suggested the means, the latter pointed out the objects, of persecution. The emperor was devoted to the worship of the gods, to the study of magic, and to the belief of oracles. The prophets or philosophers, whom he revered as the favourites of heaven, were frequently raised to the government of provinces and admitted into the most secret counsels. They convinced him that the Christians had been indebted for their victories to their regular discipline, and that the weakness of Polytheism had principally flowed from a want of union and subordination among the ministers of religion. A system of government was therefore instituted, which was evidently copied from the policy of the church [which was, by then, but a copy of the state's secular apparatus]. In all the great cities of the empire, the temples were repaired and beautified by the order of Maximin; and the officiating priests of the various deities were subjected to the authority of a superior pontiff, destined to oppose the bishop and to promote the cause of Paganism. These pontiffs acknowledged, in their turn, the supreme jurisdiction of the metropolitans or high priests of the province, who acted as the immediate vice-regents of the emperor himself. A white robe was the ensign of their dignity; and these new prelates were carefully selected from the most noble and opulent families. [T]he magistrates and the sacerdotal

³³⁵ thus retired from the imperial government, and under a cloud, under disgrace, and in distress, the same who had, in the zenith of his glory, caused himself to be worshipped as a god, and as the brother of the sun and moon.

order....expressed their abhorrence of the Christians, and humbly prayed [of the emperor] that those impious sectaries might at least be excluded from the limits of their respective territories. The priests, as well as the magistrates, were empowered [by Maximin] to enforce the execution of his edicts, which were engraved on tablets of brass; and, though it was recommended to them to avoid the effusion of blood, the most cruel and ignominious punishments were inflicted on the refractory Christians.

The Asiatic Christians had everything to dread from the severity of a bigoted monarch who prepared his measures of violence with such deliberate policy. But a few months had scarcely elapsed before the edicts published by the two western emperors obliged Maximin to suspend the prosecutions of his designs; the civil war, which he so rashly undertook against Licinius, employed all his attention; and the defeat and death of Maximin soon delivered the church from the last and most implacable of her enemies [up to that time].³³⁶

‘The fact is that any persecution undergone by Christians before Constantine was really motivated by religion. Galerius, who swayed Diocletian for the worse, was a devout polytheist; and indeed the normal hostility of pagans to Christians, as “atheists” or contemners of the [g]ods, was simply a religious phenomenon.’³³⁷

Jews’ punishment

The persecuting Jews, mentioned previously, were not left unpunished: ‘At Jerusalem men hoped that when the blow from heaven came, it would give them a vulgar conqueror to break the yoke of Rome and pour out wrath upon the heathen. Such a perversion of God’s crowning promise to mere revenge on men of yesterday simply renounced the....Servant of the Lord, whose sufferings were for the healing of the nations. It was an apostate nation long before the decisive morning of the cry: “*We have no king but Cæsar*.”’³³⁸

Forty years after the death of Christ, Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman armies, and the temple, which Christ had damned,³³⁹ had been razed, the treasures and sacred instruments looted, and the ground heavily salted so that nothing could grow. ‘The Holy Temple in Jerusalem, once the heart of the nation and the scattered people of Israel, lay in smoking ruins. The city of Jerusalem, embellished as the crowning jewel of Herod’s kingdom, was now a stinking, charred quarry and graveyard through which only wild dogs and scavengers roamed.’³⁴⁰ Nothing was left, not one stone upon another.³⁴¹

³³⁶ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.118,124,126-131 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³³⁷ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, Introduction by Rt. Hon. J.M. Robertson, p.xiii (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³³⁸ Gwatkin, Henry Melvill, *Early Church History to AD 313*, Vol. 1, pp.48,49

³³⁹ Mat 24:2b, ‘there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.’

³⁴⁰ Silberman, Neil Asher, *The Hidden Scrolls – Christianity, Judaism, and the War for the Dead Sea Scrolls*, pp.1,2

³⁴¹ Luke 21:6; the current Western- or Wailing Wall was not part of the Second Temple complex, although partly constructed in reset demolition and salvaged masonry obtained from the Second Temple, q.v. inf.

'It is somewhat remarkable that the flames of war consumed almost at the same time the Temple of Jerusalem and the Capitol of Rome; and it appears no less singular that the tribute which devotion had destined to the former should have been converted by the power of an assaulting victor to restore and adorn the splendour of the latter. The emperors levied a general capitation tax on the Jewish people; and, although the sum assessed on the head of each individual was inconsiderable, the use for which it was designed, and the severity with which it was exacted, were considered as an intolerable grievance. Since the officers of the revenue extended their unjust claim to many persons who were strangers to the blood or religion of the Jews, it was impossible that the Christians, who had so often sheltered themselves [in the earlier years] under the shade of the synagogue, should now escape this rapacious persecution. Anxious as they were to avoid the slightest infection of idolatry, their conscience forbade them to contribute to the honour of that dæmon who had assumed the character of the Capitoline Jupiter.'³⁴² Also, to mark the complete subjection of the Jews, it was ordered by the Romans that the half-shekel which every Jew paid to the Temple was to be paid to Jupiter Capitolinus. That but served to stoke the natural rebellion in the hearts of many of the Jews, and deepen the resentment over the fate of the Temple and their people, emotions that always threatened to erupt in violence.

'But at length, under the reign of Hadrian, the desperate fanaticism of the Jews filled up the measure of their calamities; and the Romans, exasperated by their repeated rebellions, exercised the rights of victory with unusual rigour. The emperor founded, under the name of Ælia Capitolina, a new city on Mount Sion, to which he gave the privileges of a colony; and denouncing the severest penalties against any of the Jewish people who should dare to approach its precincts, he fixed a vigilant garrison of a Roman cohort to enforce the execution of his orders.'³⁴³

'Notwithstanding repeated provocations, the resentment of the Roman princes expired after the victory [over Bar Kochba]; nor were their apprehensions continued beyond the period of war and danger. By the general indulgence of Polytheism, and by the mild temper of Antoninus Pius, the Jews were restored to their ancient privileges, and once more obtained the permission of circumcising their children, with the easy restraint that they should never confer on any foreign proselyte that distinguishing mark of the Hebrew race.'³⁴⁴ This effectively ended Pharasaic proselytizing, and precluded any prospect of it reappearing in the later and closely-related Judaism.

Judaism sans temple

Jewish piety, in serious decline since the cessation of the Old Testament prophets, had degenerated almost completely over the period between c.165BC and the time of Jesus' ministry, and completely by the time

³⁴² Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.87,88

³⁴³ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, p.9 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁴⁴ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, p.72 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

of the destruction of the Second Temple. The vacuity of the resulting rigid observances and rituals, especially in the absence of the temple, was all too evident.

'It was a very different Judaism which emerged from the four years of war [waged by Bar Kochba against the Romans]. Even that measure of political independence which the Jews had formerly enjoyed was now forfeited, and the Sanhedrin was completely dissolved. The temple lay in ruins and sacrificial worship had perforce come to an end. For both these reasons the Sadducees lost their importance and disappeared from the scene.

Only the Torah remained, and it became the rallying point for the resurgent people. This gave to the Rabbis an even greater authority than they had previously exercised.³⁴⁵ Around Rabbi Johanan Ben Sakkai there gathered at Jamnia (Jabneh) a learned community which appears to have acted not merely as a religious centre but also as a supreme court of law.³⁴⁶ These Rabbis constituted themselves guardians of Scripture, and with them began the movement which resulted in....the final formation....of [the] text. It has usually been assumed that the Massoretic text is of a very much later date, but the evidence of the manuscripts from the Judæan wilderness³⁴⁷ seems to prove that the text reached something like its final form during the period between the two Jewish wars, for while the manuscripts belonging to the 66AD deposit are said to show marked independence of the Masoretic text,³⁴⁸ those which belong to the 132AD deposit are substantially identical with it.³⁴⁹

The Rabbis self-confirmation in the inter-war period merely institutionalised the state of moral decline evident in Jerusalem and the surrounding Jewish lands during the forty years' probationary period after the death of Christ. Rabbi Akiba and others were not God-appointed custodians and protectors of Scripture; neither did they have any authority to emend or change it.^{350 351}

³⁴⁵ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, p.264, even though:

'A Rabbi was duty bound to teach for nothing.'

³⁴⁶ Shuerer, E., *The Jewish People in the Time of Christ*, II., I. p.326

³⁴⁷ Qumran, etc.

³⁴⁸ generally appearing as an editio princeps, an official edition, with its standard text and interpretation becoming the standard or orthodox.

³⁴⁹ subscripted emphasis added.

³⁵⁰ Caird, G. B., *The Apostolic Age*, pp.34,35 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁵¹ *Bible Study Monthly*, Vol. 83, #5, September / October, 2006, p.120:

'It is generally known that the "official" Hebrew Bible upon which the Authorised Version is largely based is known as the Masoretic Text, due to it having been the result of the work of Jewish scholars in the early years of the Christian era who took in hand the rationalising of the various and varying Hebrew texts which then existed. The following note was recently observed in the 'Speaker's Commentary,' a standard work of the late 19th-century, commenting on Psa 22:16, (Vol. 4, p.223), of interest in this connection:

"With regard to the Jewish text, it must be observed that the Jews have suppressed with the greatest care all readings which do not agree with it....The Masoretic text as edited by Jacob ben Chaim (Venice, 1526) has been followed without regard to ancient authorities, Mss., quotations or versions which undoubtedly preserve or indicate different and, in many cases, preferable readings."

Declension of visible church

First- and early second-century Judæo-Christianity, tied so-closely to Scripture, and in contradistinction to non-proselytizing Judaism, crystallised and exposed in its outgoing concern for man, regardless of Jew or Gentile. It was exoteric rather than esoteric, with no hidden or inner cliques possessing restricted knowledge; all was freely available to the supplicant on request. Informing, as it did, all aspects of faith, belief, thought, and action, it involved much study, knowledge, and struggle. Its dyadic Godhead³⁵² was alien to rigid Pharisaism which regarded it with a mixture of contempt and deep hatred. To the early Judæo-Christians, the Jews had had the perishing temple,³⁵³ but they had the everlasting Priest and King, and that could never perish.

That settled state, however, was not to remain unassailed for long. 'Shortly after its birth, Christianity encountered the mystery religions of Greece and Asia. These promised salvation through secret knowledge and arcane rights, which were, in fact, kept so secret that no record of them has been passed down to us. The fusion between [false] Christianity and mystery religions produced Gnosticism, a mystical [and heavily-apostate] form of the infant faith which promised its adepts access to secret knowledge which would explain its mysteries. The attraction of Gnosticism is, of course, that it is 'mysticism on the cheap.' Salvation through knowledge is far less of an effort than that which requires sweat and struggle—and faith. Because all mysteries are explained, faith is no longer necessary.'³⁵⁴

'[W]e must begin our study of John's letter³⁵⁵ by seeing the nature of the teaching which constituted so grave a threat to the Christian faith and church. That teaching belonged to the general type of thought that is called Gnosticism. What then were the characteristic Gnostic beliefs?

1. Epiphanius says that Basilides, one of the greatest of the Gnostic thinkers, began with the question: 'Whence comes evil?'³⁵⁶ Gnosticism found its explanation of evil in a thorough-going dualism. It held that spirit, which is God, and matter are both eternal; that spirit is altogether good; that matter has from the beginning a flaw in it; and that out of that flawed matter the world has been made. As Robert Law puts it: 'Gnosticism traces into the

The 'Speaker's Commentary' is so-called because its compilation was suggested in 1864 by the then Speaker of the House of Commons, a suggestion taken up and promoted by the then Archbishop of York. It still remains a useful mine of information on the text of Scripture.'

³⁵² dyadic nature of Godhead: Jer 33:20, '*Thus saith the Lord: If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, so that there should not be day and night in their season.*' The separate elements in a day, and in context the first day of Genesis, are governed by separate and identifiable constituents: the covenant of the day and the covenant of the night—clearly dyadic; q.v. inf. for detailed exposition.

³⁵³ after the destruction of the Temple, to mark the complete subjection of the Jews, it was ordered by the Romans that the half-shekel which every Jew had formerly paid to the Temple was to be paid to Jupiter Capitolinus.

³⁵⁴ Urquhart, Gordon, *The Pope's Armada: Unlocking the Secrets of Mysterious and Powerful New Sects in the Church*, p.335 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁵⁵ the epistle, I John.

³⁵⁶ Greek: pothen to kakon.

eternal the schism of which we are conscious in the world of experience, and posits two independent and antagonistic principles of existence from which, severally, come all the good and all the evil that exist.'

2. Since matter is essentially evil, the God who is pure spirit cannot touch it. This God therefore puts out a series of aeons or emanations, each a little more removed and distant from himself. As the emanations grow ever more distant from the true God they grow more ignorant of the true God. As they grow still more distant, they become not only ignorant but hostile to the true God. At the end of the series there comes a power distant from, ignorant of, [and] hostile to the true God and that power is the creator of the world. As Robert Law puts it: 'Gnostic evolution is from divinity downwards.' Thus the world is created out of flawed material and by a power who is the ignorant enemy of the true God. Hence come the sin and suffering of the world and all its imperfections.

3. This doctrine has certain ethical results:

(a) It completely does away with any Christian doctrine of sin, for sin is no longer the result of a moral choice in rebellion against God by the mind and the heart of man; sin is simply a physical principle in matter and in all that is composed of matter. Any physical creature or thing is bound to sin because of its physical composition. It is quite impossible to change or renew its nature; the only thing which can stop sin is the total destruction of all physical and material things, until only spirit, which is good, is left.

(b) In practice this issues in one of two attitudes to life:

First, it may issue in a rigid asceticism. If the body and all physical things are essentially evil, then the body must be subdued and its every need and desire must be refused.

Second, it may issue in a kind of licence to sin on either of two grounds. If the body is evil, then it does not matter anyway what we do with it for nothing can make it good. Therefore, let the body have its way. If in nature there is this split, then let spirit and body each go its own way. Let each act according to its nature. Let spirit reach out to goodness, and let the body sin to its heart's content, then each will be fulfilling its own nature. And, in any event, a really spiritual man will not be in the least affected by what his body does. In fact, the more spiritual a man is, the less it makes any difference if his body sins.

4. The way of escape is knowledge. The spirit of man is imprisoned in the evil flesh of the body, and only a special kind of knowledge can enable the spirit to escape from the body. The long way to God has to be climbed, past all the aeons and the emanations; there are necessary secret instructions, secret passwords, secret knowledge. At the heart of Gnosticism there is this necessity for special and esoteric knowledge. The

Gnostics divided men into two classes, the spiritual ones,³⁵⁷ for whom such knowledge is a possibility and to whom such knowledge is open, and those who, as it were, have no more than an animal soul,³⁵⁸ and for whom such knowledge is impossible and to whom such knowledge is a closed book. Gnosticism inevitably and deliberately issued in a situation in which there were an intellectual aristocracy and an ignorant and unteachable majority.

The consequence is quite clear; Gnosticism was the death of fellowship. In its arid intellectualism it killed love. Robert Law says of it: 'It was loveless to the core.' Ignatius³⁵⁹ says of the Gnostics of his day: 'They give no heed to love, caring not for the widow, the orphan, the afflicted, neither for those who are in bonds, neither for the hungry, nor for the thirsty.' There can be no fellowship where there is an intellectual elite, and a great majority of simple folk who are despised, and where a man's aim is to know rather than to love.

5. It is quite clear that this kind of belief was bound to have the most serious consequences for Christology. No Gnostic could possibly believe in a real incarnation; he could not believe that the Son of the true God could ever take upon himself a body which is essentially evil. So the Gnostics were Docetists, which literally means 'Seemists.' Sometimes they held that Jesus only seemed to have a body, and that in fact he was no more than a spiritual phantom....Sometimes they held that, since the true God can never suffer, the spiritual Christ descended upon the man in the form of a dove at his baptism; Jesus then perfected his virtues and announced the Father; but before his sufferings and death the Christ withdrew again from the man Jesus, and it was only the man Jesus who suffered and died and rose again. No Gnostic could believe in a flesh and blood Christ, and no Gnostic could believe in a divine being who knew suffering and death.³⁶⁰

Gnosticism's notions of emanations, secret instructions, secret passwords, secret knowledge and the like, found a ready parallel in mystical Judaism, with its 'tree of life' and mystical, heavenly journeyings revealing esoteric knowledge, leading ultimately to the presence of the true God, a form of nirvana.

For Judæo-Christianity, Gnosticism formed an occult-based competitor, especially active in the early years of the church, with the effect that the declension in, of, and around the visible, progressively more non-Christian church gathered pace.

'The Gnostics were distinguished as the most polite, the most learned, and the most wealthy of the [so-called] Christian name, and that general appellation which expressed a superiority of knowledge was either assumed by their own pride or ironically bestowed by the envy of their adversaries. They were almost without exception of the race of the Gentiles, and their principal founders seem to have been natives of Syria or Egypt,

³⁵⁷ Greek: pneumatikoi.

³⁵⁸ Greek: psuchikoi.

³⁵⁹ Ignatius, *The Letter to Smyrna*, 6.2

³⁶⁰ Barclay, William, *Many Witnesses, One Lord*, pp.78-80 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

where the warmth of the climate disposes both the mind and the body to indolent and contemplative devotion. The Gnostics blended with the faith of Christ many sublime but obscure tenets which they derived from oriental philosophy, and even from the religion of Zoroaster, concerning the eternity of matter, the existence of two principles, and the mysterious hierarchy of the invisible world. As soon as they launched out into that vast abyss, they delivered themselves to the guidance of a disordered imagination; and, as the paths of errors are varied and infinite, the Gnostics were imperceptibly divided into more than fifty particular sects, of whom the most celebrated appear to have been the Basilidians, the Valentinians, the Marcionites, and, in a still later period, the Manichæans. Each of these sects could boast of its bishops and congregations, of its doctors and martyrs, and, instead of the four gospels adopted by the church, the heretics produced a multitude of histories, in which the actions and discourses of Christ and of his apostles were adapted to their respective tenets. The success of the Gnostics was rapid and extensive. They covered Asia and Egypt, established themselves in Rome, and sometimes penetrated into the provinces of the West. For the most part they arose in the second century, flourished during the third, and were suppressed in the fourth or fifth by the prevalence of more fashionable controversies, and by the superior ascendancy of the reigning power. Though they constantly disturbed the peace and frequently disgraced the name of religion, they contributed to assist rather than to retard the progress of [organized, visible, pagan-based] Christianity. The Gentile converts, whose strongest objections and prejudices were directed against the Law of Moses, could find admission into many [so-called] Christian societies, which required not from their untutored mind any belief of an antecedent revelation.³⁶¹

As time went on, '[a]lmost in every city, the ancient churches were found insufficient to contain the increasing multitudes of proselytes; and in their place more stately and capacious edifices were erected for the public worship of the faithful. The corruption of manners and principles, so forcibly lamented by Eusebius, may be considered, not only as a consequence, but as a proof, of the liberty which the [self-professing, paganized] Christians enjoyed and abused under the reign of Diocletian. Prosperity had relaxed the nerves of discipline.³⁶² Fraud, envy, and malice prevailed in every congregation. The presbyters aspired to the episcopal office, which every day became an object more worthy of their ambition. The bishops, who contended with each other for ecclesiastical pre-eminence, appeared by their conduct to claim a secular and tyrannical power in the church;³⁶³

³⁶¹ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.13,14 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁶² early in the 4th. century, Diocletian issued an infamous decree to control spiralling wages and prices in the rapidly deteriorating empire. As part of his edict, Diocletian commanded that any merchant or customer caught violating the new price structures would be put to death.

³⁶³ the much later pope's decree against Henry VIII, the English king—a papal bull to kill the king—was nothing less than attempted tyrannicide.

Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 1, p.150 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): (Paraphrased) 'Why is the papacy so eager for human blood?'

'Some, indeed, now wish to be thought Christian princes, are yet only inflamed by hypocritical zeal, and so they pour forth innocent blood like cruel beasts. And why so? Because they make no distinction between the true God and idols.'

Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 1, pp.75,82,85 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'Of tyrants...whatever they wish is lawful.'

and the lively faith which still distinguished the Christians from the Gentiles was shewn much less in their lives than in their controversial writings.’³⁶⁴

‘[Concerning the pagan Egyptians], the progress of Christianity was for a long time confined within the limits of a single city, which was itself a foreign colony, and, till the close of the second century....the body of the natives, a people distinguished by a sullen inflexibility of temper, entertained the new doctrine with coldness and reluctance; and even in the time of Origen it was rare to meet with an Egyptian who had surmounted his early prejudices in favour of the sacred animals of his country. As soon, indeed, as [visible, organized, false, and pagan-]Christianity ascended the throne, the zeal of those barbarians obeyed the prevailing impulsions; the cities of Egypt were filled with bishops, and the deserts of Thebias swarmed with hermits.’³⁶⁵

Millennial victory scorned

‘The ancient and popular doctrine of the Millennium was intimately connected with the Second Coming of Christ. As the works of creation had been finished in six days, their duration, in their present state, according to a tradition which was attributed to one called Elijah,³⁶⁶ was fixed to six thousand years. By the same analogy it was inferred that this long period of labour and contention, which was now almost elapsed, would be succeeded by a joyful Sabbath of a thousand years; and that Christ, with the triumphant band of saints and the elect³⁶⁷ who had escaped death, or who had been miraculously revived, would reign upon earth till the time appointed for the last and general resurrection....The assurance of such a Millennium was carefully inculcated by a succession of fathers from Justin Martyr and Irenæus, who conversed with the immediate disciples of the apostles, down to Lactantius, who was preceptor to the son of Constantine. Though it might not be universally received, it appears to have been the reigning sentiment of the orthodox believers....But when the edifice of the [visible, organized, false and pagan-]church was almost completed, the temporary support was laid aside. The doctrine of Christ’s reign upon earth was at first treated as a profound allegory, was considered by degrees as a doubtful and useless opinion, and was at length rejected as an absurd invention of heresy and fanaticism. A mysterious prophecy, which still forms part of the sacred canon, but which was thought to favour the exploded sentiment, very narrowly escaped the [attempted] proscription of th[at pagan-]church.’³⁶⁸

‘[T]he mild and equal constitution by which the Christians were governed more than a hundred years after the death of the apostles [whereby] every society formed within itself a separate and independent republic:

‘Tyrants are very unjust....for they will not undertake the labour or trouble of inquiry.’

‘We are in danger every day and every moment, not merely from the cruelty of a single tyrant, but from the Devil, who excites the whole world against us, arming the princes of this world and impelling them to destroy us.’

³⁶⁴ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, p.114 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁶⁵ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, p.59 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁶⁶ not the Elijah of the Bible.

³⁶⁷ saints are, in fact, the ‘elect.’

³⁶⁸ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.22,23 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

and, although the most distant of these little states maintained a mutual as well as a friendly intercourse of letters and deputations, the Christian world was not yet connected by any [worldly] supreme authority or legislative assembly.’³⁶⁹

Council & Episcopal

‘As the legislative authority [not that it could ever exist in that sense in the real Christian church] of the particular churches was insensibly superceded by the use of councils, the bishops obtained by their alliance a much larger share of executive and arbitrary power; and, as soon as they were connected by a sense of their common interest, they were enabled to attack with united vigour the original rights [duties and obligations] of the clergy and their people. The prelates of the third century imperceptibly changed the language of exhortation [as seen much earlier in Paul’s epistles] into that of command, scattered the seeds of future usurpations, and supplied, by scripture allegories and declamatory rhetoric, their deficiency of force and of reason. They exalted the unity and power of the church, as it was represented in the EPISCOPAL OFFICE, of which every bishop enjoyed an equal and undivided portion. Princes and magistrates, it was often repeated, might boast an earthly claim to a transitory dominion; it was the episcopal authority alone [so it was claimed] which was derived from the Deity, and extended itself over this and over another world. The bishops were the viceregents of Christ, the successors of the apostles, and the mystic substitutes of the high priest of the Mosaic law.’³⁷⁰

In all of these preposterous claims, the episcopacy demonstrated a stultifying self-aggrandisement³⁷¹ and near complete ignorance of Scripture. God had set up an earthly throne, the throne of Israel, which the returning Christ will take in the near future, and which will maintain forever. The nascent Christian church, unlike any other religious organization of its time, did not possess an hierarchy, neither did it claim dominion over the earth (as viceregents or in any other way), nor over heaven. And the true church kept the Mosaic Law, as can be seen from the Acts of the Apostles and in Paul’s epistles. A paganising and arrogating episcopacy³⁷² could have no claim before God.

³⁶⁹ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, p.41 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁷⁰ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.42,43 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁷¹ Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 2, p.43:

‘The supreme power is constantly promised by the Prophets to the Church, especially by Isaiah, who often predicts its complete supremacy. The Papists seize upon such testimonies to clothe themselves in the spoils of God, as if God had resigned his right to them! But they are immersed in the same error with the Jews, who swell with pride whenever such dignity is promised to the elect people, as if they could remain separate from God and yet obtain the right of treading the whole world under foot. The Papists also do exactly the same.’

³⁷² on papal assumption & arrogation:

‘The Pope is not only the representative of Jesus Christ, but he is Jesus Christ, Himself, hidden under the veil of human flesh.’ —Catholic National, July 1895.

‘The Pope and God are the same, so he has all power in Heaven and earth.’ —Pope Pius V, quoted in Barclay, William (1546–1608AD) / Guil. Barclaii I. C., *Of the Authoritie of the Pope: whether and how farre forth, he hath power and*

'Instead of one apostolic founder, the utmost boast of Antioch, of Ephesus, or of Corinth, the banks of the Tiber were supposed to have been honoured with the preaching and martyrdom of the *two* most eminent among the apostles; and the bishops of Rome very prudently claimed the inheritance of whatsoever prerogatives were attributed either to the person or to the office of St. Peter. The bishops of Italy and of the provinces were disposed to allow them a primacy of order and association (such was their very accurate expression) in the Christian aristocracy. But the power of a monarch was rejected with abhorrence, and the aspiring genius of Rome experienced, from the nations of Asia and Africa, a more vigorous resistance to her spiritual, than she had formerly done to her temporal, dominion. The patriotic Cyprian, who ruled in the most absolute sway the church of Carthage and the provincial synods, opposed with resolution and success the ambition of the Roman pontiff, artfully connected his own cause with that of the eastern bishops....If this Punic war was carried out without any effusion of blood, it was owing much less to the moderation than to the weakness of the contending prelates. Invectives and excommunications were their only weapons; and these, during the progress of the whole controversy, they hurled against each other with equal fury and devotion.

Laiety & clergy

The progress of the ecclesiastical authority gave birth to the memorable distinction of the laiety and of the clergy, which had been unknown to the Greeks and the Romans.³⁷³ The former of these appellations comprehended the body of the Christian people; the latter, according to the signification of the word, was appropriated to the chosen portion that had been set apart for the service of [their pagan] religion [in contradistinction to the redeemed firstborn of Israel whom God had set apart as holy unto Him, for His holy purposes];³⁷⁴ ³⁷⁵ ³⁷⁶ ³⁷⁷ a celebrated order of men which has furnished the most important, though not always

authoritie over temporall kings and princes (published posthumously), chapter XXVII, p.219, citing *Petrus Bertandus*, the French canonist Peter Bertrand (1280–1349AD), quoting from the last sentence of *Unam Sanctam*.

"We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty."—Pope Leo XIII, *Encyclical Letter*, June 20, 1894.

"The church may by divine right confiscate the property of heretics, imprison their person, and condemn them to flames. In our age, the right to inflict the severest penalties, even death, belongs to the church. There is no graver offense than heresy, therefore it must be rooted out."—*Public Ecclesiastical*, Vol. 2, p.142.

Claiming to be God on earth is not the only criterion for blasphemy. Luke 5:21 reads, "And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" Today the Roman Catholic Church still alleges that every priest can forgive sins.

"Seek where you will, through heaven and earth, and you will find but one created being who can forgive the sinner...That extraordinary being is the priest, the Catholic priest."—Muller, Michael, *The Catholic Priest*, p.78

³⁷³ and unknown in the nascent Christian church.

³⁷⁴ the role and standing of 'firstborn males' of the children of Israel: silver redeemed the firstborn, cf. Num 18:16, with redeem meaning: ransom, win back, sever; preserve (O.T.).

Num 3:12, 'And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel from under [Hebrew: *tachath*] of all the firstborn that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel: therefore the Levites shall be mine.'

This text is often wholly misunderstood. It does not say that the Levites supplant the firstborn of Israel before the Lord. The very next verse confirms the firstborns' standing: Num 3:13, 'Because all the firstborn are mine; for on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto me all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast: mine shall

they be: I am the Lord.' When of age, firstborn males of the children of Israel were and are to be the spiritual leaders and priests of their own families.

The firstborn of kine, etc., remained the Lord's (as evidenced by the maintenance of the sacrificial system), as did the firstborn males of Israel. The Levites took over the formal ministering to the Lord in the Tabernacle and the Temple, that is all. They did not take over the rights and standing of the firstborn Israelite males.

This is also seen in Ex 13:12, *'Thou shalt set apart unto the Lord all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males shall be the Lord's.'* The redeeming of the firstborn is given in the following verse: Ex 13:13, *'And every firstling of an ass shalt thou redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem.'* The LXX exhibits a different phraseology, with *'then thou shalt pay the price'* instead of *'thou shalt break his neck,'* giving a better understanding, perhaps. The reason the ass is differentiated from other unclean animals is that it is the steed of royalty. Kings rode on an ass, when coming in peace, and Jesus Christ did too, on His entry to Jerusalem before the fateful events of Passover.

The status of the firstborn is repeated in Ex 34:19, *'All that openeth the matrix is mine; and every firstling among thy cattle, whether ox or sheep, that is male.'*

All male firstborn in Israel were to be redeemed, i.e., won back, released, severed, or preserved from the curse of God that fell upon the ancient Egyptians: Ex 13:15, *'And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I release'* (Hebrew: padah, 'release,' 'sever,' 'preserve,' 'redeem').

There is no specific biblical record of Jesus being so redeemed, Luke 2:23,24, *'(As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord:) And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons,'* although Luke 2:39a, *'And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord'* strongly suggests that five silver Temple shekels (q.v. Num 3:47,48) were paid by Jesus' parents.

This record of the sacrifice offered by His parents is a reference to the provisions of Lev 12:6-8, *'And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled [forty days for a male child, eighty for a female, q.v. Lev 12:1-5], for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtledove, for a sin offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest: Who shall offer it before the Lord, and make an atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood. This is the law for her that hath born a male or a female. And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her and she shall be clean.'*

The record in Luke concerns His mother's purification and atonement, and His presentation to His real Father: Luke 2:22b, *'they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord.'*

The 'fate' of the unredeemed or unreleased in Israel can be inferred from Ex 13:15, *'And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem.'* The unredeemed in this instance are sacrificed to the Lord, although this has implications. Certainly, the two witnesses are so sacrificed. Indeed, they constitute the final sacrifice of the 'elect,' but they must have been redeemed or released in accordance with the Law. In this context, the timing of that release is open, to some extent, given the phraseology used in Num 18:16, *'And those that are to be redeemed from a month old shalt thou redeem, according to thine estimation, for the money of five shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, which is twenty gerahs.'* Implicit in this is:

- a) some redeemed firstborn in Israel are sacrificed to the Lord, and,
- b) there are precious few who fall into the category of redeemed firstborn in Israel.

Indeed, the latter concept is of particular interest, since there are countless thousands, if not millions, nominally in Israel who are firstborn and unredeemed. Only in Judah, Levi, Benjamin, and part of Simeon would one expect to find anything approaching large numbers of redeemed firstborn, through the operation of Orthodox Judaism and its interests, although that, in turn, imposes immediate, severe, and obvious limitations.

Since Orthodox Judaism has no impact on the Judæo-Christian church, comprising the nascent firstborn of Israel—i.e., Judæo-Christians—the church, therefore, incredibly small and few in number (cp. Philadelphian era, Rev 3:7-13) thus exhibits a preponderance of firstborn, unredeemed males who are to be sacrificed (at the hand of the heathen!) to the Lord at the time of the end, while also containing a very much smaller number who are redeemed 'elect.'

But then, what of those of the church who die natural deaths beforehand, perhaps centuries before the time of the end? What is their standing vis-à-vis redemption under the Law? They are dead, so for them the question does not

the most edifying, subjects for modern history. Their mutual hostilities sometimes disturbed the peace of the infant [paganising] church....and the love of power, which (under the most artful disguises) could insinuate itself into the breasts of bishops and martyrs, animated them to increase the number of their subjects and to enlarge the limits of the [so-called] Christian empire.³⁷⁸

'[Instead of the relevant provisions of the Law of God], a moderate proportion [of the laity's income] was accepted by the [so-called] ministers of the gospel; and in their weekly or monthly assemblies every believer, according to the exigency of the occasion, and the measure of his wealth and piety, presented his voluntary offering for the use of the common fund. Nothing, however inconsiderable, was refused; but it was diligently inculcated that, in the article of Tythes [tithes], the Mosaic law was still of divine obligation.'³⁷⁹

'[Gibbon] had described, he said, "the triumph of religion and barbarism;" and though he does not assert, he partly implies that the triumph of the [adopted, though pagan to its core] religion was part of the cause of the collapse of the State.³⁸⁰ This view, as a matter of fact, is put almost explicitly by the clerical editor of the Bohn Gibbon. His express summing up of the effects of the authoritarian ecclesiastical policy is that: "Where religion first assumed this form, it trained a supine race that fell an easy prey to each successive invader; and in the land of Tertullian, Cyprian, Athanasius, and Cyril, industry, learning, talent, civilization, and even Christianity itself were for the most part soon extinguished, and remain so to the present day."³⁸¹

arise; their Redeemer is Christ (cf. Isa 60:16; Jer 50:34; Luke 1:38,2:38; John 1:1,14; Gal 3:13; Eph 1:7; Heb 9:14; I John 2:2; Rev 5:9, et al.).

³⁷⁵ the two witnesses must be firstborn males of the children of Israel (one from Judah, the other from Ephraim, mirroring the two faithful witnesses of Moses' time—q.v. Num 13:6,8,14:6-10), and redeemed under the Law, for they do the ultimate end-time work of the Lord, and suffer the inevitable penalty: being martyred in Jerusalem.

³⁷⁶ in Hebrew, the word for 'holiness' is *qadosh*, which has as its root meaning 'different,' 'separate,' and 'set apart.'

³⁷⁷ the adult census redemption money was *ten gerahs*, and thus was acknowledged both what God claimed, and what man was responsible to give at the time of a census. Now ten gerahs was half a *shekel* (Ex 30:12-16; Num 3:47). Every male that was numbered, over 20 years of age, must pay this sum and meet God's claim. When David 'numbered' the people (II Sam 24 and I Chron 21), this payment was not made and God's claim was not met, and the judgement followed.

When God took the Levites from 'under the firstborn' of Israel for the purposes of serving in the Temple, cf. Num 3:47f., there were found 22,273 firstborn males, but only 22,000 Levites. In order to net things off, the 273 either had to pay themselves or have paid for them by their fathers on their behalf (depending on whether their fathers were alive) the five temple shekel ransom money, being the 'overplus' involved in securing the Levite's standing before God in terms of the sanctuary / Temple service (q.v. Num 3:12,13,40-51) by one-for-one substitution. By this means all the Levites taken from 'under the firstborn' were redeemed in terms of that service while absolving 22,000 firstborn males from the redemption obligation through God taking satisfaction by substitution (and requiring the slight mismatch in the numbers involved through the redemption money for the 273) and introducing the beginnings of a substitutionary process which would expose fully in Christ's vicarious sacrifice for mankind. Moses gave the redemption money to Aaron and his sons, q.v. Num 3:48a,51, signifying that future redemption monies would be paid to Aaron and his heirs.

³⁷⁸ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.44,45 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁷⁹ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, p.46 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁸⁰ Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 1, p.37:

'God shows how all earthly power not founded on Christ must fall....It has often been found, by experience, that when Christ goes forth with His gospel, serious commotions arise.'

³⁸¹ Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 1, Introduction by Rt. Hon. J. M. Robertson, pp.xiv-xvi (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Fictions & embellishments

'The monks of succeeding ages, who, in their peaceful solitudes, entertained themselves with diversifying the death and sufferings of the primitive martyrs, have frequently invented torments of a much more refined and ingenious nature. In particular, it has pleased them to suppose that the zeal of the Roman magistrates, disdaining every consideration of the moral virtue or public decency, endeavoured to seduce those whom they were unable to vanquish, and that, by their orders, the most brutal violence was offered to those they found it impossible to seduce. It is related that pious females, who were prepared to despise death, were sometimes condemned to a more severe trial, and called upon to determine whether they set a higher value on their religion or on their chastity. The youths to whose licentious embraces they were abandoned received a solemn exhortation from the judge to exert their most strenuous efforts to maintain the honour of Venus against the impious virgin who refused to burn incense on her altars. Their violence, however, was commonly disappointed; and the seasonable interposition of some miraculous power preserved the chaste spouses [sic] of Christ from the dishonour even of an involuntary defeat. We should not, indeed, neglect to remark that the more ancient, as well as authentic, memorials of the church are seldom polluted with these extravagant and indecent fictions.

The total disregard of truth and probability in the representation of these primitive martyrdoms was occasioned by a very natural mistake. The ecclesiastical writers of the fourth or fifth centuries ascribed to the magistrates of Rome the same degree of implacable and unrelenting zeal which filled their own breasts against heretics or the idolaters of their own times.'³⁸²

When Valerian was consul for the third, and Gallienus for the fourth time, Paternus, proconsul of Africa, summoned Cyprian to appear in his private council-chamber. He then acquainted him with the Imperial mandate which he had just received, that those who had abandoned the Roman religion should immediately return to the practice of the ceremonies of their ancestors....A sentence of banishment was pronounced as the penalty of Cyprian's disobedience.

At length, exactly one year after Cyprian was first apprehended, Galerius Maximus, proconsul of Africa, received the Imperial warrant for the execution of Christian teachers....and the magistrate, when he had taken the opinion of his council, pronounced with some reluctance the sentence of death. It was conceived in the following terms: "That Thascius Cyprianus should be immediately beheaded, as the enemy of the gods of Rome, and as the chief and ringleader of a criminal association, which he had seduced into an impious resistance against the laws of the most holy emperors, Valerian and Gallienus." The manner of his execution was the mildest and least painful that could be inflicted on a person convicted of any capital offence: nor was

³⁸² Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, p.94

the use of torture admitted to obtain from the bishop of Carthage either the recantation of his principles or the discovery of his accomplices.’³⁸³

But here Gibbon misses the true church. It did not abide in Africa, or, for that matter, in most of the Roman Empire. Its root or base lay mostly in Asia, with outposts in the West. And its beliefs and practices were vastly different than those of the likes of Cyprian. The position in Asia was even different in the matter of martyrdom.

False church, ‘Just war’

‘We shall conclude this chapter by a melancholy truth which obtrudes itself on the reluctant mind; that even admitting, without hesitation or inquiry, all that history has recorded, or devotion has feigned, on the subject of martyrdoms, it must still be acknowledged that the [so-called or visible-church] Christians, in the course of their intestine dissensions, have inflicted far greater severities on each other than they had experienced from the zeal of infidels. During the ages of ignorance which followed the subversion of the Roman Empire in the West, the bishops of the Imperial city extended their dominion over the laity as well as clergy of the Latin church. The fabric of superstition which they had erected, and which might long have defied the feeble efforts of reason, was at length assaulted by a crowd of daring fanatics,³⁸⁴ who, from the twelfth to the sixteenth century, assumed the popular character of reformers. The church of Rome defended by violence the empire which she had acquired by fraud; a system of peace and benevolence was soon disgraced by proscriptions, wars, massacres, and the institution of the holy office. And, as the reformers were animated by the love of civil as well as of religious freedom, the Catholic princes connected their own interest with that of the clergy, and enforced by fire and the sword the terrors of spiritual censures.’³⁸⁵

In the Netherlands alone, more than one hundred thousand of the subjects of Charles the Fifth are said to have suffered by the hand of the executioner....[and so] it must be allowed that the number of Protestants who were executed in a single province and a single reign far exceeded that of the primitive martyrs in the

³⁸³ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.134,135

³⁸⁴ Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 1, pp.78,81,124,125,128 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

‘Those blinded by the Devil, just as those who have become entangled by superstitious deceptions, confidently defend their own madness....The [Magi] were blinded and fascinated by the foolish persuasion of their own wisdom.’

‘For when superstition fails of success, madness immediately succeeds, and when those who are thought and spoken of as remarkably devout perceive their fictitious worship to be of no avail, then they burst forth into the madness which I have mentioned, and curse their idols, and detest what they had hitherto followed.’

‘Superstition is always joined with ambition and pride....All the superstitious reckon God’s worship valueless, and rather wish to acquire for themselves favour and estimation among men.’

‘Pride always impels them [the superstitious, the wicked] to desire the approbation of the wicked.’

‘The greatest wisdom among the profane was to cause consent to be taken for reason.’

³⁸⁵ Orwell, George, *Animal Farm*:

‘War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is knowledge.’

space of three centuries and of the Roman Empire.³⁸⁶ '[False, pagan Christianity's] natural affinities were with decadence on the one hand and with barbarism on the other.'³⁸⁷

'Just War: the attempt to justify war in one set of circumstances and not in another has its origins in [pseudo-]Christian ethics, in particular in the fourth century which witnessed a transition from pacifism to beliefs in the right or duty to fight for a just cause. The early Christians did not bear arms but by the time the Roman Emperor³⁸⁸ declared that [nascent] Catholic Christianity was the state religion of the empire, canon law began to move in the direction of a just war doctrine. Augustine³⁸⁹ is commonly held to be the first major propagandist for these ideas, which in essence have remained part of a western civilization ever since. Definitions of the Just War have periodically altered but the general purpose remains the same: that is, to give some wars legal and moral justification, to condemn those that do not comply with the requisite specifications and also to impose restrictions on the actual conduct of war. The formal terms given to this enterprise are jus ad bellum and jus in bello.

[P]olitical realists have long been critical of the dangers involved in the application of varieties of the Just War doctrine in world politics. Taylor summed it succinctly: 'Bismark fought "necessary wars", and killed thousands; the idealists of the twentieth century fight "just" wars and kill millions.'³⁹⁰ Apart from these rather extreme manifestations, in the twentieth century the doctrine of the Just War....has tended to be rather muted and confined to [pseudo-] Christian (mainly Catholic) theology.'³⁹¹

Oppression

'So we must determine that the devil, who was a murderer from the beginning, will always find those whom he will stir up and impel to persecute the church. The devil contends this very day, not only by fallacious doctrines, and impious errors, and impostures, but also by cruel tyranny, as he inflames many impious men to madness, and thus harasses the sons of God.'³⁹²

Scapegoating and demonising for one's own dark devices is depressingly common, exposing '[as a] specific fantasy which can be traced back to Antiquity. The essence of the fantasy was that there existed, somewhere in the midst of the great society, another society, small and clandestine, which not only threatened

³⁸⁶ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.134,135

³⁸⁷ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, Introduction by Rt. Hon. J. M. Robertson, pp.xiv-xvi (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁸⁸ Theodosius I, in 391AD

³⁸⁹ 354–430AD

³⁹⁰ Taylor, A. J. P., *How Wars Begin*

³⁹¹ Evans, Graham, and Newnham, Jeffrey, *Dictionary of International Relations*, pp.288,289 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁹² Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 2, p.76

the existence of the great society, but was also addicted to practices which were felt to be wholly abominable, in the literal sense of anti-human.'³⁹³

Christians were termed 'atheistic' by the ancient 'learned' Greeks, for they denied the pantheon of gods worshipped by the Greek world. Likewise, the pagan Romans punished the early Christians for the same alleged apostasy, or for cannibalism, witchcraft, perverse immorality, or whatever unfounded accusation happened to spring into their evil minds, by such devices as forced labour in the mines, slavery in the galleys, or capital punishment.³⁹⁴ Combined, these unfounded prejudices later proved fertile ground for the fomentation, after the great fire of Rome, of that enduring human need of scapegoating, arising from the usual two human failings:

1. The refusal³⁹⁵ to accept responsibility; and,
2. The misconception that any significant event must be the consequence of the volition of some individual or grouping.

The two provided a powerful impetus to revenge seeking and an eruption of 'the classical delusional response, [which has] much in common with the hallucinations of many people and authorities down through the ages that have thought to place blame for their ills on the machinations of foreign organisations or cabals, invariably centred far-away, & decidedly ill-known.'³⁹⁶ In the case of the selected scapegoats, the Christians, this meant persecution unto death for many of them.

At that time, the Jews' view of Christianity, however, was different. To them it was but a tabula rasa, an empty slate, and they had thrust them out of the synagogues. The Jews had taken to slandering Christians: '*And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? Whose damnation is just.*'³⁹⁷ It was the Jewish argument that Paul was teaching the lie: '*Let us do evil, that good may come.*' For those who regarded the practice of religion as merely a matter of keeping the Law,³⁹⁸

³⁹³ Cohn, Norman, *Europe's Inner Demons: An Enquiry Inspired by the Great Witch-hunt*, pp.xi,xiii

³⁹⁴ q.v. sup.

³⁹⁵ of, in that instance, Nero and the authorities.

³⁹⁶ Davidson, James Dale, and Rees-Mogg, William, *The Great Reckoning*

³⁹⁷ Rom 3:8

³⁹⁸ *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, p.112:

'What blessing will God give to those who have kept his commandments?

"Blessed are they who do his commandments, that they might have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev 22:14.

It is not to be supposed, however, that keeping the commandments will give one a place in glory; for *"by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight."* Rom 3:20. But one must show his willingness to yield to the demands of God before he can ever have the blood of Christ to wash his sins away....We have found, however, that the law of God is unchangeable. In fact, it could not be otherwise, proceeding from the source it does. The law reveals the attributes of its giver: 1. Truth (Psa 119:142); 2. Righteousness (Psa 119:172); 3. Love (Ex 20:6; Mat 22:36-40); 4. Holiness (Rom

the emphasis on justification by faith seemed to make the Law and its keeping superfluous. But it was a false estimate, for justification by faith never imported a disregard for the Law. Indeed, this later antinomian philosophy, which filled the 'visible' church in the second-century, stood condemned by Paul: *'What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?'*³⁹⁹

'Jesus is the light who lights every man who comes into the world. The ancient world was exclusive. The Jew hated the Gentile and held that the Gentiles were created for no other purpose than to be the fuel for the fires of hell. True, there was a lonely prophet who saw that Israel's destiny was to be a light to the Gentiles,⁴⁰⁰ but that was a destiny which Israel had always definitely refused. The Greek world never dreamed that knowledge was for every man. The Roman world looked down on the barbarians, the lesser breed without the law. But Jesus came to be a light to every man.'⁴⁰¹

But as the Judæo-Christian church emerged from under the long shadow of first Roman state and then Roman church persecution—the dimly-lit centuries—its unique doctrine, conduct, and hope were to become ever more visible, ever more sharply differentiated from those of its oppressors.

Justification

'[In Judæo-Christianity] there is the concept of justification. Now there are no more difficult words to understand than justification, justify, justice, and just, in all the New Testament.

The Greek verb that Paul uses for 'to justify' is the first person singular of the present indication, I justify.⁴⁰² We have to be quite clear that the word justify, used in this sense, has a quite different meaning from its ordinary English meaning. If we justify ourselves we produce reasons to prove that we were right. If someone justifies us he produces reasons to prove that we did act in the right way. But all verbs in Greek which end in oo do not mean to prove a person or thing to be something, or to make a person or thing to be something; they always mean to treat, or account, or reckon a person to be something. Now if God justifies the sinner, it does not mean that He finds reasons to prove that the sinner was right—far from it. It does not mean that, at this point, He even makes the sinner a good man. What it does mean is that God treats the sinner as if he had not been a sinner at all. Instead of treating the sinner as a criminal to be obliterated, God treats him as a child to be loved. That is what justification means. It means that God reckons us not as bad men deserve, but as good men

7:12); 5. Perfection (Psa 19:7); 6. Immutability (Psa 117:7,8); 7. Spirituality (Rom 7:14); 8. Creative power (Ex 20:8-11); etc.'

³⁹⁹ Rom 6:1,2

⁴⁰⁰ Isa 42:6; 49:6

⁴⁰¹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, pp.55,56

⁴⁰² Greek: dikaion and dikaioo.

deserve. It means He looks on us not as law-breakers to be punished, but as men and women only to be loved. That is the very essence of the gospel.

That means that to be justified is to enter into a new relationship with God, a relationship of love and confidence and friendship, instead of a relationship of distance and enmity and fear. We no longer go to a God radiating terrible but just punishment. We go to a God radiating forgiving and redeeming love. Justification⁴⁰³ is the right relationship between God and man. The man who is just⁴⁰⁴ is the man who is in this right relationship, and—here is the supreme point—he is not in this right relationship because of anything that he has done, but because of what God has done. He is not in this right relationship because he has meticulously performed the works of the Law. He is in it because in utter faith he has cast himself on this amazing mercy and love of God....and to Paul the whole work of Jesus was that Jesus had enabled men to enter into this new and precious relationship with God. Fear was gone, and love had come. The God whom men had thought an enemy had become a friend.⁴⁰⁵

On sin

'[T]here are certain words for sin which Paul uses, each of which has its contribution to make to his picture of sin.

Sin is adikia, and the sinful man is adikos. The normal Authorized Version translation of these two words is unrighteousness and unrighteous. We shall best see the meaning of these words, if we come at them from their opposite. In Greek ethics the good man, the righteous man, the just man is dikaios; and the man who is dikaios is defined as the man who gives to gods and to men what is their due. The unrighteous man is the man who fails in his duty to God and to men; he is the man who fails to give God his love and his obedience, and who fails to give men his charity and his service.⁴⁰⁶

The words adikia and adikos are not uncommonly joined with the good words asebia and asebes. These words describe the godless man and his conduct. Sin is godlessness; it is the total disregard of God; it is treating God as if He did not exist. It is not atheism, for atheism does not believe that there is a God. Godlessness knows that there is a God—and totally disregards him; it is therefore even worse than atheism.

Sin is anomia; and the sinner is the anomos.⁴⁰⁷ Nomos means law; and the sinner is the man who disobeys God's law. This word stresses the deliberation of sin; it describes the man who well knows the right, and yet who does the wrong.

⁴⁰³ Greek: dikaioσύνη.

⁴⁰⁴ Greek: dikaios.

⁴⁰⁵ Barclay, William, *The Letter to the Romans*, pp.13,14

⁴⁰⁶ Paul so describes the sinner in Rom 1:18,29,3:5,6,13,9:14; I Cor 6:1,7,8

⁴⁰⁷ Rom 6:19,2:12; I Cor 9:21; II Cor 6:14

Sin is parakoe.⁴⁰⁸ The A.V. translates this word disobedience. But there is a vivid picture in it. It comes from the verb parakouein. Parakouein originally meant to mishear or to fail to hear. It could be used of the man who did not catch something that someone else said, because it was indistinctly spoken, or because he himself was deaf. Then it came to mean deliberately not to hear, as it were, to close the ears to. In the last analysis a man hears only what he wants to hear; and sin means closing the ears to God in order to listen to oneself.

Sin is parabasis and the sinner is parabates.⁴⁰⁹ Parabasis literally means a stepping across. The picture is of a man stepping across a line across which he has no right to step, of a man invading forbidden territory, and crossing the bounds of that which is right. Sin is the deliberate crossing of the fence between right and wrong.

Sin is paraptoma.⁴¹⁰ Paraptoma originally meant a slip, a trip up, a blunder....It describes the slip which a man may make when he is off his guard, when he is not looking where he is going, when he takes his eye off the goal. Sin is the failure in concentration, the failure in self-control through which a man is swept or slips into sin.

Sin is opheilema, which is the word used in the body of the Lord's Prayer; and opheilema means a debt. It means a failure to pay that which is due, a failure in duty.⁴¹¹

Sin results in porosis.⁴¹² Porosis describes a process of petrification, resulting in a complete loss of all sensation and of all ability to feel. As Burns said on sin: "It petrifies the feelings."⁴¹³ If a man goes on sinning he kills his sense of decency and honour and goodness; he comes to a stage when regret and remorse and penitence are dead. It is the progressive hardening of the heart, until the heart can no longer respond in obedience to God and in compassion^{414 415 416} to men.⁴¹⁷

⁴⁰⁸ Rom 5:19; II Cor 10:6

⁴⁰⁹ Rom 2:23,4:15; Gal 3:19; Heb 2:2; James 2:9

⁴¹⁰ Rom 4:25,5:15-17,20; Eph 1:7,2:1,5

⁴¹¹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1, pp.220,221

⁴¹² Rom 11:7,25; II Cor 3:14; Eph 4:18

⁴¹³ Burns, Robert, world-renowned Scots poet.

⁴¹⁴ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, p.143:

'Compassion, to be real compassion, must issue in deeds.'

⁴¹⁵ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.110:

'Mat 14:13-21: When Jesus saw the crowds He was moved with compassion to the depths of His being....Jesus had come to find peace and quiet and loneliness; instead of that He found a vast crowd eagerly demanding what He could give to them....Was He to have no rest and quiet and time to Himself at all? But Jesus was not like that. So far from finding them a nuisance, He was moved with compassion for them. Premanand....in his autobiography: "As in the days of old, so now our message to the non-Christian world has to be the same, that God cares."'

⁴¹⁶ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, pp.140,141 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Mat 15:29-39: In writing of this passage Edersheim has a lovely thought. He points out that at three successive stages in His ministry, Jesus ended each stage by setting a meal before [the] people. First, there was the feeding of the five thousand; that came at the end of His ministry in Galilee, for after that Jesus was never to teach and preach and heal in Galilee again. Second, there was [the] feeding of the four thousand. This comes at the end of His brief ministry to the Gentiles, beyond the bounds of Palestine—first in the districts of Tyre and Sidon and then in the Decapolis. And third

‘There is the defence [against sin] of the presence of Jesus Christ. Jesus is not a figure in a book; He is a living presence. Sometimes we ask, “What would you do, if you suddenly found Christ standing beside you? How would you live, if Jesus Christ was a guest in your house?” But the whole point of the Christian faith is that Jesus Christ is beside us, and He is a guest in every home. His is the inescapable presence, and, therefore, we must make all life fit for Him to see. We have a strong defence against temptation in the memory of the continual presence of Jesus Christ.’⁴¹⁸

Religious exclusivity

In view of the doctrines and practices of false-Christianity and other beliefs, the true church’s religious exclusiveness⁴¹⁹ from the heathen was and is utterly essential: ‘Neither the Old Testament nor the New Testament has any conception of a religion without this intolerance.’⁴²⁰ The first commandment is ‘*Thou shalt have no other gods before me,*’ and that is the foundation of true religion. As there is only one God, so there can be only one gospel. If God has really done something in Christ on which the salvation of the world depends, and if He has made it known, then it is a Christian duty to be intolerant of everything which ignores, denies, or explains it away....It is intolerant only as Peter is intolerant when he says, ‘*Neither is there salvation in any other,*’⁴²¹ or John, when he says, ‘*He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life.*’⁴²² ⁴²³

Format & prophetic links

In spite of this account of the formative and early years of church history being widely recorded and accepted for the most part, some contend that one key writing, the book of Revelation, should be placed earlier, in the reign of Nero,⁴²⁴ shortly after the burning of Rome.⁴²⁵ To bolster this contention, it is usually pointed out

and last, there was the Last Supper at Jerusalem, when Jesus came to the final stage of the days of His flesh among men.

Here is a lovely thought. Jesus always left men with strength for the way; always He gathered men to Him to feed them with the living bread. Always He gave them Himself before He moved on. And still He comes to us offering also the bread which will satisfy the immortal hunger of the human [being], and in the strength of which we shall be able to go all the days of our life.’

⁴¹⁷ Barclay, William, *The Mind of St. Paul*, pp.144,145

⁴¹⁸ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1, p.232 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁴¹⁹ viz., the exceptional, the different. Paradoxically to some, the true church is also inclusive, in the sense that It means a body of people who have been ‘summoned out’ of their homes to come and meet with God; and both in its original Greek and Hebrew usages, that sense was not exclusive but inclusive. It extended as a general call to all. The summons was not to any selected few; it is a summons from God to every man to come and to listen and to act on the word of God, q.v. inf.

⁴²⁰ Gal 1:4,8

⁴²¹ Acts 4:12

⁴²² I John 5:12

⁴²³ Denney, James, *The Death of Christ*, p.66

⁴²⁴ 54–68AD

that the numeric value of the Hebrew letters for Nero Cæsar totals six hundred and sixty-six, the number of the Beast.⁴²⁶ Evidence of this sort is extremely weak, and the widely accepted later date has much to commend it. Certainly the second-century church belief was that it was written near the end of the first-century, during the reign of Domitian. Furthermore, it is thought that John moved from Jerusalem to Ephesus about 67AD, and this would not have allowed him to establish an ongoing ministry in Asia Minor during the reign of Nero, when religious persecution of the Christians was underway. Although many point out that the contents of Revelation indicate that the churches in Asia Minor had been in existence for a number of years, long enough in most cases to have reached, at the very least, an initial point of complacency and decline, the core of this contention is questioned later.

Revelation, the final book in the New Testament, links with, illuminates, and expands many tracts from the Old Testament.⁴²⁷ In all, Revelation's twenty-two chapters and four hundred and four verses contain about five hundred and fifty references to the Old Testament. With the concluding book in place, the complete, integrated, and concordant Bible is manifest in full septempartite form:⁴²⁸

1. The Law;
2. The Prophets;
3. The Writings (or Psalms);
4. The Gospels;
5. The Acts;
6. The Epistles;
7. The Revelation (or Apocalypse).

Thus far, other than for those holding to seriously tendentious and aberrant views, there is little by way of substantive contention, with virtually all leading authorities among those adopting a Christian belief more or less accepting the basic chronology and Bible composition. Where contention and dispute of very considerable magnitude start is with the interpretation and meaning of Revelation and related books of the Bible, and of this, apparently, there will be no end—not until the Second Coming, that is.

⁴²⁵ in 64AD

⁴²⁶ reported in Rev 13:18

⁴²⁷ in particular, Dan 7-12; Isa 24-27,65,66; Joel 2:1-32; Zech 11: 8-14

⁴²⁸ seven being the number used in Scripture to signify completion, as well as the sacred and holy.

Volume 2

Prophecy

Chapter 3

Out of Confusion

There is much confusion and almost unending contention surrounding the book of Revelation amongst those interested in the admittedly complex subject of eschatology. In summary, there are four main, contending, interpretative views:

Preterist:	All the events of Revelation were fulfilled during the period of the Roman Empire;
Futurist:	Beginning with chapter four, Revelation describes future events accompanying the end of the age;
Idealist:	Revelation is not a representation of actual events, but rather a symbolic depiction of the spiritual warfare between good and evil; and,
Historical:	Revelation is a panorama of church history from the apostolic era until the consummation.

A brief, introductory summary of these views is necessary to set them in context.

Preterist

The decidedly unsavoury origin of Preterism, and part of that of Futurism, at least in its Roman exposition,⁴²⁹ gives some indication of the depth of confusion and the extent to which the Roman Catholic Church, in its ceaseless scheming and pursuit of world empire, has gone to avoid identification with the core events presaged in Revelation—singularly unsuccessful attempts, it must be said, and self-defeating on almost every occasion: 'With regard to the Preterist scheme, on the review of which under its two chief and most accredited forms we are now first about to enter, it may be remembered that I stated it to have had its origin with the Jesuit Alcasar;⁴³⁰ that it was subsequently with variations adopted and improved (after Grotius and Hammond) by Bossuet, the great champion of the Romanists; then afterwards by Hernnschneider, Eichhorn, and others of the German critical and generally infidel school of the last half-century, with their several variations; finally still with new points of difference, by Professor Moses Stuart of the United States of America.'⁴³¹

The Preterist school declares that the Antichrist power of Scripture has already come and gone, being fulfilled in the Roman emperors Vespasian and Titus who attacked the Jews, ransacked Jerusalem, and burnt the Temple. This not forgetting yet another abomination, this time by the emperor Hadrian, who, with studied insult to the Jews, set up the figure of a boar over the Bethlehem gate of the city which rose upon the site and ruins of Jerusalem, erected a temple to Jupiter upon the site of the Second Temple, caused its image to be set up in the part which answered to the holy place, and erected an image of himself in what was formerly part of the outer courtyard.⁴³²

Futurist

Continuing with the same source writings: 'The Futurist Scheme, as I have elsewhere stated, was first, or nearly first, propounded by the Jesuit Ribera;⁴³³ as the fittest one whereby to turn aside the Protestant

⁴²⁹ Elliot, E. B., *Horæ Apocalypticæ*, published 1844

⁴³⁰ in 1614

⁴³¹ Elliot, E. B., *Horæ Apocalypticæ*

⁴³² 'most holy place' was the 'Holy of Holies,' the inner sanctum, where the ark of the covenant rested. '*Holy place*,' in Mat 24:15, Mark 13:14, and Luke 21:20, on the other hand, often refers to the Temple complex in general (cp. Acts 6:13,14,21:28,29). Sometimes, depending on context, it is a reference to the room of the Temple immediately before the Holy of Holies. '*When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)*'⁴³² shows the exact location of the erection of the obscene image of the Beast, in a calculated and wholesale affront to God, for the Greek here translated '*place*,'⁴³² means '*the exact spot*'; and in that context may possibly be a reference even to the inner sanctum, the Holy of Holies. The statue of himself erected by Hadrian was placed in what would correspond today to the location of the site used for Muslim ablution / purification: Arabic: El Kas, 'The Cup.' It lies midway between the El Aqsa mosque and the Dome of the Rock.

This general arrangement is essentially identical to that seen in the temple of Jupiter at Balbek, in Lebanon.

⁴³³ c.1590AD

application of the Apocalyptic prophecy from the church of Rome. In England and Ireland of late years it has been brought into vogue chiefly by Mr. Maitland and Mr. Burgh; followed by Mr. Newman, in some of the Oxford tracts on Antichrist. Its general characteristic is to view the whole Apocalypse, at least from after the Epistles from [sic] the Seven Churches, as a representation of the events of the consummation and second advent, all still future: the Israel depicted in it being literal Israel; the days in the chronological period being literal days; and the Antichrist, or Apocalyptic Beast under his last head, a personal infidel Antichrist, to reign and triumph over the saints for just three and a half years, until Christ's coming shall destroy him: of which advent, moreover, the symbols of the Sixth Seal in particular are supposed to be a clear and decisive prefiguration. Thus, while agreeing fully with the Praeterists on the day-day principle, and partly with them as to the literal Israel's place in the prophecy, they are the direct antipodes of the Praeterists in their view of the time to which the main part of the Apocalypse relates, and the person or power answering to the symbol of the Apocalyptic Beast: the one assigning all to the long distant past, the other to the yet distant future. And here is in fact a great advantage that they have over the Praeterists, that instead of being in any measure chained down by the facts of history, they can draw on the unlimited powers of fancy, wherewith to devise in the dreamy future whatever may seem to them to fit the sacred prophecy.⁴³⁴

The Futurist school, therefore, can be summarised as holding that this great power must be future, even suggesting that it would not appear until *after* the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. This second erroneous thesis was also Jesuit in its origins.

Idealist

The idealist interpretation founds on the idea that Revelation should be interpreted in an idealist or spiritualist sense, with its content effectively 'rationalized' away, neutered, and lost in allegory and fantasy.

Historical

'Now by way of contrast, and quite distinct from the former, were the Reformers, who were all, without exception, wedded to what was held to be the proper view, and which was termed Historical, that is to say, those who believed that the book of Revelation, accompanied by the prophecies of Daniel and others, foretold a perfect sequence in the history of the Christian church throughout this present evil age from beginning to end; and that it also exposed with paramount certainty the complete failure of both pagan and papal Rome to usher in Christ's kingdom.'⁴³⁵

⁴³⁴ Elliot, E. B., *Horæ Apocalypticæ*

⁴³⁵ Elliot, E. B., *Horæ Apocalypticæ*

Insofar as it went, this was an adequate summary of the 'messages to the churches,' and perhaps a little beyond that, but it did little by way of addressing in any detail the bulk of the content of the book of Revelation.

Historical pre-millennialism

There did appear much earlier, however, another form commonly known as Historical Pre-Millennialism. In this exposition, it was remarkably comprehensive. As it was widely believed in the early Christian church of the early centuries, it was declared a heresy in the fourth-century after an apostate form of Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire. Fundamentally, it was the same understanding as that of the Pre-Millennial, Post-Tribulational view. Lacking much in essential detail, however, it was but a shadow of what is known today.

Introduction of confusion

In many ways, the Historical view illustrates the deep suspicion held by the Protestant churches of the time of anything coming from a Romanist pen. A Protestant belief extant in the mid-nineteenth century, albeit a minority one, was that Christ's return was not only imminent, but was due that very named year,⁴³⁶ and that all precursory events had already taken place, even to the two witnesses, who were taken frequently as representations of the Reformation and the Protestant churches. And thence any attempt to pronounce the events of Revelation as being almost wholly in the long-distant future was deemed to be a Romanist subterfuge, intended to deflect the attention of mankind away from the central role of the church of Rome in the near-at-hand, end-time apocalyptic events.

In addition to this, the Roman church, in its attempts to deflect the truth of its demise, and the incoming kingdom of God here on earth, at first taught through Augustine that the return of Christ, Armageddon, and the Millennium were allegories to be understood symbolically. Augustine denied a future Millennium with Christ's return and reign,⁴³⁷ but later, Romanism adopted the intentional misinterpretation or transmutation of all verses in the Bible which foretold and condemned its apostate system, making the condemnation contained in these verses appear to fall, if at all possible, on some other party.

Perplexing many, one key aspect of the book of Revelation that the Roman church continues to choose to confuse is the actual flow of events. The heavenly signs,⁴³⁸ the last identified therein as comprising the sixth seal, when correctly placed in the grand flow of events, occur after the four horsemen of the Apocalypse, and

⁴³⁶ 1844AD

⁴³⁷ Augustine, *The City of God*

⁴³⁸ recorded in Mat 24:29,30; Joel 2:30,31; Rev 6:12-18

also after the Great Tribulation, or fifth seal, but before the composite Day of the Lord, in the seven trumpets, and, especially, the seven vials when God's wrath is poured out on apostate mankind—those having one or other of the marks of the Beast, and who worshipped the image of the Beast.⁴³⁹ The Romanists' objective, however, is to place the heavenly signs, in the form of three days of complete darkness, as the final time of chastisement, after which there will be a new birth to the world, a world purified. The survivors, purged of all the 'ungodly,' will live in an idyllic environment, completely at peace. But prior to this passing into a state of peace, there is need of a time of purging of the 'ungodly.'⁴⁴⁰ Angels are said to be the executioners, standing ready to kill with the sword all that mock, or criticise, or do not believe this Roman Catholic 'truth.' More men are depicted as dying in this time than women, a possible indication that, in strict numerical terms, women will be more duped than men by this patently false doctrine.

The 'Time of Purification,' in Rome's eschatological purview, is clearly presaged by the words of Christ in John: *'They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.'*⁴⁴¹ To Rome, the start of this 'purification in favour of the Roman Catholic flock,' visited on the so-called apostates—but in reality, God's 'elect'—will correspond, in terms of timing, with the sixth seal of Revelation, the 'heavenly signs.'⁴⁴²

The key heavenly sign to the Roman Catholic 'faithful' that all these events are being put in train is said to be a great wonder, seen by many: a luminous cross in the heavens, serving as a final warning to the world, before the horrific events unfold. Again, this demonic device is intended to deflect the attention of the world from God's final warning to mankind, given by the two witnesses of Revelation chapter eleven.⁴⁴³

Thus, in every way possible, the Roman church's view is set to divert, frustrate, and otherwise confuse the population of the world as to God's true purpose and intent. The sad fact is that those who come out of their 'days of darkness,' looking upon it as a final chastisement, will immediately find themselves in the short period called the '*silence in heaven*,'⁴⁴⁴ and think that all evil has passed over, once and for all. Then the wrath of God will be meted out on those unfortunates, to their total chagrin and terror, in the form of the seven trumpets and the seven vials. Satan's modus operandi is intended to completely dupe and befuddle the population of the world—save only those eventually sealed, and those not taking the mark of the Beast—for the purposes of mounting the final attack on Christ on His glorious return, before Satan is consigned to the bottomless pit.

⁴³⁹ the correct time order is shown in 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' in the Appendix.

⁴⁴⁰ The 'New Age' has it similarly—Baer, Randall N., *Inside the New Age Nightmare*, p.169:

'J. Randolph Price, New Age writer and primary inspirer and organizer of numerous large-scale World Peace meditation events, asserts that those who deny "the divinity of all men" (i.e., man is a god) are of the "Antichrist." His spirit guide, an "awakened one" called "Asher," has informed him that "Nature will soon enter her cleansing cycle" during which those of "lower vibratory rates" will be purified off the planet.'

⁴⁴¹ John 16:2 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁴⁴² Mat 24:29,30; prophesied by a number of Roman Catholic stigmatists, mystics, and seers, q.v. inf.

⁴⁴³ q.v. inf.

⁴⁴⁴ Rev 8:1-6

Summarising the whole confusing mess, what Roman Catholicism has done is to start roughly in the middle, with the sixth seal, and then to preview it in the context of everything else necessarily occurring before that event, irrespective of whether it does actually happen before or after the sixth seal. When spurious and fabulist explanations of the identities of the various parties are added, the effect is to completely disorder and confuse the whole scenario, thereby gaining and retaining control of the 'duped masses.'

The true exposition, of course, is vastly different. In reality, the actual scroll in Revelation was gradually unrolled, each seal being broken in turn, to reveal the sequence of events, step-by-step, both preceding and through the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, a term deriving from *'and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time.'*⁴⁴⁵ If the straightforward sequence of prophesied events is not abided by, or is wittingly misinterpreted or misunderstood, nothing but muddled nonsense can result.

In parallel, there is another danger, in fact, a temptation, amongst Bible expositors, to take an attractive looking verse, pluck or place it out of context, and weave around it some pure fantasy, with no backing of truth whatsoever. Such rough handling ensures a perpetual mystery in Revelation for those people, whereas God gave all Scripture for our edification, to be clearly read and understood, thus unfolding and revealing His plan for mankind. Such dissembling endeavours soon spawn a raft of opposing schools of thought, even within their own ranks, inevitably leading to even greater confusion.

The strange irony in all of this is that those very Romanists, in their attempts to deflect the gaze of man from the place of the Roman Catholic Church in end-time events—even to the extent of temporarily 'deleting' the book of Revelation from the Roman canon list at the council of Laodicea,⁴⁴⁶ but later 'reinstating' it at the councils of Hippo,⁴⁴⁷ and Carthage⁴⁴⁸—merely succeeded in more accurately focussing that gaze once the expected Protestant time-scale in the mid- to late nineteenth century had failed to materialise. Indeed, it is what is today known as the Futurist view—not in the Romanist sense, it must be said—and, specifically, that known as Pre-Millennial, Post-Tribulational view, which leads to the full and proper exposition and understanding of the book of Revelation, as will become evident a little later.

Common competing views

Before embarking upon an investigation of the Pre-Millennial, Post-Tribulational view, it is worth digging a little deeper into some commonly-found interpretative views of Revelation, where fundamental differences can be discovered in the understanding of the sequence and relevance of even the main events featured therein. By way of illustration, some hold that:

⁴⁴⁵ Heb 9:28b

⁴⁴⁶ c.365AD

⁴⁴⁷ 393AD

⁴⁴⁸ 397AD

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1. The Millennium is the current era of the church on earth and that Christ will not return until after the Millennium, known as the Post-Millennial view;⁴⁴⁹
 2. Christ will rapture the church prior to a seven year Tribulation and return thereafter to usher in the Millennium, known as the Pre-Millennial, Pre-Tribulational view;
 3. Christ will rapture the entire church midway through a seven year Tribulation and return thereafter to usher in the Millennium, known as the Pre-Millennial, Mid-Tribulation Rapture view;⁴⁵⁰
 4. Christ will rapture the 'elect' in the church before a seven year Tribulation and return thereafter to rapture the balance and usher in the Millennium, known as the Pre-Millennial, Partial Rapture view;
 5. Christ will return to earth after the Great Tribulation to usher in the glorious Millennium, known as the Pre-Millennial, Post-Tribulational view, and by some as the Historical Pre-Millennial view;
 6. The interpretation of the Millennium should be in a idealist or spiritualist sense, with the Millennium not being a literal one thousand year reign on earth but with Christ's reign being of an undefined or open ended duration, having begun either during His earthly ministry or at the time of His resurrection. This is known as the Amillennial or Non-Millennial view, and was espoused by Augustine who was largely responsible for its adoption by the Roman Catholic Church, where it remained unassailed until the nineteenth-century. In this view, which still retains the affections of many within that church where it is still the 'official' view, and even with some without, such as reformed theologians and some Baptists, the Antichrist is looked upon figuratively, and is not taken to be a literal person;
 7. The book of Revelation is individually tailored to each human sufficiently enlightened. As such, each and every personal revelation is distinct and distinguishable from all others, and almost infinitely variable;⁴⁵¹ and,
 8. That the content of the book of Revelation and predictions of end-times found elsewhere in the Scriptures be largely ignored. This group, which includes certain 'liberal Christian theologians,' believes that Revelation is composed of a collection of visions, hallucinations, or nightmares experienced by the author. Some maintain that most likely the entire was drug-induced.⁴⁵²

⁴⁴⁹ seen in 'Christian Reconstruction,' 'Kingdom-Now Theology,' 'Latter-Rain,' 'Manifest Sons of God,' 'Word of Faith,' 'Positive Confession,' 'Social Gospel,' various 'Prosperity' cults, and 'Dominion Theology.'

⁴⁵⁰ mid-tribulation rapture deemed to occur 42 months into the 7-year tribulation.

⁴⁵¹ this has been termed the 'Individually-Tailored-to-Your-Needs' view.

⁴⁵² this has been termed the 'Really Bad Trip' view.

Indeed, the deeper one investigates the varying views of the book of Revelation, the more confused the picture becomes, with a vast spectrum of divergent and competing opinions and dogmas⁴⁵³ on almost every major aspect. But such confusion is not of God. Paul puts it succinctly: *'For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.'*⁴⁵⁴

Exposition

In light of this, and with a desire to avoid the common pitfalls associated with 'confirmation bias,'⁴⁵⁵ this study seeks as comprehensive an eschatological exposition as possible, one which links all, or sensibly all, of the relevant tracts in Old and New Testaments into a single coherent entity capable of human understanding, but with a paramount pre-condition: the essential enlistment of God's Holy Spirit. Without the aid and guidance of God, through the operation of His Spirit, it is simply not possible to understand the meaning of Revelation, its warnings, and its ultimate good news. Any purely human attempt at arriving at an understanding of these things through the exercise of man's intellect is doomed from the very start. The apostle James stated the correct approach: *'If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.'*⁴⁵⁶ ⁴⁵⁷ Wisdom is a gift of God; a gift shunned entirely by man's false religious, educational, political, social, and economic institutions and organisations, locking them out from any possibility of gaining the correct understanding.

To the apostate or the adherent of mainstream Christian theology, the result of the workings of the Holy Spirit in revealing the meaning of prophetic passages in the Bible will probably appear merely polemical, even heretical,⁴⁵⁸ but such work is neither permitted of a personal interpretation, nor the distilled essence of a variety

⁴⁵³ Russell, Bertrand, *Marriage and Morals*, chpt. 5:

'The fact that an opinion has been widely held is no evidence whatever that it is not utterly absurd; indeed, in view of the silliness of the majority of mankind, a widespread belief is more likely to be foolish than sensible.'

⁴⁵⁴ 1 Cor 14:33

⁴⁵⁵ i.e., the common fault of only regarding things which agree with a proposition while disregarding or seriously downplaying those that don't. The comprehensive nature of this study itself tends to mitigate any tendency to bias, and the driver of the Holy Spirit ensures that it cannot impinge.

⁴⁵⁶ James 1:5

⁴⁵⁷ Eccl 7:23-29, *'All this have I proved by wisdom: I said, I will be wise; but it was far from me. That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out? I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness: And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her. Behold, this have I found, saith the preacher, counting one by one, to find out the account: Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: one man among a thousand have I found: but a woman among all those have I not found. Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.'*

⁴⁵⁸ James, Dresden (attributed to):

'A truth's initial commotion is directly proportional to how deeply the lie was believed. It wasn't the world being round that agitated people, but that the world wasn't flat. When a well-packaged web of lies has been sold gradually to the masses over generations, the truth will seem utterly preposterous and its speaker a raving lunatic. The ideal tyranny is

of man's perceptions and interpretations. In point are Peter's words: *'Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.'*⁴⁵⁹ *For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.'*⁴⁶⁰

The Lord Jesus, when He prayed, never asked His Father to grant anything that was not in full accord with His Father's will. Every prayer that He uttered, therefore, must be granted, in due season. In the paramount prayer that He gave His followers for an example, the first request He made was that God's kingdom might come, with His will being *'done on earth, even as it is done in heaven.'*⁴⁶¹ Unless and until it is realised the exact import of our Lord's plea, and it is comprehended that God is going to build, through His beloved Son, a glorious kingdom here on earth, then, simply, it is not possible to grasp much of the purport of the story of the Bible or of the book of Revelation and related prophecies.

Without this appreciation, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, there is nothing but the certainty of failure to understand the symbols used, and, as a result, an inevitable failure in perceiving the true meaning of the various beasts, of the Woman, of the Harlot, of the Dragon, and of many others, almost all portraying world movements for power, and depicting various attempts, both pagan and quasi-religious, to build man-made structures and empires on the earth, all the while seeking to usurp power from He whose right it is.

Happily, however, as shall be seen in detail, Christ is destined to take all authority into His own hands. He will soon return in spirit form, in person, with full authority to take the power of God and to rule and reign in righteousness over all, forming the new Israel, to the ultimate blessing of the whole world. Indeed, it will be said, *'the whole government shall be upon his shoulder.'*⁴⁶²

Pre-tribulation or post-tribulation? pre-millennium or post-millennium?

The final question that need be addressed and settled prior to commencing upon the detailed investigation of the book of Revelation and related works is that of the timing of the Second Coming: Pre-Tribulation or Post-Tribulation. In this context, the commonly held Mid-Tribulationism version can be regarded as a variant of the Pre-Tribulation—in that the worst is believed to be avoided only by those raptured—and dealt with accordingly. A-Tribulationism, the implausible notion that the entire Tribulation can be spiritualised and allegorised into almost complete obscurity need not be addressed here, for the resulting breadth of the spectrum of vain speculation thereanent is virtually without limit.

that which is ignorantly self-administered by its victims. The most perfect slaves are, therefore, those which blissfully and unawaredly enslave themselves.'

⁴⁵⁹ Greek: *epilysis*, 'explanation,' 'unloosing'; 'private-', or personal interpretation, viz., isogesis.

⁴⁶⁰ II Peter 1:20,21

⁴⁶¹ Luke 11:2

⁴⁶² Isa 9:6

Some, it must be said, even regard the Second Coming as a Post-Millennial event, with the church prevailing, triumphant over evil, autosoterically healing all mankind through its own human effort, before Christ returns to a world at peace. But can mankind in thrall of Satan drive out Satan?

Wherein lies the truth?

The matter has been dealt with by Bullinger: 'The question is not whether Christ is coming: and it is not whether a millennium of peace is coming, but which of these....precedes the other.

All other questions in connection with the Second Advent are subordinate to this, because if Christ is to come first, then there can be no hope of improvement in, or blessing for the world till Christ comes; and it is both foolish and vain to look and labour for it. And, if the Millennium is to come first, then it is equally vain to be constantly "looking for the blessed hope," and waiting and watching for Christ.

In the early ages of the church, Christians looked for Christ to come first, and the word "Millenarian" was sufficient to describe them; but when some began to look for the Millennium to come first, it became necessary to make an addition to this word, and hence those who looked for Christ to come first were called Pre-Millenarians, and those who looked for the Millennium to come first were called Post-Millenarians; but the Primitive church knew nothing of these terms, for post-millennial views were unknown and unheard of.

The early Christians looked for Christ. They "waited for God's Son from heaven." They looked for a person, and not for a Millennium without Him. It has been reserved for a later generation to place the Millennium before the church, as its hope.

Now to make the point still more clear, let me repeat that Pre-Millennialists look for Christ to come before the thousand years; Post-Millennialists believe that Christ will not come until the thousand years have ended. Pre-Millennialists believe that the world will grow worse and worse; Post-Millennialists believe that it will grow better and better. Between these two views there is no room for compromise; there can be no concession. One must be right and the other must be wrong. And let me again remind you, that this is in no sense a question of reason. It is not a question of what may seem to accord with our ideas or desires; it is not what may accord with our views; not what may seem reasonable, or appear likely. It is entirely, and only, and wholly, a question of Revelation. Let us beware of speaking of what God is or is not likely to do. For it is written, *"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord."*⁴⁶³

On the other hand, we cannot demand that all difficulties shall be removed, all questions answered, or all doubts solved; while no objection can be, or should be entertained if it be founded on human reason. For man's word is worthless, when it is wholly a question of "What saith the Lord?"

If God had said that the Millennium is to come first, then it will surely come. If God had said that the preaching of the Gospel is to convert the world, then no matter what the apparent difficulties may be, or what

⁴⁶³ Isa 55:8

man may say about increase of population, insufficiency of means, etc., etc., the world will surely be so converted. There is no lack of power with God, and if He has said it, He will most assuredly do it.

But if on the other hand, God has said that the object of the Gospel is to take out from the nations a people for His name, then no more can be done; let man preach, and persuade, and toil, as he may. In either case, exactly what God has said will be done; no more, and no less.

What then does the word of God teach? Our subject as announced tells you our belief, that the Pre-Millennial Advent of Christ is the truth of the Bible.

There are several ways of procedure by which this truth may be established, and many are the Scriptures which might be quoted. But as our time is limited, it may accomplish a double object if we confine ourselves to those Scriptures which are usually referred to as supporting the Post-Millennial view.

Of course, the Scriptures may be perverted and wrested; they may be taken apart from their context; they may be "interpreted," so that when God says one thing, man may say He means another. All this can be done. The atheist may quote, "There is no God," and the Devil may quote, or misquote, so as to serve his purpose. The only way to arrive at the mind of God is to study and believe it "all," and take the text with the context. The Jews of old fell into error, yea the Disciples failed to understand the Scripture, simply because they did not believe "all Scripture." "O fools," said Jesus to His Disciples,⁴⁶⁴ *"and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?"* They were *"slow to believe all."* They did not want Christ to suffer, just as Christians now do not want Him to reign on earth. Christians like to dwell on the "sufferings," and the Jews liked to dwell on the "glory." But both alike come under the Saviour's censure, *"O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken."*

Now let us look at a few Scriptures of the prophets and "believe all."^{465 466}

⁴⁶⁴ Luke 24:25-27

⁴⁶⁵ Isa 11:9,2:2,3,25:6,7,35:1,2,40:5,66:10,12-14; Psa 2:8; Zech 12:10,14:9; Dan 7:14,22,27; all taken in footnotes.

⁴⁶⁶ (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); Isa 11:9, *'The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.'* But note how this scene of blessedness is ushered in with judgement and Christ's coming, in verse 4, *'With righteousness shall He judge the poor and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked.'* (i.e., at the coming of Christ, q.v. II Thes 2:8).

Isa 2:2,3, *'And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains....and all nations shall flow unto it, and many people shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in His paths.'*

Now note the context in which this prophecy occurs. The words immediately preceding, declare that it is *'concerning Judah and Jerusalem,'* and the words that immediately follow tell us that this shall be when *'He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.'* Thus we learn that this time of universal peace is ushered in by judgement, and not by the increase of Gospel light.

Isa 25:6,7, *'And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined; and He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations.'* From the preceding context we learn (Isa 24:23) that *'this mountain'* is Mount Zion on which *'the Lord of hosts shall reign....before His ancients gloriously,'* and from the context immediately succeeding (Isa 25:9,10,12) *'It shall be said in that day, Lo this is our God; we have waited*

It is, in fact, impossible to produce a Scripture which speaks of millennial blessing, where the immediate context does not connect it with preceding judgement, or with the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. In every

on Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation. For in this mountain shall the hand of the Lord rest, and Moab shall be trodden down under Him, even as straw is trodden down for the dunghill...and the fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall He bring down; lay low, and bring to the ground, even to the dust.' So that the spreading of the feast [for all] (which is no feast of Gospel fat things), and this removing of the veil of error, will not take place till Christ, the One "waited for," shall come.

Isa 35:1,2, *'The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose...They shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God.'* But notice how this time of blessing and fruitfulness is introduced in verse 4, *'Say to them that are fearful of heart, be strong, behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you.'* *'Then (not before) the eyes of the blind shall be opened,'* and all the scenes of millennial glory be revealed.

Isa 40:5, *'And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.'* But read on, and note verse 10, *'Behold the Lord God will come with a strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him, behold His reward is with Him, and His work before Him.'*

Isa 66:10,12-14, *'Rejoice ye with Jerusalem and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her. For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream. As one whom his mother comforteth so will I comfort you...And when ye see this your heart shall rejoice.'* But now note the next verses, 15 & 16, *'For behold the Lord will come with fire and with His chariots like a whirlwind, to render His anger with fury and His rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by His sword will the Lord plead with all flesh; and the slain of the Lord shall be many.'* This does not look like gradual improvement and progress, resulting and ending in blessing and peace!

Psa 2:8 is another verse which one hears constantly quoted on the platforms of missionary meetings, *'Ask of Me and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance and the uttermost part of the earth for Thy possession.'* But we never hear the next words of verse 9 quoted in connection with verse 8, yet there they stand, *'Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel!'* But if the heathen are to be given to Christ by the preaching of the Gospel as the result of missionary effort, why are these converted nations to be broken and dashed in pieces in judgement? Even if it be said that the language is figurative, a *'rod of iron'* can surely be no figure of a message of peace; nor can a *'dashing in pieces'* be a figure of the Gospel of Grace.

Zech 12:10, *'I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplications.'* When? The verse before tells us *'in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem,'* and the same verse (verse 10) tells us that it shall be when *'they shall look upon me whom they have pierced'* [cp. John 19:37, *'And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him who they pierced'*]. Not therefore by the spread of Gospel light but by the seeing of the pierced-one coming in judgement [Rev 1:7].

Zech 14:9, *'And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord and His name one.'*⁴⁶⁶ What day? Verse 1 tells us: *'The day of the Lord,'* when (verse 3) *'the Lord shall go forth and fight....and His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives.'* And so the succeeding context goes on to speak (verse 12) of *'the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all people that have fought against Jerusalem.'* This is what will usher in that reign of peace.

Turn now to Daniel chapter 7, and three verses often wrested from their context.

Dan 7:14, *'And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.'* Is this universal dominion given to Christ in connection with the spreading of the Gospel? No, but at His coming. Look at the preceding verse (verse 13) *'I saw in the night visions and behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven.'* Then *'there was given Him,'* (not peace and righteousness but) *'dominion and glory...that all nations...should serve Him.'*

Dan 7:22, *'The time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.'* When did the time come? When *'the ancient of days came!'* And does He come at the conclusion of the millennium of peace? No! The previous verse says *'I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints and prevailed against them until the ancient of days came and (then, not till then) judgement was given to the saints of the most High and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.'*

Dan 7:27, *'And the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High.'* When? The verses immediately preceding (verses 25,26) tell us of a power that *'shall speak great words against the most High and shall wear out the saints of the most High...But the judgement shall sit and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.'* Then follows the statement of verse 27.

instance the bright picture of rest and glory for "the Jew, the Gentile and the church of God," rests on the dark background of tribulation and judgement.

The New Testament is full of predictions of increasing and abounding evil; and side by side with these there are "*exceeding great and precious promises*" for the poor and afflicted, the suffering and the sorrowful, the hated and persecuted; and this during the continuance of the present dispensation. There is no period between the present time and the coming of Christ in glory, in which the saints are viewed or contemplated as being free of conflict; no time when they shall cease to '*mourn*' for the absent Bridegroom;⁴⁶⁷ or be free from sorrow and tribulation;⁴⁶⁸ or have no need of '*enduring to the end*;⁴⁶⁹ or be other than '*as sheep in the midst of wolves*.'⁴⁷⁰ No period when the wolves shall all become sheep, or the tares become wheat! And yet there is to come a blessed time when '*there shall be no more curse*.' But that is essentially a Divine work requiring all the might of omnipotence. Not to any body of men, however holy or educated; not to any church however orthodox, is committed the miraculous work of eradicating the curse from creation, and sin from the heart. No! The church herself is fallible, erring, scattered, and divided, and needs herself to be brought to, and kept humbly at, the feet of the Saviour.⁴⁷¹

In summary, there is no Millennium without Christ. There can be none. The Great Tribulation, of which more later, clearly precedes the Second Coming. There is no room for autosoterism—the belief that man can heal his own ills and sins through his own endeavours⁴⁷²—in the Judæo-Christian creed; neither is there room for aberrant beliefs which need vast numbers of converts in this world to bring about the kingdom of God as a condition precedent to the return of Christ. Accordingly, it is the Pre-Millennial, Post-Tribulational view that is in agreement and harmony with the biblical record and prophecies, and it is this that forms the basis of much that follows.

⁴⁶⁷ Mat 9:15

⁴⁶⁸ John 16:22,23; *Matthew Henry's Commentary* on Psa 56:5:

'Their malice would not admit the least cessation of arms, or the acts of hostility, but they were continually pushing at him. Such as this is the enmity of Satan and his agents against the kingdom of Christ and the interests of his holy religion, which if we cordially espouse, we must not think it strange to meet with such treatment as this, as though some strange thing happened to us. Our betters have been thus used. So persecuted they the prophets.'

⁴⁶⁹ Mat 10:22

⁴⁷⁰ Mat 10:16

⁴⁷¹ Bullinger, E. W., *Ten Sermons on the Second Advent*, Sermon III; preached 1887, published five years later.

⁴⁷² autosoterism's admonition: Solve your problem yourself! cp. the wild assertions and aspirations of aficionados; Hitchens, Peter, *The Abolition of Britain, From Lady Chatterley to Tony Blair*, p.128 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), notes that:

'[Christianity does] not offer salvation through the Overseas Development Agency, the Anti-Apartheid Movement, Amnesty International and the Social security budget. It offer[s] it in an entirely non-political way, through the faith and deeds of the individual'; Hitchens also comments, in *A Brief History of Crime*, p.109 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets) that:

'The modern secular belief [is] that if society is run by an elite of perfect, civilized and brilliantly able mandarins, people will no longer have to be good, because the machine will compel them to be.'

Chapter 4

Revelator Confirmed

The book of Revelation, despite its oft-quoted subtitle of 'The Revelation of St. John the Divine,' is described in the opening phrase as: '*The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him.*'⁴⁷³ This is the revealed title, the former being an erroneous redaction. So, in order to validate the probity of this Revelation, it is essential to extend the investigative process to encompass the Revelator Himself, for the simple reason that were He to prove to be of suspect provenance then He would most likely have produced a suspect or worthless revelation. Given that in the prologue⁴⁷⁴ it states specifically that the Revelator is Christ, it is prudent to validate the position of Christ as the Son of God,⁴⁷⁵ as it is stated that the ultimate source of the Revelation is God the Father. Without such direct, close linkage, the book's claims and statements would be worthless.

Old Testament messianic references

The Old Testament, or Old Covenant⁴⁷⁶ between the nation Israel and the Word, Christ, who is the God of creation and of the Old Testament,⁴⁷⁷ contains many references to the Messiah. Indeed, the Messiah was

⁴⁷³ Rev 1:1a

⁴⁷⁴ Rev 1:1-3

⁴⁷⁵ John 1:1-5

⁴⁷⁶ N.K.J.V.; the Pentateuch comprises the first five books of the Bible, called Torah in Hebrew. Often these books are called The Law, but, strictly speaking, Torah does not mean 'law,' it means 'teaching.' The Pentateuch contains the covenant between God and His people, inter alia.

A covenant is an agreement. In the Bible, covenants are special, because God is one of the parties to the covenant. Biblical covenants have three parts:

also known and referred to in the Hebrew Scriptures as Dabar, the Word. This was so well and widely recognised that, in the Hebrew translation of John's Gospel in Bagster's Polyglott, the first verse begins: *'In the beginning was the Word (Dabar).'*

The Old Testament references to Jesus Christ are many, comprising, amongst others, the following:

1. The place of His birth: *'But thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, though thou be least among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose going forth has been from of old, from everlasting.'*⁴⁷⁸
2. The virgin birth: *'Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel.'*⁴⁷⁹
3. Declared the Son of God: *'I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.'*⁴⁸⁰
4. Being of the tribe of Judah: *'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come: and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.'*⁴⁸¹
5. With specific date for His ministry starting with the sequence of His baptism by John in the River Jordan, His trials over forty days in the wilderness,⁴⁸² His death before the Temple's destruction,⁴⁸³ and His return.⁴⁸⁴
6. Riding on an ass into Jerusalem: *'Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!⁴⁸⁵ Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold thy king cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation,⁴⁸⁶ lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a*

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1. A statement about God's saving act (what God brings to the agreement);
 2. A statement about what God expects from [the other party to the covenant] in response; and
 3. A sign or symbol as a reminder of the covenant.' (unattributable).

The Greek word *pentateuch* was originally applied to a bag which was used to carry scrolls, but later transmuted to meaning the scrolls themselves.

⁴⁷⁷ seen in John 1:1-3, *'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was not made anything that was made.'*

⁴⁷⁸ Micah 5:2

⁴⁷⁹ Isa 7:14

⁴⁸⁰ Psa 2:7

⁴⁸¹ Gen 49:10; q.v. inf. for better translation.

⁴⁸² q.v. Mat 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13; John 1:29-36, esp. v.32b,c, *'I saw the spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.'*

⁴⁸³ Dan 9:26b,c, *'the prince [Hebrew: nagiyd, 'prince,' 'military commander'] that shall come shall destroy both the city and the sanctuary,' viz., both city and Second Temple, this by the Roman Vespasian in 70AD, as admitted by many of the Jews themselves, and as attested by Gill, John, *Gill's Commentary*, Daniel 9:25,26:*

'As many of the Jewish writers themselves interpret it: Aben Ezra, Jarchi, Abarbinel, and Jacchiade....the end of the city and temple, and of the whole nation, should be by the Roman army, which, like a flood, would overspread the land, and carry all before it. It denotes the number, power, and irresistible force of the enemy, and the sad devastation made by them.....and all this appointed and determined by the Lord, as a just punishment for their sins.'

⁴⁸⁴ Dan 9:25,26; q.v. inf. for detail.

colt, the foal of an ass.'⁴⁸⁷ It should be noted that the account of an ass and a colt refers to the she-ass mother of the male colt, but it was upon the latter that Christ rode into Jerusalem. The she-ass would have been led on ahead to ensure the acquiescence of a young colt which had never been ridden.^{488 489}

7. Rejection and trial: *'He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: And we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised and we esteemed him not.'*⁴⁹⁰

8. His death: *'[A]nd He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors,'*⁴⁹¹ confirmed in Mark: *'And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.'*⁴⁹²

9. His resurrection: *'For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.'*⁴⁹³

10. His ascension to heaven: *'Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them.'*⁴⁹⁴

11. His coming in all power as conqueror: *'Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day in the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the*

⁴⁸⁵ Hebrew: Zion, literally, '*the highest point*,' a reference to the foundation stone and the Sanctuary.

⁴⁸⁶ LXX, Targum, and Syriac give '*Saviour*.'

⁴⁸⁷ Zech 9:9; also Mat 21:7; Mark 11:7; Luke 19:35; John 12:14,15; He would have entered through the Sheep Gate in the city's north wall, where the sacrificial sheep entered to access the Temple. The date of His entrance was on a weekly Sabbath: 10 Abib, 30AD; cp. Ex 12:2,3. The Saviour came to save, and not as a king, for that will be later, q.v.inf.

⁴⁸⁸ Zech 9:9

⁴⁸⁹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, pp.117,118 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'John 12:12-16. In such a situation [of the crowds at His glorious entry to Jerusalem] it was obviously impossible for Jesus to speak to the crowd. His voice could not have reached that vast assembly of people. So he did something that all could see; He came riding upon an ass's colt. Now that was two things. First, it was a deliberate claim to be the Messiah. It was a dramatic enactment of the words of Zechariah the prophet (Zech 9:9). John does not quote accurately because obviously he is quoting from memory. Zechariah had said: '*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem, Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on an ass, on a colt the foal of an ass.*' There is no doubt at all that Jesus's claim was a messianic claim.

But, second, it was a claim to be a peculiar kind of Messiah. We must not misunderstand this picture. With us the ass is lowly and despised; but in the East it was a noble animal. Jair, the Judge, had thirty sons who rode on asses' colts (Judg 10:4). Ahithophel rode upon an ass (II Sam 17:23). Mephibosheth, the royal prince, the son of Saul, came to David riding upon an ass (II Sam 19:26). The point is that a king came riding upon a horse when he was bent on war; he came riding upon an ass when he was coming in peace. This action of Jesus is the sign that He was not the warrior figure men dreamed of, but the Prince of Peace.'

⁴⁹⁰ Isa 53:3

⁴⁹¹ Isa 53:12d

⁴⁹² Mark 15:28

⁴⁹³ Psa 16:10

⁴⁹⁴ Psa 68:18

*west and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.*⁴⁹⁵

12. His saving Israel, and defeating the powers of darkness: *'Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.'*⁴⁹⁶

Many of these were fulfilled by Christ at or during His first coming; the balance are those which will be fulfilled at His Second Coming. The book of Revelation recites some of these events and expands upon them in considerable detail.

Later messianic expectation / confirmation

The New Testament, which is also the announcement of the New Covenant, contains the genealogy of Christ,^{497 498} showing fourteen generations from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile in Babylon,

⁴⁹⁵ Zech 14:3,4

⁴⁹⁶ Joel 3:12,14

⁴⁹⁷ Mat 1:1-17

⁴⁹⁸ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, pp.8,9:

'Matthew does more than collect and systematize. It must be remembered that Matthew was writing in an age when printing had not been invented, when books were few and far between because they had to be hand-written. In an age like that, comparatively few people could possess a book; and, therefore, if they wished to know and to use the teaching and the story of Jesus, they had to carry them in their memories.

Matthew therefore always arranges things in a way that is easy for the reader to memorize. He arranges things in threes and sevens....

The genealogy of Jesus with which the gospel begins is a good example of this. The genealogy is to prove that Jesus is the Son of David. In Hebrew there are no figures; when figures are necessary the letters of the alphabet stand for the figures. In Hebrew there are no written vowels. The Hebrew letters for David are DWD; if these letters be taken as figures and not as letters, they add up to fourteen; and the genealogy consists of three groups of names, and in each group there are fourteen names.'

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, p.12 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The Jews were exceedingly interested in genealogies. Matthew called this *'the book of the generation'* (Greek: biblos geneseos) of Jesus Christ. That to the Jews was a common phrase; and it means the record of a man's lineage, with a few explanatory sentences, where such comment was necessary. In the Old Testament we frequently find lists of the generations of famous men (Gen 5:1,10:1,11:10,27). When Josephus, the great Jewish historian wrote his autobiography, he began it with his own pedigree, which, he tells us, he found in the public records.

These genealogical records were actually kept by the Sanhedrin. Herod the Great was always despised by the pure-blooded Jews because he was half an Edomite; and we can see the importance that even Herod attached to these genealogies from the fact that he had the official registers destroyed, so that no one could prove a purer pedigree than his own. This may seem to us an uninteresting passage, but to the Jew it would be a most impressive matter that the pedigree of Jesus could be traced back to Abraham.

The reason for this interest in pedigrees was that the Jews set the greatest possible store on purity of lineage....A priest, for instance, was bound to produce an unbroken record of his pedigree stretching back to Aaron; and, if he married, the woman he married must produce her pedigree for at least five generations back.'

But Jesus' birth was two thousand years ago, and Herod burned the registers. Save for a few of the priestly line who can be traced back to Aaron by their ancestors' writings and deeds down through history, no one today can produce a pedigree extending back to Abraham. Almost all has been lost and obscured.

and fourteen from the exile to Christ. There is also the genealogy contained in Luke⁴⁹⁹ showing the generations from Joseph, the earthly step- or foster father of Christ, back through, amongst others, David, Judah, Joseph, Isaac, Abraham, Shem, Noah, Methuselah, Enoch, and Adam, to God. Even Nicodemus, a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin, came to Jesus under cover of darkness and admitted that, *'Rabbi, we⁵⁰⁰ know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles which thou doest, except God be with him.'*⁵⁰¹ Nicodemus expected the kingdom to appear at that time in external pomp and power, as the notion of the Jews had it, but Christ disabused him of this false view. To this, in due course, there would be added the sign of His Messiahship, given by Christ to an unbelieving generation: the sign of Jonah, that He would be three days and three nights in the grave, *'For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.'*⁵⁰²

In the New Testament, there is much by way of superstructure built on the Old Testament foundations. Jesus was born in the autumn of the year 5BC.⁵⁰³ The shepherds were still on the hill, hence autumn and not winter, and 'BC' due to an error in computation by the Roman Catholic Abbot of Rome, Dionysius Exiguus.⁵⁰⁴ Luke states that Jesus was about thirty when He started His ministry;⁵⁰⁵ therefore it started ca.27AD.⁵⁰⁶ Given the specific date for the commencement of His ministry, we have sixty nine weeks⁵⁰⁷ *'from the going forth of the*

In the eleventh chapter of Revelation, the two witnesses are not identified by careful genealogies, which, at the time of writing, would, of necessity, have had to have been past, present, and future in order to be comprehensive. [But they are identifiable by tribe, and, possibly, by name, q.v. inf.]. When the time comes for their witness and testimony, of course, they will also be clearly identifiable by their deeds and warnings.

⁴⁹⁹ Luke 3:23-38

⁵⁰⁰ members of the Sanhedrin, including his fellow Pharisees.

⁵⁰¹ John 3:1,2; not all Pharisees were members or initiates of the occult belief system: John 9:16, *'Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them.'*

From this it is evident that some Pharisees saw Jesus' miracles as proof of God's Spirit in Him, while others considered that a sinner—who did not, in their eyes, keep the Law—could still perform astounding miracles. The only way that that could pertain would be through the operation of evil spirits—demons; cp. the *'division among the Jews concerning Jesus' powers'* in John 10:19-21—induced by occult practices, supported by Mat 9:34, *'But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.'*

John 9:39-41, *'And Jesus said, For judgement I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be blinded. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.'*

⁵⁰² Mat 12:40; also Luke 11:29

⁵⁰³ King Herod I, also known as Herod the Great, who tried to have the baby Jesus killed, died in the spring of 4BC.

⁵⁰⁴ in 532AD

⁵⁰⁵ Luke 3:23

⁵⁰⁶ q.v. inf.

⁵⁰⁷ *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, pp.96,97 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'How was Jesus anointed?

"God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy [Spirit] and with power." Acts 10:38.

At what time did Jesus receive the special anointing of the Holy Spirit?

"Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the holy [spirit] descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son," Luke 3:21,22.'

What did Jesus say shortly after this?

decree to restore⁵⁰⁸ and rebuild⁵⁰⁹ Jerusalem—given during his seventh regnal year⁵¹⁰ by Artaxerxes I Longimanus⁵¹¹ ⁵¹²—until the Anointed One,⁵¹³ the ruler, comes.’⁵¹⁴ This, on the biblical day-for-a-year principle, gives

“The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.” Luke 4:18; Mark 1:15.

It is evident that the sixty-nine weeks (483 years) were to reach to the baptism of Christ, as that was the time of His anointing by the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist began his work in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius, cf. Luke 3:1-3. Tiberius began to reign conjointly with his father in the year 12AD, two years before his father’s death. (q.v. Prideaux, Humphrey, *An Historical Connection of the Old and New Testaments*, Vol.1, p.246). The fifteenth year of his reign would therefore be 27AD, the time when Jesus was anointed, at His baptism.

When was the decree to restore and build Jerusalem?

“This Ezra went up from Babylon....And there went up some of the children of Israel, and of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinim, unto Jerusalem, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king. And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was in the seventh year of the king.” Ezra 7:6-8.

This Artaxerxes began to reign in 464BC (q.v. Prideaux, Humphrey, *An Historical Connection of the Old and New Testaments*, Vol.1, p.222); the seventh year of his reign would be 458–457BC. Reckoning 483 full years from the first day of 457BC, would bring us to the last day of 26AD. This is demonstrated from the fact that it requires all of the twenty-six years AD, and all of the 457 years BC, to make 483 years....This “seals up,” or makes sure, the prophecy [but q.v. inf. for regnal year effect and the effect of the heralding ministry of John].

Dr. Adam Clarke says: “According to the commandment of the God of Israel. He first gave the order, and stirred up the hearts of the following Persian kings to second that order:

“Of Cyrus. This sovereign gave his orders for the rebuilding of the temple about AM3468 (536BC).

“And Darius. Darius Hystaspes confirmed the above order, AM3485 (519BC).

“And Artaxerxes. Artaxerxes Longimanus sent Ezra to Judæa with new privileges, AM3547 (457BC). The letter of Artaxerxes to Ezra, conferring upon him authority to do this work, is found in Ezra 7:11-26.’

⁵⁰⁸ Hebrew: shuwb, ‘return,’ in a spatial sense, or, taken with banah, q.v. inf., ‘reinstate.’

⁵⁰⁹ Hebrew: banah, ‘build.’

⁵¹⁰ King Accession Year (B.C.) Regnal Year (B.C.):

Cyrus II	539–538	538–537
Artaxerxes I	465–464	464–463
Darius II	424–423	423–422

The regnal year is very important. It is the year that the Old Testament Bible writers from the Babylonian captivity onward use for dating events. The Bible in Ezra 7 says that it was in the seventh year of the reign of King Artaxerxes (I) when he issued the decree. Ezra intimates to count seven years from the year 464–463BC forwards—Jewish years usually started about the end of March by the Julian / Gregorian calendar, which is why the regnal and accession years cross over years on that calendar. Counting 464–463BC as the first year, would take you to 458–457BC. Ezra went to Jerusalem in 458BC, and it was then that Ezra could enforce the decree. Therefore, 458–457BC is the date to consider for the arrival of Ezra in Jerusalem and beginning of enforcement of the decree of king Artaxerxes I. [Dan 9:25b, ‘that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem’ appears to imply that it was not the mere verbal edict or written issue of the commandment that was to start the timeline, but its arrival in Jerusalem with Ezra, which happened on the first day the fifth month of that year, approximately corresponding to some day in the seventh or, more probably, the eighth month of the Julian / Gregorian calendar in use today].

This is reflected in *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Article 1827:

‘In the seventh year of Artaxerxes I (458 BC) the Babylonian Jews requested that permission should be given to the priest Ezra to visit Palestine, with full power over the Jews there, and to enforce the book of the Law as the will of the king. How the king acceded to this request, and how Ezra endeavoured to carry out his mission, are well known. Ezra first took strong measures against the mixed marriages, coming thereby into conflict with “the people of the land,” the Samaritans and their allies. To protect himself against them, Ezra undertook to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Permission for this was not contained in the commission he had received from the king; accordingly the Samaritans and their governor, Rehum, interfered and addressed a letter to the king, given in Ezra 4:7. The king, who had no doubt been informed of the former importance of the rebellious city and the danger which its refortification might threaten to his revenues, issued orders that the rebuilding of the walls must stop (Ezra 4:17). The triumph of the Samaritans was complete; the walls were torn down, and the gates were burnt (Neh 1:3). Such was the condition of the city when, in

sixty-nine weeks of days: four hundred and eighty-three years. Four hundred and eighty-three years from 458–457BC gives 27AD, the time of Christ's heralding by John and His baptism and the start of His ministry. No other party, no other person, no other authority, fits these dates. What was prophesied through Daniel in the

Kislev of the twentieth year (December, 446), Nehemiah, the king's cupbearer, received information from his brethren concerning it. The Bible narrative tells how he succeeded in being sent as governor to Judea, and how he immediately (summer of 445) set energetically to work to restore the fortifications, thus enabling Ezra, through the influence of his authority, to establish the book of the Torah as the law binding upon the Jews. Nehemiah returned to court in 433 (Neh 5:14,8:6), but was despatched to Judea a second time to counteract certain evils which had arisen.'

The dates for Artaxerxes I's reign are usually given as 465 to 425 or 424BC. It is widely accepted that Artaxerxes ascended the Persian throne sometime between 4 and 10 August, 465BC. His ascension year ended on 12 April, 464BC, which, in the Persian system, gives 464 for his first regnal year, starting the following day, 13 April. His seventh year (q.v. Ezra 7:7,8), therefore, would run from spring 458 to spring 457. The text of Ezra chapter seven seems to imply that the king's decree was issued in 458—for Ezra started out on the very day of Rosh Hashanah, the first day of the first month, and arrived in Jerusalem in the fifth month (q.v. Ezra 7:8,9; also cf. Dan 9:25, where Hebrew: *mowtsa*, 'going forth,' can mean variously 'utterance,' 'issue,' or 'going out')—and not in 457BC. If an administrative year is assumed for computation, starting in the autumn, then the issue becomes exacerbated, for the king's regnal year would then have started in autumn 465BC. Also, it is unlikely in the extreme that Ezra, a priest, would ever have used a profane administrative or secular calendar in preference to the sacred calendar, which has the year starting in spring. Therefore the fifth month, in the Persian system of the time, would fall in autumn, 458, posing an apparent discrepancy of one year for the Messiah's coming. If the 'coming' is taken to the date of John's heralding, q.v., however, with John's work forming part of that 'coming,' the apparent discrepancy is effectively removed. The other decrees or orders in Ezra / Nehemiah, namely, those of Cyrus in 538 or 536BC (q.v. Ezra 6:3f.); Darius I's confirmatory order, rather than a new decree, in 519BC (q.v. Ezra 6:1,12); and Artaxerxes' in his twentieth year in 446–445BC (q.v. Neh 2:1-9) have no relevance for the purpose of computation in relation to Dan 9:25,26.

Some play has been made of the existence of an *atnach* (otherwise *atnachta*, *etnach*, or *etnachta*; a sublinear '˘,' essentially an inverted 'v') in the Hebrew of Dan 9:25, which appears after 'seven weeks.' It is claimed that this is a fully restrictive, disjunctive device, rendering the passage to mean that after seven weeks of years, an anointed one (almost exclusively seen as the Messiah) would appear. But that runs into difficulty in the following verse where the Messiah is stated as appearing 'after the sixty and two weeks.' An *atnach* in Hebrew, which divides a passage into smaller units of meaning and which may give an important source for exegesis, in grammatical terms corresponds to the semi-colon in English (which serves as a pause or break in the reading, separating major sentence elements, used between two closely related independent clauses with the second often restating an idea expressed in the first, or expanding upon it). In v.25, the exegetical impact is great, since the *atnach* is an emphatic device to signal the significance of the passage of seven weeks of years, viz., forty-nine years. By that time, the rebuilding or reinstatement of the broad places (rather than streets) and the walls (rather than ditch) of Jerusalem would be practically complete, and the Messiah would be expected to appear after a further period of sixty-two weeks of years, or four hundred and thirty four years; cp. Gill, John, *Gill's Bible Commentary* on Daniel 9:25. In other words, just as the second clause presages and times a most significant prophetic event, the first previews and times another, much less significant: the practical completion of the rebuilding of key elements of the ancient city of Jerusalem.

Many mainstream Christian expositors hold that the 'seven' or 'week' represents a prophetic year of 360 days, but there is no Old Testament ground for this (cf. discussion of Days of Noah, inf.). The basis for their assumption is retrospective, in that in Revelation, in the New Testament, the final, climatic period, the 'seventieth week,' involving the activities of the Antichrist, is constituted on the basis of seven 360-day years. So why the change, or why the apparent discrepancy? The actual difference in duration over the final week of seven years is thirty-seven days, including two leap years, over the period 2020–2027 (q.v. inf.). Since that final hebdomad or period of seven years does not, of itself, constitute the entire of the end period events—e.g. it excludes the 109 days of the wedding feast in the air, and the two further periods of 30 and 45 days, and, indeed, the residual time till the start of the Millennium of Rest on Rosh Hashanah in the spring of 2028 (q.v. inf.)—it becomes insignificant, given the greater detail and scope of the end-time prophetic account in Revelation.

⁵¹¹ in 458–457BC

⁵¹² according to the Persian eponym and the book of Daniel, in 457–456BC, Artaxerxes took sole reign and made a decree, recorded in Ezra, concerning the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem, etc.; also cf. Ezra 7:6,7.

⁵¹³ Acts 10:38a, 'God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power'—Greek: *dunamis*, 'force.'

⁵¹⁴ Dan 9:25,26

sixth-century BC came to pass in the very person of Jesus Christ the Son of God, in 27AD, exactly.⁵¹⁵ His ministry was to last approximately three years. In the parable of the fig tree in the vineyard,⁵¹⁶ Christ implies this duration in the three years that the fig tree had gone without bringing forth fruit, with another year (or season) being allowed the barren tree (i.e., the Jews, His own people, who had rejected Him), that He, the Dresser, might dig it about, and dung it, in hopes of it bearing fruit. If it failed, it would be cut down thereafter. Sadly, it did fail, and it was cut down.

Some form of reference to a messianic expectancy at about the time of Christ by the Jews can be appreciated from Golb:⁵¹⁷ '....simultaneously with the publication in the New York Times⁵¹⁸ of a report on a scroll fragment freshly deciphered by Professor Michael Wise of the University of Chicago. Working in collaboration with him, Professor Robert Eisenman of California State University had concluded that its six broken lines contained a reference to the death of a messianic figure by "piercings." In one possible translation, the crucial line of the fragment read, "And they shall slay the Prince of the Congregation," which could be taken to describe a messianic figure. This line, when considered with other new scroll texts, could possibly cast further light on messianic thinking among the Jews just prior to the birth of Christianity.'

Another link to the Word, and by implication to the Messiah, is found in the Targum of Onkelos, a Jewish translation of the Pentateuch into Aramaic, the oldest in date, which has the action of God constantly though not consistently referred to as '*His Word*'.⁵¹⁹ Thus God, the Father, '*made a covenant between Abraham and His Word*,' and, tellingly, at Bethel, Jacob made a covenant that '*the Word of the Lord should be His God*.'

Ecce signum

'The coming of a Saviour, which was the hope of Israel, and the expectation of the Jews throughout all their ages, is frequently foretold in Old Testament Scriptures. They represent it as announced by the voice of God to the first human pair, and as forming, from the first to the last, the theme of the prophets. However imperfect a summary view of such numerous prophecies must be, with the principal subject matter in hand being Revelation itself, the more direct and immediate proofs are now scrutinised in more detail to show how clearly they testify of our Lord Jesus Christ. In particular, the leading features of Old Testament prophecies concerning Christ, and their fulfilment, will be traced as they mark the time of His appearance; the place of His birth; the family out of which He was to arise; His life, character, suffering and death; the nature of His doctrine; and the nature and extent of His kingdom.

⁵¹⁵ Christ's ministry commencement is determined more accurately using Ezekiel's dates to 27AD, q.v.inf.

⁵¹⁶ Luke 13:6-9

⁵¹⁷ Golb, Norman, '*Who Wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?*' p.239

⁵¹⁸ 8 November, 1991

⁵¹⁹ Aramaic: Memra.

The time of the Messiah's appearance in the world, as predicted in the Old Testament, is defined by a number of concurring circumstances that fix it to the very date of the ministry of Christ. *'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver to cease from among his descendants, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.'*⁵²⁰ A messenger was to appear before Him, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, to prepare His way.⁵²¹ ⁵²² A specified period, marked according to similar computations in the Holy Scriptures, by weeks of years, each day for a year, as discussed above, was set from the going forth of the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem, after the Babylonian captivity, unto Messiah the prince.⁵²³

A king had reigned over the Jews in their own land, though the ten tribes had long ceased to be a kingdom in the land. Their national council, the members of which were lineally descended from Judah, exercised its authority and power. The Second Temple was standing and the oblations and sacrifices, according to what is usually termed the Law of Moses, were there duly and daily offered up, in the main, and the time prescribed for the coming of the Messiah had drawn nigh to its close at the very commencement of Christ's ministry. Shortly before the public ministry of Christ, a messenger appeared to prepare His way; the son of a Levite. Josephus speaks of the blameless life and cruel death of 'John that was called the baptist,' and describes his preaching of virtue, and baptism with water.⁵²⁴ Such were the events, recorded at the time.

But every mark that denoted the fullness of the time, and of its signs, when the Messiah was to appear, was erased soon after the death of Christ, and being fixed to that single period, they could be no more restored again than time past could return. The tribe of Judah went into captivity, banished from its own land, and subjected to every oppression. Of the Temple, one stone was not left upon another. The sacrifice and oblation, which none but the priests could offer, altogether ceased. Thus the Jews had neither country, nor Temple, nor priest therein, nor altar. Ere Jerusalem was destroyed, or desolation had passed over the land of Judæa, the expectation was universal among the Jews that their Messiah was then to appear; and even heathen historians testify of the belief then prevalent over the whole Middle East that the ancient prophecies bore a direct and express reference to that period. And the question might now go to the Jews, however loath to abandon their long cherished hope, how can these prophecies be true, if the Messiah be not come? Or where, from the first word of Moses to the last of Malachi, can there be found such marks of the time when Shiloh was to come, or Messiah the prince to be cut off, as pertained to the period when Jesus Christ ministered and was crucified: the very period which closed over the glory of Judah?

⁵²⁰ Gen 49:10

⁵²¹ Isa 40:3; Mal 3:1; 4:5

⁵²² Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.287 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'It was [John's] function to be pre-eminently the witness to Christ.'

⁵²³ Dan 9:25; q.v. inf.

⁵²⁴ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 18.5

Though the countrymen of Christ when He came would not receive Him, yet it was of Judah that Jesus was to come, and the human lineage of the Messiah is as clearly marked in the prophecies as the time of His appearance. The divinity of the person of the Messiah, and His taking upon Himself the likeness of sinful flesh, is declared in the Old Testament as well as the New. He whose name was to be called the Wonderful, the Counsellor,⁵²⁵ the Mighty God, was to become a child that was to be born, a Son that was to be given.⁵²⁶ It was the Seed of the woman that was to bruise the serpent's head.^{527 528} The line of His descent, according to the flesh, and the place of His birth, was expressly foretold. It was in the Seed of Abraham that all the nations of the earth were to be blessed.⁵²⁹ It was from the midst of the Israelites, of their brethren, that a prophet like unto Moses was to arise.⁵³⁰ And He was to be not only of the tribe of Judah,⁵³¹ but also of the house of the family of David. From the root of Jesse a branch was to grow up, on which the Spirit of the Lord was to rest, and to which the Gentiles would seek.⁵³² Indeed, it was unto King David that a righteous branch was to arise; a King, whose name was to be called The Lord our Righteousness.⁵³³ And it was in Bethlehem Ephratah, in the land of Judah, little as it was among the thousands of Israel, that He was to come, born of a virgin,⁵³⁴ whose goings forth had been told of old from everlasting.⁵³⁵ Prophesied was His rejection and trial,⁵³⁶ His death,⁵³⁷ His resurrection,⁵³⁸ His ascension to heaven,⁵³⁹ and His eventual coming again in all power as conqueror.⁵⁴⁰

And Christ is He alone of the seed of the woman, born of a virgin, of the descendants of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, of the house of David, in whom all the families of the earth can be blessed; to whom the Gentiles seek, and who, ere the family genealogies of the Jews were lost, was shown by them to be born of the line-

⁵²⁵ better without the added comma, viz., 'Wonderful Counsellor,' cf. Isa 9:6d

⁵²⁶ Isa 9:6

⁵²⁷ Gen 3:15, the 'seed' being Christ, born of a virgin, begotten of the Holy Spirit, and not of man.

⁵²⁸ McDowell, Josh, *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, p.112:

'The first prophecy concerning Christ's coming is Gen 3:15. In this verse God says that the seed of the woman shall crush the head of the serpent. Thus, the Deliverer would come of the woman's seed, not of man's seed as is biologically accepted.

A clearer prophecy occurs in Isa 7:14 which states that "*a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel*" (K.J.V.). This is very specific in that the reference is to a virgin. This, most logically, refers to the woman in Gen 3:15....

Also, in Isa 7:14, the birth is said to be a "*sign*" from the "*Lord Himself*." This is certainly unique in that this could be no ordinary birth. Thus, we can see that the doctrine of the virgin birth presented in the Gospel is in accord with earlier Scriptural teachings.'

⁵²⁹ Gen 22:18

⁵³⁰ Deut 18:15

⁵³¹ Gen 49:8

⁵³² Isa 11:1-10; Zech 3:8b

⁵³³ Jer 23:5,6

⁵³⁴ Isa 7:14

⁵³⁵ Micah 5:2

⁵³⁶ Isa 53:3

⁵³⁷ Isa 53:12

⁵³⁸ Psa 16:10

⁵³⁹ Psa 68:18

⁵⁴⁰ Zech 14:3,4

age of David,⁵⁴¹ and in the town of Bethlehem. There is no room for any doubt on this: Christ was the Messiah, Christ is the Messiah, and Christ will be our glorious, all-conquering Messiah at His soon-to-be Second Coming. Ecce signum⁵⁴²

The last three verses of Isaiah chapter fifty-two and the whole of Isaiah chapter fifty-three, written about seven hundred years before Christ, and forming, word for word, a part both of the Jewish and the Christian belief, prophetically describe, like a very history of the facts, the sufferings and death of Christ; His rejection by the Jews; His humility, His meekness, His affliction and His agony; how His words were disbelieved; how His state was lowly; how His sorrow was severe; allegedly how His visage and form were marred⁵⁴³ more than the sons of men; and how He opened not His mouth but to make intercession for the transgressors. And all of that by divine condescendence, from before the world was formed.⁵⁴⁴

In direct opposition to every dispensation of providence, which is registered in these two chapters of Isaiah, this prophecy represents spotless innocence suffering by the appointment of heaven; death as the issue of perfect obedience; God's righteous servant as seemingly forsaken for a moment; and One who was perfectly immaculate bearing the chastisement for the sins of the guilty of all mankind, past, present and future; by virtue of His sacrifice, sprinkling many nations from their iniquity; justifying many by His knowledge; and dividing a portion with the great, the spoil with the strong, because He hath poured out His body and blood unto death.

The prophecies concerning the humiliation, the sufferings, and the cutting off of the Messiah, need only to be read to attest of their accuracy and truth. For thus it was written, and thus Christ suffered, according to the Scriptures. And those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets that the Messiah should suffer, Christ hath so fulfilled. The prophecies that testify of the sufferings of the Messiah need no forced interpretation, but apply, in a plain and literal manner, to the history of the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ.

That He was to make a full and clear revelation of the will of God, completing the religious belief, was frequently and explicitly foretold.⁵⁴⁵ The words of God were to be put into His mouth, and whoever would not hearken unto Him, God would require it of them. He was to be given for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, in order that they may see.

The teaching of Christ is pure, spiritual, perfect, and adapted alike to all. It is a revelation of the counsel of God; a revelation of the kingdom. The doctrine of the gospel is altogether a doctrine according to Godliness; its very excellence and perfection is a stumbling-block to detractors and unbelievers alike. There is not a sin,

⁵⁴¹ Mat 1:1-17

⁵⁴² Latin: 'behold the proof.'

⁵⁴³ The K.J.V.'s rendering of Isa 52:14, '*As many as were astonished at thee: his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men,*' is not supported by the LXX, which has the by far more biblically-compatible and coherent: '*So shall thy face be without glory from men, and thy glory shall not be honoured by the sons of men.*'

⁵⁴⁴ I Peter 1:19-21

⁵⁴⁵ Deut 18:18,19; Isa 4:3,4,9:6,7,11:1-5,42:6; Jer 31:31-34; Ezek 34:23,24

which it does not reprobate, nor a virtue, which it does not inculcate. And too pure and perfect it would for man indeed, were not propitiation and reconciliation made, and redemption found.

But the complete revelation of the will of God, which of itself would have pointed out a way of holiness that men could never have discovered unaided, or have even hoped to travel, was to be accompanied by a revelation of the grace, mercy, and holy purposes of God towards mankind. In fulfilment of the prophetic character and office of the Messiah, Christ announced salvation. Never was any other like Christ to preach the good news of the kingdom of God, the gospel; to bind up the broken hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captive, the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to comfort them that mourn; to give to those who seek true consolation amid the evils of this world; to give the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. And none other ever so proclaimed either the acceptable year of the Lord, or the day of Judgement of our God.⁵⁴⁶ What many wise men of old sought to know, Jesus Christ taught. What they desired to see, He revealed.

It was prophesied that He shall be for a sanctuary, but for a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to both of the houses of Israel; for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. *'Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?'*⁵⁴⁷ Both Jew and professing mainstream Christian alike were to stumble, and will continue to stumble, until the end of this dispensation.

Further proof

Still for the future [by now, near future], are other prophecies in the Old Testament, accurately reflected and illuminated in the book of Revelation: *'The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His anointed;'*⁵⁴⁸ *'to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship;'*⁵⁴⁹ *'the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising;'*⁵⁵⁰ *'the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness; a people that know me not shall be called after my name. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that know not thee shall run unto thee.'*⁵⁵¹ The final extension of the gospel over all the earth is the theme of many prophecies,⁵⁵² while it is also clearly implied in others, that a long period was to elapse before the reign of darkness was to cease, or the veil to be taken off of the nations.

⁵⁴⁶ Isa 61:1,2a; He came to save, that is why He closed the scroll immediately before *'the day of vengeance of the Lord'*; it is why He departed alone into a mountain after feeding the 5,000 because the people were minded to force Him to be king, cf. John 6:15, and it is why He rode into Jerusalem on a foal. A king came riding upon a horse when bent on war, he came riding upon an ass when coming in peace. The King was coming on His own terms, as the Prince of Peace.

⁵⁴⁷ Isa 8:14; 53:1

⁵⁴⁸ Psa 2:2; Mat 10:17; 16:18; 24:9-14

⁵⁴⁹ Isa 49:7e

⁵⁵⁰ Isa 49:7-23

⁵⁵¹ Isa 11:10; 55:5.

⁵⁵² Isa 2:2,3,25; 7,35:1,2,40:5,42:4,52:10,54:1-5,55:5,65:1; Psa 2:8,22:27,28,72:8,17; Hosea 1:10; Micah 4:1

After the Messiah was to be cut off, and the city of Jerusalem and the sanctuary to be destroyed, desolations, even to the consummation and until judgement should come upon the desolator, were determined;⁵⁵³ the children of Israel were to abide many days without a sacrifice; desolations of many generations were to pass over the land of Judæa; Jerusalem was to be trodden down of the Gentiles, and religious blindness was to happen to Israel, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. A great apostasy was to arise, and to prevail until a time set of God,⁵⁵⁴ before the stone that was to be cut out without hands was to become a great kingdom, and fill the whole earth. In the last days it should arise that the mountain of the Lord's house would be finally established and exalted above all, and all nations would flow unto it.⁵⁵⁵ That there could be no single messianic coming is abundantly evident, as many of these prophecies would be mutually exclusive and become confused. But, as has been said, God is not the author of confusion; that opprobrious title, *inter alia*, is reserved to Satan.

After the crucifixion and resurrection, the day of Pentecost and the conferring of the Holy Spirit, the real start of the Christian church era, Peter proved Christ to be the Messiah: *'Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as you yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we are all witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath*

⁵⁵³ cf. inf.

⁵⁵⁴ Mosheim, Johann Lorenz, *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Christian churches had scarcely been gathered and organized, when here and there men rose up, who, not being contented with the simplicity [sic] and purity of that religion which the apostles taught, sought out new inventions and fashioned religion according to their own liking.'

⁵⁵⁵ Dan 2:44,45,9:27; Hosea 3:4; Isa 2:2,3,61:4; Micah 4:1; Luke 21:20-24; Rom 11:25,26; II Thes 2:1-12

made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.'⁵⁵⁶ By this means, Peter showed and proved from Scripture to the men of Israel that Jesus Christ was the Messiah.

Further proof of the Messiah is given in Luke's account: *'And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.'*⁵⁵⁷ *And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.'*⁵⁵⁸ And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the Temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, Then took he then him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rise again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel,⁵⁵⁹ *of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in at that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth. And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.'*^{560 561}

This is a record of a witness given in the Temple at Jerusalem, by one named Simeon, who, being filled with the Holy Spirit, correctly identified the boy-child as the Lord's Messiah. The period of Mary's uncleanness had lasted forty days from Jesus' birth.⁵⁶²

⁵⁵⁶ Acts 2:22-36; the referenced passages in the Psalms of David: Psalms 16:8-11, 110:1

⁵⁵⁷ Jer 31:2c, 'A woman shall compass a man' is seen as a Messianic prophecy (human incarnation) by certain Jewish sages and Christian commentators, and by others, more realistically, in context, as instead of shunning and despising her husband, Israel, Jehovah's bride, in due course, and with eager affection, will press around her Divine husband.

⁵⁵⁸ by dint of that sacrifice being made, it is patent that the sacrifice of purification was for the woman, not the child, for the baby Jesus was immaculate, not needing any substitutionary sacrifice.

⁵⁵⁹ Greek; phanouel, from Hebrew, penuwel, 'face of God.'

⁵⁶⁰ Luke 2:21-40 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁵⁶¹ the sacrifice according to the Law of Moses is a reference to Lev 12:6-8

⁵⁶² for a female child it would have been eighty days.

Word—High Priest—Son—Saviour

Now however brief and very imperfect this summary of the prophecies relative to the fundamental belief of the Christian faith and to Christ may be, given the extent and scope of biblical prophecy concerning the Messiah,⁵⁶³ it is meet to consider these subjects of ancient prophecy as bearing testimony to Christ as our Saviour, for if Christ be not our Saviour, all mankind is lost, and God has deceived us. But if this could ever be so, why, then, were so many prophecies delivered? Why, from the calling of Abraham to the present time, have the Jews been separated, as a peculiar people, from all the nations of the earth? Why, through all the ages of the ancient prophets, was there testimony of a Saviour that was to come? Why was Old Testament prophecy sealed about four hundred years before the coming of Christ? Why were these prophecies preserved, so accurately, right down to the present day? Why was such a multitude of facts foretold that are applicable to Christ and to Him alone? Why?—but that all this mighty preparation might usher in the gospel of righteousness and the hope of redemption and salvation, and prepare the way for the kingdom of God. And that true Christians also, in every age, might add to their *'peace and joy in believing'* through perfect trust, that however great the promises of God may be, they still are sure; and that He who spared not his own Son, but gave Him up for us all, will with Him also, if His we be, freely give us all things promised. And if we ever read any book of Scripture for any object, ought we not diligently to search them, to see how clearly they testify of Christ? And ought not every word of such testimony to be, like all Scripture, profitable for doctrine and instruction in righteousness? And may it not be profitable *'for reproof and for correction'* to all who are mindful only of earthly things; who are eager to seek only after unprofitable knowledge; who could speak, with all volubility, of the temporal concerns of others or their own; who could expatiate freely on the properties and desirability in their own eyes of the material world and their material possessions; but who remain wholly ignorant of the value of the treasures contained in the Scriptures, or of the fullness of the testimony that God has given of His Son.

Surely not one of us, be he right minded, would wilfully refrain from searching the Scriptures to see how they testify of Christ, or from seeking the words of eternal life which may be found in them. Who could remain wilfully ignorant of this knowledge and the salvation attendant, and fail to lay to heart the thought that the Second Coming of Christ *'to judge the quick and the dead,'* is as certain as the prophetic tidings of his first advent; once heard afar off, but now proved true?⁵⁶⁴

But there is much more than even this, for it can be proved from Scripture that Melchisedec—meaning King of Righteousness—was none other than the Word, a theophany, later incarnated as Jesus Christ.

The third heaven is the heaven of God's throne where, Christ, today, is the only One who has the right to be in that heaven with the Father. The original earthly tabernacle, under the Old Covenant, with its most holy

⁵⁶³ for the sake of brevity, these have been massively foreshortened from the original listing.

⁵⁶⁴ Keith, Alexander, *The Evidence of Prophecy*, pp.52f.

place, the Holy of Holies, was a type of the throne of God in heaven. Only the high priest, a foreshadow of Christ as our High Priest now, was allowed to enter. *'Now of the things of which we have spoken, this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man hath somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount.'*⁵⁶⁵

The identity of our High Priest is obvious.⁵⁶⁶ The identity is further confirmed in the seventh chapter of Hebrews and this also illuminates the identity of Melchisedek, who appears but briefly in the Old Testament: *'And Melchisedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth,'*⁵⁶⁷ and *'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at mine right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.'*⁵⁶⁸

The account in Genesis relates that Melchizedek met Abram when returning from the slaughter of the kings. He is described as *'king of Salem,'* later to become Jerusalem, and *'the priest of the most high God.'* The capture of Lot during the battle at Sodom between four northern kings and five southern kings caused Abram, together with three hundred and eighteen men, to pursue them. After defeating them near Damascus, he turned south with the people and the goods which had been plundered. Melchisedek brought out food to feed them, and blessed Abram. The tract in Psalms identifies this priest of the order of Melchizedec as the Lord.

Paul's epistle to the Hebrews⁵⁶⁹ scrutinises the identity of Melchizedec (Melchisedek) closely: *'For this Melchizedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a*

⁵⁶⁵ Heb 8:1-5

⁵⁶⁶ Heb 8:1,2

⁵⁶⁷ Gen 14:18-20

⁵⁶⁸ Psa 110:1-4

⁵⁶⁹ some doubt that Paul wrote all—or perhaps any—of the epistle, founding in part on Heb 9:8, *'The Holy Spirit this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing.'* Paul was executed after the Great Fire of Rome (19 July, 64AD), probably in 67AD. The Second Temple wasn't demolished by the Romans until 70AD. Given the wording of the text, however, the contention remains moot.

priest continually. Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils. And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham. But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better. And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth. And as I may so say, Levi also, who received tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met them.⁵⁷⁰ He identifies this Melchizedek as 'pertaining to another tribe...out of Judah....a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec ...Jesus....a surety of a better testament....sav[ing] men.'⁵⁷¹

Melchisedec was the Word, later Christ. Paul clearly perceived the figure of Christ in Melchisedec and expressed the commonality. The phrase '*first being by interpretation King of righteousness*' is better rendered, '*first being by the translation of his name King of righteousness*'.⁵⁷² His name means King of righteousness and, as King of Salem, King of peace. Without descent, without genealogy, abiding a priest continually; made like unto the Son of God. Here the inspired phrase '*made like unto the Son of God*' is from the Greek meaning '*resembles unto the Son of God*'.⁵⁷³ He '*abideth a priest continually*,' agreeing with, '*Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedek*'.⁵⁷⁴ No mortal man could possibly satisfy these descriptions. It follows that Melchizedek was a theophany: the very appearance of the Word, later Christ, Himself.

To deny the divinity of the Messiah, as mentioned previously, is no more than yet another attack on true Judæo-Christian belief, one that strikes at the very core. So-called Christian seminaries, universities, and other places of theological learning and study have been remarkably eager to adopt this heretical denial of divinity, while all the while, in confused ambivalence and apostasy, still viewing themselves as being cloaked in the mantle of Christ.

As a rebuttal to these unfounded yet fashionable claims, the Bible stands immutable. And yet the coming of the Messiah was not simple to accomplish, given the range and content of the prophecies given in the Old Testament. While the following may be, in part, a repetition of that going before, its approach is a little different, in that it deals with the extreme complexity of fulfilling certain prophecies concerning the Messiah, and so has been formulated separately.

⁵⁷⁰ Heb 7:1-10

⁵⁷¹ Heb 7:11-25

⁵⁷² N.A.B.S.; Greek: hermeneuomenas.

⁵⁷³ Greek: aphomoiomenos.

⁵⁷⁴ Psa 110:4

Virgin birth

As to the modus of His birth: *'The Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.'*⁵⁷⁵ Further detail is given later in the same book, Isaiah: *'For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful,*⁵⁷⁶ *Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgement and justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this,'*⁵⁷⁷ and *'Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.'*⁵⁷⁸ The latter had to be, since the pain of childbirth suffered by women is a direct result of the sin of Eve: *'For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing,*⁵⁷⁹ *if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.'*⁵⁸⁰ The pain is amply described: *'Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs.'*⁵⁸¹ With Jesus there is no sin, and hence, no pain in the childbirth was possible.

Some would contend that the reference to a virgin in Isaiah is, in reality, merely a reference to a maid;⁵⁸² this deriving from the Hebrew,⁵⁸³ which can be translated 'damsel,' 'maid,' or 'virgin.' The corollary supporting the virgin translation and meaning is evident, in the first instance, from the actual embedded meaning of the word, a veiled or private lass.⁵⁸⁴ This, in turn, is the feminine equivalent of the Hebrew meaning something kept out of sight.⁵⁸⁵ Young females were kept out of sight, veiled as it were, because they were virgins, in order to protect and honour their virginity. The eventual announcement by the angel of the Lord⁵⁸⁶ of the virgin birth—from the Greek meaning a maiden,⁵⁸⁷ related to the Greek meaning virginity,⁵⁸⁸ and thus, by implication, an unmarried daughter, a virgin—was brought about when one, Mary, a virgin, conceived by the Holy Spirit, and brought forth Jesus. The entire is recorded and clarified in the opening Gospel: *'Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together,*

⁵⁷⁵ Isa 7:14

⁵⁷⁶ as noted previously, better with deleted comma, thus giving four couplets.

⁵⁷⁷ Isa 9:6,7

⁵⁷⁸ Isa 66:7

⁵⁷⁹ literally, 'kept safe through the childbearing.'

⁵⁸⁰ I Tim 2:13-15

⁵⁸¹ Isa 26:17

⁵⁸² the common disclaimer of Judaism.

⁵⁸³ Hebrew: almah.

⁵⁸⁴ q.v. 'Isaiah 7:14 – 'Almah''

⁵⁸⁵ Hebrew: elem.

⁵⁸⁶ Mat 1:23

⁵⁸⁷ Greek: parthenos.

⁵⁸⁸ Greek: parthenia.

she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins. (Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is, God with us.) Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel had bidden him, and took unto him his wife; And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.⁵⁸⁹

In order to fulfil these amazing prophecies, given off some seven hundred years before their fulfilment, God performed what might be described as a 'biological miracle,' and the Messiah was conceived by the Holy Spirit, as predicted by Gabriel: *'And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail! Thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women! And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, the Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.'*⁵⁹⁰

Even the wise men of old knew this, and the ancient apostates and pagans subverted it for their own purposes, principally to divert mankind from the truth. "Almost all the Tartar princes," says Salverté⁵⁹¹ "trace their genealogy to a celestial virgin, impregnated by a sun-beam, or some equally miraculous means." In India, the mother of Surya, the sun-god, who was born to destroy the enemies of the gods, is said to have become pregnant in this way, a beam of the sun having entered her womb, in consequence of which she brought forth the sun-god. Now the knowledge of this widely diffused myth casts light on the secret meaning of the name Aurora, given to the wife of Orion, to whose marriage with that "mighty hunter" Homer refers.⁵⁹² While the name Aurora, in the physical sense, signifies also "pregnant with light;" and from "ohra," "to conceive" or be

⁵⁸⁹ Mat 1:18-25

⁵⁹⁰ Luke 1:26-35

⁵⁹¹ Salverté, *Des Sciences Occultes*, Appendix, Note A, section xii, p.490

⁵⁹² Homer, *Odyssey*, lib. v. ll. pp.120,121

"pregnant," we have in Greek, the word for a wife.⁵⁹³ As Orion, according to Persian accounts, was Nimrod; and Nimrod, under the name of Ninus,⁵⁹⁴ was worshipped as the son of his wife, when he came to be deified as the sun-god, that name Aurora, as applied to his wife, is evidently intended to convey the very same idea as prevails in Tartary and India. These myths of the Tartars and Hindoos clearly prove that the Pagan idea of the miraculous conception had not come from any intermixture of Christianity with that superstition, but directly from the promise of "the seed of the woman." But how, it may be asked, could the idea of being pregnant with a sunbeam arise? There is reason to believe that it came from one of the natural names of the sun. From the Chaldean zhr, "to shine," comes, in the participle active, zuhro or zuhre, "the Shiner;" and hence, no doubt, from zuhro, "the Shiner," under the prompting of a designing priesthood, men would slide into the idea of zuro, "the seed"—"the Shiner" and "the seed," according to the genius of Paganism, being thus identified. This was manifestly the case in Persia, where the sun was the great divinity; for the "Persians," says Maurice, "called God Suré."⁵⁹⁵ ⁵⁹⁶ Moreover, the Babylonian Semiramis, the mother and wife of Nimrod,⁵⁹⁷ was portrayed as being the virgin mother of the 'seed,' in that wholesale, pagan subversion of the truth.

By comparison, the truth, on cursory inspection, appears even more convoluted than all heretofore. God, in the person of God the Son, came to earth in human, mortal form: *'the Son of the Highest'* became Mary's son, and *'God was made manifest in the flesh,'* ⁵⁹⁸ and all this even though *'Mary knew not a man.'*⁵⁹⁹ Not only was the Messiah to be the Son of God, born mortal, the son of a virgin, He was, in some mysterious way, also to be *'the seed of the woman,'*⁶⁰⁰ *'the Son of God,'*⁶⁰¹ *'the seed of Abraham,'*⁶⁰² and had to inherit a specific throne: *'The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David: he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy [David's] body, will I set upon thy throne.'*⁶⁰³

And from whence did He come? And the response is another involved prediction. Prophecy says, *'Out of Bethlehem shall he come forth....who is to be ruler over Israel.'*⁶⁰⁴ But another prophecy says, *'Out of Egypt I have called my Son.'*⁶⁰⁵ Yet another prophecy was well known and spoken of much, *'And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of by the prophets, He shall be called a*

⁵⁹³ Greek: ὄψις.

⁵⁹⁴ worshipped as Zoroashta, 'the seed of the woman.'

⁵⁹⁵ *Antiquities*, vol. v. P.22

⁵⁹⁶ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, pp.88,305, under the heading 'The Virgin Mother of Paganism.'

⁵⁹⁷ Holmes, Charles, *Freemasonry in Tuscany and Valdelsa*:

'The symbol of the city of Florence is the Fleur di Lis which is said to be the symbol of Nimrod.'

⁵⁹⁸ I Tim 3:16b

⁵⁹⁹ Luke 1:34c

⁶⁰⁰ Gen 3:15; Gal 4:44

⁶⁰¹ Psa 9:2

⁶⁰² Gen 22:18

⁶⁰³ Psa 132:11 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁶⁰⁴ Micah 5:2

⁶⁰⁵ Hosea 11:1; Mat 2:15

Nazarene,⁶⁰⁶ deriving from the '*separated one*,' Nazar, and Nazareth, a widely despised place in the Judæan view at that time.⁶⁰⁷

The next conundrum is how could the Messiah be both David's son yet David's Lord? Jesus himself put this question to the Pharisees, and asked them pointedly, '*Saying, What think ye of the Christ? [Messiah] Whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word; neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.*'⁶⁰⁸ Jesus was here quoting: '*The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*'⁶⁰⁹

Many would have to side with the Pharisees, that this is beyond any rational explanation, but it is Holy Scripture, forming part of the book of Psalms. It is difficult, at first inspection, to see how the Messiah could be, at once, David's son and David's Lord. But in Scripture, it becomes clear that the Messiah was David's son in that he was a descendant of David after the flesh, '*and the Lord God shall give him the throne of his father David, And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever,*'⁶¹⁰ and '*Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh.*'⁶¹¹ It is also scripturally clear that He was and is David's Lord, as King of kings, and Lord of lords.⁶¹²

But the conundrum is not yet fully resolved for the Messiah, of the seed of David, of a virgin birth, must have a legal right to the throne of David,⁶¹³ despite the fact that one of Solomon's descendants was the evil Jeconiah, of whom it was written that none of his descendants would ever rule Judah, sitting upon the throne of David;⁶¹⁴ and, if that were not sufficiently problematical, despite the fact that the right to the throne of David was transmitted, as some might presume, only through the male line, here is the Messiah born of a virgin.

It is oft recorded that the Messiah will inherit the throne of David.⁶¹⁵ But as He was to be born of a virgin, how could He obtain legal title to the throne of David? And how is it possible even to begin to untangle these apparently self-contradicting predictions?

⁶⁰⁶ Mat 2:23

⁶⁰⁷ John 1:45,46

⁶⁰⁸ Mat 22:42-46 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁶⁰⁹ Psa 110:1

⁶¹⁰ Luke 1:32b,33a

⁶¹¹ Rom 1:3

⁶¹² Rev 19:16

⁶¹³ Rev 19:16; Reckart, G., *Jesus, Patriarch King of Israel and Jerusalem*, p.1:

'Josephus reported that king Herod destroyed all the genealogical records in Jerusalem so no one else could lay a better claim on the throne of David than himself. Of course we know he did this to keep any Jewish Messiah from ever arising and claiming birthrights to the throne of David and to re-establish the Kingdom of Israel. Jews wanted this Kingdom restored and they knew Herod was nothing but a pretender, his ancestry being Gentile.'

⁶¹⁴ Jer 22:29-30

⁶¹⁵ I Chron 17:11;14; Psa 132:11; Isa 9:7; Jer 33:15-17; Jer 25:5

Fortunately, there is a greater mind at work than that of man, for it is stated that *'the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.'*⁶¹⁶ Not only was that which appeared impossible solved and resolved in the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, but God gave the complete account of how it was brought about in the two genealogies contained in the New Testament.

In Matthew's account, the genealogy of the Messiah through Joseph is given. This genealogy shows the Messiah to be the son of David, so giving Him right to the throne of David, and also the son of Abraham, thus giving Him the right to the land of Promise, which was given to Abraham and his seed. In this context, it is interesting to note that the genealogy of Jesus Christ is traced back through Heli, Mary's father, to Adam and to God, thereby giving Him title to the whole earth, as a *'Son of Adam.'*⁶¹⁷ Further, by the import of *'Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds,'*⁶¹⁸ the Messiah is Heir to all things.

This same seed is confirmed by Paul; *'Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.'*⁶¹⁹ In Matthew's genealogy Joseph is seen to be in the regal line of descent from King David, down through Solomon. But Joseph was also a descendant of David through Jeconiah, and so the succession to the throne for Joseph personally was barred. Matthew, writing his synoptic gospel primarily or especially for the Hebrews, took care in his genealogies to show that Christ was not, through Joseph, the *'fruit of David's body,'* that is, a direct descendant of David through Joseph. The genealogy of Christ in Matthew⁶²⁰ points to the virgin conception and birth, since the wording adopted in verse sixteen differs from that used in all of the foregoing begettals: *'And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.'* Here, Mary is inserted between Joseph and Jesus, calling Joseph her husband, but not saying that he begat Jesus. It could not, for he did not.

In Luke,⁶²¹ Christ's genealogy is given through Mary,⁶²² but exfoliating in Joseph,⁶²³ for the hereditary rights flowed through the males unless there were none in line. Heli was Mary's father, Joseph's father-in-law.⁶²⁴ This was necessary in order for Jesus to obtain legal hereditary title to the Promised Land and the earth. Broadly similar sets of circumstances of female-route inheritance had occurred before in Scripture.⁶²⁵ When Zelophehad had no sons, but only daughters, all their names were recorded, and they gained inheritances from

⁶¹⁶ Isa 9:7d

⁶¹⁷ Gen 1:27,28; Psa 8:4,5; Heb 2:8,9; Rev 5:1-10

⁶¹⁸ Heb 1:2

⁶¹⁹ Gal 3:16,17

⁶²⁰ Mat 1:1-17

⁶²¹ Luke 3:23-38

⁶²² in genealogy, the distaff side.

⁶²³ in genealogy, the foster spear side.

⁶²⁴ Mary was the eldest surviving heiress of her father, apparently, so the inheritance rights passed to her, provide she married within her tribe, as happened in the case in question; cp. Num 36:1-9.

⁶²⁵ Ruth 4:13-22; Gen 11:28-31,35:22-36

him.⁶²⁶ In this context it is important to note that in relation to Matthew's genealogical account, it says in Luke⁶²⁷ that Joseph was the son of Heli, but the word 'son' is not in the original, but was supplied by the translators. Without doubt this verse should contain 'son-in-law' and not 'son,' for Joseph could have had but one father. He was the literal 'son-in-law' of Heli, and quite possibly the 'son' in the sense that he married Heli's daughter, as the custom noted in Samuel.⁶²⁸ In the record in Luke, Christ is shown to be the literal 'fruit of David's body' through his mother, Mary. However, and this is extremely important, although Mary was in the royal line from David, she was a descendant of King David through Nathan,⁶²⁹ but the hereditary rights to the throne were to come through the line of Solomon.⁶³⁰ (The descendants of the Solomonic-line, the earthly throne of David as found constituted today, of the line of Zarah,⁶³¹ still rule over one of the houses, the house of Israel⁶³²).

It is essential to note the crucial importance of Joseph's betrothal for marriage to Mary before Christ was conceived and born. This is exactly what happened, recorded in Matthew: *'Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: when his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit....And behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.'*⁶³³

Now it is evident that through Mary, Jesus Christ received his literal descent from King David: and as a result of Mary's marriage betrothal to Joseph, who was also descended from David, He received his legal right to David's throne, for as it is written, Mary was Joseph's wife⁶³⁴ before Jesus was conceived and born, therefore making Joseph the legal father of Jesus, that is, His step- or foster father. This also clears away the problem of Jeconiah and his sin, for Christ is not the seed, that is, the direct descendant, of Jeconiah through Joseph.

It is wonderful to behold the precision of all of this, and so now it is possible to take a second look at the prophetic fulfilment of this prophecy, this time in summary. In Mary the mother, and Joseph the step- or foster father of Jesus Christ, there are found the only two people of that entire generation who could have fulfilled the prophecy concerning the Messiah. Joseph had to be married to Mary before the conception and birth of Jesus, in order that He could get His legal right to David's throne, via Solomon, through Joseph, while all the time not being a physical child of Joseph in order to avoid importing the divine bar against the descendants of Jeconiah

⁶²⁶ Num 26:33,27:1-9

⁶²⁷ Luke 3:23

⁶²⁸ I Sam 24:16

⁶²⁹ Hebrew: nathan, 'giver.'

⁶³⁰ I Chron 28:5,6

⁶³¹ q.v. inf.

⁶³² explained in detail in chapter 'The Throne of David.' II Sam 5:12-14, 'And David perceived that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake. And David took him more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem, after he was come from Hebron: and there were yet sons and daughters born to David. And these be the names of those that were born unto him in Jerusalem; Shammua, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon.' Nathan did not have hereditary right to the throne of David.

⁶³³ Mat 1:18-20 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁶³⁴ Mat 1:19a,20d; 'Joseph her husband;' 'fear not to take unto thee thy wife Mary.'

ascending the throne. Nevertheless, Joseph had to be married to Mary, yet he could not *'know'* his wife until after the birth of the Messiah, for the Messiah had to be born of a virgin, and be the *'seed of the woman,'* not of the man, His step- or foster father.⁶³⁵ And through Mary's heredity, Jesus would be the literal *'seed of David,'* the *'fruit of David's body,'* and the seed of Abraham.⁶³⁶ In this wise, the plan of God was brought to pass right down to the very finest detail and recorded for the edification of all. It is important to note that any omission or transmutation in the train of events, the timing, or the parties involved would have rendered the entire utterly infecund. It had to be exactly as stated in the New Testament in order to fulfil the prophecies of old.

Earthly throne

Christ is described in the following terms: *'No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.'*⁶³⁷ The phrase *'only begotten'* comes from the Greek meaning *'only-born,'*⁶³⁸ or, from its root, *'only one of the stock or family [of God].'* *'Only born'* refers to His physical birth on earth, and not to some strange notion that the second in the Godhead was actually created at some time in the past by God the Father. Surprisingly, there are many who adhere to this aberrant view, despite the clear import of, *'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.'*⁶³⁹ This is the Word from the *'beginning,'* through all time, eternally.

The Messiah was both the *'chief corner stone'* and the *'rock of offence.'* *'He shall be...for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel.'*⁶⁴⁰ *'The stone which the builders refused is become the headstone of the corner.'*⁶⁴¹ Belief in the Messiah, Jesus Christ, was reinforced by Peter, *'Wherefore also it is contained in the scriptures, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient;*

⁶³⁵ Gen 3:15, the *'seed'* being Christ, born of a virgin, begotten of the Holy Spirit, and not of man.

⁶³⁶ which should prove strangely resonant for Jews today, for Jews reckon their Jewishness or nationality from their mother, not their father.

⁶³⁷ John 1:18

⁶³⁸ Greek: monogenes.

⁶³⁹ John 1:1,2

⁶⁴⁰ Isa 8:14; Eph 2:20 and I Peter 2:6, *'chief corner stone,'* Greek: akrogoniaios, means *'foundation stone,'* while the word *'chief'* does not appear in the original Greek. In Mat 21:42, *'the head of the corner,'* Greek: kephale and gonia, mean *'head,'* or *'supreme'* and *'cornerstone'* respectively. In Psa 118:22, to which the gospel writers refer, Hebrew: rosh and pinnah, mean *'head'* or *'first'* and *'corner'* respectively. It follows that as rosh can and often does mean *'first,'* then the constant theme running through all of the foregoing is that of the first stone laid in the corner, the main corner foundation stone, which, once set in place, is used to set out the whole building. Is there a Jewish Queen of Heaven? Stone, Merlin, and Patai, Raphael, *Hebrew Goddess (Jewish Folklore & Anthropology)*:

'A traditional term for the Hebrew goddess was 'the neglected cornerstone.' Sadly, there is, q.v. Jer 7:18,44:17-19,25.

⁶⁴¹ Psa 118:22, better as *'chief foundation stone of the corner,'* q.v. sup.; cp. Isa 28:16c, *'a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation.'*

whereunto also they were appointed.⁶⁴² The fusing of High Priest and Royal King in the personage of Jesus Christ was clearly prophesied: *'And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.'*⁶⁴³ The priesthood of Melchisedec, necessitating the change in the priesthood,⁶⁴⁴ and the royal lineage of Christ, are melded together in the returning Messiah who will build and rule from the millennial Fourth Temple,⁶⁴⁵ the temple into which all mankind will flow.⁶⁴⁶

Those who profess to be Christians, and who believe in a heavenly Millennium, and those who believe in a kingdom actually in heaven, will find this message difficult and will be puzzled just why the Heavenly Father has entered into such detail in order to establish that His only begotten Son is heir to the throne of David, which was, and is, and will be forever, on earth, and that the 'elect' and the dead-in-Christ are described thus: *'And has made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on earth.'*⁶⁴⁷

*'He shall grow up out of his place,'*⁶⁴⁸ above, is an interesting K.J.V. translation of the Hebrew, literally meaning, *'He shall branch up from under Him,'*⁶⁴⁹ namely, from His own root or stock. Not only was Jesus Christ of the line of David, He was born in the city of David: Bethlehem Ephrata, so both genealogically and geographically He was rooted in David. More than that, the line of David, the kingly line, was His from the very beginning. Not only was the throne His, the earth was too, for He was the Creator of all. And so, quite literally, He did spring from His own root, for He is the root of all.

Sure & steadfast

The Bible was not formulated to pander to the whims and imaginings of man. Rather, as has been amply demonstrated, the provenance of Christ is sure, His word will stand and, similarly, His Revelation through John is sure, and must be heeded as a crucial matter of urgency. All are told that those who read, hear and take it to heart are blessed.⁶⁵⁰ Again, there is this admonition: *'Behold I come quickly, blessed is he who keeps the word of the prophecy in this book.'*⁶⁵¹ Taking all-in-all, we disregard this warning at our extreme peril.

⁶⁴² I Peter 2:6-8

⁶⁴³ Zech 6:12,13 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁶⁴⁴ Heb 7:12,13; Christ was not of the priestly tribe Levi.

⁶⁴⁵ q.v. inf.

⁶⁴⁶ cp. Isa 11:10

⁶⁴⁷ Rev 5:10 (sublinear emphasis added)

⁶⁴⁸ Zech 6:12c

⁶⁴⁹ Hebrew: umitachtav itsmach.

⁶⁵⁰ Rev 1:3

⁶⁵¹ Rev 22:7

Chapter 5

Merely Metaphoric?

Man is instructed to prove all things, searching the Scriptures; to hold fast that which is good;⁶⁵² to shun profane and vain babblings;⁶⁵³ and to choose the good, forsaking evil.⁶⁵⁴ But what, if any, substance is to be found in the beliefs of those who hold the Bible to be substantially metaphoric and, by implication, amphibolous, being capable of an almost endless variety of competing interpretations; a Bible of hidden meaning and, hence, of complexity without limit; essentially a grand enigma? And what of liberal and philosophical theology?

If the Bible be enigmatic, with near endless interpretation, then what possible value could it possess? Why, then, did God bother, as the Bible, in its actual interpretation, would merely prove to be a reflection of man's garbled philosophies and personal prejudices rather than the unequivocal, inspired word and instruction of God? Unravelling, this metaphorical and enigmatic belief simply allows of a subversion of the word of God to a bewildering variety of man's musings of any particular flavour in vogue from time to time, in preference to allowing the Bible to interpret itself with the assistance and guidance of the Holy Spirit. The result of all of man's interpretative efforts on biblical revelations expressed in metaphorical and allegorical terms has simply been the wholesale importation, wittingly or otherwise, of his own biased, pre-determined beliefs, prejudices, ulterior motives, and personal agendas. Peter refers to this in the following terms, and also incorporates a dire warning: *'As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood,*

⁶⁵² I Thes 5:21

⁶⁵³ II Tim 2:16

⁶⁵⁴ Isa 7:15

*which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*⁶⁵⁵

Open interpretations

Epstein notes that Maimonides treated the descriptions of the idyllic conditions of the messianic age portrayed by the Old Testament prophets as wholly metaphorical.⁶⁵⁶ The messianic age, in this view, will not differ materially from the present, but will represent a higher type of society patterned on the knowledge of the unity of God—in a monotheistic, or, more accurately, monolatrous sense—and of His righteousness. What an insipid travesty of biblical prophecy! Indeed, so great was this urge in Jewish religious thinking that clear and unequivocal messianic and eschatological prophecies in the Bible were disregarded by philosophising expositors for want of compliance with these allegorical and metaphorical nostrums. Rather, they were seen by them merely as attempts to express spiritual imponderables in popular form.

The Jewish infatuation with the earthly and philosophical, often to the exclusion or detriment of the sacred, only served to simultaneously blind and deflect them from the only way of salvation: The Way, as it was known in the early apostolic church age. The perceived imperative to protect and defend Jewish religious belief and society from outside influences—paradoxically, given Judaism’s wholesale importation of large volumes of philosophy, mostly Greek in origin—allied to a strong sense of the need to be seen to conform to the fashionable modes of the time, appear to have led directly to an avalanche of internally-generated musing. Put starkly, the overwhelming bulk of Judaism’s commentary and philosophy is found wanting and completely worthless to the Judæo-Christian, as much of it seeks to deny, qualify, modify, transmute, revise, or expand on Scripture. So the core issue can be stated quite simply: Is the word of God the final authority, or is religious truth something to be developed gradually through the philosophical musings and errant speculations of man, all of which are ultimately based on a chaotic blend of worthless misconceptions, emotions, and pagan rites and mores?

It has been said by many that those who take the middle ground in such matters are the Bible’s greatest enemies, and that this group includes, unfortunately, the vast bulk of professing Christians. Of course, many dare not openly deny the Bible’s divinity,⁶⁵⁷ because it is so obviously divine, but they seek to rob it of all power by spinning an endless web of theories around it that confuse the mind, distract attention, and obscure its teaching. Epstein serves clear evidence of the fundamental wanting: '[T]his reverence for human intellect led Maimonides to give allegorical explanations to the Biblical story of Paradise [sic]....This same reverence was

⁶⁵⁵ II Peter 3:16; the word translated '*wrest*,' Greek: strebloo, literally means to '*twist*' or '*torture*.'

⁶⁵⁶ Epstein, Isidore, *Judaism*, p.214

⁶⁵⁷ but some still do.

applied to his conception of the power of God....His conviction that eternal life and bliss depend on the intellectual knowledge of God led him to his formulation of the fundamental principles of Judaism....The key to the right relationship with God is the knowledge of God. This knowledge is, in the first instance, intellectual and, as such, includes the mastery of all those physical and metaphysical sciences—logic, philosophy, medicine, mathematics, astronomy—which lead to a true perception of the being and essence of God, as far as it is given to the human mind to attain. Such a knowledge serves as a bond of communion with God in this life and prepares the soul [sic] for the blessedness of an eternal life with God in the Hereafter which, on the Maimonidean view, is a life of blissful knowledge.⁶⁵⁸ Others, founding on this, spent much time and effort attempting to defend and vindicate their perception of the intellectual supremacy of the Jewish faith over the faith of others. Summarised, these are the polemical endeavours of man, and have no place for the Holy Spirit. This aberration is answered: *'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.'*⁶⁵⁹ The sacred is never subject to the profane; it cannot be.

Rebuttal

Further rebuttal to this question of open metaphoric interpretation is frequently found in the words and structure of passages in the Bible. Firstly, in many instances, the more convoluted biblical passages, which often concern prophecy, are explained in detail immediately thereafter, or elsewhere in Scripture. By this means, the metaphor or allegory in question is clarified and rendered specific, and, by dint of this, not permitting of a variety of man's interpretations. Another form of metaphoric incidence frequently occurs in Christ's parables but, again, they are often clarified by Christ upon His being questioned by the disciples. The essential difference here is that there is an explanation as to why Christ spoke in parables.⁶⁶⁰ The disciples came and asked Him

⁶⁵⁸ Epstein, Isidore, *Judaism*, pp.212-214

⁶⁵⁹ Isa 55:8,9

⁶⁶⁰ The parables of our Lord, arranged chronologically:

The two debtors:	Luke 7:40-43
The strong man armed:	Mat 12:29; Mark 3:27; Luke 11:21,22
The unclean spirit / empty house:	Mat 12:43-45; Luke 11:24-26
The sower:	Mat 13:3-9,18-23; Mark 4:3-9,14-20; Luke 8:5-8,11-15
The tares and wheat:	Mat 13:24-30,36-43
The mustard seed:	Mat 13:31,32; Mark 4:30-32; Luke 13:18,19
The seed growing imperceptibly:	Mark 4:26-29
The leaven:	Mat 13:33; Luke 13:20,21
The hid treasure:	Mat 13:44
The pearl of great price:	Mat 13:45,46
The draw net:	Mat 13:47-50
The unmerciful servant:	Mat 18:21-35
The good Samaritan:	Luke 10:29-37
The friend at midnight:	Luke 11:5-8

why He spoke to the people in parables. He replied: *'The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them....In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. For this people's heart has become callused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them. But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men*

The rich fool:	Luke 12:16-21
The barren fig tree:	Luke 13:6-9
The great supper:	Luke 14:15-24
The lost sheep:	Mat 18:12-24; Luke 15:3-7
The lost piece of money:	Luke 15:8-10
The prodigal son:	Luke 15:11-32
The good shepherd:	John 10:1-18
The unjust steward:	Luke 16:1-8
The rich man and Lazarus:	Luke 16:19-31
The profitable servants:	Luke 17:7-10
The importunate widow:	Luke 18:1-8
The Pharisee and publican:	Luke 18:9-14
The labourers in the vineyard:	Mat 20:1-16
The pounds:	Luke 19:11-27
The two sons:	Mat 21:28-32
The wicked husbandmen:	Mat 21:33-44; Mark 12:1-12; Luke 20:9-18
The marriage of the king's son:	Mat 22:1-14
The ten virgins:	Mat 25:1-13
The talents:	Mat 25:14-30

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, p.148:

'Parable' means, literally, 'something laid alongside.'

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.62 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The parable conceals truth from those who are either too lazy to think or too blind through prejudice to see [or who are blinded by God to the truth, pro tem].'

If a parable is not an allegory, then why did Christ allegorize, in a very specific form, every part of His parable of the sower (Mat 13:24-30,36-43) for the benefit of the understanding of His disciples.

John 6:60, '*Many therefore of his disciples, when they heard [Jesus' discourse on the bread and the wine, and its meaning] said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it?*'

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, p.226:

'It is little wonder that the disciples found the discourse of Jesus hard. Greek: skleros, means not '*hard to understand*;' but '*hard to accept*.'

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, p.220:

'The Jews listened, but they did not learn. There are different kinds of listening. There is the listening of criticism; there is the listening of resentment; there is the listening of superiority; there is the listening of indifference; there is the listening of the man who listens only because for the moment he cannot get the chance to speak. The only listening that is worthwhile is that which hears and learns; and that is the only way to listen to God.'

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.22 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The point of the strange parable of the Empty House (Mat 12:43-45) is that the Law may negatively empty a man of evil [but it cannot protect him from it in the future; in fact, an empty mind admits even greater sin], but only the gospel can fill him with good. The Law therefore simply leaves a man an empty invitation for all evil to take up its residence within his heart; the gospel so fills him with positive goodness that evil cannot enter in [or experiences extreme difficulty in doing so]. Here is Jesus' claim that the gospel can do for men what the Law can never do.'

*longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it. Listen then to what the parable of the sower means.*⁶⁶¹ He then proceeded to expound the meaning of the parable.

The reason for Christ's use of parables was simply to act as a filter. Not all are called during the current dispensation. Indeed, only a few are called, and even fewer chosen.⁶⁶² Despite expositions of the parables and metaphors contained in the Bible, the ultimate meaning is still hidden to the vast majority. It takes revelation through the Holy Spirit to unlock the true underlying meanings for man to be able to see and comprehend the very plan of God. The Holy Spirit is the gift of God and is conferred on repentance and total immersion water baptism for the remission of sins.⁶⁶³ ⁶⁶⁴ ⁶⁶⁵ With the guidance of this Holy Spirit, the Scriptures are opened unto man and man perceives, not by dint of his own intellect, but through the Spirit: *'That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.'*⁶⁶⁶ What is perceived, what is revealed, is God's will and meaning, His plan for redemption, His prophecies of things which must surely come to pass. Literal events; literal for singular prophecies, literal for split prophecies, literal for dual and multi-phased prophecies,⁶⁶⁷ and literal for intertwined prophecies; all taken literally by the early Judæo-Christian church, and taken literally by His servants, the 'elect,' today. 'It must be borne in mind that for centuries it has been widely held by Christian expositors that a literal interpretation of Scripture is invariably the best first approach.'⁶⁶⁸

That said, there remain passages and descriptions in the Bible which are metaphorical and for which no subsequent written clarification is found. Most are metaphors with obviously specific meanings, at least to those granted the gift of the Holy Spirit. Perhaps the best-known illustration is found in Christ's words at The Last Supper: *'And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and break it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink*

⁶⁶¹ Mat 13:11f.; Mark 4:10-14; II Tim 3:7; Isa 6:9

⁶⁶² Mat 22:14, *'For many are called, but few are chosen,'* but it is evident in these end-times that such is the rebelliousness and disobedience of mankind, effectively the invitation is being extended to a small proportion.

⁶⁶³ John 3:1-8

⁶⁶⁴ concerning what is sometimes termed 'the baptism of the spirit' (a phrase not actually found in the Bible—I Cor 12:13, often misread or misinterpreted, speaks of the baptism into one body, that of the Church, and into one Spirit, that of the Holy Spirit, the power of God): There are two stages, an ante-typical precursor in the flesh, and the type at the point of immortality at the resurrections of the elect and those whose names are found written in the book of life at the Great White Throne Judgement. Receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, q.v. Acts 2:38, is not being born of the Spirit. The gift refers to the precursor in the flesh, not the consummating type. The normative cadence is thus: baptism for the remission of sins; receipt of the gift of the Holy Spirit; and, at death, baptism of the Holy Spirit through conversion to spirit beings.

⁶⁶⁵ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, p.14:

'Forgiveness is not so much the remission of penalty as the restoration of a relationship.'

⁶⁶⁶ Eph 1:17,18

⁶⁶⁷ duality, or even multiple application in prophecy, is common, the former pointing to and illuminating a later, complete fulfilment.

⁶⁶⁸ Newton, Sir Isaac: "About the time of the end, a body of men will be raised up, who will turn their attention to the prophecies, and insist upon their literal interpretation in the midst of much clamour and opposition."

ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.'⁶⁶⁹ Other than those who hold to the doctrine of transubstantiation—a distinctive falsehood deriving from ancient pagan beliefs⁶⁷⁰—no one would imagine that the wine was literally Christ's blood and the broken bread literally Christ's body. Obviously, they are symbols. The solemn ceremony was instituted by Christ that evening of the Passover⁶⁷¹ and is kept by true Judæo-Christians every year at dusk, between sunset and darkness, on the fourteenth day of the first month.⁶⁷²

While some metaphorical passages are subsequently explained, and others have meanings which are obvious, if only to those who have received the gift of the Holy Spirit, there are some in prophecy which are still very difficult to discern and relate to actual events in the future. The position man is in at the moment is beautifully described by Paul: *'When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.'*⁶⁷³ Man is not all-knowing, and is unable to discern all things in this present dispensation, even with the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

In a few instances, certain biblical passages were closed for a time, but would be revealed to those of understanding before the time of the end: *'But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.'*⁶⁷⁴ And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, go thy way Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.'⁶⁷⁵

Finally, a very limited number of biblical passages were completely closed to man during this current dispensation: *'And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.'*⁶⁷⁶ These cannot be discerned at this time, although many seek to guess.

⁶⁶⁹ Mat 26:26-28

⁶⁷⁰ first declared in the Roman Church by Pope Gregory VII in 1079AD, but not solemnly adopted and approved until the Council of Trent, in Italy, 1545–1563AD.

⁶⁷¹ 14th Abib, 30AD

⁶⁷² the Jews keep their Passover one day later after their tradition, and when added to the postponements in their own calendar system, q.v. inf., it often increases the discrepancy, although in the time of Christ some kept it at dusk on the fourteenth and some at dusk on the fifteenth: *'Then led they Jesus from Caiphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover,'* John 18:28, since Jewish ritual defilement would end at sunset. This refers to the 1st Chagigah, offered by Passover Jews on the afternoon of 14th Abib, an essential pre-condition to taking their Passover on the 15th, when a further, 2nd Chagigah, for peace / prosperity, is also offered.

⁶⁷³ I Cor 13:11-12

⁶⁷⁴ *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, p.68:

'Dan 12:4. The increase in knowledge referred to in this text means, primarily, religious knowledge; but it covers scientific knowledge also.'

⁶⁷⁵ Dan 12:4; 8,9

⁶⁷⁶ Rev 10:4

The fundamental belief, however, in specific meanings for these biblical metaphors remains unassailable, despite residual shortcomings in understanding and the locking of a few passages during this dispensation. The alternative of disparate human interpretations without the guidance of the Holy Spirit is much more than abject confusion; it leads to destruction. Peter gives the warning: *'Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.'*⁶⁷⁷

The prophecies which were given and which refer to events now historical can be checked and verified for accuracy. By way of a simple example, those in Daniel referring to a succession of kingdoms—Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, Roman—clearly relate to specific, literal, and past events and to one coming event: the final outbreak of that lineage. Certainly the early Judæo-Christian church, before wholesale upheaval attendant upon the introduction of the mystery religion of Babylon masquerading as Christian—principally in the form of Roman Catholicism, and, subsequently, its harlot daughters, the Protestant and Non-conformist churches⁶⁷⁸—believed in the literal exposition of Scripture.

The answer to the metaphor question is the Bible interprets itself, but man has to study it, assiduously comparing the Scriptures,⁶⁷⁹ underaking all with the active support and guidance of the Holy Spirit. With these in place, deep and otherwise hidden meanings are revealed, not by dint of any intellectual skill or worth on man's part, but by divine and gracious revelation; a progressive revelation. Only in this way, can the Bible's sometimes veiled language, its figures of speech, its satire, its poetry, its vignettes, its use of type and shadow, its hyperbole, its convolutions, and its symbolism become clear, precise, and meaningful, and the entire can be seen and understood as a coherent entity.

The source of the understanding of the message is supernatural, not natural. 'It is derived neither from observation nor intellectual thought, but from admission to the council chamber of God, from knowing God and speaking with Him.'⁶⁸⁰

Put in scriptural form, we have the words of Paul: *'For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God: that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually*

⁶⁷⁷ I Peter 1:20,21

⁶⁷⁸ a grotesque congeries of pagan religions; Rev 17:5.

⁶⁷⁹ Isa 28:10

⁶⁸⁰ Ellison, Henry Leopold, *Men Spoke from God*, p.14

*discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.*⁶⁸¹

Crux

Having dispensed in a somewhat brief but hopefully adequate manner with the questions of the provenance of the Revelator and metaphoric interpretation, there remains the *raison d'être* of this part of the dissertation: the substance of the Revelation itself, for it presages literal, actual events that will shortly come to pass; events which have had and will have no equal in all history.

Revelation, the translation of a Greek word,⁶⁸² was given off as what seems initially to many to be a sealed and mystic book, despite the clear command given that it be not sealed.⁶⁸³ Some of the prophecies revealed to and written by Daniel were closed and sealed until the time of the end or, *"til the crisis at the close.*⁶⁸⁴ Daniel wrote at the conclusion of his book: *'And I heard but I understood not; then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.'*⁶⁸⁵ Again, *'But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.'*⁶⁸⁶ However, now, in this end-time, some have had the key to Revelation and the prophecies of Daniel, Joel, Zechariah, Zephaniah, and others given to them through God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit. Christ has opened these mysteries to His servants, the 'elect,' *'to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass.'*⁶⁸⁷

The logistics of this revelation are recited by John: God to Christ; Christ the Revelator to John; John through his written record to the servants of God, for the time is at hand.⁶⁸⁸ Christ said, *'For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak,*⁶⁸⁹ and this is what is found in the book of Revelation. A blessing is conferred on those who read the book, hear the words of the prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.⁶⁹⁰ We must read and comprehend, not discard, dissemble, transmute or ignore, in order to secure that blessing.

⁶⁸¹ I Cor 2:11-16

⁶⁸² Greek: apocalupsis, 'laying bear,' 'revealing.'

⁶⁸³ Rev 22:10

⁶⁸⁴ Moffatt translation.

⁶⁸⁵ Dan 12:8,9

⁶⁸⁶ Dan 12:4

⁶⁸⁷ Rev 1:1

⁶⁸⁸ Rev 1:1-3

⁶⁸⁹ John 12:49

⁶⁹⁰ Rev 1:3

The time of the revelation is given: *'I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day,'*⁶⁹¹ better translated as in the Lord's day or during the time of the Lord's day.⁶⁹² The Weymouth translation renders it, *'In the Spirit I found myself present on the Day of the Lord';* the Rotherham translation, *'I came to be, in Spirit, in the Lord's Day';* the Concordant version, *'I came to be, in Spirit, in the Lord's Day';* the Bullinger translation, *'I came to be, by the Spirit, on the Day of the Lord.'* It does not refer, as some have erroneously postulated, to either the weekly Sabbath or to Sunday. It is to be something unique, something specific.

That there is more than one Day of the Lord is apparent. Zephaniah refers to the Babylonian sacking and destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem in the same terms.⁶⁹³ By implication of duality, the fall of Jerusalem in the hands of Titus and his Roman army may also be conflated.⁶⁹⁴ The destruction of Babylon itself was similarly described,⁶⁹⁵ but these are mere types of the soon-coming cataclysm which is to befall the entire world, and which ends in the end-time composite Day of the Lord. A further and concluding Day of the Lord is found to occur at the end of the Millennium: *'But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up.'*⁶⁹⁶ It is the latter two cataclysms, and the dread and wonderful events surrounding them, which form much of the subject matter of the Prophecy volume of this study.

Joel refers to the composite Day of the Lord,⁶⁹⁷ describing it as a day of God's wrath, a time when God will send destruction upon the sinning and unrighteous of this world. It is a revelation with the purpose of showing those that will heed, living in the time of the end, the coming world shaking events which will lead to the return in power and glory of the Saviour Jesus Christ—often referred to as the Second Coming—ushering in His glorious millennial reign, and eternity thereafter.

It is this which will now be scrutinised, in some detail, in the following chapters.

⁶⁹¹ Rev 1:10a

⁶⁹² Greek: en better rendered 'in' or 'into' or 'during the time of.'

⁶⁹³ Zeph 1:7-18

⁶⁹⁴ 70AD; Luke 21:20-24

⁶⁹⁵ Isa 13:6f.

⁶⁹⁶ II Peter 3:10; cf. Rev 21:1; cp. Job 38:7b, *'or who can stay the bottles of heaven,'* where Hebrew: nebel, here translated *'bottle,'* is better *'collapsible skin bottle'* or *'skin bag,'* giving the idea of total, instant collapse.

⁶⁹⁷ Joel 1:15

Chapter 6

Messages to the Churches

The first prophetic element proper is contained in the second and third chapters of Revelation, and comprises the messages to the seven churches. These are messages from the Father through Christ, through the medium of His Power, the Holy Spirit,⁶⁹⁸ to the seven eras of the true church, from the time of writing of the book of Revelation⁶⁹⁹ down through the ages to a time immediately preceding the Second Coming. That they are not simply messages to then contemporaneous churches can be confirmed from the fact that not all the cities listed were fully in existence at that time: Sardis, for example, had been destroyed some time previously and was only in the early stages of reconstruction. Rather, these are messages to the true Judæo-Christian church,⁷⁰⁰ not to mankind as a whole, and, consequently, import specific and heavily prescribed meaning.

The seven churches were located in seven cities along one of the old Roman mail routes.⁷⁰¹ As such, official state, but not private mail would pass in turn from one to the other, just as the baton or mantle of the true church would pass through seven ages—seven is the symbol of completion—from the time of the apostolic church of the first-century to the lukewarm and hence worthless church in the time of the end, although there are elements of the last four churches in evidence at this end-time, as will become apparent.

The Judæo-Christian church has existed, despite almost continuous persecution, down to the present age. The survival of His true church was promised by Christ: *'When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea*

⁶⁹⁸ Rev 2:7,11,17,29,3:6,13,22

⁶⁹⁹ c.95–96AD

⁷⁰⁰ some Greek translations of Rev 1:6 describe the *'elect'* as a *'royal priesthood.'*

⁷⁰¹ a broadly circular route in western Asia Minor.

Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.⁷⁰² And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.⁷⁰³ No one and nothing shall prevail against it.

Early church

The word translated '*church*' in Matthew⁷⁰⁴ has nothing to do with pagan Roman Catholicism. It is a Greek word which literally means 'a called out assembly.'⁷⁰⁵ It is closely related to the 'elect,' which in Greek is a word sharing a common root.⁷⁰⁶ The church, therefore, in its actual exposition, can be viewed as the collective noun for the 'elect.' Thus the use of the word as a technical term for an assembly or group of believers in Christ was quite natural. It was not viewed as an external organisation, denomination, or hierarchical system. The New Testament church, therefore, was a local assembly or congregation of believers, along somewhat similar lines to the synagogues of the time, with the apostles over them. In the Old Testament, a Hebrew word is translated '*congregation*,'⁷⁰⁷ indicating or pointing to the local function of a Jewish synagogue and, consequent upon the above, that of an early Christian church.

'Hort⁷⁰⁸ rightly points out that originally the word does not mean, as is so often stated, a body of people who have been 'picked out' from the world. It has not in it that exclusive sense. It means a body of people who have been 'summoned out' of their homes to come and meet with God; and both in its original Greek and Hebrew usages, that sense was not exclusive but inclusive. The summons was not to any selected few; it was a summons from the State to every man to come and to shoulder his responsibilities; it was a summons from God to every man to come and to listen and to act on the word of God.

⁷⁰² *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, p.11 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'(on Mat 16 '*rock*' etc.) upon which rock [viz., Himself] He would build His Church so strong, that the gates of hell should not prevail against it. In these words three things are to be noted:—first, that Christ will have a Church in this world; secondly, that the same Church should be mightily impugned, not only by the world, but also by the powers of hell; and, thirdly, that the same Church, notwithstanding the efforts of the devil, should continue.'

⁷⁰³ Mat 16:13-20 (subscripted emphasis added)

⁷⁰⁴ Mat 16:18

⁷⁰⁵ Greek: ekklesia.

⁷⁰⁶ Greek: ekkletos.

⁷⁰⁷ Hebrew: qahal.

⁷⁰⁸ Hort, F. J. A.

The root of ekklesia is found in the triumvirate: kalein, kletos, and klesis. Kalein is the regular verb for 'summoning' or 'calling' a person. It may be that the person is 'summoned' to an office and an honour. Paul is 'called' to be an apostle (kletos).⁷⁰⁹ Kalein is regularly used for summoning a person to an office, a task, a responsibility, a reward, and an account.

Kalein is the regular verb for 'inviting a person to a meal or a banquet or into a house as a guest.' So much so is this the case that the past participle passive ho keklemenos and the adjective ho kletos can both by themselves mean 'the guest.'⁷¹⁰ So kalein is the word use for 'inviting' the guests to the wedding feast.⁷¹¹ It is used of Simon the Pharisee 'inviting' Jesus to a meal in his house.⁷¹² It is the word that Luke uses of the humble and conceited guests who are 'bidden' to a feast.⁷¹³ It is the word that is used of those who are 'called' to the marriage supper of the Lamb.⁷¹⁴ Kalein is the regular word which is used for an hospitable invitation....The Christian is the man who hears the summons of God [unto salvation], and responds actively and positively to it.⁷¹⁵

[This leads to] the concept of salvation (soteria). At this time in history, salvation was the one thing for which men were searching....Let us just see what this Christian soteria, this Christian salvation is.

(a) It was salvation from physical illness.⁷¹⁶ It was not a completely other-worldly thing. It aimed at rescuing a man in body and [mind].

(b) It was salvation from danger.⁷¹⁷ It was not that this salvation gave a man a life which was free from perils and dangers, but it gave him something which gave him a security of [mind] no matter what was happening The Christian salvation makes a man safe in a way that is independent of any outward circumstance.

(c) It was salvation from life's infection. It is from a crooked and perverse generation that a man is saved.⁷¹⁸ The man who has this Christian civilization has a kind of divine antiseptic which keeps him from infection by the evil of the world.

⁷⁰⁹ Rom 1:1; I Cor 1:1

⁷¹⁰ q.v. *Septuagint*, I Kings 1:41

⁷¹¹ Mat 22:3

⁷¹² Luke 7:39

⁷¹³ Luke 14:8

⁷¹⁴ Rev 19:9

⁷¹⁵ Barclay, William, *A New Testament Word Book*, pp.35,61,62 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁷¹⁶ Mat 9:21; Luke 8:36

⁷¹⁷ Mat 6:25,14:30

⁷¹⁸ Acts 2:40

(d) It was salvation from lostness.⁷¹⁹ It was to seek and to save the lost that Jesus came. The unsaved man is the man who is out on the wrong road, a road that leads to death. The saved man is the man who has been put on the right way.

(e) It was salvation from sin.⁷²⁰ A man is like a slave to a master from whom he cannot escape. He is like a patient who can diagnose the disease, who knows what is wrong, but who can find no remedy. The Christian salvation liberates him from the tyranny of sin.

(f) It was salvation from the wrath of God.⁷²¹....[T]here is in this world an inexorable moral law, that there is in the Christian faith an inevitable element of judgment. Without the salvation which Jesus Christ brings, a man could only stand condemned.

(g) It was a salvation which was eschatological. That is to say, a salvation which finds its full consummation beyond time. It will [only] find its full meaning and blessedness in the final [and everlasting] triumph of Jesus Christ.^{722 723}

'Now faith in the thought of Paul is a rich word.

(a) At its simplest it means loyalty, fidelity....In II Thessalonians, faith and patience are combined.⁷²⁴

(b) Faith means belief. It means the conviction that something is true....Faith is the assent that the Christian message is true.

(c) Faith sometimes means [or refers to] the Christian religion.

(d) Faith is sometimes practically equivalent to indestructible hope. "*We walk*," writes Paul, "*by faith and not by sight*."⁷²⁵

(e) But in its most characteristic Pauline use, faith means total acceptance and absolute trust. It means "betting your life that there is a God." It means being absolutely sure that what Jesus said is true, and staking all time and eternity on that assurance.

⁷¹⁹ Mat 18:11; Luke 19:10

⁷²⁰ Mat 1:21

⁷²¹ Rom 5:9

⁷²² Rom 13:11; I Cor 5:5; II Tim 4:18; I Peter 1:5

⁷²³ Barclay, William, *The Letter to the Romans*, pp.9-12 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁷²⁴ II Thes 1:4

⁷²⁵ II Cor 5:7

Faith begins with receptivity. It begins when a man is at least willing to listen to the message of the truth. It goes on to mental assent. A man first hears and then agrees that this is true. But mental assent need not issue in action. Many a man knows very well that something is true, but does not change his actions to meet that knowledge. the final stage is when this mental assent becomes total surrender. In full-fledged faith, a man hears the Christian message, and then casts himself upon it, a life of total yieldedness to that message.⁷²⁶

Some claim that the early church was democratic in its local congregation or assembly by reference to a system which can be seen in operation in Corinthians: *'but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace,'*⁷²⁷ where *'chosen,'* from the Greek, means *'on a show of hands.'*⁷²⁸ It should be noted, however, that this was in respect of a matter concerning who should accompany Paul and Titus to Corinth, that is, a matter of organisation and logistics, and most certainly not a matter of doctrine or belief, on which there is never even a suggestion of a 'democratic vote' in the New Testament.

The church at the time of Polycarp⁷²⁹ demonstrates the sub-apostolic form admirably. Here we find the church still in localised form. There was no central council in the sub-apostolic Christian church; no court of appeal; no formal, rigid hierarchy; no man-made appointments; no subterfuges; no deceit; no lies; no twisting of scriptural truth; no fiats; no dictats; no thundered anathemata; and no bloody purges. Polycarp was an elder, and leader, of the church at Smyrna. He did not represent, or lead, any of the other churches extant at that time, whether in The Province of Asia, or elsewhere. His leadership was localised, and certainly not universal, and he was so as a result of having been selected by God, as evidenced by his outstanding abilities in matters of doctrine and like matters spiritual: gifts of the Holy Spirit. By dint of this, the elders had been selected, in any event, and through this system, over time, from within the group of elders, a senior elder would emerge. Thus it was with leaders of localised church communities in the sub-apostolic era. Truly it can be said, by their fruits were they known.

Polycarp had another outstanding virtue: he had been taught at the side of John, the very last of the apostles to die. And so he maintained an unique continuity through that time when the sub-apostolic era was beginning, and it was the amalgamation of all of these virtues and abilities that brought him to a position of relative prominence, but still without the powers of a hierarchical head. In other words, Polycarp could meet, consult, advise, and dispute; but never could he compel.⁷³⁰

⁷²⁶ Barclay, William, *The Letter to the Romans*, pp.12,13 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁷²⁷ II Cor 8:19a

⁷²⁸ Greek: *cheirotoneo*.

⁷²⁹ Schaff, Philip, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Vol.1, quoting from Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, Book V, chpt. 24: *'But Polycarp was not only also instructed by the apostles, and conversed with many who had seen Christ, but....also....called many to turn away from the heretics to the church of God, proclaiming that he had received this one and sole truth from the apostles....while at Rome Polycarp discussed with the Roman bishop the matter and the introduction of the pagan Easter in place of the Passover.'*

⁷³⁰ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, pp.199,200,360 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

An eighth-century description of Christians has come down through the ages, through translations and differing routes. In part, it reads: 'They know and trust in God, the Creator of heaven and earth, in whom and from whom are all things, to whom there is no other god as companion, from whom they received commandments which they engraved upon their minds, and observe in hope and expectation of the world which is to come. Wherefore they do not commit adultery, nor fornication, nor bear false witness, nor embezzle what is held in pledge, nor covet what is not theirs. They honour father and mother, and show kindness to those near to them, and whenever they are judges, they judge uprightly. They do not worship idols made in the image of man, and whatever they would not that others should do unto them, they do not to others, and of the food which is consecrated to idols they do not eat, for they are pure. And their oppressors they treat with kindness, and make them their friends; they do good to their enemies. And their women, O King, are pure as virgins, and their daughters are modest. And their men keep themselves from every unlawful union and from all uncleanness, in the hope of a recompense to come in the other world. Further, if one or other of them have bondmen and bondwomen or children, through love toward them they persuade them to become Christians [sic], and when they have done so, they call them brethren without distinction. They do not worship strange gods, and they go their way in all modesty and cheerfulness. Falsehood is not found among them, and they love one another, and from widows they do not turn away their esteem, and they deliver the orphan from him who treats him harshly.'

Luke 14:23, '*And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.*'

'There is one sentence in this parable that has been sadly misused. "*Go out,*" said the master, "*and compel them to come in.*" Augustine used that text as a justification for religious persecution. It was used as a defence, and even a command, to coerce people into the so-called Christian faith. It was used as a defence for the Inquisition, the thumb-screw, the rack, the threat of death and imprisonment, the campaigns against the heretics, for all those things which are the shame of mainstream, visible Christianity—in short, [Roman Catholic], repugnant, satanic, and vile. Jesus does not coerce, He invites. Beside it we should always set another text—'*The love of Christ constrains us.*' (II Cor 5:14). In the Kingdom of God there is only one compulsion—the compulsion of love.'

It must be added that Judæo-Christianity is entirely pacific: Mat 5:43-48 constrains us to '*love our enemies.*' We are not to kill them, or anyone else for that matter. Christianity is not violent; Christianity is not repressive; and Christianity is not murderous and inquisitorial. It cannot be. With love, it simply cannot be.

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, p.168:

'The word used for '*to compel*' is the verb aggareuein, and aggareuein is a word with a history. It comes from the noun aggareus, which is a Persian word meaning 'a courier.' The Persians had an amazing postal system. Each road was divided into stages lasting one day. At each stage there was food for the courier and water and fodder for the horses, and fresh horses for the road. But, if by any chance there was anything lacking, any private person could be impressed, compelled into giving food, lodging, horses, assistance, and even into carrying the message himself for a stage. The word for such compulsion was aggareuein.

In the end the word came to signify any kind of forced impressment into the service of the occupying force.'

The usage in Luke, however, does not import forced impressment or, indeed, Roman Catholic tyrannicide / murder. The corresponding texts to this act are Mat 24:40,41 and Luke 17:34-36, where, variously, one is taken and the other left. They are '*taken,*' Greek: paralambano, which actually means '*to take an associate or companion to oneself.*' They have no say in the matter; they must go, and that constitutes a form of compulsion. At that time, they will have been in hiding, fearful of what is happening, and they must be '*taken.*' This is not a reference to Christ's return in the air for the dead in Christ and the elect then alive, but to a later event, at the time of His coming in all-conquering power to the mount of Olives, q.v. inf. It is at that time that the 'intermediate people', q.v. inf., are taken to be with Him in the Holy Land. They are not raised immortal. They remain mortal. And they are taken to be with their victorious Christ.

And he who has, gives to him who has not, without boasting. (And they do not proclaim in the ears of the multitude the kind deeds they do, but are careful that no one should notice them; and they conceal their giving just like one who finds a treasure and conceals it). And when they see a stranger, they take him into their homes, and rejoice over him as a very brother; for they do not call them brethren after the flesh, but brethren after the spirit and in God. And whenever one of their poor passes from the world, each one of them, according to his ability, gives heed to him, and carefully sees to his burial. And if they hear that one of their number is imprisoned, or afflicted, on account of the name of their Messiah, all of them anxiously minister to his necessity, and if it is possible to redeem him, they set him free. And if there is any among them that is poor and needy, and they have no spare food, they fast two or three days, in order to supply to the needy their lack of food. They observe the precepts of their Messiah with much care, living justly and soberly, as the Lord their God commanded them. Every morning and every hour, they give thanks and praise to God for His loving kindness towards them, and for their food and for their drink they offer thanksgiving to Him. And if any righteous man among them passes from the world, they rejoice and offer thanks to God, and they escort his body as if he were setting out from one place to another near. And when a child has been born to one of them, they give thanks to God, and if, furthermore, it happen to die in childhood, they give thanks to God the more, as for one who has passed through the world without sins.⁷³¹ And further, if they see that any of them dies in his ungodliness, or in his sins, for him they grieve bitterly, and sorrow as for one who goes to meet his doom.⁷³²

Excellent said, but the facts were even better than the words. Christians could be ever identified by their open hand to the poor.^{733 734 735 736} *'The vile person shall no more be called liberal, nor the churl said to be*

⁷³¹ thus no pagan doctrine of original sin.

⁷³² cf. *Apology of Aristides of Athens*

⁷³³ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, p.183:

'Latin proverb: 'He gives twice who gives quickly.'

⁷³⁴ contrast with *Scott's Commentary*: 'More inhumanity and villainy may be found among degenerate professors of Christianity than among infidels; and in general where we expect the most kindness, we meet with the greatest injuries, that we may learn to "cease from man."'

⁷³⁵ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, p.187:

'To the Jew, almsgiving was the most sacred of all religious duties. How sacred it was may be seen from the fact that the Jews used the same word—tzedakah—both for righteousness and almsgiving....There was a Rabbinic saying: "Greater is he who gives alms than he who offers all sacrifices." Almsgiving stood first in the catalogue of good works.'

⁷³⁶ Giving -v- Lending -v- Deceiving:

The Bible makes it clear time and time again that we are to give, with an open hand, and not to withhold. But the giving is not willy-nilly charitable giving. It is a loan, with the repayment (if any) up to the receiver. If a person is genuinely destitute, genuinely in need, then they will receive.

The problem lies in the incredible number of deceivers nowadays: those who approach members of the public, begging for money. Often, the approach is accompanied by a 'ready made' tale of woe or a superficially reasonable proposition, with the request of some money to alleviate the largely or wholly fictitious malady or wanting.

Nowadays, in the experience of many in the true church, especially in the West, these forms of approach are often made by young females and almost exclusively directed toward males. The request is for money, no matter what the stated malady or deficiency. If the male prospect offers to remedy the malady 'in kind,' or provide what is said to be wanting, it is refused, often with effusive foul-mouthed abuse. This is very telling.

*bountiful. For the vile person shall speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practice hypocrisy, and to utter error against the Lord, to make empty the soul of the hungry; and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail. The instruments also of the churl are evil: he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh right. But the liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand.*⁷³⁷ Perhaps this can be understood more clearly when it is appreciated that '*liberal*' comes from the Greek meaning '*generous*,'⁷³⁸ and '*churl*' comes from the Greek meaning '*miserly*.'⁷³⁹

These Christians were not a threat to any, save the workers of iniquity, because for them the deeds and conversation of the Christians upbraided them to shame, and brought into their minds the worthlessness of their depraved existence. And for this they were not thankful in the least, other than to stoke their hatred.

Seven churches

There are seven churches, or church ages, from the time of the first Pentecost after the resurrection⁷⁴⁰ until the sealing of the one hundred and forty-four thousand and events immediately following,⁷⁴¹ seven being God's number of completion. In these seven letters there is given a complete picture of the moral and spiritual history of the church, along with other truths. While the letters have seven exhortations to hear them, history to date tells that little real attention is actually paid, even in some of the churches themselves, and that they are sadly neglected, or even disdained, by all others.

The first two eras show the basic characteristics of the early apostolic and sub-apostolic church. The last two, the Philadelphian and Laodicean, are the most important at the present time, as it is those which are most applicable to the time of the end, immediately before the return of Christ, although, as will become apparent, the concluding four eras actually maintain to the last.⁷⁴²

Church #1: Ephesus

In the history of the church, this congregation speaks of the apostolic period. Traditionally founded by the Ionians,⁷⁴³ Ephesus was the main centre of Grecian culture and heathen idolatry; the city of female deity,

There is no obligation whatsoever on the Judæo-Christian to give to 'professional' beggars who are lying in an attempt to obtain money by defrauding members of the public.

⁷³⁷ Isa 32:5-8

⁷³⁸ Greek: nadiyb.

⁷³⁹ Greek: kiylay.

⁷⁴⁰ 30AD

⁷⁴¹ cf. inf.

⁷⁴² the following seven church eras dissertation worked around certain content in Barclay, William, *Letters to the Seven Churches: A Study of the Second and Third Chapters of the Book of Revelation*, with frequent augmentation, importation, added comment and clarification (with footnotes), and some paraphrasing.

⁷⁴³ c.1050BC

dubbed 'the Light of Asia' by Pliny. Many vigorous religious cults which strongly resisted Christianity had their headquarters in the city that had known the ministry of Paul, Apollos....Timothy, and John. It was chief of the twelve Ionian states in Asia Minor, and the seat of the proconsul of the province.⁷⁴⁴ Here was located the temple of the goddess Artemis,⁷⁴⁵ called the Artemision—actually the Oriental, not the Greek deity—adorned and ornamented by all of the twelve states, and one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. It was the largest Greek temple ever known, designed and built by Chersiphron.⁷⁴⁶ To it attached the pagan right of asylum, and Ephesus proudly proclaimed herself its 'sacristan.' Burnt down by Herostratus on the day that Alexander the Great was born,⁷⁴⁷ it was rebuilt through the joint efforts of these twelve states. It was destroyed once more, however, when the Goths sacked the city in the third century.⁷⁴⁸

The temple has been described in glowing terms: 'It had been built with ungrudging magnificence out of contributions furnished by all Asia....To avoid the dangers of earthquakes, its foundations were built at vast cost on artificial foundations of skin and charcoal laid over the marsh. It gleamed far off with a star-like radiance. Its peristyle consisted of one hundred and twenty pillars of the Ionic order, hewn out of Parian marble. Its doors of carved Cyprus wood were surmounted by transoms so vast and solid that the aid of miracles was invoked to account for their elevation. The staircase, which led to the roof, was said to have been cut out of a single vine of Cyprus....Paintings by the greatest of Greek artists....adorned the inner walls. The roof of the temple itself was of cedar-wood, supported by columns of jasper on bases of Parian marble. On these pillars hung gifts of priceless value, the votive offerings of grateful superstition. At the end of it stood the great altar....behind which fell the vast folds of a purple curtain. Behind this curtain was the dark and awful shrine in which stood the most sacred idol of classic heathendom; and, again, behind the shrine, was the room which, inviolable under divine protection, was regarded as the wealthiest and securest bank in the ancient world.'⁷⁴⁹

Due to Ephesus' location, land trade was augmented by sea trade, for it had easy access to the interior of Asia by interlacing highways and to the East by the great road linking it to Tarsus and Syrian Antioch. Its markets were the 'Vanity Fair' of Asia, abetted by an extremely agreeable climate throughout the year. It had extensive districts in its environs, especially in the coastal regions southward, including the cities of Phygela and Marathesium, and large landed interests in the lower Cayster Valley, including the city of Larissa.

Originally, the whole Ephesian valley was an arm of the sea, on the south-eastern side of which gulf stood a shrine to the great mother goddess of the heathen. Much later this became associated with Mary, the

⁷⁴⁴ Trentham, C. A., *Studies in Timothy*, p.13

⁷⁴⁵ Diana.

⁷⁴⁶ c.550BC

⁷⁴⁷ in 356BC

⁷⁴⁸ in 262AD

⁷⁴⁹ Farrar, Canon, *Life and Work of St. Paul*, ii., 12, cited by Vincent, Marvin R., *Vincent's Word Studies of the New Testament*, Vol.2, pp.436,437

mother of Jesus, who is said to have died there, the veneration of her 'home and grave' deriving from a myth that appears to have originated around the time of the Council of Ephesus.⁷⁵⁰

The river Cayster gradually silted up the gulf to the outer coastline, and made Ephesus seem like an inland city, whereas, earlier,⁷⁵¹ Strabo described it as a city of the coast. The ancient harbour is now a marsh dense with reeds.⁷⁵² Just as Miletus beforehand had lost its trade and importance to Ephesus due to the silting of its harbour by the river Meander, Ephesus in turn lost its trade and importance to rival Smyrna due to the ruination of its harbour by the Cayster, with navigation being rendered first difficult, starting sometime around the second- or first-century BC, becoming serious and potentially dangerous in the first-century AD, and then impossible, some time thereafter, with this final state-of-affairs most likely falling in the fifth- or sixth-century AD. Paul, when travelling from Troas to Rome,⁷⁵³ sailed past Ephesus without entering the harbour, quite probably suggesting, even then, an implicit policy of avoidance unless absolutely necessary.

Paul laboured here for three years at one time. It was in Ephesus that John ministered for thirty years, having left his home in Jerusalem. That said, it was no safe haven, but rather, a city often in turmoil, suffering from numerous earthquakes, plagued by malarial mosquitos arising from the silted marshlands, and repeatedly plundered through the ages by foreign invaders: by Goths;⁷⁵⁴ by Arabs, twice;⁷⁵⁵ by Turks thrice;⁷⁵⁶ and finally by Mongols under Tamerlane, who completed the city's ruin.⁷⁵⁷

In this first church age, Christ is seen in the Ephesian era in His proper place as guiding, controlling, and ruling over all. His servants are secure, because He holds them firmly in His right hand. Outwardly, everything is in proper order, but there are certain matters which need urgent attention and rectification: *'I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate.'*⁷⁵⁸

⁷⁵⁰ 431AD

⁷⁵¹ 20AD

⁷⁵² C.C.G. b.9:

'The Medieval Warm Period was the last one and lasted from the 9th to the 14th century. The previous one was the Roman Warm Period and sea levels were demonstrated up to seven feet higher than they are today. The port at Ephesus is seven feet higher than the sea level and is seven miles inland from the current port at Kusadasi.'

⁷⁵³ in 57AD

⁷⁵⁴ In 262AD

⁷⁵⁵ in 655 and again in 717AD.

⁷⁵⁶ in 1090, and again on two occasions in the 14th-century.

⁷⁵⁷ in 1403

⁷⁵⁸ Rev 2:2-6

There are aspects recited here that attract and merit commendation. Deeds, toil, and perseverance are all virtues. Moreover, the Ephesians put to the test those claiming apostolic authority. The apostles of the early church were dying, and perhaps only John was left, but the Ephesians had kept their doctrine pure. Further commendation comes from their hatred of the deeds of the Nicolaitanes,⁷⁵⁹ a sect which sought to introduce wholesale apostasy, including the worship of several pagan gods common in Asia Minor at that time.⁷⁶⁰

In spite of all the commendable qualities in this church, there was one vital lack: they had left their first love. This was true of the church whose name, Ephesus, means '*desired*.' Their hearts were drifting away from Christ. The first love is marked by its all-engrossing quality, fervency, and constancy. The first danger for any believer is to grow cold towards Christ. The church may have great zeal and activity, soundness of doctrine and practice, yet have its first love for Christ on the decline. It is subtle. Love looks for love, and meticulous care with doctrine and discipline will not take its place. Loss of first love can be so easily followed by evils in doctrine and practice. Christ will have all the believer's love, or none. His command is repent or suffer removal.

The prevailing environment in the city, however, was not in the least conducive. While the city boasted one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World—the temple of Artemis,⁷⁶¹ the fertility goddess⁷⁶² (and it was here that the title 'Mother of God' was first given to Mary)⁷⁶³—it also had a vast Roman theatre, testifying to its importance as a centre of pagan Roman civilisation during the first-century AD. Biblical and historical records show that even in Paul's day many citizens were completely alienated from the life of God. A particular problem was the prevalence of a deep-rooted belief in the power of magic. The people were so renowned for their interest in sorcery that books on magic had become widely known as 'Ephesian Writings.' The early Judæo-Christian church would find it difficult to survive the preponderant counterforces and the hostile environment.

⁷⁵⁹ '*Speaks against the Holy Spirit*,' Mat 12:32. It is the Holy Spirit that leads us into all truth. The Nicolaitanes (Nicolatians) control the laity through hierarchy and man-made government, denying and opposing the role of the Holy Spirit; the antinomian Nicolaitians of the time taught that the Law of God does not apply to man as they claimed him to be part body, part spirit, and therefore not subject to the Law.

⁷⁶⁰ the pagan gods were of the earth, earthy, and could never raise their worshippers above the earthly passions which enslaved them. The gods, mere constructions of man, could never heal. Wood and stone do not breathe, think, or act. Worse, for because the gods were gods of nations and not of mankind, many, like the Greeks, laid down that war is the natural state and noblest work of men. The welfare of the state and the standing of the national gods were inextricably entwined, with the pagan religions supplying nothing to check the vilest of passions. The historical result was near-continuous warfare 'til the ancient world crashed down in ruins.'

Pagan conceptions of the 'gods' are summed by Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, pp.109,110:

'The oldest, the most primitive, and perhaps the commonest idea was the idea of grudging gods. There was an essential hostility and suspicion between gods and men. The gods grudged men everything they attained, achieved, or received. To be successful, prosperous or great was dangerous; mediocrity alone was safe. Herodotus found a parable that the tallest trees were most likely to be blasted by the lightening stroke; any man who raised himself out of the common ruck of men was in danger of being blasted by the gods.

Here is the essence of the matter. The gods were enraged that men should enter into any blessing. Man was not the child of the gods; he was rather the victim of the gods. There was an essential conflict of interests, an essential enmity between gods and men.'

⁷⁶¹ Diana to the Romans.

⁷⁶² built 480BC

⁷⁶³ in 451AD

While the ruins of Ephesus are now wrapped in the mantle of Islam, the candlestick of this era of the church has not been removed, as will be seen later, for they did return to their first love.⁷⁶⁴

Church #2: Smyrna

The letter to Smyrna is the shortest of the letters; that to Thyatira the longest. Smyrna was originally an Ionian settlement that passed into decline after the Lydian king, Alyattes, conquered it. The original city was destroyed⁷⁶⁵ and lay deserted and in ruins for four centuries. Redesigned by Alexander the Great, and rebuilt after his death by Antigonos I on a site slightly to the south of the original, almost immediately it became wealthy and famous. It lay about forty miles north of Ephesus and, in some respects, was a rival. Because of its natural and commercial situation (its seaport was considered the safest of its time), its wealth, commerce, and splendid buildings, it was commonly called by the populace 'the beautiful,' and became known as 'the Glory of Asia.' It was also distinguished for its schools of rhetoric and philosophy.

The magnificent city was capped by an acropolis atop Mount Pagos, the walls and structure of which, to ancient eyes, resembled a crown. While this image was familiar on its coins and public monuments, the beleaguered Christians, living in a hostile city zealously loyal to Rome and beset by a small population of anti-Christian Jews, were offered a superior crown: '*a crown*⁷⁶⁶ *of life*.'⁷⁶⁷ To the ordinary inhabitants the only defect in the entire prospect was the drainage of the lowest parts of the city, aggravated by the prevalent wind which heaped water on the shore, with the result that the sewage discharge was inhibited in finding its way to the sea. In such circumstances, the malodour on the quay was palpable.

Certainly, Smyrna, the city of Homer,⁷⁶⁸ was not far behind Ephesus in idolatry. Here, alone in the Greek world, the goddess Nemesis were worshipped in paired form in a temple on the mount under the local name Cybele, the city's protecting deity. Smyrna is not named in the Acts of the Apostles or the epistles of Paul, so it is not known when the gospel was first preached there. What is known is that the Roman laws against Christianity were strenuously enforced there. Indeed, the persecutions of the sub-apostolic era believers in Asia Minor were centred here. Polycarp, friend of John, the last disciple to die, is said to have been martyred in the city.⁷⁶⁹ It was the most dangerous place to live in the empire for a Christian. Today, with the old and cramped

⁷⁶⁴ Greek: aphiemi, '*left*,' with the idea of being able to return, if desired, as opposed to '*lost*,' Greek: ginomai.

⁷⁶⁵ c.627BC

⁷⁶⁶ Greek: stephanos, '*award won in competition*.'

⁷⁶⁷ Rev 2:10d

⁷⁶⁸ to whose memory they erected a splendid temple.

⁷⁶⁹ in 168AD

inner harbour long-since silted up, Smyrna is called Izmir, the important Turkish carpet market and seaport on the Ægean. Again, it now rests in the mantle of Islam.⁷⁷⁰

To this era, one of only two without censure,⁷⁷¹ Christ's eternal nature and deity are expressed in absolute terms: *'These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive';*⁷⁷² the infinite Saviour is supreme before all things and all time. He is the goal of all, *'For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.'*⁷⁷³ His great triumph over death is next stated. He has destroyed death and its power. How important that Christ should be revealed in this light to the suffering and persecuted church, for this was the period of the Roman persecutions. Smyrna means 'myrrh,' which must be crushed to give forth its fragrance. In this martyral age, the church yielded a sweet fragrance to God: *'For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?'*⁷⁷⁴

*'I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich), and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews,*⁷⁷⁵ *and are not, but are the*⁷⁷⁶ *synagogue of Satan. Fear none of these things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.'*⁷⁷⁷ The Lord informs them that He knows their works, and tribulation, the latter from the Greek word which conveys the idea of pressing grapes until the juice comes forth.⁷⁷⁸ Christ has gone to the utmost depths of suffering and death and He sometimes permits trials of the 'elect' in order to rekindle lost first love. Furthermore, He knows their poverty. Confiscation of goods both attended and followed upon persecution. But they are reminded that although poor in worldly goods, they are rich in faith: *'Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; Whether*

⁷⁷⁰ the history of Smyrna into the twentieth century was no less bloody. Taylor, Frederick, *Exorcising Hitler, The Occupation and DeNazification of Germany*, pp.60,61, also citing: Milton, Giles, *Paradise Lost: Smyrna 1922, The Destruction of Islam's City of Tolerance*, and Naimark, Norman M., *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe*, pp.44ff.:

'The resulting war between the Greeks and the Turks, the latter led by their great national hero, General Mustafa Kemal (later honoured by the name Kemal Atatürk) ended in a definite and tragically bloody Turkish victory. Many thousands of Greeks were massacred or fled (it should be added that, during their own incursions, Greek army and militia units had also slaughtered innocent Turks and laid waste to entire villages and towns). The Greek forces were forced to evacuate Anatolia. On 9 September 1922, in one of the most terrible events of the twentieth century, the ancient and proud city of Smyrna was laid to waste by an alliance of Turkish soldiery and freebooters and then destroyed by fire. Kemal, the Turkish commander, openly admitted to his aides that he saw the destruction of the cosmopolitan (and largely Christian) city as a part of a 'purification' process taht would return its shell, at least, to its 'true and noble Turkish inhabitants.'

⁷⁷¹ Philadelphian era being the other.

⁷⁷² Rev 2:8b

⁷⁷³ Rom 11:36

⁷⁷⁴ II Cor 2:15,16

⁷⁷⁵ Greek: *ioudaios*, correctly 'Judaean' or 'of Judah.'

⁷⁷⁶ correctly 'a', not 'the.'

⁷⁷⁷ Rev 2:9,10

⁷⁷⁸ Greek: *thlipsis*.

*Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.*⁷⁷⁹

'The word used here for poverty is ptocheia, which means, not so much 'poverty,' as 'destitution.' In Greek there are two words for poverty. Penia describes the poverty of a man who has to work for his living; it describes the poverty of a man who has nothing superfluous; but ptocheia describes the poverty of the man who has nothing at all. As far as worldly possessions went, the Christians of Smyrna were destitute, but they had God....Smyrna was one of the wealthiest of cities, and yet the Christians were poor to the point of destitution....It is very probably true that the Christians of Smyrna were, at least in some cases, poor because their homes had been deliberately pillaged and plundered. The writer of the Hebrews wrote to his people: '*You received the pillaging of your home with joy.*'⁷⁸⁰ It was dangerous to be a Christian in the ancient world. It is not safe yet, for in many cases it is a fact that, if a man insisted on carrying his Christian principles into his business life or into his everyday life, he would be in very real danger of losing his job.'^{781 782}

This type of mindless persecution of the 'elect' by pagans of the time has been described as the 'logic' of irrationality, a concept well summarised in the following poetical excerpt from the works of Thomas Gray:

'Yet, ah! Why should they know their fate.
Since sorrow never comes too late,
And happiness too swiftly flies?
Thought would destroy their paradise.
No more;—where ignorance is bliss,
'Tis folly to be wise.'

In Revelation, the risen Christ informs the church that He knows the blasphemy and reviling of '[a] *synagogue of Satan*.'⁷⁸³ This is not, as some suppose, a reference to the Jewish nation as a whole, but to the unbelieving, outwardly legalising, Luciferian ideology—involving a lot of the Jews, admittedly—evident in the early Christian era.⁷⁸⁴ At that time, most Christians were Jews, but some had brought much unwanted baggage with them. Abhorrent Galatianism had made its appearance in the apostolic and sub-apostolic ages, when men tried to dilute the grace of God with legalism and ceremonialism, and with religious worship buried under an arid

⁷⁷⁹ I Cor 3:21-23

⁷⁸⁰ Heb 10:34

⁷⁸¹ and his home, and his family, if they were not true Christians.

⁷⁸² Barclay, William, *Letters to the Seven Churches: A Study of the Second and Third Chapters of the Book of Revelation*, pp.41-43 (with additions, added comment and clarification in square brackets (with footnotes), and some paraphrasing.

⁷⁸³ '[A]nd we are HIS chosen people. Lucifer is very much alive. Most Jews do not like to admit it, but our God is Lucifer;' statement by Harold Wallace Rosenthal, at the time Administrative Assistant to U.S. Senator for New York, Jacob K. Javits, in a 1976AD interview with Walter White Junior. Rosenthal was murdered shortly after the interview.

⁷⁸⁴ Rom 2:28,29

mound of dreary minutiae.⁷⁸⁵ Satan's synagogue is set in opposition here to the church of God. Satan attacks the church from without by persecution and from within by perversion of doctrine, but an internally located evil had evidently not yet made many inroads into this era of the church, as there is no censure or command to repent.⁷⁸⁶ The threat was overwhelmingly external, from the then nascent but atavistic Judaism.

There is no word here that the Smyrnians would escape their suffering. History records that they were tortured, and exposed to wild bulls and lions that tore them apart. In the Roman Empire, imprisonment was not a form of punishment as today, because the government was unwilling to support a large prison population. A man in prison was either awaiting trial or death. As for the *'ten days,'* there were ten persecutions from Nero to Diocletian.⁷⁸⁷ The tenth—a pagan decuman, 'the tenth and worst wave'—started with terminal intent on the day of the Terminalia,⁷⁸⁸ the feast of the god of boundaries. Under Maximin, the tenth persecution lasted for ten years in Syria and Egypt. For the first time, it involved the specific targeting of books including copies of the New Testament for systematic destruction. The letters of Pliny to the emperor Trajan show that it was a capital offence to be 'named' as a Christian, and that the very word was banned.⁷⁸⁹ As a result, every Christian was vulnerable, at any moment, to accusation by anyone who took offence for any reason. Release from such condemnation was only available through the public performance of pagan ritual sacrifice and worship of the emperor-god. Decius decreed that official certificates⁷⁹⁰ were to be issued to those recanting and performing supplication, thus guaranteeing their freedom from imprisonment, hard labour, torture, and, indeed, martyrdom.

Despite these tribulations, this saintly church is encouraged in this vein: *'be thou faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life.'* In the New Testament, the saints triumph over death, receiving a crown of life, forever, in the kingdom of God.

⁷⁸⁵ too many so-called Christians wilfully confound 'legalism' with 'law abiding / law-keeping.' Legalism, the Pharisaic speciality par excellence, is the compounding of petty, irrelevant, irksome, and wild rules and regulations, all of which are man-made. Abiding by the Law of God, keeping the Law of God, is conforming to the will of God. *'Keep my commandments,'* saith God. He does not say: 'Keep whatever you wish,' or, for that matter, 'Devise your own rules and regulations—and the more convoluted and mad the better—and then keep them.'

As for God's Law passing away or being rendered redundant by Christ, His own words on the matter are found in Luke 16:17, *'And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.'*

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, p.219:

'Certain Hebrew letters are very like each other; they are distinguished only by the serif, which is the little line at the top or bottom of a letter. Not even a serif of the great laws would pass away.'

⁷⁸⁶ one of only two eras without censure, the other being the end-time Philadelphian era.

⁷⁸⁷ variously under: Nero—67; Domitian—81; Trajan—108; Marcus Aurelius Antoninus—162; Severus—192, Maximus—235; Decius —249; Valerian—257 (lasting three-and-a-half years); Aurelian—274; and Diocletian—303 (finally ending in 313, after ten years).

⁷⁸⁸ pagan Roman feast kept on 23 February.

⁷⁸⁹ Trajan instructed Pliny by letter that Christians were not to be hunted down, and that anonymous accusations against Christians were to be disregarded. Pliny, for his part, operated a provisional tripartite taxonomy: (1) those who were Christian and admitted same at their trial, even after a third warning. Those, if non-citizens, were executed; if citizens, then given a lesser punishment; (2) those who denied ever being a Christian were made to sacrifice publicly to the gods and to Cæsar to prove it; and, the real impetus to his letter, (3) those who admitted to being Christian but who claimed no longer to be so. What was to be done about them?

⁷⁹⁰ in Latin called libelli.

Church #3: Pergamos

'[O]f all the periods in the [church's] history, it is the one of which we know the least. For fifty years after Paul's life a curtain was drawn over the church, through which we strive vainly to look; and when at last it rises, with the writings of the earliest church fathers,⁷⁹¹ we find a church in many aspects very different from that in the days of Peter and Paul.⁷⁹²

Pergamos—or, in its proper form, Pergamum—meaning 'marriage,' 'elevation,' or 'wedded to power,' situated in Teuthrania in Mysia, lay north of Smyrna, and was considered one of the finest cities of Asia Minor, located atop a huge rocky hill and dominating the broad plain of the navigable Caicus below. Cool mountain water was brought a distance of twenty-seven miles to the city, partly in stoneware pipes.⁷⁹³ While the outward display was one of permanence, strength, and immutability, deriving from its stronghold position, inwardly all was not as it seemed. It had little or no commerce to bolster and maintain it, but the place was remarkable for classical learning,⁷⁹⁴ refinement, and science; especially medicine. A number of kings made this their royal residence, and owing to its natural strength it became a place of deposit for royal treasure. Bequeathed to the Romans⁷⁹⁵ by its last king, Attalus III, Pergamos and its dominions became part of the Roman Empire and was elevated to a Roman province.⁷⁹⁶ Later, it became the first city of Asia to receive permission from Rome to build a temple dedicated to the worship of a living emperor.⁷⁹⁷ Within a short time, Pergamos had three such temples, where the Roman emperors were worshipped as gods. Its famous library, second only to that of Alexandria, contained two hundred thousand books. Ephesus and Smyrna were evil cities, but Pergamos was especially so in its idolatry. Here was found the renowned temple of Æsculapius in which the most prominent object was the wreathed serpent—with others to be found at Athens, Epidaurus, Kos, Tricea,⁷⁹⁸ and Rome—worshipped in

⁷⁹¹ c.120AD

⁷⁹² Hurlbut, Jesse, *The Story of the Christian Church* (with references to 'Saint' deleted)

⁷⁹³ the entire arrangement, involving tunnels, canals, and aqueducts / pipes, extended to 43 kilometres (27 miles) in its final exposition, originating at a source at higher elevation and 16 miles / 26 kilometres distant from the hilltop city. The Attalus aqueduct, incorporating the pipeline (buried, made of fireclay, and 13 cm / 5 inches inner diameter), was constructed probably in the middle or second half of the third century BC, with the purpose of bringing water from a spring in the mountains which lay to the north. This aqueduct included an inverted syphon incorporating lead pipework in the lowest section where the hydrostatic pressure was equal to twenty times the force of gravity, too great for fireclay pipework to bear. Such a complex and readily traceable water system would leave the city dangerously exposed were the supply ever to be cut in a siege, but this potential wanting was mitigated, in part, by its reputation as a place of occult learning and refinement, unlikely to be subjected to any serious siege.

⁷⁹³ Greek: arche, 'origin.'

⁷⁹⁴ the English word 'parchment' comes from the Latin: pergamentum, referring to sheepskins first perfected as writing material there, possibly as early as about 200BC, and probably involving the use of lime mordant to remove any residual flesh and hair on the skins.

⁷⁹⁵ in 133BC

⁷⁹⁶ in 130BC; the city was to end in the fold of Islam, becoming part of the Ottoman Empire after the fall of Constantinople in 1453AD. Today, the principal ruined sites of ancient Pergamos lie to the north and west of the modern city of Bergama in Turkey.

⁷⁹⁷ in 29BC

⁷⁹⁸ Eyewitness Travel Guides, *The Greek Islands*, p.168 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

the form of a living serpent fed inside the temple. The early science of medicine was identified with the worship of Satan who usurped the place, dignity, and power of Jesus Christ, for blasphemously they called Æsculapius, 'The Preserver and Saviour,' and termed themselves 'temple-sweepers' or 'sacristans.'

As Ephesus was the church of departed love, and Smyrna the church of fiery persecutions, so Pergamos⁷⁹⁹ was the church sliding into a heady and worldly alliance. *'I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.'*⁸⁰⁰ Since this church is tolerating gross error, it needs to be brought back to the truth of God's Word. The phrase, *'to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication,'* speaks of idol worship. *'Fornication'* is very much part-and-parcel of such paganism, and a clear sign of religious degeneracy. *'Eating things sacrificed unto idols'* is covered in several parts of the New Testament, in the writings of both Luke and Paul in addition to this by John, and is quite complex.⁸⁰¹ Here it is proscribed, as it is linked with *'fornication,'* giving a clear view of what was happening in the Pergamos era.

The identity of the faithful martyr Antipas, meaning 'against all,' is unknown, but, given the chronology, possibly it refers to a witness martyred by Rome during her almost unrestricted dominance.⁸⁰² As to *'the doctrine of Balaam,'* Balaam was a pagan diviner who wilfully sought and received funds from the children of Israel, and others, for his services. Numbers gives a flavour: *'And the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the rewards of divination in their hand; and they came unto Balaam, and spake unto him the words of Balak.'*⁸⁰³ Secular historical sources confirm that Balaam⁸⁰⁴ was a high priest of the ancient Babylonian mysteries.

⁷⁹⁹ '[Asklepieion, on Kos,] with its white marble terraces cut into a pine-clad hill, [was the] site chosen in the 4th-century B.C. for rest and recuperation and still exudes an air of tranquillity....Temple, school, and medical centre combined, it was built after the death of Hippocrates and was the most famous of ancient Greece's three hundred asklepieia dedicated to Asklepios, god of healing. The doctors were priests of the Asklepiada and became practitioners of Hippocrates's methods of diagnosis and treatment. The cult's symbol was the snake, once used to seek healing herbs, and it remains the emblem of modern western medicine today.'

⁸⁰⁰ legendary birthplace of Zeus.

⁸⁰¹ Rev 2:13-16

⁸⁰² review contained in 'Wine Poured Out Before Idols' in Appendix.

⁸⁰³ one tradition holds that he was martyred in 92AD, roasted alive on or in a brazen bull-shaped altar.

⁸⁰⁴ Num 22:7

⁸⁰⁴ The *'doctrine of Balaam,'* as it is revealed in Rev 2:14, encompasses the following:

'the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel' is to introduce an oppressive religious system where the hierarchy set themselves as mediators between God and man;

'Satan's seat' or throne,⁸⁰⁵ 'where Satan dwelleth,' is an important eschatological indicator. Satan's seat,⁸⁰⁶ originally vested in ancient Babylon, was then overturned to Pergamos in Asia Minor when the pagan priesthood fled there bringing their serpent-worship and their accoutrements with them. Barker and Ainsworth note that: 'The defeated Chaldeans fled to Asia Minor⁸⁰⁷ and fixed their central college at Pergamos.'⁸⁰⁸

Pergamos's evil legacy was bequeathed finally to Rome, which became known as the 'New Babylon,' and where Satan's seat or earthly throne now resides.⁸⁰⁹ While the pope's official seat,⁸¹⁰ as bishop of Rome, is

'to eat things sacrificed unto idols,' apart from the literal meaning, is to induce the church to sacrifice their tithes to the hierarchy to live luxuriously thereon, and to adopt profane practices; and, *'to commit fornication'* is to induce the church to adopt and hold to various doctrines concocted, borrowed, or 'lifted' from other religions or religious beliefs.

'Fornication' is dalliance with, and adoption of, any of the multi-flavoured pagan beliefs spawned by the Devil. Baal-peor, meaning, 'lord of the opening,' an idol of the Moabites and Midianites, was worshipped with wild and horrifyingly licentious rites, termed by Hosea *'that shame,'* (Hos 9:10). The Israelites, by the advice of Balaam, were induced to practice it in Shittim, and 24,000 perished under judgement (Num 25:1-9,31:15,16; I Cor 10:8). This dreadful wickedness arose, by Nicholaus, in the Pergamos era of the Church; termed *'the doctrine of Balaam'* in Revelation, and *'damnable heresies'* by Peter, in II Peter 2:1,15.

This cataclysmic declension is further exposed in Jude 4:11: *'For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Woe unto them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsay of Core.'* (sublinear emphasis added).

⁸⁰⁵ Greek: thronos.

⁸⁰⁶ there are, in total, three 'seats' of Satan on earth: Babylon in Shinar, Pergamum (Pergamos) in Asia Minor, and Rome (The Vatican) in Italy, possibly intended as a Satanic mirror of the three 'nomadic' locations of the throne that Christ will take, q.v. inf.

There are three 'seats' of Satan, each existing in turn, and three destructions by fire for the third, also called *'the seat of the beast';* three threes, as it were, and an occult indicator of '666,' q.v. inf.

⁸⁰⁷ viz., the western coastal states of Asia Minor.

⁸⁰⁸ Barker and Ainsworth, *Lares and Penates of Cilicia*, p.232

⁸⁰⁹ Rev 2:12,13, *'And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; these things saith he that hath the sharp sword with the two edges; I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.'*

At that time, the seat of Satan was in Pergamos. Not only was that his throne, there he dwelt. The tense in the Greek is unspecific, doubly so because by the time of the writing of the book of Revelation in 95/6AD, and by dint of the last will and testament of Attilus III in 133BC, the title (including that of pontifex maximus) and crown had long passed from Pergamum to Rome. Later, in 378AD, the Roman emperor Gratian refused the title of pontifex maximus and it lay dormant until seized by Damascus, bishop of Rome. In due course it would find its way into the Roman Catholic Church, where it is found to this day in the title held by the pope.

The pope sits in the so-called 'Peter's seat'—it is, in fact, of Islamic provenance, complete with an inscription to Allah—under the quadripartite basilisks in St. Peter's which, in occult lore, are reputed to kill all upon whom it looks or breathes. This is Satan's seat. Since the pope's official seat is Saint John Lateran, ex cathedra papal fulminations are, therefore, in reality, fulminations delivered from Satan's seat in St. Peter's and, de facto, from Satan himself.

The Antichrist has great regard for the false prophet because he sits in 'Peter's chair' and in the basilisk of St. Peter's Basilica—this from the fabulous serpent produced from a union of the snake with a cock's egg!—and from the fact that the false prophet has power to deceive the nations through the use of miraculous signs, q.v. Rev 19:20. He also shares the indwelling or possession of Satan himself with the false prophet, since Satan can only possess one person at a time, although the former will be effectively fully possessed at the end-time.

Moffatt Translation (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): Rev 13:2b, *'To him [the 'Beast'] the dragon gave his own power and his own throne and great authority.'*

This shows the *'dragon,'* Satan, turning over his very throne (Satan's seat, Rev 2:13, relocated, Dan 11:45, and inf.) to the Beast empire that had the deadly wound to one its heads healed (Rev 13:3). In turn, this helps explain the close

the basilica of Saint John Lateran, located within the early city walls, the present-day supreme pagan temple in Rome is the Vatican and St. Peter's, located within the later ninth-century enlarged city walls—Vatican hill being the former site of a deeply-occult Etruscan oracle, the site of a temple of Cybele (the mother of the gods), a tomb of the Quadriga, and an infamous haunt of mediums, soothsayers, and fortune-tellers. In fact, a market in all things occult maintained and prospered there.

Hislop notes the following continuity in lineage: 'Phænnia, in [his] oracle, means by the son of a bull, Attalus, king of Pergamos, whom the oracle of Apollo called Taurokeron," or bull-horned.... This title given by the Delphian god, proves that Attilus, in whose dominions the Magi had their chief seat, had been set up and recognised in the very character of Bacchus, the Head of the Magi. Thus the vacant seat of Belshazar was filled, and the broken chain of the Chaldean succession renewed.'⁸¹¹

Satan's seat also speaks of his usurped world power, both military and political, and his profound inveiglement with medicine, the medical profession, and the health industry. He is identified in Scripture as the prince or god of this world: '*In whom the god of this world*⁸¹² *hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*'⁸¹³ In the Smyrnian age, Satan⁸¹⁴ tried to destroy the church by persecution. In the next centuries, he tried to ruin her testimony by a combination of patronage without and false disputings within.

The great apostate church, based in and called '*Babylon the great*,'⁸¹⁵ the Roman Catholic Church, crystallized and rose towards world prominence during this time. Gibbon⁸¹⁶ observes: 'The salvation of the

bond between the false prophet (the last-in-line pope) and the Beast empire: one has his seat at Saint John Lateran, the other is, at the very least, centred on the Vatican-situated throne of Satan (but only for a time, for it is transposed to the Holy Land at the time of the end, q.v.inf.). For the time being, both are in Rome and both are used by the Roman Catholic Church. That Satan is worshipped at the very heart of the Roman Catholic Church is evident from the 2012AD Easter Vigil ceremony held in The Vatican, and which included the following salutation: "Oh, Lucifer, who will never be defeated, Christ is your son! Who came back from hell....!" Romanism, like other vast religious organizations of the world, has an outer garb for fooling its advocates, while having an inner core, devoted to Luciferian worship.

⁸¹⁰ Latin: cathedra.

⁸¹¹ cuniform 'god-lists' were ancient attempts to reconcile varying pagan gods of various peoples into a tabular equivalence format; in addition, other gods were held to be Marduk in varying manifestations.

Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, p.241, (footnote, with added comment and clarification in square brackets), citing Paucanias, in *Phocica*, Lib. x., p.833

⁸¹² the 'god' of this 'age,' rather than 'world,' from Greek: aion, is Satan.

⁸¹³ II Cor 4:4; also cf. Mat 4:8,9

⁸¹⁴ Greek: satanas, 'adversary,' 'accuser,' or 'hater.'

⁸¹⁵ Latin: civitatis mundi, 'the city of the world,' was Augustinian's descriptive title of Rome.

⁸¹⁶ Gibbon, Edward, *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, cited by Gore, Charles, *Belief in Christ*, pp.13,14 (and footnote):

'The Greeks and Romans never discarded their old legend of a Golden Age in some remote past followed by a gradual decline age after age, so that they are almost totally without the sense of a progressive purpose in the world; and if their imagination wanders beyond the present world-order they conceive, more after the manner of the Easterns, of innumerable cycles of time, each characterized by a gradual deterioration and ending in final catastrophe, without any divine purpose running through the ages as a whole and moving on to its consummation.'

'See Bevan, *Hellenism and Christianity*, pp.180f:

common people was purchased at an easy rate, if it be true that in one year twelve thousand men were baptised at Rome, besides a proportionable number of women and children, and a white garment and twenty pieces of gold had been promised by the emperor to every convert.⁸¹⁷

In many cases, heathen were won over by adoption of pagan rites and festivals as parts of so-called Christian worship, a long and determined process called 'inculturation'.⁸¹⁸ This apostate union of church and state has wrought havoc wherever it has been introduced, as attested both in ancient times, and unto this day.⁸¹⁹

While in Ephesus there had been one cause of censure; here Christ says '*a few things*.' There is an evident declension from Ephesus where the deeds of the Nicolaitanes were hated, to Pergamos where their teaching was held and tolerated: a worldly adoption. Not only that, it appears to have been a core doctrinal belief of some of them. In light of this, there is an urgent call to immediate repentance, lest God's judgement is made and swiftly exercised.

Church #4: Thyatira

Thyatira, meaning 'sacrifice of labour,' and 'ruled by a woman,' is now called Akhissar, located to the southeast of Pergamos. According to Pliny, it was known in earlier times as Pelopia and Euhippia. Its principal deity was the sun-god Apollo, worshipped under the surname Tyrmnas.

Ephesus, Smyrna, and Pergamos were more noted than Thyatira, which, although never of paramount political importance, had an interest of its own. The city's prosperity lay in the abundance of corporate guilds: potters, tanners, weavers, robe-makers, and dyers.

The city is first mentioned in connection with Paul's missionary labours in Europe. His first convert on that continent was a woman of Thyatira, Lydia, a seller of purple,⁸²⁰ a commodity for which the city was famous: *'And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken by Paul. And....she was*

'In some form or other this idea, that the present is vastly inferior to an ideal past, seems to have been general in classical antiquity. In the philosophical schools, naturally an attempt was made to get a more far-reaching view of the universe, and here the notion was elaborated of the process of things being a cyclical movement, in which history repeated itself over and over again without an end....Decline within each period and the periods endlessly repeating themselves in an unvarying round.'

⁸¹⁷ Gibbon, Edward, *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chpt. X, part III

⁸¹⁸ similarly, the Roman Catholic Church's 'inculturation' process, down through the ages, has resulted in the wholesale incorporation of pagan beliefs and practices.

⁸¹⁹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.57:

'In this present age, evil can be conquered, and evil can be repulsed, and evil can be driven away—but evil cannot be destroyed. Evil is always looking for the opportunity to make a counter-attack, and to regain the ground that is lost. Evil is a force which is at bay, but which is not eliminated.'

⁸²⁰ manufactured from the madder root, Latin: rubia tinctorum.

*baptised, and her household.*⁸²¹ The city, also known for its brass-working and pottery, was refounded by Seleucid I, the first of the Seleucid dynasty, in the early fourth-century AD, although it had been inhabited before that time, and was when John wrote. It came into existence as a garrison city and military post through the machinations of two alternating and rival dynasties. Due to its unfavourable natural condition—an open valley with great sloping hills of moderate elevation—it had to be strengthened in the interests of security, and the overall sense is of a militaristic outlook in its soldier-citizens in the face of the perception of ever-threatening danger. It was never a ruling city, or capital of an empire; more a frontier outpost, repeatedly destroyed and rebuilt as competing tides of conquest waxed and waned.

This letter, the longest of them all, marks the beginning of the second group in which the moral history goes on down to the Second Coming of Christ and which is compressed, comprising, as it does, a mere three centuries or so. The title '*the Son of God*,' used only once in Revelation, is here.⁸²² All of the last four churches, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea have distinct or distinguishable remnants which reach unto the time of the end. This is necessary because, if it were not so, the last church in line, Laodicea, being lukewarm, would be insufficient to carry out the final acts of this age committed to or through the church. Thus, while today we are now firmly in the Laodicean era, thankfully there are elements or remnants of the Philadelphian church, in particular, still in existence.

*'I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel,⁸²³ which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan,⁸²⁴ as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.'*⁸²⁵

Thyatira, also meaning 'continual sacrifice,' is the church in its late European, English and mainly formative American years. This church has much evil in it, but Christ looks first at what can be commended. These are, perhaps, the strongest words of commendation addressed to any of the churches: '*and faith, and thy*

⁸²¹ Acts 16:14,15a

⁸²² Rev 2:18

⁸²³ cp. 'Jezebel spirit' or 'Jezebel syndrome,' born of witchcraft and rebellion, and a serious affliction today, especially among women. It usually evidences in malignant narcissism, self-worship, self-gratification, visceral resentment and hatred of males, and varying forms of psychopathy.

⁸²⁴ a reference to those initiated into occultism.

⁸²⁵ Rev 2:19-25

patience, and thy works....and the last to be more than the first.' Devotion and zeal were apparent during this time, and the darker the night, the more ardent was the company of the godly minority.

The reference to *'that woman Jezebel,'* is not a statement that Jezebel, a Phœnician princess, daughter of the king of Sidon, and, more importantly, the wife of Ahab⁸²⁶ was, in any way, revisited in person upon the church. The actual Jezebel of the Old Testament was a source of idolatry in Israel who brought disaster on all. Although a stranger in Israel, she was responsible for the worst idolatry in the nation, and she persecuted the servants of God. Neither, indeed, is it a reference, as some appear to think, to the famous temple of Sambatha, located just outside Thyatira, where a sibyl or prophetess presided.

Rather, as the Thyatiran church is the fourth in line, this latter-day person, *'which calleth herself a prophetess,'* is someone, self-appointed and female, claiming infallibility in setting forth new doctrine and new revelation from God. This is a clear reference to the originator of the doctrine that developed into The Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Ellen G. White.⁸²⁷ This church—for, as stated, Thyatira literally means 'ruled by a woman'—leads the people astray by its teachings, pointing them away from divine authority, and supplanting true doctrine with the wild, unitarian imaginings of a demented woman steeped in the occult—*'the depths of Satan'*—which, inevitably, lead to wholesale fornication with the ways of this apostate world. In His grace and forbearance, Christ gives her time to repent, but she refuses to do so. Therefore there is no call to repent in this letter: only judgement remains, and she, and her adherents, will receive according to their works.

But despite this, there is still a remnant of the faithful bondservants of Christ. The rest in Thyatira are a godly remnant who did not follow this gross corruption, but, rather, have denounced its unbiblical ways. In compassion, the Lord *'will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.'* Apparently, there was much suffering as it was for the truth. Given the impossibility of repentance by the apostate elements in this church, the godly in it can only look for the coming of the Lord in faithful holding of the truth. The fact that the Thyatiran-era saints are seen to go on to the time of Christ's coming reveals that this era of the church, along with the three others following, goes beyond the confines of its sequential time.

Church #5: Sardis

Located about twenty-seven miles due south of Thyatira, Sardis, on the banks of the Pactolus, a tributary of the Hermus, was one of the oldest and greatest cities in western Asia Minor. In ancient times it was

⁸²⁶ I Kings chpts.19–21

⁸²⁷ White, Ellen G., Letter 32, 1899AD, quoted in S.D.A. Bible, Vol. 5, p.1129:

'The man Jesus Christ was not the Lord Almighty.'

S.D.A.s believe that Jesus Christ is the archangel Michael, thus denying Christ; cp. Christ's response, Mat 10:33, *'But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.'* You cannot be the Lord's by denying Him.

a proud, wealthy city, the capital of the kingdom of Lydia, widely regarded at the time as a robber's stronghold rather than the abode of civilised men.

Sardis was located at the end of the east trade artery that led to Persia and the Silk Route, in time the city of the wealthy King Crœsus, during whose reign gold in quantity had been extracted from the bed of the nearby river.⁸²⁸ Here, later, was the birthplace of proper money, for a process was developed which enabled the refining of gold to an unprecedented level of purity by means of subsequent cooking in pots with salt. This was used to produce, for the first time, assayed gold coins of specific and replicable value. Silver and gold coins were said to have been first minted there, and at one time it was known as a slave market. In addition, the metal electrum, an alloy of gold and silver, was also procured here. Pliny says the art of dying wool was invented here, and it was the entrepot of the dyed woollen manufactures and carpets, the raw material for which was furnished by the flocks of Phrygia.

The city had a history of many wars, and despite being ruled by a series of able princes—the last of whom was Crœsus, widely celebrated for his wealth and his misfortunes—it fell. In the earlier part of his reign he had extended his dominion over the whole of Asia Minor, with the exception of Lycia and Cilicia, but the Lydian rule was terminated by conquest. Constantly in a state of moral and religious corruption, the city succumbed to Cyrus the Great of Persia⁸²⁹ largely because its arrogant defender, Crœsus, saw no need to post guards on his 'impregnable' citadel which towered over one thousand feet⁸³⁰ above the broad, fertile river basin of the Hermus.

Herodotus⁸³¹ gives the account of this siege and capture by Cyrus, and of its previous fortification by an old king, Meles. From the Persians it passed into the hands of Alexander the Great, after which, for the next three hundred years, its fortunes are obscure. It was later taken and sacked by Antiochus the Great after a siege of two years.⁸³² The kings of Pergamus next succeeded to the dominion, and from then it passed into the hands of the Romans. In the time of the Emperor Tiberias, it was desolated by an earthquake,⁸³³ together with eleven or twelve other important cities of Asia, and the calamity was increased by a pestilence.⁸³⁴ When John

⁸²⁸ the Lydian king, Crœsus, sucked riches from the surrounding alluvial deposits of 'Electrum,' a naturally occurring alloy of gold, silver, and copper.

Corrigan, Sean, *From Solon to Sub-Prime: Gold in a World of Inflation*, p.1:

'The official Lydian coinage shows a conspicuously low (50%–60%) gold content, in sharp contrast to the 80% or higher constituency to be found in the unadulterated alloy.

The strong implication is that, not content with a modest degree of seignorage from the royal mint and too impatient to wait for genuine economic growth to add to his wealth store, Crœsus greatly enhanced his status by practising the world's first recorded instance of surreptitious currency debasement and by profiting all the more from the ensuing inflation.'

⁸²⁹ in 6th-c. BC.

⁸³⁰ 305 metres.

⁸³¹ Herodotus (1., 84)

⁸³² in 214BC

⁸³³ in 17AD

⁸³⁴ Vincent, Marvin R., *Vincent's Word Studies of the New Testament*, Vol.2, pp.460,461

wrote this letter, the city was a city of the past. Later, it was restored, and a Greek temple dedicated to Artemis was built.⁸³⁵ In the Roman period Sardis was regarded as a relic of barbaric warfare, choosing to live on its ancient prestige rather than on its suitability to then contemporary conditions. It continued to flourish until the Tartar Tamerlane swept over the area and destroyed everything.⁸³⁶ The city has never recovered from this desolation and is now a heap of ruins and an archaeological site in the village of Sartmahmut, with ongoing excavations.

The patron deity of Sardis was Cybele, whose form appeared on their coins, and whose temple remains are still visible. She was there represented as half-human and was often associated with a pair of lions or a single lion. This deity was supposed to have power to restore the dead.

Sardis, probably meaning 'remnant,' was the church of empty profession,⁸³⁷ decay, internal division, and warring. 'Men who in the ordinary walk of life seek a cheap success carry their slothful ambition into religion, and crave an eminence that costs them little. The shallow characters that are content to have the appearance without the reality, reputation without worth, applause without desert, priority and high station without excellence are content to be accepted as godly, although void of the love of God.'⁸³⁸ '[S]elf-satisfaction is a more obstinate bar to progress than the vices of men who make no pretensions to virtue.'⁸³⁹

The core of the message to the Sardis era is thus: *'I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.'*⁸⁴⁰

⁸³⁵ c.150AD

⁸³⁶ in 1400–3

⁸³⁷ Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 1, p.130:

'For God wishes first of all for inward worship, and afterwards for outward profession.'

⁸³⁸ Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord*, p.212

⁸³⁹ Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord*, p.222

⁸⁴⁰ Rev 3:1-5. Speaking to the Sardis era of the church, Christ says in Rev 3:3b, *'If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come upon thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I shall come upon thee.'* The Moffatt translation has it: *'If you will not wake up, I am coming like a thief; you will not know at what hour I am coming upon you.'* In both instances, the Greek translated 'hour,' hora, can also mean 'time' or 'season'. 'Wake up' or 'watch,' from the Greek: gregoreo, means 'pay careful attention.'

The corollary is very revealing. If the Sardis Church era, one of the four eras which maintain until the time of the end—q.v. the inference from Rev 2:25—were to pay careful attention and stay awake, then the Lord would not come upon them as a thief for they would know the hour at which He was coming.

Sadly, the Lord commends almost nothing in this church. The measure of its privilege and profession was a measure of its responsibility. 'Responsibility is always the other side of privilege,'⁸⁴¹ and it was full of empty profession. It was dead. The few who had not defiled themselves are mentioned as being worthy, and, by reason of their existence, and the attendant promise, a link through to the following era, the Philadelphian, is implied and maintained.

The worthiness spoken of is a reckoning of grace; they had been made such by Christ. There are three promises here. '*Clothed in white raiment*' are garments made white in the blood of the Lamb.⁸⁴² The promise not to '*blot out his name out of the book of life*'⁸⁴³ is strong assurance of the eternal security available to the believer in Sardis. Finally, Christ will delight to recognise, or '*confess his name*' as His own. The method of overcoming is clear throughout, '*For whosoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*'⁸⁴⁴ But besides these few, all are dead in Sardis.⁸⁴⁵

Church #6: Philadelphia

The city was named after its founder, Attalus Philadelphus, king of Pergamos,⁸⁴⁶ because he was loyal to his brother Eumenes. Attached to the jurisdiction of Sardis, and situated twenty-five miles to the south in a wonderfully fertile, wine-producing district with a healthy and agreeable climate on the borders of Mysia and Lydia, it was built as a market and storehouse. Its coins bore the head of Bacchus and the figure of a Bacchante. Its modern name is Allah Shehr, or 'city of God.' The population included Jews, Jewish Christians,

⁸⁴¹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, p.200

⁸⁴² Rev 7:14

⁸⁴³ Turner, W. H., *The Second Coming of Christ*, Appendix Two (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

"*The Writing, or Book, of Truth.*" Dan 10:1,21;11:2. Daniel affirms, in Dan 10:1, that the revelation he received was true. Zechariah found out that the words of Gabriel could be totally relied upon (Luke 1:18-20). After three weeks of prayer, mourning, and fasting, the angel came to Daniel and said, in Dan 10:21, '*I will declare unto thee, that which is inscribed in the writing (or book) of truth.*' This statement proves that there are heavenly prophetic writings and books as well as earthly ones [and to which the angels—in this case one most likely a cherub, q.v.—have access, on some basis or another]. God wrote the Law upon rock with His finger (Ex 31:18). Moses confirmed the fact that there are books in Heaven, when he referred to '*your book, which you have written,*' and the Lord refers to it as '*my book,*' in Ex 32:32,33. There is, obviously, '*the book of life,*' which is spoken of in Phil 4:3; Rev 3:5,13:8,17:8,20:12,15,21:27,22:19, in which there are recorded the names of the redeemed children of God. These names can be removed by wilful sin and apostasy, Ex 32:33. There are also books which record all the acts, thoughts, motivations, and intents of heart of all men and women: Rev 2:23,20:12,13; I Cor 3:10-17; II Cor 5:15.'

⁸⁴⁴ I John 5:4

⁸⁴⁵ the Sardis era of empty profession is that of the Church of God Seventh-Day, previously known as the Church of God (Adventist). It had long ceased observance of God's annual Holy Days, and the New Moons were disregarded virtually from the beginning. In the mid-1990s many in positions of seniority in the Sardis church era endorsed, either in whole or in substantial part, the Trinitarian structure of the Godhead, merely serving to accelerate the wholesale declension. cp. *Peloubet's Bible Dictionary*, 'New Moon,' p.445:

'The mentions of the new moons shows that they were regarded as a peculiar class of holy days, distinguished from the solemn feasts and the Sabbaths. I Chron.23:31; II Chron 2:4,8:13,31:3; Ezra 3:5; Neh.10:33; Ezek.45:17.'

New Moon, viz., the appointed time, an appointment with God.

⁸⁴⁶ 159-138BC

and converts from heathenism. The remains of early Christian times are more numerous here than in any other of the cities named by John, and of all the named churches, it had the longest duration of prosperity as a Christian city. Indeed, it was a missionary city in the Greek world, promoting unity of spirit, culture, customs, and loyalty within the kingdom, and it was the only one of the seven churches whose name has been preserved to this day, in the Pennsylvanian city Philadelphia, founded by William Penn.⁸⁴⁷ During the fourteenth-century the city stood practically alone against the prevailing Turkish powers. Twice besieged, and almost falling to huge armies, it still managed to withstand them, only succumbing at the last to a combined Turkish-Byzantine force.⁸⁴⁸

This church is that of the faithful remnant; the reference appearing to speak of no solely distinct period, as it carries through to the time of the end in its effectiveness. Like Smyrna, there are no words of censure here. The letter to Philadelphia, meaning 'brotherly love,' or 'love of a brother,' is manifestly to faithful individuals in the true Christian church running through to the end-time.

The message is contained substantially in six verses: *'These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold I have set⁸⁴⁹ before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the⁸⁵⁰ synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.'*⁸⁵¹

The One speaking here is holy in life and true in doctrine, holy in character and true in action. Christ is not revealed by these characteristics in the first chapter of Revelation. He is seen here not in His judicial nature, but in His personal nature, character, and attributes. The key of David is a parallel to, *'And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.'*⁸⁵² In the tract in Isaiah, this refers to Eliakim, who was the son of Hilkiah and prime minister under king Hezekiah; the key here referring to his responsibility in advising and protecting the Davidic line, as those

⁸⁴⁷ also the ancient name of Amman (Rabbah), the capital of Jordan, so named by Ptolomy II Philadelphus.

⁸⁴⁸ in 1379-90

⁸⁴⁹ better *'given.'*

⁸⁵⁰ should read *'a,'* not *'the.'*

⁸⁵¹ Rev 3:7-12

⁸⁵² Isa 22:22

activities were perceived at the time. The process of opening and shutting here refers to his absolute authority in civil affairs, but in terms of the usage in Revelation it is different. The line of David, of which Christ is the foremost, started with Christ. It was His seat from the very beginning, as King of the children of Israel, and it is His seat, or throne, which He shall claim, as of absolute right, on His return. Connected with David, Christ is depicted in His messianic, kingly office.

'He that openeth' by His Spirit, the truth of His Word, 'no man shutteth,' but to hardened spirits, He 'shutteth, and no man openeth.' His administrative authority is revealed here too. He gives access to, opens and shuts doors of ministry: *'Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia, And they came to Mysia, they assayed them to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; there stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.'*⁸⁵³

This 'open door' is usually taken by expositors to be solely a reference to the witness and testimony, including the worldwide mission field and the ingathering of converts, but this misses the free and unhindered open door access to the meaning of Scripture through the Holy Spirit, consistent with the outpouring of the Spirit in the end-time. The door is identified in scripture: *'I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.'*⁸⁵⁴ Without God-given understanding, through the Holy Spirit, there can be neither growth, nor evangelizing, nor witness. The modus is evident: *'Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.'*⁸⁵⁵

Such an undertaking of witness, which has not yet effectively started, as will be seen, is not a matter of human power and ingenuity, for these end-time believers have *'little strength.'*⁸⁵⁶ In other words, while their faith is strong, they are but few in number, and being few in number among a multitude of unbelievers, the number of miracles is similarly reduced. But they have the gift of the Holy Spirit, and its effect is supremely patent, for *'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.'*⁸⁵⁷ No individual, or group, or evil spirit has power to frustrate the service, and testimony, and witness of those joined to Christ. Their very weakness is their defence: *'Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.'*⁸⁵⁸

⁸⁵³ Acts 16:6-10

⁸⁵⁴ John 10:9

⁸⁵⁵ John 16:13; 'he' should be rendered 'it' (neuter) in all cases, q.v. inf.

⁸⁵⁶ Greek: mikros and dunamis, meaning 'small in number,' 'small host,' and 'little miraculous power.'

⁸⁵⁷ Phlp 4:13

⁸⁵⁸ II Cor 12:10

Smyrna and Philadelphia are the only churches without reproof; one a suffering church, the other, a little one. And the latter has kept Christ's Word. Speaking of their obedience and submission, confirmed by Christ, '*Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*'⁸⁵⁹ They have not denied His name. They exhibit complete obedience to God, and the total lack of apostasy. He knows their works, in which they busy themselves. They are worth much, and He loves them all.

The church has Christ's promise: '*lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.*'⁸⁶⁰ Christ will never leave His church: '*Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom,*'⁸⁶¹ ⁸⁶² and '*I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word,*'⁸⁶⁴ and hast not denied my name.⁸⁶⁵ This is a church having but little strength; not a politicised, global organisation of this world. The reference to '*the [a] synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie,*'⁸⁶⁶ ⁸⁶⁷ has spawned a number of expositions, but taken in the context of the previous reference to Luciferianism,⁸⁶⁸ and given the return of this church to the sure first principles and fundamentals of the true faith, it is seen that Satan again marshals his old attack, assailing the church in his satanic hatred. But this is not that of old; it is a transmutant version, wider and more base than before. It is external, festering and attacking,⁸⁶⁹ corrosive and virulent, unceasingly waged in a world in the complete thrall of Satan against the only 'end-time' church era to escape God's criticism. Paul identifies the real Jew: '*one inwardly; and [whose] circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men but of God.*'⁸⁷⁰ This does not do away with circumcision, for that is the Law, but it points to the true meaning and effect of circumcision, and unity with God, as one of His. The true Jew in God's eyes is Judæo-Christian. Ultimately, the accusers, liars, and revilers will come and '*worship*'⁸⁷¹ before their feet.

⁸⁵⁹ John 14:23

⁸⁶⁰ Mat 28:20b

⁸⁶¹ Luke 12:32

⁸⁶² Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord*, p.203 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): '[God's] design is not an outline or skeleton draft of the future, but [is] filled in with every detail.'

⁸⁶³ on the purely material or physical side, there is this: By naming the animal kingdom Adam took possession of his dominion before the appearance of the woman; so that she shared his lordship over creation, not in her own right, but as being bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. And herein we may discern an evident type of the second Adam and His bride. For the church, though all things are hers, will possess them through no merit or right of her own, but only as the bride of Him Who is the Heir of all things (cf. I Cor 3: 21-23).

⁸⁶⁴ interesting phrase, the only such addressed to a church era; cp. John 15:7b, '*and my words abide in you,*' where Greek: meno, meaning '*remain*' or '*continue to be present,*' reflects the sense of continuity.

⁸⁶⁵ Rev 3:8

⁸⁶⁶ Rev 3:9

⁸⁶⁷ Greek: ioudaios, correctly '*Judaean*' or '*of Judah.*'

⁸⁶⁸ cf. Smyrna era, Rev 2:9c

⁸⁶⁹ cp. Paul's words to the blaspheming Jews at Corinth in Acts 18:5b,6a.

⁸⁷⁰ Rom 2:28,29 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁸⁷¹ Greek: proskuneo, better '*prostrate themselves,*' '*bow down,*' '*to kiss the hand of,*' or '*to have respect, to honour.*'

⁸⁷² But that cannot mean worship in the sense of veneration, for there is no worship due to any other than God the Father and God the Son.⁸⁷³ Rather, this is obeisance, deference, and respect.

In Revelation it says, '*I also will keep*⁸⁷⁴ *thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.*'⁸⁷⁵ This has been and is used by many seeking to underscore the contention that there will be a rapture of the saints before the Great Tribulation. There is more on this later, but, as often the case, the proponents wittingly misinterpret. The reference is not to the time, times and half a time, or the time of trial of the 'elect,' the Great Tribulation, but, rather, to the hour of trial that will come upon *all* mankind: the seventh seal comprising the seven trumps, with the last encompassing the vial plagues that are poured out in God's fury on apostate mankind, termed '*all the world*,' or more properly, in context, '*all in the evil end-time Empire*'; the climactic '*hour of temptation*'⁸⁷⁶ / '*hour of judgment*.'^{877 878}

This is the '*short work*,'⁸⁷⁹ the great and terrible Day of the Lord. The 'elect,' already sealed, will then be attending the wedding supper of the Lamb,⁸⁸⁰ and the 'intermediate peoples,'⁸⁸¹ who do not take the mark of the Beast or worship the image of the beast,⁸⁸² will be protected from the effects of the vial plagues.

This '*short work*' has a phase completion signified in the annual holy day Yom Teruah,⁸⁸³ a day of judgement and alarm in the Old Testament, when Christ will stand on the mount of Olives.⁸⁸⁴ The great and

⁸⁷² Rev 3:9b

⁸⁷³ despite the incomplete contention of Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1, p.297 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The Greek verb [translated 'worship' in Mat 8:2: '*And, behold, a leper came and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean*'] is proskunein, and [in Greek] that word is never used of anything but worship of the gods; it always describes a man's feeling and action in presence of the divine.'

⁸⁷⁴ it is important to note that the Greek word here translated 'keep,' tereo, means 'to watch,' 'guard,' or 'protect from,' rather than from the Greek word, harpazo, meaning 'to snatch,' 'seize' or 'catch.' The Latin equivalent of harpazo is rapio, from which derives the English word 'rapture,' used by many to found an aberrant notion of a 'secret, pre-Tribulation rapture.' Initially, this keeping is protection of the 'elect' in-situ, on earth, wherever they may be, and not a snatching away from the rigours of the Great Tribulation, irrespective of whether it be to heaven, into the air, to Petra, or anywhere else. This sealing lasts from the end of the sixth seal until the end of the second woe, and is followed by the rising of the dead-in-Christ, and thereafter by that of the 'elect' left alive. It is this resurrection and change, I Cor 15:52, subsequent upon the sixth trumpet, or second woe, that removes the 'elect' from earth and leaves the wicked to receive the final judgement of the seven vial plagues, the seventh and last trumpet, also known as the third woe. All these will be addressed later.

⁸⁷⁵ Rev 3:10a,b

⁸⁷⁶ Rev 3:10b

⁸⁷⁷ Rev 14:7f.

⁸⁷⁸ Rev 3:10, '*Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world* [Greek: oikoumene; in context, meaning 'all in the final eruption of the Roman Empire'], *to try them that dwell upon the earth.*'

⁸⁷⁹ Rom 9:28, '*For he will finish the work, and cut* [the Greek does not have a separate word for 'cut'] *it short* [Greek: syntemno, 'cut in pieces,' 'hasten,' or 'finish quickly'] *in righteousness: because a short* [Greek: syntemno] *work* [Greek: logos, 'word,' and by implication, 'work'] *will the Lord make upon the earth.*'

A better and clearer translation would be: '*For he will finish the work quickly in righteousness: because a quick work will the Lord make upon the earth.*'

⁸⁸⁰ q.v inf.

⁸⁸¹ of whom more later.

⁸⁸² Rev 13:15-17

climactic battle,⁸⁸⁵ usually referred to as Armageddon,⁸⁸⁶ happens a little later, and most certainly the 'elect' will be there, but on the victorious side, able to witness events at the final closure of the '*hour of judgement*.'⁸⁸⁷

Because Christ will come suddenly, the church is instructed not to surrender one iota of Christ's Word that they then possess, '*lest any man take their crown*.'⁸⁸⁸ If the truth is relinquished, then the crown will be lost. But to him who overcometh is granted a place of prominence in the kingdom of God, and later in the new Jerusalem.

Church #7: Laodicea

Laodicea lay about forty miles southeast of Philadelphia. Built by the Seleucid monarch, Antiochus II,⁸⁸⁹ it was named after his wife, Laodicea.⁸⁹⁰ The city had previously been known by the names of Diospolis,⁸⁹¹ and Rhoas, and was renamed when refounded by Antiochus. Towards the end of the Roman Republic, and under the first emperors, it became one of the most important and flourishing cities of Asia Minor. A city of considerable size, trade, and wealth, it specialised in the manufacture of wool and woollen products. It was also the seat of large money transactions and of an extensive trade in wood.

It was a bone of contention in Asia Minor under the Romans and under the Turks. In later times, it was a 'Christian' city of importance and was the residence of a bishop, as well as the meeting place of church councils. Pride, self-satisfaction, and an ability to compromise and accommodate to the wishes of others characterised the people. They did not zealously stand for anything. The wealthy city was destroyed by the Muslims in the Middle-ages, and today the site is a mass of ruins.

A chief city of Phrygia,⁸⁹² Laodicea was so rich, with the aid of its banking community, that the city was able to refuse aid from Rome after its devastation by an earthquake.⁸⁹³ It had all the trappings of wealth and prestige: a wall of vast compass, three marble theatres, a huge circus seating over thirty thousand spectators, and, like Rome, it was built on seven hills.

⁸⁸³ Yom Teruah (day of shouting), also known as Zicharon Teruah (remembrance of shouting).

⁸⁸⁴ to the Jews, despite completely lacking biblical authority, this is the Jewish Rosh hashanah, which literally means 'the head of the year,' or 'new year,' calculated on the basis of their postponed Judaic calendar and their Babylonian template..

⁸⁸⁵ better, '*war*' or '*campaign*.'

⁸⁸⁶ Rev 19:17; also termed the '*supper of the Great God*,' to which the fowls of the air are bidden.

⁸⁸⁷ Rev 14:7b

⁸⁸⁸ Greek: stephanos, '*award won in competition*.'

⁸⁸⁹ 261–246BC

⁸⁹⁰ Laodice was a common name among the ladies of the royal house of the Selucidæ, and the name was given to several cities in Syria and Asia Minor.

⁸⁹¹ the tutelary deity of the city was Zeus (Jupiter), hence Diospolis, or city of Zeus.

⁸⁹² meaning 'freedom from the law.'

⁸⁹³ in 60AD; its environs were subject to frequent earthquakes, which eventually resulted in its abandonment rather than its rebuilding.

Uniquely, the city was known for its black wool industry, and for its medical school, specialising in ophthalmology, which concocted a spice nard resulting in the manufacture and retailing of a treatment for the ears, and also an eye salve called collyrium. Both these manufacturing classifications are clearly alluded to in Revelation.⁸⁹⁴

Laodicea's comfortable self-sufficiency was compromised only by its limited water supply, a serious weakness despite being near the river Lycus and its tributary, the Kapros. This meant that water provided by hot springs had to be brought a distance of some six miles⁸⁹⁵ by underground aqueduct and one mile⁸⁹⁶ by stone pipes from Denizli—a project largely funded and built by Herod the Great—rendering the city virtually indefensible in an enemy siege if the sole supply were ever cut, interrupted, or contaminated. In arriving lukewarm, the limited water supply served as an ideal image for 'lukewarm Christianity,' if such a term could ever obtain. The water was so unpalatable that it often caused visitors to vomit after drinking. The city was eventually abandoned, with its extensive ruins known in Turkish as Eski Hissar, or 'old castle.'

The message to this church is telling in its self-deception and its self-immiseration: *'These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning⁸⁹⁷ of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy⁸⁹⁸ of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.'*⁸⁹⁹

The church of Laodicea, meaning 'the rights of the people,' 'people of (God's) judgment or vengeance,' or even 'vengeance of the people,' is the church of insipid lukewarmness, and the only one named after a woman.⁹⁰⁰ It describes the moral and easy, pragmatic condition of the bulk of the church in lacking discernment at the close of the church age. The people demand their rights, with democracy and near-anarchy following as the result, as prophesied by Paul: *'For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after*

⁸⁹⁴ Rev 3:18

⁸⁹⁵ 10 kilometres

⁸⁹⁶ 1.5 kilometres

⁸⁹⁷ Greek: arche, 'origin.'

⁸⁹⁸ Greek: agorazo, properly 'to be in the market,' 'to do business,' or 'to haunt / lounge in the market place.'

⁸⁹⁹ Rev 3:14-21

⁹⁰⁰ in being named after or for a woman, this indicates not only its womanly characteristic of the faith-destroying weakness of pragmatism, q.v. inf., but also a form of female-oriented ownership.

*their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;*⁹⁰¹ *And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.*⁹⁰² There is nothing to commend in this church, although it thinks itself perfect. Pliable and accommodating, it panders to every whim and fancy, watering down and changing the doctrine, tolerating anything, and substituting an easy and comfortable emotionalism that it then classes as worship. Indeed it can be said 'what is wished is readily received,' for this is the sum of the lack of profession in it. When this church in the closing days is seen as being unfaithful and untrue, Christ is portrayed in the counterpoint: the faithful and true witness.

Christ said Laodicea is neither cold, like the cold, pure waters of Colossæ, nor hot, like the therapeutic hot springs of Hierapolis. Laodicea, with no notable achievements to its name, is lukewarm and provides neither refreshment for the spiritually weary nor healing for the spiritually sick.⁹⁰³ Despite evident spiritual uselessness, the Laodiceans were claiming a spiritual wealth equal to their material wealth, and, further, they were claiming to have acquired both by their own efforts and in divine reward for same. In reality, of course, they were completely impoverished and worthless.

Being neither cold nor hot there is neither zeal for God nor absolute repudiation of the Lord. Lukewarmness—for lukewarm water is an emetic—is hot and cold together. So here is their attitude to Christ: they are indifferent. It is worse to be lukewarm than to be one who abandons all profession. This church claims it has need of nothing; it is self-satisfied, comfortable, and complacent. Boasting of wealth and organisation, it fails to realise the absence of spiritual life in its midst. And so Christ informs them that they are utterly insensitive to their condition.

If the nations changed their gods, it would be but the substitution of one nonentity for another, yet each remained loyal to his own. How incredible the folly and ingratitude which has made the Laodicean church an exception to the rule and caused her to exchange God, her glory, for useless delusion and idols? What little attenuation remained with the truth was rent irrevocably, and rent with unconcerned disdain. The folly of the people is exposed in the very effective metaphor used in Jeremiah: *'For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn them out cisterns, that can hold no water.'*⁹⁰⁴ They had ready at hand a reservoir in which living waters were stored; pure, cool, perennial, and plentiful. But they left that store, which they could have had without labour, money, or price, and instead chose, with great toil

⁹⁰¹ Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 1, pp.74,76,77 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): '[The pagan religious leaders] enriched the ears and emptied the purses of others....Mere imposters who pretend to be proficient in what they know nothing.'

'Money from the simple and the credulous.'

'When knowledge is rendered saleable, it is sure to be adulterated with many faults.'

'Where avarice reigns, there is flattery, servile obsequiousness, and cunning of all kinds, while truth is utterly extinguished.'

⁹⁰² II Tim 4:3,4

⁹⁰³ Rev 3:15,16

⁹⁰⁴ Jer 2:13

and expense, to hew their own cisterns out of the rock and store their own water therein. This water—flat, stagnant, putrid—they preferred to the spring waters of the everlasting fountain. But worse, these same rock cisterns were found to be fatally cracked, and so even the indescribably putrid water, which they had stored with such trouble, leached out and drained away, and left them empty. And so the church of the Laodicean era, whose existence should have been based on a special relationship with God, turned away from Him in favour of dead idols and empty death.

For their threefold need—poverty, nakedness, and blindness—they are advised to buy, without money and price: *'Ho, ever one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and price.'*⁹⁰⁵ In Revelation,⁹⁰⁶ this church is instructed to buy *'gold,'* which speaks of divine righteousness; *'white raiment,'* which denotes practical righteousness, and contrasts with the blackness of their own manufactured woollen garb; and *'eye-salve'* which points to spiritual discernment, rather than their own manufactured, superficial applications. Their trouble is that they can never see themselves for the abject sinners they are.

The reason for the rebuke and counsel was Christ's love. If not for this, He would have forsaken them immediately. The supply and the deliverance of the 'elect' comes not through this Laodicean era, but from the remnants of the preceding three eras of the church—in particular, the Philadelphian. This one, however, is dead. It is a tragic, but true, picture: a group professing the very name of Christ, but keeping Him firmly on the outside. He is depicted as knocking on the door of this church for an individual to let Him in. Christ may disown the church as a whole, but He still makes His plea to the individual.

This is the one letter to the churches where Christ's titles are not drawn from the descriptions in chapter one of Revelation. *'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne,'* is a statement indicative of royal authority, power, and glory. The individual here has to overcome the soporific state of the church and also the wiles of the Devil, and to be granted the grace of our Lord to attain this, but it is still available; such is the love of Christ for His church.⁹⁰⁷ The overcomer will reign with the victorious Christ on His earthly throne.⁹⁰⁸ But at the moment, Christ is set down with His Father in His throne.⁹⁰⁹

This last and crucial message to the Laodiceans shows a severe and calamitous falling away from the received truth just before the time of the end—a declension without precedent in the history of the true church,

⁹⁰⁵ Isa 55:1

⁹⁰⁶ Rev 3:18

⁹⁰⁷ Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord, as recorded by St. Luke*, pp.15,31 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Love to Christ is the result of forgiveness.'

'[A Christian should be] a reflex on earth of the mercy of the Most High.'

⁹⁰⁸ presaged in II Sam 7:13; Luke 1:31-33; and Mat 25:31, inter alia.

⁹⁰⁹ presaged or confirmed in Psa 110:1; Heb 1:3,8:1,2,10:12,13,12:2, inter alia.

corresponding to Paul's *'falling away'*,⁹¹⁰ and the total repudiation of it by Christ in Luke.⁹¹¹ The sad event is prophesied in Zechariah, where God says that *'my soul loathed them'*.⁹¹² Laodicea is called lukewarm and is threatened with being spewed out if it repents not.

This is taken up by Keith through reference to Arundel's visits to the locations of the seven churches in Asia Minor: 'All the other churches were found worthy of some commendation; and there was some blessing in them all. But in what the Spirit said to the church in Laodicea, there was not one word of approval; it was lukewarm, without exception; and therefore it was wholly loathed. The religion of Jesus had become to them as an ordinary matter. They would attend to it just as they did to other things, which they loved as well. There was nothing done, as everything should be, heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men. The power of the world to come, and of that which now is, hung, as it were, even balanced in their minds: as if these Christian men had been full of faith, that the revealed will of the Most High had no title to a supreme ascendancy over them; that all the deeds done in the body would never be brought into judgement, and that lukewarmness was requital enough for redeeming love. They did not strive to enter at the strait gate; to be perfect was no purpose of theirs; there was no fight in their faith, no running in their race, no wrestling in their warfare, no victory in their work. Yet they could show a goodly form or framework of religion, on which they had raised many a hope. They trusted to redemption through Christ, while they were not redeemed from sin, nor actuated by the love of God. They used the means of grace, but neglected the end for which that grace had appeared. They were rich, they thought, and increased with goods, and had need of nothing. But they wanted zeal; and all they had was nothing worth. Whatever they vainly imagined themselves to be, the Spirit knew them truly, and told them what they were, even wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. They had done no evil, they thought; but they did little good. And they neither felt nor lived as if they knew that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Their lukewarmness was worse, for it rendered their state more hopeless, than if they had been cold. The character of lukewarm Christians, a self contradicting name, is the same in every age. Such was the church of the Laodiceans.

But what is that city now, or how is it changed from what it was? Laodicea was the metropolis of the Greater Phrygia; and, as heathen writers attest, it was an extensive and very celebrated city. Instead of then verging to its decline, it arose to its greatest eminence only about the beginning of the Christian era. But the fate of Laodicea is no less marked, nonetheless. Its own tragedy may be briefly told. It was lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot; and therefore it was loathsome in the sight of God. It was loved, and rebuked, and chastened in vain. And it has been blotted from the world. It is now as desolate as its inhabitants were destitute of the fear and love of God; and as the church of the Laodiceans was devoid of true faith in the Saviour, and zeal in his

⁹¹⁰ II Thes 2:3

⁹¹¹ Luke 14:16-24; followed by the command to '[re]fill my house,' by compelling others to enter, through end-time evangelising, and most certainly not through the Roman Inquisitorial process of burning them at the stake.

⁹¹² Zech 11:8b,9

service. It is, as described by Dr. Smith, 'utterly desolated, and without any inhabitant, except wolves, and jackals, and foxes.'⁹¹³ It can boast of no human inhabitants, except occasionally when wandering Turkomans pitch their tents in its spacious amphitheatre.'⁹¹⁴

The amphitheatre was built after the writing of the Apocalypse, and, taken with the three theatres and the vast circus, attests to the hedonistic, pleasure-seeking disposition of the place. It is known that in the days of Laodicea, there was a church there, and that it was known infamously for one thing, for there occurred the first introduction, in all of Asia Minor, of the celebration of Easter, running contrary to its neighbours keeping the Passover.

Sadly, in these end days, these lukewarm Laodiceans are to suffer the same fate as the great city of that name: to be blotted out. Their golden candlestick will be removed.⁹¹⁵ The 'parable of the pounds' in Luke⁹¹⁶ certainly comes to mind here. A nobleman⁹¹⁷ gave a pound to each of ten servants, but on his return only three are recorded as giving account of their gain. What few seem to realise is that the remaining seven servants have yet to give their account, for they represent the seven churches.⁹¹⁸ Sadly, last-in-line Laodicea is destined to fare even worse than the servant who secreted his pound in a napkin, for it has squandered the riches it has been given, and has nothing to show for its custodianship.

The wholesale falling away is completely consistent with the description given by Paul: *'Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.'*⁹¹⁹ There will be a dearth of the true gospel in the latter days, despite the statement that: *'This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come,'*⁹²⁰ a reference to the work of the two end-time witnesses,^{921 922} and not to the work of

⁹¹³ Smith, Dr., *Travels*

⁹¹⁴ Keith, Alexander, *The Evidence of Prophecy*

⁹¹⁵ Rev 1:12,20

⁹¹⁶ Luke 19:12-27

⁹¹⁷ viz., Christ.

⁹¹⁸ a foregleam of which was to be found in Solomon's Temple in the form of the ten lampstands of the Sanctuary, in the Holy Place, q.v. I Kings 7:49.

⁹¹⁹ II Thes 2:3; in the Bible, a man who has any prominent good or bad quality is either called the son of it, or the son of its consequent: II Sam 12:5, '*son of death*'; Luke 7:35, '*children of wisdom*'; Luke 10:6, '*son of peace*'; John 17:12, '*son of perdition*'; Eph 2:3, '*children of wrath*.'

⁹²⁰ Mat 24:14 is neither a command, nor an instruction, nor a commission to the church; it is a statement in answer to the disciples' question of when shall Christ return and when shall be the end of the age. Yes, the gospel of the kingdom will be preached to all nations and then the end will come, but it will be preached by those whose commission it is to do so: the two witnesses, at the time of the end. The church's commission, on the other hand, covering a considerably longer period, two millennia, is given in Mat 28:19,20: teaching all nations to observe all that Christ commanded, and baptising them.

Mat 24:4-14 is Christ's answer to His disciples, addressing their question in v.3c: '*Tell us, When shall these thing be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?* [better: '*age*,' q.v. inf.].' As such, it comprises a paragraph, distinct from v.15, et seq., therefore vv.15f. are not subsequent to '*the end coming*,' but form a more detailed prophecy of some of the events occurring in the end-time sequence itself.

The '*gospel of the kingdom*,' v.14a, from the Greek: *basileia*, '*kingdom*,' also means the '*kingship*' or '*royal power*' of Jesus Christ, as the triumphant, all-conquering Messiah.

the church, other than de minimis. The witnesses' crucial work is unaided to any discernible extent by the rest of the 'elect' then alive. By and large, this gospel will be ignored by mankind just as man has previously ignored all the prophets, the disciples, and, indeed, Christ Himself: a heedless and uncaring end-time world beheld to ignorance.

The tragic end of it all is given in Luke, where one verse tells all: *'For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.'*⁹²³ Not one of the Laodiceans will partake of the wedding supper of the Lamb, of which more later.

Keith sums lukewarmness and its effect: 'If lukewarmness marks your character, so that you scarcely care so much for the faith as it is in Jesus, as to trouble yourself at all to act on it as a truth, or to question whether it be true or false; if the alienation of your heart from the living God be so great, that no bias of judgement is needed to sustain a practical infidelity like yours; if, wedded to the world, and bigoted to sense, you mind only earthly things, and place all your love, and happiness, and confidence in them, and care for none of these things which pertain to life, to godliness, to your peace, and to immortality; if the tidings of salvation have no charm for you....[then, pray tell, where is any worth in your life?].'⁹²⁴

Abstraction

This abstraction has been compiled from the concluding remarks to the messages to each of the seven churches in Revelation chapters two and three. When taken together they have a very revealing coherence. Particularly of note are the progressively more imminent statements given to the last four churches, where, in sequence, the admonitions given are: *'hold fast,' 'watch,' 'I come quickly,'* and, finally, to the worthless church, *'I stand at the door and knock.'*

*'To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.'*⁹²⁵ This is Christ's promise to the first era of the church, the Ephesian. Smyrna's: *'He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.'*⁹²⁶ Freedom from the second death comes at the end of the Millennium of rest, attendant upon that great assize, The Great White Throne Judgement. Pergamos's: *'To him that over-*

Bible Readings for the Home Circle, p.37:

Mat 24:14. 'The word "*then*," as used here, is an adverb of time, meaning 'at that time.' The gospel to be so preached is not to convert the world; but is to be simply a '*witness*' unto all nations, that they may be condemned who do not obey it.'

⁹²¹ the witnesses, as do the rest of the 'elect,' have righteousness imputed to them through Christ.

⁹²² Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, p.26:

'Lecky, the historian, once said that the progress and spread of any idea depends, not only on its strength and force, but on the predisposition to receive it of the age to which it is presented.'

⁹²³ Luke 14:12-24

⁹²⁴ Keith, Alexander, *The Evidence of Prophecy* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁹²⁵ Rev 2:7b

⁹²⁶ Rev 2:11b

cometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone,⁹²⁷ and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it.⁹²⁸ This is an unique personal name, known only to God and the recipient, an 'unhackable' means of direct communication between the two, and a measure of the standing of the latter before God Almighty. Thyatira's: *'And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron.'*⁹²⁹ Sardis's: *'He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment.'*⁹³⁰ Philadelphia's: *'Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.'*⁹³¹ Lastly, the promise to any in Laodicea: *'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne.'*⁹³² Despite everything, after the messages to each of the churches, all are encouraged in this wise:⁹³³ *'He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches.'* Hearing imports and implies understanding, and understanding implies action..

In all this, there is a distinct and discernible progression. The first five apply to events and conditions during or immediately pursuant to the Millennium of rest, but the sixth pertains to the time of the new Jerusalem, which follows upon the great assize when all evil is finally destroyed.

*'To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.'*⁹³⁴ The need of the new heaven,⁹³⁵ earth, and Jerusalem is paramount, for the old cosmos, earth, and city have all been tainted irreparably with sin and corruption. All must be consumed by fire in the final

⁹²⁷ Greek: psephos and leukos literally, 'brilliant-' or 'shining pebble.'

⁹²⁸ Rev 2:17b

⁹²⁹ Rev 2:26,27a

⁹³⁰ Rev 3:5a

⁹³¹ Rev 3:12

⁹³² Rev 3:21a

⁹³³ Rev 3:22

⁹³⁴ Rev 2:7,11,17:26-28,3:5,12:21

⁹³⁵ Greek; cosmos.

conflagration, to enable God the Father to reign with His Son and the immortal of the true church in a perfectly sinless environment.

*'And I will give him the morning star'*⁹³⁶—a title held by Christ in the first instance; also conferred on the archangel and the cherubim,⁹³⁷—is a reference similar to that found in Peter, *'We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts,'*⁹³⁸ and is wholly in accordance with: *'I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.'*⁹³⁹ Thus to *'give the morning star'* is to grant to be with Christ as firstfruits, to be honoured as sons of God, as promised in John: *'And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.'*⁹⁴⁰

The tree of life is first mentioned in Genesis,⁹⁴¹ almost in passing. Adam and Eve did not partake of the fruit of that tree. Rather, in direct contravention of God's command, they opted to take of the fruit of the tree of

⁹³⁶ II Peter 1:19, *'We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.'* A more proper translation of the verse reads: *'We have more sure the prophetic word; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.'* 'Lamp,' rather than 'light,' is by far the better translation, and corresponds to the 'lamp' of Gen 15:17, a reference to the Word, the same that became incarnate as Jesus Christ. The 'day star,' also appearing as the 'dawn star' of Rev 22:16c, when correctly translated from the Greek: *phosphoros* and *othrinos* respectively, refer to the time and nature of His Second Coming in all power and glory to alight on the mount of Olives. In contradistinction, the 'morning star' of Rev 2:28 is a title in the call of Jesus Christ which will be given to the 'elect' upon their immortality. *'Until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts,'* and *'the bright and dawn star,'* Rev 22:16, are references to the return of Christ and to the actual time of His coming: at dawn of day, the break of dawn, q.v. inf.

'A lamp that shineth in a dark place, until'....until, that is, something happens: the return of our Lord in all power. 'A dark place' is the present world, a world of unrealities and illusions, so empty of joy, contentment, and permanent satisfactions. In this evil world, the Word is like 'a lamp that shineth in a dark [murky or squalid] place.' *'I am the Light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life,'* John 8:12. *'He that followeth me shall not walk in [the] darkness'* of ignorance, shall not be left untaught, and altogether undisciplined. He shall not be left to walk in the sparks of his own kindling; to find the way for himself, or to be his own tutor. The Lord says: I will be his teacher, I will be his Light in knowledge.

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, pp.10,11 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): *'On the evening of [the feast of Tabernacles] first day there was a ceremony called 'The Illumination of the Temple.'* It took place in the Court of the Women. The court was surrounded with deep galleries, erected to hold the spectators. In the centre, four great candelabra were prepared. When the dark came, the four great candelabra were lit and, it was said, they sent such a blaze of light throughout Jerusalem that every courtyard was lit up with their brilliance. Then all night long, until cock-crow the next morning, the greatest and the wisest and the holiest men in Israel danced before the Lord and sang psalms of joy and praise while the people watched. Jesus is saying [cp. John 8:12-20]: "You have seen the blaze of the temple illuminations piercing the darkness of the night. *'I am the Light of the World,'* and, for the man who follows me there will be light, not only for one exciting night, but for all the pathway of his life. The light in the Temple is a brilliant light, but in the end it flickers and dies. I am the Light which lasts for ever.'"

⁹³⁷ cp. Job 38:7

⁹³⁸ II Peter 1:19

⁹³⁹ Rev 22:16

⁹⁴⁰ John 14:3; *'sons and daughters of God,'* II Cor 6:17,18 et al, has man's destiny as the sons and daughters as created spirit beings, i.e., angels, q.v. inf.; v.3c better translated, *'that where I am present, there ye may be also,'* from Greek: *eimi*.

⁹⁴¹ Gen 2:9

the knowledge of good and evil with predictably disastrous results, including being barred from the garden lest they eat of the tree of life's fruit, and become immortal.⁹⁴² The tree of life then reappears in the closing chapter of Revelation,⁹⁴³ which has it in the new Jerusalem: *'with the leaves of the tree for the healing of the nations,'* possibly an allegorical indication of a righting or correction, since mankind's fall was the result of eating from the only other tree identified in the garden of Eden, the *'tree of knowledge of good and evil.'*⁹⁴⁴ A later verse has this, emended to conform to the majority text: *'And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, may God take away⁹⁴⁵ his part from the tree of life,⁹⁴⁶ from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.'*⁹⁴⁷

Since Revelation⁹⁴⁸ pictures the new heaven and earth, with the new Jerusalem coming down into its place, complete with trees of life, and since no nations needing human healing for sin could possibly then be extant, the safest translation of the final phrase⁹⁴⁹ is that given in the emendation based on the majority text. As such, the appearance of that same tree, the tree of life, in the final chapter of the Bible, must be symbolic of the final righting of the fall of mankind in the garden of Eden, and also of the healing of the nations, eternally, and be connected with the manifestation of that eternal state.

⁹⁴² Rev 3:22

⁹⁴³ Rev 22:2; not to be confused with the K.J.V.'s reference to the children of Israel's eating *'angels' food'* in Psa 78:25 where Hebrew: abbiyr and lechem mean, respectively, *'valiant'* (usually used in reference to man or angels) and *'bread'* or *'food.'* There is no overt suggestion here of angels, immortal beings, needing food to sustain them in their immortal state.

⁹⁴⁴ Gen 2:17a

⁹⁴⁵ and not *'God shall take away'* as the K.J.V.

⁹⁴⁶ and not *'book of life'* as the K.J.V.

⁹⁴⁷ Rev 22:19

⁹⁴⁸ Rev 21:1,2,22:2

⁹⁴⁹ Rev 22:2e

Chapter 7

Signs of the Time of the End

'The earth was first brought to consistency out of and by means of the water of Chaos; and by the arrangement then made the same water was ready, as it were, for that work of judgement by which the old world was punished for sin. If they had remembered this....they would have been prepared for that other revelation, which destines the element of fire, in its turn, to be the agent of a final and more fearful judgement. *"The heavens and earth which now are, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."*....Then shall the very *"elements melt with fervent heat;"* *"the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."*

Such is the prophecy. The Flood of waters becomes, in its turn, the prediction of a last flood of fire. He who foretold the one—and notwithstanding long delay [as man would consider it], the word was fulfilled—may be believed when He threatens the others, and no pause or respite can defeat the certainty of the performance.

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness!"

Similarly to the conditions on earth among mankind immediately precedent to the Flood, in the end-time, mankind will spend the last days of its reprieve busy, distracted, and engaged in hedonistic pleasures.⁹⁵⁰

Concerning the signs of the 'time of the end,' and the destruction of the Temple, the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew⁹⁵¹ is at once eschatological and interadventual, as are the corresponding tracts in Mark⁹⁵²

⁹⁵⁰ Vaughan, C. J., *Christ the Light of the World*, pp.150,151 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

⁹⁵¹ Mat 24:1-41

and Luke,⁹⁵³ although some take the latter to have been uttered in the Temple complex itself, with the other two tracts referring to a slightly later mount of Olives dissertation. Irrespective of such an improbable taxonomy,⁹⁵⁴ these three include a remarkably clear series of expositions given by Jesus Christ of many events which will shortly come to pass. There is this difference, however, ably highlighted by Bullinger: 'Now the first three or four verses of both discourses,⁹⁵⁵ and of all the three records are almost identical.⁹⁵⁶ But here a remarkable change occurs which gives us the key to the right understanding of these prophecies. In Matthew and Mark the Lord goes on to speak of the sorrows of which those verses were *'the beginning,'* and continues, and develops what He had begun to describe. But in Luke He stops short here; He does not go forward, but goes back to tell us what shall be *'before all these things.'* And for thirteen verses⁹⁵⁷ He speaks of what shall be *'before' 'the beginning of sorrows,'* and to speak of the then impending destruction of Jerusalem, concluding at verse twenty-four with the words, *'and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.'* It is the concluding days of these *'times of the Gentiles'* which, in Matthew and Mark, the Lord enlarges on, and describes the events which lead up to His appearing:⁹⁵⁸ and then all three records again coincide, and culminate in the grand and final *'sign'* about which the disciples had enquired.

To attempt to harmonise these prophecies, without noticing the great diverging point,⁹⁵⁹ is to attempt the impossible; and the best proof that it is so is the fact that no commentator, who treats all three records as referring to one and the same subject, succeeds in satisfying his own mind, still less the minds of his readers.

But observing these notes of time, and this key to the change of subject in Luke,⁹⁶⁰ we learn that in Matthew chapter twenty-four and Mark chapter thirteen, Jesus does not refer to the destruction of Jerusalem at all, but begins long after that event, and gives an epitome of the closing in of the last days of the *'times of the Gentiles,'* the days immediately preceeding His coming in glory with all His saints: while in Luke He devotes only four verses to those events,⁹⁶¹ and then goes back⁹⁶² to tell us what shall be *'before all these things.'*

[*B*]efore all these things,' He enlarges on the nearer and then impending woe of the city of Jerusalem [and the Temple's destruction]. And when He says, *'Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled,'*⁹⁶³ the events which shall be the fulfilling of these very times form the chief

⁹⁵² Mark 13:1-37

⁹⁵³ Luke 21:5-36

⁹⁵⁴ the Temple's soon-coming destruction comprising the only element uttered at the Temple.

⁹⁵⁵ viz., those in Matthew and Mark.

⁹⁵⁶ Mat 24:4-8; Mark 13:5-7; Luke 21:8-11

⁹⁵⁷ Luke 21:12-24

⁹⁵⁸ Mat 24:8-28; Mark 13:9-23

⁹⁵⁹ Luke 21:12

⁹⁶⁰ again, Luke 21:12

⁹⁶¹ Luke 21:8-11

⁹⁶² starting at Luke 21:12

⁹⁶³ Luke 21:24 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

subject of the discourse in Matthew chapter twenty-four and Mark chapter thirteen, which refers to that future siege.

Thus of these two prophecies, part has already been literally fulfilled;⁹⁶⁴ and part remains also to be as literally fulfilled. The great fact, however, which stands out most prominently in these prophecies, the evidence of which is absolutely overwhelming, is this: that our Lord leaves no room for any Millennium of happiness and peace before He comes.

There is no controversy as to the literal fulfilment,⁹⁶⁵ for Jerusalem was literally '*compassed by armies*,'⁹⁶⁶ and Jerusalem is literally '*trodden down of the Gentiles*.'⁹⁶⁷ But language is utterly useless, if the word '*until*' does not mean that a time shall come when Jerusalem shall no more be '*trodden down*,' and when those '*times*' shall have an end!⁹⁶⁸

Temple & glory?

A decade-and-a-half before the birth of Jesus, Herod the Great had begun to renovate and expand the Second Temple.⁹⁶⁹ While an exceedingly cruel and reprehensible man, he was a great lover of himself, of ease and pomp,⁹⁷⁰ of architecture, and of grandiose schemes, and, thanks to considerable economic and political astuteness, was well able to lavish on himself, and to fund and execute construction work. The actual work on the Temple was still continuing when the disciples pointed out the decoration and grandeur of it all to Christ, immediately prior to His betrayal, mock-trial, and crucifixion.⁹⁷¹ It was not finally completed until long after the deaths of both Herod the Great and Herod Antipas.⁹⁷²

The finished edifice, widely known as Herod's Temple, was the most beautiful building of its time, and one of the prime wonders of the ancient world. But 'Herod's magnificent rebuilding of the Temple of God of Israel [had merely] resulted in a spectacular structure which was—in its most authentic and spiritual essence—little more than an empty shell.'⁹⁷³ From the record of Josephus it can be gleaned that some of the stones involved in the structure were massive, measuring some thirty-seven feet by eighteen feet by twelve feet high. Probably erroneously, these have been assumed to have had the particular draft margin and fielding effect

⁹⁶⁴ Luke 21:12-24

⁹⁶⁵ of Luke 21:12-24

⁹⁶⁶ Luke 21:20

⁹⁶⁷ Luke 21:24

⁹⁶⁸ Bullinger, E. W., *Ten Sermons on the Second Advent*, Sermon IV

⁹⁶⁹ in 19BC

⁹⁷⁰ Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord, as recorded by St. Luke*, p.172:

'Herod wore tissue of silver clothes.'

⁹⁷¹ Mark 13:1

⁹⁷² 63–64AD

⁹⁷³ Silberman, Neil Asher, *The Hidden Scrolls – Christianity, Judaism, and the War for the Dead Sea Scrolls*, p.5 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets).

thought characteristic of Herod's masonry, although the same detail is evident elsewhere during this period, and reflecting Roman construction technology and methods. For obvious reasons, the massive structure gave a feeling of permanence, solidity, and security, even during its construction.

In such circumstances, the disciples would have hardly expected Jesus' response: '*Seest thou these great buildings, there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*'⁹⁷⁴ The prediction of the destruction of these great buildings produced immediate shock and bewilderment in the disciples. Jesus, however, knowing what was about to happen to Jerusalem, had reacted differently: '*And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it.*'⁹⁷⁵ In a way it is strange that they doubted Him concerning the demise of the Temple, for on the previous day, had He not spoken against the barren fig tree, and had the tree not withered?⁹⁷⁶—a clear analogy of the ultimate fate of the Temple and of the nation itself.⁹⁷⁷

History records that the Temple was destroyed, and that only seven years or so after it was finally completed. The Jews were either killed or taken into slavery. Such was the destructive power of the Roman army that some think that only a portion of the western outer or perimeter wall of the Temple remains to this day, and it has become the most sacred place readily accessible to pious Jews from all around the world. This notion is aberrant, however, as this surviving wall structure was part of Hadrian's Ælia Capitolina and the vast pagan temple complex dedicated to Jupiter, Juno, and Aphrodite, dating from after the second-century Bar Kochba revolt, when all Jews were banned from the city on pain of death. The Roman destruction of the Second Temple was total and absolute. No stone was left upon another.

⁹⁷⁴ Mark 13:2

⁹⁷⁵ Luke 19:41

⁹⁷⁶ Mark 11:13,14,21

⁹⁷⁷ Vaughan, C. J., *Christ the Light of the World*, p.168 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): '[O]ur Lord, passing from His night's sojourn at Bethany to his day's work in the faithless and now doomed city, observed at some distance a fig-tree already (at that early season of the year) clad with leaves, and therefore, much more, [as the early] fruit appears before the leaves. This tree seemed, as it were, to make an unusual profession. Before the regular season it displayed those leaves which were commonly the index of existing fruit. Other fig-trees at that season had neither leaves nor fruit: this single tree had the one, and thereby professed to offer also the other. But when the Saviour approached it, He found leaves only. Not then for being fruitless, but for being false, He took it as the type of a nation.'

Morton, H. V., *In the Steps of the Master*, p.351, gives a further, more detailed explanation:

'It seems to me that many commentators are wrong in the way they handle this incident. Even Dr. Edersheim, whose knowledge must induce feelings of the deepest reverence in all who attempt to write about the times of Jesus, seems to assume that Jesus was looking for figs on the fig tree. But He was not. The Passover month is too early for figs. "*He found nothing but leaves,*" says Mark, "*for it was not the season for figs.*" How unjust to curse a tree, some critics have said, because it did not produce figs out of season. This shows how difficult it is to comment on the Bible without some knowledge of the Bible country. What Jesus was looking for were not figs but green knobs about as big as an almond, which the Palestinian peasants eat today and call tagsh. These appear sometimes before the leaves, but always in the budding time, and, after growing to the size of nuts, fall off to make way for the real fruit. Therefore a tree without tagsh will have no figs later on. The Gospel accounts, although puzzling to anyone who does not know this, are always meticulously accurate.'

Having delivered this unexpected prophecy, Christ, accompanied by His disciples, crossed the Kidron Valley and climbed up the slopes of the mount of Olives. As they sat overlooking the scene behind them, four disciples, James, John, Peter, and Andrew, asked two very fundamental questions of Jesus:

1. When would the destruction of the Temple occur? and,
2. What were the signs of the time of the Second Coming and the end of the age?

From the context, and from other passages, it is clear that the disciples envisaged that the destruction of the Temple and the coming of Christ in glory were to happen simultaneously. In all of the three tracts which deal with these questions and Christ's responses, these misconceptions were quickly righted. That the Temple's destruction and the coming of Christ in glory are not concurrent events is obvious from the textual content, but Christ went much further, giving an interadventual preview of events between the time of His departure and the time of His glorious Second Coming, summarised below.

Deception

Christ said that all manner of religious deception would be prevalent, and warned His followers not to be duped: *'Take heed lest any man deceive you: For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.'*⁹⁷⁸ The deceivers, imbued with the power of the Devil, are able to perform miracles: *'For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.'*⁹⁷⁹

Christ spoke of religious eruptions, to the point of many competing false eruptions, and many false-messiahs. The Devil is able, with ease, to confuse mankind through sheer diversity of false religions, and this is what is extant today: an amazing diversity of deception, apostasy, cult-worship, false leadership, false hope, false promises, and reprobate salvation. These false religions prey upon the weak, the confused, the poor, the naïve, the gullible, the emotionally unstable, and the lazy. Any student of the black history of the establishment churches will see and understand that these prophecies have been fulfilled, almost to their entirety.

'Jesus says: "If another comes in his own name, him you will receive." The Jews had their succession of imposters claiming to be the Messiah and everyone had his following.⁹⁸⁰ Why do men follow imposters? because they are "men whose claims correspond with men's own desires." The imposters came promising empires and victory and material prosperity; Jesus came offering a Cross. The characteristic of the imposter is

⁹⁷⁸ Mark 13:5,6

⁹⁷⁹ Mat 24:24

⁹⁸⁰ cp. Mark 13:6,22; Mat 24:5,24

the offer of the easy way; Jesus offered men the hard way of God. The imposters perished and Christ lives on.⁹⁸¹

‘There was many a charlatan who rendered a lip service to Jesus Christ, and who used His name to produce wonderful effects on demon-possessed people. What Jesus is saying⁹⁸² is that if any man uses His name on false pretences, the day of reckoning will come. His real motives will be exposed.’⁹⁸³

‘A man may succeed for long in maintaining the pretences and the disguises, but there comes a day when the pretences are shown for what they are, and the disguises are stripped away. We may deceive men with our words, but we cannot deceive God. “*Thou discernest my thoughts from afar*,” said the Psalmist.⁹⁸⁴ No man can ultimately deceive the God who sees the heart.’⁹⁸⁵

‘Frequently, Messianic pretenders arose and caused rebellions. The time of Jesus was an excited age. It was natural to ask John if he claimed to be the Messiah. John completely rejected that claim; but he rejected it with a certain hint. In the Greek the word ‘I’ is stressed by its position. It is as if John said: “I am not the Messiah, but, if you only knew, the Messiah is here.”’⁹⁸⁶

Notwithstanding this apparent diversity, chapters twelve and thirteen of Revelation make it abundantly clear that the end-time cataclysm intimately involves a radical, militaristic, fascist religion, and its interaction with the world-girdling, millenarian-focused empire of the arch-fascist Antichrist. That debased religion is not Islam, but false Christianity, in an extreme, virulent, and militant form.⁹⁸⁷

‘The nature of totalitarianism is such that it is, “by nature, (or rather by definition), a global project that cannot be fully accomplished in just one community or one country. Being fuelled by the need to suppress any alternative orders and ideas, it has no natural limits and is bound to aim at totally dominating everything and everyone.” Lyon explained that, “The ultimate feature of the totalitarian domination is the absence of exit, which can be achieved temporarily by closing borders, but permanently only by a truly global reach that would render the very notion of exit meaningless. This in itself justifies questions about the totalitarian potential of globalization.”’⁹⁸⁸

⁹⁸¹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, p.199

⁹⁸² Mat 7:21-23

⁹⁸³ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1, p.289

⁹⁸⁴ Psa 139:2

⁹⁸⁵ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.1, p.290

⁹⁸⁶ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.78 (subscripted emphasis added)

⁹⁸⁷ North, Gary, *Boundaries and Dominion—An Economic Commentary on Leviticus*, Volume 1, p.59, footnote:

‘There is a link between totalitarianism and military symbols. The two major twentieth-century totalitarian societies, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, had annual parades where tanks rolled and soldiers marched. Nisbet writes: “The final attribute of totalitarianism that tends to be emphasized in conservative analyses since Burke is the militarization of culture and society....Once Trotsky took on the responsibility of transmuting the Czarist into the Red Army, military symbols began to burgeon. The military tunic received a value in society it had never held before; so did military rank in all councils of government....Far more important than actual war in mobilizing a population is war society, irrespective of outbreaks of war.” Nisbet, Robert, *The Making of Modern Society*, pp.202,203.’

⁹⁸⁸ Lyon, David, *Theorizing Surveillance*

Russia Today, a major Russian media source, published an article by the Strategic Cultural Fund, in which it stated that, “the current crisis is being used as a mechanism for provoking some deepening social upheavals that would make mankind—plunged as it is already into chaos and frightened by the ghost of an all-out violence—urge of its own freewill that a ‘supranational’ arbitrator with dictatorial powers intervenes in the world affairs.” The author pointed out that, “The events are following the same path as the Great Depression:⁹⁸⁹ a financial crisis, an economic recession, social conflicts, establishing totalitarian dictatorships, inciting a war to concentrate power and capital in the hands of a narrow circle.” However, as the author noted, this time around, it’s different, as this “is the final stage in the ‘global control’ strategy, where a decisive blow should be dealt to the national state sovereignty institution, followed by a transition to a system of private power of transnational elites.”

George Orwell wrote, “Power is not a means, it is an end. One does not establish a dictatorship in order to safeguard a revolution; one makes the revolution in order to establish the dictatorship. The object of persecution is persecution. The object of torture is torture. The object of power is power.” He wrote,⁹⁹⁰ “The war is not meant to be won, it is meant to be continuous. Hierarchical society is only possible on the basis of poverty and ignorance. This new version is the past and no different past can ever have existed. In principle the war effort is always planned to keep society on the brink of starvation. The war is waged by the ruling group against its own subjects and its object is not the victory over either Eurasia or East Asia, but to keep the very structure of society intact.”⁹⁹¹

But, sadly, there is yet worse to come. The only ones able to perceive these apostasies for what they really are, are the ‘*very elect*,’ who cannot be deceived. This should be read in the context of the end-time falling away, even among God’s people, or at least those nominally so, and the betrayal of Christian brother by brother: ‘*And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death.*’⁹⁹² God says of the fallen away that ‘*their soul also abhorred me.*’⁹⁹³ As they abhor God, by their very nature they will abhor His ‘elect,’ and turn on them as their accusers and persecutors.

War

The next prediction was of near-continual wars, and war rumours. Given the state of human nature, this is not exactly a surprising prediction, but the destructive power available to the demented mind of man is increasing exponentially, and has been since about the middle of the twentieth-century. Luke describes it as

⁹⁸⁹ 1929–33AD

⁹⁹⁰ Orwell, George, 1984

⁹⁹¹ Marshall, Andrew Gavin, *Global War and Dying Democracy: The Revolution of the Elite’s Global Power and Global Government: Part 5*

⁹⁹² Luke 21:16

⁹⁹³ Zech 11:8

*'Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom,'*⁹⁹⁴ and this despite the frequent and various peace-keeping initiatives. As a species, man has become very, very efficient at destroying his fellows. Notwithstanding this, Christ's exhortation was for the 'elect' to be calm, and not to be alarmed at the increasing severity of these events: *'But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by.'*⁹⁹⁵

Albert Pike, thirty-third degree Freemason and satanic Illuminati⁹⁹⁶ leader, writing in the late nineteenth-century⁹⁹⁷ to one of his collaborators⁹⁹⁸ concerning the planned Third World War,⁹⁹⁹ supposedly had this to say: 'World War III is to be fomented by using the so-called controversies, the agents of the Illuminati operating under whatever new name, as are now being stored up between the political Zionists and the leaders of the Moslem world. That war is to be directed in such a manner that all of Islam and political Zionism will destroy each other while, at the same time, the remaining nations, once more divided on this issue, will be forced to fight themselves into a state of complete exhaustion: physically, mentally, spiritually, and economically.'¹⁰⁰⁰

Pike allegedly wrote of certain 'target' populations: 'We shall unleash the nihilists and the atheists and we shall provoke a great social cataclysm which in all its horror will show clearly to all nations the effect of absolute atheism, the origins of savagery and of most bloody turmoil. Then everywhere the people will be forced to defend themselves against the world minority of the world revolutionaries and will exterminate those destroyers of civilisation, and the multitudes disillusioned with Christianity whose spirits will be from that moment without direction and leadership and anxious for an ideal, but without knowledge where to send its adoration, will receive the true light through the universal manifestation of the pure doctrine of Lucifer brought finally out into public view. A manifestation which will result from a general reactionary movement which will follow the destruction of Christianity and atheism, both conquered and exterminated at the same time.'¹⁰⁰¹

Despite the oft-postulated view that the events presaged by three of the four horsemen of Revelation constitute World War III,¹⁰⁰² this appears a good deal less than unassailable. Looking at the overall position, in

⁹⁹⁴ Luke 21:10b

⁹⁹⁵ Luke 21:9

⁹⁹⁶ Illuminati, meaning 'holder of the light'; a reference to Lucifer.

⁹⁹⁷ in 1870–1871AD

⁹⁹⁸ Guiseppe Mazzini.

⁹⁹⁹ it is claimed that Pike accurately predicted the 1st and 2nd World Wars, and their long-term political consequences, though no record of this oft-cited letter exists, and all extant and remotely secondary sources—other than in a confessed hoax by Léo Taxil—do not contain any references to three world wars, or to underlying reasons for any of them. Accordingly, it should be regarded as fiction unless and until Pike's putative letter comes to hand. Three world wars were predicted, however, in 1896, by a speaker at the Sixth Jewish International Congress in Basle, Switzerland, after which, it was claimed, Zionists would be left in control of the world.

¹⁰⁰⁰ highly doubtful, for the above reasons.

¹⁰⁰¹ allegedly contained in Pike's Mazzini letter.

¹⁰⁰² when Albert Einstein was asked what kind of weapons the Third World War would be fought with, his answer was that he could not tell, but he would absolutely guarantee that all subsequent wars would be fought with stone axes. In this, unfortunately, he was profoundly mistaken, q.v. inf.

light of three wars and the prefatory description '*wars and rumours of wars*,' the next world war, like the two previously, probably will not occur during the last seven years of the rule of the Antichrist. Although there is an admitted element of conjecture in this, World War III is more likely to precede the seven-year Antichrist / Jews 'covenant' period, and, as such, will form part of the 'reduction to dust' of the existing world political and economic system in preparation for the New World Order, with its ten-superstates, and, later, the appearance of the Antichrist. Only after the installation of the satanic duo, the Antichrist and the False Prophet, and the signing or, better, confirmation of the 'covenant,' will the horsemen of the Apocalypse ride.

The conclusion begged here is that what is termed by Pike as World War III actually represents the far more horrendous World War IV, one also involving a large measure of prefatory economic and political deception and attendant false religion in the form of the first horseman. World War V is also in the purview, as will be seen later in looking at the '*second woe*,' and there are world wars beyond even that.

In summary, all seven are as follows:

World War I: 1914-18 (first use of poison gas);

World War II: 1939-45 (first use of jets, ballistic rockets, and A-bomb);

World War III: A soon-coming¹⁰⁰³ conflict centred on the volatile Middle East region, including Israel, but rapidly engulfing the globe both militarily and economically, out of which chaos, or 'reduction to dust,' will rise the ten-superstates of the New World Order (*ordo ab chaos*), to be followed by the appearance of the Antichrist and his rise to a position of world domination (first widespread use of thermo-nuclear H-bomb in WW III?);¹⁰⁰⁴

World War IV: Presaged by three of the horsemen of the Apocalypse.¹⁰⁰⁵ One quarter of all mankind then alive will perish: '*And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death [pestilence], and with the beasts of the earth.*'¹⁰⁰⁶ This takes place during the first moiety¹⁰⁰⁷ of the Antichrist's seven-year 'false-peace' covenant with the Jews;

¹⁰⁰³ written in 2007AD, with likely consummation within ten years, at most.

¹⁰⁰⁴ while the world knows the first two as 'world wars,' and while the third will be designated similarly, they fall under the heading of 'wars and rumours of wars' in the Bible. The world conflagrations which follow, (IV to VII), are dealt with later in this work in considerably more detail.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Rev 6:1-8

¹⁰⁰⁶ Rev 6:8b

¹⁰⁰⁷ or first half.

World War V: Presaged in the *'first'* and *'second woe.'*¹⁰⁰⁸ The former woe lasts for one hundred and fifty days, only afflicting those who have taken the mark of the Beast and worshipped the image of the beast, without inducing death. The latter, involving *'two hundred million'* combatants, lasts for *'a time: a day, a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of man.'*¹⁰⁰⁹ These form the fifth and sixth trumpets of the seventh seal—part of 'The Day of the Lord;'

World War VI: The battle on the return of our Lord Jesus Christ is recited in chapter nineteen of Revelation.¹⁰¹⁰ The world-girdling nature of it and the outcome is given: *'And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet....These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat on the horse,'*¹⁰¹¹ and,

World War VII: The final world war, closing off all, occurs at the end of the Millennium of rest. Satan has been bound in the pit for the entire of the Millennium.¹⁰¹² What happens then is described in graphic terms: *'And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather then together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.'*¹⁰¹³

Famine

Mankind's way of solving the recurring problem of famine is to develop ever more specialised and ever more expensive and restrictive / patent-protected grain and other foodstuff. The correct way, of course, and one that does not commend itself to the mind of apostate man, is the wholesale adoption of God's Laws pertaining to food. For want of this, man's technology cannot overcome the unbridled forces of nature, and cannot provide enough food, at the right time, in the right locations. The result: famine marching on the heels of famine. These

¹⁰⁰⁸ Rev 9:1-21

¹⁰⁰⁹ Rev 9:15,16; v.15b, correct translation, reads: *'prepared for the season: a day, a month, and a year;'* from Greek: *hora*, *'time'* or *'season.'*

¹⁰¹⁰ Rev 19:11-21

¹⁰¹¹ Rev 19:19,21

¹⁰¹² Rev 20:1-3

¹⁰¹³ Rev 20:7-9; Satan, as a mortal being after his release from the bottomless pit which contains the lake of fire, is completely congruent with Scripture for, in his final throw at deceiving the world and overthrowing Christ's Millennium rule—unlike the assault by the Antichrist and the false prophet one thousand years earlier—there are no supernatural miracles mentioned in Rev 20:3,7,8 attendant upon Satan's final attempt to deceive.

will increase in number and magnitude as man's sins against God multiply, as his wars intensify, and his environmental sins against God's creation lead to escalating global pollution, disruption of ocean currents and weather patterns, arefaction and drought, deforestation linked to flash flooding, and the like. Put quite simply, the ability of the eco-system to withstand such a determined onslaught is being tested far beyond its design capabilities, and the result will be ever greater and greater famines, with ever-increasing suffering and death.

Pestilence

Luke mentions the outbreak of pestilence during this interadventual period.¹⁰¹⁴ Historically, war, with death and destruction on its coat-tails, has heralded famine and disease. While failing to solve any of the perceived problems, mankind's wars have only succeeded in bringing in further consequential death through famine and plague. But now, mankind has the ability, through advanced chemical and biological warfare, including its latest variant, 'gene' warfare, to visit even more terrifying plagues upon the human race: it is merely a matter of time.

Biological warfare, holding the world hostage,¹⁰¹⁵ started in terms of its introduction into the active theatre of war in the form of weapons developed at Pingfan, in China.¹⁰¹⁶ The Japanese both tested and used these weapons on the Chinese, immediately prior to and during World War II.

Biological weapons have been termed variously 'the poor man's hydrogen bomb,' and 'the 5¢ bomb,' due to their relative simplicity and their inexpensive development and production. Allied to this is a technological drive for miniaturisation, using techniques developed in such advanced industries as electronics, to enhance concealment and aid delivery.

The range of biological weapons readily available 'over-the-counter' has increased recently, as the cost of production has moved in the opposite direction. There are worrying reports that East European and South-east Asian laboratories indiscriminately ship out, mail-order with 'no questions asked,' any or all of the following:

1. anthrax;
2. plague;¹⁰¹⁷
3. botulinum; and,
4. brucella.

¹⁰¹⁴ Luke 21:11

¹⁰¹⁵ 'B.W.' being the acronym; Latin: hostes humanis generis.

¹⁰¹⁶ Japanese Unit #731, before and during WW II.

¹⁰¹⁷ pestis usinia / inguinaria / pasteurella (bascillus).

*'Let the weak say, I am strong.'*¹⁰¹⁸ And now there is a new term—'catastrophic terrorism'—to describe terroristic use of weapons of mass destruction; weapons either in the non-government¹⁰¹⁹ domain or rapidly becoming so, intentionally or not. These are especially dangerous, as the perpetrators of radiological, chemical, and biological attack, as well as more recent 'twenty-first century weaponry' in the fields of genetics, nanotechnology, robotics, and cyber-terrorism, are extremely difficult to trace and identify. Genetics, nanotechnology, and robotics¹⁰²⁰ are almost on the cusp of supplementing and even taking over from twentieth-century nuclear, biological, and chemical systems.¹⁰²¹ These new and developing technologies, however, cannot be allocated neatly into any form of clearly identifiable commercial and military use: the so-called 'dual use' technologies. Widespread commercialism and diffuse research into and development of these new weapons and their delivery systems at once will act as a barrier to legislative control and a spur to the introduction of crippling verification regimes, irrespective of however futile they may ultimately prove to be.

The complete lack of defence against these forms of attack, especially in the very limited timeframe of interest, can be seen in so-called 'defensive shield systems,' which, in theory, could act as a form of protection, but would be too slow to react, too draconian in their impact, and too dangerous in their side-effects to be of any real utility or protection. These systems simply lack the ability to trace the perpetrators with any certainty—if, indeed, at all.

A recent 'feature' of genetically-targeted biological weapons lies in the sheer range of potential delivery systems. For the first time, immune delivery systems in the form of carriers from ethnic groups not targeted genetically, and therefore immune, could be utilised. At once, the former difficulty in delivery would be removed, introducing the possibility of wholesale use. The suicidal element in such selective destruction is gone at a stroke, and, once delivered, the weapon could be allowed to replicate and spread as an unseen 'engine of destruction' within its prescribed limits, and only on its targeted population.

As for current but yet undeployed military technological developments in the field of warfare, it is widely reported that some time ago, the USA developed and manufactured a bio-weapon which does not kill, but which wholly incapacitates the victim, reducing him to a pitiful state in which death is sought as a way out of the induced agonies, but such is the victim's dire condition that he is unable to achieve even this. Revelation seems to presage the horrifying effect: *'And in those days shall men seek death and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.'*¹⁰²²

¹⁰¹⁸ Joel 3:10

¹⁰¹⁹ i.e., commercial.

¹⁰²⁰ 'G.N.R.'

¹⁰²¹ 'N.B.C.'

¹⁰²² Rev 9:6

In the late nineties, the USA government set up a system¹⁰²³ to protect large cities from chemical and biological attack.¹⁰²⁴ The difficulties encountered in mounting even a small-scale, simulated response to what would be a relatively minor attack underscores the complexity and dimensions of the problem facing the major western conurbations.

While not directly a pestilence, although the ramifications would quickly lead to same, cyber warfare, alias information warfare—dubbed a 'weapon of mass disruption' due to its ability to disrupt an enemy's public utilities, transport, banks, computer networks, and the like—is termed a 'non-lethal' weapon, and is not covered by either the Geneva- or the Hague Conventions. It follows that, other than in national legislation, there is no 'legal' reason why cyber warfare should be banned. The reaction of many nation states to this dystopian threat is widely held to become, in early course, that of introducing intrusive monitoring, inhibiting freedom, raising new restrictions, and suspending human rights.¹⁰²⁵ This, together with the relative inability of governments to enforce laws beyond their jurisdiction limits, allied to a general lack of robustness in man-made systems, is perceived by many to be one of the major forces leading in due course to a world-wide supra-governmental system.

The inherent threat in this is all too patent. When man makes his knowledge, his education, and his science a substitute for God, and seeks to usurp God's jurisprudence,¹⁰²⁶ then, without direct divine intervention, it can only end in the extinction of the human race.

Earthquakes

The damage visited by earthquakes of current magnitude continues to rise, as world population increases, and as infrastructure continues to spread over the globe. Added to this, there is the prospect of even greater earthquake magnitude '*in divers places*,' as presaged in Mark.¹⁰²⁷ The famous San Andreas Fault is but one of many so-called 'geological time-bombs' which appear 'scheduled' for the near future. The economic impact of widespread destruction on today's complex, integrated systems and services will be substantial, the effects profound and long-lasting. And, of course, volcanic activity will both pose a threat to many localities and, at the same time, a more widespread ecological and climatic one, especially in the instance of so-called 'super-volcanoes.'¹⁰²⁸

¹⁰²³ The Domestic Preparedness Programme.

¹⁰²⁴ in 1997AD

¹⁰²⁵ Orwell, George, *Animal Farm*:

'War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is knowledge.'

¹⁰²⁵ Gibbon, Edward, *Gibbon on Christianity*, pp.134,135

¹⁰²⁶ as seen, e.g., in the sheer number of self-aggrandising, largely university-based, specialist bioethicists.

¹⁰²⁷ Mark 13:8

¹⁰²⁸ such as the caldera underlying Yellowstone Park in the USA, and which, apparently, is about due for its next massive eruption, according to seismologists.

All such massive seismic activity will be held as 'proof' by New Age 'extreme environmentalists' and geolatrists¹⁰²⁹ that, at last, goddess Mother Earth—Gaia—is cleansing 'herself' of the environmentally-evil works of man. Indeed, it is possible that Satan, progressively freed from the divine restrictions imposed through the 'Restrainer',¹⁰³⁰ will cause massive environmental catastrophies, either through supernatural means, or man's deliberate satanic devices, in order to further his evil plan.

Beginnings of sorrows

And, apart from World Wars V to VII, *'these are only the beginnings of sorrows,'*¹⁰³¹ mere birth pangs¹⁰³² in what is sadly an inexorable concatenation that will usher in the events leading to the final Day of the Lord, visiting destruction on the sinful, described in a tract both immediate and eschatological: *'Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. Therefore shall all hands be faint, and everyman's heart shall melt: And they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them: and they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames. Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.'*¹⁰³³ The early pangs are but the beginnings of this process. True and faithful Christians are not to be alarmed over these.¹⁰³⁴

Persecution

The Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles record the accuracy of Christ's prophecy of religious persecution of the 'elect,' variously by the Jews and pagans, and then by the Roman Empire. This continued through the devices of the oxymoronic Holy Roman Empire, and continues to this day. In the early days, the religious authorities arrested the members of the apostolic church, dragged them to court, synagogue or Sanhedrin, flogged them, or stoned them, or otherwise disposed of them: *'Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake,'*¹⁰³⁵ and, *'Now the brother*

¹⁰²⁹ geolatrism: worship of the earth, such as is found in the Gaia cult.

¹⁰³⁰ q.v. inf.

¹⁰³¹ Mark 13:8c

¹⁰³² better translation.

¹⁰³³ Isa 13:6ff.

¹⁰³⁴ in contradistinction, the Jews have a two-age arrangement:

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.197:

'The Jews believed that all time was divided into two ages—the present age and the age to come. The present age was wholly bad and wholly under condemnation; the age to come was the golden age of God. In between the two ages, preceding the coming of the Messiah, who would bring in the new age, there lay the Day of the Lord; and the Day of the Lord was to be a terrible day, when the world would be shattered into fragments before the golden age would dawn. The Jews were in the habit of calling that terrible between-time "the birth travail of the days of the Messiah."'

¹⁰³⁵ Mat 24:9

*shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*¹⁰³⁶ While predominantly an end-time prophecy, it also refers, by way of type, to events at the time of the early church. This is what it means to be a Christian in an evil world, one totally in the Devil's thrall. Christianity, true Judæo-Christianity that is, promises travail, persecution, tribulation, torture, and even death to some. 'The Devil instigates by especial fury those whom he has enslaved to himself to tumults of all sorts. Hence the clash of trumpets; hence conflicts and battles'¹⁰³⁷—very different from 'call on the name of Jesus and be saved' easy-street Christianity, which demands money, lip-service, and emotional response, and is long on false promises and wholesale apostasy, but singularly lacking in delivery.

'No one could ever claim that he had been inveigled into [true] Christianity by specious promises or under false pretences. Jesus told men bluntly that the Christian must bid farewell to comfort.¹⁰³⁸ He told them of the persecution, the hatred, the penalties they would have to bear.¹⁰³⁹ He told them of the cross which they must carry,¹⁰⁴⁰ even although He told them also of the glory of the ending of the Christian way. He frankly and honestly told men what they might expect both of glory and of pain if they followed Him. He was not a leader who tried to bribe men with promises of an easy way (or promising speciously what they wanted, as do the world's politicians and leaders); He tried to challenge them into greatness.'¹⁰⁴¹

Christ said that true Christians would be hated by mankind: not loved; not tolerated; but simply hated. '*Sirs, What must I do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,*'¹⁰⁴² can also be paralleled, in the context of the above, by a devilish threat: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be arrested, dragged out, flogged and killed. But there is a rejoinder, and it is twofold:

1. The first is that Christians are helped by the Holy Spirit: '*And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: For the Holy Spirit shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say,*'¹⁰⁴³ and, '*Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter*¹⁰⁴⁴ *will not come unto you; but if I*

¹⁰³⁶ Mark 13:12,13

¹⁰³⁷ Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 1, p.38

¹⁰³⁸ Luke 9:57,58

¹⁰³⁹ Mat 10:16-22

¹⁰⁴⁰ Mat 16:24

¹⁰⁴¹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.155 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁰⁴² Acts 16:30,31

¹⁰⁴³ Luke 12:11,12

¹⁰⁴⁴ Barclay, William, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p.10 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'We often call the Holy Spirit '*the Comforter*.' That word goes back to Wycliff; but in Wycliff's day it had a different meaning. It comes from the Latin *fortis*, which means 'brave'; the Comforter is the [thing] which fills men with courage and with strength.'

depart, I will send him unto you,'¹⁰⁴⁵ and also, 'For John truly baptised with water; but ye shall be baptised with the Holy Spirit not many days hence.'¹⁰⁴⁶

2. The second is that of salvation, forming part of a tract in Luke: 'But before all these things, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. But there shall not an hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls.'¹⁰⁴⁷ In other words, salvation: 'But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.'¹⁰⁴⁸

A true Christian is a dedicated follower of Christ. 'If any man come to me, and hate¹⁰⁴⁹ not his father, and mother, and wife, and children and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.'¹⁰⁵⁰ The Christian must love God above all. This is not assisted by a quite woeful K.J.V. translation of the Greek as 'hate,' when, in context, it should import the relative relationship and understanding: 'love less by comparison.'¹⁰⁵¹ The world, as a whole, is dedicated to and loves itself, and one other: Satan. As light abhors darkness, so evil abhors the 'elect.' And, as a result, there cometh forth from the seat of all evil, the hatred, the persecution, the torture, and the martyrdom. It could not be otherwise.

Great apostasy

During the interadventual period, particularly at the end, and because of ever increasing persecution, floggings, loss of property, martyrdom, and the like, superficial Christians, as admirably pictured by Christ in the excerpt from the parable of the sower: 'Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away,'¹⁰⁵² will wilfully abandon their faith, turning against

¹⁰⁴⁵ John 16:7

¹⁰⁴⁶ Acts 1:5

¹⁰⁴⁷ Luke 21:12-19 (sublinear emphasis added)

¹⁰⁴⁸ Mat 24:13

¹⁰⁴⁹ Greek: miseo.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Luke 14:26

¹⁰⁵¹ Christ could not have taught hatred of one's parents, for the Law prohibits it: q.v. Ex. 20:12.

¹⁰⁵² Mat 13:5,6

Christ and His faithful followers, becoming, as if overnight, antinomian. *'And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate¹⁰⁵³ one another.'*¹⁰⁵⁴

Gospel preached

*'And the gospel must first be published among all nations.'*¹⁰⁵⁵ The Greek, translated *'published,'*¹⁰⁵⁶ also means *'preached'* or *'proclaimed.'* Matthew renders it: *'And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.'*¹⁰⁵⁷ This forms part of the Great Commission, as it is sometimes known, and of an end-time element: *'And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover,'*¹⁰⁵⁸ further enunciated: *'And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.'*¹⁰⁵⁹ In the end-time, as in the early apostolic church, there will be an outpouring of the Holy Spirit: *'But this is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.'*¹⁰⁶⁰ The reference here is to Joel,¹⁰⁶¹ where the prophet announces the coming Day of the Lord. Joel's prophecy was given in the midst of a call for repentance given to the nation of Judah, and, by inference, to the nation of Israel,¹⁰⁶² and Peter here quotes that prophecy in the same context.

Another textual excerpt conclusively tying these events to the time of the end is to be found following immediately: *'But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days,*

¹⁰⁵³ Greek: miseo.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Mat 24:10

¹⁰⁵⁵ Mark 13:10

¹⁰⁵⁶ Greek: kerusso.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Mat 24:14

¹⁰⁵⁸ Mark 16:15-18; those who claim that the 'Great Commission' given to the church does not include physical healing of the sick should read vv.17,18: *'signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils....and they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.'*

¹⁰⁵⁹ Mat 28:18-20

¹⁰⁶⁰ Acts 2:16-18

¹⁰⁶¹ Joel 2:28-32

¹⁰⁶² Joel 2:12-14; obviously, the *'day of the Lord'* affects both nations, q.v. Joel 1:15,2:11,11,31,3:14,18

*saith the Lord, I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh: and you sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'*¹⁰⁶³

The repentance, baptism and imbuing with the Holy Spirit gives great assistance, power, and strength to the end-time 'elect' of God, who, in time, are sealed by God from the devices of Satan and the wicked, and protected from the seventh seal plagues poured out on the wicked.¹⁰⁶⁴ Bold and articulate and without fear or trepidation, they go into all the world and preach the gospel as an end-time witness unto all nations during the latter or secondary part of the Great Tribulation period. But this is de minimis, for the main witnessing at the close of this age will be by the two witnesses themselves, for they must witness before the Beast and the False Prophet, and, indeed, all mankind. Those chosen for salvation, whose names are written in the '*book of life*' from the foundation of the world, shall believe, and become disciples of Christ. In so doing, they will heed Paul's direction to '*despise not prophesyings.*' That end-time warning of the imminent kingdom and of the events precedent, must, and will, be preached; only then shall the end come.¹⁰⁶⁵

That pivotal event, gospel preaching as a witness—and not for the conversion and baptism of all nations down through the current dispensation as in the Great Commission proper, but solely as a witness to a godless world—is prophesied¹⁰⁶⁶ as a process, or undertaking, which happens in a time immediately preceding the Second Coming. It follows that in all of the history of the church dispensation to date, this has not happened. Elsewhere in this work, the unique roll of the two witnesses in this context is discussed and expounded, but even if there were none to carry out this end-time activity, Christ reveals what would happen: '*And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.*'¹⁰⁶⁷

That the full good news of the kingdom could not have been proclaimed previously throughout all the world is patent, since the only versions that appear to have been so promulgated to date have been heavily polluted with manifold and manifest error. This compares with the phrase: '*so your minds should be corrupted*

¹⁰⁶³ in Acts 2:16-21 (sublinear emphasis added); v.21, '*And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on [Greek: epikaleo: 'to put a name upon,' 'to be named after'] the name of the Lord shall be saved.*'

Actually, it is passive voice: '*whosoever shall be named by [‘after’ or ‘of’] the Lord shall be saved.*'

Contrary to popular opinion, a 'last squeak' call upon the Lord's mercy will not save the sinner.

Some hold that there is a time split in this passage, beginning with verse 18, '*And on my servants and on my handmaidens,*' as this is taken to be linked to the events immediately preceding the Day of the Lord, but this appears doubtful.

¹⁰⁶⁴ after the primary period of the Tribulation, and before the onset of the sixth seal, et.seq., q.v. inf.

¹⁰⁶⁵ I Thes 5:20; Mat 24:14

¹⁰⁶⁶ Mat 24:14; Mark 13:10

¹⁰⁶⁷ Luke 19:40; cp. a Jewish legend about the stones of the Second Temple, that the stones cried out at least three times against blatant injustice.

from the simplicity that is in Christ.¹⁰⁶⁸ The word poorly translated 'simplicity,' is from the Greek meaning 'singleness,' 'sincerity,' or 'truth.' It follows that the gospel of the kingdom of God is a singular or pure truth, and not any of the variegated hotch-patched assemblies of truth, fable, and vain and aberrant imaginings that have so confused the purview, particularly in more recent times. Also, from the same root, it is not a simple faith, for nowhere in the Bible is the Christian faith termed as such. There is no 'simple faith.' In Christ there is but a singleness composed of something actually compound and complex in nature, but having a singular and tightly bound unity: in other words, truth.

The end cometh

Surprisingly, despite Christ's explanation and exposition, some see the destruction of the Second Temple¹⁰⁶⁹ and the return of Christ as comprising wholly conterminous events. In such a view, the prophetic book of Revelation, with which the prophecy of Christ given on the mount of Olives shortly before His arrest, trial and crucifixion bears close correlation, would prove to have been almost wholly superfluous, having been written over a quarter of a century after Christ is alleged to have returned. A myopic, conterminous view is complete nonsense, of course.

The last remaining straw grasped in panic by the 'complete fulfilment in the Temple's destruction by Titus' fraternity is found in the synoptic gospels: *'Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.'*¹⁰⁷⁰ But any inspection of the completion here referred to in the words *'till all be fulfilled,'* and the fact that the generation then living would see it all out, attests to its end-time setting. Those who deny this are forced, by dint of their initial error, to compound it, defending of the indefensible, by attributing to Christ's words, *'And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven....coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory,'*¹⁰⁷¹ the person of Titus and his armies, so making Christ appear to speak of Titus as being, or, at the very least, as being equal to, *'the Son of man from heaven.'* But this is patent nonsense. The last straw has gone. The matter is settled. In the phrase *'this generation,'* 'this' is demonstrative. The generation that will see the beginnings of this wholesale, calamitous declension in the end-time world, will also see its end.¹⁰⁷²

¹⁰⁶⁸ II Cor 11:3b; The claimed 'simplicity' in or of Christianity is not only a misnomer, it is also a serious misconception. The reference, oft-times misquoted, is to II Cor 11:3, *'But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.'* The word here translated 'simplicity' from the Greek: haplotes, means 'sincerity' 'generosity,' and 'singleness,' without dissimulation or self-seeking. The idea of singleness comes from the twin root, haplous, meaning a union of things folded together, and pleko, meaning braided, or plaited.

¹⁰⁶⁹ 70AD

¹⁰⁷⁰ Mat 24:34; Mark 13:30; Luke 21:32

¹⁰⁷¹ Mat 24:30

¹⁰⁷² elsewhere in this work, the lack of a true gospel being preached as a witness is discussed, and, as mentioned, the parties who will accomplish this final, end-time witness are identified by type. Only once this state is achieved and taken to a completion, sensibly after the second woe of Revelation, will the end come; and of this, more later.

Chapter 8

Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse

It is now pertinent to address the fourth and fifth chapters of the book of Revelation which set the scene for the very core of the revelation. John was on the isle of Patmos in the Mediterranean when he received the revelation in vision. In vision, and not in actual presence, he was taken to the Throne of God, where he saw God sitting on His throne surrounded by the four living creatures and twenty-four elders,¹⁰⁷³ and, standing before God, in the midst of them, Christ.

Four living creatures

The four 'beasts'¹⁰⁷⁴ are described by John: *'And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had the face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever. The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne,*

¹⁰⁷³ cf. I Chron 24:7-19, where these are found reflected on earth in the twenty-four heads of the courses of priests, listed in the order determined by lot, and serving in the house of the Lord on a rotating basis under the direction of the high priests, Zadok and Ahimelech.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Greek: zoon, 'living creatures.'

and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.'¹⁰⁷⁵ These four beasts correspond to the 'four living creatures,' or the 'four living ones' of Ezekiel,¹⁰⁷⁶ and are, in fact, cherubim.

These beasts are taken to represent many things by commentators, including the higher attributes of man, or the church, but from the location of the beasts, '*before the throne...and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne,*' it is evident that they are the closest to He who sits on the throne: Christ. As such they represent the 'elect,' for this is a heavenly preview of things to happen later on earth, '*things which must be hereafter.*'¹⁰⁷⁷ There are four 'attributes' in purview: the '*lion*' signifying courage; the '*calf*,' signifying meekness; the '*face as a man*,' signifying man elevated; the '*flying eagle*,' signifying power, authority, speed of execution.

Being '*full of eyes within*' signifies everwatchfulness, and attention to what is happening around them. In other words, these represent the position of the 'elect' in the future government of God. The parallels with Ezekiel chapter one are inescapable,¹⁰⁷⁸ where their spatial proximity to the throne is described: '*And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.*'¹⁰⁷⁹ The '*wheels*'¹⁰⁸⁰ signify 'mobility,' in all directions, and the speed was as if '*the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning.*'¹⁰⁸¹ A little later,¹⁰⁸² they are identified as cherubim.

The '*creatures*' or '*beasts*,' signifying the 'elect,' are also shown as part of the throne of God. Just as the twenty-four elders signify the tribes of Israel, two from each tribe,¹⁰⁸³ the four beasts signify the 'elect,' the highest echelon available to man save for the highly restricted position of seraphim.¹⁰⁸⁴ The lightning speed clearly represents the 'immortal elect' ruling on earth during the Millennium, and beyond.

Sealed book

In the right hand of God is a book or scroll sealed with seven seals. The book, significantly in His right hand, is completely sealed, seven being the biblical number of completeness. 'In Roman law....seven seals

¹⁰⁷⁵ Rev 4: 6-11

¹⁰⁷⁶ Ezekiel chpt. 1, in parallel with Rev 4:1c

¹⁰⁷⁷ Rev 4:1

¹⁰⁷⁸ Ezek 1:4-28

¹⁰⁷⁹ Ezek 1:26

¹⁰⁸⁰ Ezek 1:19-21

¹⁰⁸¹ Ezek 1:14

¹⁰⁸² Ezek 10:15

¹⁰⁸³ the Promised Land was divided into twenty-four districts, and representatives of each district were present at the Temple in Jerusalem for the daily sacrifices, attending in the stead of the people of the land.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Peake, A. S., *Jeremiah Volume II*, p.115 (footnote)

were necessary to authenticate a really important document.¹⁰⁸⁵ Being sealed, it could not be read, much less understood. None was found worthy to open the book save Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David:¹⁰⁸⁶ *'And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And has made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on earth.'*¹⁰⁸⁷ Recall what Christ said to His disciples: *'If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself: that where I am there ye may be also.'*¹⁰⁸⁸ God's people shall reign with Him on earth; not in heaven. Nowhere in the Bible does it say that the 'elect' go to heaven on death, or sometime after death. That notion is an Augustinian aberration, a perversion based on imports from Greek philosophy and later adopted by the council of Ephesus.¹⁰⁸⁹ As the entire physical creation was deemed sinful and debased, the philosophy of the time could not countenance the saints inhabiting the earth in perpetuity.

Goel

Christ is our Redeemer; He redeemed us from sin. Under Jewish Law, if someone lost real or heritable property by forfeit, it remained with the new owner for a period of six years. In the seventh year, there was a right to repurchase the property subject to fulfilling the requirements written in a scroll and which had been sealed for record purposes. If the party originally forfeiting the property could not redeem it, then a relative or near-of-kin, called the 'kinsman redeemer',¹⁰⁹⁰ could redeem it on behalf of the party in default.¹⁰⁹¹ The incarnation and subsequent events, in a similar way, was man's redemption by God, in mortal form, as the

¹⁰⁸⁵ q.v. inf.; Barclay, William, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p.87; Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, pp.213,214: 'H. B. Tristram in *Eastern Customs in Bible Lands* has a most interesting section on seals in the ancient world. It was not the signature, but the seal that authenticated. In commercial and political documents it was the seal, imprinted with the signet ring, which made the document valid; it was the seal which authenticated a will; it was the seal on the mouth of a sack or a crate that guaranteed the contents.

The rabbis had a saying: "The seal of God is truth." "One day," says the Talmud, "the great synagogue (the assembly of the Jewish experts in the law) were weeping, praying, and fasting together, when a little scroll fell from the firmament among them. They opened it and on it was one word, Ameth, which means truth. "That," said the Rabbi, "is the seal of God." Ameth is spelt with three Hebrew letters—aleph, which is the first letter of the alphabet, min, the middle letter, and tau the last. The truth of God is the beginning, the middle, and the end of life.'

¹⁰⁸⁶ Rev 5:5

¹⁰⁸⁷ q.v. Rev 5:9,10 (sublinear emphasis added); possible correlation linguistically with Rev 14:3, where Greek: manthano, in 'no man could learn that song' can also be translated 'no man could understand that song,' and that, together with 'new song,' Greek: kainos, meaning 'new,' 'fresh,' or 'unprecedented,' attest to the completely new nature and content of the what is here being sung, and the newness or freshness of the language, q.v. inf.

¹⁰⁸⁸ John 14:3

¹⁰⁸⁹ 431AD

¹⁰⁹⁰ Hebrew: goel.

¹⁰⁹¹ Peake, A. S., *Jeremiah Volume II*, p.115 [footnote]

'The right of redemption. The word for 'redemption' is connected with the word goel. The goel was the next-of-kin, on whom various duties were imposed by this relationship (see Lev 25:25f.). The duties had corresponding rights; the goel could chose whether he would exercise them or not, but till he declined no other could undertake them. Thus Boaz could not undertake this office for Ruth until the next-of-kin had declined it (Ruth 3:9-13;4:1-12).'

Kinsman of all mankind. If, however, the property remained unredeemed in the seventh year, title would vest permanently in the new owner. If the property could be redeemed by whichever method, a meeting with the elders would be called before the city gates. The sealed scroll would then be produced and the first seal broken to reveal the requirements and for the redeemer to prove ability to meet them in full. In a similar manner, if a Israelite man were sold into slavery, then that situation would obtain for six years, but in the seventh year the slave would be freed.¹⁰⁹²

Christ, the Goel, came to redeem mankind and the world back to God after four millennia of sin. The All-seeing, All-powerful Lamb, slain for mankind's sin, is depicted as *'a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes.'*¹⁰⁹³ These are the *'seven Spirits of God.'*¹⁰⁹⁴ He paid the price of redemption on the cross: *'Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.'*¹⁰⁹⁵ Through His sacrifice, Christ bought back the world, but He has yet to take possession. That will come in the Millennium, but in the interim, the status is thus described: *'Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels'*¹⁰⁹⁶ *for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.'*¹⁰⁹⁷ Very soon this will change, and be purified, as Christ takes the scroll from the Father and begins to open the seals, setting in train the final events leading to the full and complete redemption of all whose names are written in the *'book of life.'* The death of the firstborn of Egypt was the ransom price for the children of Israel, this before they walked through the Red Sea in a symbolic form of national baptism. In a somewhat similar way, the wicked will become the ransom for the righteous, at the end-time.

The sixth chapter of the book of Revelation contains the start of the revelation proper. Somewhat surprisingly to the casual reader, only one chapter is devoted to the first six seals, with the remaining sixteen chapters covering the seventh seal and events thereafter. In this chapter, however, Christ takes the book from the right hand of God and one by one opens the seals to reveal what is written therein.

¹⁰⁹² this was the ancient rule in Celtic Ireland. Indeed, Patrick, later to become their patron saint, was, most likely, a Welch Briton who had been taken captive to Ireland, enslaved, but released in the seventh year. This was the old Israelite Law of redemption, of being set free.

¹⁰⁹³ Rev 5:6

¹⁰⁹⁴ Isa 11:2,3 LXX: *'spirit of wisdom, understanding, will, strength, knowledge, reverence, fear of God.'* Masoretic text omits *'reverence'*; cp. Job 12:13-16, *'spirit of wisdom, power, will, understanding, dominion, strength, knowingness.'*

¹⁰⁹⁵ I Peter 1:18,19

¹⁰⁹⁶ Psa 8:5

¹⁰⁹⁷ Heb 2:8,9

Four seals

The first eight verses of chapter six of Revelation, in full, read: *'And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts¹⁰⁹⁸ saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, a measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine. And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked and, behold, a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.'*¹⁰⁹⁹

Horsemen

When the first seal is opened John records: *'And I saw, and behold, a white horse; and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.'*¹¹⁰⁰ Here there is found the first major symbol, and one that has been the subject of a wide range of interpretations down through the ages. When this seal is opened, no interpretation is given by Christ as to the prophetic meaning.

The second seal is then opened: *'And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.'*¹¹⁰¹ And when he had opened the third seal: *'and I beheld, and, lo, a black horse: and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny: and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.'*¹¹⁰² And when he had opened the fourth seal: *'and I looked and, behold, a pale¹¹⁰³ horse: and his name*

¹⁰⁹⁸ Rev 4:6

¹⁰⁹⁹ Rev 6:1-8

¹¹⁰⁰ Rev 6:2

¹¹⁰¹ Rev 6:4

¹¹⁰² Rev 6:5

¹¹⁰³ Greek: chloro, properly 'green,' indicative of pestilence.

*that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.*¹¹⁰⁴

These are the well-known but little understood four horsemen of the Apocalypse. At this point, Christ has merely opened up the first four seals to reveal mystic or symbolic writing; He has not yet revealed the true meaning of these four horsemen. Elsewhere there is clarification of the meaning, while still remaining with the same Revelator: Christ.

Some have claimed that, somewhat conveniently, there is a ready explanation provided by Christ in the Gospels.¹¹⁰⁵ It is recorded in Matthew that Christ's disciples came to Him privately as He sat upon the mount of Olives, saying, *'Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?'* And He answered and said unto them, *'Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in diverse places. All these are the beginnings of sorrows.'*¹¹⁰⁶

In summary, Christ recited four conditions that would come to pass as the *'beginnings of sorrows,'* necessarily before the time of the end—*'but the end is not yet'*—so not included in that climactic time. These, therefore, are prefatory, growing in magnitude and severity:

1. False preachers—*'for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many;'*
2. *'And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom;*
3. *'And there shall be famines;'* and,
4. *'Pestilences, and earthquakes, in diverse places.'*

As a consequence, the white horseman of the Apocalypse cannot refer to false preachers and religious deception, for these have been evident since the flood, and more especially since the inception of the church, with various perversions of Christianity setting in almost immediately upon the death and resurrection of Christ. False preachers soon abounded, misleading and deceiving the many, not the few. Paul wrote of this in his epistles: *'Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the*

¹¹⁰⁴ Rev 6:7,8

¹¹⁰⁵ Matthew chpt. 24; Mark chpt. 13; Luke chpt. 21

¹¹⁰⁶ Mat 24:3-8

same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you,'¹¹⁰⁷ and, 'For the mystery of iniquity doth already work.'¹¹⁰⁸ He also wrote of this end-time condition: 'This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with diverse lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to an understanding of the truth.'¹¹⁰⁹ And he also alluded to the devices and impact of the wicked, this time in the early church age, 'That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.'¹¹¹⁰ This condition has never relaxed or ceased but, rather, has developed in intensity, until the whole world, as prophesied, has become deceived and misled as to the truth of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ.

First horseman

*'And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.'*¹¹¹¹ The colour of the horse is telling,¹¹¹² for the horse is gleaming, attracting attention, and good to look upon. It is intended to be seen, even in the darkness of the night. In short, it is for show. It is intended that no one ignore it, that no one miss it.

Historically, the white horse was a symbol in the Roman Empire of the victorious leader, setting out to conquer. Importantly, being seated on a white horse was in expectation of victory, based on past success.¹¹¹³ Once victory had been achieved, the returning hero would be garlanded and feted and paraded on a two-wheeled war-chariot pulled by four white horses.¹¹¹⁴ But there is no hero-worshipping, pagan victory ceremony within the purview. Here the prophecy is dealing with the outset,¹¹¹⁵ not the subsequent victory celebrations.

¹¹⁰⁷ I Cor 1:10,11

¹¹⁰⁸ II Thes 2:7

¹¹⁰⁹ II Tim 3:1-7

¹¹¹⁰ Eph 4:14

¹¹¹¹ Rev 6:2

¹¹¹² Greek, *leukon*, 'white,' 'brilliant,' or 'shining.'

¹¹¹³ cp. Antichrist's or little horn's ease of plucking up or arrogating three kingdoms or world regions, q.v. inf., likely constitutes this past success; cf. Dan 7:7,8

¹¹¹⁴ Known in Latin as the *quadriga*.

¹¹¹⁵ in Scripture, a man seated on a horse symbolizes some form of conquering, while a king, coming in peace, is pictured seated on a donkey.

He who is to later blasphemously proclaim, "I am the Christ"—commonly termed the Antichrist¹¹¹⁶¹¹¹⁷—will have power conferred on him, initially and partially by the ruling oligarchy.¹¹¹⁸ By the time of the first seal / first rider, the little horn will have unlawfully / unconstitutionally arrogated and subdued three world regions,¹¹¹⁹ thirty percent of the total. As such, he will be the world's preeminent political leader. And from that position, he rides forth, with all deception, to secure control over the entire globe. The first horseman's self-promotion is taken to its ultimate extreme in his Satanic mythopoeia.¹¹²⁰ He is also a mystagogue,¹¹²¹ and extremely dangerous.

The rider of the first horse has a bow, an ancient symbol of kingship,¹¹²² and, uniquely among the four horsemen, this rider is crowned. His particular crown¹¹²³ was the ancient world's prize to victors in public games; a garland. It is not a crown by divine right; it is not hereditary. It *'was given unto him.'*¹¹²⁴ Naturally, the act of conferring or granting a garland by condescension involves a conferrer of higher rank or position, regardless of however that rank was secured. Equally uniquely, this garland is conferred before battle is set. Only after receiving the victor's garland does the rider set *'forth conquering, and to conquer.'* The normal cadence is victory first, then the garland, etc., so why garland someone beforehand? It could be, admittedly, merely through supreme confidence in the early success of his quest. The word here translated *'conquer'*¹¹²⁵ means *'to come off victorious,'* but any such restriction would miss much.

A foregleam of victory, of sorts, can be found in Daniel: *'After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible,'*¹¹²⁶ *and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and*

¹¹¹⁶ the fundamental reason why the Antichrist is so deeply possessed by Satan is that he will have taken the deepest and darkest oath to him. Being an evil spirit being, Satan is not omnipresent, and can possess only one person at a time. This explains 'Illuminati Luciferian Walk-ins,' who are possessed intermittently, but the consummation of human evil, the Antichrist, who will share his Satanic possession with the false prophet, will be almost, if not fully and continuously possessed and imbued with the highest powers evil can bestow for the duration of his hegemony in the last three-and-a-half years of the end-time beast empire.

¹¹¹⁷ some, in Islam, have taught this concerning events around the time of the Mahdi, as Richardson, J, *Antichrist: Islam's Awaited Messiah*, p.48 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'Rasaullah [Muhammed] said: "There will be four peace agreements between you and the Romans [i.e., the Western powers]. The fourth agreement will be mediated through a person who will be the progeny of Hadrat Haroon [Honourable Aaron, Moses' brother] and will be upheld for seven years.'

¹¹¹⁸ conferred by the ten kings of the soon-coming, world-girdling empire, q.v. inf., and, more fully, by and through Satan himself.

¹¹¹⁹ q.v. inf.; Dan 7:24, *'And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.'* 'Subdue,' from Aramaic: shephal, means *'to bring low,' 'to humble,' 'to abase,'* or *'to humiliate.'* The three horns *'plucked out by the roots'* before the Antichrist implies, inter alia, an economic and political, as well as a moral and spiritual collapse—yes, victory, but only of sorts; internecine.

¹¹²⁰ myth creation on the grand scale.

¹¹²¹ someone who propounds a mystical doctrine.

¹¹²² as seen in the depiction of Darius I, the Great, on the Behistun Stone in western Iran.

¹¹²³ Greek: stephanos, *'something won in contest.'* It is not a crown as of divine or other right, Greek: diadema.

¹¹²⁴ Greek: didomi, *'to give,' 'grant,'* or *'supply.'*

¹¹²⁵ Greek: nikao, *'conquer.'*

¹¹²⁶ cited in *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, p.28 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.¹¹²⁷ I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots:¹¹²⁸ ¹¹²⁹ and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.¹¹³⁰

Strangely, the rider has a bow¹¹³¹ but no arrows,¹¹³² even though, in scripture, men on horseback depict men coming at war. The bow devoid of arrows shows that the rider, personally, does not wage war at the time of his riding forth, and much has been made of the fact that it appears a bloodless exercise, the exercise of an intentionally and deceptively false-peace. But it isn't, at least not in its ramifications, for it is intended to bring on conflict at a time of the deceiver's choosing, to the detriment of the deceived, the victims.¹¹³³ There is no peaceful outcome for the world once the first horseman rides. His words and actions are intended to precipitate war through the propagation of political falsehood, deception, religious rivalries, and age-old hatreds. And he is successful in delivering his objectives. In time, there is war, on a worldwide basis, and he comes off victorious, and by this means there comes about the delivery of the evil kingdom of the Antichrist. As the dread events unfold, the '*conquered*' do not live: they die, in due course and in large numbers.

In addition to its political nature, there is also a religious connotation to the '*white horse*.' The perversity can be gauged from the ancient Persian form of sun-worship involving white horses. When the king of Persia sacrificed, he offered a white horse to that luminary. A similar form of sacrifice with horses and sun-chariots by

'But [Daniel] was astonished at the fourth beast, so unnatural and dreadful; for the further we come down the stream of time, the further it is necessary to depart from nature in forming symbols accurately to represent the degenerating governments of this earth.' (Smith, Uriah, *Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation*, p.126).

"This is allowed on all hands, to be the Roman Empire. It was dreadful, terrible, and exceeding strong;....and became, in effect, what the Roman writers delight to call it, the empire of the whole world."

¹¹²⁷ '*ten horns*' represent ten end-time regions into which the world is divided.

¹¹²⁸ the three horns '*plucked out by the roots*' before the Antichrist implies, *inter alia*, economic and political, as well as spiritual, collapse. Dan 11:2-4, describing the then coming demise of the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, and its replacement by the kingdom of the Greek, Alexander the Great, a kingdom which itself is to be divided between four of his generals, has this use and meaning of '*uprooted*' in relation to that latter quadripartite division: Alexander's kingdom is to be arrogated by others besides the rightful posterity. Dan 11:4 (sublinear emphasis added, with added comment and clarification in square brackets), '*And when he [Alexander the Great] has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken up and divided towards the four winds of heaven, but not among his posterity nor according to his dominion which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted, even for others besides these*' (sublinear emphasis added; added comment and clarification in square brackets). In Daniel, therefore, '*uprooted*,' or '*plucked up by the roots*,' means arrogated by others who are not lineal or lawful descendants or rightful posterity.

¹¹²⁹ *Forty Coming Wonders*, p.89:

'That "a horn" in the days of Babylon was used as the emblem of kingly rank may be witnessed in the Nineveh sculptures in the British Museum, where the "horns" on their head-dress or caps are seen distinctly denoting the monarch from his attendants.'

¹¹³⁰ Dan 7:7,8

¹¹³¹ Greek *toxon*, from the base *tikto*.

¹¹³² although no specific reference is found to it here, a bow held reversed (viz., pointed backwards), without arrows, was an ancient sign of an offer of peace.

¹¹³³ Hegelian dialectics: thesis -v- antithesis = synthesis; put another way: action→reaction→solution.

Manasseh, king of Judah, was purged by Josiah.¹¹³⁴ The extent of penetration into Judaism of this form of worship can be gauged from the well-known Beth Alpha synagogue's pagan zodiac floor mosaic from the sixth-century, which depicts Mithras, the sun-chariot god, riding behind four 'white' horses in the four-abreast parallel formation,¹¹³⁵ a formation specifically reserved in many pagan cultures for use during the mass-adulation of the returning all-conquering hero.¹¹³⁶ The '*white horse*' of Revelation¹¹³⁷ speaks of victory and triumph, a bloodless victory for the moment, wrought through the power of deception. But deception can only conquer so much without bloodshed, for the mind of man does not yield easily in all cases. Ultimately, the deception proves to be of no avail, for the next horseman is red, the colour of blood, spilled in world-wide battle.

This first horseman is but one of four, following on, one after the other, in quick succession, with the entire lasting a period of one thousand, two hundred and sixty days (forty-two months).¹¹³⁸ Over that period, one quarter of all mankind on the planet will die: '*And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.*'¹¹³⁹

The cadence of the horseman's manoeuvring is clear from scripture. The rider's first act, in terms of deceiving and fomenting religious and sectarian hatred, is in signing or, better, confirming a concordat with the Jews,¹¹⁴⁰ permitting the construction of the Third Temple¹¹⁴¹ on the site of the present 'Dome of the Rock.'¹¹⁴² He does it on the very first day of his riding.¹¹⁴³ In other words, that fateful agreement sets in motion a train of events resulting in world-wide turmoil and bloodshed. '*The many*' (of the Jews), or, better, '*the officials*'¹¹⁴⁴ (of the Jews) will be duped, most probably wittingly and eagerly, by this ploy, enticed by the prospect of supposed

¹¹³⁴ II Kings 23:11

¹¹³⁵ known in Latin as the quadriga.

¹¹³⁶ Silberman, Neil Asher, *Heavenly Powers, Unraveling the Secret History of the Kabbalah*, pp.21,22 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The geography of the heavens grew ever more elaborate, as individual mystical trances grew more common. In fact, the circle of the Zodiac—representing the movement of the stars and the passage of the seasons—became an extraordinarily popular motif for the mosaic floors of synagogue sanctuaries throughout the Land of Israel in the latter Roman and Byzantine periods. Scholars have long debated the significance of this decorative [sic!] innovation, noting the biblical prohibition of the use of images. But images they are: Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, and all the others—labelled in Hebrew and executed in various degrees of artistic sophistication. And often placed at the centre of these zodiac circles is an image of a heavenly Chariot blazing through the skies. To the Jews' pagan neighbours, this figure would almost certainly have appeared to be the Greek sun-god Helios, or the Roman god Sol Invictus, the unconquerable sun, ruling over all the heavenly bodies, days, and seasons.'

But there is even more here, for the depicted sun-god, regardless of nomenclature, is a representation of Satan, sitting inside not one, but two magic circles, at the very core of its paganism.

¹¹³⁷ Rev 6:2

¹¹³⁸ Rev 13:5

¹¹³⁹ Rev 6:8b

¹¹⁴⁰ Dan 9:27

¹¹⁴¹ the Jews building of the Temple in unbelief (of the true and correct);

¹¹⁴² q.v. inf.

¹¹⁴³ q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

¹¹⁴⁴ perhaps a better translation of Dan 9:27a.

world hegemony, while remaining inured and indifferent to the means employed and the covert nature and intent of their covenant counter-party.¹¹⁴⁵

Not Christ, Antichrist

Surprisingly, many have confused or conjoined the first horseman of the Apocalypse with Christ in His return to earth in full power and glory: *'And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.'*¹¹⁴⁶

The first horseman appears at the start of the first moiety of one thousand, two hundred and sixty days. Christ, on the other hand, does not appear on earth until one hundred and nine days¹¹⁴⁷ after completion of the second moiety of one thousand, two hundred and sixty days. In other words, there is a gap of two thousand, six hundred and twenty-nine days, about seven-and-a-quarter years, between the appearances of the two in their respective roles. Between these two dates fully one half of all of mankind on the planet will perish. While Christ ushers in the destruction of the wicked in the war or campaign of Armageddon,¹¹⁴⁸ followed by the Millennium of rest, the first horseman ushers in unprecedented suffering for seven long years. Jesus Christ wears *'many crowns,'* whereas the first horseman wears but one. Christ is *'King of kings, Lord of lords.'* The first horseman has no divine title.

The ineluctable conclusion is that the first horseman of the Apocalypse is but a vile parody of the true Christ—a false-messiah, a counterfeit—in short: the Antichrist.¹¹⁴⁹ Indeed, the Antichrist will be the adversary of the true Christ at the war of Armageddon in the valley of Jehoshaphat.¹¹⁵⁰

¹¹⁴⁵ the old Machiavellian pretense that 'the end justifies the means.'

¹¹⁴⁶ Rev 19:11-16

¹¹⁴⁷ q.v. inf.

¹¹⁴⁸ the war, or campaign (Greek: polemon, meaning 'war,' not 'battle' as K.J.V.) of Armageddon.

¹¹⁴⁹ the seal of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) is of a man riding a white horse, with the Latin motto ubique, 'everywhere.'

¹¹⁵⁰ Rev 19:17f.; Joel 3:2f.

Second horseman

Whilst there have been wars virtually continuously down through the ages, they have grown progressively worse and more destructive with the passage of time and the development of ever more fearful killing devices and stratagems. It has come to the point where man possesses weaponry capable of utterly eliminating mankind from the face of the earth. Here '*a great sword*' is given to the second horseman, indicative of slaughter on a massive scale. The cadence of the world wars has already been given, and more will be said later on the latter four, but here the entire planet is thrust into a world war of unprecedented destruction.

*'And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.'*¹¹⁵¹ The word translated '*red*' literally means '*the colour of fire.*' It is not the normal Greek word for the colour red,¹¹⁵² but a specialized term denoting fieriness and ferocious heat. The same word is used in describing the '*great red dragon*,'¹¹⁵³ Satan. The great sword given to the second horseman is a strange weapon of prodigious proportions. The word here translated '*sword*'¹¹⁵⁴ is actually a stabbing sword, such as the Roman gladius,¹¹⁵⁵ akin to a long knife or long dagger, but here it is massive in its proportions, presaging the sheer scale and extent of the conflict.

The second rider, again the Antichrist, acts with powers; the power given to him from Satan, who invests him with all that he possesses.¹¹⁵⁶ This power is used to its ultimate, taking peace from the earth, and introducing unremitting conflict. Every weapon available to man will be utilized,¹¹⁵⁷ resulting in wholesale killing and devastation.

Third horseman

*'I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, a measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.'*¹¹⁵⁸ The third

¹¹⁵¹ Rev 6:3,4; the great sword is, perhaps, a reference to the inventors of the sword, the Assyrians, as well as to the extent of bloodletting involved.

¹¹⁵² Greek: *isporrosorpyrros*, '*colour of fire*,' '*red*,' but the normal Greek word for the colour red is *eruthros*.

¹¹⁵³ Rev 12:3

¹¹⁵⁴ Greek: *machaira megalee*, '*massive stabbing sword*.' The ordinary sword of war is *romfaia*.

¹¹⁵⁵ Latin: *gladius*, a two-edge sword with a point for cutting, thrusting, and stabbing, and the normal weapon of the Roman footsoldier—as opposed to the longer cavalry sword, the *spatha*, the shorter sword, the *gladiolus*, and the dagger, the *pugio*.

¹¹⁵⁶ q.v. inf.

¹¹⁵⁷ historically speaking, eventually every weapon is used, regardless of the magnitude of its destructive power or its indiscriminate nature.

¹¹⁵⁸ Rev 6:5,6

horse and rider represent famine. Despite ever increasing yields from modern farming methods,¹¹⁵⁹ the famines of the last two decades, usually deriving from wars and internecine strife, have been severe in many locations around the world. The dramatic increase in frequency and intensity of these famines, as the end of the current dispensation is reached, is made manifest in the minute and careful use of a '*pair of balances*,' the symbol of commerce. In times of plenty, the accuracy of the measurement is a deal less important, as then a little more can be given, almost with impunity.

The '*measure*' mentioned in '*a measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine*' is roughly equal to a little over one litre.¹¹⁶⁰ A litre or so of '*wheat*' for a '*penny*,'¹¹⁶¹ the reward for a full day's labouring work in the field, is sparse indeed, leaving nothing for the family, and not even being capable of satisfying the hunger of the worker. It signifies starvation wages. The '*barley*' measure is three litres for a penny.¹¹⁶² In normal circumstances, barley was the foodstuff of horses and donkeys, but here it is being diverted to human consumption, and sold at premium prices. In such straits, of course, more refined commodities, like oil and wine, are beyond the means of most people. They are extremely scarce and not likely to be replenished, hence the instruction concerning luxuries: '*hurt not the oil and the wine.*'

While famine often follows on the heels of war, usually as a result of wholesale destruction of arable land, food production and distribution and the effects of the diversion of factors of production in wartime economies, there is something far more sinister in the purview. The Nazi 'Hunger Plan'¹¹⁶³ to secure the mass murder by starvation of up to thirty million 'useless eaters'¹¹⁶⁴ in the western sectors of the Soviet Union, in order to free up foodstocks for consumption by German forces and the German people in general, gives a preview and a sense of the psychopathic and satanic forces in play.

Other measures, as in the introduction into the food-chain of genetically-modified organisms¹¹⁶⁵ through which non-food genes from other species are inserted into the D.N.A.¹¹⁶⁶ of food, altering its very nature¹¹⁶⁷ and ensuring, in certain growing crops, that no viable seed is produced naturally to farmers for the next harvest,¹¹⁶⁸ will also serves to curtail the food available for general consumption.

¹¹⁵⁹ although these frequently rob the soil of nutrients and hence only accelerate the short-term yield at the expense of the continuing, longer-term yield.

¹¹⁶⁰ Greek: choinix.

¹¹⁶¹ Or Latin: denarius.

¹¹⁶² viz., three choinix for one denarius.

¹¹⁶³ in addition to the 'Final Solution' for the extermination of the Jews and others and 'Generalplan Ost' for the depopulation of Slavic lands in World War II. Had the 'Hunger Plan' been implemented in full with the other two, about 50 million would have died, at a conservative estimate, cf. Tooze, Adam, *The Wages of Destruction, The Making & Breaking of the Nazi Economy*, pp.476-485,538-541,546-549,668.

¹¹⁶⁴ German: unnutze Esser.

¹¹⁶⁵ G.M.O.

¹¹⁶⁶ deoxyribonucleic acid, the hereditary material in humans and almost all other organisms.

¹¹⁶⁷ e.g., through lowering the food value, inserting or increasing toxins, or in the plant producing toxic proteins that act as pesticides, and so on, with the ensuing products often colloquially referred to as 'Frankenfood.'

¹¹⁶⁸ often colloquially referred to as 'terminator seeds.'

Fourth horseman

*'And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked and, behold, a pale¹¹⁶⁹ horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.'*¹¹⁷⁰ The fourth horse, pale, green, or pale green, represents pestilence. Disease epidemics ranging from the more 'mundane,' to the high-profile media favourite, AIDS, are increasing both in terms of scope and medical complexity. Resistance to modern antibiotics is increasing. Diseases which were thought to have been 'conquered' by medical science are now reappearing in new and more virulent forms. The next stage, promoted by further wars and internecine strife, allied to famines, will bring forth the full rigour of the end-time fourth horsemen. The 'natural' epidemics flowing from world war and famine will be significantly augmented by the use of biological and chemical weapons, doubtless with some selective in their use, targeted on certain groups and races.

Zechariah's chariots

From a reading of the opening verses of Zechariah chapter six,¹¹⁷¹ *'And I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass. And the angel answered and said unto me, These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth,'*¹¹⁷² it is clear that these four chariots do not correspond with the four horsemen of the Apocalypse, but are commanded to go forth by Christ, *'the Lord of all the earth.'* Given this, and taking all together, it would appear reasonable to conclude that once God indicated His condescendence to the start of the final climactic events comprised in the Day of the Lord, Christ can then command that they proceed in due season.

However, there is more to the passage than this. The full text reads: *'And I turned, and I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass. In the first chariot were red horses; and in the second chariot black horses; And in the third chariot white horses; and in the fourth chariot grisled¹¹⁷³ and bay horses. Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked with me, What are these, my Lord? And the angel answered and said unto me, These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth. The black horses which are therein go forth into the north country; and the white go forth after them; and the grisled go forth*

¹¹⁶⁹ Greek: chloro, properly 'green,' indicative of pestilence.

¹¹⁷⁰ Rev 6:7,8

¹¹⁷¹ Zech 6:1-8

¹¹⁷² Zech 6:1,5

¹¹⁷³ Hebrew: barod; English from French: gris, 'iron grey' or 'anthracite grey.'

toward the south country. And the bay went forth, and sought to go that they might walk to and fro through the earth: and he said, Get you hence, walk to and fro through the earth. So they walked to and fro through the earth. Then cried he upon me, and spake unto me, saying, Behold, these that go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country.¹¹⁷⁴ This prophecy has often been related to or conflated with the four horsemen of the apocalypse, but there are significant differences, and introduces not a little difficulty:

1. Mention of the two brass mountains is linked in verse five to the positioning of *'the Lord of all the earth,'* namely, Christ.¹¹⁷⁵ Expositors, for some reason, have tended to identify the mountains as being the mounts of Olives and Moriah, on the basis that these are the mountains upon which the righteous judgement of God has been manifest. This would give the locus of the going forth of the chariots as the erroneously called valley of Jehoshaphat,¹¹⁷⁶ although a near identical locus could be obtained if the reference to the two brass mountains happened to be the split mount of Olives, as maintained by some, seen from: *'Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.'*¹¹⁷⁷ It should be noted that this latter interpretation has a rather obvious time-sequence difficulty when related to the four horsemen of the Apocalypse;

2. Others have seen brass as being a reference to Greece, through the brass empire in Nebuchadnezzar's dream of an image of a man.¹¹⁷⁸ In this view, the two mountains of brass are said to represent Greece and Macedonia. Such an interpretation taxes credulity very severely, especially as the Tanakh translates *'brass'* as *'copper,'* a very expensive metal in those days, almost rivalling gold. Ancient Greece and Macedonia, of course, can have nothing to do with taking the lead in the end-time events in question;

3. Indeed, some have thought to restrict the whole vision to a time just three years after it was given to Zechariah, in the fifth year of the reign of Darius, for, after having been conquered by Cyrus, Babylon revolted against Darius, and suffered defeat and devastation in retribution. However, this does not explain the two brass mountains, the chariot with the white horses, all that happens to the southern country, and the fact that despite starting off on the cardinal points, all of the horses and chariots go throughout all the earth, and not just ancient Babylon;

¹¹⁷⁴ Zech 6:1-8

¹¹⁷⁵ cp. Dan 2:35,44,45, where Christ is described as *'a great mountain.'*

¹¹⁷⁶ correctly the Kidron Valley.

¹¹⁷⁷ Zech 14:3,4

¹¹⁷⁸ Dan 2:31-35,38-44

4. Now concerning the Judæo-Christian view of the identity of the two brass or copper mountains, from a reading of the opening verses of the sixth chapter of Zechariah, '*And I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass. And the angel answered and said unto me, These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth,*'¹¹⁷⁹ it is clear, as stated, that the four chariots are commanded to go forth by Christ, '*the Lord of all the earth.*' And so one of the two mountains of brass or copper here likely represents Christ, and, on this basis, it is held that the two brass or copper mountains represent God the Father and God the Son. Some have contended that '*brass*' is not a metal descriptive of the Godhead, as it could convey the concept of '*brazen*.'¹¹⁸⁰ But '*brass*,' and its sometimes translation '*bronze*,' are linked in the Bible to both the Temple, certain prophets, such as Jeremiah,¹¹⁸¹ and things holy.¹¹⁸² And in any event, such an objection could not apply to '*copper*';

5. Interestingly, the Septuagint¹¹⁸³ differs from the textus receptus / Masoretic text in its handling of the phrase '*myrtle trees*,'¹¹⁸⁴ where it gives '*between the mountains.*' This meshes seamlessly with the interpretation led of the identities of the brass mountains, with the unintelligible '*the myrtle trees that were in the bottom*' of the K.J.V. becoming '*between the mountains in the deep*,' and thus a reference to two Divine Beings in the God-head overlooking the masses in turmoil, symbolised by the sea;

6. The order of the colours is different to that of the four horsemen of Revelation; and, lastly,

7. They are location specific, at least initially, as verse seven indicated that consent is given for all four chariots to go throughout the entire earth. The '*north country*' is understood to be a reference to Babylon in its latter-day form of the core of the empire of the Beast,¹¹⁸⁵ and the '*south country*' to the Muslim nations and parts of Africa.

The chariots, as war machines, have coloured horses. Red¹¹⁸⁶ symbolises war and bloodshed; Black, famine; White,¹¹⁸⁷ all-conquering political deception,¹¹⁸⁸ with an element of false religion; and Grizzled, plague

¹¹⁷⁹ Zech 6:1-8, and especially vv.1,5

¹¹⁸⁰ cf. Isa 48:4

¹¹⁸¹ 'brazen.'

¹¹⁸² cf. Jer 15:20; Ezek 40:3

¹¹⁸³ LXX.

¹¹⁸⁴ myrtle, a tall shrub of evergreen leaves, was anciently sacred to the pagan goddess Aphrodite (Venus); Inanna (Venus): Sumerian goddess; also known as Ishtar: Babylonian; Sekhmet: Egyptian; Anak: Canaanite; Zech 1:8;10,11.

¹¹⁸⁵ the universal empire, the Roman Empire, the last and mightiest effort of the ancient world, will be the model for the final, endtime Beast empire.

¹¹⁸⁶ 'bay' in v. 7, Hebrew: amots, should be translated '*red*.' In relation to horses, bay means chestnut coloured.

¹¹⁸⁷ the white horse chariot represents political and other deception allied to false religious preaching and false teaching that belittles God; a crass violation of God's Holy Law which mocks God and seeks to do away with His Law and teachings, and disregards His form of government, His authority, His Holy Days, His will and His commandments,

and pestilence. Initially, Babylon receives all but plagues and pestilence; and initially the Muslim / African nations war, together with plagues and pestilence. The phrase *'have quieted my spirit in the north country'* indicates that the wrath of God has settled and been satisfied on Babylon the great, by its total destruction. *'Quieted'* means, in context, *'caused to rest,'* and *'spirit,'*¹¹⁸⁹ is best understood here as *'angel.'*¹¹⁹⁰ Eventually, of course, all four war chariots are visited on the entire earth, at the command of the Lord of the earth.

The references in this vision of Zechariah have been ascribed by some expositors to the Day of the Lord, especially the events comprised in the third woe, and this view is apposite, to a certain extent. It is evident that the angel's¹¹⁹¹ opening of the *'bottomless pit'*¹¹⁹² signals the beginning of that divinely-directed onslaught. The eschatological context, therefore, is that commencing with the first and second woes¹¹⁹³—which last for one hundred and fifty days, and three hundred and ninety-one days, respectively, with the latter involving two hundred million combatants and resulting in the death of one third of all humanity then alive on the planet: in other words, World War V, in all its gruesome reality. The destruction of Babylon the great, for the third and final time, is prophesied to occur at the end of the third woe in the form of the seventh vial plague.¹¹⁹⁴ This meshes synchronously with the overall end-time chronology given in this study.¹¹⁹⁵

So, in summary, Zechariah's vision extends from the start of the first woe to the end of the third; in other words, it comprises of the span of the fifth, sixth and seventh trumpets, with trumpets one through four 'merely' being environmental in their impact.

Finally, concerning the disposition of the chariots, especially the red horse chariot, symbolising war, and which is not noted as going forth in any cardinal direction—implying universality from the off—is the result of a direct violation of God's Law. It is accompanied, inexorably, by famine and disease, the black and grizzled horse chariots. By adopting man's ways of greed, avarice, anger, and deceit, mankind has reaped an appalling harvest of death and suffering and will continue to do so. War will continue to grow in scale and killing power until, if it were not for the intervention of Christ, for the sake of the 'elect,' all human life would be expunged from

substituting debased ritual, customs, and the vain mores of man. The results of this satanic union, in the end-time, are simply catastrophic.

¹¹⁸⁸ doubtless, given how heavily intertwined they are, economics will interact too, with the false and deceptive promise of 'cleaning up' and 'reinvigourating' the previous system which lies in ruins, introducing a superficially better arrangement—which is basically the same as before, only even more corrupt.

¹¹⁸⁹ Hebrew: ruach.

¹¹⁹⁰ in which sense it is found in Judges 8:3 and Eccl 10:4.

¹¹⁹¹ or *'star's'*; Rev 9:1, *'And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.'*

¹¹⁹² Rev 9:1,2

¹¹⁹³ Rev 9:1-21

¹¹⁹⁴ Rev 16:17-21

¹¹⁹⁵ q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

the face of the earth: *'Except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake¹¹⁹⁶ those days shall be shortened.'*¹¹⁹⁷

That there can be no diminution in the overall time-span given in the Bible is evident: *'How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half: and when he shall have accomplished to scatter¹¹⁹⁸ the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.'*¹¹⁹⁹ It is on sworn authority before God that the power of the Antichrist, which exposes in the Great Tribulation, shall endure for three-and-a-half years.

¹¹⁹⁶ Greek: eklektos, translated '*the elect's sake*,' is better understood if rendered simply '*elect*.' There is no word in the Greek text for, or meaning, '*sake*.' The only use of the phrase '*for the elect's sake*' in the K.J.V. actually having a corresponding Greek word for '*sake*' in connection with the '*elect*,' in this instance in the plural, is found in II Tim 2:10a, '*Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes*,' with Greek: dia, meaning '*through*' or '*by means of*.' Other usage of the word '*sake*' in the K.J.V. arise from two other words: Greek: en, denoting position in terms of place, time or state, and Greek: heneka / heneken, meaning '*on account of*' or '*because*,' with the former occurring but once, in Eph 4:32, and the latter twelve times, in Mat 5:10,11,39,19:29; Mark 8:35,10:29.13:9; Luke 6:22,9:24,16:29,21:12; Rom 8:36.

¹¹⁹⁷ Mat 24:22

¹¹⁹⁸ or '*dash in pieces*.'

¹¹⁹⁹ Dan 12:6b,7

Chapter 9

Fifth Seal—The Great Tribulation

Christ says, *'All these things are the beginning of sorrows.'*¹²⁰⁰ ¹²⁰¹ When the culmination of events pictured by the four horsemen arrives, the world is only then at the very beginning of the prophesied Great Tribulation which constitutes the next, fifth, seal. *'And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them, that they should rest yet for a little season until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.'*¹²⁰²

Satan's ploy is to kill the potential sons of God, or to so divert, confuse, deceive and mislead them, as to render them incapable of becoming sons. The potential of human beings is to become part of God's spirit family; literally, as with the angels, sons of God. Satan, the rival, the accuser, unceasingly rails and plots against those few chosen in this current dispensation, ably aided by his many demons and the human hoards who willingly give themselves over to serve Satan and further his evil cause. Christ said that those who would follow Him would suffer persecutions, *'For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be*

¹²⁰⁰ Mat 24:8, 'sorrows' more correctly translated 'travail' or 'tribulation.'

¹²⁰¹ Peake, A. S., *Jeremiah Volume II*, p.198:

'Just as the prophetic word, once uttered, moves forward to effect its own fulfilment, so the prophetic deed is simply not a prediction, it sets in motion the train of events which is to lead up to its realisation.'

¹²⁰² Rev 6:9-11

those of his own household,'¹²⁰³ ¹²⁰⁴ with all being so deceived as to think that their actions accord with the will of God,¹²⁰⁵ or with the accepted codes and mores of pagan mankind. Christ never said it would be easy. True Christianity never set out to be popular, and in that it has succeeded admirably.

Sadly, during this time, Jerusalem will fall again, '*For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken....Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives.*'¹²⁰⁶ The Beast will rule the whole world and hold sway on the holy mountain for a period of three-and-a-half years, with his placed image set as an abomination before the Lord. The Jews there and in the surrounding land will be put to flight and suffer wholesale persecution and death. Jerusalem, together with the rest of the Holy Land, will be ravaged, '*The city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity.*'¹²⁰⁷

All of Jacob, both Israel and Judah, will be defeated utterly in battle, with the survivors going into captivity as slaves of the Beast and his ten kings, with their lands plundered and destroyed, '*And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: and they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God,*'¹²⁰⁸ and, '*Behold, their valiant ones shall cry without: the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly. The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth: he¹²⁰⁹ hath broken the covenant, he hath*

¹²⁰³ Mat 10:35,36; Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, pp.58,59:

'It has often been the case that, when a man embarked on the way of Jesus Christ, his nearest and his dearest could not understand him, and were even hostile to him. "A Christian's only relatives," said one of the early martyrs, "are the saints."'

¹²⁰⁴ *Forty Coming Wonders*, p.190:

'Domestic treachery, arming kindred hands, is also predicted (Luke 24:16), so that '*a man's foes shall be they of his own household.*' This is a very ancient device of Satan; he first rendered Eve the deadliest foe of her husband and of her whole posterity, by leading her to transgress; he then guided the hand of the first man born into the world to slay his brother; and history, sacred and profane, is but a record of his successful plots against the peace of families and of kingdoms, by means of every species of treachery.'

¹²⁰⁵ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.79:

'It was a primary article of Jewish belief that nothing in this world happens outside the will of God.'

¹²⁰⁶ Zech 14:2-4a

¹²⁰⁷ Zech 14:2; the other half will be killed, with few escaping.

¹²⁰⁸ Zech 13:8,9; Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.210:

'In the Old Testament 'name' is used in a very special way. It does not simply mean the name by which a person is called; it means the whole character of the person insofar as it can be known. The Psalmist says: "*Those who know thy name put their trust in thee*" (Psa 9:10). Clearly that does not mean that those who know what God *is called* will trust Him; it means that those who know what God *is like*, those who know His character and nature will be glad to put their trust in Him.'

Those whom God knows are His are in the purview; others decidedly are not. Those whom God knows shall be saved. Others, whom He knows not, are excluded from that salvation.

¹²⁰⁹ viz., the Antichrist.

*despised the cities, he regardeth no man. The earth mourneth and languisheth: Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down: Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits.'*¹²¹⁰

Satan's final fury in this dispensation, executed through his prime human agent, the Antichrist—who will break his 'false-peace' covenant with the Jews¹²¹¹—will bring mankind to the very brink of annihilation. Matthew describes the utterly desperate state of affairs: *'Except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.'*¹²¹²

A special term of emergency, absolute panic, and sheer desperation is reserved in Scripture for Jacob's end-time descendants: Jacob's trouble. Jacob's trouble¹²¹³—a time of unprecedented oppression, slavery, and near-extinction, constituting a 'final, final solution'—is prophesied in Jeremiah: *'The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord God of Israel, saying, Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book. For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it. And these are the words that the Lord spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah. For thus saith the Lord; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: But they shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them. Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord; neither be dismayed,*¹²¹⁴ *O Israel: for, lo, I will save*

¹²¹⁰ Isa 33:7-9 (sublinear emphasis added)

¹²¹¹ Dan 9:27

¹²¹² Mat 24:22; the word 'sake' should be deleted as it does not occur in the original Greek text, leaving 'but for the elect.'

¹²¹³ Moses' blessing for obedience includes: Deut 28:12, *'The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.'*

And for disobedience, includes: Deut 28:43,44, *'The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low. He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail.'*

How the Israelites would come to possess the lands and gates of the Gentiles can be seen in this following excerpt from the writings of Harvard economics professor Benjamin Friedman:

'Again and again it has always been the world's leading country that has been the premier country in terms of political influence, diplomatic influence, and cultural influence. It's no accident that we took over the roll from the British at the same time that we took over....the job of being the world's leading country. Today we are no longer the world's leading lending country. In fact, we are now the world's biggest debtor country, and we are continuing to wield influence on the basis of military prowess alone.'

That exposition is very succinct, and fits neatly with Deuteronomy.

In God's Law, interest can be charged of the Gentiles, but not of fellow Israelites.

¹²¹⁴ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, pp.37,38:

'The most precious thing about Jesus is the fact that He is not the great discourager, but the great encourager.'

*thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of thy captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid. For I am with thee, saith the Lord, to save thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished. For thus saith the Lord, Thy bruise is incurable, and thy wound is grievous. There is none to plead thy cause, that thou mayest be bound up: thou hast no healing medicines. All thy lovers have forgotten thee; they seek thee not; for I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity; because thy sins were increased. Why criest thou for thine affliction? thy sorrow is incurable for the multitude of thine iniquity: because thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee. Therefore all they that devour thee shall be devoured; and all thine adversaries, every one of them, shall go into captivity; and they that spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee will I give for a prey. For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord; because they called thee an Outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after.'*¹²¹⁵ The same also appears in Isaiah: '*For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the stranger shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob. And the people shall take them, and bring them to their place: and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord for servants and handmaids: and they shall take them captives, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors. And it shall come to pass in the day that the Lord shall give thee rest from thy sorrow, and from thy fear, and from the hard bondage wherein thou wast made to serve.*'¹²¹⁶

Some commentators seek to spiritualise away the physical promises to Israel and Judah: 'The promise of a physical return to Canaan¹²¹⁷ ended with the abrogation of the Old Covenant and is no longer part of God's covenant with His people in the latter days.'¹²¹⁸ God's threat and promise, under covenant with the children of Israel, are not unconditional in their extremity. Repentance annuls the one, disobedience the other, but to spiritualise the specific promises to Israel and Judah by suggesting an abrogation of the Old Covenant and some form of novation in favour of the church, does a grave injustice to the text. Rather, the Old Covenant is still in force, and while the church has a core role, the very suggestion of the dissolution or abrogation of the Old Covenant at this point would cause the entire to founder. It is evident that there will be a return to the Promised Land, and that this return will include the church and others¹²¹⁹ at the start of the Millennium, and that the Old Covenant maintains even beyond that.¹²²⁰

¹²¹⁵ Jer 30:1-17 (sublinear emphasis added)

¹²¹⁶ Isa14:1-3

¹²¹⁷ Jer 30:4-20

¹²¹⁸ Laetsch, *Bible Commentary*, p.44

¹²¹⁹ q.v. inf.

¹²²⁰ q.v. inf., *Old Covenant to New*

Others have suggested that the literal restoration happened in the time of Zerubbabel, after the Babylonian captivity, but the northern tribes did not return with the remnant of Judah. In other words, there was no re-gathering of Israel, and so logically, the contention falls.

Jacob's trouble

Jacob's trouble is thought by many to be the end-time trouble principally coming on those on whom Jacob bestowed his name, Ephraim and Manasseh,¹²²¹ although from Scripture it is clear that it will impact on all of Jacob. It will be the worst captivity or enslavement of all time, but it will end: *'Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places; and the city shall be builded upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof. And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry: and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small. And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.'*¹²²² Christ confirmed this: *'For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. Except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.'*¹²²³ He then specified the timing: *'When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place,'*¹²²⁴ *(whoso readeth, let him understand:)* *Then let them which be in Judæa flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field turn back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.'*¹²²⁵ ¹²²⁶ At that time, various revamped barriers-cum-walls of separation

¹²²¹ note that this cataclysmic time is called Jacob's trouble, and not Israel's trouble; Israel being the name conferred on Ephraim and Manasseh, q.v. Gen 32:28,48:16, 47:29–48:22, but it does include all of Israel, q.v. Isa 48:12; Jer 30:7f.

¹²²² Jer 30:18,19,22

¹²²³ Mat 24:21,22; the word 'sake' should be deleted as it does not occur in the original Greek text, leaving 'but for the elect.'

¹²²⁴ 'most holy place' was the 'Holy of Holies,' the inner sanctum, where the ark of the covenant rested.

'Holy place,' in Mat 24:15, Mark 13:14, and Luke 21:20, on the other hand, is the Temple complex in general (cp. Acts 6:13,14,21:28,29). Sometimes, depending on context, it is a reference to the room of the Temple immediately before the Holy of Holies. 'When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)' shows the exact location of the erection of the obscene image of the Beast, in a calculated and wholesale affront to God; Greek: *topos*, here translated 'place,' means 'the exact spot,' and in that context might even possibly be a reference to the inner sanctum, the Holy of Holies, which is built over the exact spot of the foundation stone, or even to a location over the original threshing floor, and the subsequent altar, q.v. II Sam 24:19-24, which would be outside but not directly in front of the main Temple door, being slightly offset.

¹²²⁵ Mat 24:15-21

¹²²⁶ unfortunately, the timescale detailed herein has the 'flight' occurring in winter 2023–2024, though not on a Sabbath day or on a New Moon, q.v.inf.

between the Jews and the Palestinians and others will serve to contain the Jewish population in the Holy Land and so inhibit flight.

Jacob's trouble will be so great that none will ever be like it. Without the intervention of the Lord, all mankind would perish from the face of the earth. Such will be the confusion in this time of the end that *'Who-soever shall seek to save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.'*¹²²⁷

Daniel also refers to this time of tribulation: *'And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many'*¹²²⁸ *of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.'*¹²²⁹ This also shows that Divine protection is not wholly withdrawn. The 'Restrainer' is restricted in his worldwide duty of restraining Satan and his forces, but the 'elect' are not left unprotected: one hundred and forty-four thousand will survive, and others too must come through the Great Tribulation alive.¹²³⁰

Hosea foretells of events surrounding the delivery from captivity.¹²³¹ The first three verses are a call to restoration, the remaining six recite the completion of this restoration. *'O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips. Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses: neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy. I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely; for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree, From me is thy fruit found. Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein.'*¹²³²

Ultimately, the defeated and enslaved people will have to be saved by God. While God has turned His face from Israel, they will be compelled to seek Him in the heat of their affliction: *'I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early. Come,*

¹²²⁷ Luke 17:33

¹²²⁸ Hebrew: rab, 'many' or multitudes.'

¹²²⁹ Dan 12:1,2

¹²³⁰ q.v. inf.

¹²³¹ Hosea chpt. 14

¹²³² Hos 14:1-9

*and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.'*¹²³³

Time sequence

However, in this section of chapter six there is a device also used elsewhere in the Apocalypse, as shall be seen when looking into chapter twelve. It has caused many to doubt the veracity of parts of the concluding book of the Bible as they are unable to time sequence all of the elements encompassed by the passages in question. The answer is that not all elements are in strict time sequence. Revelation, on occasion, utilises a device to highlight certain things by dragging them forward in time, so placing them in parenthesis or out of sequence. In chapter six the element highlighted in this way is the cries of those slain for the word of God.¹²³⁴ It is known that the dead-in-Christ, many of whom have been slain for the word of the Lord, will rise first: *'For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead-in-Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.'*¹²³⁵

The question that has been posed in the past is one of when, exactly, in the grand scheme of things, do the 'dead-in-Christ' rise. Given that the wrath of God is poured out on apostate mankind in the presence of the saints, this means that the saints are *'in the air'* at that point, which is immediately before the third and final Woe.¹²³⁶ Therefore, it would appear reasonable to conclude that the dead will rise with the two witnesses, and immediately thereafter, the 'living and sealed' will rise: all forever to be with Christ. By that time, the current dispensation will have closed, the dead-in-Christ will be complete, those alive at that time will have been transformed into spirit beings in the twinkling of an eye and have risen to meet him *'in the air,'* so the question arises as to how could those who have died in the past for the word of God be given *'white robes'* and be told to *'rest yet for a little season'* until their *'other brethren'* are likewise killed?¹²³⁷

The answer is that the format and wording used highlights what John saw in vision, in the spirit, and what was recorded, allegorically, and out-of-sequence, was part of the dual concept that as all creation calls out for the coming of the Lord, *'For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain to-gether until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan*

¹²³³ Hos 5:15,6:1-3

¹²³⁴ Rev 6:10

¹²³⁵ I Thes 4:16,17

¹²³⁶ they cannot be in heaven, for only Christ has ascended there, q.v. inf.

¹²³⁷ Rev 6:9-11

*within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body,*¹²³⁸ so does the martyrdom of the saints. And there is a clear and specific subscription which must be filled; all those destined to be martyred must be martyred before the end. The white robes can be only be dispensed to the saints once the dead-in-Christ have risen, an event here highlighted out-of-sequence. That many must be martyred over that entire time-span was prophesied by Christ: *'Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake,'*¹²³⁹ *'And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world, no, nor ever shall be. For there shall rise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs, and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.'*¹²⁴⁰ The events pictured occurring before the throne of God are thus in vision and allegorical, with the sequenced flow of events interdicted to highlight the craving of the saints. That the martyrs' shed blood¹²⁴¹ cries out to God is dramatically portrayed in the phrase *'under the altar,'* the very location in the Temple where the blood of ritual sacrifices was poured out below the altar's red line.

Duality

Duality, in the format of type and antitype, is a recurring device used throughout biblical prophecy. As an illustration, there was the first Adam, mortal, a sinner, and the second Adam, Christ, without sin, immortal through His ascension to heaven: *'And so it is written, the first Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.'*¹²⁴² There is also the former, typical and later, anti-typical fulfilment: *'But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled,'*¹²⁴³ *'and Jerusalem will be under the heel of the Gentiles till the Time of the Gentiles expires.'*¹²⁴⁴ These speak of war, national invasion, and captivity. That did happen to Judah,¹²⁴⁵ with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Second Temple, but that was merely the forerunner of the wholesale captivity that is to occur before the return of Christ. This latter persecution and captivity, involving the wholesale martyrdom of the saints, must be fully subscribed before the wrath of God is poured out, undiluted, on a wicked and apostate world.

¹²³⁸ Rom 8:22,23

¹²³⁹ Mat 24:9

¹²⁴⁰ Mat 24:10-13,21,24

¹²⁴¹ Rev 6:9

¹²⁴² I Cor 15:45

¹²⁴³ Luke: 21:23,24

¹²⁴⁴ Moffatt translation.

¹²⁴⁵ in 70AD

It should not be thought that the creation of the modern state of Israel,¹²⁴⁶ comprising part of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and Levi, together with a quite sizeable Arab population, signalled the end of the times of the Gentiles. This final captivity prophesied in Revelation is still in the future, albeit near future. It is a salutary experience to visit the Old City of Jerusalem on the Sabbath only to find street trading by Palestinians and 'Christians,' or to go to Mount Moriah and be confronted with a children's soccer match in progress on what is God's Holy Mount! The Gentile / apostate heel is still present in the Holy City, and on the Holy Mount, and will be, in one form or another, until the return of Christ.

Christ's disciples asked Him when His coming would occur, and the end of the world;¹²⁴⁷ the end of this age. False preaching was not the final precursor, neither was wars and rumours of wars. But Christ told the disciples specifically what the final precursor would be: *'And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.'*¹²⁴⁸ Here is a fundamental and simple statement that has been subjected to such monumental misinterpretation and misunderstanding down through the ages that its meaning has been lost to almost all. Religious institutions, evangelical, proselyte, or whatever, have variously claimed to have the truth, to have promulgated it on a worldwide basis, and to have fulfilled the prophecy to the letter. That any such claim is fatuous nonsense is evident, for the end has not come. Therefore either Christ is running late or the gospel has yet to *'be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations.'* Sense would commend the latter.

Church: precursory & missionary

For a fuller exposition it is necessary to turn to the eleventh chapter of Revelation. There, there are found two witnesses who prophesy throughout the earth for one thousand, two hundred and sixty days and whom, after completing their testimony, are killed by the Beast. And when does that happen?—between the second and third and final woe, just at the return of Christ *'in the air.'* There will be more on these two witnesses, their testimony and place in events to come in due course, but all that is required, for now, is that the inquiry be restricted to the precursory nature of these two witnesses and to their testimony, the last detailed warning given by Christ to an apostate and unbelieving world, the warning of the imminence of the kingdom. And only then the kingdom will come.

Many have wondered about the state of the church in these last days, especially in view of the dire warning handed down to the last church era in line, Laodicea.¹²⁴⁹ Laodicea, as has been seen, was the only one found to be without a single redeeming feature. It was lukewarm, neither cold nor hot, and was to be spewed

¹²⁴⁶ 14 May, 1948

¹²⁴⁷ Mat 24:3-8

¹²⁴⁸ Mat 24:14

¹²⁴⁹ Rev 3:14-22

out. That there first must be a falling away, and the revealing of the Beast, and only then the end would come, is clear from Paul, when he warns, *'Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.'*¹²⁵⁰ In order for there to be a falling away, there must, of necessity, have been some form of adherence beforehand. Taking that with the church eras previously discussed, the falling away cannot be the general lapse into apostasy which overtook much of the church in the early centuries after the death and resurrection of Christ and which spawned the major so-called visible 'Christian' religions and denominations of the present day. Rather, this is a near-end-time phenomenon, occurring within an end-time church era itself—and it can only be the Laodicean—accompanied shortly thereafter by the revealing of the man of sin, the son of perdition.¹²⁵¹

It is self-evident that such a lukewarm church, judged the equivalent of vomit, could never fulfil the precursory condition and concluding end-time mission. That mission is to be left to the two witnesses, aided, to some extent, by the 'elect.' Christ said of His first coming that John the Baptist must prepare the people,¹²⁵² lest He come and strike the earth with a curse: similarly with the two witnesses in the end-time.

Surprising to many, the duty and responsibility of bringing the final detailed warning to the world does not fall on the church as a whole; instead it is given to these two witnesses; this despite the fact that the church is Christ's,¹²⁵⁴ and He is the Head of the church, *'For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the*

¹²⁵⁰ in II Thes 2:3

¹²⁵¹ q.v. inf.

¹²⁵² Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, pp.43,44 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'[John the Baptist] fearlessly denounced evil wherever he might find it. If Herod the king sinned by contracting an evil and unlawful marriage, John rebuked him. If the Sadducees and Pharisees, the leaders of the orthodox religion, the churchmen of their day, were sunk in ritual formalism [and worse], John never hesitated to say so. If the ordinary people were living lives which were unaware of God, John would tell them so.

Wherever John saw evil—in the state, in the [religious establishment], in the crowd—he fearlessly rebuked it. He was like a light which lit up the dark places; he was like a wind which swept from God throughout the country.

It may be that there have been times when the church was too careful not to offend. There come occasions when the time for smooth politeness [and dissimulation and devious obfuscation, in many low instances] has gone, and the time for blunt rebuke has come.'

¹²⁵³ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, p.47 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'[John the Baptist] warns [the Jews of his day] that it will avail them nothing to plead that Abraham is their father. To the orthodox Jew that was an incredible statement. To the Jew, Abraham was unique. So unique was he in his goodness and in his favour with God that his merits sufficed not only for himself but for all his descendants also. He had built up a treasury of merit which not all the claims and needs of his descendants could exhaust. So the Jews believed that a Jew, simply because he was a Jew, and not for any merits of his own, was safe in the life to come. They said, "All Israelites have a portion in the world to come." They talked about "the delivering merits of the fathers." They said that Abraham sat at the gates of Gehenna to turn back any Israelite who might by chance have been consigned to its terrors.'

The concept of a 'store of merits' deriving from the previous lives of honoured fellow believers is mirrored in Roman Catholicism's 'store of merits of the saints,' which the pope claims to have authority to dispense at his will through the operation of papal indulgences. Both are equally worthless.

¹²⁵⁴ first mentioned in Mat 16:18, where Christ, speaking to Simon Peter, says, *'I will build my church.'* The Greek word used for the church throughout the New Testament is ekklesia, meaning *'summoned out ones,'* or *'called out assembly,'* through responding to a general call by God, q.v. sup.

*head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.*¹²⁵⁵ The Great Commission given to the church as a whole is very specific: *'Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen,*¹²⁵⁶ but this should not be confused with proclaiming the final, detailed warning. There is no baptism mentioned in connection with the work of the two witnesses, and, as they only appear at the time of the end, it is unlikely that they will be able to sensibly undertake much of the Great Commission before their time and purpose. It is not the church as a group or organisation that has the duty to give the final warning, but the witnesses who, of necessity, are part of the true church, but distinct from the Laodicean unfortunates forming the bulk of the nominal church in the end-times, who would be wholly unsuited to undertaking this critical duty.

The nominal church at the time of the final warning will be a very weak, vacillating, unrobust, poorly-led group; neither cold nor hot, spewed out for its worthlessness.¹²⁵⁷ Christ's warning is apposite: *'Howbeit in vain do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For, laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.'*¹²⁵⁸ While this admonition was given to the Pharisees and other religious rulers at the time, it applies also to the Laodicean and other backsliding eras of the church. The whole history of the church, from the Old Covenant times where Israel had a function preparatory to the ultimate establishment of the church, to, eventually, the establishment of the kingdom of God, is encapsulated in the Bible. And much of it makes depressing reading.

The first mention of the church in the Bible, in terms of its existence, is in Acts: *'This is he'*¹²⁵⁹ *that was in the church in the wilderness with the Angel which spake to him in Mount Sinai, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us.'*¹²⁶⁰ Old Covenant Israel was the first exposition of the church, generally referred to in the Old Testament as *'the congregation of Israel.'*¹²⁶¹ The church of the New Testament, however, goes very much further than the Old Covenant church ever could in that the gospel could not be proclaimed to the world, nor could God's people receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, until Christ had overcome Satan,¹²⁶² and had suffered the penalty of sin in our stead, risen, and been glorified.¹²⁶³ With that in place, the New Testament church commenced on the day of Pentecost—the first annual feast of God after Christ's death,

¹²⁵⁵ Eph 5:23

¹²⁵⁶ Mat 28:19,20

¹²⁵⁷ Rev 3:16

¹²⁵⁸ Mark 7:7-9,13

¹²⁵⁹ viz., Moses.

¹²⁶⁰ Acts 7:38; mount Sinai called Horeb in I Kings 19:8b; *'Sinai'* means *'thorny'*; in *'wilderness of sin,'* *'sin'* means *'thorn.'*

¹²⁶¹ cf. Ex12:3,6,9,27, etc.

¹²⁶² Mat 4:1-11

¹²⁶³ John 7:37-39

resurrection, and ascension—when the Holy Spirit descended on the one hundred and twenty or so people who had assembled in Jerusalem as commanded by our Lord.

The covenant with Moses was made at Pentecost and the Torah traditionally given to Israel at this time.¹²⁶⁴ The Lord came in fire on Mount Sinai, at Pentecost, to seal His covenant with His people Israel. At New Testament Pentecost, the formal launch of His Christian church—a renewed, spiritually-bound Israel—He came in fire again, through what was likened to tongues of fire,¹²⁶⁵ this time to indwell His people. A renewed covenant was sealed with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the Law written on the hearts of all believers. And it happened on the correct day,¹²⁶⁶ and in the correct location.^{1267 1268}

Interestingly, Peter refers to the prophecy of Joel, *'And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your old men shall dream dreams, your younger men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and the handmaidens in those days will I pour out my Spirit,'*¹²⁶⁹ as being that spoken of by the prophet Joel, but *'afterward'* in Joel becomes *'in the last days'* in Acts. Also the consummation of Joel is stated to have happened then, *'For this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel.'*¹²⁷⁰ However this can only apply in part as the succeeding verses in the second chapter of Acts clearly refer to events at the end of this age, and not to those occurring in the time of the early

¹²⁶⁴ Ex 19:1a (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), *'On the third new moon [month], when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt.'* This day is apposite, for God often starts great works on the day of the New Moon, and, as travel for a holy purpose is permitted on that day, q.v. inf., it is appropriate that God removed His people from the land of captivity on that day (q.v. inf.) and then started the process leading to making them His covenant people. Ex 19:2, *'For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and thence Israel camped before the mount.'* The K.J.V. translators inserted a semi-colon after *'wilderness,'* showing that they understood the sense of a break there. *'And there Israel'* probably should, as a result, be rendered, *'and thence Israel,'* giving a better understanding of the flow of events.

Months in the Sacred Calendar do not follow the pagan schematic Judaic / Babylonian model, q.v. inf. The first month in the Sacred Calendar can have either 29 or 30 days, as can the second and subsequent months, but given that the average lunation is c.29.53 days, it would appear reasonable to take it that combined they were more likely to have totalled 59 days (it could not have totalled 58 days, for that would have placed the New Moon on a weekly Sabbath, with no travel permitted, but it could have totalled 60. It should be noted that either 59 or 60 days, with the 50-day Omer count (q.v. inf.), places the earlier Passover day on a Wednesday with the ceremony on the previous evening, the same as occurred in the year of Christ's crucifixion, thus displaying a commonly-found Biblical symmetry), then the following appears for month three:

Sunday 01 – children of Israel come out of Egypt, clearing the boundary of that repressive land, camping outside of Egypt for the first time;

On one of the following three days, they camp before mount Horeb;

Thursday 05 – first day of sanctification;

Friday 06 – second day of sanctification;

Sabbath 07 – third day; God gives the Law;

Sunday 08 – Pentecost, on the 50-day count; Lord covenants with the children of Israel.

¹²⁶⁵ those claiming *'tongues of fire'* at their baptism today are claiming amiss; if such fire is evident, then it is either group hysteria or Satanic in origin.

¹²⁶⁶ on a Sunday.

¹²⁶⁷ Jerusalem.

¹²⁶⁸ Acts 2:1-21

¹²⁶⁹ Joel 2:28,29, cited in Acts 2:16-18

¹²⁷⁰ Acts 2:16

church. It follows that the entire of the time of the end comprises all of the time allocated for the church era or dispensation from that day of Pentecost until the return of Christ. The vast bulk of the specifics inherent in the time of the end, however, have yet to occur.

'When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place,'¹²⁷¹ (whosoever readeth, let him understand), Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened,'¹²⁷² and the reference in that passage to be understood: 'and he shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.'¹²⁷³

The reason why flesh shall be saved alive is due to the existence of the 'elect.' Without the 'elect'—those baptised into the true church and submitting themselves wholly to God's will—no flesh whatsoever can be saved alive. This is but one measure of the critical importance to Christ of His 'elect.' It is also the reason why there is a final Great Tribulation. Fundamentally, the Great Tribulation is the final wrath of Satan against God's 'elect,' with a view to their total extirpation, with the 'elect' given into the hand of Satan by God until the prescribed martyrdom is filled. This is recited in Revelation, in relation to the Beast: *'And it was given unto him to make war with the saints,'¹²⁷⁴ and to overcome them: and power¹²⁷⁵ was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.'*¹²⁷⁶ Again, this end-time event is presaged in, *'Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.'*¹²⁷⁷ Young has the opening phrase in an active sense: *'Many shall purify themselves, and make themselves white, and be refined.'*¹²⁷⁸ This is not something that is vicariously effected for the 'wise,' or 'knowledgeable,' for the emphasis is on their active involvement and participation.

¹²⁷¹ repeated for ease of reference: 'most holy place' was the 'Holy of Holies,' the inner sanctum, where the ark of the covenant rested. 'Holy place,' in Mat 24:15, Mark 13:14, and Luke 21:20, on the other hand, is the Temple complex in general (cp. Acts 6:13,14,21:28,29). Sometimes, depending on context, it is a reference to the room of the Temple immediately before the Holy of Holies. *'When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)'* shows the exact location of the erection of the obscene image of the Beast, in a calculated and wholesale affront to God; Greek: *topos*, here translated 'place,' means 'the exact spot,' and in that context might even possibly be a reference to the inner sanctum, the Holy of Holies, which is built over the exact spot of the foundation stone, or even to a location over the original threshing floor, and the subsequent altar, q.v. II Sam 24:19-24, which would be outside but not directly in front of the main Temple door, being slightly offset.

¹²⁷² Mat 24:15,16,21,22; the word 'sake' should be deleted as it does not occur in the original Greek text, leaving *'but for the elect.'*

¹²⁷³ Dan 11: 31b and also Dan 12:11; the likely nature of the 'abomination' q.v. inf.

¹²⁷⁴ viz., the 'elect.'

¹²⁷⁵ to do as he pleases.

¹²⁷⁶ Rev 13:7

¹²⁷⁷ Dan 12:10

¹²⁷⁸ Young's Literal Translation.

A foretaste of the coming religious and political persecution can be had from records of the infamous Inquisitions:¹²⁷⁹ '[B]urning of heretics was first decreed in the eleventh-century.¹²⁸⁰ The synod of Verona¹²⁸¹ imposed on bishops the duty to search out heretics in their dioceses¹²⁸² and to hand them over to the secular power. Other synods, and the Fourth Lateran Council¹²⁸³ under Pope Innocent III, repeated and enforced this decree, especially the synod of Toulouse¹²⁸⁴ which established inquisitors in every parish.¹²⁸⁵ Everyone was bound to denounce heretics, the names of witnesses were kept secret; after 1243, when Innocent IV sanctioned the laws of Emperor Frederick II and of Louise IX against heretics, torture was applied in trials; the guilty persons were delivered up to the civil authorities and actually burnt at the stake....The present pope, Pius X,¹²⁸⁶ has decreed the establishment in every diocese of a board of censors and of a vigilance committee whose functions are to find out and report on writings and persons tainted with the heresy of Modernism.....Given the ideas then, and long after, universally prevalent in regard to heresy and the measures of repression necessary to prevent infection from spreading, there is nothing exceptionally cruel or intolerant about the statute *De Haretico Comburendo*, of 1401, which provide that heretics convicted before a spiritual court, and refusing to recant, were to be handed over to the secular arm and burnt.'¹²⁸⁷

Days shortened

There is one final interesting aspect to all of this—a foreshortening—of the coming Great Tribulation, *'For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto*

¹²⁷⁹ *Wikipedia*, 'Spanish Inquisition':

'Created through papal bull, *Ad Abolendam*, issued at the end of the 12th century by pope Lucius III as a way to combat the Albigensian heresy in southern France. There were a huge number of tribunals of the Papal Inquisition in various European kingdoms during the Middle Ages. The Tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition (Spanish: *Tribunal del Santo Oficio de la Inquisición*), commonly known as the Spanish Inquisition (*Inquisición española*), was a tribunal established in 1480 by Catholic Monarchs Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile. It was intended to maintain Catholic orthodoxy in their kingdoms, and to replace the Medieval Inquisition which was under Papal control. It became the most substantive of the three different manifestations of the wider Inquisition along with the Roman Inquisition and Portuguese Inquisition.'

The Portuguese Inquisition took place between 1536 and 1821; formally the Inquiry on Heretical Perversity, it was composed of a group of institutions within the judicial system of the Roman Catholic Church whose aim was to "fight against heretics." Its origins were French. In Portugal, it was closely related to the Spanish Inquisition. After Jews were expelled from Spain in 1492, many moved to Portugal, but eventually left also this country, together with 400,000 Portuguese Jews. Nowadays, only between 1,000 and 1,500 Jews live in Portugal.

¹²⁸⁰ by decree of Roman Emperor Justinian, 538AD, the bishop of Rome was appointed 'The Corrector of Heretics.'

¹²⁸¹ 1184AD

¹²⁸² the word 'diocese' comes from Diocletian's institution of administrative units in the Roman Empire. Diocletian was one of the main Roman persecutors of the early Christians.

¹²⁸³ 1215AD

¹²⁸⁴ 1229AD

¹²⁸⁵ comprising one priest and two laymen per parish.

¹²⁸⁶ 1909AD

¹²⁸⁷ *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, VII, pp.260,441 (sublinear emphasis added, highlighting something only an orthodox Catholic could write).

this time, neither shall be. And except that the Lord hath shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.¹²⁸⁸ The Antichrist¹²⁸⁹ will have power given him over the 'elect' and others for the time given, 'And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws:¹²⁹⁰ and they shall be given into his hand until a time, and times, and a dividing of time.'¹²⁹¹ This time period is the same as the three-and-a-half years, the forty-two months, and the one thousand, two hundred and sixty days¹²⁹² of Revelation. However, it is effectively curtailed, or cut short, insofar as the 'elect' are concerned,¹²⁹³ but for the 'intermediate peoples,' as they are termed in this work—purely for convenience in identification—who go through the entire period, it lasts for the full three-and-a-half years.

Some may wonder why shortening the days of the Great Tribulation for the 'elect' saves all flesh, as seen in: 'And except that the Lord hath shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.'¹²⁹⁴ The reason is simply that without the 'elect,' there would be no value whatsoever in the Second Coming, and in sealing and in-gathering, as postulated in: 'Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?'¹²⁹⁵ Without the presence of an 'end-time election,'¹²⁹⁶ the earth's inhabitants and all they have would simply be destroyed, for the entire world would possess no

¹²⁸⁸ Mark 13:19,20; the word 'sake' should be deleted as it does not occur in the original Greek text, leaving 'but for the elect.'

¹²⁸⁹ one in opposition to, taking the place of, or a substitute for Christ.

¹²⁹⁰ as have also the Roman pontiffs down through the centuries. *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, pp.48,49,55 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'What power has attempted to change the Law of God?—The papacy; as proved by history and the admission of Catholic writers themselves, such as the following:

Have you any other way of proving that the church has power to institute festivals of precept?

"Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her—she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no scriptural authority." *Doctrinal Catechism (Catholic)*, p.174.'

"The idea of the transference of the Jewish [sic] Sabbath from the seventh day to the first, was an invention of later times." Alford, Henry, *New Testament for English Readers*.

The Roman Catholic *Decretal de Translate*, Episcop. Cap., states, 'The pope has power to change times, to abrogate laws, and to dispense with all things, even the precepts of Christ.' In short, the pope claims powers to change divine Law.

¹²⁹¹ Dan 7:25; 'times' Aramaic: zeman, a 'set time,' or a 'season,' referring, principally, to the holy days and new moons. Cumbey, Constance, *The Hidden Dangers of the Rainbow*, p.89, while erring in part, gives further flesh to the scope of the Antichrist's changes:

'traditional Jewish and Christian holidays would be replaced with pagan festivals such as the Wesack Festival and a Festival of the Christ—to be celebrated at the full moons, of course.'

The occult full moon will replace the sacred new moon in the Antichrist's calendar system.

¹²⁹² Rev 12:14,11:2,12:6 respectively.

¹²⁹³ as can be seen from 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

¹²⁹⁴ Mark 13:20; the word 'sake' should be deleted as it does not occur in the original Greek text, leaving 'but for the elect.'

¹²⁹⁵ Luke 18:8

¹²⁹⁶ Greek: ekloge, 'divine selection,' q.v. Rom 9:11,11:5,7,28; I Thes 1:4; II Peter 1:10

worth and no relevance. This is also seen in the promise of *'the BRANCH,'*¹²⁹⁷ a reference to Christ who will *'build the temple of the Lord,'*¹²⁹⁸ but that blessed event is conditional: *'And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice [or commandments] of the Lord.'*¹²⁹⁹ The same sentiment of conditionality is found in the concluding phrase in the Old Testament when dealing with conditions immediately precedent to Christ's first coming and John the Baptist's preparatory mission: *'lest I come and smite the earth with a curse,'* or, better, *'with utter destruction.'*¹³⁰⁰

The effective power of the Beast to do as he so wishes by imperial edict and the ensuing immiseration of almost all of the world's population culminates at the time of the death and resurrection of the two witnesses. These two complete the prescription of righteous martyrdom. There are no further martyrs.

As the sixth trumpet, the second woe, has its duration described, *'Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels'*¹³⁰¹ *which are bound in'*¹³⁰² *the great river Euphrates.'*¹³⁰³ *And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men,'*¹³⁰⁴ and is included in the second three-and-a-half-year period commencing with the Great Tribulation, and as there are other trumpets which have to be accommodated within this three-and-a-half-year period, then the time available for the Great Tribulation, insofar as the wholesale persecution and martyrdom of God's 'elect' is concerned—the primary period—is sensibly reduced to a little less than two years.¹³⁰⁵ Thus is brought to pass: *'And except that the Lord hath shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake,'*¹³⁰⁶ *whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.'*¹³⁰⁷ They are shortened, effectively, from three-and-a-half years to just under two years,¹³⁰⁸ but only for the sake of and applying to the 'elect.' For the rest, the event lasts for the full three-and-a-half years.

That the 'elect' are the *'salt of the earth'* is axiomatic in Scripture: God's own; His people; His disciples and followers—they are the 'elect.' *'Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt hath lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.'*¹³⁰⁹ If the salt were ever to lose its savour, no longer able perform its sacred function, then much would be lost. Not only would the 'elect' lose their place in the soon-coming kingdom of heaven, also there would be a more

¹²⁹⁷ Zech 6:12-15

¹²⁹⁸ Zech 6:12b

¹²⁹⁹ Zech 6:15c (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹³⁰⁰ Mal 4:6c

¹³⁰¹ demons, for they are bound.

¹³⁰² Greek: *epi*, 'at.'

¹³⁰³ sensibly just outside the land area which is to be allotted to Israel in the Millennium; cf. Ezek 48:1-29.

¹³⁰⁴ Rev 9:14,15

¹³⁰⁵ more detail on this later; also q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

¹³⁰⁶ Greek: *eklektos*, *'the elect's sake,'* more easily understood in English if rendered *'elect,'* since the word *'sake'* should be deleted as it does not occur in the original Greek text, leaving *'but for the elect.'*

¹³⁰⁷ Mark 13:20

¹³⁰⁸ q.v. inf. and 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet; reduced to 666 days.

¹³⁰⁹ Mat 5:13

devastating destruction meted out. In the phrase *'wherewith shall it be salted?'*¹³¹⁰ the final use of the word *'it'* obviously refers back to *'the earth,'* and if the salt or 'elect' no longer performs the sacred function before God, then, placing two texts together:

1. The salt would be cast out and trampled underfoot of wicked men; and,
2. The world would be destroyed, for it would be utterly worthless before God and irredeemable.

The wicked of today's world owe their very existence to the 'salting effect' of the 'elect,' despite the incongruity of their virtually-continuous persecution of them.

In summary, the Great Tribulation, as it is known, occurs as the fifth seal and represents the wrath of Satan against the 'elect' or saints of God, and many more besides. Satan knows he has but a short time, as is made clear, *'for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.'*¹³¹¹ This is not, as sometimes postulated erroneously by expositors, the wrath of God. That dread event awaits the opening of the seventh seal.

¹³¹⁰ Mat 5:13c

¹³¹¹ Rev 12:12c

Chapter 10

Sixth Seal

Matthew continues with the account: *'Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.'*¹³¹² This event is, in fact, the sixth seal: *'And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal; and, lo, there was a great earthquake;'*¹³¹³ *and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.'*¹³¹⁴ This is also prophesied in Joel: *'The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come.'*¹³¹⁵ Zechariah, continuing: *'And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?'*¹³¹⁶ and, *'The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord: the*

¹³¹² Mat 24:29

¹³¹³ Revelation's great earthquake; cp. Heb 12:27, *'And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things which are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.'*

The earthquake plays a prominent part in many eschatological writings, showing the sweeping away of the profane, the fleeting, and the ill-founded, preparatory to the establishment of the sacred, the permanent, the everlasting.

¹³¹⁴ Rev 6:12,13

¹³¹⁵ Joel 2:31

¹³¹⁶ Rev 6:14-17

*mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness. A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. And I will bring distress upon men, and they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung.*¹³¹⁷

And at its end, *'It shall come to pass in that day that there will be no light; the lights will diminish. It shall be one day which is known to the Lord; neither day nor night. But at evening time it shall happen that it will be light.'*¹³¹⁸ This describes conditions extant in the Day of the Lord,¹³¹⁹ on the day that Christ returns to the mount of Olives.¹³²⁰ There is, therefore, an immediate sign of His imminent arrival given in the evening, when there will be unnatural light, a form of twilight. In the daytime, after His arrival, there will be a similar diminished light. This is the concluding day of the seven hundred days of the Day of the Lord.¹³²¹

Paul refers to this time, and its effect: *'See that ye refuse not him that speaketh, For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we received a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire.'*¹³²²

The Romish perversion of the sixth seal has it as 'three days of darkness when devils will roam the earth,' but the real sixth seal will be much more violent, with unprecedented upheavals in nature: great earthquakes moving every mountain and island out of its place, and the stars of heaven falling to earth, this probably a description of crashing asteroids, meteors and meteorites, amongst other things.

All the wicked shall know that the Day of the Lord is at hand, for it will have been witnessed against them by God's two witnesses. And they will know that there is no escape. They will weep bitterly and be consumed with anger, graphically described by Christ in the telling phrase, *'there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*¹³²³ The likely duration of this sixth seal—three days—is discussed in detail later.¹³²⁴

¹³¹⁷ Zeph 1:14-16

¹³¹⁸ Zech 14:6,7

¹³¹⁹ Zech 14:1

¹³²⁰ Zech 14:4

¹³²¹ q.v. inf.; 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

¹³²² Heb 12:25-29

¹³²³ Mat 24:51c

¹³²⁴ q.v. inf.; 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

Chapter 11

The Sealed, & Others

The first six seals of Revelation lead to the great and terrible Day of the Lord which comprises, in the aggregate of its seven trumpets and vials, the seventh and final seal. This Day of the Lord or Day of the Eternal is referred to in more than thirty prophecies throughout the Bible.¹³²⁵ The Great Tribulation, on the other hand, is only referred to as such in two chapters.¹³²⁶

For about six thousand years God has given guidance, admonitions, and warnings to mankind. In love, He revealed His Law—His way of life that would lead to everything good and desirable—to our first parents, Adam and Eve. God has sent His prophets with His message of peace, His warnings to heed the Law and to turn from apostate practices, and revealing to mankind the way to peace and prosperity. But mankind rejected His message and murdered virtually every one of His prophets. So God sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, with the gospel of the kingdom of God, and they crucified Him. They martyred virtually every one of the apostles for bringing the message of God's way of life and the gospel of the kingdom. Mankind's track record is one of

¹³²⁵ there are a number of '*days of the Lord*' found in the Bible, including: '*day of the Lord*' on Edom (Obad 15), and Egypt (Ezek 30:2-11; Jer 46:1,2,10,13), also on Jerusalem, twice (Joel 1:15,2:1-11; Zech 14:1), the Second Coming (Acts 2:20; I Cor 5:5; II Cor 1:14; I Thes 5:2; Rev 1:10), and at end of the Millennium and the creation of the new heaven, earth, and Jerusalem (II Peter 3:10; Rev 21:1); the destruction will be both swift and total, cp. Job 38:7b, '*or who can stay the bottles of heaven,*' where Hebrew: nebel, here translated '*bottle,*' is better '*collapsible skin bottle*' or '*skin bag,*' giving the idea of total, instant collapse.

¹³²⁶ Mat. 24:21,29; Rev 7:14

unmitigated sin and enmity towards God and his people: an appalling litany, without equal. Such is the wickedness of mankind. No wonder that *'except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved.'*¹³²⁷

For about six thousand years God has dealt with this rebellious world in peace, love, mercy and compassion. He has warned mankind that their apostasy, idolatry, and sin would lead to self-imposed destruction; the complete annihilation of all living life from the face of the earth. But mankind did not heed, and mankind will not heed, until it is too late. Even to this very day man is continuing to devise weapons of destruction, ever more terrifying, ever more effective, and which, unless interdicted, will result in the suicide of the entire human race. By the time of the end, the current dispensation will have closed and God will have been forced to intervene, as prophesied, to save mankind from itself. He will have to intervene and speak to this rebellious world in the only language it heeds: superior force. He is going to punish this world for all its evil ways with just judgments, with wars and plagues so terrible that some in the then world will at last be forced to acknowledge and turn from their wicked ways and seek God.

God will save this evil world from itself through a series of events, recited in the seventh seal, subdivided into seven trumpets, the first six of which fall before the seventh and last trumpet's vial plagues of God's wrath. The composite Day of the Lord will lead directly to the Second Coming of Christ, coming as the King, and that, at last, will lead to the ushering in of world peace.

Secret rapture?

But before all this, one thing holds up the entire sequence of events.

It must be recalled that God has a very special relationship with His 'elect.' The seventh chapter of Revelation is another chapter which has been subject to a wide variety of interpretations by imputing links with the twelfth chapter and also with Luke where Christ stated: *'Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.'*¹³²⁸ There are many who aggregate sections of chapters seven and twelve of Revelation with excerpts from Luke to produce a 'soft option' or benign prognosis, which renders the Great Tribulation of no effect or impact on the 'elect.' Various expositors have suggested a 'secret rapture' to heaven, or a flight to Petra, or a flight to somewhere else in the wilderness, or to some other physical location or place of divine communal protection and complete safety prior to the onset of the Tribulation. The prognoses often come accompanied by a strong enjoinder to the poor mendicant to become a member of the particular group, usually at financial cost, in order to avoid the Tribulation's extreme rigours.

¹³²⁷ Mat 24:22a

¹³²⁸ Luke 21:36

The concept of a 'secret rapture of the saints,' the spiriting away of the elect by Christ and their transportation to heaven, appears nowhere in the Bible, despite being popular with many so-called Christians today. This idea appears to many to have originated with Ellen G. White,¹³²⁹ and was claimed both by her and her followers to be a divine revelation given by God. In truth, however, the error was introduced earlier by a Chilean Jesuit priest, Lacunza, who wrote a book¹³³⁰ which taught the novel and misguided notion that Christ is to return not once, but twice; the first being to 'rapture' the Church in order to escape the tyrannical reign of the Antichrist. In an attempt to avoid any taint of Romanism, Lacunza adopted the subterfuge of having his book published under the assumed name of a Jew who had converted to Christianity, supposedly. At core, however, the 'secret rapture' is Romish fable.

The aberrant notion gained acceptance over time, especially after Lacunza's book was translated into English,¹³³¹ at which point it quickly found its way into the Church of England, mainstream Protestantism, and The Brethren, the latter through an Anglican curate¹³³² who appears to have stumbled across the belief of a 'secret rapture' while attending some mysterious meetings on biblical prophecy at Powerscourt in Ireland. In turn, this resulted, eventually, in its introduction into mainstream evangelical thinking, where a promise of being spared the rigours of the Great Tribulation was quickly perceived as a distinct and marketable commodity. While there is wide variety in doctrine, and much disagreement between the rapturist devotees over the detail, what they hold in common is a belief that those alive on earth and who are Christ's will be raptured away to safety before the onset of either what they term the seven-year Tribulation, or of the three-and-a-half-year Great Tribulation, when 'all-hell' will break loose on earth.

For a flavour of some of the wild and aberrant beliefs and doctrines bound up in what is by far its most common exposition, Pre-tribulation Rapture, the following summary should suffice:

1. Not only is the church raptured before the Tribulation / Great Tribulation, the Holy Spirit is raptured as well;
2. The Holy Spirit is the 'Restrainer';
3. Christ's return is imminent, and could occur at any moment, rather than occurring at a time pre-determined by God the Father;
4. The dire events precedent to the Tribulation / Great Tribulation in Daniel and Revelation do not apply to the Rapturists;

¹³²⁹ in the 1830s; White actually had a proscription placed on her in connection with the Thyatiran era of the Church, q.v. sup.

¹³³⁰ Lacunza, Emmanuel, *The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty*, written in 1791, under the nom-de-plume Rabbi Ben Ezra.

¹³³¹ by Rev. Edward Irving in 1826–27.

¹³³² Darby, J. N., generally regarded as the founder of The Brethren.

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5. The Tribulation / Great Tribulation itself does not apply to the Rapturists;
 6. God won't let His people go through the Tribulation / Great Tribulation;
 7. Anyone failing to believe in the Pre-tribulation Rapture and alive at that time will have condemned him- or herself to living through the Tribulation / Great Tribulation, and possibly to dying in it;
 8. The identity of the Antichrist will not even be known by the Rapturists, for they will be gone;
 9. Christ will come, in the first instance, to rapture His Church in secret, and only some time later will He return in full power to deal with the wicked remaining on earth;
 10. Those who are of Christ will be those who are then currently 'born again' Christians;
 11. The 'born again' church is so special to Christ that, by the grace of God, it has been elevated above all other saints;¹³³³
 12. There is a different and inferior salvation for these 'other' 'dead-in-Christ' saints; and,
 13. The thus raptured 'born again' church is to be taken to heaven for the wedding of the Lamb.

All this must be compared with the word of Scripture, as explored and exposed in this study, for it lays out a very different story. Many, however, in defence of the indefensible, would point to that which is the only text in the Bible where a quasi-reference is made to a rapture, *'For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead-in-Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.'*¹³³⁴

But this is no secret rapture to heaven: the 'elect' rise to meet Christ *'in the air,'* this only after the dead-in-Christ have risen. The word *'meet'* conveys the idea, in ancient times, of a great dignitary coming to a city. The leaders in the city would go out some way to greet the dignitary, and to escort him to the city. In a similar way, this *'meeting in the air'* conveys the idea of not only a supernatural greeting of the highest Dignitary, but then, after the Lamb's wedding supper, the direction of travel becomes the direction of the Dignitary: to earth. This is borne out, of course, by the events surrounding the Second Coming.¹³³⁵

¹³³³ viz., the *'dead-in-Christ,'* a grouping including Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, etc.

¹³³⁴ I Thes 4:16,17; Greek: harpagesometha, translated *'caught up'*—future passive—comes from harpazo, meaning 'to snatch,' 'seize,' or 'catch.' The Latin equivalent of harpazo is rapio, from which derives the English word 'rapture.'

¹³³⁵ q.v. inf.

Despite this, millions live today in the false expectation that they are already 'saved,' and can relax and await their 'secret rapture' to the great blue yonder, immediately before 'all-hell' breaks loose on the planet. Sadly, they are deluded. Christ repeatedly warned of the need for vigilance, for obedience to the Word of God, and a constant guarding of our minds and thoughts from the falsely-spiritual supermarket of antichrists awash with false prophecies and the doctrines of demons.¹³³⁶

Only at the point of sealing the one hundred and forty-four thousand will comprehensive and absolute divine protection be afforded the 'elect' then alive; only at this momentous pivot in all history, at end of the sixth seal. Those expectantly looking for an early rapture to heaven, or a flight to a place of safety prior to the Great Tribulation,¹³³⁷ will be distraught in the extreme when it fails to materialise. Daniel speaks of these end-times: *'it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.'*¹³³⁸

The *'power of the holy people'* attests to those working under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit at the time of the end. But this power will come to an end.¹³³⁹ The completion of this scattering of power, by the 'un-identified' *'he,'* in this verse, is usually taken to be a reference to Satan through juxtaposition to Michael,¹³⁴⁰ and, by inference, the then chief agent of Satan on earth, the Antichrist, who will bring on the end, when *'all these things shall be finished.'* This point of completion of the scattering is not finally reached until all the powers of the holy people are dissipated. The actual point at which this occurs is in the martyrdom of the two witnesses.¹³⁴¹

The actual biblical purview of this is not benign in any way. The flight to the wilderness¹³⁴² is expounded below, but it has a telling ending: *'And the dragon was wrath with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.'*¹³⁴³ It is blindingly obvious, one would think, that if the flight to the wilderness takes place at the 'time of the end,' then there would be no remnant of the seed with which the dragon could make war. This remnant does not constitute those judged unworthy of inclusion in the church, as widely reported by some revisionary aberrants. To the contrary, this remnant does keep the commandments of God, and does have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

¹³³⁶ there will be many 'doctrines of demons' promulgated at the time of the end, for it is apparent that once the Restrainer is restricted, q.v. sup., earth-bound demons will be in a position to portray themselves as messengers of light coming from any number of sources. This will extend to claims of their being 'extra-terrestrials,' returned ascended masters, angels from heaven, and so on.

¹³³⁷ or, for that matter, an extended Tribulation which they claim is to last seven years, the avoidance of which would result, in their view, in being raptured before even the appearance of the Antichrist.

¹³³⁸ Dan 12:7c,d

¹³³⁹ Dan 12:7d

¹³⁴⁰ Dan 12:1

¹³⁴¹ q.v. inf.

¹³⁴² q.v. Rev chpt. 12

¹³⁴³ Rev 12:17b

This remnant is the church, but at a later time, a time much later than the church's fourth.-century flight to the wilderness to escape the face of the dragon-cum-serpent, Satan.¹³⁴⁴

Flight to wilderness

A sub-apostolic flight by the church into the wilderness, beyond the confines of the Roman Empire, did take place in the fourth-century around the time of the Council of Laodicea and the Edict of Nantes, when persecution of the true Christian church became institutionalised and widespread. It lasted, in all, one thousand, two hundred and sixty days, or a time, times and half a time, both of which, on the year-for-a-day-basis, give one thousand, two hundred and sixty years. It was one thousand, two hundred and sixty years from the time of the flight into Armenia¹³⁴⁵ until the explosion of biblical knowledge deriving from the general ability to print and publish the word of God, the Bible, in the languages of the people, although expositors often see this as actually completing with the Pilgrim Fathers' arrival at Plymouth Rock¹³⁴⁶ heralding allegedly general religious freedom in the New World.

The flight prophecy to a specific location in the twelfth chapter of Revelation is singular, not dual.¹³⁴⁷ There is no 'second phase' flight to a place of safety in a remote wilderness; no secret and preventative rapture to heaven; no Petra; nothing. There cannot be since while there is no mention of a flight to a place of protection during the Great Tribulation, there *is* mention of the 'elect' being given into the hand of the dragon, and persecuted, and martyred, and there *is* mention of the dragon making war with the remnant of the woman's seed. And further, there can be no remnant seed after the end of the Great Tribulation with whom the dragon could make war since the one hundred and forty-four thousand are sealed in the middle of it.¹³⁴⁸ They are sealed in their foreheads; sealed by the Holy Spirit.¹³⁴⁹ The dragon,¹³⁵⁰ therefore, cannot touch them, so there is no need of

¹³⁴⁴ Rev 12:12-17, where the '*time, times, and half a time*,' v.14d, are taken as years, on the year-for-a-day basis, giving 1,260 years, q.v. sup.

¹³⁴⁵ a recurring theme, it seems, given an earlier episode in Armenia. Davidy, Yair, *The Khazars, Tribe 13*, p.44:

'The Aramaic translation to Amos 4:3 mentions part of the ten tribes being exiled "beyond the mountains of Armenia."'

¹³⁴⁶ 1620AD

¹³⁴⁷ the twice-mentioning of the flight of the woman into the wilderness, in Rev 12:6 and 12:14, can be seen as confirmation to the early church of God's imminent divine protection and salvation, in line with the principle recorded in Gen 41: 32, '*And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.*'

¹³⁴⁸ q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet; this actually after and immediately following the sixth seal, as Rev 7:3,4, '*Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea nor the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them that were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.*' Rev 7:1a, 9a should have the word '*seeing*' inserted in the text, as this renders the meaning clearer.

¹³⁴⁹ this is seen also in its prefatory form in Eph 1:13c,14,4:30b, '*Ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise. Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory....And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*' The Greek: katasphegizo means 'sealed closely' or 'sealed down,' giving a sense of permanence.

flight to a communal place of safety. The seal by the Holy Spirit is with the name of the Father: *'And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred and forty four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.'*¹³⁵¹ Up until that point, the saints are to be given into the hand of the Beast, the head of the earthly agency of Satan. This is confirmed in relation to the Beast: *'And it was given unto him to make war with the saints,'*¹³⁵² *and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations,'*¹³⁵³ and elsewhere it is said that *'the dragon was wrath with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed.'*¹³⁵⁴ Again, there is no mention here of the saints escaping to a place of safety reserved by God. Rather, the remnant—the end-time 'elect'—are to be overcome by the Beast who will make war with them. Christ warned, *'Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye be accounted worthy to flee'*¹³⁵⁵ *all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.'*¹³⁵⁶ This does not mean three-and-one-half years in a communal place of safety chosen by God from the face of the Beast. It means that the 'elect' should pray that they be accounted worthy to flee or escape out of (not raptured) and survive all these things which shall come to pass, because it will most certainly be a question of fleeing for survival. Another way of escape, of course, lies through death prior to these things coming to pass. Either way, the 'elect' will stand before the Son of God.

In addition to the 'elect,' there are also the 'intermediate peoples,'¹³⁵⁷ a great multitude of all the nations, who are protected at the end of the Great Tribulation,¹³⁵⁸ and beyond, from the vials of God's wrath, for they have not taken the mark of the Beast, nor worshipped his image.¹³⁵⁹ They are not the '*remnant*,' and their divine protection only begins at the end of the Tribulation.¹³⁶⁰

End-time flight

The living of the remnant surviving the Great Tribulation, all one hundred and forty-four thousand of them, do so, but not in a communal place of safety chosen and protected by God. They have to flee for their lives from the face of the Beast. This is bolstered by Christ's description when speaking of the time immediate upon the final stages—the wrath of God—and prior to His return to the mount of Olives: *'Then shall two be in*

¹³⁵⁰ Satan.

¹³⁵¹ Rev 14:1

¹³⁵² viz, the 'elect.'

¹³⁵³ Rev 13:7

¹³⁵⁴ Rev 12:17a, although the time period for is protracted, extending from after the time of the flight to the wilderness until the return of Christ, q.v.

¹³⁵⁵ Greek: ekpheugo K.J.V. '*escape*,' also, and better in context, meaning '*flee*.'

¹³⁵⁶ Luke 21:36

¹³⁵⁷ q.v. inf.

¹³⁵⁸ and not half way through.

¹³⁵⁹ q.v. inf.

¹³⁶⁰ q.v. inf.

*the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken and the other left. Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.*¹³⁶¹ If, previously, the 'elect' had been taken away to an isolated, communal place of safety, remote from the world at large, there could be no such selection, because all would then be 'raptured' from that safe place. Since there is a selection, the sealed 'elect' must still be intermingled with the wicked in the world; the wheat still with the tares, and so no 'secret rapture' before 'all-hell breaks loose.'

During the period of the Great Tribulation, these people are unable to trade without taking the dread mark of the Beast.¹³⁶² As a result, they are hunted and dispersed. Previously, in the form of a recent precedent, the Nazi regime in Germany operated a 'snoop and tell' policy, whereby ordinary German citizens were encouraged to inform on any neighbours or relatives whom they considered to be evidencing 'aberrant behaviour.' This sort of regime will surface again, when the 'elect' will have to flee and hide from the face of the Beast in the time of the greatest tribulation ever to occur on earth. Were this time not curtailed for the sake of the 'elect,' all mankind would perish from the face of the earth.

144,000 sealed

The sealed are sealed after the sixth seal, while the two witnesses, divinely protected from the very beginning of the Great Tribulation, continue in their work through to the end of the second woe, otherwise known as the sixth trumpet of the seventh seal. This second woe, in itself, lasts three hundred and ninety-one days, and thus the sealed will be able to assist in the final spreading of the gospel witness. This is why Scripture states that in the end-time, as in the early apostolic church, there will be an outpouring of the Holy Spirit: *'But this is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.'*¹³⁶³

Having been sealed from the Beast, the 'elect' are invulnerable, impeachable, and their work most certainly will bear fruit, evidenced by the sheer magnitude of those non-firstfruit 'intermediate peoples' coming out of the Great Tribulation not having taken the mark of the Beast, or having worshipped his image: *'After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues. These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them*

¹³⁶¹ Mat 24:40-42

¹³⁶² q.v. inf.

¹³⁶³ Acts 2:16-18

*white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.*¹³⁶⁴

The one hundred and forty-four thousand are termed '*very elect*,' because in the end-time the '*very elect*' will be betrayed by family and kindred and brethren, just as Jesus was betrayed by one of His disciples. He warned that '*ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death.*'¹³⁶⁵ The existence of the '*very elect*,' who will be able to discern the False Prophet's deceptions, and be able to resist them,¹³⁶⁶ will greatly enrage the Beast.

In the kingdom of God there are a number of positions and mansions: '*And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last,*'¹³⁶⁷ and, '*In my Father's house there are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*'¹³⁶⁸ The detail is given in Ezekiel: '*After this he measured....the breadth of every side chamber, four cubits, round about the house*¹³⁶⁹ *on every side. And the side chambers were three, one over another, and thirty in order.*'¹³⁷⁰ These side chambers are the 'houses' of the priests in the Millennial Fourth Temple, but there are other chambers too.¹³⁷¹ It follows that opportunity exists for placements of differing status in the kingdom. Bar that of seraphim,¹³⁷² these are open to male and female, all one in Christ.

There is but one route into the kingdom, through Jesus Christ, entering by the strait gate: '*Enter ye at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*'¹³⁷³ This can only be achieved through living a proper, Judæo-Christian life, obedient to God's Law and God's will.¹³⁷⁴ The 'elect' are those few who have taken the path that leads to life, eternal life.

¹³⁶⁴ Rev 7:9;14,15

¹³⁶⁵ Luke 21:16

¹³⁶⁶ as lack of discernment is often taken to be part of the great female failing, it could be argued, possibly, that the 144,000 is therefore likely to be a male count, or, at least, predominantly so. Some would point to Ezek 9:3b,4, '*and he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof,*' (sublinear emphasis added), wherein a former marking prior to the sacking of Jerusalem and the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar's generals only appears to have been on the males. However, the Hebrew word translated '*men*,' *enowsh*, means '*mortals*,' and so could, and presumably did, encompass females as well. Also cp. Acts 2:16-18.

¹³⁶⁷ Luke 13:30

¹³⁶⁸ John 14:2,3

¹³⁶⁹ of the Lord.

¹³⁷⁰ Ezek 41:5,6; thirty being the number of God's heavenly throne, q.v. inf.

¹³⁷¹ Ezek 44:14,45:5,46:19

¹³⁷² q.v. inf.

¹³⁷³ Mat 7:13,14; this is an oft-quoted passage, but how many know the full extent of what Christ actually said. The reason for the question lies partly in the K.J.V. translation, and partly in the wantings of modern mainstream Christian belief. Green's Literal Translation renders it a touch better, '*Go in through the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many are the ones entering in through it. For narrow is the gate, and*

Activity

'The servant that shall be found diligently and humbly employed in the work of his Master when his Lord shall come will be most happy, for he will be highly honoured and advanced in His glorious kingdom. But if a man, professing to be a servant of Christ, be an unbeliever, actuated by avarice, ambition or sensuality, if he supposes that his Lord will never come to call him to account, or that he shall have time enough to get ready before He comes, and shall thus be emboldened to domineer and tyrannise over his fellow-servants, as a rapacious oppressor or cruel persecutor, or shall indulge in luxury and excess, the Lord of that servant will come to take vengeance on him when he least expects it.'¹³⁷⁵

*'And the Lord said, Who then is that wise and faithful steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom the lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.'*¹³⁷⁶ *'Find so doing' refers back to, 'Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.'*¹³⁷⁷

*'But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.'*¹³⁷⁸ The abusive, unheeding servant knows not the day and hour, neither can he or she come to know of that day and hour.

constricted is the way leading away into life, and few are those finding it.' Elaborating on one phrase in Green's translation: *'and constricted is the way leading away into life,'* 'constricted' comes from the Greek: thlibo, means 'to afflict,' 'trouble,' or 'suffer tribulation' in addition to 'narrow' or 'constricted.' Therefore the Judæo-Christian path is the path of tribulation, as those who tread it know only too well.

To the contrary, mainstream Christianity, especially in the 'born again' brigades, maintains that on repentance and baptism the Christian becomes 'born again' and saved, for all time.

But in Judæo-Christianity man is faced with a choice: two gates—one wide, one narrow. The wise select the narrow one, and enter therein (through repentance and baptism). Once through the gate (baptised), the path that then extends along *'the way leading away into life'* is the path (which starts only inside the narrow gate) that leads, ultimately, to eternal life. And all along that path, the traveller suffers *'affliction, trouble, and tribulation'*; II Tim 3:12, *'Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.'*

In Mat 10:22 Christ puts it starkly: *'And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.'* We are only saved, through the Grace of God, at the end of the path, not at the beginning. This is different than mainstream teaching on the subject. Very different.

¹³⁷⁴ Rev 2:26b, *'And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron.'*

¹³⁷⁵ Scott's Commentary, Mat 24:45-51

¹³⁷⁶ Luke 12:42-44

¹³⁷⁷ Luke 12:37; *'Watching,'* from the Greek: gregoreo, means *'pay careful attention.'* Mark 13:33's *'watch'* means *'stay awake.'*

¹³⁷⁸ Luke 12:45,46; *'looketh,'* in *'When he looketh not for,'* from the Greek: prosdokao, means *'to expect,'* and *'to wait for,'* and *'aware,'* in *'Not aware,'* from the Greek: ginosko, means *'to come to know.'*

*'And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.'*¹³⁷⁹ *'But he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.'*¹³⁸⁰

Thus there are four categories highlighted:

Category #1, identifying the 'elect' servants who will have their place in the 'first resurrection': the 'firstfruits';

Category #2, referring to the oppressive servant who violently sets about his fellows,¹³⁸¹ causing havoc. The actual description used, in the literal translation by Green, is: *'And he will cut him apart'*¹³⁸² *and put his portion with the unbelievers.'*¹³⁸³ This speaks of utter destruction. Those who are granted to taste of the Holy Spirit and consciously, wittingly, and wilfully go back to their old sinful ways are not to be given a second chance. Their fate is a *'portion with the unbelievers,'*¹³⁸⁴ with *'unbelievers'* meaning those 'without faith,' or 'heathen';

Category #3, the lax servants, who, through weakness, but not wilfulness, do not do the will of their Master, are to *'be beaten with many stripes.'* In terms of those alive at the time of the end, this indicates that they will go through the Great Tribulation, and also part of the Day of the Lord.¹³⁸⁵ Some are to come through or out of this,¹³⁸⁶ with their clothes washed white in the blood of the Lamb. Others will not so revive and will go through the entire of the Great Tribulation and the Day of the Lord, and, after their death, will appear in the Great White Throne Judgement, to be condemned;

Category #4 are the people, those not mentioned as being servants of the Lord, who do not manage to hear or learn of the word of God, and, consequently, who have little or no knowledge of the requirements of the Master. Punishment, still meted, is restricted, given the circumstances, to being *'beaten with few [stripes].'* If they truly and wholeheartedly repent, they will have the chance of immortal life in the Great White Throne Judgement.¹³⁸⁷

This encompasses all mankind, apart from the incorrigibly wicked of the end-time who take the mark of the Beast, and worship his image. They will have condemned themselves to destruction.

¹³⁷⁹ Luke 12:47; *'Knew [his lord's will],'* again from the Greek: ginosko, means *'to come to know,'* and *'Prepared [not],'* from the Greek: heteimazo, *'[not] to make ready.'*

¹³⁸⁰ Luke 12:48

¹³⁸¹ fellow believers.

¹³⁸² in two.

¹³⁸³ Luke 12:46c

¹³⁸⁴ the last from the Greek: apistos.

¹³⁸⁵ q.v. inf.

¹³⁸⁶ Rev 7:9-17, 9:4,5

¹³⁸⁷ q.v. inf.

Salvation 'issue'?

Strangely, it has even been claimed by some that knowing the time and date of the Second Coming is not a salvation issue! But is it right? It is important to note that no proof or substantiation of that claim is ever offered. It's merely stated, relying, presumably, on it constituting a self-evident axiom. But is it? Or is it nothing more than a wild opinion diametrically opposed to the Word of Christ on the matter?

The 'elect' know their Lord's will, and the exact time of the Second Coming.¹³⁸⁸ As a result, they will be awake, clothed and shod, and watching on that day, at that time, in Jerusalem,¹³⁸⁹ prepared and ready to be transformed, in an instant, into spirit beings, then to partake of the wedding feast '*in the air*.' So where does the 'not a salvation issue' get one? Simply this: it removes any possibility of being part of the first resurrection! Most certainly, that is a salvation issue; one of paramount import, the salvation issue par excellence: membership of the 'elect' and a place at '*the wedding supper of the Lamb*.'

Parallel in Daniel

*'And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.'*¹³⁹⁰ Mene,¹³⁹¹ the fifty-shekel piece, at the time of giving off the parable of the pounds or minas,¹³⁹² was roughly equivalent to three months' salary. The parable refers via the church eras to the 'elect,' where numbering or counting to fifty identifies the 'elect' raised or transformed on the return of Christ '*in the air*' on the day of Pentecost. A further and parallel numbering or counting to fifty is seen in the Jubilee,¹³⁹³ which prefigures the loosing of prisoners and the glorious start of the Millennium of rest.

*'This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Mede took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.'*¹³⁹⁴ In a similar way, the removal of the firstfruits, the 'elect,' to be with Christ for the wedding feast '*in the air*,' immediately brings on the punishment of the wicked in the culminating events of the latter part of the day of the Lord, the seventh trump third woe. '*In that night*' is the start of the day following; the corresponding day at the time of the end being the first day of the third woe. Similarly, the end of the '*head*

¹³⁸⁸ q.v. inf. and 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

¹³⁸⁹ the 'elect,' having been sealed by God, q.v. inf., are inviolate, so far as Satan and his hordes and followers are concerned. Since the event happens at Pentecost, q.v. inf., the 'elect' will be in Jerusalem.

¹³⁹⁰ Dan 5:25

¹³⁹¹ from the Hebrew verb minah, '*to number*'; Greek: mna.

¹³⁹² Luke 19:11-27

¹³⁹³ or Yobel; Lev 25:8-11

¹³⁹⁴ Dan 5:26,30,31; this known as a peshet, a rare Hebrew-Aramaic word, used in the book of Daniel, for the mystical or hidden meaning of dreams.

of gold¹³⁹⁵ king and kingdom, the first of the four great ungodly world-power kingdoms, is reflected in the end of the fourth.¹³⁹⁶

Penalty?

What is the 'penalty,' or loss, if any, for failing to be counted as one of the 'elect'?

The 'elect' are subject to very special persecution at present. They are few in number, and Satan's wrath is greatly inflamed against them. Consequently, life is extremely hard and challenging, in ways largely unknown and unknowable to the masses. But there will come a time when they are divinely protected, sealed by God, both from the attacks of Satan and his hordes and from the God-directed plagues and woes of the seventh seal that are to afflict sinning mankind.

The 'intermediate peoples,'¹³⁹⁷ the multitude of all nations who come out of great tribulation,¹³⁹⁸ who go through all of it¹³⁹⁹ and ultimately stand before the Lamb,¹⁴⁰⁰ endure the first five trumpet plagues, the fifth of which is termed the first woe. These aggregate two hundred days.¹⁴⁰¹ In addition, the horrendous sixth trumpet, called the second woe, extending to three hundred and ninety-one days and applying to the incorrigibly wicked,¹⁴⁰² also impacts on the 'intermediate peoples.' Therefore, the '*many stripes*' of the unprepared servant amount to five hundred and ninety-one days, including the first woe in which '*men will desire to die, and death will flee from them*,'¹⁴⁰³ and the second, in which one third of mankind dies in world engulfing war.¹⁴⁰⁴

*'And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out'*¹⁴⁰⁵ *of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.'*¹⁴⁰⁶ Even though ultimately protected from the wrath of God against the wicked, exposing in the seven vial plagues of the seventh trump, those of God who are left on earth after the ascension of the 'elect' to the '*wedding feast in the air*' are commanded to remove themselves from proximity with the damned of Babylon the great, lest they partake of those plagues too and perish with the wicked.

¹³⁹⁵ Dan 2:38

¹³⁹⁶ Dan 2:40-43

¹³⁹⁷ as they are termed in this study.

¹³⁹⁸ Rev 7:14

¹³⁹⁹ and not just the first 666 days of the Tribulation; q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

¹⁴⁰⁰ Rev 7:9,10,13

¹⁴⁰¹ cf. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

¹⁴⁰² Rev 9:20,21

¹⁴⁰³ Rev 9:6

¹⁴⁰⁴ Rev 9:18; they do not go through the seventh trump, reserved for those taking the mark of the Beast, q.v. inf.

¹⁴⁰⁵ Greek: exerchomai, equally meaning '*go out*.'

¹⁴⁰⁶ Rev 18:4

Patently, Rome is in the purview here. As the seat of Satan, the Beast and the evil empire,¹⁴⁰⁷ it is to be completely, utterly, and irrevocably destroyed. It would be necessary, therefore, for the unsealed intermediate people to escape before the destruction, in similar circumstances to the escape of the forewarned Christians of Jerusalem shortly before its destruction by the Romans in the first century.

The seventh trump, in its seven vials plagues, is reserved for the incorrigibly wicked of the world. The wicked go through every one of the plagues, all seven hundred days¹⁴⁰⁸ of the 'Day of the Lord.'

And that leaves those who are, presumably, God-fearing in their own aberrant way, but essentially ignorant and lax: *'But he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.'*¹⁴⁰⁹ There is some level of comfort here, but it is little in comparison with what it could have been, and it remains unspecified in its detail. The warning message is not written for them.

Dan excluded

The one hundred and forty-four thousand comprise twelve thousand from each of the tribes of Israel.¹⁴¹⁰ Interestingly, the recital of the tribes in chapter seven of Revelation¹⁴¹¹ omits Dan; it also names Ephraim as Joseph.¹⁴¹² While the latter is of no apparent significance, the omission of Dan is nothing short of startling. Dan's role and character is described in the Pentateuch: *'Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward.'*¹⁴¹³ This is not a complimentary description by any means, but there are many uncomplimentary descriptions and dire warnings contained in the Bible, so why should Dan be the only tribe excluded from representation in the firstfruits' one hundred and forty-four thousand?

¹⁴⁰⁷ until the Beast's relocation 'between the seas,' viz., in the Holy Land, either in Jerusalem or, possibly, at Beit Shemesh (House of the Sun), although the latter is an extremely remote possibility, especially in light of Mat 24:15 and Mark 13:14, where the abomination of desolation is seen *'sitting'* or, better, *'abiding where it ought not,'* an indication of the abode, not only of the image of the beast, q.v. inf., but also the Antichrist himself.

¹⁴⁰⁸ q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

¹⁴⁰⁹ Luke 12:48

¹⁴¹⁰ this could be an all-male count, with women and children additional, q.v. sup., although on balance it is unlikely, as all are equal in Christ (Gal 3:28), and there are no differing 'male and female' spirit beings.

¹⁴¹¹ Rev 7:5-8

¹⁴¹² although it is possible that, in part, it is intended to signify the relative end-time standing of these tribes, it being postulated later herein that one of the two witnesses is of Ephraim, Ephraim being the younger son of Joseph upon whom, together with his elder brother Manasseh, Jacob conferred his name, Israel, cf. Gen 48:14-16, with 'Israel' meaning 'he shall rule as God,' (with the other of Judah in a refection of the two faithful witnesses in the wilderness, Joshua of Ephraim and Caleb of Judah, cf. Num 14:6f.).

¹⁴¹³ Gen 49:16,17

A specific and exclusive biblical marker involving Dan occurs in Judges,¹⁴¹⁴ Dan being the first of the tribes to embrace idolatry, then continuing in wickedness in the Promised Land until some were taken into captivity by the Assyrians, while some escaped to sea in boats. But, again, all the tribes embraced idolatry and nowhere is this serious departure from the Lord by Dan evaluated as being worse than the idolatry of the others. Despite this, the reference to Dan as being '*a serpent by the way*' has been taken by many expositors to allude to the lack of moral commitment and spiritual stability.

Some have even suggested that this exclusion results from the Antichrist coming from the tribe of Dan, but there is nothing in the Bible on which to base this and it must rank as deeply unhelpful and unfounded speculation.¹⁴¹⁵ What can be said, as it is obviously inferable, is that the tribe of Dan does not contain any meriting inclusion in the one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed at the time immediately before the opening of the seventh seal.

The majority of the modern day descendants of this tribe are known to the world as the Irish and this could be refined, possibly, by excluding the northern Protestant 'planted' peoples who came from Scotland and Northern England and who more probably comprise part of Ephraim or other northern tribes. It is the overwhelmingly Roman Catholic population of Ireland, together with the relevant part of the 'Irish Diaspora' as it is termed, that constitutes the bulk of modern-day Dan. Taking this present day religious marker of almost wholesale adoption of the Babylonian religious system, Roman Catholicism, and the sheer fervour of that adoption, with the content of Judges, it could be inferred that in a wholesale manner Dan lacks the capacity to perceive truth and will willingly remain in a mutual embrace with idolatry. It seems that it is impossible for Dan to escape the pale of the apostate and pagan form of worship bound up in Romanism, the essential character of which system—the grand objects of her worship, her festivals, her doctrine and discipline, her rites and ceremonies, her priesthood and her orders—has been derived from ancient pagan Babylon. Dan appears to be held wholly captive by this apostasy, unable in the end-time to even produce one single person of the tribe suitable for inclusion in those who are sealed by God.

Given the bloody history of Catholic Ireland over the past thousand years or so, this omission might also relate to singularly wholesale and violent activities on the part of the Irish in the latter days. As Edom¹⁴¹⁶ is cursed for standing aside and taking advantage of the calamity of God's people and, so, in the end-time, being rewarded for the work of its hands,¹⁴¹⁷ perhaps Dan is excluded for playing some leading part and taking a somewhat similar advantage. As to the reference in the book of Genesis, there is nothing overtly apparent in the

¹⁴¹⁴ Judg 18:17-31

¹⁴¹⁵ similarly, and possibly wild conjecture, founding on no more than pagan folklore and tradition—Ancient Egyptian and Romanism in this case, so it entirely speculative—the 'false-prince' or the 'false-king,' the Antichrist, may have been born on 19 July (from the Egyptian) in the year 1966 (from the Roman Catholic). Not worth more than noting.

¹⁴¹⁶ predominantly modern Turkey, and some of the Turkic states to the north.

¹⁴¹⁷ Obad 10-16

seemingly derisory description to single out Dan as being invested of a peculiarly malevolent apostasy. History and Revelation, however, appear to reveal otherwise.¹⁴¹⁸

Although speculative, another possible reason for the exclusion of Dan in the sealed 'elect' arises out the demise of one of the three fallen end-time kings and its after-effects, falling on the descendants of Jacob in northern Europe. Of these descendants, Dan is one, but would be excluded from membership, as it were, due to the Roman Irish infatuation with the Beast kingdom, the Beast, and the False Prophet, leading to this tribe alone remaining with the Beast while others eventually rise up in insurrection, and turn on the Babylonian religious system centred in Rome. Thus it could be that Dan would be seen as forming part of or siding with the oppressor, with the rest of Jacob going into the time of Jacob's Trouble. As a result, Dan would not be permitted to partake in the one hundred and forty-four thousand.

As the Bible is silent on exactly why Dan does not figure in the sealed number, it is obvious that at the most fundamental level, as stated, nobody in Dan will be found fit to qualify. Despite the omission of Dan here, the reference in Revelation¹⁴¹⁹ to the twelve gates in the New Jerusalem, each named after one of the tribes, has a parallel in Ezekiel¹⁴²⁰ which describes the Jerusalem of the Millennium. Also towards the end of that book,¹⁴²¹ Dan is given his inheritance, so the proscription is on membership of the 'elect,' and nothing more.

Modern-day Jewry

There is a further interesting point to note in the recital of the sealed of the tribes. The three tribes which comprise modern-day Jewry—Judah, Benjamin and Levi—each have twelve thousand sealed. In order to be sealed, each and every person must be a member of the true Judæo-Christian church and imbued with the Holy Spirit. In order to attain this elevated status as God's firstfruits, it is necessary to repent of sin, seek the forgiveness of God, and be baptised into the church by total immersion in water for the remission of sins, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Without this, a person cannot become a member of the true Christian church in the current dispensation. What is of interest here is the fact that the Jews will contribute twenty-five percent of those sealed, an enormous proportion for such a relatively small and fundamentally non-Christian population. Even more so, the tribe of Levi, the smallest of all tribes, still manages to contribute a full twelve thousand. This is certainly disproportionate in strict numerical terms and, bar the two 'non-levitical'

¹⁴¹⁸ some maintain that '*Dan shall be a serpent in the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backwards,*' Gen 49:17, could be taken to refer to the Irish nationalist actions vis-a-vis the British government in the early part of the 20th-century, concerning the uprising and subsequent breaking up of the kingdom of Gt. Britian and Ireland, and the involvement and prior approval of the then pope, Benedict XV, which, it is maintained, was, technically, an act of war.

¹⁴¹⁹ Rev 21:12,13

¹⁴²⁰ Ezek 48:32

¹⁴²¹ Ezek 48:1,2

witnesses, renders Levi proportionately the most successful tribe of all at this end-time, and the very antithesis of Dan. It should be recalled how the tribe of Levi is described in Jeremiah: *'Thus saith the Lord, If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should be no day and night in their season; Then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites, the priests, my ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me.'*¹⁴²² The priesthood are to minister in the matter of sacrifices in the Fourth Temple.¹⁴²³

Firstfruits

The next matter warranting contemplation is the sheer magnitude of the number involved. Some hold the number to be tropological,¹⁴²⁴ but there is no biblical support for this, save, possibly, in relation to it being an all-male count, something which seems rather unlikely, as discussed, although it should be borne in mind that in both the Old and New Testaments crowds and peoples are frequently numbered only in terms of the males.¹⁴²⁵

While one hundred and forty-four thousand is a very small proportion of the world population, even that residual upon the earth after the slaughter involved in the first six seals, it is a seemingly vast number to have adopted the true Judæo-Christian faith at its highest level,¹⁴²⁶ at the very time of the Tribulation when to do so means extreme danger, hardship, and, potentially, a most gruesome death. They will be in Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost, and awake, clothed and shod, and watching on that day.¹⁴²⁷

The one hundred and forty-four thousand comprise the firstfruits when taken together with those widely known as 'the dead-in-Christ.' References to the dead-in-Christ are found in several passages, for example: *'In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed,'*¹⁴²⁸ *'For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead-in-Christ shall rise first: Then we which are*

¹⁴²² Jer 33:20-22

¹⁴²³ q.v. inf.

¹⁴²⁴ i.e., figurative.

¹⁴²⁵ e.g., the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 is a male count, with women and children as an addition, as is the later feeding of the 4,000, cf. Mat 14:13-21, Mark 8:1-9 respectively; similarly, the end-time great earthquake will slay 7,000 men, q.v., Rev 11:13. To the opposite, at the feast of Shavuot (Pentecost), males entered the courtyard of the Temple itself and, together with a priest, waved their basket of firstfruits. Females were also permitted to enter the sanctified area to the north of the altar. Jewish sages are divided, however, on whether females—presumably head of a family or its sole remaining representative—were allowed to wave the basket with a priest (as stated by S. A. Rappoport). In the context of the N.T.'s 144,000 firstfruits narrative, it is obvious that they must have, and that they did, as a foregleam of what would happen at Christ's return *'in the air.'*

¹⁴²⁶ bar the two witnesses.

¹⁴²⁷ the 'elect,' having been sealed by God, q.v. inf., are inviolate, so far as Satan and his hordes and followers are concerned.

¹⁴²⁸ I Cor 15:52

alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord,'¹⁴²⁹ and, 'And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded¹⁴³⁰ for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the Beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.'¹⁴³¹

Intermediate peoples

Part of the seventh chapter of Revelation¹⁴³²—like part of the sixth, where not all elements are in strict time sequence—again utilises the device to highlight certain things by dragging them forward in time, placing them in parenthesis or out of sequence. As to the question of the identity of those described: '*After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands,*'¹⁴³³ there is this answer: '*And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? And whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*'¹⁴³⁴

This is not another reference to the original firstfruits, the aggregate of the one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed and the dead-in-Christ, reigning with Christ in the temple at Jerusalem through the entire of the Millennium, and beyond in the new Jerusalem. It is certainly in Millennial Jerusalem because in the kingdom of Heaven, when it comes to earth, post-Millennium, in the form of the new Jerusalem, there will be no day and

¹⁴²⁹ I Thes 4:16,17

¹⁴³⁰ occult belief that beheading prevents a person from entering the kingdom of God, as does emasculation, the latter on a false reading and understanding of '*wounded in the stones, or have his privy member,*' cf. Deut 23:1.

¹⁴³¹ Rev 20:4-6

¹⁴³² Rev 7:9-17

¹⁴³³ Rev 7:9

¹⁴³⁴ Rev 7:13-17; cp. Jer 23:3, '*And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase.*'

night, neither will it contain a temple building, as confirmed in Revelation.¹⁴³⁵ The key to the identity of this great multitude¹⁴³⁶ lies in the phrase, '*of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues.*' These people are not solely of the tribes of Israel; rather, they are of all nations, and they have come through great tribulation, or, as more accurately translated: '*out of the tribulation, the great one.*'

They have come through the Great Tribulation, have not taken the mark of the Beast and have not worshipped the image of the Beast, and have repented when being witness to, and when faced with the full horror and unprecedented upheavals in nature and the plagues which constitute the sixth seal and the first six trumpets of the seventh seal. In doing so, they '*have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*' They are not sealed; neither do they rise to meet Christ on His return: '*Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven [the sky] to another.*'¹⁴³⁷ As stated, the members of this great multitude are to suffer the full rigours of all the seals, save the seven vial plagues of the seventh trump. Given that, and fact of the numbers involved, they cannot form part of the original one hundred and forty-four thousand firstfruits sealed immediately after the first phase of the Great Tribulation, and following heavenly signs.¹⁴³⁸

This is confirmed once more in the twentieth chapter of Revelation: '*And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the Beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*'¹⁴³⁹ There is a prescription on those having such part in the Millennium: not having worshipped the Beast nor having the mark of the Beast upon their foreheads or their hands, and being the 'elect.' These firstfruits live and reign with Christ. It follows that the rest of the dead do not live again, in other words, are not resurrected, until the thousand years are finished, then they are to be judged. The vision contained in chapter seven of Revelation¹⁴⁴⁰ is thus one of

¹⁴³⁵ Rev 21:22,25

¹⁴³⁶ Greek: polus oklos.

¹⁴³⁷ Mat 24:29-31; Greek: ouranos, '*the sky*' or '*the celestial heavens.*'

¹⁴³⁸ q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

¹⁴³⁹ Rev 20:4-6

¹⁴⁴⁰ Rev 7:9-17

an intermediate stage before the final harvest completes after the White Throne Judgement,¹⁴⁴¹ presaged on earth at this time by the Feast of Tabernacles. The key phrase is thus: *'These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple.'*¹⁴⁴² These people 'serve' throughout the Millennium. They are not described as having *'lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years,'* nor as *'priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years,'* descriptions reserved solely for the firstfruits.

Peoples of all nations

The conclusion which is demanded here is that these 'intermediate people,' the *'great multitude'* who have come through the Great Tribulation, and have not taken the mark of the Beast, nor worshipped him, and who are of all nations,¹⁴⁴³ actually repent, are baptised, and receive the Holy Spirit either immediately before the onset, or possibly even during the currency of the Great Tribulation, and serve, as mortals, in the Millennium.

During the Millennium, they will be sustained physically, for they are mortal, by the produce of Tyre: *'And her merchandise and her hire'*¹⁴⁴⁴ *shall be holiness to the Lord: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the Lord, to eat sufficiently, and for durable'*¹⁴⁴⁵ *clothing.'*¹⁴⁴⁶ If some happen to die, at a ripe old age—it is noted that even *'the child shall die an hundred years old'*¹⁴⁴⁷—they will be raised to immortality at the end of the Millennium in the Great White Throne Judgement. Those who survive for the entire of the Millennium will momentarily die, and be changed, instantly, *'in the twinkling of an eye,'* to immortal beings at the same time as their raised colleagues.

That a proportion of these will be from the surviving Jewish community is confirmed: *'And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon'*¹⁴⁴⁸ *me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only*

¹⁴⁴¹ q.v. inf.

¹⁴⁴² sublinear emphasis added.

¹⁴⁴³ not restricted to the twelve tribes, and not of the 144,000.

¹⁴⁴⁴ i.e., *'trade.'*

¹⁴⁴⁵ i.e., *'elegant.'*

¹⁴⁴⁶ Isa 23:18

¹⁴⁴⁷ Isa 65:20

¹⁴⁴⁸ cp. John 19:37, *'look on him.'*

Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, pp.106,107:

'It issues in the conception of the unapproachability of God. Clearly the difference between God and man sets a vast and unbridgeable gulf between God and man. But to Jewish thought it did more than that. God is so different from men that to approach God at all is dangerous and even fatal. No man can enter into the nearer presence of God and escape with his life.

After the wrestling at Peniel, it is Jacob's astonished and incredulous cry: *'I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved'* (Gen 32:30). As Moses heard it, God said to him: *'You cannot see my face; for man shall not see me and live'* (Ex 33:20). When Gideon realized who his visitor had been, he cried out in terror: *'Alas, O Lord God! for now I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face.'* And God's answer was: *'Peace be to you; do not fear; you shall not die'* (Judg 6:22f.).

When Manóah discovered that the messenger who had brought him news of the coming birth of a son was an angel of the Lord, his terrified reaction was: *'We shall surely die, for we have seen God'* (Judg 13:22). At this stage of things the idea is that God is so holy, so different, so unapproachable, that to see Him is to die.

This essential difference between God and man is called the transcendence of God; and with the course of the centuries this idea of the transcendence of God was not lessened but intensified. In the Old Testament story of the giving of the Law, the Law was given to Moses directly from God. The people were amazed that God had that day talked with a man and that that man was still alive (Deut 5:24). But twice in the New Testament we are told that the Law was given, not directly from God, but through angelic intermediaries (Acts 7:53; Gal 3:19) [sic; the Law came from God, but was handed down, in two tables, through the agency of angels]. By New Testament times the [Jewish] idea was that God was so different and separate and apart from men, so transcendent, that any transaction between God and men could not be direct, but must be performed through some intermediary. So, then, the idea of the holiness of God issued in the idea of the dangerous unapproachability of God.'

But is that a full and fair statement of the complex relationship between man and God?

What about the experiences of Abraham, Moses, Jacob, Gideon, and Manóah; and, of course, the incarnation of the Word in Jesus Christ?

Abraham: Gen 18:1-3, *'And the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, And said, my Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant.'*

Moses: Ex 3:2-6, *'And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses, And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover, he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.'*

Jacob: Gen 32:30, *'And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.'*

Gideon: Judg 6:22, *'Alas, O Lord God! for now I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face.'* And God's answer was: *'Peace be to you; do not fear; you shall not die.'*

Manóah: Judg 13:22,23a, *'And Manóah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God. But his wife said unto him, If the Lord was pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at our hands.'*

In the gospels, Jesus was God incarnate (human incarnation).

It is necessary, therefore, to differentiate between God in spirit form and God in human incarnation:

Abraham at Mamre	Human incarnation of God; Abraham saw Him and lived; God ate with Abraham, Ex 18:1-8	
Moses at burning bush	Human incarnation of God; face-to-face, Ex 33:11a	Spirit, Moses did not look upon God, Ex 33:20-23
Jacob at Peniel	Human incarnation of God; Jacob wrestled with Him, Gen 32:24-31.	
Gideon in Ophrah	Human incarnation of God's messenger or angel (The Word), Judg 6:11-24.	
Manóah	Human incarnation of God's messenger or angel (The Word), Judg 13:2-25.	
Jesus in New Testament	Human incarnation, John 1:1,14.	

From this it is obvious that when in His spirit form, to look upon the face of God would be fatal (other than at and after the Second Coming, q.v. inf.), but not so when in His human incarnation. No one, of course, has ever seen the Father. Christ confirmed that the Jews had never seen Him, cf. John 5:37,6:46, the latter reading, *'Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.'* And no one has seen the face of the Son in spirit form, only in His human incarnation.

son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.¹⁴⁴⁹

Some may content that, *'They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat,'*¹⁴⁵⁰ is indicative of a millennial immortal state for these people, but that would be misguided. They have just come through the Great Tribulation, the greatest upheaval since creation, during which they will have been in severe want of food and drink, for, in not taking the mark of the Beast, they will have been unable to trade, or buy and sell, and they will have been hunted down as animals. So Christ will nurture them henceforth: *'For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.'*¹⁴⁵¹

There are but two resurrections: the first, of the firstfruits, and, a millennium later, a second, in the Great White Throne Judgement. The first is to eternal life; the second, for the 'intermediate peoples,' is also to eternal life, but of a lower status: *'In my Father's house are many mansions:'*¹⁴⁵² *if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am,*¹⁴⁵³ *there ye may be also.'*¹⁴⁵⁴ There is a contrast between the resurrection to life and

Patai, Raphael, *The Jewish Mind*, p.409 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'God visited Abraham when he was sick (this is how [the rabbis] interpret Gen 18:1).' Disregarding the illness nonsense, the rather problematic questions for the Rabbis of a sole God's human incarnation and of looking in that God's face and surviving are not dealt with (cp. Gen 33:10; Ex 20:19b,33:20b, *'And he said, Thou canst not see my face:for no man shall see me and live.'*; Num 14:14). Neither is the vexing question of how the divine spirit being could divest Himself of His powers, assume a debased state of humiliation as a mortal human being, and then reassume His former state, for He would lack powers to do so while in His state of humiliation. Only with another divine being, acting with powers, would this be possible.

Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, p.114 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'[A] general fact which stands out in the message which Jesus brought is that God is involved in the human situation. It was precisely this that both Jew and Greek had come to deny. The Jews so stressed the holiness and transcendence of God that they removed Him from human contact altogether. They even, in popular thought, delegated to the [assumed plurality of] archangels the duty of presenting the prayers of the faithful to God. Sometimes that was held to be the duty of Michael, sometimes of Raphael. *'I am Raphael,'* says Raphael to Tobit, *'one of the seven holy angels, who present the prayers of the saints and enter into the presence of the glory of the Holy One,'* [sic] (Tobit 12:15). The Greeks considered it an insult to God, a complete misunderstanding of the nature and being of God, to involve God in the world or in the human situation at all. The entry of Jesus into the world is the proof that God is involved in, and identified with, the human situation. In Jesus the God who was afar off has indeed been brought near.'

¹⁴⁴⁹ Zech 12:10-14

¹⁴⁵⁰ Rev 7:16

¹⁴⁵¹ Rev 7:17; cp. Jer 23:3, *'And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase.'*

¹⁴⁵² Greek: none, meaning 'residences,' or 'places to stay.'

¹⁴⁵³ viz., on earth.

¹⁴⁵⁴ John 14:2,3

the resurrection to judgment [and damnation, for those who have done evil].¹⁴⁵⁵ Those to whom Jesus gives life will never perish.^{1456 1457}

Predestined

The apparent bifurcation between the Throne of God / God and the Lamb / God in the seventh chapter of Revelation¹⁴⁵⁸ has caused difficulty for some, leading to this scene being placed after the Millennium and in the New Jerusalem. This cannot be as the prophecy contains several purely millennial matters which could not possibly be present in the new Jerusalem, such as the physical Temple, and day and night. The conclusion demanded here is that the use of the words God and Lamb are references to the same being, the Messiah, with the reading, '*Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, even¹⁴⁵⁹ unto the Lamb,*¹⁴⁶⁰ rather than '*and unto*' (sublinear emphasis added). Once this concept is in place, the meaning of the prophecy is apparent, with the timing clearly lying within the Millennium itself.

It should be borne in mind that the Holy Spirit was closed to humanity as a whole, with the exception of a few such as the prophets, at the time of the fall of man in the garden of Eden. In the New Testament, despite the availability of the Holy Spirit, it still continued to be closed to humanity in general, save for a few such as the apostles and the converted of the Judæo-Christian dispensation, until Christ, the second Adam, should restore the government of God and unseat and bind Satan, and destroy Satan's throne on earth.¹⁴⁶¹

It is evident from '*No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day,*¹⁴⁶² that we do not have the power or the authority to be able to decide whether to be in the kingdom, despite the offer being open to all. This is why repeatedly in the New Testament those in the church are referred to as having been called or chosen, why they are called a chosen generation, and why predestination is twice mentioned in the New Testament.¹⁴⁶³ '*For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified,*¹⁴⁶⁴ and, '*According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the*

¹⁴⁵⁵ John 5:9

¹⁴⁵⁶ John 10:28

¹⁴⁵⁷ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.1, p.43 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁴⁵⁸ Rev 7:9-17

¹⁴⁵⁹ Greek: kai

¹⁴⁶⁰ Rev 7:10b

¹⁴⁶¹ Satan's throne resides in the Vatican, Rome, q.v. sup. And inf.

¹⁴⁶² John 6:44

¹⁴⁶³ Rom 8:29,30; Eph 1:5,11

¹⁴⁶⁴ Rom 8:29,30

world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.¹⁴⁶⁵ Surprising as it may be to many, the called are predestined to be called; they are not volunteers. While man has freedom of choice as a free moral agent, this is an awkward term, and a condition heavily prescribed, for the only 'freedom' available under this head is that of rejecting God: *'For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.'*¹⁴⁶⁶ [God] does not save us whether we will or no.¹⁴⁶⁷ [Is] liberty to do evil the true emancipation?¹⁴⁶⁸ ¹⁴⁶⁹ 'We accept guidance only from our own casual impulses or shortsighted lusts and longings.'¹⁴⁷⁰ 'Misery and wickedness renew themselves with a vigour so unabated.'¹⁴⁷¹

Man in this base condition is immediately bond-slave to sin and Satan,¹⁴⁷² denying himself any freedom whatsoever. Of those called, not all respond, since *'many are called, but few are chosen.'*¹⁴⁷³ Man must be called, for *'No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.'*¹⁴⁷⁴ Man does not come of his own volition, for he is not and cannot be his own prime mover. He cannot choose to be righteous, for it is a gift of God, given to whomsoever He chooses.¹⁴⁷⁵ In all cases, however, the end is certain, known from *'before*

¹⁴⁶⁵ Eph 1:5

¹⁴⁶⁶ Heb 6:4-6

¹⁴⁶⁷ Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord, as recorded by St. Luke*, p.130

¹⁴⁶⁸ Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord, as recorded by St. Luke*, p.129 (with comment and clarification in square brackets):

'[The world is in a turmoil, deranged,] believing that it would be cramped and straightened by goodness, and that liberty to do evil is the true emancipation.'

¹⁴⁶⁹ II Peter 2:19a, *'While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption.'*

¹⁴⁷⁰ Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord, as recorded by St. Luke*, p.131

¹⁴⁷¹ Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord, as recorded by St. Luke*, p.192

¹⁴⁷² John 8:34b

¹⁴⁷³ Mat 22:14

¹⁴⁷⁴ John 6:44a

¹⁴⁷⁵ Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord, as recorded by St. Luke*, p.91:

'Do you think of salvation as a thing there, ready for you, whenever you choose to go and take it? It depends on God's invitation whether any good awaits you. You have first to discover whether God in unmistakable words invites you or not.'

Salvation is of the Lord, the Messiah Jesus Christ, and only in Him; there is no other way (cf. Acts 4:12b, *'for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved'*). Also, John 3:16,17, *'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.'*

The route to salvation is perfectly clear from Scripture:

Scripture teaches that the fear of judgement is a spur to conviction of sins, to consideration that the individual's 'life to date' has not been in accordance with the will of God—followed by conviction, contrition, resolution, repentance, redemption through faith and baptism for the remission of sins, and receipt of the gift of the Holy Spirit. That is the Judæo-Christian cadence and modus.

The new person, after dying to their sins in baptism and having received the gift of the Holy Spirit, which enables the human being with human nature to live a godly life (but by no means perfect, for humans aren't, save one, Jesus) lives according to God's will, not his own will. In doing so, that person is one of the 'elect,' who, if he or she endures to the end, will be raised immortal at the Second Coming of Christ (I Thes 4:16); this termed the first and better resurrection.

*the foundation of the world,*¹⁴⁷⁶ for God is omniscient, knowing the end from the beginning. And He knows His own.

False 'freedom'

The consumer mentality—the preponderant mentality especially evident in the latter stages of an economic boom, and the false well-being that it engenders—brings on a self-satisfied complacency and the illusion of freedom. In this way, freedom comes to be understood as the absence of external constraint and this, in turn, transmutes to the complete absence of restraint, both external and internal, the latter being seen as illicit moral restriction of any kind on personal freedom.

In its latter stages, society becomes so preoccupied with consumption that even religion is relegated to commodity status, ruled by little else than the equivalent of the whim and political correctness of fickle shoppers in a religious bazaar. It becomes more excitable, more shallow, more self-assured, and a deal more arrogant. Nothing, it seems, can be denied to it, for it has conquered all. Non-judgemental permissiveness abounds. As a result, homosexuality, sodomy, fellatio, cunnilingus, rape, all other manner of lascivious behaviour, hallucinogenic drug-taking, alcohol abuse, defamation, fraud, theft, antisocial behaviour, assault, and murder become commonplace; often either legalised, tacitly sanctioned, or wilfully ignored. During this declining stage, it becomes fashionable for the 'haves' to make demands of government on behalf of the 'have nots.' Usually little more than ill-considered attempts at moral extortion, the 'demands' are remarkably free of volunteered financial commitment on the part of the well-to-do supplicants. In short, they are made simply to sate the demand of overweening egos, paid for out of the public purse. At the same time, such things as extreme environmentalism and ancient, bizarre occult religious rites surface to absorb much of the energies of the chattering and usually vociferous, yet vacuous, middle classes.

Successive government legislation has destroyed the lifetime bond in marriage, and even destroyed the incentives to marriage in the lower echelons of society, removing what little moral compass the masses had retained in personal relationships. Mutual commitment, mutual respect, and mutual obligation have all foundered through being seen to place 'unacceptable limits' on selfish, personal freedom held as an inalienable right. Indeed, so much legislation has been piled upon legislation, abetted by a substantial increase in legislative chambers, that the result has been extreme overload of poorly drafted and ill-conceived law matched to little or

That kingdom will be here on earth, as immortal spirit beings, and will be preceded by the wedding feast in the air. After the Millennium, the entire creation is burned up and destroyed, and replaced by a new heaven and earth, with God the Father coming to abide with His spirit beings in a wholly new creation untainted by sin. There is more on those latter events in the last two chapters of Revelation.

It also encompasses the transition from the old, defective covenant (owing to Israel's repeated and protracted failure to keep it) to the new, better covenant. That process takes c.3,000 years to accomplish; q.v. inf.; cf. Heb 8:13, which refers back to Jer 31:31, where God says He will make a new covenant with both the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

¹⁴⁷⁶ I Peter 1:20a

no provision for even-handed enforcement. In such circumstances, widespread disrespect for ineffective law and its ineffective officers becomes inevitable.

Called & changed

Considering, *'And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which was spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption,'*¹⁴⁷⁷ it is evident that man must be called and that he must be changed in order to inherit heavenly things.

When Nicodemus, a man of the Pharisees, a ruler of the Jews, came to Jesus secretly by night, he said, *'Rabbi, we know thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.'*¹⁴⁷⁸ The Pharisees, being familiar with the messianic tracts in Isaiah,¹⁴⁷⁹ most probably knew, or, at the very least, strongly suspected, that Jesus was the prophesied Messiah. Their understanding, however, was restricted to one messianic appearance, so they supposed He was planning to overthrow the Roman Empire there and then. This was the same Roman Empire which had opened up to the Pharisees some minor, yet to them, important, government offices. These were well paying political jobs and the Pharisees did not want to lose their jobs or their power over the people. Christ knew what they were thinking and what they feared, so He immediately explained that the kingdom of God, ruling all nations, could not be set up until the time of the new spirit birth, the time of the resurrection. *'Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again,'*¹⁴⁸⁰ *he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I say unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit.'*¹⁴⁸¹

The entry into the kingdom of God, therefore, in terms of the one hundred and forty-four thousand firstfruits, is predestined, and involves repentance and conversion through baptism by water immersion and

¹⁴⁷⁷ I Cor 15:45-50

¹⁴⁷⁸ John 3:1,2

¹⁴⁷⁹ Isa 7:14; 9:6,7; and chpt. 53

¹⁴⁸⁰ Greek: anōthen, 'from the top,' 'from above'; in context, 'anew.'

¹⁴⁸¹ John 3:3-8

conferring of the gift of the Holy Spirit, growth of the individual through the presence of this Spirit, and eventual rebirth in spirit form through the resurrection upon the return of Christ. This constitutes the route to salvation. Many others who are numbered among the firstfruits, being termed the dead-in-Christ, and who will rise first, will have followed the same route, exactly. Among the dead-in-Christ will be those of Old Covenant times who were sanctified from the womb, such as Jeremiah, those sanctified for specific purposes, such as the prophets, and those such as King David. All these will also be included in the dead-in-Christ as although they did not undergo water baptism, having lived prior to the Judæo-Christian era or dispensation, the Holy Spirit had to be conferred on them in order for their writings to be part of the Holy Scripture, and for them to have achieved what they did. Finally, the 'intermediate people' of all nations, who will have followed much the same route as the firstfruits, albeit belatedly, and a good deal less rigorously, having the Holy Spirit poured out on them, will also enter the kingdom, at the beginning of the Millennium, but only in human form, to await the end of the Millennium and their death and elevation to spirit beings.¹⁴⁸² The rest of the dead wait until that second resurrection, and the Great White Throne Judgement, immediately after the Millennium. This will be discussed later.

Sanctified? Made holy? How?

But there are still others in what is a broad purview. A verse that has perplexed many is found in Corinthians: *'For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now they are holy.'*¹⁴⁸³ What of them? To be 'sanctified' means 'set aside for a holy purpose.'¹⁴⁸⁴ That applies to the unbelieving spouse. The children of the marriage are said to become 'holy,' with the counterpoint state being 'unclean.' In the first instance, this ably demonstrates the mercy of God. *'Ah Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and by thy stretched out arm; there is nothing too hard for thee: which shewest mercy unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them.'*¹⁴⁸⁵ Peake describes it this way: 'The reference is clearly to the Decalogue,¹⁴⁸⁶ the text of which has become so familiar that the author quotes it in

¹⁴⁸² q.v. inf.

¹⁴⁸³ I Cor 7:14; cp. I Thes 4:7, *'For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness,'* where 'holiness' (Greek: hagiasmos) is counterposed to 'uncleanness' (Greek: akatharsia, literally, 'not cleansed'); in other words, 'holiness' or 'cleanness' before God is contrasted to 'uncleanness,' also cp. II Cor 6:17d, *'touch not the unclean,'* or *'touch nothing unclean.'*

¹⁴⁸⁴ described in terms of the church in I Peter 1:25,26, *'But as he who called you is holy, ye also be holy in all manner of conversation [conduct]. Because it is written, be ye holy; for I am holy.'* The adjective 'holy,' Greek: hagios, has the basic meaning of 'something different or separate.' A thing which is hagios is different from other things. A person who is hagios is separate from other people. So the Temple was hagios because it was different from other buildings. The altar was hagios because it existed for a purpose different from the purpose of ordinary things. God's day is hagios because it is different from other days. A priest is hagios because he is separate from other men, even though he has no temple in which to conduct his priestly duties, pro tem.

¹⁴⁸⁵ Jer 32:17,18

¹⁴⁸⁶ Ex 20:6; Deut 5:10

this abbreviated, allusive form in the confidence that the reader will supply the rest. The passage means that God shows mercy to thousands who belong to those who love Him. Thus while the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children to the third and fourth generation, the principle of solidarity works on a far vaster scale in the bestowment of reward for love of God and observance of His commandments.^{1487 1488}

Paul was a former Pharisee, so he knew the scriptures¹⁴⁸⁹ extremely well. The phrase he uses here in Corinthians, *'else were your children unclean, but now are they holy,'* can be seen as a reference to and use of almost the same phrase in Deuteronomy, where, in the context of the camp of the Israelites, the *'unclean'* serve to turn The Lord away. So being designated *'holy'* means that the Lord's protection is available for that family's children¹⁴⁹⁰ arising from the position of the believing spouse, and that implies and impacts on the system in the family home: it has to be run as a proper Judæo-Christian household, keeping God's Law and His will, and the unbelieving spouse has to fit in with that holy regime. If he or she doesn't, then they can leave. The believing spouse is not under bondage to run and concede things to get the unbeliever back in that instance,¹⁴⁹¹ for that would cause the family's sole anchor to drag, with both falling into perdition.

That, in turn, raises a difference between the position of a believing husband and a believing wife, for the head of the household is the husband. If the wife is the believer, then she still has to obey her husband, except where it would infract her beliefs, so, in her case, the household could not be run, in toto, on a Judæo-Christian basis, hence the reason for the admonition: *'Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?'*¹⁴⁹²

If the party deriving sanctification,¹⁴⁹³ or the road to holiness,¹⁴⁹⁴ were to fall away, however, leaving the original 'elect' party, then Paul's admonition would apply: *'But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.'*¹⁴⁹⁵ But the fundamental

¹⁴⁸⁷ Peake, A. S., *Jeremiah Volume II*, p.120 (footnote)

¹⁴⁸⁸ the will of the Father is that we do His commandments:

Psa 111:10 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets, sublinear emphasis added), *'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have they that do his commandments [literally, 'do them,' referring back to v.7b, 'his commandments']: his praise endureth forever.'*

cp. Mat 7:21; Luke 22:42; John 6:38,39; Heb 13:20,21

¹⁴⁸⁹ Old Testament.

¹⁴⁹⁰ the 'elect's' children are thus under divine protection. Since the 'elect' are sealed at the end of the sixth seal (q.v. 'Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet), the end-time condition of the children is secured, and while they cannot partake in 'the wedding supper of the lamb,' q.v. inf., they will be under divine care and protection during that time.

¹⁴⁹¹ I Cor 7:15

¹⁴⁹² II Cor 6:14

¹⁴⁹³ Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, p.71:

'Confronted with the unsearchable riches of Christ (Eph 3:8), the Christian must always be learning more and more about his Lord and about the way of Jesus. One of the greatest threats to a real Christian life is what might be called static Christianity. The great fact of sanctification must never be forgotten. In Greek, sanctification is hagiasmos; Greek nouns which end in -asmos regularly denote and describe a process, and hagiasmos, sanctification, is the road to holiness.'

¹⁴⁹⁴ cf. Greek: hagiasmos sup.

¹⁴⁹⁵ I Cor 7:15

question remains as to whether an unbelieving, non-baptised member of a family, or their offspring, can enter the one hundred and forty-four thousand in circumstances where only his or her counterparty in the marriage is actually eligible through repentance, baptism and conversion, and by living a proper Judæo-Christian life.

The word sanctified means 'made holy,' or 'made free from sin,' and this might suggest the affirmative view, but Christ said that *'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.'*¹⁴⁹⁶ Are these, then, mutually exclusive conditions or parameters? While these non-believers can only be sanctified by means of the Holy Spirit, the answer appears to lie in the full meaning and intent of sanctification, allied to the train or modus of baptism variously recorded in the New Testament. The inference is that the unbelieving spouse and the children are held to be 'clean,' namely able to approach God, and so are under His divine protection.¹⁴⁹⁷ It does not mean that they are part of the 'elect.' They cannot be, for in their unbaptized state they would lack the capacity.

¹⁴⁹⁶ John 3:5

¹⁴⁹⁷ this includes during the time their parent/s would be attending the wedding feast in the sky, q.v. inf.

Chapter 12

Seventh Seal

The eighth chapter of Revelation begins with a scene set in the Throne of Heaven, the golden altar and the golden censer both being mentioned. The smoke of the incense together with the prayers of the saints ascend before God. The angel then fills the censer with the fire of the altar and casts it into the earth. There are voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake and, then, the climactic opening of the seventh seal.

The seventh seal comprises of seven trumpets: *'And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.'*¹⁴⁹⁸ This is not as sometimes concluded by expositors a parallel with the seven seals or contemporaneous therewith; rather, the seventh seal clearly comprises of seven trumpets: *'And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God: and to them were given seven trumpets.'*¹⁴⁹⁹

The seventh seal, therefore, is septempartite. It has seven parts or sections, each a trumpet. These trumpets are actually real life plagues, confirmed later in chapter nine: *'And the rest of the men, which were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.'*¹⁵⁰⁰

In times past, trumpets, or, rather, ram's horns, were blown in times of war or on sight of an approaching army. They signified alarm, war, and destruction. This time, in Revelation, they not only signify

¹⁴⁹⁸ Rev 8:6

¹⁴⁹⁹ Rev 8:1,2

¹⁵⁰⁰ Rev 9:20,21

alarm, war, and destruction, but also the wrath of God. Zephaniah describes it: *'The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness. A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers.'*¹⁵⁰¹

When the ancient northern tribes known as Israel forsook God's ways and turned to idolatry, God's punishment was to send the armies of the Assyrians to conquer them and take them into captivity. Likewise, when Judah disobeyed in a manner worse than Israel,¹⁵⁰² God's punishment was to send the armies of the Chaldeans to conquer them and take them into captivity. This time, God will finally punish the whole of mankind, save a very few.

The Day of Trumpets is the first annual holy day in the seventh month: *'Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, In the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation.'*¹⁵⁰³ The phrase *'memorial of blowing of trumpets'* can more faithfully be translated, *'a memorial of triumph, or shouting for joy, with trumpets.'* These trumpets were to be blown on the day of the feast, by the sons, that is, descendants, of Aaron: *'And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Make thee two trumpets of silver; of a whole piece shalt thou make them....And the sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow with the trumpets: and they shall be to you for an ordinance for ever throughout your generations. Also in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginning of your months,'*¹⁵⁰⁴ *ye shall blow with your trumpets over your burnt offerings, and over the sacrifices of your burnt offerings; that they may be to you for a memorial before your God: I am the Lord your God.'*¹⁵⁰⁵ King David knew that this feast was a solemn occasion.

The phrase *'holy convocation'*¹⁵⁰⁶ is more correctly translated *'sacred occasion'* in the Tanakh. The annual pilgrim or shalosh regalim¹⁵⁰⁷ *'convocations'* are but three: *'Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place where he shall choose,'*¹⁵⁰⁸ *in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the Lord empty.'*¹⁵⁰⁹

¹⁵⁰¹ Zeph 1:14-16

¹⁵⁰² Ezek chpt. 23; Ahola, *'her own tabernacle,'* referring to Israel, and Aholibah, *'my tabernacle is in her,'* referring to Judah.

¹⁵⁰³ Lev 23:24

¹⁵⁰⁴ Philo, Judæus, *The Special Laws*, II, XXVI, p.140:

'The New Moon is the "beginning of the lunar month, namely the period between one conjunction and the next, the length of which has been accurately calculated in the astronomical schools.'"

¹⁵⁰⁵ Num 10:1,2,8,10

¹⁵⁰⁶ Lev 23:24

¹⁵⁰⁷ rather than chag, which means *'pilgrim'* festival. In Ex 10:9 and Judg 21:19 chag is seen as actually referring to travelling to various feasts, not just the three recited, which are correctly called in Hebrew: shalosh regalim.

¹⁵⁰⁸ viz., Jerusalem.

¹⁵⁰⁹ Deut 16:16

The Hebrew Yom Teruah, the Day of Trumpets, connotes through teruah the idea of 'to break' or 'a breaking,' as in a shattering or rending asunder. This fits well with the day of the return of the Messiah and the climactic events pertaining thereto.

*'Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day,'*¹⁵¹⁰ is better rendered: *'Blow up the horn'*¹⁵¹¹ *in the new moon, at the covered time, on the day of our feast.'* The 'covered time' refers to the dark or New Moon.¹⁵¹² The silver trumpets served for both gladness and solemnity. In the particular case of the Day of Trumpets, it is recorded that in addition to these silver trumpets,¹⁵¹³ a ram's horn¹⁵¹⁴ was blown.¹⁵¹⁵ The ram's horn, unlike the silver trumpets, could only produce one note, when blown properly and with skill: a piercing blast.¹⁵¹⁶ This blast is referred to in the Bible as a shout or a noise; it did not have a musical connotation.

The tremendous noise of the voice of God is connected with the sound of a ram's horn: *'And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.'*¹⁵¹⁷ The word here translated 'trumpet' is from shophar, meaning a curved horn. This ram's horn imports solemnity. It was the sound of imminent danger; the sound of battle imminent. Jeremiah records his reaction on hearing the sound of the war trumpet: *'My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me; I cannot hold my peace, because thou hast heard, O my soul, the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war.'*¹⁵¹⁸ The shophar was used as a simple alarm of war. Its sound filled the ancients with fear and dread, knowing the horror of war was at hand. It is this warning of war that sets apart the Day of Trumpets from God's other Holy Days. It is this warning of war that gives this joyful feast its contrasting note of solemnity.

Four winds

The seven trumpets, comprising the seventh seal of Revelation, represent the final pouring out of the wrath of God on the unholy, unjust and wicked on the earth. Four of these trumpet-plagues are described as winds that blow on the earth, trees, rivers, and seas: *'The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast*

¹⁵¹⁰ Psa 81:3

¹⁵¹¹ Hebrew: shophar, curved horn.

¹⁵¹² 'covered' being from the Hebrew kicceh, deriving from kacah and kasah, meaning 'closed,' 'concealed,' 'secret,' 'hidden,' 'veiled,' 'covered' or 'plumped by being encased in flesh or clothed with apparel.'

¹⁵¹³ Hebrew: chatsotserah.

¹⁵¹⁴ Hebrew: shophar.

¹⁵¹⁵ Mishnah 26b, Rosh Hashanah.

¹⁵¹⁶ although the intensity, concatenation, and phasing could be varied.

¹⁵¹⁷ Ex19:19

¹⁵¹⁸ Jer 4:19

into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed. And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp,¹⁵¹⁹ and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters: And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood;¹⁵²⁰ and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter. And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for third part of it, and the night likewise.¹⁵²¹

The seven trumpets show some similarity to the plagues God visited on the Egyptians,¹⁵²² although in this instance they are much more far reaching, severe and universal. Hail and fire, mingled with blood, speak severally: hail of sudden judgement from God, '*Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm....Judgement also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies*';¹⁵²³ fire of God's wrath, '*For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains*';¹⁵²⁴ blood of death, '*Or if I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man and Beast*';¹⁵²⁵ and cast upon the earth speaks of His omnipotent power.

Many have wondered at this prophecy, unable to relate it to any known or imaginable physical event or occurrence. Recently, however, it has been discovered that a pre-historic sub-sea crater deriving from an asteroid-strike¹⁵²⁶ which appears to have landed in about one hundred metres¹⁵²⁷ of water overlying sediments, produced large amounts of sulphur in the associated chemical and heat reactions. The asteroid itself would

¹⁵¹⁹ the burning '*star*' here described is, possibly, a comet. On entry to the earth's atmosphere, a large comet would burn up and disintegrate, causing a massive air-burst explosion. That, in turn, would throw inordinate amounts of dust into the atmosphere, which would fall as bitter contaminants on a third of the world's potable water supplies, with inevitable results. If it were sufficiently large to reach ground or sea level, the impact would be greater, especially in the latter case, as the impact would create a massive ejecta plume of vapourized seawater, ice, and ocean floor which would be lifted into the atmosphere, as well as creating one or more gigantic tsunamis. A spent comet, which does not evidence a visible tail owing to its volatile constituents being dissipated through repeated close cycles to the sun, would effectively be invisible, and thus remain undetected until a few seconds before impact with the earth.

¹⁵²⁰ Wormwood, the '*star*,' from the Greek *apinthos*, or later, *apsinthos* (a proper name, incidentally, and thus the name of the star)—that which makes water no longer potable—is a bitter and poisonous herb containing thujone, an hypnotic drug. It is also the base compound used in the manufacture of absinthe—*artemesia absinthium*—an hallucinogenic liquor, linked by name with the pagan sun-goddess Artemis. When used without control, wormwood can produce convulsions, paralysis, and even death. The similarly sounding Apophis, in Egyptian mythology, is the name given to the evil spirit of destruction that is believed will eventually plunge the world into darkness. Artemisia, a genus of composite plants, including wormwood, derives from Artemis, the pagan goddess also known as Venus and Diana.

¹⁵²¹ Rev 8:7-12

¹⁵²² Exodus chpts. 7-11

¹⁵²³ Isa 28:2,17

¹⁵²⁴ Deut 32:22

¹⁵²⁵ Ezek 14:19

¹⁵²⁶ K-2.

¹⁵²⁷ c.310 feet.

have appeared as a fiery ball falling through the atmosphere to earth, rather like '*a star burning as a lamp*,' and would have evaporated subterraneously under the enormous pressure of the impact. The sulphur itself would have been thrown into the atmosphere where it would have been converted to sulphuric acid. As this would have affected a large part of the world with highly acidic rain and, in the more immediate area, more direct contaminants, the waters would have been rendered acidically corrosive.¹⁵²⁸ This could well be a giant asteroid strike on water, with corrosive waters resulting.

Supernatural heavenly signs, and other cosmic irregularities, struck fear into men in ancient times and will do so again, only this time these supernatural signs will have been unsurpassed on any previous occasion. Seeing the natural course of heavenly bodies so seriously disrupted, such as the day and night not shining for the third part thereof, will cause natural and universal consternation, and fear and abject panic in those who are not sealed and protected. But there is worse to come: '*And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!*'¹⁵²⁹ For obvious reason, these last three trumpets are usually termed 'the three woes.'^{1530 1531 1532}

Three woes

Three is a special number God uses for judgement. These three woes are three final, major plagues leading to the Valley of Decision and the ending of the Satan-dominated era on earth. This final struggle is to be fought in three stages, each stage so horrifying that it is termed a woe by God. Each stage is so destructive that only God can remedy the damage that will be meted out on the earth and its remaining wicked inhabitants. At

¹⁵²⁸ Rev 8:11; Greek: *pikraino*, translated '*bitter*,' means '*piercing*,' or '*acid*,' and acid means irritating or corrosive. The entire gives a rather close correlation with the '*great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp*' and '*the third part of the waters became...bitter*.'

¹⁵²⁹ Rev 8:13

¹⁵³⁰ Cripps, Richard S., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos*, p.202:

'Woe. The Hebrew interjection might be more accurately rendered by the English 'Alas!' It is frequent in prophecy (Isaiah seventeen times, Habakkuk five times, Jeremiah four times, and eight times elsewhere).'

¹⁵³¹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.13:

'Mat 11:20-24; The Greek word for '*woe*'....is *ouai*; and it must be remembered that *ouai* expresses sorrowful pity at least as much as it does anger. This is not the accent of one who is in a temper because his self-esteem has been touched; it is not the accent of one who is blazingly angry because he has been insulted; it is not the accent of one in a passion of hatred at men; it is the accent of sorrow, the accent of one who offered men the most precious thing in the world, and who saw it completely disregarded; the accent of one who is watching a tragedy being played out, and who is powerless to stop men rushing on ruin. We must remember that Jesus' condemnation of sin is holy anger, but the anger comes, not from outraged pride, but from a broken heart.'

¹⁵³² *Forty Coming Wonders*, p.172:

'[T]he ministries symbolized by these three angels, flying in the midst of heaven, clearly point to another and different form of preaching the gospel than any hitherto manifested to the world.'

Greek: *mesos*, giving, literally, '*middle heaven*' (as against K.J.V.'s '*midst of heaven*') gives the sense of above the sky, in the context of being elevated above the earth's atmospheric bound, looking down upon the inhabitants of the earth.

the third woe and last trumpet, mankind will be saved from extinction only by the intervention of God. Again, *'And except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.'*¹⁵³³ If God did not personally intervene for the sake of the 'elect,' man and his sin would destroy the last vestige of life from the face of the earth. These terrifying events make the Day of Trumpets a solemn day, but to the 'elect,' it is a time of rejoicing, looking forward to the return of Christ, in all power and majesty, and the ushering in of the Millennium of rest.

The first woe, the fifth trumpet, is revealed in this wise: *'And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. And the shapes of the locusts¹⁵³⁴ were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.*¹⁵³⁵ One woe is past; and behold, there come two woes more hereafter.'¹⁵³⁶

First-century military powers did not have armoured attack helicopters with air to ground missiles and the like, capable of carrying and disseminating chemical and biological warheads, so John could not refer to them in terms of any then current nomenclature, but his description is very accurate, nonetheless. Irascible and sedulous, they are machine-like in action, and very effective.

¹⁵³³ Mat 24:22; the word 'sake' should be deleted as it does not occur in the original Greek text, leaving *'but for the elect.'*

¹⁵³⁴ John the Apostle used the symbolic term 'locusts' to describe the terrifying war machines which are to be used in this end-time woe. Others see a more natural or possibly parallel fulfilment in that it is thought by some to be a reference to insects known as 'flying scorpions.'

¹⁵³⁵ Hebrew: Abaddon and Greek: Apollyon mean 'Destroyer.' The king over this armed force, the angel of the bottomless pit (where many demons¹⁵³⁵ are currently restrained in chains, Jude 6; II Peter 2:4: *'For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment'*), will be none other than the arch-destroyer, Satan.

Gill, John, *Gill's Bible Commentary* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Abaddon, with the Jews, is [held to be] one of the habitations or apartments of hell,' cf. T. Bab. Erubin, 19.1 (Zohar).

¹⁵³⁶ Rev 9:1-12 (sublinear emphasis added)

The second woe, the sixth trumpet, is then revealed: *'And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God. Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels¹⁵³⁷ which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels¹⁵³⁸ were loosed, which were prepared for an hour,¹⁵³⁹ and a day, and a month, and a year to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army¹⁵⁴⁰ of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three were the third part of men killed, by the fire, by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.'*^{1541 1542}

Again, first-century military powers did not have armoured tanks, mobile artillery, modern ballistic missiles and so on, so John could not refer to them by common nomenclature, but, still, his description is both telling and accurate.

What is displayed here is a monumental war lasting a little over thirteen months during which one third of mankind then alive on the planet will perish. This is World War V.¹⁵⁴³ Despite this, man will still fail to turn from sinful, pagan, and apostate ways: *'And the rest of the men, which were not killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.'*¹⁵⁴⁴

This may seem foolhardy to the point of absurdity on the part of the residuum of mankind left alive after these two great woes, but Paul warns: *'Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come,*

¹⁵³⁷ demonic messengers, viz., demons, for they are bound in sin.

¹⁵³⁸ demons.

¹⁵³⁹ correctly, 'season.'

¹⁵⁴⁰ plural: 'armies,' possibly implying one demon per army.

¹⁵⁴¹ Rev 9:13-19

¹⁵⁴² the second woe, lasting 391 days, is coterminous with the day of Pentecost, 2027, when the 'elect' rise to meet Christ 'in the air,' q.v. Rev 11:11-14; I Thes 4:16,17. Since the enthralling events of Pentecost 2027 occur at night, with the day-time not spent, 391 days before that day of Pentecost, which falls on 13 June, gives the start of the most dreadful world war of all, in which one third of all mankind then alive will die. The date of the start of that war is revealing: Sunday, 17 May, 2026, the night of the new moon, a time of extreme night-time darkness. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet gives the cadence: the Antichrist signs or confirms his fateful covenant with the Jews on Sunday, 19 July, 2020; sets up the abomination of desolation in the Holy Place on Sunday 31 December, 2023; starts the Great Tribulation on the following day, 1 January, 2024; starts the worst of all word wars, in terms of carnage, on Sunday, 17 May, 2026 (with the new moon at 23:02 UTC on 16 May); and loses the war of Armageddon on the evening of 13 December, 2027, at the time of the full moon (i.e. just in 14 December, on the biblical reckoning of the day; the fourteenth being the biblically-calculated date of that climactic event).

¹⁵⁴³ q.v. sup.

¹⁵⁴⁴ Rev 9:20,21

*except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.*¹⁵⁴⁵ This falling away, this wholesale lapse into idolatry and sin, while principally directed toward the last and lukewarm era of the church,¹⁵⁴⁶ will be so absolute that mankind as a whole will not have or be given the desire or ability to repent. Indeed, it is readily apparent that these end-time people are especially evil, the uttermost, even when compared with the immeasurably sinful who have already lived and died, for even the ancient city of Nineveh repented in time.¹⁵⁴⁷ As the dead are resurrected to the Great White Throne Judgement, and the books are opened and also the book of life, the names of none of these end-time evil ones will appear in the latter.

End-time condition of man

The question then is why the especially evil seem to be reserved to the end-time. The answer appears to have certain salient elements:

1. The gospel has yet to be preached effectively in all of the world for a witness. The gospel, as promulgated by the established churches, such as it is, is certainly not the gospel of Christ. It would be utterly unrecognisable to the primitive Judæo-Christian church of the first-century. Christ was clear and unequivocal in this matter: *'This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.'*¹⁵⁴⁸ While many contend that the gospel has been so preached, it is patently evident that the end has not come. While this will be expanded upon later, the point here is that there will be a most violent reaction, without precedent, against this gospel on the part of mankind, and for this to happen, there is need of extremely violent peoples available to and completely under the sway of Satan;
2. The end-time will represent the culmination of Satan's sway over mankind, a state permitted by God until the time of the end,¹⁵⁴⁹ and,
3. The actual number of God's people surviving in this end-time is mentioned in Revelation¹⁵⁵⁰—one hundred and forty-four thousand—the number martyred is not. As for the rest of Israel, the martyred and surviving in this end-time are referred to somewhat indirectly in both the books of Zechariah and Revelation by way of proportion: *'And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts thereof shall be cut off and die; but*

¹⁵⁴⁵ II Thes 2:3

¹⁵⁴⁶ Laodicean.

¹⁵⁴⁷ Jonah 3:1-10

¹⁵⁴⁸ Mat 24:14

¹⁵⁴⁹ q.v. sup.

¹⁵⁵⁰ although this could possibly be an all-male count—a common feature in Old rather than New Testament writings—with females additional to it; however, the 120 or so, mentioned at the first Pentecost after the resurrection, cf. Acts 1;15b, is a count of males and females, suggesting that the 144,000 is similarly composed.

the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God.¹⁵⁵¹ Two thirds of Israel are to perish, with only one third surviving. Zechariah also gives the outcome at Jerusalem itself: *'Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.'*¹⁵⁵² By that time, of course, the composite prescription of martyrdom will have been filled; there will be no need of more. In fact, the gospel, for a time, will have ceased to be proclaimed, *'for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first,*¹⁵⁵³ allied to, *'I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work,*¹⁵⁵⁴ for by that time, the final warning will have been promulgated by the two witnesses.¹⁵⁵⁵ In these circumstances, there is no need for, or benefit to be derived from placing any more of the 'elect' of Israel in jeopardy of their lives, or others of Israel needful of refining in this end-time cataclysm and willing to listen, in a futile attempt to enlighten the condemned. It cannot be done. The evil are reserved unto judgement because, *'The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgement to be punished.'*¹⁵⁵⁶ While this end-time evil will accomplish the greatest persecution of God's people since the beginning of time, the number and overall proportion slaughtered is not known with absolute accuracy.

Restrainer

There is one further consideration in this connection: that of the identity and influence of the 'Restrainer' alluded to by Paul in Thessalonians: *'Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and*

¹⁵⁵¹ Zech 13:8,9

¹⁵⁵² Zech 14:1-4 (sublinear emphasis added); in terms of the geology of and around Jerusalem, there is a fault line running from east to west through the mount of Olives and immediately south of the Temple area, and extending to the Mediterranean Sea, that could prove to become an appropriate fissure / fracture.

¹⁵⁵³ II Thes 2:3b

¹⁵⁵⁴ John 9:4; Christ's word here refers to His work while on earth, which was circumscribed in time. It does not refer to there being no work possible during the Great Tribulation, since the work of the two witnesses, and, in due course, that of the sealed 'elect,' will continue. But at the very last, it will cease, for it would then be to no useful end.

¹⁵⁵⁵ q.v. sup.

¹⁵⁵⁶ II Peter 2:9

exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth¹⁵⁵⁷ will let, until he be taken out of the way.¹⁵⁵⁸ And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.^{1559 1560}

Many explanations as to the identity of this 'Restrainer' have been brought out, principal amongst them the Holy Spirit; the Virgin Mary;¹⁵⁶¹ the 'man of sin';¹⁵⁶² not an individual, but an evil principle;¹⁵⁶³ the Roman Empire; various religious leaders down through the ages; the British Empire; the United States of America; and, finally, the divisive European Union. All are incorrect.

He who restrains is the archangel Michael,¹⁵⁶⁴ operating through the power of the Holy Spirit, and this restraint or restriction is diminished by God the Father, who knows and has predetermined the exact timing of the end of this evil age. The relevant texts indicating Michael as the 'Restrainer' and the end-time protector of the 'elect' are to be found in Daniel: *'But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes,¹⁵⁶⁵ came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. But I shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth¹⁵⁶⁶ with me in these things, but Michael your prince. Also in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and strengthen him. And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia....And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book'¹⁵⁶⁷ 'Yet*

¹⁵⁵⁷ Greek: *katecho*, here translated '*letteth*,' more accurately rendered '*restraineth*,' or '*holdeth down fast*.'

¹⁵⁵⁸ a quite woeful translation in the K.J.V. of root Greek: *ginomei* and *mesos*, much better rendered (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): '*until he [the Antichrist] arise [or 'appear in history'] in your midst*.'

¹⁵⁵⁹ II Thes 2:3-10

¹⁵⁶⁰ while miracles, signs, and wonders from heaven do not convert the heart of the ungodly to righteousness, q.v. Psa 78:1f., for only the Holy Spirit can do this, they do deceive the gullible and the wicked to furtherance of their wickedness, q.v. Rev 13:13,14.

¹⁵⁶¹ allegedly by restraining the hand of Christ from striking the world—one of the Romanist views—given in the demonic revelations at Fatima.

¹⁵⁶² i.e., the Antichrist.

¹⁵⁶³ another Romanist view.

¹⁵⁶⁴ reference to the claimed Archangel Raphael, from the book of Tobit, is unscriptural and in error.

¹⁵⁶⁵ Tanakh: '*a prince of the first rank*'; a much more accurate translation.

¹⁵⁶⁶ '*holdeth*' in Dan 10:21, from the Hebrew: *chazaq*, means '*to restrain*'

¹⁵⁶⁷ Dan 10:13,21,11:1,2,12:1 (sublinear emphasis added)

Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee;¹⁵⁶⁸ and, indicative only, *'And there was war in heaven*.¹⁵⁶⁹ *Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels. And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven*.'¹⁵⁷⁰

The prophecy given to Daniel containing the word '*holdeth*'¹⁵⁷¹ was given two years after the Medes and the Persians conquered Babylon. The powers of darkness, such as the '*prince of Persia*,' are here seen ranged against Michael and his assistant, Gabriel.¹⁵⁷² As such, the task of the archangel Michael, down through the ages, has been to limit or restrain the powers of evil on earth. Without this restraint, evil would wipe away all vestiges of good on earth, including the 'elect,' and the entire world would be consumed at the return of Christ.

When, at the end time, the restraint is effectively restricted, evil has its day, and that day will be like no other, such will be the evil of it, but the archangel still assists God's 'elect,' even though the 'saints' are to be given into the hand of the Beast for a time, for, without this divine assistance, no 'saints' would be left alive. They will all be helped, even those who are martyred. Despite the contentions of some, the restriction cannot be the Holy Spirit, or else what then would sustain the 'elect' who are imbued with the Holy Spirit, once it were taken out of the way, or sustain the archangel, since he operates in the power of God's Holy Spirit? Remove the Holy Spirit and all fails.

The munificent effect of 'Divine Providence,' so often seen in the past to the general benefit of mankind, will be withdrawn, but only for a time. Once the restriction preventing the Antichrist is removed, all hell will break out, until Christ, the archangel,¹⁵⁷³ and others will make their dramatic appearance.

Opposition

The full power of the adversaries ranged against the 'elect' can be seen in Ephesians: *'For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness*¹⁵⁷⁴ *in high places*.'¹⁵⁷⁵ It is these powers of evil, deriving from Satan, that will

¹⁵⁶⁸ Jude 9

¹⁵⁶⁹ Rev 12:7-9's '*war in heaven*' does not mean that Satan warred against God in His throne or in His heaven. Satan lost and '*was cast out into the earth*,' but the question is from where? It could not be the heaven of God's throne, for it is axiomatic in Scripture that evil can never stand before God the Father and His throne, so it must be the '*second heaven*,' that of the cosmos. Indeed, the evidence of a supernatural struggle and its resulting destruction and waste is abundant throughout the known cosmos, and undoubtedly it extends beyond that. So Christ's statement in Luke 10:18, '*I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven*,' must refer to the attempt by Satan to gain control of the cosmos. This, in itself, shows the deeply-deluded, illogical state of Satan's mind.

¹⁵⁷⁰ Rev 12:7,8

¹⁵⁷¹ Dan 10:21

¹⁵⁷² cp. Dan 9:21, almost certainly the same person.

¹⁵⁷³ q.v. inf.; cf. seraphim.

¹⁵⁷⁴ better, '*evil spirits in high places*.'

¹⁵⁷⁵ Eph 6:12

enable the Beast Empire to interdict, control, and overpower all human devices ranged against it in the time of the end. Simply, it will be a battle between the spirits of evil and mere humans: not much of a battle at all. The current military might of, say, the United States of America will count for nothing by comparison: all systems will fail, everything will crash, and the entire will be rendered completely ineffective, through the devices of these evil spirits.

As for the 'elect,' given into the hand of the Beast for a time, it can be said that without the salvation of Christ, all would perish, and perish right quickly. But for their sake, and their sake alone, those days shall be shortened: *'For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.'*¹⁵⁷⁶

¹⁵⁷⁶ Mat 24:21,22; the word 'sake' should be deleted as it does not occur in the original Greek text, leaving 'but for the elect.'

Chapter 13

Seven Thunders & Little Open Book

The contents of the tenth chapter of Revelation are inset into the general flow of events. Many expositors have suggested or postulated that, *'another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed in a cloud, with a rainbow upon his head,'* is Christ, but, to some, *'another'* is hardly suggestive of Christ. To these, the *'mighty angel'* appears to be confused with the description of *'one like unto the Son of man....sitting on a cloud.....and on his head a golden crown'*¹⁵⁷⁷ contained in chapter fourteen. The deciding element is contained in chapter ten, where this mighty angel, *'lifted up his hand to heaven. And swear by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer.'*¹⁵⁷⁸ The Creator of all of these things is stated by John: *'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was not made anything that was made.'*¹⁵⁷⁹ The Creator is Jesus Christ, when He was the Word.¹⁵⁸⁰ The question then revolves around whether an angel would ever swear by the Creator of all.

When Jesus was arraigned before the Sanhedrin, the chief priest attempted to have Him swear on oath. *'But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus said unto him, Thou hast said:*

¹⁵⁷⁷ Rev 14:14

¹⁵⁷⁸ Rev 10:5b,6

¹⁵⁷⁹ John 1:1-3

¹⁵⁸⁰ Creator also includes the Father, cf. Gen 1:26.

nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall you see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.'¹⁵⁸¹ The chief priest wanted Christ to adjure, to solemnly swear an oath before God, but Christ demurred. Green's literal translation renders it a little more clearly, perhaps: *'Jesus said unto him, You said it. I tell you more....'* Christ refused to swear. The only instance of a man swearing an oath before God in the New Testament is given in Mark, where the man possessed by a devil cried out when he saw Christ: *'What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.'*¹⁵⁸² The demon possessing the man swore by God. Jesus Christ did not; neither would any Judæo-Christian.¹⁵⁸³

No oath sworn before God is valid for any human, or, for that matter, an angel, unless, of course, that angel is God. The mighty angel has to be God, therefore, in this case the Son, in order for Him to so swear: the Son and the Father are one. That's why, in Isaiah, when God swore, there being no higher authority, it is recorded: *'The Lord hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength,'*¹⁵⁸⁴ that is, by His power, the Holy Spirit, and in Hebrews, *'For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.'*¹⁵⁸⁵

The biblical proscription on swearing is clear and concise: *'Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shall perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne; Nor by the earth; for it his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shall thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.'*¹⁵⁸⁶

¹⁵⁸¹ Mat 26:63,64

¹⁵⁸² Mark 5:7

¹⁵⁸³ the Greek words translated '*adjure*' are different in the texts cited. In the latter, involving the demon, it is horkizo, while in the former, involving the high priest, it is exorkizo. The additional ex, meaning out of, indicates that the aim of the high priest was to extract an oath from Christ, something he failed to do.

¹⁵⁸⁴ Isa 62:8

¹⁵⁸⁵ Heb 6:13,14

¹⁵⁸⁶ Mat 5:33-37; Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, p.23:

'Jesus forbids oaths altogether, and insists that an unadorned 'Yes' or 'No' is all that is needed. But there is a background to that passage. In the time of Jesus there were Jews who were masters of evasion. If they did take an oath in the name of God they would keep it, but they did everything possible to avoid doing so. They would swear by heaven, or by earth, or by Jerusalem, or by their own heads, and they would feel themselves quite free to break such an oath, because it did not actually include the name of God. God, so to speak, had not actually been made a partner to the transaction by name, and therefore the transaction was quite breakable.

Jesus declares that heaven is God's throne and earth God's footstool and Jerusalem is God's city. The point that Jesus is making is that you cannot possibly keep God out of any transaction, for God is everywhere present, and, whether His name is mentioned or not, He is there present when any promise is given or taken. All promises and pledges are made in the presence of God, just as all places are in the presence of God, and therefore an oath in the name of God is unnecessary, for God is there anyway.'

The Jews in that age were in such a habit of using vain, frivolous oaths in their ordinary talk that these became known among the heathen as 'Jewish oaths.' The Jews swore by the temple, its gold, its altar, the earth, the heavens, the sun,

Seven thunders

The mighty angel, Jesus Christ glorified, has a little open book in His hand, and He stands on the earth and on the sea: *'And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth, And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, And swear by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.'*¹⁵⁸⁷

The substance of the seven thunders is sealed and is hidden from us, for the time being. What can be discerned is that it refers to the completion of God's purpose on earth, seven being God's number of completion or perfection. What is confirmed is that the seventh trumpet, sub-divided again into seven, as shall be seen, completes the mystery of the purpose of God, as He has previously declared it to His servants, the prophets.

Whilst the content of *'the voices of the seven thunders'*¹⁵⁸⁸ are sealed from man on the instruction of God, it is likely that they relate, in some expository way, to the seven vials of God's wrath.

Little open book

Chapter ten concludes with a further instruction from the voice in heaven, probably that of the arch-angel:¹⁵⁸⁹ *'And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the*

the moon, the head, and so on. This practice is alluded to in Mat 23:16-22. Maimonides, quoted by Lightfoot in Hor. Heb. (Carpzov's edition), p.280, sums the vile Jewish view:

'If anyone swears by heaven, by the earth, by the sun, and so forth, although it is the intention of him who swears in these words to swear by Him who created these things, yet this is not an oath.'

Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, p.23 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Malachi classes the man who swears falsely with the sorcerer, the adulterer, those who oppress the hireling, the widow and the orphan, those who thrust aside the sojourner, and those who do not fear God (Mal 3:5). There is no doubt of the heinousness of [the] offence [of false swearing] in the eyes of the prophets and the law-givers of Israel.'

Today, false swearing is ubiquitous.

Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, p.24 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Nothing is clearer than that daily that oath [given in court to tell the truth] is broken. Either to save himself or someone else from penalty, or to gain something for himself or for someone else, a man twists or suppresses or denies or falsifies the truth.'

¹⁵⁸⁷ Rev 10:2-7

¹⁵⁸⁸ Rev 10:3,4

¹⁵⁸⁹ it cannot be that of the Father; cf. John 5:37.

angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.¹⁵⁹⁰

The *'little open book'* is generally taken to be a reference to the title deeds of the earth, but if that were the limit of the understanding, it would miss much, and ultimately prove to be very misleading. It is consistent, nevertheless, in a limited way, with the flow of events and it does have some connection with Jeremiah where reference is made to sealed and open title deeds: *'so I took the evidence of the purchase, both that which was sealed according to the law and custom, and that which was open.'*¹⁵⁹¹ Such an arrangement was common practice in those ancient days. The open copy was for an easy reference while the sealed copy was to prevent tampering. Many of these sealed deeds and documents were placed in earthenware jars, themselves frequently sealed with pitch. In times such as repatriation after captivity, these sealed documents would allow the rightful owner to reclaim the family patrimony.

In the instance depicted in chapter ten, however, the title deeds to the world could be considered to remain sealed until the rightful owner, our Lord Jesus Christ, claims His inheritance, and only then opened. While the great angel, Jesus Christ, stands on both the earth and the sea, signifying His possession or ownership of both, the actual narrative hasn't quite got that far. In any event, Christ wouldn't need title deeds to prove ownership, since He created the the earth and all that is therein.

The *'little open book'*¹⁵⁹² corresponds much more closely, in ways, with a tract in Ezekiel.¹⁵⁹³ There,¹⁵⁹⁴ the book is described as being *'sweet as honey'* in the mouth, whereas, in Revelation,¹⁵⁹⁵ it is *'sweet as honey'* in the mouth, but it makes John's *'belly bitter.'* In both cases, the book or scroll is open. In Ezekiel, it is described as containing *'lamentations, and mourning, and woe.'*¹⁵⁹⁶ The implication, therefore, is that the little open book in Revelation is of a similar ilk, but much more dire in its contents, given the effect on John's stomach.

Eating the book or scroll signifies acceptance of the duty to announce the message of God. In the case of the tract in Ezekiel, it is to the rebellious nation of Israel, and, in Revelation, to a rebellious world in thrall of Satan. *'Sweet in the mouth'* is total obedience to the command of God to announce His will to the designated recipients as a witness against them, irrespective of whether they heed or disregard that witness.

¹⁵⁹⁰ Rev 10:8-11

¹⁵⁹¹ Jer 32:11

¹⁵⁹² Rev 10:1-11

¹⁵⁹³ Ezek 2:7-10,3:1-4

¹⁵⁹⁴ Ezek 3:1-4

¹⁵⁹⁵ Rev 10:9,10

¹⁵⁹⁶ Ezek 2:10

The little book of Revelation is already open, that is open to inspection. Nothing is hidden here and so the little book should be taken as a reference to the exposition of Revelation, the unveiling of the understanding of Revelation in the latter days. It is also apparent that in being opened, the events of the time of the end are about to come to pass.

When the little book was eaten, it was sweet in the mouth, but later bitter in the belly. The initial joy of the good news of the return of Christ, the true gospel, is mixed with the knowledge of the prefatory and dire convulsions recited in Revelation, the gospels, and many books of the Old Testament. This latter description tends towards a stressing of the exposition, as the title deeds to the earth normally would not import such an overwhelmingly dichotomous reaction, unless in some way it were viewed in the context of the claimant's rights and the dreadful events surrounding His coming.

Chapter 14

Two Witnesses Enoch & Elijah, Perhaps?

The eleventh chapter of Revelation is the first chapter, amongst several, that has caused no end of bitter dispute among expositors and those who study biblical prophecy. And yet it starts so benignly, or, at least, so it would seem: *'And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.'*¹⁵⁹⁷ Here the 'elect,' who worship God, are separated from the rest of mankind, for *'leave out'* literally means *'cast out,'* a purging permitting Christ to return to His Holy Temple, the election.

*"Measure the temple, the altar, and the worshippers in the court."*¹⁵⁹⁸ This denotes that, in the predictive period, there would be a small number whose doctrine, worship, and behaviour would bear measuring by the word of God, and that these only would be acceptable interior worshippers,¹⁵⁹⁹ whereas the outer court, being left by express command unmeasured, and given *'unto the Gentiles,'* emphatically shows that by far the greater number of professing Christians would be formal, superstitious, and idolatrous worshippers; Christians in name only, but Gentiles in wickedness, and even in idolatry. *'The Holy City,'* also, being *'trodden underfoot'* by them,

¹⁵⁹⁷ Rev 11:1,2

¹⁵⁹⁸ Rev 11:1b

¹⁵⁹⁹ i.e., Judæo-Christian, sometimes referred to as 'spiritual Israel.'

implied that the church at large, and the most lucrative and eminent places, would be filled with idolaters, infidels, and hypocrites, and that true Judæo-Christians would be oppressed in a most grievous manner.¹⁶⁰⁰

Patently, the content of the opening two verses of the eleventh chapter is a reference to the church, not the physical building of the Temple which had existed until a quarter of a century before the revelation was given to John.¹⁶⁰¹ It is not the Temple building per se that is profaned; it is the Jewish form of worship therein that profanes. The first verse, therefore, in its reference to *'those that worship therein,'* is a reference not to the Aaronic priesthood of the tribe of Levi, but to Judæo-Christians who compose the true Temple to which Christ will come on His glorious return. The *'altar,'* then, is a reference to the slain in Christ.¹⁶⁰² Jerusalem itself will be given over to the Gentiles for three-and-a-half years, or a time, times and half a time. This treading under foot includes the Holy Mount, the profane Third Temple, and the Holy City.¹⁶⁰³

Somewhat surprisingly, some expositors have sought to suggest that the specific wording of verse two infers that this Temple is the one which was in existence at the time of Jewish control; in other words, the Second Temple. But this is clearly in error, as this Gentile treading of the Holy City is a clear reference to the second moiety of the seven year period at the end, when the Beast will erect the abomination in the temple / sanctuary. Because of this, many simply term this temple the 'Tribulation Temple,' as it is partially during this period that it is in existence.

The difficulty for many, however, in these two opening verses, lies in the distinct differentiation of the temple / sanctuary and altar on the one hand, and the outer courts on the other. In Hebrew, the courts of the temple are called chatzrot, which also connotes the sense of 'nearness to God,' so the instruction to leave them out of the measurement would effectively bar both the Levites as keepers, the Jews, and the Gentiles from any part in the workings of the temple / sanctuary. This, however, does not offer any difficulty in Judæo-Christianity where the true Temple is the 'elect' of the church, distinguished from the physical, debased Third Temple which will be constructed in Jerusalem on foot of the Antichrist-confirmed seven year 'false-peace' covenant.¹⁶⁰⁴

Some have suggested, on a somewhat vague basis, that these verses also preview the division of the Temple Mount at the start of the seven-year Beast-confirmed covenant with the Jews, under which the Jews can be seen as securing the innermost parts, with the Gentiles remaining in control of the outer precincts.¹⁶⁰⁵

¹⁶⁰⁰ *Scott's Commentary*, Vol. VI, p.5f5

¹⁶⁰¹ Judæo-Christian church is the Temple, cf. I Cor 2:17; II Cor 6:16; Eph 2:20-22; I Peter 2:5

¹⁶⁰² cp. Rev 6:9-11

¹⁶⁰³ q.v. inf.

¹⁶⁰⁴ but the days of mourning and feasting of the Jews (17th Tammuz; 9th. Av; fast of Gedalia in the seventh month; and 10th. Tevet) will turn to rejoicing and festivity, albeit prematurely; Zech 8:19 and q.v. inf.

¹⁶⁰⁵ the *'middle wall'* is a reference to the second wall of enclosure, the Soreg, constructed within the 2nd Temple complex, upon which was carved, in Greek and Latin, the following warning: 'No stranger may enter here on pain of death.' This served to separate Jew from Gentile, preventing access to the penetralia or inner sanctum by any unauthorised persons: a prohibition strictly enforced during the time of the 2nd Temple. Access to the entire complex was later forbidden to those Jews who refused to offer sacrifices, q.v. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 18.1.5.

Certainly, the reference indicates strongly that the whole edifice will be less than sanctified:¹⁶⁰⁶ the profane will still be extant, and this before the Antichrist resiles halfway through the seven-year covenant. At that point, the entire becomes wholly debased.

Some even have suggested that the outer court or 'square' of the Temple, sometimes referred to as 'The Terrace' in ancient times, could be the place where the two witnesses suffer martyrdom. The courtyard or the square of the Temple complex would appear, at first glance, to offer a distinct opportunity: *'But the court¹⁶⁰⁷ which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.'*¹⁶⁰⁸ If this be the case, then the question begged: Why two different words¹⁶⁰⁹ for what might be the same place, used within half-a-dozen verses or so of each other? A detailed analysis of the Greek words used¹⁶¹⁰ in the two relevant passages¹⁶¹¹ is claimed by some expositors to show that the square referred to could be external to the temple precinct, but within Jerusalem itself, and quite possibly be the existing square immediately to the west of the Western Wall, or an enlargement of it, or, indeed, it could be a reference to a future square or large open platt within the city which is yet to be constructed.

If it is a reference to the temple court, as some claim, then the answer might lie in the context and the state of the 'court' or 'square.' While it is under the foot or under the control of the Gentile forces it is totally profaned, hence the Greek word for an open yard. When the two witnesses are slain, however, that is said to change. The time of the Gentile hegemony comes to an end, the yard becomes the square, and, in due course, the temple and its courtyard are reclaimed and cleansed.

One further possible refinement, however, and one that has much to commend it, is that the witnesses are to be slain on the north side of the altar, located on the upper platform of the Temple. 'The *'most holy'*

¹⁶⁰⁶ the Temple Mount area as it exists today is actually the remains of the Timinus, the 'holy area' constructed by the Roman emperor Hadrian, on which he built temples to the gods Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva: the centre-point of Hadrian's Colonia Aelia Capitolina (The Roman Colony dedicated to his family name and the Capitoline hill in Rome, which was dedicated to the Roman god Jupiter).

¹⁶⁰⁷ the 'court,' Greek: aule, means an uncovered courtyard, open to the wind. It is this, the outer court of the Third Temple, that is given over to the Gentiles. In the K.J.V.'s v.8a the location is termed '*the street [square] of the great city [Jerusalem].*' In v.8a the Greek word used is plateia, correctly meaning a square or broad place. (The K.J.V.'s 'street' actually comes from the Greek plateia, meaning a wide open space; a square or forum. The Greek: plateia, in Rev 11:8; 21:21; 22:2, must, therefore, mean a square—the city lies foursquare, cf. v.16—and not a mere street or road, since the New Jerusalem described in chaps. 21 and 22 has no streets). Somewhat confusingly, the K.J.V.'s usual translation of 'street' is translated 'lane' in Luke 14:21, both coming from the Greek: rhumas.

In Hadrian's Aelia Capitolina, the 'holy area' of the temple of Jupiter, built on the site of the second Temple, was called 'The Square.' The place of sacrifice of the two lambs at Pentecost, q.v. inf., viz., 'between the hall and the altar'—this area having had a special sanctity, with entrance forbidden to ordinary Israelites in the normal course—would give the place of the death and resurrection of the two witnesses as being on the upper platform, on the north side of the altar.

¹⁶⁰⁸ Rev 11:2

¹⁶⁰⁹ Greek: aule and plateia.

¹⁶¹⁰ q.v. footnotes above.

¹⁶¹¹ at the time of writing, Jerusalem does not possess a formal square of any great proportions, but it does, of course, have many streets.

sacrifices were slain at the north side of the altar, the less holy at the east or south side.'¹⁶¹² Since the upper platform of the Temple Mount as it exists today is the remains of Hadrian's *Timnus*, known as 'The Square,' and given that the whole Temple is profaned by the time of the witnesses' deaths, this offers at once a remarkably comprehensive explanation and detailed exposition, one wholly consistent with the impressed meaning of the Temple ceremony undertaken at Pentecost.

Some contend that with reference to the 'elect' of the church, the act of measuring of the innermost parts would appear to indicate that, to a very limited extent, they do comply with the provisions pertaining to Temple worship when under the tutelage of the Jews during the first moiety, but this must be tempered by the Jews' failure to undertake the annual holy days and New Moons correctly, using the correct calendar, *inter alia*. This, too, is pressing the matter way, way beyond its limit, of course, for the entire grand edifice, in terms of its enabling, its constructors, its construction, and its operation,¹⁶¹³ is rendered unclean to the Judæo-Christian, and must remain so until cleansed by Our Lord.¹⁶¹⁴

Notwithstanding these spatial considerations, the real dispute centres on the subjects of the succeeding verses: the two witnesses, God's last witnesses to this heathen and apostate world before the pouring out of His wrath on them all. They will have been assigned the most difficult task of all in confronting the Antichrist and the False Prophet in the very time of the end, when the vast bulk of mankind will be wholly debased and evil beyond imagining. They are also to act throughout the length of the Tribulation: three-and-a-half years.¹⁶¹⁵

Major contenders?

It is possibly beneficial, from the start, to dispense with various common contenders and pretenders to the positions of one or other of these two witnesses.

Quite the most ludicrous claims are made by various parties, usually but not exclusively American, who appear in Jerusalem and are stricken with what is sometimes referred to as 'Jerusalem Syndrome,' usually after arrival in Jerusalem rather than before. In other words, they become convinced, by whatever means, that they are one of the two witnesses. In addition to the stark inability of any of these parties to demonstrate the supernatural abilities of the witnesses recited in the eleventh chapter of Revelation, it has to be noted that the mission of these witnesses lasts but three years and a half years and terminates immediately before the start of the third

¹⁶¹² Edersheim, Alfred, *The Temple—Its ministry and services as they were at the time of Jesus Christ*, pp.264-266 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); '*between the hall [viz., The Hall of Hewn Stones, q.v. inf.] and the altar,*' in other words, to the north of the sacrificial altar.'

¹⁶¹³ including the Jews' aberrant calander system, q.v. inf.

¹⁶¹⁴ q.v. inf.

¹⁶¹⁵ q.v. inf.; cf. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet, where there is a slight displacement by three-and-a-half days.

woe. It follows that their mission could not possibly have begun, and all of this mindless 'feeling brigade,' despite doubtless firmly-held convictions, are in profound error.

Other oft-postulated contenders for the identity of these two witnesses include the church, which has a commission from Christ: *'Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.'*¹⁶¹⁶ Sadly, as has already been seen in the third chapter of Revelation, the Laodicean era in particular is completely unfit to witness as these two do. The church, uniplural, cannot import a two witness interpretation. It is also patently evident that the Great Commission given to the church includes baptism, something which does not appear anywhere in the remit of the two witnesses.

Other candidates postulated are Joshua and Zerubbabel from the time of the re-building of the Temple, recorded in the book of Ezra. This falls on a number of counts, not least being the fact that Joshua and Zerubbabel are long dead and nowhere does the Bible record that anyone, other than Christ, has died and subsequently risen, to return from heaven millennia later.¹⁶¹⁷ Joshua and Zerubbabel are in the grave, awaiting, like all of the righteous dead, a resurrection with the dead-in-Christ at the Second Coming. This is possible, even for those who predated the arrival of Christ's ministry,¹⁶¹⁸ given that possession of the Holy Spirit and membership of the church are prerequisites.¹⁶¹⁹ These people, though not many in number, were imbued with the Holy Spirit, and sanctified. A specific and almost unique example is recorded in connection with Jeremiah: *'Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.'*¹⁶²⁰ There are only two others mentioned in the Bible having this gift bestowed while in the womb: Jesus and John the Baptist.

Christ said, *'And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.'*¹⁶²¹ Isaiah's statement, *'For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth,'*¹⁶²² reflects that of King David: *'For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?'*¹⁶²³ All the dead-in-Christ are in the grave pending the coming of the Messiah. As the events of chapter ten predate the Second Coming, all in the grave will stay there, and therefore there is no possibility whatsoever of Joshua, Zerubbabel, Enoch, Elijah or any other who has suffered death being resurrected and so becoming one or other of these two witnesses.

¹⁶¹⁶ Mat 28:19,20

¹⁶¹⁷ Lazarus died a mortal death, despite being raised from the grave by Christ; cf. John 11:1f.,12:1-17

¹⁶¹⁸ 27AD

¹⁶¹⁹ the congregation of Israel in the desert was frequently referred to in the Old Testament, and was the forerunner of the true Christian church.

¹⁶²⁰ Jer 1:5

¹⁶²¹ John 3:13

¹⁶²² Isa 38:18

¹⁶²³ Psa 6:5

Despite this, the most frequently postulated identities of the two witnesses are Enoch and Elijah, deriving from the belief that both Enoch and Elijah were taken up to heaven, with a view to returning later to play a major part in world events. This particularly applies to Elijah, and originates, for its part, in large measure from the Jewish belief that Elijah will precursor the Messiah, and that that will lead to the creation of a Jewish hegemony.¹⁶²⁴ Indeed, to this day, religious Jews, during the Passover ceremony, retain an empty place at the table for Elijah, and, at the appropriate moment, open the door of the house and look expectantly for Elijah to make his long awaited appearance. This is founded on a tract in Malachi: *'Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.'*¹⁶²⁵

The angel Gabriel¹⁶²⁶ announced the coming of John, before his birth to Zacharias and Elizabeth, in the following terms: *'But the angel said unto him....For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.'*¹⁶²⁷

Another indication of the position of John the Baptist is found in the words of Jesus given immediately after the vision of the Transfiguration: *'And the disciples asked him saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must come first? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they*

¹⁶²⁴ a common delusion; Menachim Begin, former Israeli Prime Minister:

'Our race is the Master Race. We are divine gods on this planet. We are as different from the inferior races as they are from insects. In fact, compared to our race, other races are beasts and animals, cattle at best. Other races are considered as human excrement. Our destiny is to rule over the inferior races. Our earthly kingdom will be ruled by our leader with a rod of iron. The masses will lick our feet and serve us as our slaves.'

Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, p.30 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'It was a fixed part of Jewish belief—and still is—that Elijah would return to be the herald of the coming of the Messiah and of the last times....John's very clothes were the [very type of] clothes which Elijah had worn (cp. Mark 1:6; Mat 3:4; II Kings 1:8). The accent of his voice was the accent of Elijah. Men could not but see in John the coming again of Elijah as the herald of the end.

But there was one completely unique feature of the ministry of John. John summoned the people to repent and to be baptised in order to receive forgiveness for their sins [q.v. John 1:15,23, et al. Mat 3:6's *'confessing their sins'* refers to purification for the coming of the Messiah and forgiveness of sins to date, the latter seen in Mark 1:4's *'remission of sins.'*]. Never in history had a Jew been baptised. Baptism [to them] was something not for Jew but for Gentile.'

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.274 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Jesus said to His disciples: "If you remit the sins of anyone, they are remitted; if you retain them, they are retained."

This is a saying whose true meaning we must be careful to understand. One thing is certain—no man can forgive any other man's sins. But another thing is equally certain—it is the great privilege of the church to convey the message of God's forgiveness to men. [cp. 'binding and loosing' doctrine, inf.]

¹⁶²⁵ Mal 4:5,6; penultimate part may be more accurately rendered *'....shall turn the heart of the fathers with the children, and the heart of the children with the fathers.'*

¹⁶²⁶ not an archangel, as fairly commonly thought, but a cherub, q.v. inf.

¹⁶²⁷ Luke 1:13-17 (sublinear emphasis added)

listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.¹⁶²⁸

Christ clarified any possible contention immediately. The two disciples—who had been sent by John the Baptist who had been imprisoned by King Herod—came to inquire whether He was the Messiah or, were that failing, confirmation that they were to seek another: *'Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show John again those things which you do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft clothing are in king's houses. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare the way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven*¹⁶²⁹ *is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.*¹⁶³⁰

The Malachi prophecy was fulfilled in John the Baptist who came in the spirit of Elijah; so says Jesus Christ. Expositors who postulate otherwise ignore His words, preferring to seek a reappearance of Elijah shortly before the Second Coming. There is no biblical authority for that whatsoever, as shall become apparent.

John the Baptist was the son of a priest: *'There was, in the days of Herod the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia:*¹⁶³¹ *and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child, because that Elizabeth was barren; and they both were now well stricken in years. And it came to pass, that, while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his*

¹⁶²⁸ Mat 17:10-13 (sublinear emphasis added)

Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, p.30:

'The phrase *'all things,*' is translated from the single Greek word, pas, which in Greek imports a general and not an all-inclusive meaning. In other words, not every last thing, but all things in general.'

¹⁶²⁹ Matthew, writing his synoptic gospel primarily or especially for the Jews, usually refers to the kingdom as the *'kingdom of heaven,*' while the other gospel writers use the phrase *'kingdom of God.'* The two phrases refer to the same kingdom, of course, but Matthew was following a 1st-century AD Jewish custom whereby the word *'heaven'* was often substituted for the word *'God'* in order not to make over-abundant use of the latter.

¹⁶³⁰ Mat 11:2-12 (sublinear emphasis added)

¹⁶³¹ The *"course of Abia"* (Abijah in Hebrew) can be gleaned from 1 Chronicles 24:7-10. It was the 8th of 24 courses during a 12 month year. Each group of priests (all except the most senior who were on duty more often) officiated in the Temple for two weeks every year. Zacharias' turn of duty came when the 8th group (Abijah's) attended; which was during weeks 15 and 16 after the start of the year.

course, According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.'¹⁶³² John the Baptist was of the tribe of Levi, and of the priestly Aaronic line.

Some genuine confusion has arisen, however, from the following passage: *'And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptisest thou then, if thou be then not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptise with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is, who coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloosen. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptising.'*^{1633 1634 1635}

But again, John is clearly identified: *'In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his*

¹⁶³² Luke 1:5-9

¹⁶³³ John 1:19-28 (sublinear emphasis added)

¹⁶³⁴ Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, pp.23,24 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The Jewish world knew about baptism, for the three necessary elements through which a proselyte entered the Jewish faith were circumcision, baptism, and sacrifice. So prominent a place did baptism hold in the reception of converts to Judaism, that Rabbi Joshua agreed that it alone was necessary, although he was confuted by Rabbi Eliezer. Jewish proselyte baptism was carried out in the presence of three witnesses, if possible members of the Sanhedrin. The nails and the hair of the candidate were cut; he was stripped naked; he was totally immersed in water, so that his whole body was totally covered; the essence of the Law was read to him, and he was warned of the difficulties and the dangers and the possible persecution which lay ahead; he confessed his sins to the men who were known as 'the fathers of baptism,' and who correspond to godparents [sic!]; then after blessings and exhortations he emerged a Jew. This process was held to effect in him the most radical change. He was said to emerge as 'a little child just born,' 'a child of one day.' So completely was he a new man that it was theoretically argued that a proselyte who had been baptised might marry his own sister or his own mother, because for him the connection with the past was completely broken....Certainly John would know of proselyte baptism although....no such baptism had ever been undergone by Jews themselves.

It is not difficult to find antecedents for John's practice of baptism. It is not suggested that John was dependent on any of them, but it is certain that John came into a situation in which baptism was known and practiced.'

¹⁶³⁵ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, pp.228,229:

'In later days a man called Polycrates wrote about the Fourth Gospel. He never doubted that John wrote the gospel and that he was the beloved disciple, but he says a very curious thing about him. He says that John was by birth a priest, and that he wore the pelatos, which was the narrow gold band, or ziz, inscribed with the words, "Holiness unto the Lord," which the High Priest wore upon his forehead. If that were so, John would be actually of the High Priest's kin; but it is difficult to believe that he could be of the priestly line, for the gospels so clearly show him as a Galilean fisherman.' Perhaps the answer to this conundrum lies in John's family being a 'disenfranchised' line of the priesthood, thrust out by the Machiavellian manoeuvrings of Annas and his tribe. Alternatively, it could have been a reference to John the Baptist, who was of the priestly line.

paths straight,'¹⁶³⁶ and, 'The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the son of God; As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. John did baptise in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.'^{1637 1638}

At a cursory glance, there would seem to be a conflict here with the statement of Christ¹⁶³⁹ and the words of John the Baptist,¹⁶⁴⁰ but a closer inspection reveals consensus. The priests and Levites¹⁶⁴¹ obviously expected or anticipated the Messiah,¹⁶⁴² with the precursor of Elijah, and at that very time. The expectation or anticipation in this form flowed from their understanding of the prophetic day-for-a-year principle underlying a tract in Daniel, which gives off a date for the messianic appearance, when correctly interpreted.¹⁶⁴³ The priests and Levites, in terms of their understanding, had expectation of only one messianic appearance, and their travelling from Jerusalem to Bethabara to question John the Baptist closely on these matters derived from these two considerations. Their task was important to them. The messianic appearance would herald, to them, the liberation of the Jews from the yolk of the Roman Empire and the elevation of the Jews above all others. Hegemony, omnipotence, and the fulfilment of their expectation of prophecy appeared possibly to be at hand, so it was important that the priests and Levites discovered exactly what was happening in the wilderness, and

¹⁶³⁶ Mat 3:1-3 (sublinear emphasis added)

¹⁶³⁷ Mark 1:1-4 (sublinear emphasis added)

¹⁶³⁸ reference in the Old Testament: Isa 40:3, 'The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.'

¹⁶³⁹ Mat 11:2-12

¹⁶⁴⁰ John 1:19-28

¹⁶⁴¹ Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, pp.23,24:

'The Levites face outwards, guarding the Tent of the Tabernacle from pollution; the priests face inwards, leading to God. This is the essential difference between what might be termed ministry and priesthood. Both the Levites who minister or prepare for worship, and the priests who conduct that worship, are types of the saints, who both minister and act as a spiritual priesthood (Heb 13:15,16; 1Peter 2:5). The Levitical service is from God and for God, to help men in their approach to God, so that they might be joined with Him in fellowship.'

¹⁶⁴² Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p78:

'Frequently, Messianic pretenders arose and caused rebellions. The time of Jesus was an excited age. It was natural to ask John if he claimed to be the Messiah. John completely rejected that claim; but he rejected it with a certain hint. In the Greek, the word 'I' is stressed by its position. It is as if John said: "I am not the Messiah, but, if you only knew, the Messiah is here."' The same sense of expectation in the Jews can be discerned later, in the time leading up to the fall and destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70AD.

Silberman, Neil Asher, *The Hidden Scrolls — Christianity, Judaism, and the War for the Dead Sea Scrolls*, p.117 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Josephus Flavius, the aristocratic Jewish turncoat-historian, who could never be accused of excess of sympathy for revolutionary movements among his people, related regretfully after the Roman sack of Jerusalem that "what more than all else incited [the Jews] to the war was an ambiguous oracle, likewise found in their sacred scriptures, to the effect that at that time one from their country would become the ruler of the world." The clearest scriptural basis for this belief was one of Balaam's oracles, quoted in Number 24:17, that someday "a star shall come out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel" to conquer the world. The Roman historians Tacitus and Suetonius also mentioned the messianic prophecy as an important source of incitement for the Jewish Revolt.'

¹⁶⁴³ 27AD; Dan 9:25,26

did so without delay. The worst outcome for them would be a false-messiah, who, if adopted by the people, would lead the Jews, deluded by the popular hope, to inevitable destruction at the hands of the Romans.

Crucially, when questioned by the priests and Levites, John denied being either Christ¹⁶⁴⁴ or Elias.¹⁶⁴⁵ The former demands no comment as it is obviously the case, but the latter does. What happened was similar, in a way, to Christ's later dismissing the questionings of the religious authorities: *'Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, an evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's¹⁶⁴⁶ belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth,'¹⁶⁴⁷* where there was no intention of enlightening those who were unable or unwilling to accept the gospel. John answered correctly. He was not Christ and he was not Elijah. Christ exposed both the latter and the Old Testament tract by stating that John came in the spirit of Elijah and that it was John who was the person referred to in Malachi.¹⁶⁴⁸

One further point of significance lies in the concluding phrase of verse six, *'lest I come and smite the earth with a curse,'* or, as rendered in the Moffatt translation, *'lest I come and smite the earth with total destruction.'* Without the preparation and purification of the Jews accomplished by John, no one would have heeded Christ. Indeed, Christ would then not have been able to condescend His message, and the whole world's population would have been annihilated. But why would Christ even consider totally destroying the earth? The answer lies in the fact that without John the Baptist turning the hearts of the fathers with the children, and preparing the way for Christ, there could be no possibility of the people believing: *'And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptised with the baptism of John,'¹⁶⁴⁹* nor of the creation of the Christian church, and so no wedding between Christ and the church: *'Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb,'¹⁶⁵⁰* and, thus, no salvation. Such a world would be totally doomed, without hope, and worthy only of destruction. The same applied to the world at the time of Noah, and, save for Noah and his immediate family, that world was destroyed by God, by means of the flood.

Where are Enoch & Elijah?

Clearly, Elijah is not a candidate for one of the witnesses. Likewise, Enoch is not a candidate for the other. So the question is begged, where are they? Many believe that Enoch and Elijah were taken up to heaven

¹⁶⁴⁴ Messiah.

¹⁶⁴⁵ Elijah.

¹⁶⁴⁶ or *'great fish.'*

¹⁶⁴⁷ Mat 12:38-40

¹⁶⁴⁸ Mal 4:5,6; exposition of Old Testament tracts in the New Testament in this way is not unusual. It follows that there is no conflict between Malachi 4:5,6 and Mat 3:1-3,11:2-12; Mark 1:1-4; Luke 1:13-17; John 1:19-28.

¹⁶⁴⁹ Luke 7:29

¹⁶⁵⁰ Rev 19:9a

by God in order to be put back on earth at a later time for some divine and supernatural purpose. This belief is held by the Jews. In addition, the apostate church, which adopted wholesale the Babylonian mystery religion, cloaked it in the name of Christianity, and largely supplanted the early or primitive Christian church, so forming the earliest eruption of Roman Catholicism, believed that Enoch and Elijah were to be the two witnesses. This can be found in the beliefs of such as Eusabius.

The answer to the core question of the whereabouts of Enoch and Elijah can only be addressed in passing¹⁶⁵¹ as, obviously, it does not form a fundamental part of the exposition of the book of Revelation. This does not preclude, however, a little consideration of the matter as the exclusion of Enoch and Elijah from being the two witnesses does not, of itself, identify their whereabouts.¹⁶⁵²

Transfiguration

The only remaining tracts causing difficulty to some are those relating to the appearance of Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration¹⁶⁵³ ¹⁶⁵⁴ with Christ.¹⁶⁵⁵ On leaving the mountain, Jesus told His disciples, *'tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen from the dead.'*¹⁶⁵⁶ A vision is not a material reality but a supernatural picture observed by the eyes. Moses died and was buried.¹⁶⁵⁷ At the time of the transfiguration, both he and Elijah were, and still are, in their graves, but in vision, both they and Christ were seen in the glory of the resurrection, an event to which Moses and Elijah, amongst others, have yet to attain.¹⁶⁵⁸ This vision was granted the disciples after Christ had spoken of the glory of immortality in the coming kingdom, and was a demonstration of it.

¹⁶⁵¹ q.v. 'Where Are Enoch & Elijah?'

¹⁶⁵² q.v. Appendix.

¹⁶⁵³ Barclay, William, *The Daily Study Bible, Gospel of Mark*, p.210 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Tradition says that the transfiguration took place on the top of Mount Tabor. The Eastern [Orthodox] Church actually calls [its] festival of the Transfiguration the *Taborion*. It may be that the choice is based on the mention of Mount Tabor in Psa 89:12, but it is unfortunate. Tabor is in the south of Galilee and Caesarea Philippi is away to the north. Tabor is no more than 1,000 feet [c.305 metres] high, and, in the time of Jesus, there was a fortress on the top. It is much more likely that this event took place amidst the eternal snows of Mount Hermon which is 9,200 feet [c.2,805 metres] high and much nearer Caesarea Philippi and where the solitude would be much more complete.'

The general location of Hermon is more likely, although the actual mount is questionable. Certainly, it is never the intention in the Bible to make any mountain, other than Moriah at Jerusalem, a place of worship and veneration.

¹⁶⁵⁴ Moses and Elijah, appearing on the mount of Transfiguration, were of the tribe of Levi. The two witnesses, on the other hand, are the firstborn of two tribes, Ephraim and Judah, a reversion to the firstborn dedicated to the Lord, q.v. sup.

¹⁶⁵⁵ Mat 17:1-9; Mark 9:2-10; Luke 9:28-36

¹⁶⁵⁶ Mat 17:9b

¹⁶⁵⁷ Deut 34:5,6

¹⁶⁵⁸ Heb 11:39,40

Certainly, Elijah is dead and buried in the dust of the earth awaiting the resurrection of the just. Some years after being removed in the whirlwind, he went to his grave, but he will rise again at the last trump, at the very point of the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ *'in the air.'*

Elijaic sproutings

This, however, has not hampered the sporadic appearances of others claiming to be some form of 'Elijah mark II.' As noted, many suffering from 'Jerusalem Syndrome' are North American, and their contentions are sometimes based on a misunderstanding of the phrase in Malachi: *'before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.'*¹⁶⁵⁹ This phrase is not specific as to timing and cannot be restricted with safety to immediately prior to the Second Coming, since *'before'* is not date specific. Notwithstanding, some continue to link this with the contention that John the Baptist fulfilled only part of the tract in Malachi,¹⁶⁶⁰ in that he did nothing to *'turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers,'* and, that despite the word of Christ on the matter,¹⁶⁶¹ neither did he *'restore all things.'*¹⁶⁶²

In addition to being in direct conflict with the word of Christ, this position and its attendant contention is not founded on any biblical or even extraneous authority, and must fall for lack of substance. It is also rebutted in wholesale manner by Luke: *'But the angel said unto him, Fear not Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.'*¹⁶⁶³

Similarly, some have sought to counter that John did not fulfil the statement pertaining to a voice lifted up, *'The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold*

¹⁶⁵⁹ Mal 4:5b

¹⁶⁶⁰ Mal 4:5,6

¹⁶⁶¹ Mat 17:11

¹⁶⁶² Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, p.30:

'The phrase 'all things,' is translated from the single Greek word, pas, which in Greek imports a general and not an all-inclusive meaning. In other words, not every last thing, but all things in general.'

¹⁶⁶³ Luke 1:13-17 (sublinear emphasis added)

*your God!*¹⁶⁶⁴ by speculating that while John lifted up his voice, only a latter day John or Elijah could lift up his voice fully by using television or radio transmissions or other forms of mass media.

Despite the contention being utter piffle, it has spawned a series of self-professed latter day voice-lifting 'Elijahs.' Many of these 'Elijaic sproutings' have emanated from that second-level fount of misunderstanding and apostasy: the United States of America. Almost invariably, these individuals have either been leaders of existing religious sects, groups or churches, or aspiring leaders of existing or future religious sects, groups or churches. Stripped of a variety of embellishments, the basic message appears to be: 'I am Elijah, I am come, follow me, and (often)....give me your money, tithes, and offerings.' All such assorted and variegated revenue-generating gambits can be safely ignored, although one, in particular, has wreaked incredible damage.

Idol shepherd

In Scripture that person is called the '*idol shepherd*,' and he was responsible for a large measure of the end-time falling away in the last era of the church: '*Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.*'¹⁶⁶⁵ This indicates a '*falling away first*,' as a precursor to the appearance of '*the son of perdition.*'

In order for there to be a falling away, there had had to have been, previously, at least some measure of securely-founded belief from which to have wandered. As the falling away is a precedent to the end-time appearance of '*the son of perdition*,'¹⁶⁶⁶ this falling away is clearly a near end-time occurrence, and one which has actually occurred. This falling away comes from within, in the form of false teachers and teachings: '*which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest,*'¹⁶⁶⁷ *as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction,*'¹⁶⁶⁸ in the form of revising and diluting doctrine and accreting wild and unholy interpretations and observances from the apostate and pagan of this world, frequently working in the space between the holy texts and their interpretation, using cognitive dissonance¹⁶⁶⁹ to the full, while simultaneously driving out the truth and the few that hold fast to it.

The biblical prophecy concerning the works and effects of this '*idol shepherd*' are brief but telling: '*And the Lord said unto me, Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd. For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land, which shall not visit those that be cut off, neither shall seek the young one,*'¹⁶⁷⁰ *nor heal that that is broken, nor feed that that standeth still: but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in*

¹⁶⁶⁴ Isa 40:3;9

¹⁶⁶⁵ II Thes 2:3

¹⁶⁶⁶ otherwise referred to in Scripture as the '*First Beast*'; commonly known as the Antichrist.

¹⁶⁶⁷ '*wrest*' means '*twist*' or '*distort*.'

¹⁶⁶⁸ II Peter 3:16b

¹⁶⁶⁹ rationalizing away evidence contrary to one's beliefs.

¹⁶⁷⁰ Hebrew: hanaar, '*youth*' or '*young man*.'

*pieces. Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened.*¹⁶⁷¹

The second adjectival description given of this shepherd,¹⁶⁷² *'idol,'* means *'good-for-nothing,'* *'ungodly,'* or *'vain,'* and is better translated that way. In the prophets it is used as a name for idols, importing the idea of vanity and nothingness. The instruments that are commanded by God to be taken up are those of or pertaining to a shepherd, and those are the ones by which the foolish shepherd will accomplish his evil against the *'flock,'* God's people.

Though the shepherd is evil, he is not beyond the control of God, as he is raised up by God. This shepherd will be wicked, caring naught for the flock over which he has been placed: he will abuse, mistreat, and neglect God's people. He will be intent solely on his own interests and purposes. As a result, the poor flock is to fall under the oppression of a merciless tyrant who, through his seditious practices and abhorrent ways, rules them with rigour and bondage. This shepherd is a curse.

He *'shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces.'* Instead of feeding the flock, he will fleece it and flay it mercilessly, devastating it. The abject misery of the flock, in being so shamefully abused, is clear: there is no healing, no feeding, no tending, but, rather, a wholesale rapine, and a serving of himself of the flock. In stark and absolute contrast to the Good Shepherd, the idol shepherd takes no care of the young ones, that need care, and are well worthy of it. He does not heal that which was broken, which was worried, and torn, and distraught, but, rather, lets it die of its wounds and bruises, when a timely intervention would have saved it. He does not feed those who, through hunger and weakness, stand still, and are ready to faint, and cannot get forward, but, rather, leaves them behind, as discards, and allows anyone of any belief to take them up. An alternative translation renders this passage: *'he does not carry that which stands still.'* He does nothing to support the weak, and comfort the feeble. To the contrary, he is luxurious on himself, eating *'the flesh of the fat,'* for he insists on the best for himself. And like the wicked servant that said, *'my lord delayeth his coming,'* he and his own eat and drink with the drunken, and serve but their own bellies. He is barbarous to the flock, and his passions are as ill-governed as his appetites, for he rants at his flock, even to the point, in heartless rage and voracity, of tearing asunder their claws to get at the very last morsel of flesh.

Just like an idol, this vain, good-for-nothing shepherd receives an abundance of respect and homage from the flock, and the chief of their offerings, but neither does he think to do, nor does he do them any kindness. When the flock most needs his care and close attention, he leaves it destitute. Despite being brought onto

¹⁶⁷¹ Zech 11:15-17

¹⁶⁷² Hebrew: elil, *'idol,'* from eliyl.

the scene by God, and being given full sway over God's people,¹⁶⁷³ his mistreatment of them does not escape notice. God's judgement overtakes him.

First, an indictment is pronounced: *'Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock!'* The purpose of a shepherd is to care for the flock, but he cares not a whit for the flock and is fit only for judgement, which follows. *'The sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened.'* The right arm is the symbol of strength or power, and the right eye that of intellect or reason. This is language in the form of a curse.¹⁶⁷⁴

He will be unable to help himself, and others, upon whom he has served himself, will be unable to save him. His eye will fail to discern the danger that he is in, and fail to discern the danger in which he has left the flock. He should have been a leading workman, but was slothful, so his arm is dried up. He should have been a watchman, but was sleepy, and never looked about, so he is blinded. Since the shepherd failed to use both arm and eye in caring for the flock, but completely and contemptuously discarded it, he is done away with in swift judgement, as evidenced by the *'sword.'*

This evil person has already lived and wrought all that is described above, and much, much more. He died in 1986. His name was Herbert Armstrong, the self-styled 'God's only apostle of this age.' He was blind in

¹⁶⁷³ there is an impressed meaning in Zech 11:6,16 in the phrases *'in the land,' 'of the land,' 'over the land,'* and *'smite the land.'* In its overt meaning and intent, *'the land'* is a reference to a geographical area, which is taken as a reference to part of the lands occupied by the Israelite nations in the latter days, through correspondence with the references in the concluding verses to a 'near end-time' evil or worthless shepherd, and most probably to the United States of America, but in its impressed meaning, when taken with Zech 11:7a, Tanakh translation, *'So I pastured the flock,'* is seen as a reference to the *'pasture'* on which the flock feed—in other words, doctrine. This is supported by Zech 11:16a, again in the Tanakh, *'For I am going to raise up a shepherd over the land,'* (subscripted emphasis added). No shepherd of the flock, that is, the church, is or ever was sovereign over the physical land, but an arrogant, evil shepherd was certainly shepherd over the doctrine on which the flock fed, for he appropriated the 'right' to determine doctrine, to change doctrine, and to add to doctrine. He was not appointed by God *'over the flock'*—that position he arrogated—but he was raised up by God to a position *'over the land,'* to a position of possession and control of doctrine and, indeed, control over the entire environment or religious regime in which the ultimately worthless flock were kept. This ensured, over time, the near-complete theological and spiritual declension of the church, resulting in the Laodicean era, excoriated by Christ in Rev 3:14-21.

Zech 13:7-9 has a further reference to land, in vv.8,9a, *'And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried,'* where, post the Laodicean-era falling away, the flock of the intermediate people, the great multitude of Rev 7:9,14,15, is in the purview, and even then two thirds have already been lost through the time of testing by fire, in the Great Tribulation. That this be so—that fully one third does not succumb—is surprising, at least superficially.

Barclay, William, *Letters to the Seven Churches: A Study of the Second and Third Chapters of the Book of Revelation*, p.40:

'The Greek translated 'tribulation', thlipsis, in Rev 2:9, for example, means 'pressure,' and in classical Greek it is always used in a literal sense. It is, for instance, used of a man who was tortured to death by being slowly crushed by a great boulder laid upon him.'

In life, the Judæo-Christian always suffers pressure, and is under pressure—especially that unrelenting, grinding, severe pressure of the sort reserved by Satan for Judæo-Christians—many in the 'intermediate' group would be expected to collapse, but one third does not.

¹⁶⁷⁴ also found in similar phraseology employed against the Bar Kokhba forces, rebelling against the Romans. Those forces were destroyed. The entire phrase, therefore, is a Hebrew curse of desolation and utter destruction.

his right eye for the last twenty years of his life, and his right arm lost all strength in his latter years. His vile activities even extended to self-confessed incest with his younger daughter over a period of ten years, starting in 1933 or thereabouts. Incest, no less!¹⁶⁷⁵ A crime so evil that Paul describes it as '*such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.*'¹⁶⁷⁶ Though not even mentioned among the Gentiles, it was found in the very top family in the self-proclaimed hierarchy of the then nascent Radio Church of God.

The ripping and tearing of the flock accomplished by Armstrong and his hierarchy is still felt to this very day.¹⁶⁷⁷ Thankfully those evil influences have ceased to proceed: the damage has been done, and although the aftershocks are still being felt, they are not proceeding: '*Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.*'¹⁶⁷⁸ The organisation's spectacular collapse, its disintegration into a host of squabbling daughters-of-hell, and the wholesale damage so wreaked, have been attested in many disparate publications. Indeed, '*their folly*' has been made manifest to all men.

One strangely positive point missed by many, however, is the 'service' performed by this wicked man. Armstrong has been called 'the great sifter,' for he sifted through a surprising number of religious beliefs and practices, picking out what he thought he could cobble together into his own brand of religion, ultimately in order to reap financial gain from the ensuing cult and his hierarchical and oppressive organisation. An interesting by-product of this sifting was the elimination of many of the wilder beliefs currently holding currency in so-called Christendom. The religious beliefs that he studied and sifted usually had some element of truth in them, however small or well-hidden. On occasion, he managed to identify part or all of at least a few of them, such as the view and definition of God's Holy Spirit, and the corresponding apostasy of the Holy Trinity, with the result that amongst all the aberrant doctrine and theology that he produced there were a few rough nuggets of truth. Despite these being largely ignored and abused in his organization, they were still there when those keen and willing to diligently search the Scriptures and '*earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints,*'¹⁶⁷⁹ began their quest for the correct and original Judæo-Christian belief, doctrine, practice, and eschatology.

¹⁶⁷⁵ a vile sin described by Cicero (in Latin) as *scelus incredibile, et praeter unum in omni vita inauditum*, 'incredible wickedness, such as I never heard of in all my life besides.'

¹⁶⁷⁶ I Cor 5:1

¹⁶⁷⁷ Armstrong's regime, and its organizational spin-offs, were / are latter day colporteurs—peddlars of religious literature and 'new truth'—which they used / use to extort tithes and other offerings from the gullible 'faithful.'

¹⁶⁷⁸ II Tim 3:7-9 (sublinear emphasis added)

¹⁶⁷⁹ Jude 3b

It follows that the '*idol shepherd*,' probably unwittingly, performed a service in that he broadcast to those who would otherwise have had difficulty in accessing the information,¹⁶⁸⁰ a few fundamental truths abstracted from various religious beliefs and practices. To some, these scant remnants of truth comprised the first basic building-blocks in their search for true Judæo-Christianity.

Despite this, there were manifold failings of huge proportion, and his vain claim to be the 'greater' of the two witnesses—with his son dubbed the 'lesser'—was spurious in the extreme, as were his claims to be, variously, Elijah, John the Baptist, and Moses.

Characteristics of witnesses

Having disposed of the most frequently postulated and contending claims as to the identity of these witnesses, it is now appropriate to consider who they could be, or from where they might spring.

'A witness has been defined as a man who first sees and then shows.'¹⁶⁸¹ By this standard, the two witnesses see and expose the events of the end, and their timing, and, by consequence, the time of their own death, at which point they are to become the two martyrs.

The two witnesses are unique amongst all of God's prophets and witnesses, owing to their God-appointed task, and the extreme conditions under which they labour. They are men of tremendous spiritual depth and understanding, men of judgement and wisdom, and, perhaps above all, men of courage. 'It is not such a simple matter to be a prophet¹⁶⁸² as men think. It is a high dignity to stand in the counsel of God; it is not accessible to the first-comer, but only to the worthiest....just as man cannot force himself on God or elect himself to the prophetic office,¹⁶⁸³ so little can he escape His summons if he is God's chosen instrument, no matter how inaccessible his retreat, he cannot elude His all-seeing eye.'¹⁶⁸⁴

'[Christ's] invitation [to] and selection [of the disciples] were in fact an appointment to a task and office. 'He appointed¹⁶⁸⁵ twelve.'¹⁶⁸⁶ This was a setting apart for a special service, and appointment for a special place in the plan and the purpose of God.¹⁶⁸⁷ Similarly, de majoris, the two end-time witnesses are set apart for a most special service—sanctified, as firstborn males¹⁶⁸⁸ of peculiar preeminence—and appointed for an unique and crucial place in the consummate plan and purpose of God.

¹⁶⁸⁰ there was no internet in those days.

¹⁶⁸¹ Barclay, William, *The Daily Study Bible, Gospel of Mark*, p.211

¹⁶⁸² or 'witness.'

¹⁶⁸³ as Herbert Armstrong discovered, q.v. sup.

¹⁶⁸⁴ *The Century Bible, Jeremiah*, Vol. 1, pp.267,268

¹⁶⁸⁵ Greek: poiein.

¹⁶⁸⁶ Mark 3:14

¹⁶⁸⁷ Barclay, William, *The Mind of Jesus*, p.70 (with comment and clarification in square brackets):

¹⁶⁸⁸ q.v. firstborn reserved unto God, inf.

The passage in Revelation pertaining to these witnesses reveals much: *'And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy an thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.'*¹⁶⁸⁹ *These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.'*¹⁶⁹⁰ *And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the Beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually¹⁶⁹¹ is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.'*¹⁶⁹² *And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts to one another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.'*¹⁶⁹³

¹⁶⁸⁹ but not ashes, which signifies utter devastation and distress. Here, sackcloth clothing signifies mourning for what God's people are about to endure during the Great Tribulation, q.v. inf.

¹⁶⁹⁰ the '*God of the earth*' is a reference back to Zech 4:11-14, where the near identical phrase '*the Lord of the whole earth*' is used. They both refer to Christ / the Word. It is not a reference to II Cor 4:4, where the phrase '*the god of this world*,' or more correctly, from Greek: aion, '*the god of this age*,' is a reference to Satan.

¹⁶⁹¹ Greek: pneumatikos, '*by the Spirit*.'

¹⁶⁹² *Matthew Henry's Commentary*, cited in the Preface to *The National Comprehensive Family Bible*, p.x. (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'That these prophets were generally hated and abused in their several generations by those that lived with them. Stephen challenges his judges to produce an instance to the contrary: '*Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?*' Yea, and as it should seem, for this reason, because '*they shewed before of the coming of the Just One*,' (Acts 7:52). Some there were that trembled at the Word of God in their mouths, but by the most they were ridiculed and despised, and made a jest of (Hos 9:7). The prophet was the fool in the play. '*Wherefore came this mad fellow unto thee?*' (II Kings 9:11) said one of the captains concerning one of the sons of the prophets. The Gentiles never treated their false prophets so ill as the Jews did their true prophets, but, on the contrary, had them always in veneration. The Jews' mocking of the messengers of the Lord, killing of the prophets, and stoning of them that were sent unto them, was as amazing, unaccountable an instance of the enmity that is in the carnal mind against God, as any that can be produced. And this makes their rejection of Christ's gospel the less strange, that the Spirit of prophecy, which for so many ages was the glory of Israel, in every age met with so much opposition; and there were those that '*always resisted the Holy Spirit*' in the prophets, and '*turned that glory into shame*,' (Acts 7:51). But this was it that was the measure-filling sin of [the Jews] that brought upon them both their first destruction by the Chaldeans, and their final ruin by the Romans (II Chron 36:16, '*But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy.*') [and even then, only after the expiry of forty years' probation].'

¹⁶⁹³ Rev 11:3-13

Firstfruits

'Properly speaking, the offering of the firstfruits belonged to the class of religious and charitable contributions, and falls within [the] present scope only insofar as certain of them had to be presented at the Temple at Jerusalem. Two of these firstfruit offerings were public and national; namely, the first omer,¹⁶⁹⁴ and the wave-loaves at Pentecost. The other two kinds of 'firstfruits'....were offered on the part of each family and of every individual who had possession in Israel, according to the Divine directions¹⁶⁹⁵....where the [family and individual part of the] ceremonial to be observed in the Sanctuary is also described.'¹⁶⁹⁶

The fact of the matter is this: there were but two public and national firstfruit offerings. The first, the wavesheaf / omer during Unleavened Bread, represents Christ. The second, the two waveloaves at Pentecost, complete with leaven signifying sin, represents the two witnesses who take the red road to martyrdom, being the final two martyrs. That, in bare terms, gives an indication of the standing of the two witnesses. Not only are they the first into the kingdom after Christ,¹⁶⁹⁷ and destined for the highest position available in the kingdom,¹⁶⁹⁸ they have a church, public, and national office before God that by every account is an unique one.

Christ said that if He did not find faith on His coming, He would smite the entire earth with total destruction: *'Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet¹⁶⁹⁹ before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.'*^{1700 1701}

That same faith, much magnified in the 'elect,' allied to the preaching of the gospel as a witness unto the entire world at the time of the end, are the singular achievements of the two witnesses. As such, in low form, the witnesses are seen as redeeming such as can be redeemed of the end-time, utterly evil world from the dire penalty of sin: *'total destruction.'* There is no Elijah before the very end, for he has come already in the form of John the Baptist. But there are two who perform a much deeper and more intense service at the time of the end, immediately prior to Christ's Second Coming. As such, they stand for all Israel, with their expressive representation in the form of the Pentecost wave-loaves ceremony entirely apposite.

¹⁶⁹⁴ at the feast of Unleavened Bread.

¹⁶⁹⁵ Ex22:29,23:19,34:26; Num 15:20,21,18:12,13; Deut 18:4,26:2-11

¹⁶⁹⁶ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Temple, Its Ministry and Services as they were at the time of Jesus Christ*, pp.375,376 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁶⁹⁷ Lev 23:17b, *'they are the firstfruits unto the Lord.'*

¹⁶⁹⁸ most probably that of archangel, q.v. inf.

¹⁶⁹⁹ John the Baptist, q.v. John 11:10

¹⁷⁰⁰ Hebrew: cherem, *'total destruction.'*

¹⁷⁰¹ Mal 4:5,6

Precedent

The two faithful witnesses to the children of Israel, after the escape from Egypt, were Caleb¹⁷⁰² and Joshua, from the tribes of Judah and Ephraim¹⁷⁰³ respectively, so, following scriptural precedent, the two end-time faithful witnesses will hail from the same two tribes.¹⁷⁰⁴ These two tribes are also identified in the uniting of the children of God in the kingdom which follows.¹⁷⁰⁵

The two witnesses will be first-born males, since the firstborn of Israel, if male, is holy unto the Lord,¹⁷⁰⁶ and also they will be the firstborn or regenerated to eternal life of all mankind, save our Lord, Jesus Christ. Due

¹⁷⁰² Caleb, the faithful witness from the tribe of Judah, was of Idumean stock, according to his genealogy.

¹⁷⁰³ Ephraim means: *'I will bring forth fruits.'*

¹⁷⁰⁴ exhibiting duality, very common in prophecy, with the former pointing out and illuminating the later fulfilment.

¹⁷⁰⁵ q.v. two sticks bound together in Ezek 37:16,17

¹⁷⁰⁶ Ex 13:2,11-13; the fundamental idea of the sacrifice in the Old Testament is that of substitution, in the case of the redemption money for that which cannot be offered to God, where the firstborn after the flesh—from that which is natural—is reserved to be a vessel in bringing forth the firstborn after the spirit—leading to that which is spiritual. The continuing status of the redeemed firstborn males of Israel is seen in what happened when the baby Jesus was presented at the temple: Luke 2:22,23, *'And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord).'* The presentation of that crucial firstborn was not accompanied by any recorded redemption money payment, but it must have been, given the phraseology used in Luke 2:39a (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), *'And when they [Jesus' parents] had performed all things according to the law of the Lord.'*

Immediately after the replacement tablets of the Law were given at Horeb, the fathers were instructed to redeem their male firstborn (Ex 34:20c), which Orthodox Jews do to this day for their firstborn males, giving five temple shekels (or local equivalent) to a priest at the time the child is thirty days or more old. This is not to be confounded or conflated with Psa 49:6-8 which deals with the rich taking wholly unfounded comfort and security in their personal wealth. Further considering the redemption made through prescribed money payment by / for the 273 *'overplus'* firstborn males of the children of Israel vis-à-vis the Levites, thus securing a one-for-one substitution of Levites for firstborn, 12,000 in each case, the money redemption system is first mentioned in Ex 34:20c (immediately after the golden calf / calves episode at Horeb), with the netting off / redemption / one-for-one substitution process taking place almost a year later (q.v. Num 1:1b), in Num 3:38f.

The status of the firstborn before the Lord is given earlier, in Ex 22:29b, *'the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me.'* But at Horeb something went dreadfully wrong. The whole of the children of Israel rebelled and fell to idol worship, and the Levites, owing to their willingness to kill the ring leaders, etc., were taken instead of the firstborn males for the purpose of service before the Lord in connection with the system God then set up: the sacrificial system, instituted as a result of those transgressions. The K.J.V.'s Num 3:12, *'And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the firstborn that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel: therefore the Levites shall be mine,'* contains a calamitous translation error. In context, Hebrew: tachath, does not mean *'instead,'* or *'in lieu of,'* but *'from under,'* the root word, Hebrew: towach, meaning *'depress'* or *'humble.'* So the Levites were elevated to service in the sanctuary, not under the ancient covenant system per se (Gal 3:17-19, especially v.17, where the Abrahamic covenant is linked down through to Christ, as the sacrificed firstborn (but note that the Latin Vulgate and the Ethiopian texts and some others omit *'in Christ'* in v.17a); cp. Gen 22:1-20), but under the formal sacrificial system and codified Law which post-dated that Abrahamic covenant by four hundred and thirty years. In order to accomplish this, the Levites replaced the firstborn for God's instituted ritual / sacrificial tabernacle and Temple service through the netting off of their respective numbers by the *'overplus'* payment of temple shekels by or for 273 firstborn, cf. Num 3:44f. That was for the sanctuary / temple-based system, and the Levites were approved of God to undertake therein the service aspects, serving or ministering to the priests and the people, and assisting the priesthood in teaching the people God's judgements and the Law, cf. Deut 33:8-11 which gives Moses's blessing on the tribe of Levi. Levitical Temple service included: carrying the Tabernacle and its vessels when Israel travelled in the desert; serving as the choir and orchestra of the Temple; guarding the Temple as watchmen and doormen; and, assisting the priesthood whenever possible in discharging the priestly service.

to being in the position of facing the most evil empire of all, that of the Antichrist assisted by the false prophet, and to the timing and manner of their resurrection, they are probably destined to become two archangels,¹⁷⁰⁷ the highest rank in the kingdom of God available to man.

It is probable that one witness, of Judah, is to be sent to the Israelites; the other, of Ephraim, to the Gentiles.¹⁷⁰⁸ *'God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name.'*¹⁷⁰⁹ When Jacob

But the 'levitical covenant,' Jer 33:20-22; Mal 2:1-8, etc., became profaned and rendered worthless, turning the people away from God rather than to Him. In effect, it was found utterly worthless! This is also seen in Heb 8:6-8, where the old covenant is deemed '*not faultless*,' viz., '*deserving censure*,' as a result of the misdeeds of the tribe of Levi and the Israelites as a whole. And so a new covenant was instituted—effectively commencing at Pentecost, 30AD—which is still in its incipient stage: no one in the church has been '*born again*' as a spirit being, and will not be until Christ returns '*in the air*' for His 'elect,' the real firstborn, (Rom 8:29; Col 1:18; Heb 12:23) (It follows that the entire new covenant, to fructify and prove up to completion with the new heavens and new earth, will take almost three millennia, out-to-out). In addition, there is no temple service for the Levite (until the profaned Third Temple is built), so the tithe falls, in its entirety, to the priesthood. Correspondingly, the Levite and the levitical role effectively fall out of the picture for the Judæo-Christian through redundancy, as well as through the '*once-for-all*' sacrifice of Christ.

Now, so far as anyone is aware, no Judæo-Christian male firstborn has been redeemed by his father (unless formerly he were from a religious Jewish family practicing Judaism), so the default, for the unredeemed, new covenant, Israelite would be for the firstborn to pay his own redemption money to an Aaronic priest (unredeemed adult Jews in Orthodox Judaism do this), and then he would be specifically dedicated to the service of the Lord, but only if in God's church, since it is only there that full and proper service to God can be undertaken. Remember, '*Because all the firstborn are mine....I hallowed unto me all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast: mine shall they be: I am the LORD*,' Num 3:12,13. That, in turn, means one must look to the seven eras of the church (the last four maintain until the time of the end). The very last, the only named after a woman, is worthless, and is spewed out. The only end time era not being criticized by the Lord is the Philadelphian era (just as the Smyrnan era was the only not criticized near the start), and it is in that era that one will find the firstborn taking the lead in God's service. The only way a Levite would be in that position would be if he were himself a firstborn, and in the true church of the Philadelphian era.

So Judæo-Christian observance is: no sacrifices; formal redemption of the firstborn males by payment of the prescribed redemption money to an Aaronic priest, and thus redemption through dedication to the Lord's service, for that statute still stands. In addition, the Judæo-Christian is redeemed through a far superior covenant, the New Covenant, cf. Mat 26:27,28 '*the blood of [Jesus'] new covenant*,' not paid in '*silver and gold*,' '*but with the precious blood of Christ*,' I Peter 1:18,19. The blood of Jesus is the price by which all children of God are purchased and set apart, sanctified.

One final point that some raise to substantiate the 'everlasting' replacement of the firstborn is found in Ex 34:19,20, where there are clean and unclean firstborn male animals mentioned. The clean are for sacrifice (again, that's in connection with the sacrificial system) and the unclean are to be redeemed, with special provision for the ass. The Masoretic text has its neck being broken if not redeemed, but the LXX has '*and if thou wilt not redeem it thou shalt pay a price*.' The reason why the ass is selected, to be redeemed by a lamb or young sheep, is that it was the ancient steed of kings, which Christ rode into Jerusalem. The proponents of the 'unclean' hypothesis claim that this is a reference to original sin, which is ridiculous; that doctrine is wholly pagan, q.v. inf. There is no original sin in Judæo-Christianity. Despite this, the claim is that male firstborn children, by dint of original sin, are unclean, and correspondingly must be redeemed at all times. But that is simply to conflate the ancient Levitical provisions under the sacrificial law with a pagan concept (and why just the firstborn? and why just males?) and then attempt to bundle it all together and shoehorn it into the Judæo-Christian church, which would be ludicrous. A further contention cited in support of the original sin hypothesis is that Jesus was not redeemed by His parents insofar as it is not specifically mentioned in Luke 2:22-24 falls (an argument from silence) as Luke 2:39a notes that: '*they had performed all things according to the Law of the Lord*.' Performing all requirements of the Law would also encompass payment of the redemption money. To any claim that that child, alone amongst all others, did not need redemption, is this, Mat 3:15b, at the time of His baptism, which provides the answer, when John initially objected to baptizing Christ: '*Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness*.' In accordance with the Law, all the male firstborn in Israel and in the Judæo-Christian church should be redeemed from death for the service of God.

¹⁷⁰⁷ at the moment, there is only one archangel, Michael. The Ranking of Angels is contained in the Appendix, as is the Ranking of Demons.

was blessing his children, and coming to the sons of his son Joseph, he crossed his hands, to hold his right hand—that signifying the superior blessing—on the head of the younger, Ephraim, rather than on the head of his elder brother, Manasseh. Joseph pointed out the error or anomaly, as he saw it, but Jacob was adamant, for it was God’s will that it be so: Ephraim was to be the greater. Joseph himself had inherited the rights of the firstborn, for his brother Reuben had been deprived of them,¹⁷¹⁰ and now the firstborn rights were going to his younger progeny.¹⁷¹¹ The reason why that is so is that out of Ephraim the fullness of the Gentiles¹⁷¹² is to be brought forth due to the end-time work of the faithful witness to the Gentiles from that tribe, reflecting the faithful Promised Land witness given by Joshua. Ephraim, uniquely, is to fulfil both roles, for Ephraim, in the Old Testament, is often used as a synonym for the Israelites.¹⁷¹³ He was identified as the appointed firstborn, inheriting the physical blessings of that position and, additionally, through the end-time witness, Ephraim will be instrumental in passing on the much greater blessings of the Spirit to the Gentiles, to those destined to receive them.¹⁷¹⁴

The other witness, from Judah, could come from Israel, or the USA, or Britain, or anywhere else in the Jewish diaspora. Unfortunately, to many, Judah presents problematically: a tract appearing at the conclusion of the parable of the vineyard, wherein the wicked husbandmen kill the son of the owner of the vineyard¹⁷¹⁵ has Christ pronouncing: *‘Therefore I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given*

¹⁷⁰⁸ Gen 48:19 last phrase, in the K.J.V. (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), is translated: *‘and his seed [Ephraim’s] shall become a multitude of nations,’* the latter two words from the Hebrew: mello ha-goim. It can be translated equally literally as: *‘and his seed shall become the fulness of the Gentiles,’* a phrase referenced by Paul in Rom 11:12,25; Hebrew: mello answers exactly to pleroma in the Greek: *‘fulness.’*

¹⁷⁰⁹ Acts 15:14

¹⁷¹⁰ I Chron 5:2b, *‘but the birthright was Joseph’s.’*

¹⁷¹¹ Jer 31:9, *‘I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.’*

¹⁷¹² Rom 11:12,25; Wilson, John, *Sixty Anglo-Israel Difficulties Answered* (published posthumously in 1877), comments, in #13:

‘The ‘multitude of nations,’ promised to come of Ephraim, is doubtless the ‘fulness of the Gentiles’ referred to by the Apostle,’ also seen in Eph 3:3-6, ‘How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in a few words. Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ). Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.’

¹⁷¹³ this means that one of the two witnesses will come from wherever the tribe of Ephraim now finds itself: Britain, Northern Ireland (but not the Republic of Ireland, for that too, is of a different Israelite tribe, in the main, although there are Anglo-Irish (i.e., Norman Irish) and others (English settlers in and around Dublin, within the Pale, dating from the time of Queen Mary), Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, etc.

¹⁷¹⁴ in passing, it might just prove possible to identify the Ephraimite witness in advance, given that the start and finishing dates of the witnessing have already been established elsewhere, q.v. inf. and ‘The Seven Seals of Revelation’ spreadsheet. While the major blessings are to Israel, Isa 61:1-22 also speaks de minimis (Latin) of the unique blessings of Ephraim in the current era, although the latter part extends into the Millennium. Isa 61:16 reads: *‘Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shall suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.’* It is possible that just as Ephraim has benefited from physical blessings derived from the Gentiles, the end-time Ephraimite witness, the epitome summa cum laude (Latin) of that tribe, will be similarly blessed.

¹⁷¹⁵ an analogy to the Jews’ involvement in the death of Jesus.

to a nation¹⁷¹⁶ that will bring forth the fruits.¹⁷¹⁷ That receiving nation or tribe, patently, is Ephraim. The tribe of Judah, the Jews, as a group, are to have the kingdom taken from them, and have not and will not be involved in the dissemination of God's word to the Gentiles, or, indeed, around the world. The Jews' national religion, Judaism, is an inward-looking, highly esoteric, and, to a surprising extent, highly defensive and isolationist form, and nothing to do with Judæo-Christianity. So why would a member of that tribe be one of the two end-time witnesses? Admittedly, it is the individual and not the tribe that matters in the final analysis, and, of course, given the amount of interbreeding since the time of the patriarchs, and the Jews' insistence on their lineage being traced through the maternal line, the second witness may not even be aware of his Jewish connection at all.¹⁷¹⁸

Two witnesses

The most fundamental point of all is that there are two witnesses. In biblical terms, the minimum testimony from two witnesses was necessary to sustain a judgement against an accused at trial: *'It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two witnesses is true.'*¹⁷¹⁹ By way of similar testimony, Christ sent out his disciples two-by-two to the lost sheep of the house of Israel during His ministry.¹⁷²⁰

In this time of treading down, God has reserved to Himself His faithful witnesses,¹⁷²¹ who will not fail to attest the truth of His word, and the penalty on all having the mark of the Beast, and on the Beast himself, and on his kingdom, and on the False Prophet, and on the Whore, and on all her harlots. They will also witness to the imminent coming in all power and glory of Christ, and the kingdom of God.

As to habit and posture, these two witnesses are to prophesy clothed¹⁷²² in sackcloth, representative of their deeply distressed state of mourning over the then state of the world, and its imminent punishment.

The reference to the *'two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth,'* is to Zechariah: *'And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man is wakened out of his sleep. And said unto me. What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and, behold, a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof. So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord? Then*

¹⁷¹⁶ Greek: ethnos, equally meaning 'tribe.'

¹⁷¹⁷ Mat 21:43

¹⁷¹⁸ if, as speculated and developed elsewhere in this work, the Antichrist proves to be Jewish or of Jewish descent, then the bulk of the religious Jews, probably almost to a man, will follow him by reason of his deeply occult tendencies and occult learning, cf. Dan 8:23, things which adherents of that religion tends to hold in very high regard. If Jewish, he is certainly of the Kabbalistic tradition—a highly occult, esoteric sect, rooted in demon-channelled Satan worship. This would make another interesting antithesis: one Jew a witness for Christ; the other, the Antichrist, possessed by Satan.

¹⁷¹⁹ John 8:17

¹⁷²⁰ Mat 10:1-15

¹⁷²¹ Latin: ad finem fidelis, 'faithful to the end.'

¹⁷²² Greek: periballo, 'clothed,' meaning 'thrown around,' in the passive sense. It is God who will cause them to be clothed thus, but without ashes, q.v. sup., for they need sorrow and repent of nothing personally.

*the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord....Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then he said, these are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.*¹⁷²³ The intervening verses¹⁷²⁴ are paranthetical, and refer to Zerubbabel, prophesying of the success of his endeavours in reconstructing the Temple.

*'The two anointed ones' can also be rendered as 'the two sons of oil,' or 'the two shining ones,' or 'the two firstborn'*¹⁷²⁵ *of the Holy Spirit.'* The K.J.V. translation is problematical, leading many to the conclusion that the two witnesses are anointed unto death in a physical sense, but this is not necessarily a valid conclusion, although those whom God appoints to any service, he anoints for it. There is, of course, the anointing of the Holy Spirit, which is applicable here: *'But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is true, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him,'*¹⁷²⁶ but notwithstanding this spiritual anointing, by far the best translation, in the context of the two wave-loaves of the feast of Pentecost and the references in the eleventh chapter of Revelation, is the latter: *'the two firstborn of the Holy Spirit.'*

Two wave-loaves

'The peculiar offerings on the feast of Pentecost—two wave-loaves—were accompanied by related, concomitant sacrifices. These consisted of seven lambs of the first year, without blemish, one young bullock,

¹⁷²³ Zech 4:1-5, 11-14

¹⁷²⁴ Zech 4:6-10; the Tanakh has the closing phrase: *'those seven are the eyes of the Lord, ranging over the whole earth,'* speaking of the Lord's omniscience.

¹⁷²⁵ the two witnesses not only must be firstborn males, they must also be firstborn males dedicated to the service of the Lord, for only the dedicated firstborn—in terms of Num 3:12-22,46-48,51,18:15—can be holy unto the Lord. Redeeming (or, better, *'preserving,' 'releasing,'* or *'severing,'* from Hebrew: padah, from the curse of the firstborn at the time of the Passover, meaning *'protection'*) a firstborn from the curse and execution in Ex 13:15 (corrected K.J.V. translation in square brackets): *'And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I [release (Hebrew: padah)].'* Failure to redeem and to dedicate to the special service of God, q.v. Ex 13:13,34:20, leaves the firstborn no longer reserved for that service. The Levites, who supplanted the firstborn in terms of ministering unto the Lord, q.v. Num 3:12,13, are also useless in performing that service, for as a body they are wedded to Judaism. It follows that the end-time witness from the tribe of Judah, q.v. sup., is unlikely to be a Levite. (This unredeemed state is not to be confused with Jesus' redeeming mankind from the penalty of death under the Law for sin, q.v. Gal 3:13).

¹⁷²⁶ I John 2:27

and two rams for a burnt-offering, with their appropriate meat-offerings;¹⁷²⁷ and then '*one kid of the goats for a sin-offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace-offerings*.'¹⁷²⁸

As the omer of barley at the wave-sheaf ceremony during the feast of Unleavened Bread was the first-ripened in the land, so the '*two wave-loaves*' were prepared from the very best wheat grown in the best district of the country, conditions similar to those of the barley sheaf. Similarly, three seahs, or about three pecks and three pints of wheat¹⁷²⁹ were cut down, brought into the Temple, thrashed like other food offerings, and then ground and sieved.

From the flour thus obtained, two omers (or double the quantity of that obtained from the barley sheaf) were used for the two loaves, while the balance might be redeemed and used for any purpose. Care was taken that the flour for each loaf should be taken from one-and-a-half seah, that it should be separately kneaded with lukewarm water (like all thank-offerings), and separately baked—the latter in the Temple itself.¹⁷³⁰ The loaves were made on the evening preceding the daytime festival (i.e., on the evening of the day of Pentecost). According to the Mishnah,¹⁷³¹ each loaf was four handbreadths wide, seven long, and four fingers high, with the dough weighing about 5¾ lbs,¹⁷³² yielding just over 5 lbs.¹⁷³³ of bread.

Contrary to the common rule of the Sanctuary, these loaves were leavened,¹⁷³⁴ which, as the Mishnah informs,¹⁷³⁵ was the case in all thank-offerings.¹⁷³⁶ But that is not all. Let it be remembered that these two loaves, with the two lambs that formed part of the same wave-offering, were the only public peace- and thank-offerings of Israel; that they were accompanied by burnt- and sin-offerings; and that, unlike ordinary personal peace-offerings, they were considered '*most holy*,' as were all public peace-offerings.¹⁷³⁷ The '*most holy*' sacrifices were slain at the north side of the altar, the less holy at the east or south side.

¹⁷²⁷ i.e., food-offerings.

¹⁷²⁸ Lev 23:19

¹⁷²⁹ 29 litres.

¹⁷³⁰ separate baking signifies the witnesses' independence of each other. There is no immediate commonality such as would be found through immediate or near family ties. They come from two different tribes, and their passage to the truth and their exalted position can only be through the independent operation of God's Power, the Holy Spirit. It could also refer to the likely difference in task allotted to the witnesses: one sent to Israel, the other to the Gentiles.

¹⁷³¹ meaning 'material to be learned by repetition.'

¹⁷³² 2.62 kg.

¹⁷³³ 2.28 kg.

¹⁷³⁴ the wave-loaves were leavened because the witnesses, like all of the rest of Israel, are leavened by imperfectness and sin, thus needful of a sin-offering. The two loaves were not, however, mixed with or anointed with oil, nor were they applied with frankincense. There is to be nothing joyous about their deaths to God's people, although the wicked will rejoice, q.v. Rev 11:10.

¹⁷³⁵ Me. v.1

¹⁷³⁶ Lev 7:13

¹⁷³⁷ the peace-offering, also known as the completion-offering, was always the last offered of a series. This is appropriate here, for the two witnesses will be the last of the 'elect' to be killed by the Beast Empire.

The idea of a public thank-offering was further borne out by all the services of the day. First, the two lambs were waved while yet alive; that is, before being made ready for use.¹⁷³⁸ Then, after their sacrifice, the breast and shoulder, or principal parts of each, were laid beside the two loaves, and ‘waved’ (generally towards the east) forwards and backwards, and up and down....the meaning of the movement being to present the sacrifice, as it were, to God, and then to receive it back from Him.¹⁷³⁹

After burning the fat, the flesh belonged, not to the offerers, but to the priests. As in the case of the ‘most holy’ sacrifices, the sacrificial meal took place within the Temple itself, nor was any part of it to be kept beyond midnight. This, incidentally, accords precisely with the time of Christ’s arrival for His ‘elect.’¹⁷⁴⁰ One of the wave-loaves and of the lambs went to the High-priest; the other of each belonged to all of the officiating priesthood.

Lastly, after the ceremony of the wave-loaves, the people brought their own free-will offerings, each as the Lord had prospered him, the rest of the feast day being spent in partaking of the festive meal, to which the stranger, the poor, and the Levite were bidden as the Lord’s welcome guests.

As the bringing of the omer of spring barley¹⁷⁴¹ marked the start of the period when the barley might be used in the land, so the presentation of the wave-loaves marked when new flour might be brought for meat-offerings in the Sanctuary.^{1742 1743}

Even though the two wave-loaves were leavened, indicating sin, they were the only leaven ever brought into the Temple, for the Lord counted them holy unto Himself.¹⁷⁴⁴ This was demonstrated after the waving and

¹⁷³⁸ or, rather, signifying their use while alive.

¹⁷³⁹ in this instance, since the flesh belonged not to the offerers, q.v., the waving actually represents the witnesses’ travel as newly-created spirit beings to meet with Christ ‘in the air,’ partaking in the wedding feast, then to return to earth at the mount of Olives. The back and forth to the east reflects the direction from which Christ will return to Jerusalem, and the ancient custom of going out to meet a superior dignitary and then accompany him back to the city. The witnesses, spirit beings, simply could not return to their former mortal fellow-inhabitants of the earth. They will be part of the Lord’s transformed ‘elect.’

¹⁷⁴⁰ at midnight on Pentecost, 2027, q.v. inf.

¹⁷⁴¹ q.v. inf.

¹⁷⁴² cp. Lev 7:34

¹⁷⁴³ Edersheim, Alfred, *The Temple—Its ministry and services as they were at the time of Jesus Christ*, §§5,6,13, pp.264-266

¹⁷⁴⁴ when God chooses the messenger, appoints the mission, and dictates the message, what matter the limitations of His servant? It is He who is pledged to secure success. Some have chosen to see in these two leavened loaves a synchronous connection with the parable of the leaven in Mat 13:33, ‘Another parable spake he unto them: The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.’ Gill, John, *Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible*, on v.33, explains: ‘The measure here designed, is the Hebrew: seah, which held a gallon and an half, and three of these made an ephah.’ An ephah corresponds not with the waveloaves, which were but two and of a different measure—two tenth deals of meal, cf. Lev 23:13a,17a, which Gill on v.17 identifies as ‘the quantity of two tenth parts of an ephah, or two omers of wheat flour made into two loaves.’ Since the quantities are different, they cannot refer to the same thing. Leaven always indicates sin, as found in the sacrifice with leaven, in Amos 4:5, but the idea behind the parable is of something with sin transmuting into the whole kingdom of God, which is what the church will do, in due course, q.v. inf., three being the sacred number of completion, but not the most complete, which is seven. Three, therefore, indicates that

sacrificing of the two lambs¹⁷⁴⁵ by the priests partaking of the two loaves together with the breast and shoulder of the two sheep and the remaining meat from the congregational peace offerings. The wave-loaves were waved on the northern side of the altar, the most holy side, facing east, the direction from which Christ is to come.

Taking the reference to the spatial location of these two, they are seen standing by, or before, the Lord of the whole earth. They are also positioned on either side of a golden candlestick. The phrase '*standing before the God of the whole earth*,'¹⁷⁴⁶ has special embedded meaning. '*Before the Lord*' and '*before God*' are phrases with particular spatial connotation. In the Day of Atonement,¹⁷⁴⁷ the Bible instructs the High Priest to sprinkle blood on the corners of '*the altar that is before God*.'¹⁷⁴⁸ This expression refers only to the golden incense altar in the Holy Place, and never to the outer altar that stood in the court of the Temple. It follows that the two witnesses, '*standing before God*,' holds an unique position, as close to God as any mortal can be, other than the mortal Christ, for He was without sin.¹⁷⁴⁹ The gift of prophecy will be conferred in the last days, '*And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God....on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy*,'¹⁷⁵⁰ and on none more so than on God's two witnesses, '*and they shall prophesy an thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth*.'¹⁷⁵¹

From this, it can be seen that the standing and honour accorded these two witnesses is great indeed, for they are the first two raised of the dead: the firstfruits, after Christ, as seen from the ceremony of the '*wave-loaves*.' As a result, all others wait until these two are raised: they actually precede all the patriarchs, prophets, the other dead-in-Christ, and the one hundred and forty-four thousand then remaining alive into the kingdom.

further development will occur, as seen in Revelation chaps. 21,22, in the '*new heaven and the new earth*,' and God dwelling with His people, for evermore, Rev 21:1a,3.

The impressed meaning is brought out by Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, pp.186,187 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Leaven was a little piece of fermented dough which had been kept over from the last baking and had fermented in the keeping. Leaven is regularly used in Jewish thought for influence. Usually it is used for bad influence, because the Jews identified fermentation with putrefaction, and leaven stood for rottenness. Jesus had seen Mary take a little piece of leaven and put it in the dough. He had seen the whole character of the dough changed by that little piece of leaven. [Thus] the kingdom of God starts from the smallest beginnings, [and it] works from the inside. Until the leaven got into the dough it was powerless to help; it had to get right inside. We will never change men from the outside. New houses, new conditions, better material things only change the outside. It is the task of Christianity to make, not new things, but new men.' That said, leaven, by itself, does not denote or imply holiness.

¹⁷⁴⁵ rams, and so male, of one year old, cf. Lev 23:19b

¹⁷⁴⁶ Zech 4:14b; cf. Rev 11:4b; the rightful Lord of the whole earth and the God of the earth, Christ, John 1:1-3

¹⁷⁴⁷ Atonement actually means '*covering*.'

¹⁷⁴⁸ Lev 16:18 (sublinear emphasis added)

¹⁷⁴⁹ the close proximity pictured also leaves open the possibility of a theophany, along similar lines to that afforded to Paul, seen from Acts 22:14,15, '*The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldst know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldst hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard*.'

¹⁷⁵⁰ Acts 2:17,18; v.17b '*on all flesh*' has Greek: *pas* for '*all*,' but cp. Joel 2:28b, which does not have an Hebrew equivalent, despite the word '*all*' appearing in the K.J.V.

¹⁷⁵¹ Rev 11:3b

In the eleventh chapter of Revelation, the two olive trees are identified as being the two witnesses, as are the two candlesticks, which incidentally are not mentioned as being made of gold, although the connected golden supply pipes system logically suggests that they are. Candlesticks generally are representative of the church, down through its ages,¹⁷⁵² and this serves to highlight the standing of the witnesses, and their supply of the Holy Spirit: each equal to an entire church era, and that of the best of them, Smyrna and Philadelphia.¹⁷⁵³ In addition, it is reasonable to infer that the complex golden candlestick of Zechariah¹⁷⁵⁴ represents both Christ and the church: Christ from the gold, and the fact that it upholds and supports the seven lamps, and the church from the seven lamps themselves, being constantly supplied with oil, representing the Holy Spirit. In that case, the golden bowl indicates the overwhelming supply of the Holy Spirit, made available to the 'elect' in the Judæo-Christian church throughout its entire existence in the seven eras recited in the messages to the churches.¹⁷⁵⁵

The assemblage of golden pipes, mentioned above, from the two olive trees which feed oil into the bowl, is indicative of the key position of these two witnesses at the time of the end. Through them, and until their martyrdom and resurrection, pictured in the eleventh chapter of Revelation, the church is sustained by dint of the Holy Spirit coursing through them. And from where does the oil come? Is not a tree a form of conduit, elevating liquid from the earth to the branches and leaves? And who is therein called '*Lord of the whole earth?*' but Christ our Lord! And so the supply of oil, the Holy Spirit feeding into the church, originating in Christ, is both continuous and inexhaustible.

These two witnesses are supported and supplied during the discharge of their great work by standing before the God of the whole earth: Christ. It is He who gives them the oil of holy zeal, and courage, and strength, and comfort. It is He who sustains them. It is He who makes them as olive trees, whose lamps of profession are kept burning by the oil of the Holy Spirit, which they receive from God. And it is for this reason that during the three-and-a-half years of their witnessing, they are invincible. '*And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this wise be killed.*'¹⁷⁵⁶ This is, at once, defensive, and reactive. And strangely it also serves to prevent the 'untimely' deaths of the Antichrist and the False Prophet. By dint of their 'outward calm,' these two abominable misanthropes will be careful not to invite their own death, but, rather, they will encourage and send lackeys against the two witnesses in a continuous stream of what will become, in effect, a conveyor of utterly worthless human sacrifice, either in close proximity, or at a remove, by means of remote warfare devices.

¹⁷⁵² seen in the second and third chapters of Revelation.

¹⁷⁵³ q.v. *The Messages to the Churches*.

¹⁷⁵⁴ chpt. 4

¹⁷⁵⁵ sadly, not all have availed of it.

¹⁷⁵⁶ Rev 11:5

These two witnesses have power *'to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.'*¹⁷⁵⁷ Other translations have the closing phrase, *'as often as they wish.'* These make it appear that the nature and frequency of smiting is at the discretion of the two witnesses.¹⁷⁵⁸ However, the Greek translated *'they will,'*¹⁷⁵⁹ literally means *'desire,'* and is almost exclusively used to mean *'desire of God.'* It follows that perhaps a more satisfactory, faithful translation would be: *'to smite the earth with every plague, as often as if they desire,'* or *'as often as God desires.'* God-directed plagues, administered through the two witnesses, are against the earth and the water, in other words, the environment, and not directly against the wicked. The only ones killed by the witnesses are those seeking to end their witnessing prematurely in their death. This is meet, as it is Christ alone who will destroy His enemies, the wicked, upon His return.

It is known that the two witnesses are anointed with the Holy Spirit, and possibly anointed unto death, as was Christ.¹⁷⁶⁰ Given their *'stand[ing] by the Lord of the whole earth,'* and *'before the God of the earth,'* they are placed in an unique position, for they are mentioned prophetically in the Old Testament and similarly in the New Testament. They complete God's warning to mankind; the last warning before the final, seventh, trumpet. They are shown to have supernatural powers, for a period of three-and-a-half years, and when they are killed by the Beast from the bottomless pit, their dead bodies are resurrected after three-and-a-half days,¹⁷⁶¹ and they then ascend.¹⁷⁶² Save, in part, for those of the tribes sealed by the Holy Spirit, they are two of only four humans identified specifically by type in Revelation; the others being the Antichrist and the False Prophet. Two, pure, for human beings, and filled with the Holy Spirit; two evil beyond imagination, and orchestrated by Satan.

¹⁷⁵⁷ Rev 11:6

¹⁷⁵⁸ K.J.V. and others.

¹⁷⁵⁹ Greek: thelo.

¹⁷⁶⁰ Jesus' anointing with the Holy Spirit: Acts 10:38, *'How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.'* Luke 4:18, *'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.'*

The 'elect' are anointed with the Holy Spirit: II Cor 1:21, *'Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God.'* I John 2:27,28, *'but the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. And now, little children, abide in him; that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.'*

'Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat. But when the disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, to what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.' Mat 26:6-12 (this is not to be confused with the foot-anointing in Luke 7:36-50). The anointing in Bethany was presaged in a gift brought to the baby Jesus by the wise men in Mat 2:11: *'when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.'* Myrrh was used for embalming the dead.

¹⁷⁶¹ on the basis of one day for each year of their witness.

¹⁷⁶² q.v. inf.

Firstfruits & wave-loaves

Another fascinating correlation and precursor of these witnesses is found in the observance of God's annual holy days. The seven annual holy days or feasts of obligation, as they are sometimes termed, comprise the following, in order of appearance:

1. The Passover;
2. The Feast of Unleavened Bread;
3. Pentecost;
4. The Day of Trumpets;
5. The Day of Atonement;
6. The Feast of Tabernacles; and,
7. The Last Great Day.

Three are holy convocations / shalosh regalim¹⁷⁶³ festivals: Unleavened Bread, Pentecost and Tabernacles, as seen in the commandment, *'Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place where he shall choose;¹⁷⁶⁴ in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the Lord empty.'*¹⁷⁶⁵

To religious Jews, the entire seems to represent, in addition to the actual meaning inherent in each, the passage of a person through life, culminating in a gathering of the faithful and the joyous assembly. This, unfortunately, falls well short of the actual composite meaning. When God gave His church seven annual Sabbaths, He, in His wisdom, had a great purpose. Specifically, these days were given to keep God's church, His children, constantly in an understanding of God's great plan of redemption. The number seven reflects completion. Taken in this context, these annual Sabbaths display the following embedded meanings:

1. The Passover: the shedding of the blood of the Lamb, both presaged and reminds God's people of the blood sacrifice of Christ on the cross, guiltless, for their sins;
2. Unleavened Bread: the putting away of leaven, representing sin, which every Judæo-Christian must do. All must wholeheartedly repent and be baptised for the remission of sins, *'And he¹⁷⁶⁶ came into all the country*

¹⁷⁶³ often erroneously referred to as Hebrew: chag festivals. In Ex 10:9 and Judg 21:19 chag is seen referring to travelling to various feasts, not just the three recited, which are correctly called in Hebrew: shalosh regalim.

¹⁷⁶⁴ Jerusalem.

¹⁷⁶⁵ Deut 16:16

¹⁷⁶⁶ John the Baptist.

*about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.*¹⁷⁶⁷ This is an absolute requirement throughout the dispensation of the church. The wavesheaf ceremony, occurring during the feast of Unleavened Bread, does *not* represent Christ's awakening from the dead in the tomb in the cutting of the wavesheaf after the sunset closing the weekly Sabbath, despite the common but aberrant belief that He rose to present Himself to His Father on Sunday morning. Rather, the 'cutting off' symbolizes the end of His human incarnation, with His ascension to heaven fifty days later, and His subsequent return, the Second Coming, presaged in the priest waving the wavesheaf;

3. Pentecost: the Feast of Weeks, both the start and the culmination of the church era, presaging certain events at the time of Christ's return for the 'elect';¹⁷⁶⁸
4. Trumpets: the direct intervention in world affairs by Christ at the point of His Second Coming to the mount of Olives;
5. Atonement: the expiation of all sin,¹⁷⁶⁹ wherein Aaron / the High Priest cast lots on the two goats forming a single sin offering: one for the Lord, one for the 'scapegoat' or, better, the goat of departure¹⁷⁷⁰—one, ritually sacrificed, symbolising Christ's death; the other, presented alive before the Lord and then set free in the wilderness—described as '*a place not inhabited*,'¹⁷⁷¹ signifying Christ's ascent into heaven, where no human being resides and where no human can follow—with the entire symbolising the remission or dismissal of sin by the mercy of God through Christ, and Christ's remove, bringing cleansing, and atonement of mankind to God, and salvation;
6. Tabernacles: gathering of the 'elect' in the Millennium and all God's people for all eternity; and,
7. Last Great Day: the completion of God's plan—the fall of the angels; the fall of man; the sacrifice of the Lamb and the redemption and election of the faithful; and the punishment of the evil ones, with nothing left undone. All is completed, and in perfection, with attendant celebrations.

In the third listed, Pentecost, the formal conduct of the ceremony performed by the priests, in addition to the first-fruit offering of the seven species of fruit,¹⁷⁷² involved the twin loaves baked from the newly harvested

¹⁷⁶⁷ Luke 3:3

¹⁷⁶⁸ q.v. inf.

¹⁷⁶⁹ Lev 16:5-10

¹⁷⁷⁰ Hebrew: Azazel, '*complete removal*.'

¹⁷⁷¹ Hebrew: midhbar, not an absolutely waterless desert, rather, in earthly terms, the reside and range of the pastoral nomad.

¹⁷⁷² seven reflecting the completion of the firstfruits.

wheat. These two wave-loaves were prepared from wheat grown in the best district in the country, and were offered without either oil or frankincense. The loaves—comprising, as noted, the only leaven ever brought to the Temple—were held by the Jews to represent God's blessing on man's earthly, physical needs throughout the year, but, again, this falls woefully short of the embedded meaning.

The two loaves were waved on the northern side of the altar¹⁷⁷³ by a priest, facing east,¹⁷⁷⁴ together with an offering of two one year old lambs (young sheep) for the festival. The embedded meaning can be extracted by comparison with the wavesheaf ceremony which formed part of the earlier Feast of Unleavened Bread. That symbolised the resurrection of Christ and His ascension to heaven, as the first-fruit of the firstfruits, followed by His glorious return, simultaneously evident in all four corners of the earth, like lightning, *'For as lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.'*¹⁷⁷⁵ In a broadly parallel but heavily subdued manner, the two wave-loaves were waved from earth to heaven, to the east, to indicate an ascension and a return in glory, and also forward and backward to indicate their going forth to meet the royal Messiah, while the location of the waving of the twin loaves at the northern side of the altar signifies both their death at and ascension from that specific location,¹⁷⁷⁶ and the juxtaposition of the witnesses' death and resurrection with the then imminent return of Christ on the mount of Olives, immediately to the east. Being offered without oil or frankincense indicates that:

1. the death is not a joyous occasion—hence no oil—for they are clothed in sackcloth;¹⁷⁷⁷ and,
2. their violent deaths at the hands of pure evil are an affront before God—hence no frankincense—and as the wave-loaves contain leaven, signifying sin,¹⁷⁷⁸ it would be wholly inappropriate.¹⁷⁷⁹

The second part of the Pentecost wave offering, as already noted, was *'holy,'* the two lambs waved on the north and most holy side of the altar¹⁷⁸⁰ and then sacrificed and their flesh eaten only by the officiating

¹⁷⁷³ facing the direction the Messiah will come.

¹⁷⁷⁴ q.v. inf.

¹⁷⁷⁵ Mat 24:27

¹⁷⁷⁶ Rev 7,8,11,12

¹⁷⁷⁷ Rev 11:3c, *'sackcloth'* for mourning over what is to happen to the world, but not ashes, which would signify repentance for deadly sin; the witnesses have nothing over which to repent.

¹⁷⁷⁸ frankincense was one of the three gifts presented to the baby Jesus by the wise men: gold, frankincense, and myrrh, q.v. Mat 2:11. Since He was king, priest, and destined to die for the sins of others, but all the while remaining without sin, the gifts were wholly appropriate.

¹⁷⁷⁹ tree-sourced white resin or gum, highly fragrant when burned, mentioned in a listing of products in Ex 30:34. A pleasant offering to God, frankincense is a symbol of holiness and righteousness, something singularly lacking in the violence of their death at the hands of the forces of the Beast, q.v. Rev 11:7,8.

¹⁷⁸⁰ cp. location of the martyrdom of the two witnesses, sup.; the waving and then offering of the two lambs signified both their *'accepted as holy'* status and their slaughter.

priests within the Holy Place.¹⁷⁸¹ The lambs, a peace-offering at Pentecost,¹⁷⁸² signified not only the peace of the coming Millennium, and the unique and 'holy' role played by the witnesses in that sequence of events in finally filling the prescription of martyrdom, but also, as a completion-offering,¹⁷⁸³ with the completion of their testimony and great commission.¹⁷⁸⁴ Were there no 'elect' alive at the time of the end, the earth would have been destroyed, since the whole world would be worthless in God's eyes.

All this, however, begs the question of whether these two witnesses, out of all of mankind that have ever lived, and save only Christ, are the only two to enter heaven. We have the definitive word of Christ on the matter: *'No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man,'*¹⁷⁸⁵ so the answer to the dilemma is quite simple:

1. Sin, or its taint, cannot enter the third heaven and the heavenly throne of God, and, thus, all with or having had sin, including the two witnesses, are debarred from entering;
2. Christ's statement stands immutable;
3. The wave-loaves were not taken into the Holy of Holies, which represented heaven, but were waved on the north side of the altar; and,
4. The timing of the resurrection of the two witnesses, occurring just before the start of third and final woe, immediately precedes the raising of the dead-in-Christ.¹⁷⁸⁶

In other words, these two witnesses can be regarded as being 'the firstfruits of, and also with the firstfruits raised immediately prior to the third woe,' with the original firstfruit being Christ: *'But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.'*¹⁷⁸⁷

¹⁷⁸¹ in the Tanakh, the wave offering, of two lambs and two loaves at Pentecost, is called an 'elevation offering.' Elevating or waving an offering before the Lord, raising it up before the Lord, signifies sanctification and acceptance. Thus, in the instance of Aaron and his sons: Ex 29:23,24, *'And one loaf of bread, and one cake of oiled bread, and one wafer out of the basket of unleavened bread that is before the Lord. And thou shalt put all in the hands of Aaron, and in the hands of his sons; and shalt wave them for a wave offering before the Lord,'* and of the wavesheaf, in Lev 23:10d,11, *'ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.'* The two lambs at Pentecost again show the relative standing of the predilect, the two witnesses, the only two who are thus represented, apart from Christ.

¹⁷⁸² Lev 23:19

¹⁷⁸³ q.v. inf.

¹⁷⁸⁴ cf. Rev 11:4,7,8

¹⁷⁸⁵ John 3:13; despite this, some still contend, erroneously, that bringing leaven into the Temple signifies an ascent of those tainted with sin to the third heaven, before God's throne.

¹⁷⁸⁶ q.v. inf.

¹⁷⁸⁷ Cor 15:23; despite this barring from heaven for those having sinned, another passage sometimes quoted is a statement that seems to imply that Paul ascended into heaven. This appears in II Cor 12:1-5, *'It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body; I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the*

It follows that if the third heaven is barred to the two witnesses, then either the first or second heaven pertains: but which? The answer is found in Paul's epistle: *'For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead-in-Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.'*¹⁷⁸⁸ The two witnesses are taken up in a similar manner: *'And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.'*¹⁷⁸⁹ The witnesses are to be taken up to the first heaven, taken into the air in a cloud to meet the Lord in spirit form just as the other firstfruits are transformed into spirit, *'In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.'*¹⁷⁹⁰

The seven species of fruit in the baskets of firstfruits were also waived, representing the ascension of the firstfruits, the 'dead-in-Christ' and the then living 'elect,' to the first heaven, and their return to earth in glory with Christ. This ceremony was also held in the special area within the Temple complex *'between the hall and the altar,'*¹⁷⁹¹ in other words, to the north of the sacrificial altar. As noted, this area had a special sanctity, and entrance was forbidden to ordinary Israelites in the normal course.¹⁷⁹² The commandment concerning the firstfruits offering differed from all of the other sacrifices, however, in that the ordinary Israelites were commanded to fulfil the divine obligation in that very place, patently archetypal of the sanctity, position, and standing of the 'elect' of spiritual Israel.

Prophets

Turning now to other attributes of the two witnesses, it is very likely that they will comply with the general statement by Paul in Corinthians: *'For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after*

third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body; I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities.' Contrary to the comments contained in some expositions, Paul says that the passage relates to *'visions and revelations.'* The question he poses is expressed in terms of *'(whether in the body; I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth).'*—in other words, whether the revelation was in the body (a dream), or out of the body (a vision), Paul simply cannot tell. Patently, it is not a statement that Paul ascended to the third heaven, for that is barred to all except Christ.

¹⁷⁸⁸ I Thes 4:16-18

¹⁷⁸⁹ Rev 11:12

¹⁷⁹⁰ I Cor 15:52

¹⁷⁹¹ Wikipedia:

'The Hall of Hewn Stones (Hebrew: Lishkat ha-Gazit) was the meeting place of the Sanhedrin during the Second Temple period. The Talmud deduces that it was built into the north wall of the Temple, half inside the sanctuary and half outside, with doors providing access both to the temple and to the outside.'

¹⁷⁹² males entered and, together with a priest, waved their basket of firstfruits. Females were also permitted to enter the sanctified area to the north of the altar. Jewish sages are divided, however, on whether females—presumably head of a family or its sole remaining representative—were allowed to wave the basket with a priest; q.v. inf. for resolution.

*the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence.*¹⁷⁹³ The witnesses are described as prophets: *'And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand, two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.'*¹⁷⁹⁴ They are prophets, despite the belief in some quarters that there can be no further prophets as, in that view, prophecy is closed. The Bible says otherwise. But it should be noted that while their prophesying will be within the scope and purview of Revelation, it can go further in its detail: *'But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God,'*¹⁷⁹⁵ taken in tandem with, *'Howbeit when he [it], the Spirit of truth, is come, he [it] will guide you into all truth: for he [it] shall not speak of himself [itself]; but whatsoever he [it] shall hear, that shall he [it] speak: and he [it] will shew you things to come.'*¹⁷⁹⁶ While Scripture is complete, certain verbal prophecies through the Holy Spirit are yet to be revealed, just before the end.

They are also described as being given power by Christ, more fully expanded in, *'These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.'*¹⁷⁹⁷ These two witnesses are the conduits for the visiting of some of the plagues recited previously in Revelation in the form of some of the initial trumpets. They live until the time of the second woe. Only one more woe—the seventh trumpet, sub-divided into seven vials, or bowls—remains after their death and resurrection, until the Second Coming to the mount of Olives.

Markers

The exact, personal identities of these two remain closed, for the time being. Likewise, the personal identities of the Beast and the False Prophet remain closed.¹⁷⁹⁸ There are, however, certain indications of the witnesses' generic characteristics and origins. There are two of them, just as there were two named in Ezra¹⁷⁹⁹ who built the altar to God and who led the Temple rebuilding: Joshua and Zerubbabel, figured as representing the offices of church and state, respectively the religious and secular powers. Similarly, in the Transfigur-

¹⁷⁹³ I Cor 1:26-29

¹⁷⁹⁴ Rev 11:3

¹⁷⁹⁵ I Cor 2:9,10

¹⁷⁹⁶ John 16:13

¹⁷⁹⁷ Rev 11:6

¹⁷⁹⁸ q.v. inf. for identity of the next pope after Benedict XVI.

¹⁷⁹⁹ Ezra chpts. 3ff.

ation,¹⁸⁰⁰ Moses and Elijah, in vision, represent the offices of state and church, united under Christ. It might appear reasonable to conclude that, in a similar manner, of the two witnesses, one will represent the church and the other will represent the state. It is also easily within the bounds of possibility, as noted before, that one will be sent to the Israelite nations and one to the Gentile nations, although this does not have an exact parallel forerunner in the Bible. Admittedly, the numbers do not quite balance,¹⁸⁰¹ but there remains the possibility, given the condition of the end-time church, especially as all mankind is called, at least potentially: *'Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?'*¹⁸⁰² But there is a much better indication than this.

The two true witnesses during the time of the children of Israel's wanderings in the wilderness were Joshua and Caleb,¹⁸⁰³ ¹⁸⁰⁴ of the tribes of Ephraim and Judah respectively, who alone of the twelve spies gave a true account of what they have seen during their forty days in the Promised Land, and had faith in the Lord: *'And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of them that searched the land, rent their clothes: And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not.'*¹⁸⁰⁵ The response of the people is also recorded: *'But all the congregation bade stone them with stones. And the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel.'*¹⁸⁰⁶ The judgement of God on the other spies was telling and severe: *'Even those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the Lord. But Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of the men that went to search the land, lived still.'*¹⁸⁰⁷

Joshua and Caleb were the only two of those crossing the Red Sea forty years earlier when then over the age of twenty who, subsequently, were allowed to enter into the Promised Land: *'And the Lord's anger was*

¹⁸⁰⁰ Mat 17:1-9, Mark 9:2-10; Luke 9:28-36

¹⁸⁰¹ twelve disciples were allocated to the twelve tribes while Paul the Apostle and some assistants, Barnabus, Silas, Timothy, Titus, Luke, Mark, Philemon, and others, were allotted to the Gentiles.

¹⁸⁰² Rom 9:24

¹⁸⁰³ Caleb and Joshua were both called *'servants of the Lord,'* q.v. Num 14:24 and Josh 14:29 respectively.

¹⁸⁰⁴ the number two, in the Bible, denoted witness and testimony (q.v. Mat 18:19,20; Deut 19:15; John 5:30-33,36,37; Luke 24:44; I John 5:8; Rev 11:3,4,12:11).

A Jewish wedding needs two witnesses: one assigned to the groom, and one to the bride. The wedding witnesses are termed *'the friends of the bridegroom.'* The two witnesses of Revelation will, therefore, serve this purpose *'in the air,'* at the wedding feast of the Lamb. This gives added support to the contention that the two witnesses of Revelation chpt. 11 are the two who are destined to sit either side of Christ in His glory, q.v. v.21, with the plea of mother of James and John, Mat 20:20-23.

It is speculated that the assistant to the groom (Christ), likely will be the witness of the tribe assigned to the Gentiles: Ephraim; while the assistant to the bride (Israel), will be he of the tribe assigned to Israel: Judah. Ephraim is *'My first-born,'* the former Gentiles march into the kingdom before the Jews. If this is correct, Ephraim, therefore, tends the Christ, Judah to the *'firstborn'* and the *'firstfruits,'* q.v. Rom 8:29; I Cor 15:20,23,45; Col 1:5,18; Rev 1:5.

¹⁸⁰⁵ Num 14:6-9

¹⁸⁰⁶ Num 14:10

¹⁸⁰⁷ Num 14:37,38

kindled the same way, and he swore, saying, Surely none of the men that came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I swore unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob; because they have not wholly followed me: Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite, and Joshua the son of Nun: for they have wholly followed the Lord. And the Lord's anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation, that had done evil in the sight of the Lord, was consumed.¹⁸⁰⁸ They were the only two over the age of twenty at the outset that crossed both the Red Sea and the Jordan, and thus they did not need circumcision before crossing the latter. Most did, however, as no circumcisions had been performed during the wanderings in the wilderness. Joshua led the people into the Promised Land. It was Joshua to whom God spoke. This would appear to be archetypal of the two witnesses, circumcised in flesh and in heart. If correct, again this indicates that one witness will be of the tribe of Ephraim, and the other of Judah; the former to the Gentiles, the latter to Israel.

*'And he¹⁸⁰⁹ sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.'*¹⁸¹⁰ This verse is very interesting, endowed with much deeper meaning than apparent on but superficial reading. The Greek for *'last'*¹⁸¹¹ has eschatological import, meaning *'the last in time'*; that of *'first'*¹⁸¹² means *'first in rank'*; while *'servant'*¹⁸¹³ means *'one who executes the commands of another, especially of a master.'* Putting these together, the verse reads: *'And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desires to be first in rank, the same shall be the last in time of all [collectively], and the executor [or completer] of all [things].'* Given this, it can be read as a reference to the end-time witnesses and their position as the first two into God's Kingdom at the time of Christ's return.

There is also further likely correspondence of the two witnesses with part of the content of Jesus' words to the mother of two of the disciples: *'Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right*

¹⁸⁰⁸ Num 32:10-13; although highly speculative, given the propensity to duality and recurrence in Scripture, it might be that given the plea of the mother of Zebedee's children (James and John) in Mat 20:21b, *'Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom,'* and Jesus' response in v.23b, *'but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father,'* one of the two witnesses will be found to be named John, or possibly Jonathan, and the other, Yacov, or Jacob, representing Ephraim and Judah respectively. They could equally be a reiteration: Joshua and Caleb.

¹⁸⁰⁹ Jesus.

¹⁸¹⁰ Mark 9:35

¹⁸¹¹ Greek: eschatos.

¹⁸¹² Greek: protos.

¹⁸¹³ Greek: diakonos.

hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them¹⁸¹⁴ for whom it is prepared of my Father,¹⁸¹⁵ and, 'And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldst do for us whatsoever we shall desire. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? They said unto him, Grant¹⁸¹⁶ unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? And be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized: But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared.'¹⁸¹⁷

The request that James and John be allowed to sit either side of Christ in His kingdom¹⁸¹⁸ possibly had the answer given immediately beforehand.¹⁸¹⁹ It is obvious from the context that Christ had just been speaking on the matter, and that that had prompted the question. Matthew records Jesus' reponse: '*So the last shall be first, and the first last; for many be called, but few chosen.*'¹⁸²⁰ The last to be martyred, so fulfilling the prescription of the 'elect' slain for Christ, are the two witnesses. Being the first to rise, they rank the first in the kingdom, after Jesus Christ.

Transfiguration

Some have seen Moses and Elijah in these exalted positions, flowing from their reading of the embedded significance of the Transfiguration:¹⁸²¹ '*And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they*

¹⁸¹⁴ cp. Syriac Peshito: '*is not mine to give, except to those.*'

¹⁸¹⁵ Mat 20:20-23

¹⁸¹⁶ the word translated '*Grant*,' from the Greek: επο, is better rendered '*Command*.'

¹⁸¹⁷ Mark 10:35-40

¹⁸¹⁸ Mat 20:20-23; Mark 10:35-40

¹⁸¹⁹ Mat 20:16; Mark 10:31

¹⁸²⁰ Mat 20:16

¹⁸²¹ tradition claims that this took place on Mount Tabor, but this is unlikely in the extreme. Some believe the mountain is more probably a reference to Mount Hermon,¹⁸²¹ the highest in the vicinity of Caesarea Philippi, or one of its lesser heights.

saw no man, save Jesus only. And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.¹⁸²² Jesus was transfigured,¹⁸²³ the Greek indicating a transformation of essential form, proceeding from within.

Ample proof of the Transfiguration under Mosaic Law was afforded by the eye-witnesses Peter, James, and John. Peter records the event: *'For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye witnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And the voice that came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.'*¹⁸²⁴

While Moses and Elijah were, respectively, representatives of the Law and the Prophets, there is no indication here of their sitting enthroned on either side of Christ when He comes into His glory. Christ's place at the centre of the Law and the Prophets is clearly shown, but all three were seen standing, and, at that time, Christ had not even ascended to heaven to sit at the right hand of God, to wait until His throne be ready on earth, immediately following the time of His Second Coming. Neither was there any hint of prior allocation to Moses and Elijah in the subsequent exchange between Christ and two of his disciples who had been with Him on the mountain during the Transfiguration. The disciples obviously thought the positions either side of Christ to be open, and Christ did not refer them to the earlier Transfiguration scene, which He could have done with ease had the matter been otherwise.

Hypothesis

Under the circumstances, a potentially reasonable hypothesis¹⁸²⁵ is that the linking through the Holy Spirit of the two witnesses to Christ,¹⁸²⁶ allied to their being the firstfruits to rise, as seen from the wave-loaves of Pentecost;¹⁸²⁷ the manner of their rising, from death to mortal life;¹⁸²⁸ and the phrase *'standing before the*

¹⁸²² Mat 17:1-9; this account also repeated in Mark 9:2-10, where there is added, in verse 10: *'And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.'*

¹⁸²³ Greek: metamorphoo; in both Rom 12:2 and II Cor 3:18 it is used of the spiritual transformation of a believer's new nature.

¹⁸²⁴ II Peter 1:16-18

¹⁸²⁵ subject to the caveat recited in the 'Preamble' and 'Notes.'

¹⁸²⁶ Zech 4:11-14; Rev 11:4

¹⁸²⁷ and in Rev 11:11,12

¹⁸²⁸ Rev 11:11b, *'and they stood upon their feet,'* then ascending to the immortal, being a low mirror of that of Christ. In their anticipation, some may be tempted to suggest that the *'Spirit of life from God [which] entered into them, and they stood upon their feet,'* v.11a,b (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), is an indication that at that point the witnesses become immortal, but this falls for the Pentecost wave-loaves were leavened, indicating sin, and, in turn, mortality. Also, the word here translated *'Spirit,'* from the Greek: pneuma, means *'breath,'* found in mortal man. These events can be viewed, perhaps, as a very debased version [through sin] of the modus pertaining to Christ, for first there was a mortal resurrection from the grave, and then an immortal ascension to heaven.

*God of the whole earth,*¹⁸²⁹ with its particular spatial connotation, referring to *'the altar that is before God,'*¹⁸³⁰ mean that the two witnesses, *'standing before God,'* hold an unique position in that they are destined to stand and be enthroned either side of Christ in His glory, an event seen prophetically in the seraphim of Isaiah: *'I beheld the Lord seated upon a high and lofty throne, and the skirts of His robe filled the temple. Seraphs stood in attendance on Him. Each of them had six wings....And one would call to the other, Holy, holy, holy! The Lord of Hosts! His presence fills all the earth!'*¹⁸³¹ The house was filled with smoke.¹⁸³² Accordingly, Isaiah's personal projection into that time, in vision, is not immediate, but a foregleam of Christ enthroned on earth. It is intended not only to show that his sin, signified by his unclean lips, was purged away so that he could speak to the nation in a wholesome manner on the Lord's behalf,¹⁸³³ but that he would also stand in the inner court of the Lord, as a member of the immortal 'elect,' in the 'blessed time' of the Millennium of rest.¹⁸³⁴

Work of witness

The two witnesses' work is at the very time of the hegemony of the beast, the Antichrist. The measure of their success lies not in the magnitude or distribution of the end-time 'elect' who, as the end-time exposition of the church, must substantially predate the beast's hegemony, but in the size and composition of the *'great multitude,'* pictured at the start of the Millennium: *'And after this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.'*¹⁸³⁵ All people, Israelite and Gentile alike, are included here, so the witnesses' end-time warning is to all mankind, and not restricted to the children of Israel. That said, in time all will become assimilated into Israel, made clear in the description of the new Jerusalem

¹⁸²⁹ Rev 11:4

¹⁸³⁰ Lev 16:18

¹⁸³¹ Isa 6:1b-3, Tanakh version; cp. K.J.V. Isaiah 6:1-4 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): *'In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above [better: 'over against'] it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.'*

¹⁸³² Isa 6:4b; smoke in the physical temple here on earth is a sign of God's presence and power, q.v. Ex 13:21f. At the end of the building of the Tabernacle there came the words: *'Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud abode upon it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle,'* Ex 40:34f. It had been in this cloud that God descended to give Moses the Law, Ex 34:5. Once again, this strange mysterious luminous cloud appears when the first temple was dedicated by Solomon, q.v. I Kings 8:10f; II Chron 5:13f.,7:2. In lower form, Lev 16:13 commands the symbolic representation (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): *'And he [the high priest] shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not.'* It follows that the temple filled with smoke in Isa 6:4 can only be the Millennium Temple, from which the returned Christ will reign over the whole earth in glory, cf. v.3b: *'the whole earth is full of his glory.'*

¹⁸³³ q.v. the intrusion contained in Isa 6:5-7

¹⁸³⁴ q.v. inf.

¹⁸³⁵ Rev 7:9

which will come down from heaven:¹⁸³⁶ *'And the wall....had twelve gates....and the names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.'*¹⁸³⁷ The only entry into the new city, the new Jerusalem, will be by these twelve gates, with each gate specifically reserved for a tribe of Israel. Without tribal membership, entry will be impossible. Accordingly, complete assimilation of the Gentiles of the *'great multitude'* is a necessary prerequisite. In all of Scripture, the new Israel is never envisaged as a totally separate and new construction, but as the old Israel purified and reconstituted immortal. There is a form of continuity.

Martyred & raised

Whatever their eventual ranking in the kingdom of God,¹⁸³⁸ these two witnesses give their testimony, the final warning from God to a rebellious and apostate world, *'And when they shall have delivered their testimony, the Beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war with them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.'*¹⁸³⁹ The first mention in Revelation of the Beast from the bottomless pit occurs here and corresponds with the Beast in chapter thirteen.¹⁸⁴⁰ It will be seen later that this Beast is the head of the last revival of the Roman Empire, known universally as the Holy Roman Empire; one which historically has almost invariably been a Frankish, Germanic, or German-led or dominated power. This world-girdling temporal power will make war with the two witnesses and, at the last, overcome them and kill them.

Once the testimony of the two witnesses is completed, their final act will glorify Christ even to death, being slain by the Beast. The Beast carries out warfare against the witnesses until they are martyred, in Jerusalem, *'And their dead bodies shall lie in the street'*¹⁸⁴¹ *of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also*¹⁸⁴² *our Lord was crucified.'*¹⁸⁴³ Their *'dead bodies,'* literally *'fallen corpses,'* implies their being left where they fall.¹⁸⁴⁴ What appears to be the more correct translation—*'square'*—as has been seen, has given rise to the supposition that the two witnesses are to be martyred within the Third Temple compound itself, on the north side of the altar. Given the configuration of the Old City, as it now stands, and as discussed previously, it is difficult to suggest any seriously viable alternative, especially since in Hadrian's Ælia Capitolina, the *'holy area'*¹⁸⁴⁵ of the temple of Jupiter, built on the site of the second Temple, was called *'The Square.'*¹⁸⁴⁶

¹⁸³⁶ Rev 21:2

¹⁸³⁷ Rev 21:12

¹⁸³⁸ q.v. 'Ranking of Angels' in the Appendix.

¹⁸³⁹ Rev 11:7

¹⁸⁴⁰ Rev 13:1f.

¹⁸⁴¹ Greek: plateios (or plateia), *'square,'* and not *'street,'* literally meaning *'broad.'* The K.J.V.'s usual translation of *'street'* is translated *'lane'* in Luke 14:21, both coming from the Greek: rhumas.

¹⁸⁴² Rev 11:8c, *'where also our Lord was crucified,'* better as: *'where indeed our Lord was crucified.'*

¹⁸⁴³ Rev 11:8

¹⁸⁴⁴ they are not crucified, as some seem to suspect.

¹⁸⁴⁵ Latin: timinus.

¹⁸⁴⁶ q.v. sup.

The population of the city will assent to the work of the Beast. They will not allow the dead bodies to be placed in graves, an indignity of immense proportion in the East. Sadly, the city of Jerusalem of the time is characterised as Sodom, because of its wickedness, and Egypt,¹⁸⁴⁷ because of its oppression and enslavement of the people of God. Both names appear repeatedly in Scripture as the objects of God's unrelenting wrath. That it must be Jerusalem is confirmed in Christ's words, *'for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killeth the prophets.'*¹⁸⁴⁸

But this extreme malaise is not only to be found in Jerusalem. The complete depravity of the inhabitants of the earth is now exhibited in their celebration of the cessation of the very witness from God through these two men that proved so irksome and so tormenting to their incorrigible godlessness. They will carry out this wanton merriment in feasting, banqueting and in the exchange of souvenir gifts, while the bodies of the two witnesses start to visibly decay.¹⁸⁴⁹ In Jerusalem, and throughout the Judaic world, these days will encompass the Judaic calendar festivals of Shavuot / Shavuot II,¹⁸⁵⁰ to Jews a chag festival of religious celebration.¹⁸⁵¹ This universal merriment, however, is not destined to last long. Three and a half days will be the limit of it, and then there will be no further merriment available ever again to the former revellers. All the wicked merriment, particularly in Jeru-salem, will be turned rapidly into utter and abject terror.

Revelation accounts what will happen: *'And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them. And the same hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand.'*¹⁸⁵² *and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God in heaven.'*¹⁸⁵³ This glory given by the remnant, those survivors of the earthquake in Jerusalem, is superficial, an attrition;¹⁸⁵⁴ not the heartfelt self-loathing being the necessary precursor to repentance, baptism and the remission of sins. It is all too little, and all too late. The merry-makers, by their own actions, will have shown that they have rejected the last warning from God. The only ones in the position of being able to glory wholeheartedly will be the 'elect' then alive and those who have not taken the mark of the Beast or wor-

¹⁸⁴⁷ literally meaning 'black,' taken as a reference to Ham.

¹⁸⁴⁸ Luke 13:33b-34a

¹⁸⁴⁹ Rev 11:10

¹⁸⁵⁰ in the Judaic calendar, in the year in question, Judaism's chag festival of Shavuot falls on Friday, 11 June, with Shavuot II falling on 12 June.

¹⁸⁵¹ use of the Hebrew word chag for a so-called pilgrim feast is not universally adopted in the Old Testament. Chag can be applied to feasts other than those termed 'pilgrim.' In Ex 10:9 and Judg 21:19 chag is seen as actually referring to travelling to various feasts, not just the three recited. The correct term for the three feasts is Hebrew: shalosh regalim. Teruah is a chag at the last, for the spirit 'elect' come with Him to the mount of Olives on His glorious return.

¹⁸⁵² cp. II Kings 24:16, where the 7,000 taken captive were fighting men, 'strong and apt for war'—analogous of present-day political and military leadership.

¹⁸⁵³ Rev 11:11-13

¹⁸⁵⁴ spurious remorse / repentance arising out of fear of imminent punishment, motivated by an attempt to avoid it.

shipped his image and who will eventually comprise the multitude praising and serving the Lamb.¹⁸⁵⁵ Luke indicates that, on that day, it *'shall rain fire and brimstone from heaven'*¹⁸⁵⁶ on the heathen. God is not mocked: their punishment is underway.

Gone!

Not only have the two witnesses revived and ascended, but the dead-in-Christ are raised immediately thereafter,¹⁸⁵⁷ and then the 'elect,' all one hundred and forty-four thousand, are changed, *'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump.'*¹⁸⁵⁸ So far as the inhabitants of the earth are concerned, they disappear. This is the moment to which all of God's people have been instructed to desire. Mark contains this warning to those of the time of Christ and the apostles: *'Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.'*¹⁸⁵⁹ *And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.'*¹⁸⁶⁰ A more specific statement is found in Luke, this time addressed to those who will be alive at the time of the Second Coming: *'Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch,'*¹⁸⁶¹

¹⁸⁵⁵ Rev 7:9-17
¹⁸⁵⁶ Luke 17:29,30
¹⁸⁵⁷ I Thes 4:16,17
¹⁸⁵⁸ I Cor 15:52,53
¹⁸⁵⁹ Greek: *katheudo*, 'lying down to rest.'
¹⁸⁶⁰ Mark 13:35-37
¹⁸⁶¹ watches and related nomenclature:

Roman watches:

first watch	6pm–9pm	not mentioned in Scripture
second watch	9pm–midnight	Luke 12:38
third watch	midnight–3am	Luke 12:38
fourth watch	3am–6am	Mat 14:25

Jewish (and Greek) watches:

evening watch	6pm–10pm	not mentioned in Scripture
middle watch	10pm–2am	Judg 7:19
morning watch	2am–6am	Ex 14:24

Jewish daylight nomenclature:

first hour	7am
second hour	8am
third hour	9am
fourth hour	10am
fifth hour	11am
sixth hour	12 noon
seventh hour	1pm
eighth hour	2pm
ninth hour	3pm

and find them so, blessed are those servants.'¹⁸⁶² The 'elect,' who will know the due day of the Parousia, will not sleep on that day, such will be the sheer anticipation and excitement, and more especially, given the instruction to be ready, lest they 'miss' the glorious return of the Saviour. As that day is a chag feast, commanded to be kept in Jerusalem, they will be there, in the city, under divine protection, previously sealed in their foreheads,¹⁸⁶³ ready and waiting on that glorious night.¹⁸⁶⁴

Fast flow

Events now happen apace, with a warning: *'The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.'*¹⁸⁶⁵ This further confirms that the glory¹⁸⁶⁶ of the bulk of the surviving remnant really had no substance. There is not even the remotest expectation of an amelioration or improvement of conditions on earth, for with no wholesale and fundamental change in the heart of mankind in prospect, God's judgement must and will continue to its conclusion.

Revelation¹⁸⁶⁷ now returns to the trumpet judgements and the woes, last dealt with in chapter nine.¹⁸⁶⁸ *'And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.'*¹⁸⁶⁹ There is a fundamental translation error in this verse in that the plural is imported instead of the original singular,¹⁸⁷⁰ so the verse should read: *'the kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ.'* The kingdom of this world is the kingdom of Satan, for it is he who rules this world or age, as evidenced in Matthew: *'Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.'*¹⁸⁷¹ Satan's kingdom is transient, corrupt, and wicked. The kingdom of this world, at the time of the end, will be Satan's worldwide kingdom, the Beast kingdom, and this, when swept away, will be replaced by the kingdom of God. It is clear that this coming godly kingdom will not be founded, as some seem to think, by the subjection and submission of nations evangelised under the preached Gospel; but will be a kingdom founded on Christ

tenth hour	4pm
eleventh hour	5pm
twelfth hour	6pm

¹⁸⁶² Luke 12:37,38

¹⁸⁶³ Rev 7:3-8; q.v. sup.

¹⁸⁶⁴ cf. 'Seven Seals of Revelation' in Appendix.

¹⁸⁶⁵ Rev 11:14

¹⁸⁶⁶ Rev 11:13b

¹⁸⁶⁷ Rev 11:15-19

¹⁸⁶⁸ Rev 9:21

¹⁸⁶⁹ Rev 11:15

¹⁸⁷⁰ Greek: basileia, being singular.

¹⁸⁷¹ Mat 4:8,9

and in the ruin of those earthly kingdoms that collectively comprise the one existing kingdom of this current age: that of Satan. In contrast, the kingdom of God will last forever, the actual realisation being expounded later in chapters nineteen and twenty of Revelation.

As in chapter four of Revelation, the four and twenty elders once again worship God: *'And the four and twenty elders which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.'*¹⁸⁷²

Four things are in train of fulfilment at this time:

1. The rage of the nations: they have evidenced this many times, but now it reaches its culmination;
2. The wrath of God: no longer will supreme patience be manifest, the hour of His vengeance having arrived;
3. The rewarding of the 'elect'; and,
4. The destruction of the destroyers of the earth.

A fearful summary indeed!

Temple of God

Finally, to close off chapter eleven: *'And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.'*¹⁸⁷³ The view of a sizeable number of scholars is that this verse, the concluding verse of the chapter, rightly belongs with the following chapter. The inherent difficulty for many in this passage is that it is seen as a heavenly preview of an event to take place on earth, being a reference to the future earthly Temple, described in considerable detail in Ezekiel, which will exist during the Millennium. No serious expositor would ever attempt to claim that this reference is to the debased and profaned Third Temple, built by the Jews while in unbelief, often termed the 'Tribulation Temple,' as it would be the very antithesis. Neither can it be a reference to the *'new heaven and a new earth'*,¹⁸⁷⁴ since there is to be no temple structure in it.

An explanation to this difficulty can be gleaned, in part, from the Greek word translated as *'temple'*,¹⁸⁷⁵ which refers, in context, to the central and most holy sanctuary only, namely, the Holy of Holies, and not to the

¹⁸⁷² Rev 11:18

¹⁸⁷³ Rev 11:19

¹⁸⁷⁴ Rev 21:1a

¹⁸⁷⁵ Greek: naos.

entire Temple complex.¹⁸⁷⁶ As the central sanctuary in the Temple at Jerusalem represented the throne and sanctuary of God, the use of the word '*temple*' in the text in question is somewhat misleading. As a reference to the throne / sanctuary it becomes clearer, particularly when compared with, '*Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.*'¹⁸⁷⁷ Given that, it is reasonable to conclude that the event happens where it says it does: '*in heaven.*'¹⁸⁷⁸

The ark mentioned is held by many not to be the ark of the covenant, the Old Covenant, but another, the ark of the New Testament of Jesus Christ. The Greek word here translated '*testament*,'¹⁸⁷⁹ is also translated '*covenant*' in, for example, '*and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold.*'¹⁸⁸⁰

¹⁸⁷⁶ despite the Encyclopedia Americana stating that the word 'Temple' in the New Testament denotes 'the central sanctuary itself' if from the Greek: hieron; while if from Greek: naos it denotes 'the entire precincts of the sacred place, the Temple,' such definition does not allow for context, and appears here to have become juxtaposed.

¹⁸⁷⁷ Heb 8:1,2

¹⁸⁷⁸ Rev 11:19a

¹⁸⁷⁹ Greek: diatheke.

Barclay, William, *A New Testament Word Book*, pp.30,31 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'The word diatheke is the word which is translated '*covenant*.' It is one of the commonest of all words in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, and it is also a great New Testament word. It is a word which has a certain problem attached to it, and the solution to that problem will show us that in the word there is a whole theology and a complete view of the relationship between God and man.

In its ordinary, non-theological usage a '*covenant*' means 'an agreement entered into between two people.' It is occasionally so used in the Old Testament [LXX], e.g. of the '*league*' the Gibeonites wished to make with Joshua (Josh 9:6), of the '*league*' with the inhabitants of Canaan which is forbidden (Judg 2:2), of the '*covenant*' between David and Jonathan (I Sam 23:18).

But far more commonly it is used of the relationship entered into between God and man. It is so used of God's new agreement with man after the flood (Gen 9:12-17). It is specially used of God's agreement with Abraham (Gen 17:4-9). And it is used everywhere of the relationship and the agreement between the people of Israel and God (Deut 4:13,23). It is uniquely the word which is used to describe 'the relationship, the agreement' between God and the people of God. In the New Testament the old usages survive. The covenant with Abraham is still remembered (Acts 7:8). The covenant with the people of Israel is still stressed (Acts 3:25; Rom 9:4). But very specially it is used of that new relationship between man and God which was made possible by the life and death of Jesus (Mat 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; II Cor 3:6). In the New Testament it is a characteristic word of the letter to the Hebrews to describe this new and better relationship between God and man (Heb 7:22,8:6,9,10,12:24,13:20).

So far everything is straightforward, but the real problem is this—the normal Greek word for a covenant between two people is suntheke, which is the word everywhere used for a marriage covenant, or an agreement between persons or states. In all normal Greek in all ages, diatheke means, not a '*covenant*,' but a '*will*.' Kata diatheke is the regular term for 'according to the terms of the will.' Why should the New Testament never use suntheke and always diatheke?

The reason is this. Suntheke always describes 'an agreement made on equal terms,' an agreement which either party can alter. But the word '*covenant*' means something different. God and man do not meet on equal terms; it means that God, of His own choice and in His free grace, offered man this relationship, which man cannot alter or annul, but which he can only accept or refuse. Now the supreme example of such an agreement is 'a will.' The conditions of a will are not made on equal terms. They are made by one person and accepted by the other, who cannot alter them and who could not have made them.

Our relationship with God is not something into which we entered in our own right and on our own terms; it is something given to us solely and completely on the initiative and in the grace of God. Philo says, 'A covenant is a symbol of grace which God sets between Himself who extends the boon and man who receives it.' 'It is fitting for God to give and for a wise man to receive.'

The very word '*covenant*,' diatheke, is a word which in itself sums up our 'debt' and our 'duty' to God. We are in 'debt' because our new relationship to God is due to the approach of God and to nothing that we could ever have done. We

The question then arises as to whether the chapter eleven ark is that of the covenant, or another. The only other New Testament reference to an ark, other than Noah's vessel, is in the verse in Hebrews already cited. Given the lack of any other reference to an ark of the testament, the reference in Revelation is usually held by expositors to be to the ark of the covenant, the Old Covenant, although this view is not, by any means, unassailable, as will become evident.¹⁸⁸¹

Such a basic understanding could mean either that the ark of the covenant will be recovered on earth at some future point and restored to its place in what will then be the millennial Fourth Temple,¹⁸⁸² or it is already in heaven, having been reclaimed by God, depending on the interpretation placed on the first part of the vision. It should be noted that Ezekiel makes no mention of the ark of the covenant in his description of the millennial Fourth Temple in the entire of the fortieth through the forty-fourth chapters of his book, although his description is more a physical building description than an inventory of contents.¹⁸⁸³

Other references, although not to an ark, but to the future New Covenant, occur in Jeremiah, *'Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they break, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people,'*¹⁸⁸⁴ and also in Hebrews, *'But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if the first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I*

have a 'duty' because we have to accept God's conditions of love and faith and obedience, and we cannot alter them. The very word shows that we can never meet God on equal terms, but only on terms of submission and gratitude.'

¹⁸⁸⁰ Heb 9:4a

¹⁸⁸¹ q.v. inf.

¹⁸⁸² religious Jews hold a traditional belief that the ark of the covenant was secreted under the Temple Mount at the time of the Babylonian captivity and lies there, hidden, to this day. None of the various stories of the ark's supposed current whereabouts, regardless of whether in Aksum in northern Ethiopia, in the archives of the Vatican, in the vaults of Rosslyn Chapel (The Collegiate Chapel of St. Matthew, Roslin, Midlothian, Scotland), or buried and lost in ancient Babylon, etc., have any real claim to validity, but again, nothing cited would prevent the 'discovery' of a timely 'fake' or 'counterfeit,' should political and religious expediency demand it.

¹⁸⁸³ the Jewish Encyclopedia lists five items missing in the second Temple: the ark of the covenant; the Shekinah; the sacred fire (cf. II Chron 7:1-3); the Urim and Thummim; and the spirit of prophecy, while Easton's Bible Dictionary, article *The Second Temple*, lists four items missing: the ark of the covenant; the sacred fire; the Urim and Thummim; and the sacred oil.

¹⁸⁸⁴ Jer 31:31-33

*will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities shall I remember no more.*¹⁸⁸⁵ Thus the Revelation ark¹⁸⁸⁶ could be an ark of this future New Covenant.

It is this latter interpretation which supplies the better 'fit,' both in prophetic context and with the historical record to date, and it should be noted that Revelation chapter twelve opens with, *'And there appeared a great wonder in heaven.'*¹⁸⁸⁷ It follows, given what has been led, that the reference to the *'temple of God....opened in heaven'* is patently to the Holy Sanctuary in heaven. When this is taken in the context of the timing of the introduction of the New Covenant, the conclusion demanded is that the reference, *'And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament'*¹⁸⁸⁸ is one to the ark of the New Covenant.

This is bolstered by the Millennial condition of Israel seen in Jeremiah: *'Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion: And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall that be done any more.'*¹⁸⁸⁹ The Tanakh gives the concluding verse more clearly: *'And when you increase and are fertile in the land, in those days—declares the Lord—men shall no longer speak of the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, nor shall it come to mind. They shall not mention it, or miss it, or make another.'* This removes the *'visit it'* of the K.J.V., and, with it, the last possibility of an earthly manifestation of the Old Covenant ark. It must also be recalled that the Shekinah¹⁸⁹⁰—the presence and dwelling of God in the Holy of Holies—was very evident both in the tabernacle in the wilderness and in the First Temple, but was singularly missing in the Second Temple, and also must be missing in the Third, for it is profaned ab initio.¹⁸⁹¹

Finally, to complete Revelation chapter eleven, the concluding listing of *'lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail'*¹⁸⁹² presage the soon coming final judgement.

¹⁸⁸⁵ Heb 8:6-12

¹⁸⁸⁶ Rev 11:19

¹⁸⁸⁷ Rev 12:1

¹⁸⁸⁸ Rev 11:19

¹⁸⁸⁹ Jer 3:14-16

¹⁸⁹⁰ cf. Appendix, 'Shekinah.'

¹⁸⁹¹ admitted, insofar as the 2nd .-Temple is concerned, in Yoma 21.2.

¹⁸⁹² Rev 11:19b

Chapter 15

Woman, Red Dragon, & Child

The twelfth chapter of Revelation is another that has been the subject of a wide variety of wildly speculative interpretations and expositions. The first section or element comprises six verses: *'And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown¹⁸⁹³ of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns¹⁸⁹⁴ upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.'*¹⁸⁹⁵

This passage has caused great dispute as to the identity of the woman, being variously postulated as the church, Israel, and the Virgin Mary. Addressing these in reverse order, it is obvious that it cannot be a reference to Mary as key verses¹⁸⁹⁶ have no connection with the earthly mother of Jesus: she is not in heaven, being dead in the grave; she is not arrayed in splendour; she is not and cannot be crowned with a crown of

¹⁸⁹³ Greek: stephanos, a crown, a mark of royal or exalted rank; a prize won in competition; a reward of victory.

¹⁸⁹⁴ Greek: diadema, a kingly crown; a diadem; blue and white headband worn by Persian kings; turban or tiara.

¹⁸⁹⁵ Rev 12:1-6

¹⁸⁹⁶ Rev 12: 4,6,13-17

twelve stars, representing the twelve tribes, as she patently lacks the status, being of the tribe of Judah only;¹⁸⁹⁷ she did not flee into the wilderness for three-and-a-half years; and she received no known persecution. Despite its adoption of the abhorrent doctrine of the 'Immaculate Conception,'¹⁸⁹⁸ the Roman Church correctly identifies Mary as having given birth without any labour pains: *'Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.'*¹⁸⁹⁹ This, however, sits ill with chapter twelve's: *'And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.'*¹⁹⁰⁰

The second option cannot stand on its own since, in Revelation, a woman signifies a church, but Israel does have an adjunctive role in this as will be seen later. This woman-church signification is used in Revelation to define two distinct church organisations. The first mentioned is the true church, in vision shown as a great wonder in heaven,¹⁹⁰¹ wonderfully arrayed, clothed for her wedding, and crowned with twelve stars, one for each of the tribes of Israel. The other church is described later as a whore, and the mother of harlots. This, of course, is the great apostate religious organisation that has persecuted God's people down through the ages.

The reference to the church as being *'clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars'* indicates a complete, universal system,¹⁹⁰² and is reminiscent of Joseph's sun, moon and eleven bowing stars dream,¹⁹⁰³ with the crown of twelve stars not only referring to the twelve tribes, but also to the twelve apostles and the twelve gates of the new Jerusalem.¹⁹⁰⁴

Many have found that for them there is one insuperable difficulty with this exposition, however, and it has caused many to fail to secure the full and exact meaning, and it is this: If the woman is the church, then how could she bring forth a man child, Christ, as the Christian church was not formed until the conferring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost,¹⁹⁰⁵ while Christ himself was born about thirty-three years earlier.¹⁹⁰⁶ In other words, and in seemingly somewhat profane terms, the actual birth appears to have happened some considerable time before the arrival on the scene of the mother.

The answer lies in the adjunct, mentioned above. The church, often referred to as the congregation, was in existence long before the birth of Christ. Israel is frequently referred to as the congregation: *'And if the whole congregation of Israel sin through ignorance,'*¹⁹⁰⁷ and, *'Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel,*

¹⁸⁹⁷ despite being referred to in Luke 1:42 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets) as: *'Blessed [or 'highly-spoken of] art thou among women, and blessed [or 'highly-spoken of] is the fruit of thy womb.'*

¹⁸⁹⁸ viz., the Roman Catholic belief that Mary was born without sin.

¹⁸⁹⁹ citing Isa 66:7

¹⁹⁰⁰ Rev 12:2

¹⁹⁰¹ Rev 12:1

¹⁹⁰² sun, moon and stars.

¹⁹⁰³ Gen 37:9

¹⁹⁰⁴ Rev 21:21

¹⁹⁰⁵ 30AD ; Acts 2:1-8

¹⁹⁰⁶ c.4BC

¹⁹⁰⁷ Lev 4:13

saying, *In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb,*¹⁹⁰⁸ and, *'Therefore thou shalt have none that shall cast a cord by lot in the congregation of the Lord.'*¹⁹⁰⁹ There are hundreds of such references in the Old Testament and the reason for this is that the sceptre promises, *'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be,*¹⁹¹⁰ and the kingly line, including Christ, as seen from the New Testament genealogies,¹⁹¹¹ would continue until the coming of the Messiah. The last is a reference to Christ, at his Second Coming, in all conquering power and glory. The original promise, the original congregation formed as a result of the conditional covenant between God and Israel, was recorded in this wise: *'Therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all my people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do.'*¹⁹¹²

As a result of the promise made to the Fathers, the church was in Israel, the sceptre was in Judah, and the birthright was in Joseph, and, through Joseph, to Ephraim and Manasseh. The difference that occurred at that crucial Pentecost was the conferring of the Holy Spirit on a wide-scale basis, the free availability of the Spirit of God to those who would sincerely and humbly seek it. *'But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning....Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him [it] unto you.'*¹⁹¹³ Before this time, only a very select few had been imbued with the Holy Spirit, and then for very specific purposes. After that Pentecost, it became freely available on repentance and baptism for the remission of sins.

When taken in context, the apparent anomaly of the relationship of the birth before the arrival of the woman disappears and all becomes clear. The church has existed from ancient times. After that Pentecost, it became The Judæo-Christian church, the true Christian church, the very church Christ will wed on His impending and glorious return: *'Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he said unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of*

¹⁹⁰⁸ Ex 12:3

¹⁹⁰⁹ Micah 2:5

¹⁹¹⁰ Gen 49:10

¹⁹¹¹ Mat 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38

¹⁹¹² Gen 19:5,6,24:3

¹⁹¹³ John 15:26,27,16:7 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

God.¹⁹¹⁴ This 'wife' is the final exposition of the true but remnant church in the present dispensation, the only church generally imbued with the Holy Spirit, with all sin set aside, held pure and clean before the Lamb, together with all of the risen dead-in-Christ. This is not the Laodicean, but the Philadelphian remnant, purified, together with those few of Thyatira and Sardis of like disposition. The parable of the ten virgins¹⁹¹⁵ also refers, in part,¹⁹¹⁶ to those of the church—for virgin in Scripture refers to the church¹⁹¹⁷—who watch and wait and are ready: *'the bridegroom came: and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.'*¹⁹¹⁸ This shutting of the door barring the foolish virgins¹⁹¹⁹ only refers to an action after the election has entered the wedding feast of the Lamb. It is not 'dinner' in the purview here but the Greek, meaning 'early meal.'¹⁹²⁰ It is not the fullness of all that partakes of this, but only the 'elect,' comprising the first resurrection.

An indication of the existence of Satan-inspired persecution of the early Judæo-Christian church after its inception is found in Revelation chapter twelve: *'And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon: and the dragon fought and his angels. And prevailed not: neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the manchild. And to the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood, which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make*

¹⁹¹⁴ Rev 19:7-9

¹⁹¹⁵ Mat 25:1-10

¹⁹¹⁶ Mat 25:5, '*slumbered and slept.*' Slumbered means, literally, '*nodded,*' a transient act, the initial state of slumber or sleep. Mat 25:6; the translation '*to meet him*' can hardly convey the meaning of the Greek phrase, which implies a custom or familiar ceremony, involving the 'elect' '*coming forth unto a meeting.*'

¹⁹¹⁷ through chastity and purity.

¹⁹¹⁸ Mat 25:10

¹⁹¹⁹ the admonition in Mat 25:9c, '*but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves*' is better translated '*rather go and barter in the marketplace,*' a derisory comment, reinforcing the futility of their position: one cannot buy the Holy Spirit in the markets!

¹⁹²⁰ Edersheim, Alfred, *Jesus the Messiah*, p.769; Greek: apio-ton.

war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.'¹⁹²¹

The fundamental difference between the Old Testament manifestation of the church and the New Testament manifestation is that under the latter, the Holy Spirit and salvation is made freely available due to the blood sacrifice and resurrection of Christ. The Holy Spirit and salvation, moreover, is also extended to the Gentile peoples, *'For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.'*¹⁹²²

There is another interesting part exposition, part counterpoint, and part correlation with the travailing woman of chapter twelve:¹⁹²³ *'But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth'¹⁹²⁴ hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel.'*¹⁹²⁵ The reference to 'she which travaileth' cannot be a reference to the mother of Jesus bringing forth, for Jesus was without sin through His entire life, and labour pains are the result of Eve's sin in the garden of Eden,¹⁹²⁶ but travailing and bringing forth is a necessary precursor of Christ's remnant brethren, who were Jewish, returning to the children of Israel. Again this may seem impenetrable; are not the Jews the children of Israel? And, if that be so, how can they possibly return unto themselves?

The first part of the answer is found in Psalms: *'His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; If they break my statutes,'¹⁹²⁷ and keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and*

¹⁹²¹ Rev 12:7-17

¹⁹²² Rom 11:25,26

¹⁹²³ Revelation chpt. 12

¹⁹²⁴ Tanakh, 'bringeth forth.'

¹⁹²⁵ Micah 5:2,3

¹⁹²⁶ Gen 3:16

¹⁹²⁷ cp. Lev 18:5,25,19:19,20:8,22,25:18, 'Ye shall keep my statutes'; Hebrew: chok, 'statute,' shares same root as chakok, to 'engrave, carve, or chisel,' implying something unmoveable.

his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. *Selah*.¹⁹²⁸

The second element is found in both Old and New Testaments: *'But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.'* *'And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me¹⁹²⁹ whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. And I will bring a third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God.'*¹⁹³⁰

At the end of the current dispensation, when the church has been brought forth to glory, the Jews will see full well their error, and return to Israel in the form of its pure manifestation, the Judæo-Christian church. So *'she which travaileth'* refers to the trials and tribulations of the church from its inception to the time of the return of Christ.

Satan's wrath

The second wonder in heaven¹⁹³¹ is the seven-headed, ten-horned great red dragon. This passage refers to Satan, here depicted as a dragon in red because he is eager to shed blood, and to deceive. More correctly, the Greek¹⁹³² should be rendered *'great serpent.'* This can be cross-referenced with two other verses in Revelation,¹⁹³³ where Satan is also described as the serpent dragon, *'And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.'*¹⁹³⁴

Satan made an assault on God's angelic beings: *'And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought with his angels. And prevailed not: neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan,*

¹⁹²⁸ Psa 89:3,4,29-37

¹⁹²⁹ cp. John 19:37, *'look on him.'*

¹⁹³⁰ II Cor 3:14-16; Zech 12:10;13:9

¹⁹³¹ Rev 12:3-6; Rev 12:3, when taken in tandem with the Beast from the sea in chapter 13 and the description of the Beast in chapter 17, clearly identifies this seven-headed, ten-horned entity, directly linked to and deriving from Satan, as the last eruption of the (Holy) Roman Empire; Rev 12:4b, *'and the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born,'* shows the devouring intent of Satan against the true Christian church.

¹⁹³² Greek: drakon.

¹⁹³³ Rev 12:9 and, more particularly, Rev 20:2

¹⁹³⁴ Rev 20:2

which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.¹⁹³⁵ It is unusual to read of 'war in heaven'—which is the second heaven,¹⁹³⁶ and not the throne of God—but here the ultimate doom of Satan must begin, just as did his first sin develop on earth. These events are also recorded in Isaiah, *'How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High,'*¹⁹³⁷ and also in Ezekiel, *'Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.'*¹⁹³⁸

Just as Michael has a retinue of angels at his command, Satan has his followers. In the course of that war, the weaker foe was permanently dislodged, never to regain access to the second heaven. Christ saw this, a complex continuum, recorded in Luke: *'And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.'*¹⁹³⁹

Many have confused Christ's statement in Luke of a contemporaneous event with the original fall of Satan,¹⁹⁴⁰ or have taken it to be a reference to some end-time, final assault and repulsion during the climatic, latter stages of the Apocalypse. This is sometimes held to be supported by: *'How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which did weakenest the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most high. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did*

¹⁹³⁵ Rev 12:7-9

¹⁹³⁶ viz., that of the cosmos; q.v. sup.

¹⁹³⁷ Isa 14:12-14

¹⁹³⁸ Ezek 28:13-15

¹⁹³⁹ Luke 10:17,18; Gill, John, *Gill's Commentary* on Luke 10:17 (paraphrased and abridged):

'In order to abate their surprise, and reduce their transport of mind, Christ declares, 'I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven,' meaning, that this was no news to Him, nor any surprising event, that devils should be cast out of men, and be in a state of subjection; for as He existed as the Word before His incarnation, He was present, and saw him and his angels fall from the second heaven, from their first estate, their habitation of bliss and glory, down to earth and hell, upon their sin and rebellion, as violently, swiftly, and suddenly, as the lightning falls from heaven to earth.'

¹⁹⁴⁰ resulting in the destruction of the originally created universe, q.v. 'Creation or Evolution' and 'Gap theory.'

*shake kingdoms; That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?*¹⁹⁴¹

Isaiah chapter fourteen and Ezekiel chapter twenty-eight are consonant with a timeframe which can be deduced quite readily: *'And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation,*¹⁹⁴² *and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before God day and night.*¹⁹⁴³ *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood, which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.'*¹⁹⁴⁴ Since Satan, the Devil, the accuser of then existing, and previous brethren,¹⁹⁴⁵ was cast down and then proceeded to persecute the Judæo-Christian church, the time indication of when it happened must surely be found in Christ's literal words: *'I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.'*¹⁹⁴⁶

It would appear reasonable to assume that the Devil, already in command of the first heaven, encompassing the earth,¹⁹⁴⁷ would mount his attack from there on the second heaven at the time when he considered his opponent to be somehow weakened. Recall, Christ, in a weakened state through fasting for forty days, had previously been tempted by the Devil, who attacks when his prey is weakened: *'Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing. And when they were ended he afterwards hungered.'*¹⁹⁴⁸ Given that Satan was accusing the 'elect' *'before God day and night'* at the time of Job, and was subsequently *'cast down,'* it follows that when Christ reported that He saw the Devil being cast down to earth, He was human, on earth,

¹⁹⁴¹ Isa 14:12-17; Ezek 28:13-15

¹⁹⁴² when Christ came to earth, He laid the sin on the head of its originator: Satan. Only then did the death penalty pass on Satan, formally and legally.

¹⁹⁴³ cp. Job 1:6ff.

¹⁹⁴⁴ Rev 12:10-17

¹⁹⁴⁵ Satan's accusing is seen in Scripture when he was found accusing Joshua, the high priest: *'And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?'*

¹⁹⁴⁶ Luke 10:18b

¹⁹⁴⁷ Eph 6:12 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), *'For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness [literally, 'evil spirits'] in high places.'*

¹⁹⁴⁸ Luke 4:2; also cf. Mat 4:4; Mark 1:3

not in heaven¹⁹⁴⁹ at the time of His sighting. The Devil, therefore, would be undertaking an assault on the second heaven in the absence of one of the two immortal Jehovahs.¹⁹⁵⁰ It would appear, therefore, to be an entirely reasonable position to hold that the Devil would mount such an attack sometime during Christ's earthly tenure, particularly after his failure, in the Devil's view, to tempt Christ personally. In other words, Christ's report of what He saw,¹⁹⁵¹ was in '*beholding as a spectator*,'¹⁹⁵² and not as a commander or an active participant—a key point—and thus most certainly contemporaneous.¹⁹⁵³

The casting down of Satan to earth did not cease his accusing of the brethren, now done through and by his human agents and their demonic controllers. Christ clearly prophesied that often foremost amongst those through whom Satan would work would be the very family of the 'elect:' '*And a man's foes shall be they of his own household*.'¹⁹⁵⁴ Indeed, it is a time of '*Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea!*'¹⁹⁵⁵

Devourers

The flood from the mouth of the serpent, '*And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood*,'¹⁹⁵⁶ is identified correctly by Hislop as being false doctrine (resulting, without divine intervention, in bloody extirpation at the hands of the civil and military authorities), on account of emanating from the mouth of the dragon, rather than an actual deluge.

The phrase '*and the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born*,'¹⁹⁵⁷ has its pagan parody, well described by Hislop.¹⁹⁵⁸ The devouring Red Dragon

¹⁹⁴⁹ there are three heavens: first, the sky; second, the cosmos; and third, the throne of God; Satan, in his sin, cannot enter before the face of the Father, so the third heaven was and is debarred to him; also cp. Job 1:6,7; when Satan was cast down to earth at the time of Christ's ministry, he was also debarred from ever entering the second heaven.

¹⁹⁵⁰ though it was the archangel Michael with his host, acting on behalf of the two Jehovahs, who fought Satan at the time of Satan's first insurrection.

¹⁹⁵¹ Luke 10:18, '*And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.*'

¹⁹⁵² Greek: theoreo; Luke 10:18b, '*beheld*,' better as '*beheld as a spectator*.'

¹⁹⁵³ probably in 29AD.

¹⁹⁵⁴ Mat 10:36

¹⁹⁵⁵ Rev 12:12b

¹⁹⁵⁶ Rev 12:13

¹⁹⁵⁷ Rev 12:4b

¹⁹⁵⁸ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, pp.231-233:

'It will be observed, however, that the Great Red Dragon, or Great Fiery Serpent, is represented as standing before the Woman with the crown of twelve stars, that is, the true Church of God, "*to devour her child as soon as it should be born*." Now, this is in exact accordance with the character of the Great Head of the system of fire-worship. Nimrod, as the representative of the devouring fire to which human victims, and especially children, were offered in sacrifice, was regarded as the great child-devourer. Though, at his first deification, he was set up himself as Ninus, or the child, yet, as the first of mankind that was deified, he was, of course, the actual father of all the Babylonian gods; and, therefore, in that character he was afterwards universally regarded. As the Father of the gods, he was, as we have seen, called Kronos; and everyone knows that the classical story of Kronos was just this, that, "*he devoured his sons as soon as they were born*." Such is the analogy between type and antitype.'

Hislop further describes the rites of this abominable worship: 'There is reason to believe that the same practice obtained in our own land in the times of the Druids. We know that they offered human sacrifices to their bloody gods.'

was merely acting in type, seeking to devour the man-child, with the description, '*and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne,*' being a clear and obvious reference to Christ, the Firstborn of the dead,¹⁹⁵⁹ with the church's 'elect' following later, as firstborn.

Timeframe error

The next factor that causes dispute is the final reference in the entire passage under consideration: '*And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*'¹⁹⁶⁰

Those contending that a 'secret rapture to heaven' will occur before the three-and-a-half year Great Tribulation, usually known as the Pre-Millennial, Pre-Tribulational view,¹⁹⁶¹ by which means the true church will be spirited to God's heaven out of harm's way, read into the verse that the remnant are those who do not qualify for inclusion in the 'secret rapture.' Yet the very description of the remnant is that they, '*keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*' This is not a description of failure, of those falling short of entry level for inclusion in a 'secret rapture.' To the contrary, it is a description of the very 'elect.'¹⁹⁶² Indeed,

We have evidence that they made "*their children pass through the fire to Moloch,*" and that makes it highly probable that they also offered them in sacrifice; for, from Jer 19:5, we find that these two things were part of one and the same system. The god whom the Druids worshipped was Baal, as the blazing Baal-fires show, and the last-cited passage proves that children were offered in sacrifice to Baal. When "the fruit of the body" was thus offered, it was "for the sin of the soul." And it was a principle of the Mosaic law, a principle no doubt derived from the patriarchal faith, that the priest must partake of whatever was offered as a sin-offering (Num 18:9,10). Hence the priests of Nimrod or Baal were necessarily required to eat of the human sacrifices; and thus it has come to pass that "Cahna-Bal," the "Priest of Baal," is the established word in our own tongue for a devourer of human flesh.

Now, the ancient traditions relate that the apostates who joined in the rebellion of Nimrod made war upon the faithful among the sons of Noah. Power and numbers were on the side of the fire-worshippers. But on the side of Shem, and the faithful, was the mighty power of God's Spirit. Therefore many were convinced of their sin, arrested in their evil career; and victory, as we have already seen, declared for the saints. The power of Nimrod came to an end, and with that, for a time, the worship of the sun, and the fiery serpent associated with it. The case was exactly as stated here with regard to the antitype (Rev. 12:9): "*The great dragon,*" or fiery serpent, "*was cast out of heaven to earth, and his angels were cast out with him;*" that is, the Head of the fire-worship, and all his associates and underlings, were cast down from the power and glory to which they had been raised.'

¹⁹⁵⁹ Rom 8:29; Col 1:18

¹⁹⁶⁰ Rev 12:17

¹⁹⁶¹ q.v. sup.

¹⁹⁶² Rev 19:10 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), '*And I [John] fell at his [the angel's] feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*'

Eadie, John, Preface to *The National Comprehensive Family Bible*, p.ix, citing an account by Matthew Henry (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Concerning the prophets of the Old Testament, observe: That they were all holy men. We are assured by the apostle, that '*the prophecy came in old time by holy men of God,*' (and *men of God* they were commonly called, because they were devoted to Him), who spake as they were moved by the Holy [Spirit]. They were men '*subject to like passions as we are*'—so Elijah, one of the greatest of them, is said to have been, (James 5:17)—but they were holy men; men that in the temper of their minds, and the tenor of their lives, were examples of serious piety. Though there were many pretenders, that without warrant said, '*Thus saith the Lord,*' when He sent them not—and some that prophesied in Christ's name, but He never knew them, and they indeed were workers of iniquity, (Mat 7:22,23)—and though the

not only are the brethren specifically noted as having *'the testimony of Jesus,'* but also the Apostle John, and the angels in heaven, *'of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus.'*¹⁹⁶³ In the view of the 'secret rapturists,' and those wed to an end-time flight to a communal place of safety, these would be classed as 'outcasts.'

The error made by many stems, in part, from an error in perception of the timeframe. The flight of the woman, the Judæo-Christian church, was in the fourth-century; the duration of her hiding was one thousand, two hundred and sixty years, on a year-for-a-day basis; with the subsequent persecution the balance of the current dispensation, up until the return of Christ. To condemn the remnant of her seed, the 'elect,' as failing to attain the entry threshold of the kingdom, is both arrogant and blasphemous. Any such criticism or denigration of God's chosen 'elect' is fundamentally a criticism or denigration of God, and that is blasphemy, and is not to be taken lightly.

Martyrdom

Contrary to the widely held belief, there is nothing in Revelation that states that the end-time Judæo-Christian church will be taken to a place of safety before the onset of the Great Tribulation. Wealth beyond calculation has been amassed on the basis that one or other denomination, sect, or whatever, comprises or will comprise the only people that are to be so protected. The sole biblical foundation for such a contention seems to rest on the repetition of the flight of the woman, the church,¹⁹⁶⁴ the contention being that these are either both references to the same end-time event, or the former is a reference to the flight in the fourth-century and the latter is an end-time reference. But the end-time is described as a time of widespread martyrdom, *'And I saw the woman'*¹⁹⁶⁵ *drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration,'*¹⁹⁶⁶ and not a comfortable flight to a communal place of safety. In addition, the remnant in verse seventeen¹⁹⁶⁷ is clearly a reference to the 'elect.' If, previously, those 'elect' had been spirited away to a place of divine safety, then the dragon, the Devil, could not possibly make war with them, neither could the power of the holy people be scattered by the Beast,¹⁹⁶⁸ and neither could his religious agency, the apostate church, under the control of the false prophet, become drunken with the blood of end-time martyrs.

cursing, blaspheming lips of Ballam and Caiaphas, even then, when they actually designed mischief, were overruled to speak oracles—yet none was employed and commissioned to speak as prophet but those that had received the Spirit of grace and sanctification; for holiness becomes God's house.

The Jewish doctors universally agree in this rule, That the Spirit of prophecy never rests upon any but a holy and wise man, and one whose passions are allayed; or, as others express it, an humble man, and a man of fortitude; one that has power to keep his sensual animal part in due submission to religion and right reason.

¹⁹⁶³ Rev 19:10c

¹⁹⁶⁴ Rev 12:6,14

¹⁹⁶⁵ the apostate church, the 'whore,' q.v. inf.

¹⁹⁶⁶ Rev 17:6

¹⁹⁶⁷ Rev 12:17

¹⁹⁶⁸ Dan 12:7e

*'And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the Beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.'*¹⁹⁶⁹ Here is a prescription on those having part in the Millennium: not having worshipped the Beast, nor having the mark of the Beast upon their foreheads or their hands. These firstfruits live and reign with Christ. They have to die; they are beheaded. They are human and, thus, when beheaded,¹⁹⁷⁰ they die. The elect are martyred; not spirited away to a place of God-appointed divine safety. The era of martyrdom¹⁹⁷¹ started with righteous Abel, and is still continuing. The prescription has not yet been filled; not by a long way.

This is seen in Daniel, *'Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed'*¹⁹⁷²—more martyrdom, no spiriting away—and again, *'And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully,*¹⁹⁷³ *and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace*¹⁹⁷⁴ *shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.'*¹⁹⁷⁵ Cloaking his intentions in false claims of peace and security, with attendant but deeply deceptive claims of economic wellbeing and moral rectitude, this latter day king shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. For the holy this is martyrdom, not a safe and pleasant 'secret rapture to a place of safety.'¹⁹⁷⁶

¹⁹⁶⁹ Rev 20:4-6

¹⁹⁷⁰ the mode of execution, beheading, is not without significance, for it seems that it was the fate of Nimrod at the hands of Shem and his followers. This could import a form of delayed and massive vengeance meted out on the 'elect' by the forces of evil. Satan always seeks to repay in his own evil way. Interestingly, beheading by guillotining permits subsequent harvesting of body parts for medical or other uses. In other words, this is a form of cannibalism, a practice highly lucrative and dearly beloved of the dæmon heart. Interestingly, the French Revolution of 1793 brought in the widespread use of the guillotine, officially called the 'Holy Guillotine' and dubbed 'Madame Guillotine.'

¹⁹⁷¹ Greek: æra martyrum.

¹⁹⁷² Dan 11:33-35

¹⁹⁷³ 'destroy wonderfully,' from the Hebrew words sachath and pala, means to destroy or corrupt marvellously, extraordinarily, or wonderfully.

¹⁹⁷⁴ Hebrew: shalvah, 'security.'

¹⁹⁷⁵ Dan 8:23-25 (sublinear emphasis added)

¹⁹⁷⁶ despite this, there has even been the absolute folly of a western religious leader, Herbert Armstrong, (elsewhere identified as 'the foolish / idol / iniquitous shepherd' of Zech 11:15-17) attempting to secure exclusive rights to arid Petra in the Jordanian desert, of all places, as a place in the wilderness appointed by God—in the deluded mind of the

The Bible says that the 'elect' will be martyred, with few being spared—not at all lucrative for peddlers of the 'secret rapture to a place of safety,' but Christ did say, *'Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man a variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross¹⁹⁷⁷ and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it. He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.'*¹⁹⁷⁸ Moreover, we are faced with a verse which states, plainly, in the context of the Antichrist, that, *'it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.'*¹⁹⁷⁹ Martyrdom of the 'elect' at the time of the Apocalypse is neither optional nor avoidable. There is no communal safe haven; no divine place of safety; no Petra: just God, our ultimate Saviour and Redeemer. The 'elect' must be martyred until the prescription is filled.

The repetition of the flight to the wilderness, apparent in verses six and fourteen of chapter twelve, can be seen as a repetition signifying the certainty, immutability, and immediacy of God's decree.¹⁹⁸⁰ The 'elect' will flee, certainly, at the time of the Great Tribulation, but it will be by way of dispersal, anywhere, to avoid the attentions of the evil empire of the Beast. It is not to a communal place of safety, either on earth or in heaven.

man—as a place of safety for God's church during the Great Tribulation. What utter folly and confusion, but at the time, and for the sect concerned, apparently very lucrative. Wisely, King Hussein refused to accede to his deluded request.

¹⁹⁷⁷ here as a symbol of suffering, shame and martyrdom, and not as a repugnant pagan religious symbol of triumph.

¹⁹⁷⁸ Mat 10:32-40

¹⁹⁷⁹ Rev 13:7

¹⁹⁸⁰ a principle apparent from an inspection of Gen 41:32, *'And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass'*; also cp. Dan 5:25-30

Chapter 16

Mark of the Beast

The major contenders or main participants introduced in the course of the eleventh chapter of Revelation, the two end-time witnesses, are augmented by the delineation of two other, antipathetic, participants in chapter thirteen. Unfortunately, the chapter opens with a misattribution. The received text has: *'And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a Beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.'*¹⁹⁸¹ The corrected text allows for the substitution of *'he stood'* for *'I stood.'* Accordingly, the text should read: *'And he stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a Beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.'*

The reference to *'he'* is a continuation of the reference to the dragon, who is noted as having *'seven crowns upon his [seven] heads.'*¹⁹⁸² These *'crowns'*¹⁹⁸³ sit upon the heads of each of the eruptions of the seven Beast empires. In the following chapter, there is also a reference to ten crowns, described as being on the ten horns of this Beast, the translation *'crowns'* again from *'a crown or diadem of divine or other right,'* and once again satanically conferred by the king of this world. These crowns, however, do not sit on heads, as in a form of hereditary right, but, rather, on horns, the symbol of power, so these crowns must be acquired by force. The power conferred on these ten kings comes from Satan, via the Beast, and is principally a reference to the ten

¹⁹⁸¹ Rev 13:1; signifying various eruptions of the Roman Empire, q.v. inf.

¹⁹⁸² Rev 12:3b (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

¹⁹⁸³ Greek: diadema, 'a crown or diadem of divine or other right'; in this case, satanically conferred by the king of this world or age, Satan.

end-time ultimate kings 'who have power one hour with the Beast,' but it may also refer, de minimus, to the earlier, divided kings, also numbering ten, before three are fallen.¹⁹⁸⁴

It is the dragon of chapter twelve that stands upon the sand of the sea and views the Beast¹⁹⁸⁵ rising up out of the sea.¹⁹⁸⁶ The sea represents the masses and the multitudes of nations in tumult, as it is tossed under the influence of wind and tide, described in *'Woe to the multitude of many people, which make a noise like the noise of the seas: and to the rushing of nations, that make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters!'*¹⁹⁸⁷

First beast

In addition to the description contained in this first verse of the chapter, this rising Beast is further described thus: *'And the Beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered at the Beast.'*¹⁹⁸⁸ This passage gives the origin of the Beast: the sea. In the ancient fables of pagan mythology, the 'Beast from the sea' is Dagon.¹⁹⁸⁹

The 'wound' is developed further in being wrought by 'a sword.'¹⁹⁹⁰ The 'head' so wounded was the first, imperial Rome, which suffered death by the sword at the hands of the Huns and Goths,¹⁹⁹¹ but which was partially healed with Justinian's short-lived Imperial Restoration,¹⁹⁹² a precursor to its full end-time resurrection. And a telling reference is made to the first Beast: *'Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the Beast: for it is the number of a man: and his number is six hundred and threescore and six.'*¹⁹⁹³

Second beast

The second Beast appears later in Revelation chapter thirteen: *'And I beheld another Beast coming up out of the earth: and he had two horns like a lamb,'¹⁹⁹⁴ and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all of the*

¹⁹⁸⁴ q.v. inf.

¹⁹⁸⁵ Greek: therion, 'a wild or venomous beast.'

¹⁹⁸⁶ like Oannes, the pagan-messiah.

¹⁹⁸⁷ Isa 17:12; Rev 17:15,20:8

¹⁹⁸⁸ in Rev 13:2,3

¹⁹⁸⁹ i.e., Nimrod.

¹⁹⁹⁰ Rev 13:14d

¹⁹⁹¹ In 476AD

¹⁹⁹² In 554AD; the Byzantine-driven, but pale-image restoration did not survive much beyond the death of Justinian in 565AD. Byzantium discovered that it could not afford the cost of constant warfare and rapidly withdrew from the west.

¹⁹⁹³ Rev 13:18; q.v. inf.

¹⁹⁹⁴ Rev 13:11, 'And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon,' with Greek: ge, 'earth,' also meaning 'ground' or 'soil,' denoting a period of relative stability when compared with the turmoil surrounding the first beast's rise from the 'sea,' q.v. Rev 13:1a.

power of the first Beast before him, and causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first Beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders,¹⁹⁹⁵ so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of man. And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the Beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the Beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the Beast, that the image of the Beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the Beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the Beast, or the number of his name.¹⁹⁹⁶

There is an interesting parallel, recorded by Cripps, Richard S., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos*, p.216, footnote (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

‘The place name (Ashtaroth-Karnaim of Gen 14:5) had been derived from the goddess worshipped there—‘Ashteroth of the two horns.’ A representation of an idol 4½ inches [11cm] long, exhibiting Astarte [same goddess, different nation] with two rams’ horns, [was] found at Gezer.’

The last-in-line pope, in common with most of his predecessors, will be utterly infatuated with the goddess Astarte, called ‘Mary’ in the Roman Church. So identified will he be with her that his very being and demeanour will exhibit the most vile and debased, grovelling forms of pagan Marian devotion.

This ties well with the various ‘prophecies’ emanating from Roman Catholic mystics, where devotees are enjoined to pray to the Virgin, wear scapulars, etc., in order to escape the wrath of God.

¹⁹⁹⁵ It is important to note that the miracle worker is the False Prophet, not the Antichrist! II Thes 2:9, ‘*Even him, whose coming is after [better: ‘in accordance with’] the working of Satan with all power and signs [Greek: semeion, better: ‘that by which a person is distinguished from others’] and lying wonders [Greek: teras, better: ‘portents’ (of things to come)].*’ Correctly translated and understood, the Antichrist does not possess the spectacular, miraculous wonders and powers of the False Prophet, rather, the Antichrist fits and fulfils the prophetic expectations of the Jews and others. Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, p.69 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): ‘[Sensations were] the very method that the false-messiahs who were continually arising promised. Theudas had led the people out, and had promised with a word to split the waters of Jordan in two. The famous Egyptian pretender (Acts 21:38) had promised that with a word he would lay flat the walls of Jerusalem. Simon Magus, so it is said, had promised to fly through the air, and had perished in the attempt. These pretenders had offered sensations which they could not perform. Jesus could perform anything He promised. Why should he not do it?

There were two good reasons why Jesus should not adopt that course of action. First, he who seeks to attract men to him by providing them with sensations has adopted a way in which there is literally no future. The reason is simple. To retain his power he must produce ever greater and greater sensations. Wonders are apt to be nine day wonders. This year’s sensation is next year’s commonplace. A gospel founded on sensation-mongering is foredoomed to failure.

Second, that is not the way to use the power of God. “*You shall not put the Lord your God to the test,*” said Jesus (cp. Deut 6:16).

God expects a man to take risks in order to be true to him, but he does not expect him to take risks to enhance his own prestige. The very faith that is dependent on signs and wonder is not faith.’

In the end-time, there will come the sensation-pedlar par excellence: the false prophet. Rev 13:13,14a,15ab, ‘*And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast....And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image should also speak.*’

These sensational, miraculous abilities of the false prophet are tied inextricably to the physical presence / propinquity of the Antichrist: v.14a, ‘*he had power to do in the sight of the beast.*’ Mutual dependency binds them together, by Satan’s plan, in a mutually-enhancing, evil relationship. The Antichrist needs the false prophet for his spectacular miracles and crowd appeal, and the false-prophet needs the presence of the Antichrist to be able to do them. Both are bound in the maw of hell; doomed.

¹⁹⁹⁶ Rev 13:11-17; v.16d, ‘*receive a mark*’ is better translated ‘*to give, grant, or suffer himself a mark,*’ Greek: didomi autos, importing an active receipt and a wilful decision to take the mark.

This second Beast of chapter thirteen arises out of the earth; not the sea. In aggregate, therefore, these two Beasts cover the entire world: land and sea. The ruler of this world is Satan, demonstrated in the temptation of Christ: *'Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.'*¹⁹⁹⁷ Christ did not dispute that Satan has control of the kingdoms of the world, but His answer was simple and unequivocal: *'Then saith Jesus unto him, get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.'*¹⁹⁹⁸ This second Beast causes the whole world to *'worship the image of the Beast.'*¹⁹⁹⁹ It follows that the second Beast is of this world; Satan's world.

Like Satan himself, this Beast, the third member of the evil trinity of the Tribulation period, traffics in counterfeiting:²⁰⁰⁰ *'and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.'*²⁰⁰¹ Satan's agents are able to present themselves to all as messengers of light: *'For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.'*²⁰⁰² The second Beast has two horns, signifying civil and religious power, side-by-side, evident in the apostate, worldly, prostituted Babylonian religious system.²⁰⁰³ Some see the Roman mitre as two-horned. Abbots, who wear two-pointed mitres, were known of old as the 'horned ones.'²⁰⁰⁴

Roman church

The Roman Catholic Church is admirably described as a Cæsaro-papist, ecclesiastico-civil institution. The civil aspect, in the form of temporal power,²⁰⁰⁵ as it is generally received today, is taken to signify the sovereign civil rule which was exercised by the popes over the states of the church, with varying vicissitudes, from the middle of the eighth-century down to the year 1850 with its disbandment, and to 1870 when the last remnant of the papal states was annexed to Italy. During its latter stages, temporal power was reinstated under

¹⁹⁹⁷ Mat 4:8,9

¹⁹⁹⁸ Mat 4:10

¹⁹⁹⁹ Rev 13:15c

²⁰⁰⁰ hailing from 'the home of forgeries': the Vatican.

²⁰⁰¹ Rev 13:11b

²⁰⁰² II Cor 11:13-15

²⁰⁰³ viz., Rome.

²⁰⁰⁴ Pate, C. Marvin, *Reading Revelation: A Comparison of Four Interpretive Translations*, p.19:

'[W]ere known as the goruti, the horned ones;' this is apposite, given the close theological association with the two-horned Babylonian cow divinity: the goddess Astarte, the Virgin.

²⁰⁰⁵ *Scott's Commentary*, Vol. VI, p.5f6:

'The pope became universal bishop in 606AD. The pope became temporal prince in 756AD. The theory that the papacy was superior to all secular power, and which dominated the struggle between church and state for many, many centuries, was dreamt up by Gelasius I c.500AD.'

the Treaty of Vienna,²⁰⁰⁶ mainly through the friendly support of the non-Catholic countries of Russia, Prussia, and England, the papal states having previously been annexed by the French.²⁰⁰⁷ Temporal power was partially revived when the so-called 'Roman Question' was settled in a treaty concluded at the Lateran Palace²⁰⁰⁸ between the Roman church and the state of Italy, referred to therein as the kingdom of Italy, whereby the forty-four hectare²⁰⁰⁹ Vatican City State was recognised by the state of Italy, as were territorial immunities for certain outlying basilicas and monuments. At the same time the famous Lateran Concordat was completed, a substantial financial settlement in favour of the Roman Catholic Church was agreed in respect of reparation for lost territories, the settlement being 'full and final.'

Significantly, despite its manifold deficiencies, Judaism is not mentioned in Revelation in an end-time extirpative context, and militant Islam only indirectly in Daniel through association with '*the king of the south.*' The great religious evil at the end is apostate Christianity. Together with the Beast from the sea and the dragon himself, this Beast forms an horrendous trio of evil. These two worldly Beasts, designated as the '*beast*' and the '*false prophet,*'²⁰¹⁰ are the two main instruments of Satan on earth. Here is the culmination of the world's desire for the amalgamation or merger of political and religious power, the combination of church and state, with the apostate whore, the Roman Catholic Church—substantially aided and abetted her harlot Eastern and Russian Orthodox, Protestant and Non-conformist daughters—sitting astride a resurrected Holy Roman Empire. Collectively, these are more powerful and terrifying than anything seen previously on earth.

This Beast, the False Prophet, sponsors and promotes the first Beast, who is the head or Wilful King of the Holy Roman Empire, and who, with his military power is able to control the world, subject to the understanding that the coadjutor directs all worship to the Beast whose deadly wound was healed.²⁰¹¹ It is not without intent that Satan's final throw transpires at the focal point of the world's three monotheistic religions: Jerusalem.

Pagan antecedent

Hislop draws out the following from the intertwined briars of pagan belief on the archetypal false prophet: 'Now, in ancient Chaldea there was a type, also, of this. That god was called in Babylon Nebo, in Egypt Nub or Num, and among the Romans Numa, for Numa Pompilius, the great priest-king of the Romans, occupied precisely the position of the Babylonian Nebo. In Egypt this god was represented with the head and the horns of a ram²⁰¹²....The name Nebo, the grand distinctive name of this god, signifies "The Prophet," and as

²⁰⁰⁶ in 1815AD

²⁰⁰⁷ in 1798AD & again in 1809AD

²⁰⁰⁸ in 1929AD

²⁰⁰⁹ or 109 acres.

²⁰¹⁰ Rev 19:20

²⁰¹¹ Roman Empire; Rev 13:12.

²⁰¹² cp. Rev 13:11b, '*and he had two horns like a lamb.*'

such, he gave oracles, practised augury, pretended to miraculous powers, and was an adept in magic. He was the great wonder-worker, and answered exactly to the terms of the prophecy, when it said, "*he doeth great wonders, and causeth fire to come down from heaven in the sight of men.*"²⁰¹³ It was in this very character that the Etrurian Tages was known; for it was he who was said to have taught the Romans augury, and all the superstition and wonder-working jugglery connected therewith.

The greatest miracle which Rome pretends to work, is when, by the repetition of five magic words, she professes to bring down the body, blood, soul, and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ from heaven, to make him really and corporeally present in the sacrament of the altar. The Chaldeans pretended, by their magic spells, in like manner, to bring down their divinities into their statues, so that their "real presence" should be visibly manifested in them. This they called "the making of gods"; and from this no doubt comes the blasphemous saying of the Popish priests, that they have power "to create their Creator." There is no evidence, so far as I have been able to find, that, in the Babylonian system, the thin round cake or wafer, the "unbloody sacrifice of the mass," was ever regarded in any other light than as a symbol, that ever it was held to be changed into the god whom it represented. But yet the doctrine of transubstantiation²⁰¹⁴ is clearly of the very essence of Magic, which pretended, on the pronounciation of a few potent words, to change one substance into another, or by a dextrous juggle, wholly to remove one substance, and to substitute another in its place. Further, the Pope, in the plenitude of his power, assumes the right of wielding the lightnings of Jehovah, and of blasting by his "fulminations" whatever offends him. Kings, and whole nations, believing in this power, have trembled and bowed before him, through fear of being scathed by his spiritual thunders. The priests of paganism assumed the very same power; and, to enforce the belief of their spiritual power, they even attempted to bring down the literal lightnings from heaven; yea, there seems some reason to believe that they actually succeeded, and anticipated the splendid discovery of Dr. Franklin. Numa Pompilius is said to have done so with complete success....Such were the wonder-working powers attributed in the Divine Word to the beast that was to come up from the earth; and by the old Babylonian type these very powers were all pretended to be exercised.

Now, in remembrance of the birth of the god out of a "hole in the earth," the Mysteries were frequently celebrated in caves under the ground. This was the case in Persia, where, just as Tages was said to be born out of the ground, Mithra was in like manner fabled to have been produced from a cave in the earth.²⁰¹⁵ In these caves men were first initiated in the secret Mysteries, and by the signs and lying wonders there presented to them, they were led back, after the death of Nimrod, to the worship of that god in its new form. This Apocalyptic beast, then, that "*comes up out of the earth,*" agrees in all respects with that ancient god born from a "hole in

²⁰¹³ Rev 13:13

²⁰¹⁴ i.e., thaumaturgy.

²⁰¹⁵ Justin Martyr, *Apologies*, Vol II, p.193 (Footnote):

'It is remarkable that, as Mithra was born out of a cave, so the idolatrous nominal Christians of the East represent our Saviour as having in like manner been born in a cave. There is not the least hint of such a thing in the Scripture.'

the ground"; for no words could more exactly describe his doing than the words of the prediction: *"He doeth great wonders, and causeth fire to come down from heaven in the sight of men....and he causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed."*²⁰¹⁶ This wonder-working beast, called Nebo, or "the Prophet," as the prophet of idolatry, was, of course, the *"false prophet."* By comparing the passage before us [with the nineteenth chapter of Revelation], it will be manifest that this beast that *"came up out of the earth"* is expressly called by that very name: *"And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image."*²⁰¹⁷ As it was the *"beast from the earth"* that "wrought miracles" before the first beast, this shows that the *"beast from the earth"* is the *"false prophet"*; in other words, "Nebo."

If we examine the history of the Roman Empire, we shall find that here also there is a precise accordance between type and antitype. When the deadly wound of Paganism was healed, and the old Pagan Pontiff was restored, it was, through means of the corrupt clergy, symbolised, as is generally believed, and justly under the image of a beast with horns, like a lamb; according to the saying of our Lord, *"Beware of false prophets, that shall come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."*²⁰¹⁸ The clergy, as a corporate body, consisted of two grand divisions—the regular and secular clergy answering to the two horns or powers of the beast, and combining also, at a very early period, both temporal and spiritual powers. The bishops, as heads of these clergy, had large temporal powers, long before the Pope gained his temporal crown. Now, it was just exactly about the time that the Pope became universal bishop, that the custom began of systematically investing the chief bishops of the Western Empire with the Papal livery, the pallium,²⁰¹⁹ "for the purpose," says Gieseler, "of symbolising and strengthening their connection with the Church of Rome."²⁰²⁰ That pallium, worn on the shoulders of the bishops, while on the one hand it was the livery of the Pope, and bound those who received it to act as the functionaries of Rome, deriving all their authority from him, and exercising it under his superintendence, as the "Bishop of bishops," on the one hand, was in reality the visible investiture of these wolves with the sheep's clothing. For what was the pallium of the Papal bishop? "A dress made of wool, blessed by the Pope, taken from the holy lambs [sic] kept by the nuns of St. Agnes, and woven by their sacred hands"²⁰²¹ [sic]...."that it might be bestowed upon those whom the Popes delighted to honour, for the purpose, as one of themselves expressed it, of...."joining them to our society in the one pastoral sheepfold."²⁰²²

²⁰¹⁶ Rev 13;13,14a

²⁰¹⁷ Rev 19:20

²⁰¹⁸ Mat 7:15b

²⁰¹⁹ white woollen scarf-like vestment replete with red crosses.

²⁰²⁰ although initiated as early as 501AD, it was not systematically bestowed until 602AD.

²⁰²¹ Anon., *Rome in the 19th Century*, Vol. III, p.214

²⁰²² Giessler, Alfred, *Papacy*, Vol II, p.255; Kenner, T. A., *Symbols and their Hidden Meanings*, p.84 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'[Some] famous papal symbols include the pallium, a band of lambswool worn over the shoulders, with descending strips front and back so as to appear like the letter 'Y' in either direction. It is decorated with six black crosses and has

[In the matter of the overweening nature of all of this] we have the distinct evidence of both Guizot and Gibbon to this effect....from Gibbon we get light as to the real origin of what Guizot calls this "prodigious power." Gibbon shows that soon after Constantine's time, "the Church" (and consequently the bishops, especially when they assumed to be a separate order from the other clergy) gained great temporal power through the right of asylum, which had belonged to the Pagan temples, being transferred by the Emperors to the [so-called] Christian churches. "The fugitive, and even the guilty, were permitted to implore either the justice or mercy of the Deity and His ministers."²⁰²³ Thus was the foundation laid of the invasion of the rights of the civil magistrate by ecclesiastics, and thus were they encouraged to grasp at all the powers of the State. Thus also, as is justly observed by an anonymous authoress, speaking of the right of asylum, were: "the altars perverted into protection towards the very crimes they were raised to banish from the world."²⁰²⁴

At first these false prophets, in leading men astray, and seeking to unite Paganism and Christianity, wrought underground, mining like the mole in the dark, and secretly perverting the simple, according to the saying of Paul, "*The mystery of iniquity doth already work.*"²⁰²⁵ But by-and-by, towards the end of the fourth-century, when the minds of men had been pretty well prepared, and the aspect of things seemed to be favourable for it, the wolves in sheep's clothing appeared above ground, brought their secret doctrines and practices, by little and little, into the light of day, and century after century, as their power increased, by means of all "*deceivableness of unrighteousness,*"²⁰²⁶ and "*signs and lying wonders,*"²⁰²⁷ deluded the minds of the worldly Christians.²⁰²⁸

Confidence trick

The process continues to this day. The *modus operandi* to be adopted at the time of the end to ensnare a very large proportion of the world population in the belief that the Antichrist and the False Prophet are really from God is a rather simple one. Many so-called Christian denominations confidently expect that an end-of-days Elijah will come, just before the arrival of the Messiah. Judaism likewise has this profoundly mistaken belief. The Antichrist will set himself up as God, proclaiming that he is God, in effect, the Messiah. The False Prophet, in a

jewelled pins at one shoulder. It is thought to symbolize Christ as the "good shepherd," carrying the lamb on his shoulders. Earlier popes also held the right to walk under a red-and-gold banded canopy (Latin: umbraculum); to be fanned with large ostrich-feather fans (Latin: flabella); and to be carried around on an ornate chair (Latin: sedia gestatoria) for certain functions by a dozen bearers (Latin: palafrenieri). All of these tokens—many of which are still symbolic of the office of the papacy—have fallen into disuse in recent years.'

The false prophet, the last-in-line pope, will resurrect these and, indeed, invent other trappings consistent with his pretentious pomp and circumstance.

²⁰²³ Gibbon, Edward, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. III, chap. XX, p.287

²⁰²⁴ Anon., *Rome in the 19th Century*, Vol. I, pp.246,247

²⁰²⁵ II Thes 2:7a

²⁰²⁶ II Thes 2:10a

²⁰²⁷ II Thes 2:9b

²⁰²⁸ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, pp.256-263 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

parody of Elijah, being the second Beast actually arising after the arrival of the Antichrist, will have power to do great wonders and to bring down fire from heaven:²⁰²⁹ *'And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.'*²⁰³⁰ Now it is clear that the False Prophet will be the Roman Catholic pope of the time, and, by this means, Roman Catholics will be added seamlessly to the fold of deceived believers. The Jews, in accepting the Antichrist as their messiah, will also take to the false-Elijah (and to their false second-messiah).²⁰³¹ It is frightening, indeed, to see how easily this false and profane duo will fit with the erroneous beliefs of so many 'religious' people and organisations.

Many consider that Roman Catholicism will have to mutate significantly and sufficiently to be able to accommodate and view all major pagan religious beliefs, particularly Eastern and New Age, with favour. This is frequently foreseen in terms of an ultimate expression of holism, especially in New Age's 'new-paradigm,' in one unified, socio-political world system. This misses the objective, however, as the demonic plan is to have all of mankind in thrall to the Devil, and this need not have such a pandemic level of syncretistic conformity in belief and operation.²⁰³² All that is necessary is that the delusion is complete, and the manifold variations of paganism secure some limited form of mutual respect and co-operation, in order that they be sated.²⁰³³ After all, the common root of all of them is the Devil. Despite its shortcomings, once this grand accommodation is in place, and with the restriction of the 'Restrainer,' a consequent, 'natural' form of hegemony through the actions and miracles of the False Prophet and the political and military conquests of his arch-ally, the Antichrist, together with the expectation of execution if the image of the Beast be not worshipped, and that of starvation if the beastly mark permitting buying and selling be not taken,²⁰³⁴ will ensure that effective control of the vast bulk of the end-time world vests in the god of this world, Satan the Devil, and in his two evil lackeys. This non-uniformity and lack of cohesion can be seen in the end-time world system described by Daniel: *'And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with the mire clay.'*²⁰³⁵ *And as the toes of the*

²⁰²⁹ cp. II Kings 1:10

²⁰³⁰ Rev 13:13, *'And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.'* Greek: pur literally means 'fire,' and not thunderbolts, lightning, or other forms of electrical discharge. 'heaven,' Greek: ouranos, means, in context, 'sky.'

²⁰³¹ q.v. inf.

²⁰³² Huntington, Samuel P., *The Clash of Civilizations, and the Remaking of World Order*, p.64, has it wrong on this point, when he states that in the years to come:

'A universal religion is only slightly more likely to emerge than is a universal language.'

It is not the need of a monolithic belief system that is desired by Satan in order to delude the world, it is a bewildering array of competing creeds, but with two salient characteristics:

1. the ability to interact together with other Satan-inspired religions in a form of syncretism, and,
2. an absolute antipathy to Judæo-Christianity.

²⁰³³ q.v. writings of pope Benedict XVI on salvation thought Judaism and on other religions.

²⁰³⁴ Rev 13:15-17

²⁰³⁵ the ten toes of mirey clay and iron, not only do not cleave together, they actively oppose each other in territorial and other disputes; the boundaries, as usual, being the scenes of greatest friction.

*feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.'*²⁰³⁶

Many would continue in the contention, however, that such diversity of belief cannot be melded into any form of coherence capable of collectivist action. On the surface, New Age, Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Protestantism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Shintoism, Taoism, Gnosticism, and all the rest appear to lack any real common ground. But this continues to presuppose a common or seamless approach to events in the future. The New Age vision of worldwide peace and harmony in the 'Age of Aquarius,'²⁰³⁷ is doomed to disappointment. In the ensuing disillusionment, New Age man will cast around for something else, and find, to his perceived but short-term joy, a safer crutch in the view proffered that before the wonderful age of man-made everlasting world peace and harmony²⁰³⁸ can be brought forward, the forces of evil contrary to such a view will have to be eradicated. In other words, first the struggle, then the peace. Interestingly, this is the view of Roman Catholicism, and already of some New Agers, amongst others, one which opens up the prospect of a phony worldwide unity through pagan diversity and some phony conception of supposed common or shared core values and purpose. This is the real New World Order, for the Antichrist's creed will be a wholly-flawed 'One World' system. In this, it is evident that, through time, the world of Islam will first demur and then oppose it, as seen from the end-time '*king of the south*'^{2039 2040} references in the book of Daniel.

Thus we have the abominable prospect, soon to be realised, of a False Messiah and a False Prophet collectively ensnaring the vast bulk of the world's religions, including mainstream 'Christianity,' Judaism, Eastern religions, and New Age, and, through the economic and commercial power of the Beast empire, much of the rest of the world as well. But not all Jews will be deceived: '*And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one*

²⁰³⁶ Dan 2:41-43

²⁰³⁷ supposedly to have dawned on 21st March, 2000, according to Weldon and Wilson's *Occult Shock and Psychic Forces*.

²⁰³⁸ or man-made, by default, as it were: Chomsky, Noam, *Hegemony or Survival—America's Quest for Global Dominance*, pp.235,237:

'Bertrand Russell once expressed some somber thoughts about world peace:

After ages during which the earth produced harmless trilobites and butterflies, evolution progressed to the point at which it had generated Neros, Genghis Khans, and Hitlers. This, however, I believe is a passing nightmare; in time the earth will become again incapable of supporting life, and peace will return.' (Cited by Judy Toth, *Bertrand Russell Society Quarterly*, February, 2003).

Chomsky and Russell have it wrong. Apart from the ludicrous and unsupportable claims of evolutionary theory, there is nothing in man's purview that dictates his extermination. It is not inevitable. In fact, there is a future, a glorious one, although between here and there much pain is to be endured.

²⁰³⁹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, pp.153,154 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Luke 11:[31a], '*The queen of the south shall rise up in judgment with the men of this generation*'....When Solomon was king, the Queen of Sheba [Saba: an ancient country in southern Arabia, including modern Yemen and Hadhramaut] recognized his wisdom and came from far [southern Arabia] to benefit from it.'

The queen of the south hails from Arabia; likewise the king of the south. The seat of Islam, its holiest city, Mecca, is found there.

²⁰⁴⁰ the Scots' festival, at year end, of Hogmanay: The word, in Chaldee, means 'Feast of the Man of the Moon,' presaging and honouring the '*king of the south*,' the 'man of the Crescent Moon,' the 'man of Islam.'

week.²⁰⁴¹ Abundant in quantity is here translated '*many*,'²⁰⁴² but this does not mean all. It can also mean, in context, the '*chief men*' or '[political] *leaders*.' A Roman pope as the 'promised Elijah,' as perceived by the Jews, surely could not deceive all, even given the hunger of the Jews for their 'promised Elijah.' At the end, it seems that many Jews will prefer to concentrate on the Antichrist in terms of their long-awaited 'Messiah,' or there could be some other imposter holding himself out to be Elijah returned,²⁰⁴³ or their 'second messiah.'²⁰⁴⁴

In order to promote his vile counterfeiting, Satan has here imbued his False Prophet with largely unprecedented, supernatural, thaumaturgic²⁰⁴⁵ powers to carry through to completion the greatest wholesale deception of the ages.²⁰⁴⁶ These miracles are characterised as '*great wonders*'²⁰⁴⁷—with one being specified, '*he maketh fire come down from heaven*'—which are intended to and do deceive men into worshipping the Beast and his abominable image, completely unconditionally, as prophesied.²⁰⁴⁸

Further powers

If synchronistic deception does not work sufficiently effectively, the False Prophet, through his evil alliance with the political power of the Beast, has the threat of death over those who will not worship the image of the Beast: '*And he had power to give life unto the image of the Beast, that the image of the Beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the Beast should be killed.*'²⁰⁴⁹ It must be noted that it is the False Prophet who compels all men to worship the image of the Beast, save only those few who are not deceived. The central role of this end-time evil pope will greatly facilitate bringing on the fateful climax of the strategy and devices of Satan.

In addition, and if this were not enough, the Beast and the False Prophet will have economic control over the world, in that if any do not have the mark of the Beast in their right hand or in their foreheads, then they cannot buy or sell, engage in trade or profession. In other words, they starve, as can be deduced from the text: '*And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or*

²⁰⁴¹ Dan 9:27

²⁰⁴² Hebrew: rab.

²⁰⁴³ it's happened before; e.g., Herbert Armstrong declared "I am Elijah."

²⁰⁴⁴ q.v. inf.

²⁰⁴⁵ i.e., magical.

²⁰⁴⁶ Barclay, William, *The Plain Man's Guide to Ethics*, p.188:

'Lying is the source of misgovernment. *'If a ruler listens to falsehood, all his officials will be wicked'* (Prov 29:12).'

²⁰⁴⁷ Rev 13:13

²⁰⁴⁸ Rev 13:14,15; the image '*to*' or '*of the beast*,' is taken by some to be that of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, recorded in Dan 2:31-43, with the '*clay*' of v.v. 41-43 being ceramic. Since that Babylonian-era preview was in the form or image of a man, the end-time image will most probably encompass Jupiter, standing for the Devil, and Mithras (the false-messiah), for the Antichrist, in one image. Such an arrangement would permit the false prophet (the 'last-in-line' pope) to fob off on the 'great unwashed' (the population of the earth) the false-messiah as Jesus Christ!

The image to the beast, Rev 13:14,15, is an image not to or of the Antichrist, but to and of the beast empire.

²⁰⁴⁹ Rev 13:15

*in their foreheads: and no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the Beast, or the number of his name.*²⁰⁵⁰ It should be noted that, again, it is the False Prophet who compels all men to take the mark of the Beast, save only those few who are not deceived. The '*hand*' is correctly taken by many expositors to be a reference to work, while the '*forehead*' is taken as signifying intellectual thought and religious practice and belief, but this is merely a small part of it, as will be seen.

Many expositors have postulated that personal implanted microchipped devices will be used for this purpose. Given the complexities of modern international commerce, the power to restrict computer-driven economic activity to those having the '*mark*' will require an all-pervading ability to monitor, tag and interdict electronic communications, allied to the control of highly sophisticated international financial markets,²⁰⁵¹ although the constant threat of capital punishment will obviously play its part too. Interesting times lie ahead, indeed!

'Image'

The Beast image wrought for the purposes of universal homage, over which the False Prophet has the power to give life, that it should speak, is an interesting one. This power, as granted, is recorded nowhere else in the Bible. It is unique in that sense, although it should be noted that pagan shrines down through the ages have had many laughing, weeping, wailing, and talking images.²⁰⁵²

This image,²⁰⁵³ has been postulated as not being the exact image of the Beast individual himself, or of the Beast empire, as the wording is an image to the Beast;²⁰⁵⁴ not an image of the Beast.²⁰⁵⁵ Despite such an apparently flimsy ground, there is at least some possibility of accuracy in the postulation. Hislop exhibits a strange and ancient image for the false-messiah, that of a lion with a bee in his mouth: 'The classic reader may remember that one of the gods of primeval antiquity was called Ouranos,²⁰⁵⁶ i.e., "The Enlightener." In this very character was Nimrod worshipped when he was deified. As the Sun-god he was regarded not only as the illuminator of the material world, but as the enlightener of the souls of men, for he was recognised as the revealer of "goodness and truth." It is evident, from the Old Testament, not less than the new, that the proper and personal name of our Lord Jesus Christ is, "The Word of God," as the Revealer of the heart and counsels of the Godhead. Now, to identify the Sun-god with the Great Revealer of the Godhead, while under the name of

²⁰⁵⁰ Rev 13:16,17; possibly a reference not only to the global banking and exchange control system but also to the Vatican Bank's (Institute for the Works of Religion) then enhanced role in same.

²⁰⁵¹ for illustration, the existing SWIFT automated inter-national bank funds transfer system, based in Brussels, possibly allied to an interlocking or unified arrangement of worldwide capital transfer tax, withholding tax, and consumption tax can be seen as forming a potential foundation for such a form of interdiction.

²⁰⁵² the same image as that set up in the Temple by the Antichrist, q.v. inf.

²⁰⁵³ Greek: icon.

²⁰⁵⁴ Rev 13:14

²⁰⁵⁵ Rev 13:14 (sublinear emphasis added), 'to the beast'; the following three references to the '*image of the Beast*,' Rev 13:15, then being taken as possessive rather than replicative.

²⁰⁵⁶ Greek: ouranos, '*elevation*,' hence '*sky*,' and, by implication, '*celestial heavens*.'

Mithra, he was exhibited in sculpture as a Lion; that Lion had a Bee represented between his lips. The bee between the lips of the Sun-god was intended to point him out as "the Word;" for Dabar, the expression which signifies in Chaldee a "Bee," signifies also a "Word;" and the position of that bee in the mouth leaves no doubt as to the idea intended to be conveyed. It was intended to impress the belief that Mithra....was no other than the light of men....the Lord Jesus Christ.

....Now the light of the wax-candle, as the light from Dabar, "the Bee," was set up as a substitute of the light of Dabar, "the Word." Thus the apostates turned away from the "True Light," and set up a shadow in His stead. That this was really the case is plain; for, says Crabb,²⁰⁵⁷ speaking of Saturn: "on his altars were placed wax tapers lighted, because by Saturn men were reduced from the darkness of error to the light of truth." In Asiatic Greece, the Babylonian god was evidently recognised as the Light-giving "Word," for there we find the Bee occupying such a position as makes it very clear that it was a symbol of the great Revealer. Thus we find Müller referring to the symbols connected with the worship of the Ephesian Diana: "Her constant symbol is the bee, which is not otherwise attributed to Diana....The chief priest was called Essen, or the king-bee."

The character of the chief priest shows the character of the god he represented. The contemplar divinity of Diana, the tower bearing goddess, was of course the same divinity as invariably accompanied the Babylonian goddess: and this title of the priest shows that the Bee which appeared on her medals was just another symbol for her child, as the "Seed of the Woman," in his assumed character, as Dabar, "The Word" that enlightened the souls of men. That this is the precise "Mystery" couched under the wax-candles burning on the altars of the Papacy, we have very remarkable evidence from its own formularies; for, in the very same place in which the "Mystery" of the wax-candle is spoken of, thus does Rome refer to the Bee, by which the wax is produced: "forasmuch as we do marvellously wonder, in considering the first beginning of this substance, to wit, wax-tapers, then must we of necessity greatly extol the original of Bees, for....they gather the flowers with their feet, yet the flowers are not injured thereby; they bring forth no young ones, but deliver their young swarms through their mouths, like as Christ (for a wonderful example) is proceeded from His Father's Mouth...."

In a Popish work,²⁰⁵⁸ I find the Lord Jesus expressly called by the name of the Bee. Referring to Mary under the title of "The Paradise of Delight," the author thus speaks: "In this Paradise that celestial Bee, that is, the incarnate Wisdom, did feed. Here is found that dropping honeycomb, with which the whole bitterness of the corrupted world has been turned into sweetness."²⁰⁵⁹

Hislop also indicates in his book that the icon or image of the Beast was formerly a Babylonian god simply known as Semele, that is, 'the image.' This god was Semiramis, the 'Queen of Heaven,' Apphrodite-Mari, the Semitic god-mother, frequently portrayed as holding her immaculately conceived child in her arms; she was

²⁰⁵⁷ Crabb, G., *Mythology*, p.12

²⁰⁵⁸ Pancarpium Marianum, cap. 29, p.122

²⁰⁵⁹ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, pp.193-196

both mother and wife of Nimrod. As such, the image to be worshipped under threat of death conceivably could be what is now known as the 'Madonna,' 'Our Lady,' and the 'Queen of Heaven'—the Roman 'Virgin Mary.'²⁰⁶⁰ This same image, under the name of Asherah,²⁰⁶¹ previously stood in the Temple at Jerusalem, put there by King Mannaseh.

Supporting a tentative conclusion that the image of the Beast will be 'male' rather than 'female,' Pfeiffer notes: 'The ultimate abomination of desolation, manufactured by the peoples of the earth under the instruction and guidance of the False Prophet, through whom Satan gives it power to speak,²⁰⁶² is the earthly symbol of all Satanic worship. Whatever its actual form, it is to be accommodated in the place [or spot] of the Temple of God, as prophesied by Christ: *'When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whosoever readeth, let him understand), Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains.'*²⁰⁶³ *For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.'*²⁰⁶⁴ The embedded reference to Daniel is: *'and he shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate,'*²⁰⁶⁵ and also later.²⁰⁶⁶

A Jewish reference to the possible identity of the abomination, can be seen in this analysis by Price: 'In later Jewish commentaries, the legendary name given to the anti-messiah is Armilus. A brief summary of his characteristics, given in such works as Sefer Zerubbavel and those by Saadiah Gaon, reveals close similarities between the Jewish and Christian concepts of the Antichrist.

This Armilus will deceive the whole world into believing he is God and will reign over the whole world. He will come with ten kings and together they will fight over Jerusalem....Armilus will banish Israel "to the wilderness" and it will be a time of unprecedented distress for Israel; there will be increasing famine, and the Gentiles will expel the Jews from their lands, and they will hide in caves and towers....God will war against the host of Armilus....and there will be a great deliverance for Israel and the kingdom of Heaven will spread over all the earth,'²⁰⁶⁷

²⁰⁶⁰ Juno, the principal goddess of the Romans, was termed Juno regina, 'the queen of heaven.'

²⁰⁶¹ Phœnician goddess Astarte, i.e., Semiramis, cf. Tanakh, II Kings 21:7,23:5,6

²⁰⁶² Rev 13:14,15

²⁰⁶³ cp. Dan 11:31; '*mountains*' appear to be those of Moab and Edom—q.v., Dan 11:41b—to which those then in the Holy City should flee.

²⁰⁶⁴ Mat 24:15,16,21,22; the word '*sake*' should be deleted as it does not occur in the original Greek text, leaving '*but for the elect.*'

²⁰⁶⁵ Dan 11:31

²⁰⁶⁶ Dan 12:11; Pfeiffer, Robert H., *Introduction to the Old Testament*, p.88

²⁰⁶⁷ Encyclopedia Judaica, 3:476,477; cp. Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, pp.186,187 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Luke 13:20,21, '*Again Jesus said, "To what will I liken the kingdom of God? It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened."*

Leaven was a little piece of fermented dough which had been kept over from the last baking and had fermented in the keeping. Leaven is regularly used in Jewish thought for influence. Usually it is used for bad influence, because the Jews

Other references further describe Armilus as arising from the Roman empire, having miraculous powers, and being born to a stone statue of a virgin.²⁰⁶⁸ It is also interesting that he makes this statue "the chief of all idolatry" with the result that "all the Gentiles will bow down to her, burn incense, and pour out libations to her." This parallels the Antichrist's "abomination of desolation," which is worshipped by the nations.^{2069 2070}

Most of this appears to have been gleaned from the book of Daniel. Overlaying this is a Jewish mystical element evidencing in the third paragraph cited, but it is interesting that the form of abomination identified is the 'image'—the Madonna. There may also be a reaction here to Romanist worship.

In truth, through the inspiration of Satan down through the ages, the Beast has a range of images and representations available for his selection of one for the purpose of universal homage. A possible clue to a more likely candidate is contained in Daniel, speaking of the Wilful King: '*But in his estate shall he honour the god of forces,*'²⁰⁷¹ or, more properly, '*the god of fortifications.*' Some maintain that the '*god of fortifications,*' or the '*tower-bearing goddess,*' is none other than Semiramis, also known as Anunitu, the '*goddess of battle,*' in the guise of Diana: the Madonna.

This is taken up by Hislop: 'After what the reader has already seen in a previous part of this work, it is hardly necessary to say that it is this very goddess that is now worshipped in the Church of Rome under the name of Mary. Though that goddess is called by the name of the mother of [Jesus], all the attributes given to her are derived simply from the Babylonian Madonna, and not from the Virgin Mother of Christ. There is not one line or one letter in all the Bible to countenance the idea that Mary should be worshipped, that she is the "refuge of sinners," that she was "immaculate," that she made atonement for sin when standing by the cross, and when, according to Simeon, "a sword pierced through her own soul also"; or that, after her death, she was raised from the dead and carried in glory to heaven. But in the Babylonian system all this was found; and all this is now incorporated in the system of Rome. The "sacred heart of Mary" is exhibited as pierced through with a sword, in token, as the apostate Church teaches, that her anguish at the crucifixion was as true an atonement as the death of Christ;—for we read in the Devotional office or Service-book, adopted by the "Sodality of the sacred heart," such blasphemous words as these, "Go, then, devout client! Go to the heart of Jesus, but let your way be through the heart of Mary; the sword of grief which pierced her soul opens you a passage; enter by the

identified fermentation with putrefaction, and leaven stood for rottenness. Jesus had seen Mary take a little piece of leaven and put it in the dough. He had seen the whole character of the dough changed by that little piece of leaven. [Thus] the kingdom of God starts from the smallest beginnings, [and it] works from the inside. Until the leaven got into the dough it was powerless to help; it had to get right inside. We will never change men from the outside. New houses, new conditions, better material things only change the outside. It is the task of Christianity to make, not new things, but new men.'

²⁰⁶⁸ which is why he is called 'the son of a stone.'

²⁰⁶⁹ Dan 9:27,11:31,12:11; Rev 13:14,15

²⁰⁷⁰ Price, Randall, *In Search of Temple Treasures*, pp.244,245

²⁰⁷¹ Dan 11:38; the '*god of forces,*' or, better, '*fortifications,*' is Nimrod. Semiramis / Artemis / Diana / the Roman virgin Mary are all essentially the same goddess form. While Artemis was depicted with a tower on her head, the first builders of walled cities were Nimrod and Asshur, cf. Gen 10:8-12.

wound which love has made";—again we hear one expounder of the new faith, like M. Genoude in France, say that "Mary was the repairer of the guilt of Eve, as our Lord was the repairer of the guilt of Adam"; and another—Professor Oswald of Paderbon—affirms that Mary was not a human creature like us, that she is "the Woman, as Christ is the Man," that "Mary is co-present in the Eucharist, and that it is indisputable that, according to the Eucharistic doctrine of the Church, this presence of Mary in the Eucharist is true and real, not merely ideal or figurative"; and, further, we read in the Pope's decree of the Immaculate Conception, that that same Madonna, for this purpose "*wounded with the sword*," rose from the dead, and being assumed up on high, became Queen of Heaven.²⁰⁷² If all this be so, who can fail to see that in that apostate community is to be found what precisely answers to the making and setting up in the heart of Christendom, of an "*Image to the beast that had the wound by a sword and did live*."

If the inspired terms be consulted, it will be seen that this was to be done by some public general act of apostate Christendom, "*Saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast*";²⁰⁷³ and they made it. Now here is the important fact to be observed, that this never was done, and this never could have been done, till eight years ago; for this plain reason, that till then the Madonna of Rome was never recognised as combining all the characters that belonged to the Babylonian "Image of the beast." Till then it was not admitted even in Rome, though this evil leaven had long been working, and that strongly, that Mary was truly immaculate, and consequently she could not be the perfect counterpart of the Babylonian Image. What, however, had never been done before, was done in [the middle of the nineteenth century].²⁰⁷⁴ Then bishops from all parts of Christendom, and representatives from the ends of the earth, met in Rome; and with only four dissentient voices, it was decreed that Mary, the mother of God, who died, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven, should henceforth be worshipped as the Immaculate Virgin, "conceived and born without sin." This was the formal setting up of the Image of the beast, and that by the general consent of "*the men that dwell upon the earth*." Now, this beast being set up, it is said, that the beast from the earth gives life and speech to the Image, implying, first, that it has neither life nor voice in itself; but that, nevertheless, through means of the beast from the earth, it is to have both life and voice, and to be an effective agent of the Papal clergy, who will make it speak exactly as they please. Since the Image has been set up, its voice has been everywhere heard throughout the Papacy. Formerly decrees ran less or more in the name of Christ. Now all things are pre-eminently done in the name of the Immaculate Virgin. Her voice is everywhere heard—her voice is supreme.

²⁰⁷² Footnoted: Rev. Godfrey, *Memoir of Massy*, pp.91,92:

'In the 'Paradisus Sponsi et Sponsæ,' by the author of 'Pancarpium Marianum,' the following words, addressed to the Virgin, occur in illustration of a plate representing the crucifixion, and Mary, at the foot of the cross, with the sword in her breast, "Dilectus tuus filius carnem tu vero animam immolasti: immo corpus et animam;" "Thy beloved son did sacrifice his flesh; thou thy soul—yea, both body and soul." This does much more than put the sacrifice of the Virgin on a level with that of the Lord Jesus, it makes it greater far. This, in 1617, was the creed only of Jesuitism; now there is reason to believe it to be the general creed of the Papacy.'

²⁰⁷³ Rev 13:14

²⁰⁷⁴ December 1854AD

But, be it observed, when that voice is heard, it is not the voice of mercy and love, it is the voice of cruelty and terror. The decrees that come forth under the name of the Image, are to this effect, that *"no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name."*²⁰⁷⁵ No sooner is the Image set up than we see this very thing begun to be carried out. What was the concordat in Austria, that so speedily followed, but this very thing? That concordat, through the force of unexpected events that have arisen, has not yet been carried into effect; but if it were, the results would just be what is predicted—that no man in the Austrian dominions should *"buy or sell"* without the mark in some shape or other. And the very fact of such an intolerant concordat coming so speedily on the back of the Decree of the Immaculate Conception, shows what is the natural fruit of that decree. The events that soon thereafter took place in Spain showed the powerful working of the same persecuting spirit there also....if I have been right in the interpretation of this passage, then it follows that it must yet become more persecuting than ever it has been, and that that intolerance, which, immediately after the setting up of the Image, began to display itself in Austria and Spain, shall yet spread over all Europe; for it is not said that the Image of the beast [allied to the False Prophet] should merely decree, but should *"cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed."*²⁰⁷⁶ When this takes place, that evidently is the time when the language of Revelation is fulfilled, *"And all that dwell on the earth shall worship the beast, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."*²⁰⁷⁷ It is impossible to get quit of this by saying, "This refers to the Dark Ages; this was fulfilled before Luther." I ask, had the men who dwelt on the earth set up the Image of the Beast before Luther's days? Plainly not. The decree of the Immaculate Conception was the deed of yesterday. The prophecy, then, refers to our own times—to the period on which the Church is now entering. In other words, the slaying of the witnesses, the grand trial of the saints, is still to come.²⁰⁷⁸

*'Honouring the god of forces'*²⁰⁷⁹ and setting up *'an image to the Beast'* may not refer to the same activity. Honouring the pagan 'queen of heaven' can be seen as toadying to the proponents of such beliefs—the Roman and other like churches—while the image to the Beast could be regarded as being a deal more 'personal.'

²⁰⁷⁵ Rev 13:17, *'And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, the name of the beast, or the number of his name.'* K.J.V.'s insertion of the word 'or' before *'the name'* is a translator's addition. It does not appear in the original Greek.

²⁰⁷⁶ Rev 13:15

²⁰⁷⁷ Rev 13:18

²⁰⁷⁸ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, pp.265-268 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁰⁷⁹ also Nimrod, Mithras, and Ala Mahozim.

Babylonian / Jewish mysticism

There may well be a compelling insight into the form and name of this image of the Beast bound up in the phrase '*understanding dark sentences*,'²⁰⁸⁰ a reference to a defining characteristic of the Antichrist which has a parallel in rabbinical Judaism, as can be seen in the following, by Gruber: 'Just as the Rabbis revised the past, so they revised the future. "Even of more relevance to the Rabbis was the role of the Messiah as Pharisee par excellence. He would unravel their problems and interpret biblical verses with clarity and precision." When Messiah came, He would come in their image and likeness.'²⁰⁸¹

Sadly, however, there is even more than this wrapped up in the phrase '*understanding dark sentences*,' for it also refers to the pagan mysteries of Kabbalism. The Antichrist, the demonic occult prime eleventh horn of Daniel,²⁰⁸² will be well versed in the underlying and hidden meanings of the Kabbalistic creed, especially insofar as it defines and relates to the false-messiah and the Jews' building of the Third Temple in apostasy. Silberman recounts various Kabbalistic musings founded on the so-called 'Chariot of Ezekiel':²⁰⁸³ ²⁰⁸⁴ 'In the beginning was Ezekiel's vision, a series of stunning, surrealistic images, miraculously appearing in the heavens above the ziggurats and hanging gardens of Babylon....Ezekiel's visions became the foundation of a new mystical understanding. In his detailed description of the New Temple²⁰⁸⁵ that would someday be built by the righteous survivors of Israel (with dimensions and architectural features reflecting a heavenly pattern), Ezekiel recognised that Israel had a crucial role to play in its own redemption. If the Israelites could separate themselves from the sources of evil and produce patterns of divine power, they could tap unimaginable energy for the improvement of the world....From Ezekiel's vision of the Chariot and its attendants would come incantations and magical rituals aimed at enabling individuals to pass through the heavens and, like Ezekiel, enter the presence of God. Ezekiel's Chariot vision was a first step toward understanding how heaven and earth were intimately connected. And in that sense, it marked the birth of the Kabbalah.'²⁰⁸⁶

²⁰⁸⁰ Dan 8:23b; Gesenius: also meaning, '*dark artifices*,' or '*dark strategems*.'

²⁰⁸¹ Gruber, Daniel, *Rabbi Akiba's Messiah: The Origins of Rabbinic Authority*, p.75

²⁰⁸² Dan 7:8

²⁰⁸³ Kabbalistic ascent to the levels of heaven is shamanistic. Excerpted from van Franz, M. L.'s, *C. G. Jung: his myth in our time*:

'The shaman is one who takes a journey through the use of hallucinogens. It is a journey of incredible danger, where the shaman is dismembered and faces death. After being taken to the underworld, there is an ecstatic flight to the heavens where the shaman is taught by the spirits of dead shamans. Returning to earth, the shaman now has the ability to heal. This story is also depicted in the book of Enoch in Judaism. More often than in Judaism, however, one finds in the Gnostics and in Iranian traditions, as late as the time of the Mithraic mysteries, depictions of the journey to heaven where, indeed, a trip to the beyond in a state of ecstasy was part of the initiation into those mysteries.'

²⁰⁸⁴ aberrantly read by Kabbalists into the vision recorded in Ezek 1:1-28.

²⁰⁸⁵ Ezekiel chpts. 40-44

²⁰⁸⁶ A deeply occult belief riddled with bizarre magical practices, sorcery, dybbuks, golems, reincarnation, celestial messengers, assorted apparitions, evils spirits and masters, incantations, mystical contemplation and speculation, frequent demonic possession, trances, penance rituals including flagellation, and speaking in tongues, inter alia, woven together by 'ingenious ways to reconcile the glaring differences in the widely differing texts,' cf. Silberman, Neil Asher, *Heavenly Powers, Unraveling the Secret History of the Kabbalah*, pp.25,36,46,50,51,54,55,81,130,132,133,155,156,161.

The geography of the heavens grew ever more elaborate, as individual mystical trances grew more common. In fact, the circle of the Zodiac—representing the movement of the stars and the passage of the seasons—became an extraordinarily popular motif for the mosaic floors of synagogue sanctuaries throughout the Land of Israel in the later Roman and Byzantine periods.²⁰⁸⁷ Scholars have long debated the significance of this decorative innovation, noting the biblical prohibition of the use of images. But images they are: Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, and all the others—labelled in Hebrew and executed in various degrees of artistic sophistication. And often placed at the centre of these zodiac circles is the image of a heavenly Chariot blazing through the skies. To the Jews' pagan neighbours, this figure would almost certainly have appeared to be the Greek god Helios or the Roman god Sol Invictus, the unconquerable sun, ruling over all the heavenly bodies, days, and seasons. But to those that participated in the yearly synagogue recitation of the first chapter of the book of Ezekiel, there could be no mistaking the identity of this Chariot or its role in the universe. It was the throne of God's blazing glory, propelled across the heavens by the seraphim and the ofanim.²⁰⁸⁸ The words of Ezekiel, the visions of the mystics, and the vivid, visual decoration of the synagogue thus all combined to express faith in the reality of the heavenly powers and their influence on earth.

We have numerous texts from this period that offer extraordinary detail on heavenly journeys. The prophetic tradition of more ancient times was now expressed in the visions of a special class of scholars who developed intense meditative techniques centred on Ezekiel's description of the Chariot. In time, the Chariot became the innermost image in a complex labyrinth of celestial chambers, guardian angels, and dangerous passages through which the mystic journeyed in an attempt to reach the presence of God. Such experiences were recorded in a vibrant body of literature called the texts of the Hekhalot, or 'Heavenly Palaces,' though the relatively few surviving examples are undoubtedly just a tiny selection of countless experiences whose descriptions are now lost—or were never written down.²⁰⁸⁹

Nowhere in the book of Ezekiel is there this vision of a chariot. So whence did it arise? The horrifying truth is that it was not from the Holy Scriptures that this chariot vision took shape, but from the pagan religious beliefs of the Perso-Babylonians among whom the Jews were then living in exile. The chariot of the Perso-Babylonians was that of their god Ahura-Mazda; the charioteer, Mithra, the blond, blue-eyed messiah-god of the pagans, made the subject of secret lore under the name of Maaseh Merkeba, as confirmed by Rabbi Kohler's words, when describing how the then Jewish leaders began to blend the worship of Mithra with the teachings of Scripture: 'So was the heavenly throne-chariot of Ezekiel's vision [sic],²⁰⁹⁰ as soon as it was brought into connection with the chariot of the Persian Mithra, Ahura-Mazda's charioteer, made a subject of secret lore under

²⁰⁸⁷ and this in a supposedly aniconic religious belief (viz., the absence of graphic representations).

²⁰⁸⁸ Hebrew: '*wheels*,' a reference to the wheels of the supposed heavenly chariot.

²⁰⁸⁹ Silberman, Neil Asher, *Heavenly Powers—Unravelling the Secret History of the Kabbalah*, pp.7-13,19,20

²⁰⁹⁰ referred to also in I Chron 28:18 [sic] and Ben Sira 49,8.

the name of Maaseh Merkaba. Similarly, the Creation chapters in Genesis, Proverbs,²⁰⁹¹ and Job²⁰⁹² were, in connection with Persian and Babylonian, and later on also Greek concepts, turned into cosmogenic secrets, Masseh Bereshit, to be taught only in esoteric circles consisting of but two or three.

This Persian system was adopted by the Jewish leaders of thought, the Hasidim, and the Messiah became for them the World-Saviour who would combat and finally annihilate Satan 'the wicked one.' Thus the entire messianic hope of Judaism underwent a change, while at the same time the Jewish philosophy of angelology and demonology was formed under Perso-Babylonian influence.

These new ideas were introduced by the Hasidim as divine mysteries,²⁰⁹³ handed down to the initiated by such men as Enoch, Noah, and Shem, the men of vision singled out in the Apocalyptic writings.²⁰⁹⁴

Roots in Babylon

'In religion, the Babylonians were nature worshippers. The four seasons, the ground, the sea, the air, rain, wind, thunder and lightning, and the like, each were under the control of a separate deity, sometimes friendly, at other times hostile to man. Like man, these gods were subject to human passions. They thought as men, and they acted as men; consequently they could be cajoled or even intimidated, or, for that matter, be convicted and convinced, in a similar way to Judaism's conception of God. These gods, moreover, were not all equal; some were greater than others, though no one of them exercised lordship over the others. Some were formed like men, others part men and part beast, while other gods, again, were wholly bestial both in appearance and attributes. One peculiarity of the Babylonian deities was that the power and influence of the gods of the cities waxed and waned with the increasing or decreasing importance of the cities themselves. The greater gods composed a double trinity of deities. At the head of all was Anu, the god of heaven, and Ea, the god of the lower world and of hidden knowledge. The second triad consisted of Sin, the moon god; Samas, the sun god; and Ramman, the god of storm, thunder, and lightning. Each god had his own city, and was the greatest of all the gods there. The goddesses were of minor importance, and in fact were but the spouses of the gods. But there was one important exception to this rule. This was Istar, the Ashteroth of Scripture,²⁰⁹⁵ a goddess who belonged to the front rank. She was the goddess of battle and of love. In addition, there were an unaccountable number of minor gods, and it is from this Babylonian pantheon that the Greeks and Romans later borrowed their divinities.

²⁰⁹¹ Proverbs chpts. 3,8

²⁰⁹² Job chpts. 37,38

²⁰⁹³ in the Kabbalah.

²⁰⁹⁴ Kohler, Rabbi, *The Origins of the Synagogue and the Church*, pp.43-45 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁰⁹⁵ Judg 2:13

These gods and goddesses were worshipped by the performance of much ritual and ceremony. The priests not only conducted the worship of the people, but practically controlled their whole lives; even the making and administration of the law were in their hands. Not only did they perform the public acts of worship, but also the necessary acts for the individual worshipper. When an illness or any evil befell a man, it was put down to the act of some demon or evil spirit, of whom the air was full. If his own personal god was not able to right him, the man would then appeal to one of the greater gods, of course through the priest. Many of the priests were also given to soothsaying, which they considered and conducted as a science; the study of omens was also a favourite occupation of the Babylonians. Naturally, this meant frequent journeys to the priests, who pretended to interpret the omens²⁰⁹⁶ to their deluded followers.

It was long believed that even the early Babylonians had much knowledge of astronomy. They knew some of the planets; had figured the zodiacal constellations; had compiled a list of the fixed stars, and had invented sundials. They also knew the true length of the solar year, and had formed a calendar harmonising the solar and lunar years.²⁰⁹⁷ They could also calculate eclipses. But recent investigations reveal little or no scientific astronomy until [about the eighth-century].²⁰⁹⁸ Their astronomy was debased by a large admixture of astrology, and their learned men were magicians, soothsayers, and sorcerers. Thus it comes about that many fragments of tablets containing observations and calendars are of an astrological rather than an astronomical character.²⁰⁹⁹

‘Observing the sky in the interests of astrology led to undreamt of advances. They were able to predict eclipses of the sun and moon. In the Babylonian School of Astronomy, about 750BC, observations of heavenly bodies were recorded and continued, without interruption, for over three hundred and fifty years, the longest series of astronomical observations ever made. The accuracy of their reckoning exceeded that of European astronomers until well into the eighteenth-century.’²¹⁰⁰

Orthodox Judaism, mysticism, & the occult

Ashkenazi Hasidism, which emerged from Germany in the late twelfth-century, as a form of Jewish mysticism, is described in this manner: ‘The German-Jewish pietists built their own understanding of Hasid, or ‘pietist,’ upon the cumulative foundation of earlier meanings but moved in new directions as well. Their worldview was grounded in the idea that God’s will is only partially revealed in the words of the Pentateuch, or the

²⁰⁹⁶ Ezek 21:21

²⁰⁹⁷ the Jews adopted the same calendrical system after their time of captivity in Babylon, starting in 602BC, substituting it for God’s sacred calendar.

²⁰⁹⁸ c.747BC

²⁰⁹⁹ Buckland, A. R., and Williams, A. Lukyn, *The Universal Bible Dictionary*, pp.50,51

²¹⁰⁰ Keller, Werner, *The Bible as History*, p.292

Torah, given to the prophet Moses at Mount Sinai.²¹⁰¹ God's will requires of the truly faithful and punctilious Jew, that is, of the Hasid, a search for a hidden and infinitely demanding additional Torah, which God encoded in the words of scripture.

Along with Maimonidean religious philosophy, theosophical mysticism, or Qabbalah, and the scholastic legal achievement of the glossators of the Talmud, German-Jewish pietism permanently reshaped classical Judaism into traditional Judaism, which lasted down to the modern period....Their writings about manipulating the Divine Name in the form of permutations of the Hebrew alphabet to achieve mystical and magical goals, decidedly influenced later Jewish mysticism in Spain.²¹⁰²

Sephardic Jews are the descendants of the large Jewish community living in Spain and Portugal in the Middle Ages. Under the Papal Inquisition, there was an horrendous massacre of thousands of Jews throughout the Iberian Peninsula,²¹⁰³ and it had some startling effects. The Sephardic Jews have been credited with disseminating Cabalism throughout Europe, after they were forcibly expelled from Spain by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella.²¹⁰⁴ The most esteemed figure in Spanish Judaism was the philosopher, talmudist, and physician Maimonides,²¹⁰⁵ who attempted to harmonise Judaism with Aristotelean philosophy.

The term 'Cabala' is identified and explained, together with its sources, with one being medieval Spain: 'Cabala: Generically, Jewish mysticism in all its forms; specifically, the esoteric theosophy that crystallised in thirteenth-century Spain and Provence, France, around the *Sefer ha-Zohar* (the book of Splendour), referred to as the Zohar.²¹⁰⁶ Cabala's roots are in hellenistic astral mysticism, in which the adept, through meditation and the use of magic formulas, journeys ecstatically through and beyond the seven astral spheres. Medieval Spanish Cabala, the most important form of Jewish mysticism, is more concerned with esoteric knowledge about the nature of the divine world and its hidden connections with the world of creation.²¹⁰⁷

According to the Zohar, above and beyond all human contemplation is God as He is in Himself, the unknowable, immutable En Sof.²¹⁰⁸ Zoharic theosophy concentrates on ten sephirot²¹⁰⁹ as symbols of the inner life and processes of the Godhead. Because they are also archetypes for everything in the world of creation, understanding their workings can illuminate the inner workings of the cosmos and of history. This cosmic aspect was dramatically developed in sixteenth-century Lurianic Cabala, which arose in response to the cataclysmic

²¹⁰¹ sic; should read Horib, q.v. inf.

²¹⁰² *Encyclopedia of Religion*, Vol. I, p.458

²¹⁰³ in 1391AD

²¹⁰⁴ in 1492AD

²¹⁰⁵ 1135–1204AD

²¹⁰⁶ the Zohar inverts many Biblical tracts and concepts, e.g., it teaches that Adam expelled God from the garden of Eden.

²¹⁰⁷ Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, 2nd. cent. AD, was the first to publicly teach the mystical dimension of the Torah known as Kabbalah, and is the reputed author of the basic work of Kabbalah, the Zohar.

²¹⁰⁸ Infinite.

²¹⁰⁹ realms or planes.

experience of Jewish exiles expelled from Iberia,²¹¹⁰ and which projected that experience onto the divine world.’²¹¹¹

The extent of the dispersion is documented by Grolier, who also confirms the Sephardim as followers of the occult traditions of ancient Babylon. The Jews assimilated a vast raft of wholly pagan traditions during the period of Jewish captivity in ancient Babylon: ‘The Sephardim are those Jews who follow the liturgy and customs developed by the Jews of medieval Spain and Portugal. The name comes from Sepharad, a place of exile mentioned in Obadiah,²¹¹² and early identified with Iberia. Unlike the Ashkenazim,²¹¹³ the Sephardim followed Babylonian rather than Palestinian Jewish traditions. They also developed their own [agglomerated] language, Ladino, or Judæo-Spanish, a blend of medieval Castilian, Hebrew, Arabic, and other elements.

After the expulsion of the Jews from Spain²¹¹⁴ and Portugal,²¹¹⁵ many Sephardim formed communities in the lands of the Ottoman Empire—the Balkans, North Africa, and the Middle East. Others remained in Iberia, nominally converting to Christianity [sic].²¹¹⁶ Villified as Marranos (“pigs”), they were subject to continuing persecution, and most eventually left to form communities in north-western Europe—Amsterdam became a particularly important centre. Sephardic traditions were largely adopted by local Jewish groups in the Middle East and North Africa; hence today the term Sephardim is loosely applied to all Jews native to those areas. Among important Jewish thinkers from the Sephardic tradition are Solomon ibn Gabirol, Moses Maimonides, and Baruch Spinoza.’²¹¹⁷

The nineteenth-century Sovereign Pontiff of Universal Freemasonry acknowledges the deeply occult traditions of the main Jewish sects: ‘The Magi²¹¹⁸ of Babylon were expounders of figurative writings, interpreters of nature, and of dreams—astronomers and divines; and from their influences arose among the Jews, after their rescue from captivity, a number of sects, and a new exposition, the mystical interpretation, with all its wild fancies and infinite caprices. The Aions of the Gnostics, the Ideas of Plato, the Angels of the Jews, and the Demons of the Greeks, all correspond to the Ferouers of Zoroaster.

A great number of Jewish families remained permanently in their new country, and one of the most celebrated of their schools was at Babylon. They were soon familiarised with the doctrine of Zoroaster, which itself was more ancient than Kuros. From the system of the Zend-Zvesta they borrowed, and subsequently gave

²¹¹⁰ in the AD1490s

²¹¹¹ *The Encarta Concise Encyclopedia*; Silberman, Neil Asher, *Heavenly Powers, Unraveling the Secret History of the Kabbalah*, p.173 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

‘Isaac Luria believed ‘that this quality [evil] ‘existed—at least in potential form—within the En Sof [the Kabbalistic ‘god,’ and that]....it’s potential and very existence threatened the eternal unity of [that g]od.’

²¹¹² Obad 20

²¹¹³ Jews who settled in German lands.

²¹¹⁴ 1492AD

²¹¹⁵ in 1497AD

²¹¹⁶ i.e., Romanism.

²¹¹⁷ *Grolier’s Encyclopedia*.

²¹¹⁸ In Syriac, magi means, ‘to pray in silence.’

large development to, everything that could be reconciled with their own faith; and these additions to the old doctrine were soon spread, by the constant intercourse of commerce, into Syria and Palestine.'²¹¹⁹

Franklin accurately identifies the spoor: 'In reality, however, these 'new ideas,' recorded and promoted by the Hasidim, had been invented in ancient times by Nimrod, Semiramis, and Horus, and were handed down as tradition to the Hasidic sages of Judaism by the pagan Magi of Persia.

After the Great Synagogue of Ezra and Nehemiah was disbanded, the secret worship begun by the Hasidim in Babylon and Persia began to come to the fore. The fall of the Jerusalem Temple to the Syrians²¹²⁰ and the resulting decline of Levitical influence left the Hasidim as the controlling religious and political force in Judah. The Hasidim²¹²¹ began to spread their Mithraic practices among the Jews under the label 'Judaism.' The common people were told that these Mithraic practices were scriptural in origin and were an essential part of the worship of the God of Israel.'²¹²²

From this blossomed what is called mystical Judaism, accreting more and more pagan notions as time passed.

Antichrist's 'ability'

The end-time Antichrist, in his capacity of '*understanding dark sentences*'—the true import of Kabbalistic thought and theology and its disastrous impact on Jewish religious belief and practice—will be aware of the past string of disastrous 'would-be messiahs,' the historical desire for a charismatic leader, and of the terrible significance of his seven-year covenant that will permit the rebuilding of the Temple. It is not beyond the bounds of possibility that he could even be instrumental in the recovery of the temple treasures and vessels looted by the Romans,²¹²³ alleged by some to be stored in the vaults of the Vatican, although, it must be said, others maintain that they were taken during the sacking of Rome by the Vandals,²¹²⁴ and are lost.

The Third Temple will be profane from the very beginning, since it will be run and operated under rabbinical law, and so will incorporate the full panoply of pagan imports into Judaism.²¹²⁵ In short, it will be a Temple dedicated to pagan worship, essentially the worship of the sun. In this, the Antichrist's role of false-messiah will not be lost to him, for he will recognise his central role in the whole affair. It is for this reason that biblical

²¹¹⁹ Pike, Albert, *Morals and Dogma*, p.256

²¹²⁰ in 167BC

²¹²¹ later known as Pharisees.

²¹²² Franklin, Carl D., *The Two Jehovahs of the Pentateuch*

²¹²³ in 70AD

²¹²⁴ in 355AD

²¹²⁵ to this end, temple vessels and priestly vestments have been prepared by The Temple Institute, an altar erected for the purpose of practice of ritual sacrifice near the Dead Sea, and the veil to the Holy of Holies, allegedly conforming to the instructions given off in Ex 26:31-33, is in process of being woven by a small group in Shiloh known as 'The Women of the Vailed Chamber.'

prophecy says that at the mid-point of the seven-year covenant the Antichrist will set up his own image in the Temple, the biblical '*abomination of desolation*.' '*Standing where it ought not,*' sometimes rendered: '*standing where he ought not*.'²¹²⁶

Paul writes, the Antichrist, '*sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God*.'²¹²⁷ The idol, therefore, can be taken as a metaphor for the Antichrist. Barclay says: 'Nobody knows what the Abomination of Desolation is,' but then says: 'The '*abomination of desolation*,'²¹²⁸ is, in its compass, the false politico-military-religious world-girdling power. The abomination of desolation is, at once, the Antichrist and the idol, and through the latter, the evil Beast empire supported by the false prophet and his false religious organisation. By definition, the '*abomination of desolation*' is something abhorrent to God, something that literally brings to ruin and destruction. '*Abomination*,'²¹²⁹ in almost all instances in the Bible, refers to idolatry.'²¹³⁰

Since a statue of Zeus (the Roman Jupiter) was erected by Antiochus Epiphanes in '*The Holy Place*,'²¹³¹ dedicating the Temple to the pagan god, and the Roman emperor Hadrian erected another statue of Jupiter on the Temple mount, on the site of the then former Temple,²¹³² ²¹³³ it is likely that the Abomination of Desolat-

²¹²⁶ Mark 13:14c (subscripted emphasis added), as in the A.S.V. and Weymouth translations; N.I.V. footnote: '*or "he,"*' also in v.29'; also in N.A.B. (New American Bible); and G.N.T. (Good News Translation)

²¹²⁷ II Thes 2:3; he could even have a false theophanic cloud (cp. I Kings 8:10,11, etc.) to fool the unwary and gullible.

²¹²⁸ Dan 12:11; Barclay, William, *Daily Study Bible*, Chpt. 11, and *The Gospel of Mark*, on Chpt. 13 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'[T]he famous expression "*abomination of desolation*"....[was substituted for the original] Baal of heaven, the Semitic name of the Olympian Zeus.'

It is also observed that the '*abomination*' is a plural noun, while the following participle is singular, a grammatical form which is actually an impossibility in Hebrew. Many see this as an intentional device, rather than a scribal error, to alert the reader to a hidden message. Perhaps this is why Christ said '*let him that readeth understand*,' in Mark 13:14, when referring to the abomination standing in the Temple, as an additional pointer to the existence of something suppressed and important.

This is supported by Nestle, E., in *Zu Daniel*, and explained by Price, Randall, *In Search of Temple Treasures*, p.373: 'His euphemistic approach takes shiqqutzim meshomem ("*abomination that makes desolate*") as a cacophemistic distortion for the official designation of Hebrew Ba'al Shamen ("*lord of heaven*") or Greek Zeus Olympius. In this case, shiqqutzim serves as a parodic substitute for Ba'al or Syrian Zeus and shomem as an allophonic substitute for the consonantly similar shamen ("*heaven*").'

Whether this claim of substitution is true or not, the Baal of heaven is known by many names in pagan lore, including Mithras and Janus—the false-messiah. Cult worshippers of the former followed a 'papa' who ruled from the Vatican hill in Rome, and later became assimilated in Roman Catholicism (which is now targeting specific sectors of the general population, especially the youth).²¹²⁸ ²¹²⁸ The latter was celebrated as Principium Deorum, the source and fountain of all of the pagan gods. The pagan Baal was also known as Jupiter, Zeus, Nebo, and Nimrod, *inter alia*. The particular nomenclature of the image is wholly of secondary importance, for the act will be intended to desecrate the 3rd Temple in the eyes of religious Jews, and to signal the start of the absolute hegemony of the Antichrist, the time known in prophecy as the Great Tribulation: Satan's final solution, or so he may imagine. Certainly, his followers will think so.

²¹²⁹ Hebrew: shiqqunts.

²¹³⁰ e.g., II Chron 15:8; I Kings 11:5; Jer 7:30,31; Lev 26:30-32; Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Mark*, on chpt. 13.

²¹³¹ in 167BC

²¹³² in 135AD

²¹³³ the Temple Mount area as it exists today is actually the remains of the Timinus, the 'holy area' constructed by the Roman emperor Hadrian, on which he built temples to the gods Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva: the centre-point of Hadrian's Colonia Aelia Capitolina (The Roman Colony dedicated to his family name and the Capitoline hill in Rome, which was dedicated to the Roman god Jupiter).

ion, spoken of by the prophet Daniel, once more will be a statue of Jupiter. In this, there would be a certain baleful and chilling symmetry in Jupiter Olympus,²¹³⁴ quite possibly all of gold,²¹³⁵ reappearing for the third and final time. Taking all-in-all, this is probably the most likely image to be erected.

Mary, 'Co-redemptrix'

At one time, John Paul II was reported as being under considerable pressure²¹³⁶ to elevate the Virgin Mary to the official position of 'Co-redemptrix.'²¹³⁷ This would have confirmed her as the redeemer and the sole distributor of graces in the service of the Roman Holy Trinity: being seen as 'the daughter of the Father, the mother of the Son, and the spouse of the Holy Ghost.' The Virgin is seen in Roman eyes as the human dimension of the Holy Ghost, the latter never having been incarnate. She is also seen as the advocate of the faithful, supplanting the role of Jesus Christ.²¹³⁸ Had it been pronounced by the pope *ex cathedra*, this secondary triune dogma would then be complete in *Redemptoris Mater*: 'Co-redemptrix,' 'Mediatrix,' and 'Advocate.' It would also be the greatest feminist doctrine of all time, as it would mean that a woman had had the highest participation with the Divine.

That Mary was blessed among woman is clearly attested in the Gospel: *'And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women,'* and, *'For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed,'*²¹³⁹ but no generation has blessed her so much, in completely the wrong way, as the current one. 'Bless-

²¹³⁴ Jupiter, supreme god of the Roman pantheon, was called Latin: *dies pater*, 'the shining father,' the god of light and sky, and protector of the state and its laws. The Romans worshipped him as Latin: *Jupiter optimus maximus*, 'all good, all powerful.' His English name, Jove, is completely identical with the Greek god Zeus.

²¹³⁵ cp. Dan 3:1a,b, *'Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits.'* This golden image stood sixty cubits high and six cubits wide, giving sixty-six in aggregate. This was Nebuchadnezzar's blasphemous riposte to his dream from God (cf. Dan 2:31-45) interpreted by Daniel: he would have an endless kingdom, all of gold, by his own efforts, and not the steadily debased, terminal one prophesied.

²¹³⁶ from *vox populi*.

²¹³⁷ Hogue, John, *The Last Pope—the decline and fall of the Church of Rome*, pp.318,319 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'If Christ is coming down to earth at this millennium's end [i.e., 2000AD, as it was usually taken at the time] his pope may require that he make some room for his mother as an equal partner in mediating your salvation.

In April, 1997 John Paul said, "having created 'male and female,' the Lord also wants to place the New Eve beside the New Adam in the Redemption....Mary, the New Eve, thus becomes a perfect icon of the [Roman] Church....We can therefore turn to the Blessed Virgin, trustfully imploring her aid in the awareness of the singular role entrusted to her by God, the role of the co-operator in the Redemption.

Kenneth L. Woodward of Newsweek reported that in the last four years [written in 1997], the pope has received over four million signatures on petitions from 157 countries requesting that he use his *ex cathedra* powers to make Mary Co-Redemptrix and Mediatrix of All Graces and Advocate for the People of God.

In other words, they want to make Jesus' mother, She-sus Christ. It is an unique situation. For the first time, people from the highest of the papal hierarchy to the lowest of the laity around the world are pressing this pope with 100,000 letters a month to make an infallible statement.'

²¹³⁸ I John 2:1, from Greek: *paraclete*, a term originally meaning an helper of an accused in a court.

²¹³⁹ Luke 1:28,48

ed"²¹⁴⁰ actually means 'well spoken of,' as in eulogised: Mary was well spoken of among women. She was not, or about to become, divine or part of the redemption. Despite this, apparitions increased to record levels in the twentieth-century, as did pilgrims worshipping at her shrines. Any action to so elevate Mary by the then Polish pope²¹⁴¹ would merely have been building upon a raft of dogma that has emanated from Rome over the years.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that when Mary accepted [sic] God's invitation for her to bear His Son, she 'was already collaborating with the whole work her Son was to accomplish.'²¹⁴² The Second Vatican Council's *Dogmatic Constitution of the Church* states: 'The Father of mercies willed that the Incarnation should be preceded by assent on the part of the predestined mother, so that just as a woman had a share in bringing about death, so also a woman should contribute to life....rightly, therefore, the Fathers see Mary not merely as passively engaged by God, but as freely co-operating in the work of man's salvation through faith and obedience. For, as St. Irenæus says, she [Mary] "being obedient, became the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race." Hence not a few of the early Fathers gladly assert with him in their preaching: "the knot of Eve's disobedience was untied by Mary's obedience: what the virgin [sic] Eve bound through her disbelief, Mary loosened by her faith." Comparing Mary with Eve, they call her "Mother of the living," and frequently claim: "death through Eve, life through Mary."²¹⁴³ This is in direct conflict with Scripture. Eve was not virginal; she had been married to Adam by the Lord. Mary is not the cause of salvation for the whole human race; Jesus Christ is. Life is not through Mary. Christ said, '*I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*'²¹⁴⁴ Mary has no place in this.

Despite overwhelming biblical evidence of the unique position of Christ, Rome chooses to maintain that Mary's role in the incarnation was merely the very beginning of her involvement in the salvation of mankind: 'It was God's design that the Blessed Virgin Mary, apparently absent from the public life of Jesus, should assist him when he was dying nailed to the Cross.'²¹⁴⁵ Rome claims that standing at the foot of the cross, Mary offered Him in sacrifice to God: 'She it was who, immune from all sin, personal or inherited, and ever more closely united with her Son, offered Him on Golgotha to the Eternal Father together with the holocaust of her maternal rights and motherly love.'²¹⁴⁶ In compounding this damnable heresy, The Second Vatican Council's *Dogmatic Constitution of the Church* further expresses the Roman claim that Mary remained at the cross to suffer with Christ: 'Thus the Blessed Virgin advanced in her pilgrimage of faith, and faithfully persevered in her union with her Son unto the cross, where she stood, in keeping with the divine plan, enduring with her only begotten Son

²¹⁴⁰ Greek: eulogeo.

²¹⁴¹ Poland's patron saint is the Black Madonna of Czestochowa / Jasna Góra, much beloved of John Paul II during his life.

²¹⁴² #973 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²¹⁴³ #56 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets, sublinear emphasis added)

²¹⁴⁴ John 14:6; some other references, of many in the Bible, to the unique redeeming position of Christ, through only whom salvation is available, and everlasting life, are found in John 3:16,36,17:1-3.

²¹⁴⁵ Benedict XV, *Inter Sodalicia*

²¹⁴⁶ Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*

[sic] the intensity of his suffering, associated herself with his sacrifice in her mother's heart, and lovingly consenting to the immolation of this victim which was born of her.'²¹⁴⁷

So intense was Mary's share in the suffering, according to Rome, that she was brought to the very edge of death. Pius XI stated: '[Mary] participated with Jesus Christ in the very painful act of redemption.'²¹⁴⁸ Benedict XV put it thus: 'Mary suffered and, as it were, nearly died with her suffering Son; for the salvation of mankind she renounced her mother's rights and, as far as it depended on her, offered her Son to placate divine justice; so we may well say that she with Christ redeemed mankind.'²¹⁴⁹ Pius XII stated: '[Mary] had a part with [Christ] in the redemption of the human race.'²¹⁵⁰

This led to Mary being classed as 'Co-operatrix in man's redemption.'²¹⁵¹ This notion is sometimes referred to as the 'Fifth Marian Dogma'—the previous four dogmas already having been brought into the Roman belief by being decreed *ex cathedra*: 'Mother of God;' 'Perpetual Virgin;' 'Immaculate Conception;' and 'Assumption into Heaven.' The fifth is seen by many in the Roman church as heralding a 'New Marian Age.'

Pius IX, mistakenly identifying and interpreting: '*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel*,'²¹⁵² sees Mary, in standing at the foot of the cross, triumphing 'utterly over the ancient serpent.'²¹⁵³ Correctly read, of course, the 'bruising' of Satan is done by the seed of the woman,²¹⁵⁴ and not the woman. Rome goes even further, however, in its promotion of the cult of Mary, ascribing to her a leading role in the spread of the gospel: 'It is no exaggeration to say that it is due chiefly to her leadership and help that the wisdom and teachings of the Gospel spread so rapidly to all the nations of the world in spite of the most obstinate difficulties and most cruel persecutions and brought everywhere in their train a new reign of justice and peace.'²¹⁵⁵ Leo XIII here places Mary in the stead of Jesus Christ. '[A]nd the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved'²¹⁵⁶ leaves no room for Mary. It was the Lord, acting through the Holy Spirit, who increased the church, and caused the spread of the gospel. Christ prophesied this to happen, '*But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning*.'²¹⁵⁷

²¹⁴⁷ #58 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²¹⁴⁸ Pius XI, *Explorata Res* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²¹⁴⁹ Benedict XV, *Inter Sodalicia*

²¹⁵⁰ Pius XII, *Ad Coeli Reginum*

²¹⁵¹ Leo XIII, *Ubi Primum*, and 'Co-redemptor' in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, and in several Catholic writings, such as seen in Denzinger, Henry, *Sources of Catholic Dogma*.

²¹⁵² Gen 3:15

²¹⁵³ Pius IX, *Ineffabilis Deus*

²¹⁵⁴ Christ

²¹⁵⁵ Leo XIII, *Adiutricem Populi*

²¹⁵⁶ Acts 2:47b

²¹⁵⁷ John 15:26,27

Denying the role of the Holy Spirit is blasphemy. The dread penalty is stated in Matthew: *'Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come.'*²¹⁵⁸

Perhaps the ultimate accolade accredited to Mary by Rome is that of 'Queen of heaven.' Pius XII asserts the matter in the following terms: 'The Blessed Virgin Mary is to be called Queen not only on account of her divine motherhood but also because by the will of God she had a great part in the work of our salvation....In this work of redemption the Blessed Virgin Mary was closely associated with her Christ....Just as Christ, because he redeemed us, is by a special title our King and Lord, so too is Blessed Mary, our Queen and Our Mistress, because of the unique way in which she co-operated in our redemption. She provided her very substance for his body, she offered him willingly for us, and she took an unique part in our salvation by desiring it, praying for it, and so obtaining it.'²¹⁵⁹

Vatican hill was once the major centre of the mother-goddess Cybele—possibly the pagan Roman Empire's greatest deity. Cybele 'was called virgin, pure and undefiled, who supposedly had the power to wash away sins, was claimed to have resurrected bodily to heaven, and was served by an emasculated priesthood.'²¹⁶⁰ How close to Romanism to this very day!

The Bible has it very differently. Propitiation means atonement, to have paid the penalty of our sin in our stead. He who paid the penalty is identified in Scripture time and time again. It cannot be misunderstood, other than by wilful dissembling: *'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.'*²¹⁶¹ Again, *'And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world.'*²¹⁶² And finally, *'Herein is the love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins.'*²¹⁶³

Mary did not offer Christ for our sins. That is blasphemous, for it places her in the stead of our Redeemer. Despite this, the Roman belief is that God has decreed that souls (sic) are to be saved by devotion to the

²¹⁵⁸ Mat 12:31,32; Kittel, G. & Bromily, Geoffrey W., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 1, p. 621: 'means 'blasphemy of the deity' by mistaking its true nature or violating or doubting its power.' Excerpts of definitions from Greek Literature, the Septuagint, and the New Testament.

²¹⁵⁹ Pius XII, *Ad Coeli Reginam*

²¹⁶⁰ article *Which Goddess is Which?* citing Burns, Cathy, *Billy Graham and His Friends: A Hidden Agenda?* p.415

²¹⁶¹ Rom 3:23-25

²¹⁶² I John 2:1,2

²¹⁶³ I John 4:10

Immaculate Heart of Mary. Given that the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception²¹⁶⁴ is unique to the Roman Catholic Church, this doctrine does nothing less than to prescribe salvation, while seeking to reserve it solely to a Cæsaro-papist, ecclesiastico-civil, world-girdling, pagan cult.²¹⁶⁵

The substitution of redemption and salvation through Christ by the pagan doctrine found in Rome's Mary, portrayed as she is as having lived free from sin, sitting as 'Queen of heaven,' in the guise of Mediatrix of all graces, and even possibly Co-Redemptrix, places the divine attributes of Christ on the shoulders of Mary, and, as a result, aims to divert man from the One and only Saviour. *'Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.'*²¹⁶⁶ Jesus Christ alone is the Saviour, not some devilish apparition portraying itself to the gullible and foolish as the 'Queen of heaven.'

Compounding this litany of anti-Christian, pagan-based beliefs and dogmas, is the belief that God has placed Mary in an unique position in that mankind must make all pleas and supplications to Mary in order to be saved. In the view of Rome, 'souls' are to be saved by devotion to the 'Virgin.'

Pope John Paul II, her most loyal follower, and one who firmly believed that his deliverance from the assassination attempt on his life²¹⁶⁷ was directly linked to the 'Fatima 3' prophecy handed down, allegedly, by the Virgin Mary²¹⁶⁸ long ruminated over her elevation to 'Co-redemptrix.' He believed his deliverance was purely the result of 'divine protection from the Virgin,' and a clear message. As Pope John Paul II lay recovering from the attempted assassination, he allegedly experienced a 'prodigy,' a vivid re-enactment of Fatima's 'miracle of the sun,' in the midst of which he had a vision of the terrible agony which would grip the Roman Church in the wake of his assassination. He then set about considering an appeal by four million Roman Catholic petitioners asking him to have Mary declared 'Co-redemptrix,' without arriving at a conclusion.

Any such manoeuvre in the future could ultimately lead to a form of 'Holy Quartet,' although a reversion to a pagan former trinity common in Egypt and elsewhere—that of the Father, Mother and Son—might occur. As things are now perceived, however, the 'five-dogma' regime recited above would remain extant. Had the pope accede to the petition, Marian devotion²¹⁶⁹ would have skyrocket. Presumably, in turn, this would have

²¹⁶⁴ viz., of Mary.

²¹⁶⁵ but cp. with Benedict XVI's writings, q.v. sup.

²¹⁶⁶ Acts 4:12

²¹⁶⁷ in 1982AD

²¹⁶⁸ by virtue of the two events sharing the same date in terms of day and month, although over sixty years apart.

²¹⁶⁹ the hyperdulia, viz., superior veneration due to the Virgin Mary; Dickson, Charles, *A Protestant Pastor Looks at Mary*, p.60:

'A Muslim student visiting Rome wants especially to see the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore. Surprised? The poetry of a Syrian mystic is replete with Marian devotion. Surprised? Martin Luther recommended prayer to Mary. Surprised? An American Pentecostalist minister begins to visit shrines of Marian apparitions. Surprised? Muslims refer to Mary as il-Sittneh, or Our Lady. Surprised? A chapter in the Koran is named after her. Surprised? Mary's deep kindness as a mother is portrayed in Chinese art. Surprised? And now a presbyterian minister has written a book recommending

eased the worldwide acceptance of such a damnable abomination, although this would have no compelling or concurring effect on either Jews or Judæo-Christians, to put it mildly.

As stated, the Roman Catholic canon extends to the Virgin Mary having an 'immaculate conception,' so enabling her to participate fully in this pantheon of hell. Her mother, variously Anna or Dinah, is derived from Diana Lucifera, the pagan Morning Star goddess. For her part, the Virgin Mary also enjoys the pagan titles of 'Morning Star,' 'Empress of Hell,' and, of course, 'Lady of the World,' 'Mother of the World,' 'Lady of all Nations'—otherwise known as 'Our Lady.'

The wholesale extent to which Mariolatry has permeated the Roman delusion, supplanting Christ the Redeemer, is ably illustrated in the words of Alphonsus de Liguori:²¹⁷⁰

1. 'It is the will of God that all graces should come to us at the hands of Mary;
2. Such is His [God's] will that we should have all by Mary;
3. All graces that have been bestowed on men all came by Mary;
4. O Mary, we poor sinners know no other refuge than thee, for thou art our only hope, and on thee we rely for salvation;
5. [It is] Mary who seizes the sword of divine justice with her own hands to prevent it from falling upon sinners;
6. St. Bridget heard Jesus Christ address His mother and say, that she might be ready to obtain the grace of God for the devil, if only he would seek her aid;
7. We often obtain more promptly what we ask by calling on the name of Mary than by invoking Jesus Christ;
8. Mary, it is stated, bruised the serpent's head;
9. God has entrusted the heart of Jesus into the hands of Mary;
10. Whoever desires Jesus must go to Mary;
11. Inasmuch as He [Jesus] was her Son, He was truly obliged to obey her;

praying the rosary. Still surprised? A closer investigation of both past history and current events points out that Mary has a universal appeal that transcends our cultural, geographical, and even religious boundaries.'

²¹⁷⁰ 1696–1787AD; Liguori, de, Alphonsus, *The Glories of Mary*; Blavatsky, Helena Petrovna, *Isis Unveiled*, pp.38,39: 'Cyril of Alexandria openly embraced the cult of Isis, the Egyptian goddess, and had had her anthropomorphized into Mary, the Mother of God.'

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12. All those who are not thy servants, O Mary, shall perish;
 13. It is impossible for any sinner to be saved without the help of Mary;
 14. Mary is invoked to save the reader's soul, 'through his merits';
 15. Even God was subject to her will; and,
 16. Mary does not ask, but commands God.²¹⁷¹

'The church close by the Vatican has upon its marble pediment, graven in large letters, "Let us come to the throne of the Virgin Mary, that we may find grace to help in times of need." The Roman sees Hebrews quoted,²¹⁷² but cannot verify it if he would, seeing the Bible is forbidden to him, and knows not that it reads, "*Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need,*" the context showing that Christ is presented as the Mediator. Pius IX, at the foot of the Column of the Immaculate Conception, erected to perpetuate the fact that he was permitted to decree the dogma, has Moses, David, Isaiah, and Jeremiah casting crowns before the Virgin, saying, "*Thou art worthy, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.*"^{2173 2174}

It was not until 1854 that Pius IX stated: '[The Virgin Mary] has been appointed by God to be the Queen of heaven and earth.' This was not made 'official' until the reign of Pius XII.²¹⁷⁵ Pius IX also made Mary the cornerstone of the Roman Catholic faith, wherein belief and teaching was founded on salvation only and solely being available through Mary.

The singular and exulted position occupied by the Virgin Mary in Catholic belief is admirably demonstrated by the claim, common among Romanists to this day, that she is in heaven, and that when requests and supplications are made to Christ in her name by her devoted followers, she offers and presents her naked breast to Our Lord and Saviour, and beseeches Him to grant whatever favour has been petitioned!

Foolish shepherd

The False Prophet of Revelation, the end-time pope, is also frequently linked with the foolish or idol shepherd of Zechariah: '*And the Lord said unto me, Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd. For, lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land, which shall not visit those that be cut off, neither shall seek the*

²¹⁷¹ Liguori, de, Alphonsus, *Glories of Mary*.

²¹⁷² Heb 4:16

²¹⁷³ said of the Lamb, Rev 5:9.

²¹⁷⁴ Fulton, Dr. Justin D., *Is it Mary or the Lady of the Jesuits?*

²¹⁷⁵ in 1954AD

young one, nor heal that that is broken, nor feed that that standeth still: but he shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces. Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! The sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened.'²¹⁷⁶ Such a connection is erroneous for the foolish / idol shepherd will have been in charge of the flock, the remnant, true Judæo-Christian church, and then have left it to its fate. His identity and fate,²¹⁷⁷ therefore, is not that of, or awaiting, the False Prophet.²¹⁷⁸

Sadly, this foolish / idol shepherd is merely the near-last in an infecund line of shepherds of the flock—God's people—stretching back to the time of the nation Israel, and excoriated by God: *'And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds: Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them. Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord; As I live, saith the Lord God, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock; Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves anymore; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them. For thus saith the Lord God; Behold I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken,*

²¹⁷⁶ Zech 11:15-17

²¹⁷⁷ Zech 15:18

²¹⁷⁸ Rev 19:20

*and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment. And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he goats. Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet? And as for my flock, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet. Therefore thus saith the Lord God unto them; Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and the lean cattle. Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad; therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle. And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it. And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them. And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the field devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid. And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more. Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord God. And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God.'*²¹⁷⁹ This is a time-sequence preview of the purification of Israel and the Judæo-Christian church.

There is a correlation with the end-time Laodicean condition of the Christian church in Revelation chapter three, where that church era is described as being lukewarm and fit only to be spewed out.²¹⁸⁰ The foolish and '*idol shepherd*' of the near end-time church suffers the woes recited in Zechariah, being wholly appropriate to the magnitude of his shortcomings and the wholesale damage that he has caused.²¹⁸¹ They do not refer, however, to the events surrounding the demise of the False Prophet.

²¹⁷⁹ Ezek 34:1-31

²¹⁸⁰ Rev 3:14-22

²¹⁸¹ Zech 11:15-17

First beast in detail

Reverting to the Beast that arises from the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, the seven heads are the seven imperial and military eruptions in the form of empires of the Beast. This, in part, relates back to the second chapter of Daniel and the interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

*'Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.'*²¹⁸²

The outline in Daniel's descriptive prophecy is dibasic: one, from the human standpoint, above, where under the mighty figure of a man in stately proportion, the Gentile empires are seen as to the world in their succession; the other from the divine standpoint, in chapter seven, where they are seen in their base, unglazed state. The one therefore displays their outward appearance to the eye of man, the other reveals their innermost character to the eye of God. Nebuchadnezzar sees these nations and *'times of the Gentiles'* under the outward

²¹⁸² Dan 2:31-45

aspect of glittering gold, shining silver, brilliant brass, and irresistible iron. Daniel sees them as wild beasts, ferocious in nature, and cruel in their career. One sees increase in might and power, the other just declension in terms of the depths of barbarity and depravity to which these empires will stoop. Bullinger says: 'Now look at the image; first at its values. All tend downwards; first gold, then silver, brass, iron, and clay. Look at its weight, its specific gravity:

Gold:	19.3
Silver:	10.5
Bronze:	8.5
Iron:	7.6
Clay:	1.9

Down, down from 19.3 to 1.9. The image is top-heavy, and the first blow of the mighty stone upon the feet shall shatter its pottery, and bring it all down in pieces. Yet with all this manifest deterioration there is a seeming advance, in apparent greatness; but it is in reality only weakness. The first empire, Babylon, is seen as one; the second, Medo-Persia, is seen as two; the third, Greece, becomes four (Macedonia, Thrace, Syria, and Egypt); and the fourth, Rome, becomes ten. So that there is less and less of that unity which is strength, and more and more of that division and separation which is weakness.²¹⁸³

While many interpretations, sure or otherwise, have been placed upon the passage,²¹⁸⁴ the most widely held and correct identities of these four Beast kingdoms are recited by Bullinger:

1. The Babylonian Empire, then current in the time of Daniel;²¹⁸⁵
2. The Medo-Persian²¹⁸⁶ Empire that captured Babylon;²¹⁸⁷
3. The Greek Empire of Alexander the Great, who conquered Asia Minor, defeating the Persians in the process, and then took control of Syria and Egypt before proceeding even as far as India;²¹⁸⁸ and,
4. The Roman Empire, which gradually filled the vacuum in the period of the Greek decline before the birth of Christ; then current in the time of John.²¹⁸⁹

²¹⁸³ Bullinger, E. W., *Ten Sermons on the Second Advent*, Sermon VIII, 'The Second Advent in Relation to "The Gentile;"' 'The gold kingdom did, at least, offer some respect to the position of God (cf. Nebuchadnezzar's admission, Dan 4:34); in the silver, Cyrus ascribed his powers to his own pagan gods; in the bronze, Alexander to his own powers; and in the iron and clay, the Roman Empire to the state, the emperor, and their pagan pantheon of gods.'

²¹⁸⁴ Dan 2:31-45

²¹⁸⁵ extant 605-539BC

²¹⁸⁶ i.e., the Medes absorbed by the Persians; extant 536-331BC

²¹⁸⁷ in about 538BC

²¹⁸⁸ by the year 323BC; extant 331-168BC

The fourth kingdom of the second chapter of Daniel is the well known 'Beast' kingdom of Revelation. This Beast is described further: *'And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the Beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The Beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the Beast that was, and is not, and yet is. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings, five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the Beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the Beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.'*²¹⁹⁰

Despite such detail, many explanations have been proffered down through time to illuminate the identities of the seven heads, ten horns and all of the crowns. Some have tried to connect the seven heads with the seven great world monarchies of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome and the Roman Empire in its restored condition. This is arbitrary, as, for example, the seventh kingdom is not a separate one from the preceding Roman Empire of history while the first six are all identifiably separate, one from another, and, of course, it fails to start with Nebuchadnezzar, the *'head of gold.'*²¹⁹¹ Others have linked this prophecy, especially *'And there are seven kings: five are fallen,'*²¹⁹² *and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space,'*²¹⁹³ to import a list of Roman emperors: Augustus, Tiberias, Caligula, Claudius, Nero, Vespasian, and, finally, Titus. The problem with this listing, apart from its fundamental and complete irrelevance, lies in its timing: the parties are all long since dead, yet the end has not come. As for the ten kings, some see, erroneously, the Seleucid monarchs in this role.²¹⁹⁴

²¹⁸⁹ extant 168BC–476AD (primary period), with imperial Rome ranging over the period 31BC–476AD.

²¹⁹⁰ Rev 17:6-14; Moffatt translation, Mat 5:9, *'Blessed are the peacemakers! they will be ranked the sons of God.'* The rank of *'sons of God,'* seen in Job 1:6, is that of the angels.

²¹⁹¹ Dan 2:38

²¹⁹² erroneously, some prefer to see the five fallen as representing Roman administrative eras or systems: Kings, Consuls, Dictators, Decemvirs, and Military Tribunals.

²¹⁹³ Rev 17:10

²¹⁹⁴ q.v. inf.; Seleucid empire, 335–141BC: the Roman general Pompey the Great ended the Seleucid kingdom in 64BC by absorbing the remains of the former empire into his own, but it had been eroded gradually over the period 141–64BC, with the Parthians taking the eastern part, and the Romans the western. At its height, it covered what is modern-day Syria, part of Asia Minor (Turkey) near Targus, Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, the Emirates, the northern part of Oman, part of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and several other 'stans,' and reached the southern shores of the Caspian Sea. It was by

Eighth, of the seven

*'And there are seven kings,'*²¹⁹⁵ where 'kings' can also mean 'leaders' or 'commanders.'²¹⁹⁶ But these are related back to kingdoms, as seen from links with the following verse: *'And the beast that was, and is not, even he'*²¹⁹⁷ [or 'it'] *is the eighth*²¹⁹⁸ *and goeth into perdition.'*²¹⁹⁹ Of the seven heads, the last, the seventh, is effectively recast as an eighth, de facto, so different and terrible is it from the others, where the correct translation is: *'and is the eighth, and is also out of the seventh.'*²²⁰⁰ The 'eighth' is the resurrected or new beginnings beast kingdom of the Antichrist, the last short empire lasting seven years, intensifying in its second moiety, and culminating in the last and final *'one hour with the beast,'*²²⁰¹ signifying both its strength and thankfully its transient existence.

The seven heads or kingdoms, given that one is said to have recovered from a seemingly deadly wound suffered in warfare, *'And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed; and all the world wondered after the beast,'*²²⁰² and, *'which had the wound by a sword, and did live,'*²²⁰³ identifies not only the Roman Empire, but also the cadence. The first head is the Roman Empire of the time of John, which received a deadly wound;^{2204 2205 2206} the second is Justinian's revival;²²⁰⁷ and so on. The interesting part lies in the apparent eschatological purview: *'And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and*

far the largest of the successor states. In this way, *'the king of the north'* transmuted to the fourth kingdom, the Roman Empire.

²¹⁹⁵ Rev 17:10a

²¹⁹⁶ Greek: basileus.

²¹⁹⁷ could equally be 'it,' but, given the context, 'he' is probably more satisfactory, from the Greek: autos, although that both apply is seen from Rev 17:7's *'seven heads,'* which are linked to and identified with *'seven mountains,'* v.9 (Greek: oros, orh), and finally with *'seven kings,'* v.10.

²¹⁹⁸ signifying 'resurrection' or 'new beginnings' in occult lore, deriving from what is vested in the number eight, q.v.

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²¹⁹⁹ Rev 17:11; a parallel vesting is also found in Scripture: II Peter 2:5 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), *'And spared not the old world, but saved Noah, the eighth [generation], a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.'*

²²⁰⁰ Rev 17:11a

²²⁰¹ Rev 17:12

²²⁰² Rev 13:3

²²⁰³ Rev 13:14d

²²⁰⁴ in 473AD

²²⁰⁵ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.129:

'The empires founded on force have vanished, leaving only a memory which with the years becomes even fainter.'

²²⁰⁶ cited in *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, p.23 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'[T]he Western Empire was broken up into ten divisions....[A]ll historians agree in this, that out of the territory of Western Rome, ten separate kingdoms were ultimately established, and we may safely assign them to the time between the extreme dates....351AD and 483AD.

The ten nations which were the most instrumental in breaking up the Roman empire were named (without respect to the time of their establishment) as follows: The Huns, Ostrogoths, Visigoths, Franks, Vandals, Suevi, Burgundians, Heruli, Anglo-Saxons, and Lombards. The connection between these and some of the modern nations of Europe, is still traceable in the names, as England, Burgundy, Lombardy, France, etc. see [Newton, Isaac, *Observations Upon the Prophecies of Daniel, and the Apocalypse of St. John*], pp.209,210.'

²²⁰⁷ in 554AD

*the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.*²²⁰⁸ The sixth king is the era of Hitler / Mussolini. Both were Fascist regimes in communion with the Roman Catholic Church, especially Hitler's. The reason why the purview is said to be from that of *'one is,'* is that senior elements of the Nazis were absorbed into the all-conquering western powers—the United States of America and others—where the evil spores blended with the native varieties, germinated, and took root. The actual purview is thus not limited to the time of the hegemony of Nazi Fascism, but to the entire period from the mid-thirties (with the creation of the Berlin / Rome Axis²²⁰⁹ and Mussolini's announcement of what was to prove an ephemeral dream of building a new Roman Empire, evident in, *'The beast that thou sawest was, and is not....and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder....when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is'*²²¹⁰), to the advent of the seventh head with its ten horns: *'And I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.'*²²¹¹ As such, the transient, hidden nature of the beast²²¹² and the prophetic purview fit neatly with the period of final flowering of eschatological understanding, clearly presaged in Daniel: *'But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.'*²²¹³

'Eight is the number of regeneration and rebirth. The baptismal font is eight-sided, being the basin in which the young are [said to be] reborn free of sin. There are eight beatitudes in Christ's Sermon on the Mount; eight trigrams of the Taoist Ba'gua (and eight mortals who have mastered the Way); and eight divisions in Islam. In several mystical doctrines, personal transformation can be obtained on the eighth day, after seven days of fasting and meditation. Eight is the number of corners on a cube, and as such it is also seen as

²²⁰⁸ Rev 17:10

²²⁰⁹ in 1936AD

²²¹⁰ Rev 17:8

²²¹¹ Rev 17:3b

²²¹² Baer, Randall N., *Inside the New Age Nightmare*, pp.170,171, citing Carr, Joseph, *The Twisted Cross*, p.87, quoted by Marrs, Texe, in *Dark Secrets of the New Age*, p.253:

'Joseph Carr, who investigates the occult basis of the Nazi regime in *The Twisted Cross*, notes parallels between New Age philosophy and the Nazi National Socialism: "One cannot argue against the claim that the Nazi worldview and major elements of the New Age Movement worldview are identical. They should be, after all, for they both grew out of the same occultic root: Theosophy. Their respective cosmogony, cosmology, and philosophies are identical....Further, he states that the New Age is "an Antichrist movement that could easily spawn another Adolf Hitler—and a holocaust that makes the killing of the Jews during World War II look like a minor action."

Finally, in the classic Book, *The Occult and the Third Reich*, a due forewarning is given:

"Those who induced Germany to embrace the swastika are not dead. They are still among us, just as they have been in every era, and doubtless will continue to be until the Apocalypse. National Socialism was for them but a means, and Hitler was but an instrument. The undertaking failed. What they are now trying to do is revive the myth using other means," cf. Angebert, Jean-Michel, *The Occult and the Third Reich*, p.xvi.

²²¹³ Dan 12:4,9

representing solidity, physical perfection and the scope of reality. The Chinese consider the number to be lucky, because their word for it sounds like the word for “prosper.”²²¹⁴

The Antichrist is described as the eighth,²²¹⁵ and of the seven; physical perfection as the eighth, reborn or regenerated, while shunning the desire of women, indicating both singleness of purpose and pagan purity.

Seven heads

The correct identities of the parties represented by the seven heads can be unravelled by reference to the seventeenth chapter of Revelation: *'And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.'*²²¹⁶ The seven mountains, or hills, are, in their own way, proof that mystical Babylon cannot be ancient, literal Babylon which was situated on a vast plain and not on mountains. However, it is widely known that Rome is built on seven hills.²²¹⁷ Classical writers familiarly spoke of Rome as the 'city of seven hills.' Roman coins, minted during the reign of Vespasian²²¹⁸ and now in the British Museum, actually depict the city as a woman sitting on seven hills. The basilicas of Saint John Lateran and Santa Maria Maggiore sit on the Caelian and Esquiline hills respectively, and the former papal palace, Palazzo del Quirinale²²¹⁹ sits atop that hill. It can be said that Vatican territorial sovereignty straddles these hills. So it is Rome, and its Holy Roman Empire, that provides the definitive answer.

Revelation affords a further insight into the nature of what constitutes a 'head': *'And [he] stood upon the sand of the sea,'*²²²⁰ and saw a Beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the Beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads, as it were, wounded to death; and his

²²¹⁴ Kenner, T. A., *Symbols and their Hidden Meanings*, p.22 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²²¹⁵ in Hebrew numerology the number eight is (Sh'moneh), from the root (Shah'meyn), 'to make fat,' 'cover with fat,' 'to super-abound.' As a participle it means 'one who abounds in strength,' etc. As a noun it is 'superabundant fertility,' 'oil,' etc., so that as a numeral it is the superabundant number. As *seven* was so called because the seventh day was the day of completion and rest, so *eight*, as the eighth day, was over and above this perfect completion, and was indeed the *first* of a new series, as well as being the *eighth*.

²²¹⁶ Rev 17:9

²²¹⁷ Quirinal, Capitoline, Palatine, Caelian, Esquiline, Aventine & Viminal; Constantinople, which later became the eastern capital of the Roman Empire, is also situated on seven hills. At the time of John the Apostle, Rome had a 'Feast of the Seven Hills,' in December, held immediately before the celebration of Sol Invictus. The city's name, before it became known as Rome, was Septimontium, the Seven Hills, according to the Roman Antiquarian, Marcus Terentius Varro (116–27BC).

²²¹⁸ 70–79AD

²²¹⁹ now the Italian President's official residence.

²²²⁰ the 'sea' represents the world in turmoil and chaos, tossed this way and that, following upon a catastrophic financial collapse of global proportions and World War III being ignited in the Middle East, amongst other things, with the Antichrist rising out of the ensuing chaos. The 'sand' signifies the ever-shifting alliances and understandings between the world's nations as they jostle for relative political, economic, or military advantage. It affords no firm foothold, no firm foundation; irredeemably, ever-changing.

*deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the Beast.*²²²¹ As stated, the deadly wound which was healed, albeit partially, in terms of the history of imperial Rome, was its fall in the fifth-century²²²² and its healing in the middle of the sixth,²²²³ although the final, end-time resurrection of a world-girdling 'Holy' Roman Empire,²²²⁴ with its restoration and consummation,²²²⁵ is here in purview. '*One of his heads,*' therefore, refers to the first eruption of the Roman Empire, covering Rome's Empire up until its fifth-century collapse.²²²⁶ '*The Beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition,*'²²²⁷ again refers to the Roman Empire which has not existed in its full and independent state since that year, and also to the absence of a Holy Roman Empire for well over a century. Interestingly, the wording is of five past heads / kings (the first being imperial Rome, and the rest constituting aspects of the Holy Roman Empire), and one that is, and one that is yet to come, described as: '*And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.*'²²²⁸ It is apparent from this that the viewpoint inherent is, in large part, retrospective, part aspective, and, finally, frighteningly prospective. But why should this view be taken in preference, say, to one commencing with the first head / king and then addressing the remainder in chronological order?

There is a fundamental difference between Daniel and Revelation which should provide an explanation. Daniel was told: '*But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased,*'²²²⁹ whereas, about six hundred and fifty years later, John was instructed differently: '*And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.*'²²³⁰

Taking these and the end-time's vastly increased knowledge, Daniel's prophecy should be intelligible with the gift of the Holy Spirit; and similarly with Revelation. And, from this point in history, five kings have fallen, one is (or was, until recently), and one is yet to come:

²²²¹ Rev 13:1-3

²²²² in 476AD

²²²³ in 554AD

²²²⁴ demise in 1870AD, q.v.inf.

²²²⁵ in Latin: terminus ad quem.

²²²⁶ in 476AD

²²²⁷ Rev 17:8

²²²⁸ Rev 17:10

²²²⁹ Dan 12:4; Turner, W. H., *The Second Coming of Christ*, Appendix Two:

'The angel prophesies of an increase of travel and knowledge in the last days. What did he mean? Some have suggested that the prophecy in Dan 12:4 of people running to and fro and knowledge increasing was a prophecy of the increase of travel and knowledge that we see in the world today, and give this as a proof that we are in the last days, and there may be some truth in this. However, as this statement is made in the same verse as the instruction to seal the prophecy until the last days, it has a specific reference to the knowledge of prophetic truth that was revealed to Daniel.'

²²³⁰ Rev 21:10

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1. The original Roman Empire;²²³¹
 2. The Imperial Restoration—by Justinian I (Justinian the Great), emperor of the East—one head wounded as unto death, but partially revived, Phoenix-like;²²³²
 3. The Frankish Empire (French) leading to Charlemagne (German—with Germany being the Holy Roman Empire's traditional protector, funder, and champion);
 4. The Hapsburg Dynasty (Austrian);
 5. The Napoleonic Empire (French); Holy Roman Empire finally demised;²²³³
 6. The Axis Empire of Mussolini / Hitler Italian / German)—the aspective part; with,
 7. The final and most horrendous yet to come.

Holy Roman Empire

Charlemagne was crowned Emperor by Pope Leo III²²³⁴ in what historians usually regard as the start of the Holy Roman Empire.²²³⁵ About a millennium later Napoleon took the title of Holy Roman Emperor,²²³⁶ but not without some severe ramifications for the Roman hierarchy: 'In France, the Roman Catholic religion was abolished by national decree in 1793, but in 1802 the fall of the Papacy was stayed for a time, and it was restored to a portion of its former power by Napoleon's Concordat with the Pope for re-nationalising the Catholic religion in France²²³⁷....described in Sir Walter Scott's *History of Bonaparte*:²²³⁸ "When the ratifications of this Concordat or treaty were published, it was singular to behold how submissively the once proud See of Rome lay prostrated before the power of Bonaparte, and how absolutely he must have dictated all the terms of the treaty. Every article in it innovated on some of those rights and claims which the Church of Rome had asserted. By this compact, Pius VII surrendered to Bonaparte—a soldier whose name was five or six years before un-

²²³¹ i.e., imperial Rome, 31BC–476AD.

²²³² Latin: redivivus

²²³³ in 1870AD

²²³⁴ 800AD

²²³⁵ whereas ecclesiastics date it either from Pope Gregory I in 590AD, or from the decree of Phocas in 610AD.

²²³⁶ having earlier disbanded the empire in 1806AD!

²²³⁷ 1801AD, followed by the Organic Articles in 1802AD severing the papal link with the Church in France.

²²³⁸ the Code Napoleon has heavily influenced thinking throughout much of continental Europe in this matter. Under that code, the state assumes a position above the citizen. The state is neither responsible to the citizen nor serves him; rather, the converse. In Great Britain, however, the state is the servant of the subject (citizen), the state is the representative of the people, and its assets are held on behalf of the people and are ultimately owned by the people. In both systems, the liabilities of the state are met, ultimately, by the citizens.

heard of—those claims to supremacy which his predecessors had maintained for so many ages against the whole of the potentates of Europe. A puritan might now have said of the Power seated on the Seven Hills, '*Babylon is fallen—it is fallen—that great city.*'²²³⁹ The more rigid Catholics were of the same opinion. This Concordat, they alleged, showed the debasement of the Roman hierarchy. It was inaugurated at Notre Dame²²⁴⁰ with the utmost magnificence. Bonaparte took care to have full advantage of the Concordat by introducing his own name as much as possible into the catechism of the Church. To honour Napoleon, the catechism taught, was the same as to honour and serve God Himself; to oppose his will was to incur the penalty of eternal damnation."²²⁴¹

By the thirteenth-century, the Roman church actually owned about twenty percent of the land in Europe and received ten percent of its tithes in revenues. It was by far the wealthiest and preponderant institution in the world. The calamitous descent to such a low ebb by the time of the Concordat with Napoleon perhaps illuminates the strength and nature of the motives and desires driving Pope Pius VII. Almost anything could be ceded in his attempt to regain the church's past glories.

Under Napoleon, the Latin kingdoms became united from the extremity of Italy to the German Ocean.²²⁴² His empire included France, Spain, Holland, Westphalia, Naples, Switzerland, Savoy, Lombardy, Tuscany, the minor dukedoms of Italy, and the States of the Roman church. He was king of Italy, and his son and presumptive heir was king of Rome, which itself was designated the 'second city of his empire.'

In the second quarter of the twentieth-century, both Mussolini and Hitler concluded concordats with the Vatican. Again, there was the prospect, from the perspective of the papacy, of a strong and all-conquering west / central European power becoming the vehicle for a worldwide church / state superpower. Shortly afterwards, Japan, Germany, and Italy withdrew from The League of Nations.

The Reich Concordat²²⁴³ with the Vatican represented both the failure and the removal of the resistance of the Roman church to the rise of the parvenu Hitler and his Nazis. In accordance with its terms, the Centre

²²³⁹ Isa 21:9; Rev 14:8,18:2

²²⁴⁰ April, 1802AD

²²⁴¹ *Forty Coming Wonders*, pp.460,461

²²⁴² i.e., the North Sea.

²²⁴³ in 1933AD; Cornwall, John, *Hitler's Pope*, chpt. 8, pp.2,130,131,153,157 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets) gives an indication of how the last pope will control / manipulate the Antichrist's power through the use of the Roman Church's Canon Law, thus giving force to his damnable and damnably heretical fulminations: 'The [Reich Concordat of 1933] constrained the Holy See, the German hierarchy, the clergy, and the faithful to silence on any issue the Nazi regime deemed political....It [the Reich concordat] imposed a moral duty on Catholics to obey the Nazi rulers....To be specific, since the persecution and elimination of the Jews in Germany was by now a stated policy, the treaty had legally bound the Catholic Church in Germany [and in toto] to silence on outrages against the Jews.... There was the single aim that ran through Pacelli's [later to become pope Pius XII, the pope during World War II, et seq.] diplomatic policy from the Serbian Concordat in 1913 to the conclusion of the Reich Concordat in 1933. It was to be stressed, he wrote, "that the Code of Canon Law is the foundation and the essential legal presupposition of the concordat." This involves "not only official recognition (by the Reich) of the legislation of the Church, but also the adoption of many provisions of this legislation and the protection of all Church legislation." The historic victory in the accord, he was saying, [was] the total recognition and acceptance of the Church's law by the state.'

Party, the main Roman Catholic political bulwark against Nazism in Germany in the years leading up to the Concordat, was effectively neutralised and then removed. This led to the passage of the Enabling Act²²⁴⁴ and the elevation of Adolf Hitler—chosen son of the black-satanic Thulegesellschaft Society / Germanenorden and star pupil of occultist Dietrich Eckhart—to the dictatorial position of Reich Chancellor, and the imposition of the authoritarian, occult-ridden, crypto-socialist, autarkic experiment with the deadly and virulent bacillus of Nazism. In addition, the Catholic church in Germany, both in its hierarchy and laity, was silenced and delivered into the grateful hands of a dictator who up to that point had feared the reaction of German political Catholicism to any form of a 'new Kulturkampf.' Hitler was well aware of the ramifications of Bismark's ill-fated Kulturkampf in the previous century, when a Catholic backlash against religious repression on the part of the state had forced Bismark into an ignominious backtracking. Later, Goebbels stated²²⁴⁵ in his newspaper, *Der Angriff*, that Ludwig Kaas, leader of the Centre Party, had agreed to the Enabling Act in exchange for the government's agreement to negotiate a Reich Concordat with the Holy See.²²⁴⁶ Without the active support or collusion of the predominantly Roman Catholic Centre Party, Hitler's Act would have failed to secure the necessary two-thirds majority to allow it to pass into law.

A somewhat similar political neutralisation process had taken place earlier in Italy,²²⁴⁷ when the Holy See forbade the Roman Catholic Partito Popolare in its approaches to the socialists in attempting to thwart the rise of Mussolini. Five years later, the Vatican Lateran Treaty had been signed with Mussolini. Ludwig Kaas, when leader of the then neutered and emasculated Centre Party in Germany²²⁴⁸ described the entire Lateran Treaty in Italy as representing the ideal form of agreement between a modern totalitarian state and the Roman church. He opined: 'The authoritarian Church²²⁴⁹ should understand the 'authoritarian' state better than others.'

In spite of Hitler's declared hatred of religion, and his desire, eventually, to see it eviscerated and then extirpated, his shorter-term need of its silence and more than tacit support led to an accommodation with the Holy See in the concordat. In a broadly similar way, the Antichrist will need the support of broadly and nominally Roman Catholic Europe, for western Europe will serve as his base, and only the pope can deliver that support.

From the point of view of the papacy, the Antichrist's military might will be seen not only as essential to project the Romish religion to the very peak of world power and influence, but having established it thus, to purge the world of those the papacy deems unacceptable and unconvertible.

This can be compared with chapter 13 of the book of Revelation, where it sheds light on why and how the false prophet, the last-in-line pope, has power to compel people to worship the image of the beast, and take the mark of the beast. The Antichrist's world-girdling empire is to be bound in Roman Canon Law, if not in fact, to honour all dictats and papal fulminations made under that code of Church law.

²²⁴⁴ March, 1933D, introducing the German population to the dark and treacherous forest of Nazi unreason. The bringer of 'order' and his regime would rapidly descend to being the agent of violence, random death, and utter chaos.

²²⁴⁵ in 1937AD

²²⁴⁶ The Holy See, which long predates the Vatican city state, is a sovereign entity without territory. It is as the Holy See that the Roman Catholic Church leadership maintains diplomatic relations and signs treaties.

²²⁴⁷ in 1924AD

²²⁴⁸ writing in 1933AD

²²⁴⁹ *The Word for All Seasons*, edited by John Birkbeck, chapter by Shaw, D. W. D., pp.55,56 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

This was just a restatement of what had been long held as fact in the Roman Church. Speaking of events around the time of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, Rabbi Isaac, 'a perceptive scholar and observer of the world in which he lived....was well aware that the guiding vision of Christian power in this very period was the theory of the "two swords" of the Crown and the Papacy.'²²⁵⁰

Given this long-standing background—much of which was done under the auspices of Archbishop Eugenio Pacelli, papal nuncio in Germany, later Cardinal Secretary of State in the Vatican, and, then, elevated to pope as Pius XII—²²⁵¹it is of no great surprise that Pius maintained a wartime silence over the atrocities being perpetrated against the Jews, the Serbs, and others. In order to glean some indication of Pius's bent towards the Nazi regime, it is merely necessary to resort to Friedlander: 'The Sovereign Pontiff seems to have had a predilection for Germany which does not appear to have been diminished by the nature of the Nazi regime and which was disavowed up to 1944.'²²⁵²

Former Reich Chancellor Heinrich Brüning was quoted as saying:²²⁵³ 'Behind the agreement with Hitler stood not the [then] Pope, but the Vatican bureaucracy and its leader, Pacelli. He visualised an authoritarian state and an authoritarian Church directed by the Vatican bureaucracy, the two to conclude an external league with one another. For that reason Catholic parliamentary parties, like the Centre, in Germany, were inconvenient to Pacelli and his men, and were dropped without regret in various countries. The Pope [then Pius XI] did not share these ideas.'²²⁵⁴

The underlying policy followed by Pacelli was summed in a homily he gave at Notre-Dame in Paris:²²⁵⁵ '[T]he sooner everyone fully realises that there is a definite correlation between the mission of the [Roman] Church of Christ [sic] and the progress and greatness of nations, the sooner will come the harmony which God desires.'²²⁵⁶ All-in-all, Pius saw the future of mankind only in terms of a league between the authoritarian church and authoritarian government regimes.

The gambit in Croatia, where the Roman church was at the very forefront of the horrendous massacres perpetrated on the Serbs, especially, indicates the extent to which Pius was willing to condone wholesale

'But the horrible temptation is always open to us and the [Roman] Church [where it is institutionalised] to allow response to the true authority of Jesus to degenerate from what is free and become an evil and enslaving response to authoritarianism.

No one has ever seen this more clearly than Dostoevsky. In his fable of the Grand Inquisitor (in *The Brothers Karamozov*) he depicted this fiendish [pseudo-]Christian temptation for all time. Fortified by all the symbols of splendour and power, the Grand Inquisitor guarantees to all his followers in the name of Christ everything—bread, security in this world, safety in the next—on the condition only of unquestioned submission to his authority. If you want to find out what dictatorship of the spirit, embracing the whole life, amounts to, you'll see it there.'

²²⁵⁰ Silberman, Neil Asher, *Heavenly Powers, Unraveling the Secret History of the Kabbalah*, pp.85,86.

²²⁵¹ in 1939AD

²²⁵² Friedlander, Saul, *Pius XII and the Third Reich*

²²⁵³ in 1935AD

²²⁵⁴ Vaillancourt, J-G, *Papal Power*, p.191(with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²²⁵⁵ in 1925AD

²²⁵⁶ Padarello, Nazareno, *Portrait of Pius XII*, p.124 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

murder to increase the geographical influence of Romanism in an area largely in thrall to Eastern Orthodoxy. When it came to Jews who had converted to Roman Catholicism in Germany, or normal Jews in Germany, eastern Europe, Holland, Belgium, occupied France, Vichy France, and elsewhere, he could not have cared less, or, at the least, very little and not until the impending defeat of the Axis powers looked certain, for the victims had had no beneficial impact on the resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire, other than by way of their eradication. The subsequent policy to follow the German war machine as it strode into Russia and convert as many as possible to Roman Catholicism also fits into this overall picture, complying as it does with 'Marian guidance' on the subject of the conversion of Russia, allegedly given off in the Fatima 'revelations.' When the apparition appearing to be the Virgin declared a desire to have Russia converted to her 'Immaculate Heart,' the inference was a conversion of Russia to the Roman church. In this context, the Roman view of the Russian Orthodox Church is informed by the latter's rejection of the Roman views on papal primacy, purgatory, and the 'Immaculate Conception.' The long-standing dispute with Eastern Orthodoxy, and its historic protector, Russia, has yet to be resolved, at least in the unalterable view of Romanists. World War I had failed to eradicate the Serbian Orthodox enclave, but instead had divided the Roman Catholic bastion of Austria-Hungary, so depriving the Vatican of its then main stronghold in Europe. But Rome's ambition was to flare again in World War II with the signing of the pact with the Nazi regime allowing Roman Catholic 'missionaries' of the Collegium Russicum²²⁵⁷ in Rome to go to occupied territories in the east and with the placing of the Baltic territories under Berlin's Catholic nunciature.²²⁵⁸ The final 'catholicisation' of Russia was about to be launched, under the protection of the Wehrmacht and the S.S., in the manner previewed by Pavelich and his associates in Croatia, but on a much larger scale.

There was, however, at least one major problem in this entire strategy: Hitler. Although a Roman Catholic, but perhaps only nominally so, despite a deep infatuation with the Society of Jesus,²²⁵⁹ on which he modelled the Schutzstaffel,²²⁶⁰ Hitler was uncontrollable, volatile, and extremely anti-religious, privately describing the Catholic church as: 'a cunning mixture of hypocrisy and business acumen' and considering 'Christianity to be weak, beggarly, and Pauline Jewish.' He was also demon-possessed to an extraordinary degree. According to Ravenscroft: 'As soon as he was totally finished annihilating the Jews, Hitler planned to turn on Christianity with the same hellish fervour.'²²⁶¹

In view of this, Hitler could not be relied upon to be the 'Emperor' of a resurrected Holy Roman Empire, or at least one properly and fully in submission to papal authority. But given what is widely perceived to be a weak, vacillating pope, why would Pius XII ever have entertained any involvement in the move to remove Hitler,

²²⁵⁷ Russian College.

²²⁵⁸ Pius XII, *War Messages to the World*

²²⁵⁹ Jesuits.

²²⁶⁰ Nazi S.S., or 'protective force.'

²²⁶¹ Ravenscroft, Trevor, *The Spear of Destiny*, p35f.

especially in circumstances where the chances of discovery were high²²⁶² and the ramifications possibly horrendous, at the very least for the Roman Catholic Church in Germany? Why take such a risk?

Pius's apparently foolhardy decision in acting as intermediary between General Ludwig Beck of the German military and the British government, *inter alia*, over the matter of the proposed plot to topple Hitler,²²⁶³ has led many apologists to claim it as proof of his desire to see an end of the Nazis. To Pius, if at all possible, it would be better that Hitler be replaced, of course, for the reasons already stated, and therefore his actions in cohort with the early coup can only be seen for what they were: a calculated risk that a more compliant replacement Roman Catholic Reich Chancellor would make for a far better 'Emperor,' opening up the way to an enhanced, mutually beneficial working relationship with the papacy.

There is strong historical precedent for such a relationship. Throughout much of the history of the Holy Roman Empire close links can be seen between the Roman church and its long-standing defenders and protectors, the Germanic peoples. It is clear that the Roman church's first call for both defensive and aggressive actions has long been upon Germany. Its first call for funds, too, had been on Germany, which, prior to the Great War, was contributing more than fifty percent of all funds worldwide into the 'Holy See.' Pius knew this well, and this helps explain his extreme reticence in voicing concern over the fate of the Jews and others deported to the Nazi concentration camps, put into forced labour, or simply killed on the spot:²²⁶⁴ ²²⁶⁵ Germany was seen to be the means whereby the Roman church could reclaim its old hegemony and its lost temporal

²²⁶² Italians and Germans had cracked almost all Vatican codes.

²²⁶³ variously in 1939, and later in the abortive 20 July, 1944 plot with Carl Goerdeler and Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg, etc.

²²⁶⁴ Rees, Laurence, *Auschwitz: The Nazis and the 'Final Solution'*, pp.75,76,79,80 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'[Hitler's] decree [of October, 1941] that extended the euthanasia programme to adults was backdated to 1 September and the start of the war—another sign that the conflict acted as a catalyst to radicalize Nazi thinking. The disabled were, to these fanatical National Socialists, another example of Nallastexistenzen, now especially burdensome to a country at war....Between October 1939 and May 1940 around 10,000 mental patients were killed in West Prussia and Warthegau, many by the use of a new technique—a gas chamber on wheels....At the start of 1941 the adult euthanasia campaign was extended to concentration camps in an action known as 14f13....Many factors came together at this crucial time to cause the change in policy. One important precondition was, of course, that....Jewish women and children in the Soviet Union now presented a 'problem' for the Nazis—one that they had created themselves by a combination of shooting male Jews and instigating a policy of starvation in the East. But that was not the only reason the decision was taken to extend the killing. In July Hitler had announced that he wanted a German 'Garden of Eden' in the East, and by implication there would be no place for the Jews in this new Nazi paradise....With killing units already shooting Jewish men, it must have seemed a logical step from the Nazi ideological perspective to send extra men to the murder squads in order to 'cleanse' this new 'Garden of Eden' completely.'

²²⁶⁵ Rees, Laurence, *Auschwitz: The Nazis and the 'Final Solution'*, p.193 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The killing of [Jewish] Poles was about to intensify. On 19 July [1942] Himmler announced: 'I herewith order that the resettlement of the entire Jewish population of the General Government be carried out and completed by December 31.' In this context 'resettlement' was a euphemism for 'murder.' Himmler thus revealed that he had set a target date for the annihilation of several million Polish Jews.'

Here is the confluent use of '42,' "the answer to everything," in 1942, and 19 July, occult day of the heliacal rising of the Dog-star Sirius, occult signifier of Satan.

power, and to criticise the Nazi regime, even possibly to deter it from its purposes, would be counterproductive to those objectives. Thus, when the coup failed, Pius was left with no choice but to have Hitler for his 'Emperor.'

Doubtless, there were other important matters weighing down on Pius's mind. Hitler's confirmation of the Kirchensteuer²²⁶⁶ played a major part in forging the eventual close understanding between Der Fuhrer and the Vatican. The amounts handed over to the Roman church from its share of the 'Church Tax' rose steadily in the years before World War II, reaching one hundred million US dollars by the middle of the war.²²⁶⁷

But if there were any lingering disappointment over the failed coup, there was worse to contemplate. After a promising start to 'Operation Barbarossa',²²⁶⁸ Hitler's thrust was stopped at Moscow, and Paulus and his twenty-two divisions were trapped at Stalingrad. It was Christmas,²²⁶⁹ and Pius's message broadcast to the 'Christian nations' was blunt and to the point: 'This is not a time for lamentation, but for action,' in other words, a call for 'all Christianity' to join in the 'Holy Crusade....against the darkness of a world separated from God'....This from the same pope who stated: 'Hitler's war is a noble enterprise in the defence of European culture.'²²⁷⁰ Despite the popes urgent plea, Paulus surrendered;²²⁷¹ Twenty-two divisions were lost.

To Pius's perverted mind, the Axis forces were Christian crusaders against the powers of darkness, sent forth with a papal imperative to conquer the east, and subjugate the Russian Orthodox and communist population.²²⁷² The eventual Russian victory on the eastern front, however, resulted in loss rather than gain to the Vatican: Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, East Germany, Yugoslavia, and others fell to the Soviets, soon to disappear behind the Iron Curtain. Pius's dreams of rolling Romanism to the foothills of the Urals and beyond lay in tatters. It is no mere coincidence that this dream was shared by a more recent pope: John Paul II.^{2273 2274}
²²⁷⁵ Rome's long-term vision does not change.

²²⁶⁶ or 'Church Tax,' $\cong$ 8–10% on the income tax deducted from all wage earners unless specifically opted-out by an individual through renouncing his religion.

²²⁶⁷ in 1943AD

²²⁶⁸ invasion of Russia.

²²⁶⁹ 1942AD

²²⁷⁰ on 30 July, 1941AD

²²⁷¹ on 2 February, 1943AD

²²⁷² The pope did not excommunicate any of the Nazi hierarchy, or the SS, or Gestapo, but he did excommunicate *all* communists!

The close nexus between Fascism and the Catholicism can be seen in what happened in the nascent Slovakia. Butler, Rupert, *Hitler's Jackals*, p.18 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Anxiety over Slovakia's political complexion had been mounting among British diplomats in Prague as early as the time of Munich [viz., the Munich Agreement with Hitler]. One reported that the Christian Slovak People's Party 'is going ahead on Fascist lines far more openly and obviously than the central government....' A few days later, the diplomat added that [Josef] Tiso [a Roman Catholic priest, later to become the Slovak prime minister from March till October, 1939; subsequently convicted and hanged for war crimes after the end of World War II] and his followers were pursuing an extremist anti-left and anti-Jewish campaign. 'Fascist ideals and practices seemed clearly to be the order of the day in the new Slovakia, to which must be added a primitive clericalism.'

²²⁷³ Urquhart, T. Gordon, *The Pope's Armada: Unlocking the Secrets of Mysterious and Powerful New Sects in the Church*, pp.171,172 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets, and subscripted emphasis added): 'For many of those who thought the first non-Italian pope in centuries would bring a wind of change, warning bells began to sound immediately. Forsaking Paul VI's compassionate approach to disciplinary problems, John Paul's

In Pius's tacit and overt support of Germany and his 'Emperor,' many have seen a continuing and abject failure to endorse even the most basic tenets of common humanity both before and during the war on the part of one claiming to be the spiritual leader of all Christendom; something nothing short of staggering, until it is recalled that the Roman church is but a device of satanic religious deception, intended to bring all humanity to heel, and to its knees.

It is a sad fact that down through the ages, various oppressive regimes and empires have had extremely close relations with the Roman Catholic Church. The last eruption is destined to have the closest and most heinous relationship of all. The prophetic viewpoint is actually taken from the time when the prophecies in the books of Daniel, Revelation, and others would be properly or substantially understood: at or about the time of the Axis empire. It is also post factum the Lateran Treaty²²⁷⁶ which restored papal sovereignty and made the Vatican City an independent state, effectively resurrecting the ecclesiastico-civil power of old. This viewpoint is now looking into the near future to the final eruption, the evil world-girdling empire of the most wicked human being ever to exist—the Antichrist.

approach was drastic—and harsh....John Paul brought the practice of priestly dispensations [the laicization of priests] to an abrupt halt, referring to them as 'administrative solutions.' Now priests would have to marry outside the Church and then apply for laicization. The self-confident new pontiff was equally decisive in his treatment of unruly orders and theologians. He took the unprecedented step of appointing his own delegate as interim governor of the Jesuits. A new inquisition was launched, disciplining or silencing some of the world's most distinguished [sic!] theologians. In the next few years he would not hesitate to restrain individual bishops and even national bishops' conferences.

In his first encyclical, Redemptor Hominis (The Redeemer of Man), he proclaimed his programme for the church. It was spectacular—indeed, apocalyptic: nothing less than a missionary drive to bring about world unity [under absolute papal authority] by the year 2000. By the mid-eighties, he had given his crusade a name: 'The New Evangelization'....Coming from the totalitarian regime of Poland, the hard-won social values of postwar Western society such as tolerance, respect for minorities, equality for women, freedom of speech and the press, a sense of social responsibility and a pervading spirit of democracy, counted for little with him....He contrasted this negative picture of reality with a vision of a 'civilization (or culture) of love' in which Christian values [as enunciated by Rome] were restored to private and public life.

As the decade wore on, and John Paul proclaimed a new Europe united 'from the Atlantic to the Urals,' the 'civilization of love' became increasingly identified with a new Christendom, the restoration of a medieval model of the continent.'

²²⁷⁴ Urquhart, T. Gordon, *The Pope's Armada: Unlocking the Secrets of Mysterious and Powerful New Sects in the Church*, pp181,182 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'On 7 January, 1982, Kiko [the head of the 'Neocatechuminate' movement] introduced a group of catechists from over seventy-two countries to John Paul II....He explained to the pope how he had exacted an oath of fealty from the group, asking them, 'Do you recognize that the bishop of Rome, Peter, is the stone on which Christ has built his church?', and 'Do you promise obedience and fealty to Peter and all the bishops of the church who are in communion with him?' All, he assured the pontiff, had vowed their assent. Moreover, he continued, they had all agreed to offer their lives in the service of the church....Later in the decade, in fact, the Vatican was to take the unprecedented and highly controversial step of imposing a mandatory oath of loyalty to the magisterium on the clergy.'

²²⁷⁵ Urquhart, T. Gordon, *The Pope's Armada: Unlocking the Secrets of Mysterious and Powerful New Sects in the Church*, p.198 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'But the key message of the World Youth Day is surely a powerful and tangible image of centralisation. Its sole thrust was to showcase not a person but a media personality magnified out of all reality. The [Roman] Church was presented as an across-the-footlights rapport with this faraway figure brought close by massive banks of speakers and video walls. The illusion of the pope's personal contact with each Youth Day participant was fostered....but it was also the rock-star communing with his fans. The term which best captured the essence of the event was 'Popestock.'

²²⁷⁶ 1929AD

Mark of the beast

It is now pertinent to turn to an investigation into the actual form of the mark on the forehead or hand, incidentally a slave custom very common in the time of John, for this is of crucial importance, and the fundamental subject of this chapter.

The cult of Mithraism became the official cult of the Roman Empire under the emperor Elagabalus,²²⁷⁷ after whom it was termed Elagabalism. Religious observance to the pagan deity Mithras was incorporated formally into the Roman calendar by the emperor Aurelian,²²⁷⁸ when he decreed that the official birthday of the god, to be celebrated throughout the Roman Empire, was to be set on the twenty-fifth day of December.²²⁷⁹ In the fourth-century, the Roman emperor Constantine decreed that day to be the birthday of Jesus.²²⁸⁰ Those who celebrate Christmas²²⁸¹ today actually pay homage to Mithras, the pagan false-messiah: in short, the annual winter celebration portends the coming of the Antichrist.²²⁸²

The mark of the beast is the mark of the Antichrist and, since Satan and his acolytes use the same schemes time and time again, the end-time mark will also be a physical mark on the forehead or on the hand, this time most likely by implanted microchip or similar devices.²²⁸³

²²⁷⁷ 218–222AD

²²⁷⁸ Lucius Domitius Aurelianus; decree in 278AD.

²²⁷⁹ q.v. sup; 25 December, in pagan Rome, was called dies natalis Solis Invicti (Latin: the day of the birth of the invincible sun-god), and the festival, again on 25 December, appears in the Philocalian calendar as natalis invicti. 25 December is also the birthday of Osiris, Adonis, and Dionysus.

²²⁸⁰ decreed in 313AD

²²⁸¹ consider these quotes from *Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1911 edition, under “Christmas”: “Christmas was not among the earliest festivals of the Church...The first evidence of the feast is from Egypt.” Further, “Pagan customs centring round the January calends gravitated to Christmas.” Under “Natal Day,” Origen, an early Catholic writer, admitted, “...In the Scriptures, no one is recorded to have kept a feast or held a great banquet on his birthday. It is only sinners (like Pharaoh and Herod Antipas) who make great rejoicings over the day on which they were born into this world.” *Encyclopedia Americana*, 1956 edition (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), adds, “Christmas...was not observed in the first centuries of the Christian church, since the Christian usage in general was to celebrate the death of remarkable persons rather than their birth...a feast was established in memory of this event [Christ’s birth] in the 4th-century. In the 5th-century the Western church ordered the feast to be celebrated on the day of the Mithraic rites of the birth of the sun and at the close of the Saturnalia, as no certain knowledge of the day of Christ’s birth existed.”

²²⁸² Churchill, Winston, in an article entitled, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Jewish People*, published on February 8, 1920, observed:

‘It would almost seem as if the gospel of Christ and the gospel of the Antichrist were destined to originate among the same people: and that this mystic and mysterious race had been chosen for the supreme manifestations, both of the divine and the diabolical.’

²²⁸³ Baer, Randall N., *Inside the New Age Nightmare*, pp.147,148, citing Davies, Owen, *The Omni Book of Computers and Robots*, pp.89,90:

“Almost unnoticed, the ultimate biological computer has reached the drawing boards. The bioprocessor will be a molecular latticework that can grow and reproduce. Capable of logic, reason, perhaps even feeling, it’s three dimensional organic circuitry will not process data in the rigid, linear style of earlier computers, but networking fashion, like a human brain.”

R.F.I.D. microchip devices are being embedded in consumer products (e.g. in Adidas sports equipment, etc.) in order to enable consumer durables and apparel manufacturers to remotely track their customers.

Eurozone

An early precursor of the 'mark' was evidenced in the Lateran Council's proclamation²²⁸⁴ that there was to be 'no traffic with heretics.' Those who opposed could neither buy, nor sell, nor receive decent burial. Leading on from the market and currency aspects, some were looking at the European Union's introduction of the euro²²⁸⁵ as if it would portend some form of 'mark.' The euro became legal tender in eleven²²⁸⁶ European states, although actual currency notes and coinage were not introduced until later.²²⁸⁷ Many queried whether it would succeed or fail. Expositors seem inclined to the latter, alloying this with New World Order predictions of a total financial meltdown on a worldwide scale, and the subsequent phoenix-like rise of a new, cashless, largely European-dominated, and, near the end, single world fiat currency, and the emergence of a world government²²⁸⁸ in tandem.

In order to achieve this turn of events as they are currently perceived, however, the euro would have to collapse simultaneously with all other major and peripheral currencies. Many point to forthcoming economic and political difficulties in euro-land between the central major, and richer members, and the peripheral, minor, and poorer members. In typical European manner, these potential difficulties had not been addressed in advance, or, at best, had been glossed. As a result, many feel that potential horrors lie dormant, still to be discovered. But friction is one thing, total collapse is another, and, of course, there is always the possibility of some 'budgetary balancing arrangement' or 'investment concession' for the encouragement of these poorer regions. But does this accurately predict the future path of the euro,²²⁸⁹ and its European Union²²⁹⁰ member states?

²²⁸⁴ in 1179AD

²²⁸⁵ 1 January, 1999AD

²²⁸⁶ later increased to twelve; then, to twenty-eight, if Vatican City be included (at the time of writing).

²²⁸⁷ 1 January, 2002AD

²²⁸⁸ the 'one world governmental system' can only rise out of the ashes of war. Its *raison d'être* will found on the claim that it is the way to bring peace to a war-weary and thoroughly ravished world. After the next world war, mankind will clamour for peace, almost at any price. In order to achieve this, it has to be world war; local conflicts, of which there have been countless since the time of writing the biblical prophecies, are incapable of producing a world-wide clamour for 'peace through a one-world government.'

²²⁸⁹ (written in 1998–1999AD): Taking the economic strength of the euro, incidentally the first European common currency since the days of the Roman Empire, it appears sufficiently robust, given time, to be able to topple the US dollar as the world's reserve currency, or elbow it to the margins. By any economic measure, the euro will rank as a formidable new entrant to world currency markets. It is backed by reserves of \$350 billion, seven times that of the US dollar, and euro-land enjoys a comparatively healthy net annual trade balance, whereas the USA has a massive trade deficit, thought to be c.\$300 billion for 1999, and rising steadily.

The euro, representing a regional block of 290 million people, some 20 million more than the United States, is the currency for eleven economies with a combined G.D.P. of \$6.80 trillion, just short of the USA's G.D.P. of \$7.25 trillion, in fiscal 1997 / 1998 figures.²²⁸⁹ In addition, euro-land has combined exports 25% greater than the USA. Its combined imports similarly exceed those of the USA, and it can claim to be the world's leading trading power. It has already succeeded in persuading the central banks of Japan, Brazil, Taiwan, and China that a significant proportion of their external reserves be held in euros, and the euro looks likely to spread by a process of adoption extra-territorially. While strong currencies come not as the result of lofty declaration and political fiat, but a continuous testing by events in the real world, and even though it takes time to build durability and credibility, the euro was being perceived, even then, as a store of value for central banks, institutions, and private investors.

Two major differences of crucial import between the U.S. currency and the euro exist: the ability of the U.S.A. to print its own money and pay down debts denominated in its own currency, and the reserve currency status of the U.S. dollar. Both give the dollar an inbuilt advantage over the euro in its current guise.

Past calls by European politicians for a worldwide system of exchange rate fixing or targeting, a sort of global E.R.M.²²⁹¹ as it were, are held by some to testify to lingering doubts in euro-land over continuing volatility in global currency markets. This is largely due to the central euro-land view of the unacceptable and inevitable by-products of what some, especially the French, like to term the (much-hated) Anglo-Saxon financial system: free capital movement and freedom of choice, superficially at least, and, underlying that, the stark reality: deep-rooted market manipulation of commodity and other markets, and near all-pervading fraud.²²⁹²

²²⁹⁰ E.U.

²²⁹¹ Exchange Rate Mechanism.

²²⁹² (written in 1999): The World Trade Organisation (W.T.O.), as constituted, is tasked with increasing international free trade, international fair trade, and enhancing social justice, thus allowing third world economies to grow in a free and unhindered global market. Whatever the success or otherwise of the W.T.O. in these pursuits, the agenda of the states at the core of the EU, and other organisations, such as the Catholic Institute of International Relations (C.I.I.R.), is a good deal different. That agenda encompasses the control and avoidance of financial crises and contagion, the avoidance of speculative bubbles, and the reduction of volatility, all through centralised financial monitoring, intervention and control. The proposed 'Global Intervention Fund' (G.I.F.), to be funded by means of what is referred to as the 'Tobin tax' (a tax on all spot conversions of one currency into another), is in point. The C.I.I.R. describes it thus, paraphrased for brevity: 'This is a proposed tax to be charged on a global level on all international financial transactions at a tariff set to impact negligibly on long-term investments, but prohibitively on most short-term money flows.' The potential ramifications of such a universal regime should be readily apparent, insofar as unrestricted financial and trade flows are concerned. The tax could quickly aggregate to a potentially enormous intervention fund, demanding of a supranational body to administer and control it. Also, tensions at the boundary between short- and long-term investment monies, and any retrospective reallocation between these two categories, seem to signal heavy bureaucracy and raises the spectre of claw-back taxation. The proffered palliative was trite and superficial: 'The actual operation of such a global tax regime is anticipated to become much eased, if not effectively resolved, by the introduction of a new clearing system for foreign-exchange transactions, scheduled for 2000.'

The G.I.F. would not be part of the International Monetary Fund (I.M.F.), and most likely would operate separately from most existing institutions [other than with supra-national banks, such as the E.U.'s European Investment Bank, E.I.B.] with apparently limited national supervision, and no right of national veto. It would also appear likely that it would fall outside the direct, but certainly not the indirect control of the United Nations (U.N.), although some form of formal relations with most international financial organisations would likely be established. The basic operation of the G.I.F., as currently perceived, in not lending money to governments but merely in shifting money between currencies, and so balancing-off asymmetrical capital flows, whether speculative or panic-driven, opens up the possibility to beggar nation states by the reverse-operation of the system to accentuate the asymmetry. The prospect of this is horrifying, as viable economies could be reduced to penury in very short order, with adverse free-market capital flows being replaced by orchestrated and politically motivated institutional equivalents, possibly backed up by some form of hindrance to international trade, lockout, or out-and-out boycott.

The reaction against capital flows, which are essentially uncontrolled by government, even some of the long-term investment variety, runs remarkably deep. While most economic commentators would agree that long-term foreign direct investment (F.D.I.), in the main, has benefited third world and developing economies, despite its many wanting, the C.I.I.R. describes it differently (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'The crisis has also raised sufficient doubts about the extension of the [IMF's] mandate to encompass capital account liberalisation, at least to delay its implementation....In one important respect, however, the effect of the crisis has been counterproductive: it appears to have reinforced the strongly positive view of foreign direct investment. This can be expected to advance rather than to retard the negotiations for the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (M.A.I.). Apart from resting on a questionable interpretation of the crisis, this risks counteracting any slow-down in the movement towards capital

Closely linked to this are calls for the rapid promotion of the euro to centre-stage in the world currency markets, with the possibility of a subsequent European-led 'legal' interdiction of free capital movement around the world in the name of monitoring, control, fraud prevention, money laundering interdiction, and taxation. In turn, this would severely obstruct third party sovereign states in setting out their own economic agendas and policies, and setting their own interest rates. This would lead to external economies being bound inextricably to the European 'super-state.'

'[In 2000AD, the then E.U. President Romano Prodi] went on to issue a paper setting out his Commission's 'strategic objectives' for the next five years. 'What we are aiming at is a new kind of global governance,' he explained. 'Europe's model of integration, working successfully on a continental scale, is a quarry from which ideas for global governance can and should be drawn.'²²⁹³

The hegemony of the once mighty U.S. dollar looks to be nearing its end, as it become progressively weakened by mountainous external deficit, allied to sudden and massive bond-yield gyrations, volatile interest rates allied to a massive 'credit crunch,' a stock market 'bubble-bursting' collapse, concomitant unravelling of global derivatives and futures positions, massive repatriation of foreign-held petro-dollars, U.S. T-bills and T-bonds, all leading to hyper-stagflation, a collapse in key commodities and in G.D.P., mass unemployment, destitution for many, and a breakdown in civil society, amongst a range of other horrors. The hurrying death-spiral of the U.S. dollar in the circumstances described would prove well-nigh impossible to arrest, let alone correct. No financial strategy to avoid being drawn down into a maelstrom of debt and insolvency could present itself to those caught up in it, as all apparent routes to safety would prove to be nothing more than futile grasps of the end of a rapidly dissolving rope of sand.²²⁹⁴

This is not to imply that there will not be problems for the nascent euro. Historically, the passing of one world empire and its supplanting by another has heralded massive speculative gyrations in the currency of the supplanter, as over-confidence, speculation, and avarice in both directions temporarily triumph over prudence, risk-aversion, and fear, until cometh the inevitable crash. Historical precedent would suggest that the euro is in for a roller-coaster ride. In addition, the apparent lack of any mechanism for the individual control of a nation's economy in the euro-zone, especially a peripheral one which is out-of-phase with the core—deriving from an 'independent' European Central Bank, the lack of 'national' or 'central' lenders of last resort in event of a full-scale banking crisis, nominally strict public sector borrowing limits, substantial financial penalties for infractions

account liberalisation through the IMF.' It would certainly appear that the Anglo-Saxon concept of virtually unregulated free trade has little to commend itself insofar as the advocates of global capital controls are concerned.

²²⁹³ Booker, Christopher, and North, Richard, *The Great Deception—Can the European Union Survive?* p.450 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); the federal system coming about in the E.U. after the looming economic collapse is described in a Global Research (Centre for Research on Globalization) Paper:

'The future of the E.U. has no room for nation states or national constitutions. Nation states will be replaced by regions and feudal city states and these will require a hardened Fascist framework to hold it together. It's all in the E.U.'s forward planning documents.'

²²⁹⁴ written in 1998AD

(apparently), and the desire for tax harmonisation—leads to the conclusion that rapid growth and attendant inflation, especially in peripheral euro-nations, will, over time, lead to serious stress fractures in the edifice.²²⁹⁵

Taken at its most fundamental, it is virtually certain that the fiscal and economic policy of euro-land will be set to meet the needs of Germany and France (preponderantly the former), most probably in or as a result of a near-total financial collapse, leading inevitably to a strong centralising pull on resources of all descriptions, with the periphery becoming progressively denuded. In the absence of appropriate medication, the peripheral nations would then suffer a self-feeding cycle of higher unemployment, higher inflation, and lower growth. These divergences, in turn, would lead, sooner or later, to stress failures, sovereign bond yield spikes, and calls for the creation of a central euro-land treasury, economic harmonisation, tax harmonisation, and common services. These all speak of more and more government, more and more centralisation, and more and more control. In other words, a Roman Empire-style hierarchy and control system, driven by economic circumstances largely of an internal and highly centralised making.²²⁹⁶ Whether the eurozone can attain this through a gradual process of evolution and adoption, or whether it will take a complete collapse and a resurrection out of the dust to secure may appear a little uncertain to many, although events in the world economy clearly presage a worldwide economic collapse from which the Eurozone could not insulate itself. It will take down everything.

The political implications deriving from the introduction of the euro are at once so very significant, and so elemental, for economic union sensibly cannot stop at the point of a common currency, as, slowly but surely, the external ramifications of economic union impact upon such matters as a common exchequer, common foreign policy, common defence policy, and the creation of a single pan-European government. The removal of economic barriers, if economic stresses are not to become intolerable, forces the removal of political ones. This was stated unambiguously from the very beginning by Jean Monet, Europe's 'founding father.' 'The fusion of economic functions must compel nations to combine their sovereignties into that of a single European state.'²²⁹⁷

Under current rules, it seems that member states cannot secede from the euro, since there is no formal mechanism.²²⁹⁸ They are bound 'for all time,' it would appear, in an economic and political marriage 'made in hell.' In this, full political union is the only agenda and the only way out. The alternative is total disintegration, a prospect anathema to European politicians and bureaucrats alike.

The introduction of the euro marks the beginning of the end for the sovereign nation state in euro-land, and, ultimately, something of the same for the rest of the world. And so the forthcoming inauguration of the euro, rising to an almost pan-European currency, with all its political attenuations, will be a historic event of great significance. Sadly, relatively few have noticed that a key element operating in this is that the new Europe is being strongly influenced by the Catholic Church. And despite the euro's likely foundering, the replacement,

²²⁹⁵ written in 2000AD

²²⁹⁶ written in 2000AD

²²⁹⁷ written in 1952AD

²²⁹⁸ Greece, in the period 2011–2012AD and beyond, may well test this, along with other peripheral states.

which, in all likelihood, will form the basis of the new world currency in the course of time,²²⁹⁹ will be sitting ready and waiting in the wings. A sobering prospect indeed, for the route for the coming demagogue of chapter thirteen of Revelation will have been all but completed.

During a visit to Austria,²³⁰⁰ Pope John Paul II expressed his displeasure at the 'national and artificial borders in Europe.' He then went on to say: 'Europeans must do everything in their power to overcome any threatening international confrontations by establishing a united Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals.'²³⁰¹

The E.U., despite having twenty-seven members,²³⁰² has a flag with twelve five-pointed stars, arranged in a circle on a blue background or field: a Roman Catholic creation. The occult number five depicts 'spiritual light',²³⁰³ and the five pointed star is the occult star of Venus, the Virgin of pagan lore.²³⁰⁴ Twelve Venus stars, arranged in a circle, is but an obscene parody of the woman:²³⁰⁵ *'And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.'*²³⁰⁶

²²⁹⁹ I.M.F.'s Special Drawing Rights (S.D.R.s), a fiat form of currency issued by the supra-national entity, could form the basis of the new currency, taking over the role of the U.S. dollar in the process, viz., as the world's new reserve currency.

²³⁰⁰ in 1983AD

²³⁰¹ The Cutting Edge, *The Vatican's Global Plans* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'It is essential to realise that this overtly political request is to be understood within the background of the Roman Catholic Church being not only a religious, but also a civil and political body, with concomitant aspirations. The Roman Catholic Church deals with nations under the title of 'The Holy See.' On its webpage, while commenting on 'The Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations,' it states: 'The term 'Holy See' stands for the central authority of the Church, which transcends, even if it includes, the tiny sovereign state of Vatican City. Thus, the Holy See represents a world-wide community and not only the citizens of Vatican City.' Distinctly, therefore, the Roman Catholic Church defines herself simultaneously as 'the Holy See' and 'the central authority.' She then sets the jurisdiction of this 'central authority' to swallow up the 'world-wide community.' We would be deluded to imagine that only Roman Catholics are included within this realm, for Rome's own dogmas teach that all humanity falls under papal sufferance. Exactly how 'magnanimous' and 'beneficent' such 'authority' intends to be is a foregone conclusion. In a concise, intense, insightful official law, the same R.C.C. authority declares, 'The First See is judged by no one.' [Canon 1404, *Code of Canon Law*]. No accountability, only tyranny: such has ever been Rome's stamp upon the pages of history. The Pope's mission is also clearly declared in his official pronouncements. He defines the Church as, 'the Church which is a 'sacrament or sign and instrument....of the unity of the whole human race.' No doubt, to be unwilling to submit to 'Central authority' would be a heinous crime offending the 'conscience of the human family,' and disrupting 'the unity of the human race.'

²³⁰² fifteen at time of original writing; excluding Vatican city.

²³⁰³ cp.with God's system, where five is the number of divine grace. God changed Abram's name to Abraham by adding the letter / number 5 to his name., and He changed Sarai's name by adding the same letter with the value of 'grace' to form the name Sarah (Gen 17:15). Abraham and Sarah were transformed by grace to become the parents of a family from which the Messiah would be born.

²³⁰⁴ sadly, the entire E.U. edifice is permeated with pagan symbolism. Even the conscious motivation behind E.U. politicians' decision to choose a particular symbol for the Quality Award issued by the European Standards Committee has arisen from the ancient Greek myth about Europa and Zeus, the leader of the pagan gods, with this ancient myth describing the origins of Europe. According to mythology, Zeus wanted to seduce Europa, a beautiful maiden who would have nothing to do with him. As recited in Grant Jeffrey's book, *The Prince of Darkness*, the legend is that: 'He transformed himself into a beautiful bull that later became the pet of Europa. One day, when she was riding the bull, he took her across the sea to Crete, revealed himself as Zeus, and seduced her....'

This same pagan symbol, the virgin Europa riding on the back of the bull beast, Zeus, was also engraved on the new stamp commemorating the election of the European Parliament.

²³⁰⁵ viz., the true church.

²³⁰⁶ Rev 12:1

The blue field is the Virgin Mary's colour, the 'queen of heaven.' It follows that the entire flag is but a representation of the E.U.'s dedication to the Virgin Mary,²³⁰⁷ and the ground of the New Holy Roman Empire.

Barely a year after the signing of the Treaty of Rome,²³⁰⁸ Archbishop Montini dedicated a twenty-metre tall Europa Madonna in honour of Pope Paul VI, on the north Italian mountain of Serenissima: the official name of the idol being 'Our Beloved Lady, Ruler of Europe.' Roman Catholic apostasy and outright paganism leads to their teaching the view that the Madonna is the biblical figure pictured in the first verse of chapter twelve, whereas the real picture in Revelation of the Roman Catholic Madonna is that of the whore sitting on the back of the Beast Empire, as then it would be correct, in an indirect way,²³⁰⁹ to call her 'The Ruler of Europe' and, more appositely, 'The Ruler of the World.'

Actual 'mark'

The actual mark of the Beast is described: *'And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.'*²³¹⁰ The Greek translated 'mark'²³¹¹ is defined by various Commentaries and Lexicons in the following terms:

1. Strong's: 'A scratch or etching, i.e. a stamp (also as a badge of servitude), or sculptured figure (statue): K.J.V.—'graven,' 'image';
2. Thayer's: i) A stamp, an imprinted mark a) the mark stamped on the forehead or right hand as the badge of the followers of the Antichrist, b) the mark branded upon horses; and ii) a thing carved, a sculpture, a graven work; used of idolatrous images'; and,
3. Bullinger's: 'A mark. In the papyri this word a) is always used of a mark connected with the emperor, and b) it always contains his name or effigy, and the year of his reign, and c) it was necessary for buying and selling, and d) it was technically known as charagma.'

This etch, stamp, or brand is not Sunday worship, as some appear to think. This is to horribly confuse the mark of Cain with the sign of God's people and with the end-time mark of the Beast.²³¹²

²³⁰⁷ the rose is an occult symbol of the virgin Mary.

²³⁰⁸ Treaty of Rome signed in 1957AD.

²³⁰⁹ the Antichrist will be that person, but the whore will ride on the back of the Beast, the Antichrist's empire, q.v. inf.

²³¹⁰ Rev 13:16,17

²³¹¹ Greek: kharagmah.

²³¹² Gen 4:15b, 'And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.' Cain received a 'mark,' Hebrew: owth (usually taken to be the Hebrew letter tau on his forehead) for rebellion against God and his Law, q.v. inf. In the Old Testament, God's own people are also identified by a 'sign'— again, the Hebrew word owth is used, cf. Ex 31:13, Ezek 20:20— v.13b, 'Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep.' Note that 'sabbaths' in both instances is plural. Logically,

The mark of the beast is the mark of the Antichrist²³¹³ and, as Satan and his acolytes use the same schemes and systems time and time again, that end-time mark will also be a physical mark on the forehead or on the hand, this time most probably by implanted microchip²³¹⁴ devices.

‘It was customary among the ancients for servants to receive the mark of their master....These marks were usually impressed on their right hand or on their forehead.’²³¹⁵ ‘Among the Romans, slaves were stigmatized with their master’s name or mark on their foreheads.’²³¹⁶ This is what the mark signified in Greek and Roman times around and shortly after the time of Christ when the book of Revelation was written. It shows the mark as a physical brand on the forehead, seared on by a hot iron: ‘In the days of the early Church, the Roman and Greek worship of Mithra [sic]²³¹⁷ was a strong competitor to Christianity....the Mithra[s] neophyte, or candidate, would be given a secret name....followed by a mark on the forehead. The mark consisted of being ‘signed’

this must include observing weekly Sabbaths on the seventh day and observing all other Sabbaths on their correct days, and that can only be done on the basis of the correct calendar (not the Judaic, neo-Babylonian perversion, q.v. inf.). The ‘sign’ of God’s people, therefore, lies in keeping all of the holy days properly. To think that one can avoid God’s punishment that is to be poured out at the end-time on those taking the mark of the Beast by simply avoiding Sunday worship opens up the horrifying prospect of many blindly sprinkling incense before the image of the Beast and willingly taking the dread etch, stamp, or brand of the Beast on the basis of rationalizing it to be necessary to buying and selling, and thus to their very survival, while delusionally thinking themselves safe by dint of not observing Sundays.

²³¹³ an American preacher claimed in an internet sermon that the mark of the Beast and the seal of God’s elect were of the same basic constituent: neither was a physical mark, and both had to do with the practice of the person receiving the non-marking mark—the wicked continue in their lawlessness and rebellion, while the elect are reconciled to God. But the Greek words are very different, and import very different meanings:

Rev 13:16c, ‘to receive a mark [Greek: *charagma*, ‘a scratch or etching’] in their right hand, or in their foreheads.’

Rev 7:3c, ‘till we have sealed [Greek: *sphragizo*, ‘to stamp,’ by implication, ‘to keep secret’] the servants of our God in their foreheads.’

The difference is polar: the mark of the Beast is a physical mark administered by man; the seal of the ‘elect’ is a spiritual seal of protection from God. One condemns to death, the other admits to life eternal.

²³¹⁴ now available as an Multiple Micro Electrode Array, (M.M.E.A.) an implantable chip which can affect the embeddee’s emotions, fears, euphoria, depression, pain and pleasure, all controlled by a radio frequency signal.

²³¹⁵ Newton, Thomas, *Dissertations on the Prophecies*, Vol. 2, p.296

²³¹⁶ Woodrow, Ralph, *His Truth is Marching On*, p.57

²³¹⁷ should read Mithras, not Mithra; religious observance to the pagan deity Mithras was incorporated formally into the Roman calendar by the emperor Aurelian in 275AD when he decreed that the official birthday of the god, to be celebrated throughout the Roman Empire, was to be set on 25 December. In 313AD, Roman emperor Constantine decreed that day to be the birthday of Jesus. Those who celebrate Christmas today actually pay homage to Mithras, the pagan false-messiah: in short, it portends the Antichrist. 25 December is also the birthday of Osiris, Adonis, and Dionysus.

Churchill, Winston, *The Struggle for the Soul of the Jewish People*, an article published on February 8, 1920, observed: ‘It would almost seem as if the gospel of Christ and the gospel of the Antichrist were destined to originate among the same people: and that this mystic and mysterious race had been chosen for the supreme manifestations, both of the divine and the diabolical.’

Grimassi, Raven, *Encyclopedia of Wicca & Witchcraft*, p.171, finds:

‘[S]imilarity between the images, symbols and tools of Freemasonry and those of the ancient cult of Mithras; and another correlation between the Masonic five points of fellowship and the Orphic statue of Mithras which was divided into “five segments by a serpent coiled around his feet, knees, chest, back and head.” Mithras—it is well worth noting—was a god who had the power to end one cosmic cycle and begin a new one: the power to bring about a transformative renewal into a *new age*.’

on the forehead with a hot iron. This event was followed by ecstatic dancing in a symbolic circle, offerings of incense, riotous drinking, and a ritual of free sex.²³¹⁸

The end-time 'mark' is compound, demanding of a variety of forms: *'And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.'*²³¹⁹ Such variety or variegation will enable the 'mark' to become conformed to the main religious or quasi-religious symbols in common currency at the time of introduction, varying by geography, race and creed, all as a means of easing its ready adoption. The all-ensnaring mark will be confusingly diverse.

Implanted micro-chip

The implanted micro-chip was originally invented²³²⁰ to control burgeoning world population. To achieve this, the first step was recognised as being the need to devise a means of identifying and locating people individually. After development over a period of about twenty years, the original micro-chip became small enough to pass through an hypodermic needle.²³²¹ The chip, in its then current manifestation,²³²² had about two hundred and fifty functions available, ten categories of information, and many sub-categories, with the power source, a lithium battery, being recharged through a circuit using changes in body temperature. It was found that there are two places on the body where temperature changes are fastest: the area on the forehead below the hairline, and the area on the back of the hand. The chip is sufficiently imbued with memory to contain not only individual data in written form, but also pictorial images of the individual together with fingerprints. There is also an unallocated additional international digit, allowing, if desired, the world to be divided into ten²³²³ regions, for the purposes of administration and control.

Close monitoring

In the matter of control of the individual, in addition to exhibiting an in-built mechanism, the micro-chip implant²³²⁴ has a transmitter that transmits an unique and distinctive signal on the 1,000Mhz waveband that can be picked up through low earth orbiting²³²⁵ satellites, enabling an individual to be located by this means to one

²³¹⁸ from an unattributed 11-page work entitled *Notes on Revelation* on the internet.

²³¹⁹ Rev 13:16,17 (sublinear emphasis added); 'buy or sell' more properly, 'go to market,' Greek: agorazo; or 'trade,' Greek: poleo.

²³²⁰ in 1968AD

²³²¹ c.0.75 millimetres (30 thou.) diameter and 6 or 7 millimetres (¼ inch) long.

²³²² c.2000AD

²³²³ 1 to 9 and 0.

²³²⁴ of the time.

²³²⁵ L.E.O.

metre accuracy, or better.²³²⁶ L.E.O. satellite technology allows a single point location scan about every twenty minutes or so, with accuracy and frequency continuously improving. The chip is not transferable as it is imprinted with the specific details of the individual concerned. In addition, it has a bio-sheath over one end into which the tissues of the skin can grow and combine, becoming effectively permanent.²³²⁷ Further developments in this area will enable the chip to control and interdict personal purchases and sales, operating in a similar way to that of a Smart Card.

Other systems currently under development include the next generation barcode called bokode, a form of data tag which can hold many thousand times that of the standard barcode, and which, given its minute size, offers interrogative, camera-compatible visual interaction at a distance. Bokades can either be powered, with an L.E.D., a mask, and a lens, or passive, with the camera flash illuminating a reflector behind the pattern mask, needing no inherent power source.

Inevitably, the implantable micro-chip will be developed into a full-blown bio-chip, ever more microscopic, ever more invidious, with functions such as 'remote switching',²³²⁸ with the device incorporating or even manufactured from living protein. The phrase being coined for the new, controlled human is frighteningly descriptive: 'digital flesh.'²³²⁹

These and similar devices / systems will be enhanced by a virtually cashless world economic system, enabling all transactions, however trivial, to be recorded and controlled, so that the combined effect will give the Beast empire the ability to interdict any transaction or any individual or group, instantly, at will.

²³²⁶ later versions to well within one-metre, or even small fractions of a metre.

²³²⁷ difficult to remove, even with surgery.

²³²⁸ enabling the authorities to activate and deactivate the device at will, permitting and denying access.

²³²⁹ as way-marks, as it were, plastic scanable passports were introduced c.2000AD to British Passport holders, and microchip implants, using natural body energy, have been developed for the location and identification of potential kidnap victims. Space satellites can follow the 'bleep' to detect a victim's movements or hiding place. The chip is made of synthetic and organic fibres and runs on four milliamperes of neuro-physiological energy. Only a small scar is visible, and the chip even escapes detection by x-rays. It is inserted under the skin but not in areas that can be amputated, including hands, nose and ears. The whereabouts of the carrier can be followed by six satellites through the global positioning system (G.P.S.), which has considerable accuracy, and has previously been used to track stolen luxury cars. The absence of a signal will suggest that the victim has been killed, because the body no longer supplies the energy to make the chip function. In Great Britain, Her Majesty's Government is mulling plans to track convicted paedophiles using implanted chip technology.

Another worrisome device is a highly sophisticated technology to pinpoint the exact geographic location of every mobile phone user in the world. This is to be done by again using existing G.P.S. hardware, operating with specialist software incorporated into the world's telecommunications systems. The initial use was intended only for the identification of the location of callers to emergency services to enable physical contact to be made as quickly as possible, but subsequently it has been expanded to encompass all mobile phone calls, irrespective of taxonomy. The accuracy is to be within a few metres at worst, and improving technology is expected to refine this over time to near pin-point accuracy. The extraordinary degree of surveillance provided to those controlling and possessing technology such as this is quite astounding, and bodes ill for those who value privacy.

'Marked' confusion

A decade and a half ago it was reported²³³⁰ that, come the twenty-first century,²³³¹ an implanted high-technology microchip will be capable of monitoring health, and interacting with central authorities which will provide necessary medication or other treatment. These personalised 'health-monitoring' chips will be capable of being interactively scanned by a wide variety of equipment and electrical appliances, and they are even expected through this interactivity to become capable of diagnosing illness, and recommending the appropriate medication or other treatment, presumably including euthanasia. It appears that there will be a number of 'highly personalised, individually-crafted marks' on the market.

It is apparent that even Roman Catholic eschatological visions recognise that there will be more than one mark available. The Roman view of the near end-time economy under the Antichrist is that it will be cash-less, and in order to accomplish this, the present stock market and banking system will have to collapse in order to propel the peoples of the world into the deceptively 'caring' arms of occultists and the Antichrist. Although this need not be a complete collapse, in terms of a wholesale and worldwide meltdown, as some economies are not yet fully integrated, it appears likely to be so, and the gyrations of the leading stock- and bond markets²³³² give something of a foretaste of things to come. The ensuing disorder will usher in the opportunity for the introduction of the ten world regions, the Antichrist, and, later, the mark of the Beast.

The difference in the Romanised version is that while the bio-chip and its ilk are identified as *'the mark of the Beast,'* the other reference, *'Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of God in their foreheads,'*²³³³ is identified as the 'sign of the cross.' Despite the clear identification of the one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed as representing twelve thousand from each of the listed tribes of Israel,²³³⁴ the Roman view is that those sealed and protected are Roman Catholics, protected by their beloved 'sign of the cross.' Thus, in the Roman purview, the penalty for taking the 'mark of the Beast' is held to be everlasting torture in hell, and the reward for taking the 'mark of the cross' is held to be an everlasting reign with Christ in heaven. The Roman view of the one hundred and forty-four thousand is that it is merely a figure indicative of many people; not a specific one. This is necessary to allow the importation and 'saving' of the vast numbers in the Roman Church.

In passing, it is interesting to note that the Roman view of the False Prophet is that of an Anti-pope, or false pope, who usurps power over the Roman Catholic Church in the latter days, while the 'true pope' goes into hiding. This shows little other than the ability of the Roman Church to twist scriptural references to its own end.

²³³⁰ December, 1998AD

²³³¹ 21st-c.

²³³² together with derivatives markets and other exotica.

²³³³ Rev 7:3

²³³⁴ Rev 7:4-8

*'The mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name,'*²³³⁵ indicates that there are three potential classifications of the mark: a Symbol; a Name, and a Number. The first is the symbol of the cross or other similar mark; the second is the name of the Beast; and the third is his number, which also adequately describes the individual's bio-chip data.

When these are compared with the Roman view, it becomes clear how the deception will evolve. The confusion over which mark to take, and when, and from whom, will lead almost all mankind alive at that time to receive one or another, in the wholly mistaken belief that to do so will ensure divine protection from the forces of evil while securing access to money, markets, and work. Indeed, it is even more insidious, as those who think that the mark is neither a literal mark nor implant, but the action of attending church on, or otherwise abstaining from work and thus honouring the apostate 'Day of the Lord,' namely, Sunday (or even on the true Sabbath), might well be persuaded to accept some mark or other as a benign aid to covert survival, and even of maintaining Sabbath worship on the chosen day, when its very receipt is nothing less than damnation.²³³⁶

During what they see as the time of Tribulation, the principal Roman Catholic work will be to purge the earth of dissidents and unbelievers, with those who believe the words of the various Marian visions exhorted to fear nothing, and to fight for the cause of the Virgin. Devotionaries are urged to pray their way into heaven; pray the daily rosary; take holy communion frequently, preferably once each day; become a 'tertiary';²³³⁷ will to become a saint; stock up fully on crucifixes, holy water, 'blessed' wax candles, sacred medals, prescribed healing herbs and brews, images of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, and the like; gain as many 'indulgences' as possible; wear the sacred cloak or scapular,²³³⁸ and, finally, to have the family home blessed and consecrated in the twin names of the 'Sacred Heart of Jesus' and the 'Immaculate Heart of Mary.'

The malaise does not stop there, sadly, for there is yet another mark of the Beast which has been promulgated by 'born-again' and certain fundamentalist religious organisations as becoming available in due course, this time disguised as a discerning mark of those comprising the 'inner court' of God. The 'rationale' behind this apostate perversion goes as follows: The Temple of the Tribulation period is taken not as a physical building, but as the body of the church. The members make up this Temple which has an inner court or sanctuary. There is also an outer court which is trodden under by the Gentiles for the three-and-a-half year Tribulation.

²³³⁵ Rev 13:17b; K.J.V.'s insertion of the word 'or' before '*the name*' is a translator's addition. It does not appear in the original Greek.

²³³⁶ a common error is found among Sabbatarians who believe the 'mark of the Beast' to be Sunday worship; a fairly common but competing Roman view is that the imprinting of the mark is to be done by angels. In this version, those who have taken the bio-chip implant will be marked indelibly with the mark of the Beast, and those who have refused to take the implant will be marked indelibly with the Sign of the Cross. The dread penalty for the former is held to be eternal torture in Hell, whereas the reward for the latter is to be an eternal reign in heaven with God.

²³³⁷ one living a holy Roman Catholic life in the midst of an unholy world.

²³³⁸ scapular is hung around the neck or over the shoulders and comprises two square pieces of cloth, connected by cord, and bears images of the Virgin, affording a similar level of 'protection' to the 'miraculous medal' which also bears an image of the Virgin.

ion period. This outer court is then held to be *'the remnant of her seed'* referred to in Revelation,²³³⁹ who are to undergo the full rigours of the Tribulation, and be martyred, as opposed to the inner court, or sanctuary, which comprises those taken to a 'place of safety.'

Some will actually believe that in taking this 'inner court' form of the mark they will be spared the rigours of the Great Tribulation, be taken to a 'place of safety,' and be raised as the *'firstfruits'* in the kingdom of God. These 'saved ones' will think that they are marked on or in their foreheads to separate and identify them as being those who are to escape the Great Tribulation. This takes completely unfounded scriptural comfort from a time-displaced reading of, *'And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.'*²³⁴⁰ Contrary to these misplaced beliefs, this passage, allied with its correspondents,²³⁴¹ does not speak of end-time events: it is a prophecy of events concerning the captivity of Jerusalem after the wholesale desecration of the Temple worship by King Manasseh and others following thereafter, leading to a collapse into apostacy, and the destruction of the entire under Nebuchadnezzar's generals.²³⁴² It has absolutely nothing to do with end-time events and avoiding the Great Tribulation.

The mark of the Beast is nothing more than a subtle, or, for that matter, not so subtle, dizzying range or selection of marks. As already noted, it is evident that the mark of the Beast is to come in a variety of forms simply to confuse, entice, and ensnare the unwary and foolhardy. Satan is very subtle, in a highly perverse way. He knows that a proliferation of marks, some even purporting to be 'good,' or even 'godly,' will entice almost all of this wretched world to follow his way to destruction.²³⁴³ So sad! What nonsense! And what delusion: *'And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.'*²³⁴⁴

Receiving the mark is not something that should occur unconsciously: 'Because the Church—the body as a whole—is so trusting, they are extremely susceptible to being deceived by smooth-talkers using all the

²³³⁹ Rev 12:17

²³⁴⁰ Ezek 9:3b,4 (sublinear emphasis added)

²³⁴¹ essentially comprising Ezekiel chpts. 3–16.

²³⁴² detailed account given in II Kings 25:1-11 and Jer 52:1-11.

²³⁴³ it is interesting to note the all-pervading nature of these marks and the attendant control systems, when integrated. A simple illustration would be the combined effects on business of auditing, especially forensic auditing, and quality inspections. Taken together, these permit third party access to, and inspection of, virtually all key financial and operational aspects of any company in the world operating under these international standards. Allied to the ability to electronically log, control, and interdict local and international money transfers, and the people making them, the whole company operation would become at once transparent and controllable. The individual caught in a cashless society, if identified for rejection and eradication, would suffer immediate electronic exclusion, a very harrowing experience akin to being declared bankrupt, for it would effectively places all assets and sources of finance beyond effective reach.

²³⁴⁴ II Thes 2:10-12 (sublinear emphasis added)

right Christian 'buzzwords.' In fact, in many cases, they are trusting to the point of being gullible. We are admonished by the Lord to be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves; we are to use our (hopefully, well-honed) gift of discernment to recognise the wolves who come along in the proverbial sheep's clothing to render havoc among the flock.'²³⁴⁵

Digital currency

The Beast's empire will have its own form of money, a digital currency, for control of all financial transactions will be a key component of his hegemony. Probably appearing initially as a number of currencies spread around the ten world regions, its second moiety exposition, where '*no man might buy or sell*'²³⁴⁶ without the mark of the Beast is likely to be in the form of a unified digital currency permitting the logging and tracking of all transactions and the interdiction of any involving those lacking the mark.

Ten regions

The Beast's empire will engulf the whole world²³⁴⁷ and be divided into ten regions or kingdoms. It appears that its foundation may well have been built into the E.U. via the Club of Rome's *Strategy for Survival Project*, where the world is divided into ten regions. This would mirror the ten regions of the New World Order:

1. USA, Canada, and Mexico;²³⁴⁸

2. Europe;²³⁴⁹

²³⁴⁵ Cook, Terry L., *The Mark of the New World Order*, p.349 (footnote)

²³⁴⁶ Rev 13:17a

²³⁴⁷ Rev 12:9,16:14

²³⁴⁸ known as North American Union (N.A.U.).

²³⁴⁹ Western Europe (E.U. together with Norway, Switzerland, and minor, semi-autonomous 'statelets') plus Czech Republic, former West and East Prussia (to beyond Kaliningrad), the Danzig Corridor, Silesia and parts of the Mark Brandenburg (all in Poland except Russian Kaliningrad), and the Baltic States (Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia) ceded to 'Historic' Germany; plus a revived 'Historic' Austro-Hungary: incorporating Slovakia, western Galicia (southern Poland), Slovenia, Croatia, and other 'former Yugoslav' states, Vojvodina, Transylvania, possibly eastern Galicia (south-west salient of Ukraine, including Lvov, Ternopol, Kolomyia, and Chemovtsy), plus Bulgaria and the balance of Romania. Ukraine, in the main, could be ceded to the 'E.U.,' but with the eastern part falling to the F.S.U., q.v. inf., but the westernmost part of Turkey is unlikely to be. That said, the actual demarcation of Western Europe and the Former Soviet Union is of little real importance, since the two will be conjoined under the Beast, with both allied to Northern America, q.v. inf.

Huntington, Samuel P., *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, pp.165-167:

'Apart from Russia, the most populous and most important former Soviet republic is Ukraine. At various times in history, Ukraine has been independent, yet during most of the modern era it has been a political entity governed from Moscow....Ukraine, however, is a cleft country governed by two distinct cultures. The civilizational fault line between the West and Orthodoxy runs through its heart and has done so for centuries. At times in the past, western Ukraine was part of Poland, Lithuania, and the Austro-Hungarian empire. A large portion of its population have been adherents of the Uniate Church which practices Orthodox rites but acknowledges the authority of the Pope. Historically, western

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3. Japan;
 4. South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and Israel;²³⁵⁰
 5. Former Soviet Union;²³⁵¹
 6. Central and South America;
 7. Muslim countries;
 8. Africa;²³⁵²
 9. India and South East Asia; and,
 10. China.²³⁵³

While the exact boundary definition in some of the above is rather vague and unspecified, the ten New World Order regions generally are as indicated. Some expositors attempt to divide them into a western region²³⁵⁴ and an eastern region,²³⁵⁵ with predictable difficulty and anomaly,²³⁵⁶ although a later administrative device of the Beast Empire could resolve the matter. The implementation of the ten world regions will signal the start of the Beast Empire in its prefatory, early form, and will precede the coming of the Beast, the Antichrist: *'And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth,²³⁵⁷ and is of the seven,²³⁵⁸ and goeth into perdition,²³⁵⁹ and 'I considered the horns,²³⁶⁰ and, behold, there came up among them another little horn.'²³⁶¹*

Ukrainians have spoken Ukrainian and have been strongly nationalist in their outlook. The people of Eastern Ukraine, on the other hand, have been overwhelmingly Orthodox and have in large part spoken Russian. The issue of secession first came up with respect to Crimea....In May, 1992 the Crimean parliament....voted to declare independence from Ukraine and then, under Ukrainian pressure, rescinded that vote....In May, 1994, the Crimean parliament voted to restore the 1992 constitution which made it virtually independent of Ukraine. Once again, however, the restraint of Russian and Ukrainian leaders....and the election two months later....undermined the Crimean thrust for secession.'

²³⁵⁰ catch-all for 'the remainder.'

²³⁵¹ balance of Eastern Europe, plus Russia and some minor satellite states.

²³⁵² black, mainly sub-Saharan, save for South Africa, q.v. #4.

²³⁵³ taxonomy largely confirmed by Mesarovic, Mihajlo and Pestel, Eduard, in *Mankind at the Turning Point*.

²³⁵⁴ right foot with five toes.

²³⁵⁵ left foot with five toes.

²³⁵⁶ usual rehearsal is to group items #1,2,4,6,&8 as the western division, and items #3,5,7,9,&10 as the eastern.

²³⁵⁷ viz., the Antichrist.

²³⁵⁸ Beast empire eruptions.

²³⁵⁹ Rev 17:11; referring to the septimo-octave head, called the 'eighth' because he arises to his position of world power after the seventh head of ten world kingdoms has come into its world dominating position.

²³⁶⁰ ten horns.

²³⁶¹ Dan 7:8a; the Antichrist.

‘Rationalizing’ sin

Human nature can rationalise away any sin, and this is what happened in Carthage to so-called Christians in the reign of the Roman Emperor Decius who feared only those whom he could not conquer, namely, Christians who would not deny their Lord.

The Decian persecution, for example, produced three types of 'lapsed' that could be indicative of what will happen to some 'weak Christians':

1. Sacrificati: these were the sacrificers who had gone through an elaborate heathen ceremonial, putting on the 'liturgic veil,' assisting at a victim's death and bringing a portion of the dead body to the altar fire for consummation, so going out of the way to identify themselves with heathenism, even beyond the requirements of Decius' law;
2. Thurificati: these were the incense offerers who had simply thrown a little incense on the fire burning before some image as a gesture and passing formality, and acknowledging the established pagan religion.²³⁶² Not one of them seems to have regarded it as meaning much in the way of belief in the heathen gods, but it did mean—and this the magistrates knew well—the giving up of that exclusiveness of sovereignty over the believer's life, which was the very thing which made the Roman authorities most bitter against Judæo-Christians. A Christian who in a pinch pragmatically would do what the law insisted on his doing while comfortably rationalising it away to nothing was a 'Christian' of whom the Empire need have no fear whatsoever, for he was compliant and accommodating to paganism; and,
3. Libellatici: this was a very peculiar and compound class of certificate holders. Doubtless, every 'Christian' who sacrificed or offered incense received for protection a certificate of having done so, but the Libellatici were Christians who had secured such certificates without having done the evil deed at all. Certificates could be had for money, were offered by favour, and could even be obtained by fraudulent means and counterfeiting. The magistrates were willing to condone all of it. After all, the Empire need not fear any 'Christian' who was not inflexibly loyal to his God. But while Roman magistrates judged thus shrewdly, it was hard for a good many 'Christians' to see that it was apostasy from Christ just to accept a certificate that one had sacrificed, when one never had, and never would. Some other consciences could not be made to feel deeply that the burning of a grain of incense before an idol was such a deadly sin, when one did not believe in it, nor mean anything by it, and it was done only to save one's life. Jesus Christ placed the seriousness of the matter beyond all doubt: *'But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.'*²³⁶³

²³⁶² cf. Rev 13:8,14:9-11

²³⁶³ Mat 10:33

Sadly, history will repeat itself, for, come the time, many 'Christians,' seeking self-preservation, will pragmatically rationalise their position and bow down before and 'mock-worship' the image of the Beast.

Taxonomy

The marks of the Beast, then, may be any or all of the following, received in or on the forehead or hand, save the last listed:

Bio-chip implant with the name of the new World Empire, or region, or its king;

Bio-chip implant for security;

Bio-chip implant for personal identification (ID number, in three groups of six);

Bio-chip implant for racial segregation and purity;

Bio-chip implant for the prevention of theft or abduction;

Bio-chip implant for the prevention of fraud;

Bio-chip implant for purchase of prescribed substances / prevention of drug or substance abuse;

Bio-chip implant for social security benefits;

Bio-chip implant for the elderly or the disabled;

Bio-chip implant for bank transactions and commerce of all descriptions;

Bio-chip implant for insurance;

Bio-chip implant for retail purchases;

Bio-chip implant for registered users;

Bio-chip for competition, lottery, or sports participation;

Bio-chip implant for credit transactions;

Bio-chip implant for passport control and travel;

Bio-chip implant for permits and licences;

Bio-chip implants for access to buildings, toll roads, and the like;

Bio-chip implant for medical emergency aid;

Bio-chip implant for medical screening;

Bio-chip implant for interactive medical diagnosis and treatment;

Bio-chip implant for membership of trade association or profession;

Bio-chip implant signifying international quality standards;

Bio-chip implant for geo-location, individual identification, race, *etc*;

Bio-chip implant for membership of religious organisations;

Bio-chip implant of the cross, Trinity, '333,' or other 'holy' emblem;

Bio-chip mark of 'God,' or 'inner court,' the 'elect,' or the 'one hundred and forty-four thousand';

Bio-chip mark indicating those who are to escape the Great Tribulation;

Bio-chip mark of the occult, in all forms, including the 'third eye';

Bio-chip mark as a fashion accessory or in sports club badges;

Bio-chip implant with '666';

Applied surface mark with the name of the new World Empire, or region, or king;

Applied surface mark for security;

Applied surface mark for personal identification (ID number, in three groups of six);

Applied surface mark for racial segregation and purity;

Applied surface mark for the prevention of theft or abduction;

Applied surface mark for the prevention of fraud;

Applied surface mark for purchase of prescribed substances / prevention of drug and substance abuse;

Applied surface mark for social security benefits;

Applied surface mark for the elderly or the disabled;

Applied surface mark for bank transactions and commerce of all descriptions;

Applied surface mark for insurance;

Applied surface mark for retail purchases;

Applied surface mark for registered users;

Applied surface mark for competition, lottery, or sports participation;

Applied surface mark for credit transactions;

Applied surface mark for passport control and travel;

Applied surface mark for permits and licences;

Applied surface mark for access to buildings, toll roads, and the like;

Applied surface mark for medical emergency aid;

Applied surface mark for medical screening;

Applied surface mark for interactive medical diagnosis and treatment;

Applied surface mark for membership of trade association or profession;

Applied surface mark signifying international quality standards;

Applied surface mark for individual and race identification, *etc*;

Applied surface mark for membership of religious organisations;

Applied surface mark of the cross, Trinity, '333,' or other 'holy' emblem;

Applied surface mark of 'God,' or 'inner court,' the 'elect,' or the 'one hundred and forty-four thousand';

Applied surface mark indicating those who are to escape the Great Tribulation;

Applied surface mark of the occult, in all forms, including the 'third eye';

Applied surface mark as a fashion accessory or in sports club badges;

Applied surface mark with '666';

Part of stigmatic marks;²³⁶⁴

And, of course, no physical mark at all, for those who believe that the mark of the Beast is merely an act of worship either of the Beast, or his image, or his empire, on his day—Sunday. Equally, the latter could be extended to include Friday, or any day of the week, save the Sabbath. In this view, it is usual for the forehead to be taken to indicate the intellect, and the hand to indicate human activity and work. Such a belief would allow any or all of the foregoing marks to be taken with apparent impunity!

²³⁶⁴ Greek: stigmata, 'a mark, puncture, piercing, or brand,' the plural of stigma—archaic Greek letter for the number six—and symbolical of moral and social degradation, infamy, disgrace, reproach, slavery, and outcasts.

Finally, it should be noted that an applied surface marking may be a tattoo (including an electronic tattoo),²³⁶⁵ a laser-burned or heat-burned branding, or anything similar. Inevitably, the '666' mark will be promoted by some as the only satanic indicator—although the number will also be portrayed as divine²³⁶⁶—thus appearing to the simple-minded and the duped to remove from suspicion all or any of the others. Satan will ensure that there will be an utterly confusing range, mode, and number of marks and implants at the time of the end.

So which will confuse you?

W A R N I N G

TAKE NO MARK OF ANY DESCRIPTION IN OR ON YOUR BODY; DO NOT PARTICIPATE IN GLOBAL HARMONISATIONS FOR PEACE OR HEALING, NO MATTER WHAT THE PRETEXT OR GIVEN REASON; MAKE NO FORM OF PAYMENT TOWARDS THE COST OF MANUFACTURE AND THE ADORATION OF THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST; TAKE NO LUCIFERIAN INITIATION;²³⁶⁷ NEITHER WORSHIP (NOR SCATTER INCENSE) TO THE ANTICHRIST, OR HIS IMAGE, OR HIS WORLD EMPIRE; AND HONOUR NO DAYS OTHER THAN GOD'S HOLY SABBATHS (WEEKLY AND ANNUAL) AND THE NEW MOONS.

²³⁶⁵ tattooed into the skin; includes an embedded antenna and electronic circuitry for identification and authentication purposes, and also for remote auto-location and sensing.

²³⁶⁶ Cumbey, Constance, *The Hidden Dangers of the Rainbow*, p.22:

'New Agers consider the 666 a sacred number.

Those who so freely use the numbers 666 honestly believe they are sending signals to outer space, or to what they call the superior intelligences which they believe inhabit our planet. They are asking those superior intelligences to come in and bring a new advanced civilization.

They believe that the more times and the more places that the numerals 666 are used the quicker that new civilization will come.'

²³⁶⁷ Spangler, David, Director of Planetary Initiative, U.N., 'No one will enter the N.W.O. unless he or she will make a pledge to worship Lucifer. No one will enter the New Age unless he will take a Luciferan initiation.'

Chapter 17

Antichrist & Kings

Satan's plan is to usurp the power, authority, throne, and kingdom of God, and, in so doing, banish God forever. His ambition is given in Isaiah: *'How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which did weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.'*²³⁶⁸ The phrase '*in the sides of the north*' is translated in the Tanakh as, '*on the summit of Zaphon.*' Both correspond with, '*Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King.*'²³⁶⁹ Satan is well aware that Christ's rule during the Millennium will be centred on mount Zion; hence his desire to frustrate this by securing irrevocable control over it. In pursuit of this dark and evil plan, his devil-possessed human agent, the Beast—also known as the Antichrist—will seize control of the Temple by irruption for a period of just over three-and-a-half years.²³⁷⁰

²³⁶⁸ Isa 14:12-14 (sublinear emphasis added)

²³⁶⁹ Psa 48:2 (sublinear emphasis added)

²³⁷⁰ q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

Early opinions

Irenæus, who was a bishop in the sub-apostolic church, and a disciple of Polycarp, a companion of the Apostle John, wrote a book²³⁷¹ which gives a telling insight into the beliefs and the level of understanding of a section of the early Christian church²³⁷² concerning prophecy of the time of the end. He considered the worship of the Antichrist and his image in the Jewish Temple, just before the second advent, to be the threatened abomination of desolation,²³⁷³ and he expected Daniel's seventieth week to be fulfilled by the Antichrist, of whom he says: 'Putting away idols to persuade men that he is God, he will set himself up as a sole idol, combining in himself all the manifold errors of all the idols. He will sit in the Temple of God, showing himself that he is God. In the Temple of Jerusalem the adversary will sit, striving to show himself to be the Christ: as also the Lord says, *'When ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, etc.,'*²³⁷⁴....They shall believe, it says, in the False One (the Man of Sin),²³⁷⁵ that all may be condemned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. His coming John thus describes in the Apocalypse, *'The Beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, etc.'*²³⁷⁶ And afterwards of his armour-bearer, whom he called also *'the false prophet,'* *'He spake,'* it says, *'like a dragon, and exerciseth all the power of the first Beast before him, etc.'*²³⁷⁷ This is said that all may know his miracles to be done not by divine power, but by magic art; and no wonder, if having demons and apostate spirits to help him, he through them performs miracles by which he deceives those that dwell on the earth. He will also command them to make an image to the Beast.

At the half of the hebdomad²³⁷⁸ Daniel saith, the sacrifice and the libation shall be taken away, and in the Temple shall be the abomination of desolation, and until the consummation of the time, a consummation shall be appointed upon the desolation—but the half of the hebdomad is three years and six months.²³⁷⁹

And when this Antichrist shall have laid waste all things in the world, reigning three years and six months, and sitting in the Temple of Jerusalem; then the Lord shall come from heaven in clouds, in the glory of the Father: and casting him and those that obey him into the lake of fire, will bring about to the just the times of the kingdom; that is, the rest, even the seventh day made holy. And he will restore to Abraham the promise of the inheritance; in which kingdom, saith the Lord, many shall come from the East and from the West, and shall sit down with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.²³⁸⁰

²³⁷¹ Irenæus, *Against Heresies*; also cf. *The Refutation and Overthrow of Science Falsely So Called*.

²³⁷² c.180AD

²³⁷³ cp. Lev 18:27a *'all these abominations,'* should read, from toevot ha-El: *'all God's abominations,'* i.e., abominations against God.

²³⁷⁴ Mat 24:15

²³⁷⁵ II Thes 2:12

²³⁷⁶ Rev chpt. 13

²³⁷⁷ Rev 13:12;19:20

²³⁷⁸ or 'week,' corresponding to seven years in Daniel's prophecy.

²³⁷⁹ Dan 9:27

²³⁸⁰ Irenæus, *Adver. Heres. (Against Heresy)*, chpts. 25ff.

By and large, this is a fairly well conceived summary of some of the main events.²³⁸¹ It has to be remembered that when John received the Revelation he understood practically nothing of it, so Irenæus' excerpt represents a very substantial advance in understanding, and this had occurred in a little over eighty years. In fact, so relatively complete was it that it does not appear to have been much bettered until the middle or latter part of the nineteenth-century. Between these two time periods the mistaken notion that the Antichrist would be the last-in-line pope seems to have arisen.²³⁸²

Development of nineteenth-century understanding can be seen in a work by Bonar²³⁸³ where he coins the quite memorable phrase collectively describing the dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet as the 'Trinity of Hell,' identifying three separate beings in troika. Most commendably, many expositors in that century²³⁸⁴ held the belief that the Jews, at some time near the time of the end, would return in a grand movement to the Holy Land, and only some time thereafter would the seven year covenant with the Beast be concluded.

Paganism

Concerning the end-time and the appearance of this Beast, there is a telling description of his activities in Daniel: *'And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall arise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.'*²³⁸⁵

Many have lighted on the phrase *'and think to change times and laws'* as being clear indication that the little horn of Daniel chapter seven is the pope and his apostate church, on the basis that, in the past, the Roman church has changed times and laws. For confirmation, one need only look to Gibbon: *'Not to mention other examples, is not every Christian obliged to sanctify Sunday, and to abstain on that day from unnecessary servile work? Is not the observance of this law among the most prominent of our sacred duties? But you may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorising the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify.'*²³⁸⁶

Wholesale adoption of paganism has been a recurring theme in the Roman church since its inception. At every turn, she had borrowed, adapted, name-changed, and otherwise obfuscated a quite bewildering array of outright and outlandish pagan beliefs and practices, first calling them Christian, and then compelling sceptics and non-believers to worship accordingly, often on pain of death: Inquisition on the grand scale.

²³⁸¹ and from 180AD

²³⁸² evidenced in Parker, Thomas, *The Visions and Prophecies of Daniel Expounded*.

²³⁸³ Bonar, Andrew, *Development of Antichrist*, in 1853AD.

²³⁸⁴ such as Purdon, Robert A., *The Last Vials*.

²³⁸⁵ Dan 7:24,25

²³⁸⁶ Cardinal Gibbon, *Faith of our Fathers*, p.111, 3d.

Roman 'religious liberty' is illusory, of course. Currently, Rome is seeking the recognition of the pagan Roman weekly and special days of worship, under the protection of civil legislation. John Paul II also alluded to this same objective: 'In the particular circumstances of our time, Christians will naturally strive to ensure that civil legislation respects their duty to keep Sunday holy.'²³⁸⁷ There is no mention here of the genuinely discriminatory nature of any such legislation vis-à-vis those who do not hold Sunday as holy: Judæo-Christians, various seventh-day sects, Jews, and Muslims, for example.

Rome is also applying the considerable weight and influence of the Holy See, the moral and juridical representative of the Roman church,²³⁸⁸ through diplomatic channels to achieve this Roman agenda. In many countries where the Roman Catholic Church holds sway, changes have already been made to the point where lists of Roman Holy Days are now public holidays. In all of this there is a foretaste, perhaps, of the sort of pressure that will be brought to bear once the Antichrist and the False Prophet come into power.

Evil triumvirate

What is known and widely accepted is that the Antichrist will be allowed to carry out his evil plans until the coming of Christ, when he will be '*consumed.*' *'Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.'*²³⁸⁹ Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will now let, until he be taken out of the way.²³⁹⁰ And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume²³⁹¹ with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had

²³⁸⁷ John Paul II, pastoral letter *Dies Domini*, para. 67

²³⁸⁸ since 1964, the Holy See has maintained Permanent Observer status at the U.N., augmented by full participation in numerous U.N. treaties and other undertakings.

²³⁸⁹ Latin: *præsens deus*, a visible manifestation of God; in terms of the Antichrist, this is apposite, for he is seen '*Proclaiming that he is God.*'

²³⁹⁰ a quite woeful translation in the K.J.V. of root Greek: *ginomei* and *mesos*, much better rendered (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): '*until he [the Antichrist] arise [or 'appear in history'] in your midst.*'

²³⁹¹ Greek: *analysko*, '*use up*,' '*expend*,' as in expending money.

*pleasure in unrighteousness,'²³⁹² and, 'And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.'*²³⁹³

The person sitting on the horse is Christ,²³⁹⁴ against whom will come those gathered by the three wicked end-time entities mentioned in Revelation, grouped together in their final evil endeavour: *'And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs²³⁹⁵ come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the Beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.'*²³⁹⁶ From this, it is clear that the Beast and the False Prophet are two individuals in the end-time evil triumvirate, the third being the dragon, Satan. The Beast and the False Prophet are not, as some have supposed erroneously, comprised of one person exercising two commands or missions. There is a fundamental difference between the Antichrist and the False Prophet and all previous evil politicians, military leaders, and religious: this time the two are not only the front men, they are the highest controlling humans in the evil chain that links them with their evil handler and empowerer: Satan. Satan actually possesses the Antichrist.

There are, however, differences in interpretation concerning the identities of the two Beasts described in Revelation, especially in identifying the '*Antichrist*.' These are, perhaps, the main interpretations:

1. The first Beast is the '*Antichrist*,'²³⁹⁷ verses 1-10, a political leader, and the second Beast is the '*False Prophet*,'²³⁹⁸ a religious leader, an apostate²³⁹⁹ Jew;
2. As above but deleting the reference to an apostate Jew;
3. The first Beast is the Roman Beast,²⁴⁰⁰ a political leader, and the second Beast is the '*False Prophet*' and the '*Antichrist*,'²⁴⁰¹ a religious leader; and,

²³⁹² II Thes 2:1-12

²³⁹³ Rev 19:19-21

²³⁹⁴ q.v. inf; Revelation chpt. 19

²³⁹⁵ 'frog-like' characteristics of these unclean spirits (frogs are unclean for food in God's Law) refer, in all likelihood, to their 'hopping' from one world regional 'king' to another in pursuit of their task of mustering all the kings of the earth to battle, v.14.

²³⁹⁶ Rev 16:13

²³⁹⁷ Rev 13:1-10

²³⁹⁸ Rev 13:11-18

²³⁹⁹ in the sense of not being Judæo-Christian; q.v. Rev 3:9.

²⁴⁰⁰ Rev 13:1-10

²⁴⁰¹ Rev 13:11-18

4. The two Beasts are one and the same person.

Certainly the identity of the '*Antichrist*' has spawned a host of misconceptions: 'The following are testimonies concerning this revelation, given by the following leading Reformers:

1. The Waldensians²⁴⁰² claimed the Papacy was the Antichrist and '*man of Sin*'; and the Roman church was the Great Harlot System of Babylon;
2. Wycliffe²⁴⁰³ claimed that the Papacy was the Antichrist;
3. Luther²⁴⁰⁴ denounced the Papacy as the Antichrist;
4. Melancthon²⁴⁰⁵ said, "The Roman Pontiff with his whole kingdom is the very Antichrist"; and,
5. Tyndale, Ridley, Latimer, Hooper, Fox, with all the 'Westminster Divines,' who established the 'Confession of Faith,'²⁴⁰⁶ condemned the Mass and Transubstantiation as "the abominations of Revelation chapter seventeen, in the Great Harlot's cup."²⁴⁰⁷

Unfortunately, most if not all succumbed to the common confusion of the identity of the Antichrist and of the False Prophet.

Antichrist

The term '*Antichrist*' appears nowhere in the book of Revelation. Despite its widespread use in the context of the bulk of mankind's apocalyptic writings and commentaries, it is, in fact, a term restricted in the Bible to I and II John, and it is this, as much as anything, that has given rise to the problem that many have experienced in discerning quite who is the proper recipient of the title of '*Antichrist*.'

The matter is compounded by the multiple use of the term in I and II John. '*Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.*'²⁴⁰⁸ Also, *Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [but] he that*

²⁴⁰² 1126AD

²⁴⁰³ 1378AD

²⁴⁰⁴ 1520AD

²⁴⁰⁵ 1530AD

²⁴⁰⁶ 1647AD

²⁴⁰⁷ Fox, John S., *Flood of Light upon the Book of Revelation*, pp.119,120

²⁴⁰⁸ I John 2:18

*acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also,*²⁴⁰⁹ and, *'every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is in the world,'*²⁴¹⁰ and finally, *'For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.'*²⁴¹¹

From these textual excerpts, it is clear that the coming of Christ marked the beginning of the last days, insofar as it heralded the last dispensation under attack from this Satan-inspired and controlled world, namely, the dispensation of the Judæo-Christian church. All who deny that Christ is the Son of God, or who are contrary or antagonistic to Christ are classed as *'antichrists,'* and this includes all religious beliefs other than true Judæo-Christianity, regardless of how closely they may feel they adhere to the Law and other matters.

The term *'antichrist'* is both a generic one and a useful, specific reference to an end-time player in the final cataclysmic events of this age. In its generic sense, the term applies to those otherwise known as ravening wolves prophesied by Christ, *'Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves,'*²⁴¹² and recorded by Luke, *'For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock....to draw away disciples after them.'*²⁴¹³ All who would deny Christ made flesh, and that that Christ was God incarnate, Emmanuel, God with us—*'and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is, God with us'*²⁴¹⁴—are here called *'antichrist.'*²⁴¹⁵

In its specific sense, the term applies to a person, rather than to his empire, who sets himself up against the very God of creation. This is seen in the thirteenth chapter of Revelation where the first beast's description transmutes from that of the Roman Empire's eruptions²⁴¹⁶ to the characteristics and deeds of the singular beast, the *'little horn,'* the *'eighth,'* commonly known as the Antichrist.²⁴¹⁷ *'When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)'*²⁴¹⁸ gives the exact location of the erection of the obscene image of the Beast, in a calculated and wholesale affront to God, for the Greek here translated *'place'*²⁴¹⁹ means *'the exact spot';* very possibly a reference to the inner sanctum, the *'Holy of Holies.'*²⁴²⁰

²⁴⁰⁹ I John 2:22,23 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁴¹⁰ I John 4:3

²⁴¹¹ II John 7

²⁴¹² Mat 7:15

²⁴¹³ Acts 20:29,30

²⁴¹⁴ Mat 1:23

²⁴¹⁵ the taxonomy would also include those adhering to dyothelism, who hold that Christ during His earthly sojourn had and was torn between two wills, one human, and the other, divine.

²⁴¹⁶ Rev 13:1-4

²⁴¹⁷ Rev 13:5-8; Dan 7:8; Rev 17:11

²⁴¹⁸ Mat 24:15

²⁴¹⁹ Greek: topos.

²⁴²⁰ q.v. sup.

The Antichrist will exhibit several unique characteristics,²⁴²¹ characteristics which will be seen as most pressingly craved in the time of the end: 'Franco,²⁴²² the Spanish dictator, asserts that "Parliamentary government is breaking up in all countries. It has had its time. It is necessary to substitute for it a modern system more in harmony with the economics of our day." The continental nations, living as they do in a chronic state of emergency that does not pass away, but on the contrary tends to increase, and to be complicated by the menace of another war, are more and more inclined, in desperation, to call for a Strong Man.'²⁴²³

'One of the main preparations for the predicted worship of a man, during the last years of this dispensation, has been the preaching that Jesus, however good, was only a man and was not One with the Father, except in Him being in uncommonly close communion with Him—was not God in the complete sense, but divine only in the sense in which, as such preaching has it, all men are divine, Jesus being different from other men, not in kind but only in degree. If the Christian church has, as is thus claimed, existed for some two thousand years on the basis of preaching and worshipping One who, however remarkable, was merely a man, it will seem quite as logical to found a new church and conduct a worship dedicated to another remarkable man! The object of worship will be, to their thinking, the same, with only this difference, that it is another man!'²⁴²⁴

Further descriptions of the Beast empire, the coming world hegemonic power, and its inextricably-linked 'Antichrist' figure are given in Revelation: *'And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the Beast: and they worshipped the Beast, saying, Who is like unto the Beast? who is able to make war with him? and there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue²⁴²⁵ forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his*

²⁴²¹ the future apotheosis of a human ruler, admittedly in an extremely low form, is seen by some in the widely despised and deceased Jewish figure Robert Maxwell (known colloquially as 'Cap'n Bob'); Greenslade, Roy, *Maxwell's Fall*, pp.13,14:

'Early on, Maxwell realised that to sustain his lies successfully, to maintain in his own eyes his invented self, he must have power, he must control his environment with unquestioned authority. Money bought power, and power brought money. His image of himself was of a benevolent dictator, a kindly man forced to take harsh measures to achieve great things. He regarded himself as a saviour who needed power only insofar as it was necessary to orchestrate his kindness on behalf of the greatest number. The ruthlessness, the cruelty, the rudeness, the rapaciousness saddened him. How often did he say, hand on heart: "Money and property mean nothing to me." It was a lie, and it was his truth. His obsession with power and money meant that he could not stop.'

With Hitler as prototype, a political and military leader whom the Germanic peoples frequently regarded as 'God Himself,' it is possible to discern the Antichrist's eight-point political and military modus operandi:

Mission→Connection(with populace)→Vision→Hope→Certainty→Indoctrination→Control(autocratic)→Destruction.

²⁴²² Generalissimo Franco.

²⁴²³ Pankhurst, Christabel, *The World's Unrest: Visions of the Dawn*, p.82

²⁴²⁴ Pankhurst, Christabel, *The World's Unrest: Visions of the Dawn*, pp.75,76; all strictly monotheistic, unitarian-style religions—including Judaism, Islam, Arianism (i.e., of that pertaining to the teachings of the heresiarch Arius), Unitarianism, Jehovah's Witnesses, and the like, together with that strange monotheism evident in Roman Catholicism and its estranged sisters, Eastern and Russian Orthodoxy, wherein three divine entities are said to be but non-simultaneous emanations of a core One, and Protestantism, where the three somehow become conjoined in One—are in a debased state and appear extremely prone to the ready adoption of the damnable heresy and worship of the creation—a sinning, mortal man—rather than the Creator. A persistent heresy indeed!

²⁴²⁵ Greek: poieo, far better rendered 'to make (war).'

*name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.'*²⁴²⁶

Anti-Christos

It is due to quasi-Christian church related references that many have concluded that the end-time Antichrist will be a religious leader; in other words, one of the future popes. But there is little support for such a contention other than through attempted association with those earlier plural and wide-ranging references in the epistles of John. But the man of sin, the Beast of Revelation chapter thirteen, the '666' Beast,²⁴²⁷ is actually a political leader who sets himself up effectively to rule the earth in the name of Satan, and, in doing so, has the eager assistance of another evil individual, the False Prophet, who is obviously a religious leader. There are not two such religious leaders; just one, and it follows that the Beast is the continuation of that singular evil introduced by Nimrod and which has existed, with gaps, down through subsequent times. Nimrod was a political leader, not a religious one. It was only after his death that his wife Semiramis set about deifying him.

Vine gives this definition: 'Antichristos (in Greek) can mean either against Christ or instead of Christ, or perhaps, combining the two, 'one who, assuming the guise of Christ, opposes Christ.' The word is found only in John's Epistles, (a) of the many antichrists who are forerunners of the Antichrist himself,²⁴²⁸ (b) of the evil power which already operates anticipatively of the Antichrist.²⁴²⁹ What the Apostle saw of him so closely resembles what he says of the first beast in Revelation chapter thirteen, and what the Apostle Paul says of the Man of Sin in Thessalonians,²⁴³⁰ that the same person seems to be in view in all these passages, rather than the second beast in Revelation chapter thirteen, the false prophet; for the latter supports the former in all his Antichristian assumptions.'²⁴³¹ Bullinger compares Christ with the Antichrist through brief references to Scripture:²⁴³²

Christ:

*'Cometh from above.'*²⁴³³

*'I am come in my Father's name.'*²⁴³⁵

Antichrist:

*'Ascendeth out of the bottomless pit.'*²⁴³⁴

*'Shall come in his own name.'*²⁴³⁶

²⁴²⁶ Rev 13:4-8

²⁴²⁷ Rev 13:18

²⁴²⁸ I John 2:18,22; II John 7

²⁴²⁹ I John 4:3.

²⁴³⁰ cf. II Thessalonians chapter 2.

²⁴³¹ *The Expanded Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words.*

²⁴³² Bullinger, E. W., *Ten Sermons on the Second Advent*, Sermon VIII, *The Second Advent in Relation to "The Gentile."*

²⁴³³ John 3:31

²⁴³⁴ Rev 11:7

*'Humbled himself and became obedient unto death.'*²⁴³⁷

*'Exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped.'*²⁴³⁸

*'Came down to do the will of him that sent me.'*²⁴³⁹

*'Shall do according to his [own] will.'*²⁴⁴⁰

*'I have glorified thee on earth.'*²⁴⁴¹

*'Opened his mouth in blasphemy against God.'*²⁴⁴²

*'The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep....there is one shepherd.'*²⁴⁴³

*'Given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them.'*²⁴⁴⁴

*'God hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name.'*²⁴⁴⁵

*'Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.'*²⁴⁴⁶

*'Shall reign for ever and ever.'*²⁴⁴⁷

*'They shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.'*²⁴⁴⁸

*'The Son of God and heir of all things.'*²⁴⁴⁹

*'The son of perdition.'*²⁴⁵⁰

Antichrist's 'god'

The Antichrist's personal worship is described in the K.J.V, thusly: *'But in his estate he shall honour the God of forces,'*²⁴⁵¹ but there are errors in this translation. The Tanakh's rendering of 'stand' for 'estate' is incorrect too. The corrected version, however, reads: *'On his own basis he shall honour the god of fortresses.'*²⁴⁵² So

²⁴³⁵ John 5:43

²⁴³⁶ John 5:43

²⁴³⁷ Phlp 2:8

²⁴³⁸ II Thes 2:4

²⁴³⁹ John 6:38

²⁴⁴⁰ Rev 13:6 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁴⁴¹ John 17:4

²⁴⁴² Rev 13:6

²⁴⁴³ John 10:11,16

²⁴⁴⁴ Rev 13:7

²⁴⁴⁵ Phlp 2:9

²⁴⁴⁶ II Thes 2:8 (sublinear emphasis added, with added comment and clarification in square brackets): *'And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume [Greek: analisko, meaning 'to expend,' 'use up,' or 'destroy'] with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy [Greek: katargeo, meaning 'render inactive,' or 'inoperable,' as well as 'do away with' or 'put an end to'] with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders. And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.'*

²⁴⁴⁷ Rev 11:15

²⁴⁴⁸ Dan 7:26

²⁴⁴⁹ Heb 1:2

²⁴⁵⁰ II Thes 2:3

²⁴⁵¹ Dan 11:38a

²⁴⁵² Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 1, p.135 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

it would seem that here the Antichrist is using a pagan deity—one of the aspects of the goddess Aestarte, amongst other gods²⁴⁵³—as a front for his own purposes and on his own terms. The next phrase is more opaque: *‘and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour.’*²⁴⁵⁴ The meaning behind this tends to turn on whether the first reference to God in the preceding verse, *‘Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers,’*²⁴⁵⁵ where *‘God’* is plural,²⁴⁵⁶ should exhibit a capital *‘G’* *‘Gods’* or a diminutive *‘g’* *‘gods.’*²⁴⁵⁷

If it is a capital *‘G,’* then the meaning is relatively straightforward: The capital *‘G’* Gods²⁴⁵⁸ is a reference to the dyadic Godhead of Judæo-Christianity, and the diminutive *‘g’* god²⁴⁵⁹ would then be a pagan deity such as Jupiter or Mithras, the latter being the pagan false-messiah god. The former would mean that the Antichrist is of Israelite descent, probably Jewish, but here it should be recalled that the Jews adopted the worship of the pagan god Mithra (the forerunner of Mithras)²⁴⁶⁰ during their Babylonian captivity in the sixth-century BC, thereby replacing the true dyadic Godhead. So in order to get to a Jewish provenance in this case, assuming that the pagan deity is Mithras, either there has to be:

1. A distinction made between Mithra and Mithras, with the latter taking precedence; or,
2. The possible exclusion of the word *‘and’* which links the first two phrases;²⁴⁶¹ or,
3. A time distinction made in the derivation from the term *‘fathers’* which would exclude any paradox.

If it is a small *‘g,’* then the exegesis is a deal more problematical: the Antichrist is of pagan, Gentile descent, but one which never honoured any of the aspects of the goddess Aestarte,²⁴⁶² or equivalents. This is extremely difficult, but not utterly impossible to imagine, but it begs the provision of specification, which is wholly lacking. So the conclusions, on reasonable grounds, are:

1. In English, it is capital *‘G’* *‘Gods’*²⁴⁶³ plural, referring to the dyadic Godhead of Judæo-Christianity;
2. The following verse²⁴⁶⁴ refers to a single god, or goddess, that of fortresses and war, rather than two pagan deities;²⁴⁶⁵ and,

²⁴⁵³ ‘Yet [kings] despise every deity, and think nothing but extolling their own magnificence.’

²⁴⁵³ or Minerva, or Diana, or Mary in Roman Catholicism, for they are all one and the same.

²⁴⁵⁴ Dan 11:38b

²⁴⁵⁵ Dan 11:37a

²⁴⁵⁶ Hebrew: elohiym, *‘Gods.’*

²⁴⁵⁷ Dan 11:37; it is definitely plural, elohim, but Hebrew does not have capitals in the sense of the English usage.

²⁴⁵⁸ Dan 11:37

²⁴⁵⁹ Dan 11:38b

²⁴⁶⁰ but without the accretions parodying Judæo-Christianity which appeared near the end of the first century.

²⁴⁶¹ Dan 11:38a,b; *‘and’* does not appear in the Tanakh, although it does in the Moffatt translation.

²⁴⁶² or Minerva, or Diana, or Mary in Roman Catholicism and its spin-offs / spin-outs; or male pagan deity counterparts.

²⁴⁶³ Dan 11:37; as the K.J.V. but with *‘Gods’* in the plural.

3. The pagan deity, rather than being female, is much more likely to be a reference to Jupiter or Mithras, the latter being the pagan false-messiah and favourite god of Roman soldiery and Roman militarism.

Identity clues

‘Antiochus [could] do nothing by his unbridled and furious audacity, unless divinely permitted and previously limited.’²⁴⁶⁶ And the same can be said of the Antichrist. He will be given a set period of time—no more, no less—starting on a set day and ending on a set day, exactly. The Antichrist cannot vary or avoid this, and neither can his promoter, Satan.

‘Profane men, indeed, who understand nothing of God's providence, have said that folly and chance prevail more in war than skill or arms; but the success of generals does not spring from either chance or fortune, but as God pleases to conduct the affairs of the world in various ways, so in some cases the evil and unskilful warriors succeed, while others make many fruitless efforts and trials, although they are superior in counsel, and are provided with the very best ornaments.’²⁴⁶⁷

‘His valour shall be strengthened, not meaning by "valour" that heroic spirit with which kings are usually endowed, nor any increase in magnanimity; nor yet that [he] should imitate such monarchs as these, but his strength should lie concealed. He should creep on by clandestine acts, and not contend in open battle according to the practice of those who excel in courage; he should secretly try many schemes, and thus stealthily extend his empire.... he shall grow great by fraudulent and clandestine arts.... deceit shall prosper in his hand. This makes a tolerable sense.’²⁴⁶⁸

It is evident from Scripture that the Antichrist will be satanically possessed, as opposed to demonically.²⁴⁶⁹ As a son of perdition possessed by the Devil, as was Iscariot,²⁴⁷⁰ the Antichrist will be a narcissistic, schizophrenic plenipotentiary, a particularly dangerous combination. Judas's later regret at what he had done²⁴⁷¹ indicates that he was intermittently possessed and discarded by Satan as soon as the evil plan against Christ had been set in irrevocable train. Possibly, in a similar way, the Antichrist and the False Prophet will be intermittently possessed, but in a more intense form than any other human beings in all history, although the

²⁴⁶⁴ Dan 11:38

²⁴⁶⁵ i.e., two deities as the Tanakh.

²⁴⁶⁶ Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 2, p.75 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁴⁶⁷ Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 2, p.75

²⁴⁶⁸ Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 2, p.74 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); Calvin applies this to Antiochus Epiphanes. In fact it is a description of the Antichrist.

²⁴⁶⁹ if that amounts to full-time possession, which the context may indicate, then the false-prophet must be possessed, full time, by a senior or the most senior demon. An intermittent arrangement—a less compelling explanation, it must be said—would allow both to be possessed by Satan. Satan can only possess one person at a time; he is not omnipresent.

²⁴⁷⁰ Luke 22:3,4

²⁴⁷¹ Mat 27:3-5

prospect of a fully Satan-possessed Antichrist is much more likely. In reality, of course, they will simply be being used by their evil master, Satan. As to provenance and identity, there is little directly mentioned in Scripture but perhaps a little can be gleaned obliquely.²⁴⁷²

²⁴⁷² the only hint of any sort of detail comes in Daniel chpt. 11, and is pretty scant. Although highly speculative and uncorroborated, Wade Cox, C.C.G. (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), has: 'The terms in Dan 11:38 refer to *'the god of fortresses'* and *'the god that did not know or was not known by his fathers.'* These two terms are quite interesting. The Hebrew consonants are allegedly based on the masculine singular Eloah but the words are VLALH and the vowel points indicate the word form similar to Valhalla. This is the tradition of the Norse of the battle of Ragnarok. The second word here....mean[s] fortresses [the K.J.V. has *forces*, but it should be *fortresses* or *munitions*]. The second incidence is VLALVH. This is another variation on the theme. The next verse mentions an alien god (elovah).'

And that, in turn, gives a potential but tenuous possibly clue to the Antichrist's likely provenance: the former being Jewish, the latter being German, assuming Cox's statements above to be correct.

While Valhalla was the mythical domain of Odin in Norse legend, it was also the name of a German Temple of Fame, built by Louis I of Bavaria at Donaustauf near Ratisbon, and consecrated to all Germans renowned in war, statesmanship, literature, and art. Hitler, of course, who saw himself as a messiah of sorts, and who was seen as something similar by the then pope, Pius XII, was deeply involved in the occult.

The Moffatt translation has: *'He shall not heed the gods of his fathers or Tammuz or any other god, for he shall exalt himself above all gods.....For his strong forts he shall procure soldiers who worship a foreign god.'* This tends to bring out the same conclusion, in broad context, as the Tanakh rendering, q.v. sup., with the exception that what above is assumed by some as a reference to the pagan god or goddess of war becomes targumed, ironically, as Tammuz, the pagan false messiah, which women have tended to mistake for or impose upon the true Messiah. Moffatt's plural deity form in *gods of his fathers* is correct for the Hebrew is *elohim* (the K.J.V. and Tanakh are both incorrect here), and the purely pagan deity theme is apposite in that it can be related in a way to what is stated by Cox, which appears in the following verse, assuming Cox's *elovah* to be correct, but to which specific pagan god that refers is unknown.

Rounding this off, it is really difficult to subscribe to the idea that the Antichrist will be Irish—as believed by some expositors—which appears to be based solely on the omission of Dan from participation in the 144,000 of Revelation. Why all of Dan could be excluded from participation merely because one of their number happens to be the Antichrist remains unexplained. While Dan was the first tribe into idolatry, extrapolating from that to the provenance of the Antichrist is a massive leap in the dark. The reasons commonly led are quite inadequate to justify the conclusions drawn from them.

The most convincing explanation to date lies in the fact of the rejection by the Roman Catholic Irish of their royal line, currently held in the person of Queen Elizabeth II of England. That line was turned over from Ireland to Scotland to England in course of a period of about a millennium. Interestingly, in 1315AD, the younger brother of Robert the Bruce, king of Scotland—Edward—at the request of the Irish, was crowned king of Ireland, the idea being that the Scots would assist the Irish to rid themselves of the English presence. It came to naught, however, and the 'riddance' had to wait until the 20th-century when, after gaining the prior consent of the pope, the Irish rebels, taking advantage of British preoccupation with World War I, rose up in armed conflict against the British authorities, leading, through many twists and turns, to the creation of the Free State and, eventually, the Republic of Ireland in the southern part of the island. The balancing, as it were, of the role of the pope in the affairs of Ireland is appropriate, for the Norman English invasion of Ireland in 1170AD had been sanctioned by a previous pope, Adrian IV, who granted authority over Ireland to Henry II, king of England. One pope had consigned Ireland to centuries of bloody warfare and strife, while another had not only repeated that in shorter timeframe, but had been instrumental in cutting the Romish Irish off from the throne of David, the very throne that the Messiah will take on His return to earth. It is that repudiation—allied to extreme and near all-inclusive idolatry, together with their end-time wedlock to Fascism (the Catholic Irish, in thrall of the authoritarian church, fall an easy prey to the authoritarian political regime par excellence: Fascism, of which the early stages are even now apparent in Sinn Féin / IRA and their election successes both in Northern Ireland among the Catholic population and in the Republic of Ireland to the south, and also exposed in the first Irish government in the south in 1922–1923AD which had distinctly Fascist leanings, leading to civil war) that renders the Romish Irish sufficiently distinct from the rest of the children of Israel. Since the Catholic Irish have rejected the throne en masse, similarly they will reject the Messiah, the initiator and ultimate possessor of that throne, with the ineluctable corollary being their acceptance, en masse, of the Antichrist.

Not before

There is an event precedent to the appearance of the '*son of perdition*,' the Antichrist, which is mentioned in all translations²⁴⁷³ except recent ones such as the N.I.V., where it is elided.²⁴⁷⁴ This is the event called the '*falling away*.'²⁴⁷⁵ Once it happens, the '*flock*' fall under judgment. The verse in question²⁴⁷⁶ has perplexed many down through the ages who have relied upon the common English translation or the Masoretic text.²⁴⁷⁷ When the text is correctly translated from the correct Hebrew—the Masoretic Text is wildly misleading here—it gives: '*one third of the flock shall be cut off in one month*.' This happened, in the mid-nineties,²⁴⁷⁸ when the New Moons virtually coincided with the fall of Julian calendar months.²⁴⁷⁹

Second beast

The second Beast exercises all the authority of the first Beast in his presence, implying that his power is reliant, at least in part, on that of the first Beast, and causes the earth to worship, not himself, but the first Beast who is superior to him, '*And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him*.'²⁴⁸⁰

Many have wondered, however, how it could be that the second beast, the last pope, has any sway over the Antichrist. Perhaps part of the answer can be gleaned from Cornwall, who relates the uneasy relation-

²⁴⁷³ II Thes 2:3

²⁴⁷⁴ N.I.V.'s N.T. text exhibits the following omitted from the K.J.V.: Mat 17:21,35,18:11,23:14; Mark 7:16,9:44,46,11:26,15:18; Luke: 17:36;23:17; John 5:4; Acts 8:37,15:34,24:7,28:29; Rom 16:24, and also footnotes many alterations, one or two of which have merit, q.v. inf., and some of which are disastrous, e.g., N.I.V.'s I Peter 2:7, '*The stone the builders rejected is become the capstone*,' with obvious occult import and meaning.

²⁴⁷⁵ which happened on Christmas Eve,²⁴⁷⁵ 1994AD, in The Worldwide Church of God (W.C.G.), when Joe Tkach Snr. gave a prepared sermon on his vision for the new direction of the Laodicean church, a direction that was mainstream Protestantism with a few easements for those wanting to keep some annual holy days, at least for a while. In came Advent Day, known as Christmas to one and all, and Easter, plus Sunday worship, freedom from the Mosaic Law, tithing substituted by freewill offerings, etc.: in short, the wholesale reworking of the former belief system.

²⁴⁷⁶ Zech 11:8a

²⁴⁷⁷ erroneous K.J.V. (and other translations) based on the Masoretic text give: '*Three shepherds also I cut off in one month*.'

²⁴⁷⁸ January, 1995

²⁴⁷⁹ registered adult membership of the W.C.G., at the end of 1994AD, stood at c.100,000. The organization lost one third of that early in 1995AD, as umbrage and disgust took hold of the membership, precipitating a mass exodus in one month, while the events recited in Zech 11:8,9b,c,d (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), '*I will not feed you: that that dieth, let it die; and that that is to be cut off, let it be cut off; and let the rest [Hebrew: shaar, better 'remainder'] eat every one the flesh of another*,' took care of the balance. Joe Tkach Snr. didn't see the year out. Joe Jnr. and his wife Tammy, with her 'womens' ministry,' took over and completed the declension. The effect of the loss of two thirds of the membership, leaving but a third, was immense, as recorded in *Ambassador Report* 64, February, 1997:

'In recent years, however, the W.C.G.'s ministry has itself been withering in size, and sweeping changes in church doctrine by Armstrong's successors, Joseph W. Tkach Senior and Junior, have resulted in the defection of perhaps two thirds of the church's members and a loss of more than \$170 million annually from its one-time annual income of over \$210 million.'

²⁴⁸⁰ Rev 13:12a

ship between Hitler and the German Nazi government on the one hand, and Pacelli²⁴⁸¹ and the Roman Curia on the other, and gives some clues to how it might work out in practice at the time of the end: '[T]here was the single aim that ran through Pacelli's diplomatic policy from the Serbian Concordat²⁴⁸² to the conclusion of the Reich Concordat.²⁴⁸³ It was to be stressed, he wrote, "that the Code of Canon Law is the foundation and the essential legal presupposition of the concordat." This involves not only official recognition (by the Reich) of the legislation of the Church, but also the adoption of many provisions of this legislation and the protection of all Church legislation." The historic victory in the accord, he was saying, [was] the total recognition and acceptance of the Church's legislation by the state.

The Reich Concordat²⁴⁸⁴ constrained the Holy See, the German hierarchy, the clergy, and the faithful to silence on any issue the Nazi regime deemed political. To be specific, since the prosecution and elimination of the Jews in Germany was by now a stated policy, the treaty had legally bound the Catholic Church in Germany²⁴⁸⁵ to silence on outrages against the Jews. [The concordat] imposed a moral duty on Catholics to obey the Nazi rulers.'²⁴⁸⁶

Hitler, despite being Roman Catholic, hated religion, and desired to destroy it, but his short-term need was to neutralise 'political Catholicism' in Germany in order to pave the way for the passing of the Enabling Act,²⁴⁸⁷ an act that granted him de facto dictatorial powers. He made a pact with Pacelli, the Vatican's Foreign Secretary, who could deliver the desired neutering of the Catholic Centre Party in Germany. Not only was this desirable, it was utterly unavoidable.

But what was driving Pacelli? Hitler's Nazi regime, just as the coming Antichrist's will be, was duty bound in law, even if it did not do so in practice, to honour all papal dictats and fulminations made under provision of Roman canon law. Hitler did so when it suited his purpose, just as the Antichrist will when it suits his. Potentially, this gave the Roman pope great power, for his word would be carried into deeds by the evil empire of the Nazis, the plan being that the Romish regime would ride on the back of Nazism as it conquered the world, especially as it conquered Communism in the East after the overthrow of Russia. While that was the plan, it didn't work out as Pius XII and the Holy See would have liked, as history has shown.

The last pope will have demonically-provided supernatural powers, such as being able to make fire come down from heaven,²⁴⁸⁸ and these displays of power will prove very seductive to the Antichrist. The two will play the role of a partnership, at least superficially, but doubtless each will have and play out his own partially-

²⁴⁸¹ Vatican Foreign Secretary before elevation to pope as Pius XII, and afterwards when pope during the war years.

²⁴⁸² in 1913AD

²⁴⁸³ in 1933AD

²⁴⁸⁴ 1933AD agreement between the Holy See and the Nazi government.

²⁴⁸⁵ in toto.

²⁴⁸⁶ Cornwall, John, *Hitler's Pope: the Secret History of Pius XII*, pp.150,151,153,157 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁴⁸⁷ 1933AD

²⁴⁸⁸ i.e., the sky; q.v. sup.

hidden agenda. Some might point to the verse where the '*whore church reigneth over the kings of the earth*,²⁴⁸⁹ suggesting that the pope will be the superior of the Antichrist, but, as is often the case, the K.J.V.—and, to be fair, almost all other translations—has it wrong. The Greek here translated *reigneth*²⁴⁹⁰ is actually from two Greek words, meaning '*holding royalty*.' In contrast, the Greek translated *reigneth*²⁴⁹¹ in chapter nineteen,²⁴⁹² where it is applied to God, is a single word, which does mean to reign. The whore's '*holding royalty*' is neither by divine right, nor by heredity, but by presumption, arrogance, and arrogation. The woman sitting on the beast²⁴⁹³ is carried by the beast; she sits upon it, but she does not ride it in the sense of controlling its movement, direction, or pace. She is, in effect, the conveyed passenger.

Even very near the end, when the pope is stripped of his church and that church is gutted and burned, and Rome itself destroyed, with the pope having to flee, the Antichrist protects him and has him by his side. The reason?—even with the three evil spirits out of the abyss, the pope's supernatural powers and his deeply occult 'pedigree' will be deemed essential for displaying to the world's leaders in order to goad them into a last-ditch attempt to overthrow Christ.

Napoleon's view

Cornwall reproduces Napoleon's view of his dealings with the then pope, Pius VII: 'I was in a position to exalt the pope beyond all bounds and to surround him with such pomp and ceremony that he would cease to regret the loss of his temporal power.²⁴⁹⁴ I would have made an idol out of him.....Paris²⁴⁹⁵ would have become the capital of Christendom, and I would have become the master of the religious as well as the political world..... My Church councils would have been representative of all Christendom, and the popes would have been mere chairmen. I would have opened and closed these assemblies, approved and made public their decisions, as did Constantine and Charlemagne.'²⁴⁹⁶ And therein lies the fundamental tension between the two players. The two at the end are likely to exhibit many of these same tensions and characteristics.

²⁴⁸⁹ Rev 17:18

²⁴⁹⁰ Greek: exousa basileian.

²⁴⁹¹ Greek: hebasileuse.

²⁴⁹² Rev 19:6

²⁴⁹³ Rev 17:7

²⁴⁹⁴ Napoleon terminated the Holy Roman Empire in 1808AD, although a pale remnant did struggle on until 1870AD, care of the Congress of Vienna in 1814–1815AD, before the Vatican finally lost the Papal States (which had been established 1,116 years earlier on foot of a forgery, The Donation of Constantine, on which the Donation of Pepin had been erected) to Italy during the reign of Pius IX. Napoleon also disbanded the Inquisition, although after the Congress it was reintroduced in the Papal States by Pius VII (where the torturers were Roman Catholic priests in a state sometimes compared to North Korea), and which lasted until the demise of papal temporal power in 1870AD.

²⁴⁹⁵ at Fontainebleau.

²⁴⁹⁶ Cornwall, John, *Hitler's Pope: the Secret History of Pius XII*, p.2 23 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Marvellous

In realising that the Beast / Antichrist political figure derives his power from the dragon, Satan, the world will worship the source of that power, and in doing so will ascribe omnipotence and invincibility to the Beast empire and its political leader. When the Beast's empire suddenly becomes reality, coming back from seeming extinction, the whole world will marvel. It will be of such dramatic and wonderful character that it will suit the mood of the world, and it will be acclaimed with fervour and delirious joy.²⁴⁹⁷ While this occurs during the life of the empire, it will be principally evident during the latter three-and-a-half years of the seven-year affliction, this latter moiety known as the Great Tribulation.²⁴⁹⁸ To gain a wider picture of this, it is best to view the thirteenth chapter of Revelation in conjunction with the eighth chapter of Daniel.

*'Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones towards the four winds of heaven. And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, towards the south, and towards the east, and towards the pleasant land. And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered. Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden underfoot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.'*²⁴⁹⁹

Many expositors correctly identify part of this passage as a prophecy about Alexander the Great, the 'he goat,' and his four generals,²⁵⁰⁰ the 'four notable ones,' who each began to rule a portion of the great empire set up by Alexander. 'So Alexander....died. And his servants bore rule, everyone in his place. And after his death they all put crowns upon themselves: so did their sons after them many years: and evils were multiplied in the earth.'^{2501 2502 2503} The idea of the struggle for power of Alexander's captains^{2504 2505} is not unknown even in

²⁴⁹⁷ Rev 13:4, 'And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?'

²⁴⁹⁸ same period referred to as '1,260 days' in Rev 12:6; 'a time, times, and half a time' in Rev 12:14; 'forty-two months' in Rev 13:5; 'a time, times, and the dividing of time' in Dan 7:25; and the latter half of Daniel's seventieth week in Dan 9:24-27.

²⁴⁹⁹ Dan 8:8-14

²⁵⁰⁰ Lysimachus, Ptolemy, Seleucus, and Craterus.

²⁵⁰¹ Keller, Werner, *The Bible as History*, p.311

²⁵⁰² I Macc 1:7-9

²⁵⁰³ this self-appointed, assumed rule is seen in the following excerpt: Keller, Werner, *The Bible as History*, p.311 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

“So Alexander [the Great]....died. And his servants bore rule every one in his place. And after his death they all put crowns upon themselves: so did their sons after them many years: and evils were multiplied in the earth.” (I Macc 1:7-9).’

²⁵⁰⁴ Greek: Diadochi; collective noun for the four generals succeeding Alexander the Great.

²⁵⁰⁵ Alexander died in 323BC. He left no heir to the throne. This power vacuum led to an intense struggle among his generals for control of the empire. His wife Roxana, princess of Bactria, gave birth to a son shortly after his death. The child was the rightful heir to the throne. However, Cassander, one of the generals, killed both Roxana and her baby. Whilst Alexander’s four generals succeeded him, the succession was not by common consent but by the constant squabbles among them. The empire simply fell apart because none of them could successfully eliminate the others. Daniel correctly prophesies the fourfold division.

The struggle for power among the generals continued until 315BC, when the parties headed by the top four generals decided to divide the kingdom four ways. Daniel prophesied this division in Daniel 8:21,22. These four generals were known as the Diadochi, meaning ‘*Successors*’ in Greek.

The generals and their areas of rule were:

1. Ptolemy Lagi: ruled over Egypt, Palestine, Arabia, and Peterea. He was assisted by the general Seleucus. Seleucus had originally been given Babylon, but was forced out by Antigonos;
2. Antigonos: ruled Syria, Babylonia, and central Asia;
3. Cassander: ruled over Macedonia and Greece; and,
4. Lysimachus: ruled Thrace and Bythina.

Continuing conflict among the Diadochi saw Antigonos, the worst of the generals, subjugated by an alliance of the others in 312BC. His family fled to Macedonia where they set up a small kingdom.

The subsequent divisions were reduced to two based on Egypt under the Ptolemies and Asia under the Seleucids. The Romans later defeated the Seleucids and the empire that grew from that system was Roman.

Cox, Wade, has this (paraphrased):

‘The general consensus is that the most important of the Diadochoi were Antipater and his son Cassander, Antigonos Monophthalmus and his son Demetrius Poliorcetes, Craterus, Eumenes, Leonnatus, Lysimachus, Perdiccas, Ptolomy and Seleucus.

After the death of Alexander on 11 June 323BC in Babylon, there was an initial arrangement for the administration of the empire termed the Babylonian Settlement. The settlement took a month to achieve because of contention among the Macedonians of the Diadochoi. Alexander’s half-brother Arrhidæus (who had some mental deficiency) and the unborn son of Roxana, Alexander IV, were jointly proclaimed king and Perdiccas was established as regent. In 321–320BC a new settlement was agreed upon at Triparadeisus in Syria.

By 306BC six of the Diadochoi remained. These were Antigonos and Demetrius, Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy and Seleucus. The forces of Demetrius defeated Ptolemy in the naval battle off Salamis in Cyprus and that allowed him and his father Antigonos to take the royal title. The others soon followed suit. The empire was thus ruled in five kingdoms under six kings in constant rivalry.

The Diadochoi reduced to four, roughly ruling as follows:

Ptolemy I Soter (*saviour*), son of Lagus, ruled over Egypt as satrap from 323–305BC and as king from 305–283BC, ruling Palestine, Arabia, and Peterea. He was assisted by the general Seleucus. General Seleucus had originally been given Babylon, but was forced out by Antigonos. Seleucus Nicator later ruled in Syria and recovered Babylon ca. 312BC and later ruled in Judea, establishing the Seleucid Dynasty.

Antigonos ruled Syria, Babylonia, and central Asia.

Cassander ruled over Macedonia and Greece.

Lysimachus ruled Thrace and Bythina.

The Diadochoi continued the wars over the period from 320–281BC.

The major decisive battle was the Battle of Ipsus (301BC). Antigonos and Demetrius were pitted against the coalition of Cassander, Lysimachus, and Seleucus near Ipsus in Phrygia. Antigonos was defeated and killed and his possessions divided amongst the victors.

From 301BC, after Ipsus, the empire was as follows:

Ptolemy I Soter ruled Egypt and Palestine from his capital in Alexandria. He died in 282BC. It was this dynasty, that he began, which the Romans finally defeated in 31BC at the battle of Actium, signalling the end of the Hellenistic period and forming the Roman Empire in its place.

Seleucus I Nicator ruled Syria and Phrygia as far as the Indus from his capital in Antioch.

Lysimachus ruled Thrace and Bithynia, and Cassander ruled Macedonia for only four years before his death in 297BC.

Macedon was eventually lost to the descendants of Antigonos, founder of the Antigonid Dynasty, one of the three

modern politics. In its original form it was no more of an advertisement for the profession of army commanders. Alexander's generals had no scruples about getting rid of his whole family by murdering them: Philip Arrhidaeus his half-brother, his mother Olympia, his widow Roxana and his posthumous son.'

Furthermore, expositors, in the main, manage to correctly identify—but only in part²⁵⁰⁶—the little horn as one Antiochus Epiphanes who severely persecuted the Jews in the '*pleasant land*.'^{2507 2508}

Epiphanes

The character and force of the Antichrist has certain foregleams in the actions of one of his forerunners, Antiochus Epiphanes. 'The title Epiphanes entails "illustrious," as, after the capture of his father, he was detained as a hostage at Rome, and then escaped from custody. Historians inform us of his possessing a servile disposition, and being much addicted to gross flattery.'²⁵⁰⁹ 'Antiochus Epiphanes [was] known as "Epiphanes the Madman." [L]ike Hitler,²⁵¹⁰ he was filled with murderous hatred of the Jews, and killed one hundred thousand Jews on one occasion, and multiple thousands more on other occasions.'²⁵¹¹

'By a trick he got his elder brother's son, Demetrius, to be sent a hostage to Rome, in exchange for him, contrary to the cartel; and his elder brother being made away with by Heliodorus,²⁵¹² he took the kingdom. The states of Syria did not "give it him," because they knew it belonged to his elder brother's son, Demetrius, then a hostage at Rome. But with the help of Eumenes and Attalus, neighbouring princes, he gained an interest in the people, and "*by flatteries obtained the kingdom*," established himself in it, and crushed Heliodorus, who made head against him "*with the arms of a flood*." They that opposed him were "*overthrown*" and "*broken before him*;"

Hellenistic dynasties along with the Ptolemaic and the Seleucid.

The wars ended in 281BC on the death of Seleucus and all the Diadochoi were now dead. The four holdings reduced to three dynasties based on:

1. Egypt and the surrounding island and ports under Ptolemy II;
2. The Asiatic part of the empire under Antiochus the son of Seleucus; and,
3. Macedon and Greece, extant but unstable until subjugated by Antigonus Gonatus, son of Demetrius, when he seized the throne of Macedon in 276BC.

This ended the age of the Diadochoi even though these three entities were not themselves successors or original Diadochoi.'

²⁵⁰⁶ q.v. inf.

²⁵⁰⁷ c.171–165BC

²⁵⁰⁸ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, pp.31,32:

'In the time of the rising under Judas Maccabæus there were certain Jews who sought refuge in the caves in the wilderness. Antiochus sent a detachment of men to attack them; the attack was made on the Sabbath day; and these insurgent Jews died without even a gesture of defiance or defence, because to fight would have been to break the Sabbath....Even in a national crisis, even to save their lives, even to protect their nearest and their dearest, the Jews would not fight on the Sabbath. It was because the Jews insisted on keeping the Sabbath Law that Pompey was able to take Jerusalem (Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 14.4.2).'

²⁵⁰⁹ Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 2, p.55

²⁵¹⁰ another forerunner of the Antichrist.

²⁵¹¹ Turner, W. H., *The Second Coming of Christ*, Appendix One (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁵¹² Dan 11:20

even *“the prince of the covenant,”* his nephew, the rightful heir, whom he pretended to *“covenant with,”* that he would *“resign”* to him whenever he should return. But *“after the league made with him, he shall work deceitfully,”* as one whose avowed maxim it is, that princes ought not to be bound by their word any longer than it is for their interest. And with *“a small people,”* that at first cleave to him, he shall *“become strong,”* and *“he shall enter peaceably upon the fattest places”* of the kingdom of Syria, and, very unlike his predecessors, shall *“scatter”* among the people the *“prey, and spoil, and riches,”* to insinuate himself into their affections; but at the same time he shall *“forecast his devices against the strongholds,”* to make himself master of them, so that his generosity shall last but for a time. When he has the garrison into his hands, he *“will scatter the spoil”* no more, but rule by force, as those commonly do that come in by fraud. He that comes in *“like a fox”* reigns *“like a tiger.”*

He had a rooted antipathy to the Jews’ religion. *“His heart”* was *“against the holy covenant,”*²⁵¹³ and *“he had indignation against the holy covenant,”*²⁵¹⁴ that covenant of peculiarity by which the Jews [and the rest of the children of Israel] were *“incorporated”* a people distinct from all other nations, and dignified above them.

He carried on his malicious designs against the Jews by the assistance of some perfidious apostate Jews. He kept up *“intelligence with them that forsook the holy covenant,”*²⁵¹⁵ some of the Jews who were false to their religion, and introduced the customs of the heathen, with whom they made [an alternative] covenant.²⁵¹⁶ These upon all occasions he made use of; *“such as do wickedly against the covenant,”* such as throw up their religion, and comply with the heathen, he shall *“corrupt with flatteries,”* to harden them in their apostasy, and to make use of them as decoys to draw in others.²⁵¹⁷

He profaned the temple: *“Arnd ams shall stand on his part,”*²⁵¹⁸ not only his own army, which he now brought from Egypt, but a great party of deserters from the Jewish religion that joined with them; and they *“polluted the sanctuary of strength,”* not only the holy city, but the temple.²⁵¹⁹ He *“entered proudly into the sanctuary,”* took *“away the golden altar, and the candlestick,”* etc; and therefore, *“there was a great mourning in Israel; the princes and elders mourned,”* etc.²⁵²⁰ Antiochus, having resolved to bring all about him to be of his religion, *“took away the daily sacrifice.”*²⁵²¹

²⁵¹³ Dan 11:28

²⁵¹⁴ Dan 11:30c

²⁵¹⁵ Dan 11:30d

²⁵¹⁶ q.v. the fulfilling of this, I Macc 11-15, where it is expressly said, concerning those renegade Jews, that they *‘made themselves uncircumcised, and forsook the holy covenant.’* II Macc 4:9 records how Jason, the brother of Onias the high priest, who, by the appointment of Antiochus, set up a school at Jerusalem, *‘for the training up of youth in the fashions of the heathen;’* and in II Macc 4:23f., of Menelaus, who fell in with the interests of Antiochus, and who was the man that helped him into Jerusalem, now in his last return from Egypt. Much in the book of Maccabees concerns the mischief done to the Jews by these treacherous men of their own nation, Jason and Menelaus, and their party.

²⁵¹⁷ Dan 11:32

²⁵¹⁸ Dan 11:31

²⁵¹⁹ I Macc 1:21f.

²⁵²⁰ Dan 11:25; II Macc 5:15f., *‘Antiochus went into the most holy temple, Menelaus, that traitor to the laws, and his own country, being his guide.’*

²⁵²¹ Dan 11:31

He persecuted those who retained their integrity. Though there were many who “forsake the covenant,” and “do wickedly” against it, yet there is a people who do “know their God,” and retain the knowledge of Him, and “they shall be strong, and do exploits.”²⁵²² When others yield to the tyrant’s demands, and surrender their consciences to his impositions, they bravely keep their ground, resist the temptation, and make the tyrant himself ashamed of his attempt upon them.²⁵²³ This might well be called doing exploits; for to choose suffering rather than sin is a great exploit. And it was by faith, by being strong in faith, that they did these exploits—that “they were tortured, not accepting deliverance,” as the apostle speaks, probably with reference to that story.²⁵²⁴ Or, it may refer to the military courage of Judas Maccabæus, and others in opposition to them. Note, the right knowledge of God is, and will be, the strength of the [man]; and, in the strength of that, gracious [people] do exploits. They that know His name will put their trust in Him, and by that trust will do great things.’²⁵²⁵

Antiochus Epiphanes’s blasphemous arrogation of the title theos,²⁵²⁶ appearing on the coinage of the time, was matched by his taking control of the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem, ending the daily sacrifice, and desecrating the sanctuary by setting up a statue to Jupiter Olympius,²⁵²⁷ offering a large hog on the sacred altar, and opening it to prostitution. The problem, however, of extending the passage in its entirety to Epiphanes is that the latter part of this passage could not possibly have referred to him. The two thousand three hundred days, as will be seen later, form an integral part of the end-time of the current dispensation. Despite some expositors views, it cannot solely refer to the time lapse in days between the desecration of the Temple and its cleansing by the Maccabees,²⁵²⁸ either on the basis of two thousand, three hundred ‘evening-mornings,’ or on a simple two thousand, three hundred days basis.²⁵²⁹

²⁵²² Dan 11:32

²⁵²³ Eleazer, one of the principal scribes, whom Epiphanes had swine’s flesh thrust in his mouth, bravely spat it out again, though he knew he must be tormented to death for so doing, and was so, cf. II Macc chpt. 7.

²⁵²⁴ Heb 11:35

²⁵²⁵ *Matthew Henry’s Commentary* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁵²⁶ ‘god.’

²⁵²⁷ Virgil, *Æneid*, bk. IX, line 625: Latin: ‘Jupiter omnipotens, audacibus annue coeptis,’ All-powerful Jupiter, favour my daring undertakings [plural]. This finds a parallel in the Great Seal of the United States of America which bears the Latin legend: ‘novum seclorum annuity coeptis.’ New Order of the World; he favours the [or, our] undertakings.
annue: first person imperative.

annuit: third person.

²⁵²⁸ in 165–164BC

²⁵²⁹ the latter is claimed to have commenced on 15th Kislev, in Anno-145 of the Selucidæ, when Antiochus set up the ‘abomination of desolation’ upon the altar of God (cf. I Macc 1:57), and to have ended 13th Adar, Anno-151, when victory was obtained over Nicanor by Judas Maccabeus; the phrase ‘two thousand and three hundred days’ has been taken erroneously to refer to the number of sacrifices lost during the time of desecration by Epiphanes (the numbers involved do not mesh); the actual cleansing referred to is said to have taken place on the 25th Kislev, when one day’s supply of oil miraculously kept the golden lampstand burning for eight days. This cleansing has been celebrated ever after by the Jews as the Feast of Dedication, referred to in John 10:22,23, and now called Hanukkah (q.v. inf.) by the Jews. Dan 8:14b, Hebrew: tsadag, translated ‘cleansed,’ means ‘righted,’ or ‘be made righteous,’ referring to both the site and the Temple, and is rather weakly translated ‘cleansed’ in the K.J.V. At the end-time this refers to the site, rather than the profaned Temple which will be destroyed and replaced by the glorious millennial Fourth Temple described in Ezekiel chpts. 40–44.

When Daniel sought an explanation of this vision, however, the angel Gabriel placed it in a specific time: *'So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for the time of the end shall be the vision.*²⁵³⁰ *'The time of the end'* is the soon-coming end of the current dispensation. Patently, the end did not come in the second-century BC;²⁵³¹ the end could not come then, for Christ had not come and His blood sacrifice had not been made for our sins. The end-time, the time of part of the vision, is yet to come. The occult Antichrist / Chosen One / Avatar / Shri Krishna / Bodhi-Sattva / False-messiah / Maitreya has yet to arise.

On the other hand, many expositors have insisted on reading a wide variety of end-time eschatological meanings into those parts of the prophecies in the book of Daniel that have already occurred. In order to clarify this matter, a little time is taken here to diverge and identify those of Daniel's prophecies which have already taken place, and those which are pending.

Historically-proven prophecies

It should be noted that the prophecies contained in the bulk of the following, those which have been fulfilled, were made through Daniel in the sixth-century BC, and that these accurately presaged the rise and fall of empires and leaders, the ebb and flow of power and influence, and the complex interactions between them.

*'Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him. And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will.'*²⁵³²

Daniel had been given an earlier vision in Belshazzar's²⁵³³ reign that foretold of Persian and then Grecian kingdoms that would supplant the Babylonian Empire.²⁵³⁴ Now that the Persians had actually taken power, God further revealed, in more detail, events that would affect the Jews for several centuries to come.²⁵³⁵

From the time of Daniel until a supervening event, four more kings would rule over Persia, apparently fulfilled by Cambyses, Pseudo-Smerdis, Darius the Great, and Xerxes, the Ahasuerus of Esther.²⁵³⁶ Xerxes

Hoffman, Michael, *Judaism Discovered*, p.916:

'The secret of Hanukkah was disclosed by....Rabbi Levi Isaac ben Meir of Berdichev (known as "the Kedushat Levi" after his eponymous treatise), an important eighteenth century halachic authority, who revealed the lighting the Hanukkah menorah does not commemorate the victory of the....Maccabees. The arcane traditional doctrine of Chazal concerning Hanukkah is that it actually signifies God's "delight in the Jewish people" themselves, and their vainglorious celebrations.'

²⁵³⁰ Dan 8:17 (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁵³¹ 165–164BC

²⁵³² Dan 11:1-3

²⁵³³ Belshazzar means, literally, 'Bel, protect the king.'

²⁵³⁴ Daniel chpts. 7 and 8

²⁵³⁵ followed by a preview of the Great Tribulation.

would *'stir up all against the realm of Grecia.'*²⁵³⁷ This he did, in fact, even capturing Athens before suffering a military defeat at Salamis.²⁵³⁸ Thereafter he withdrew and stayed in Persia. Upon the mention of Greece, there was predicted *'a mighty king.'*²⁵³⁹ This could be none other than the youthful Alexander the Great, the king of Greece; a supervening event indeed, but it wasn't to last: *'And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven: and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those.'*²⁵⁴⁰

After his untimely death at the young age of thirty-two, his kingdom did not pass on to his posterity, meaning to his own son,²⁵⁴¹ but, *'his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven,'*²⁵⁴² in that it was eventually divided among four powerful Greek military leaders: the generals Ptolemy, ruling Egypt, Cyrene, and Coelo-Syria, including Palestine; Seleucus, ruling Syria, Babylonia, and, later, east Asia Minor; Lysimachus, ruling Thrace, Bithynia, and, later, Macedonia; and Craterus, and later Cassander, ruling Greece, Macedonia, and Asia Minor, but with losses.²⁵⁴³

²⁵³⁶ Est 1:1,2

²⁵³⁷ Dan 11:2d

²⁵³⁸ 480BC

²⁵³⁹ Dan 11:3a

²⁵⁴⁰ Dan 11:4

²⁵⁴¹ Alexander had no living son to succeed him.

²⁵⁴² Dan 11:4b

²⁵⁴³ Turner, W. H., *The Second Coming of Christ*, Appendix One:

'The accurate fulfilment of Gabriel's prophecy of the break-up of Alexander's Empire.

As Gabriel foretold, the horn was broken off in the greatness of its strength. Alexander was taken ill by an attack of fever, some say malaria, which was aggravated by his intemperate eating and drunken excesses, and this brought about his death at the early age of thirty-three in 323BC. Alexander's brother Philip Aridæus, and his sons Alexander Ægus and Hercules, were murdered over a period of fifteen months. With the death of his heirs, four of Alexander's generals divided his empire amongst themselves. Opinions vary on the exact division of the empire, but the following gives some idea of how the empire was divided:

Ptolomy obtained the South; and ruled over Egypt, Cyprus, and parts of North Africa.

Seleucis obtained the East; and ruled over Syria, Babylonia, and Medo-Persia.

Lysimachus took over the North, most of Asia Minor; and ruled over Thrace, Western Bithynia, Lesser Phrygia, Mysia, and Lydia, with the Meander as a boundary.

Cassander took over the Western European part of the empire; and ruled Greece and Macedonia.

God's prophetic revelations of the four horns of Dan 8:8, and four heads of the leopard in Dan 7:6, were accurately and completely fulfilled more than two hundred years after Daniel prophesied these events.' (subscripted emphasis added). Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 2, p.9:

'Alexander had scarcely completed his victories when he died, contrary to all expectation; and after his death, every one seized a portion of the prey for himself. This, however, is certain: after the chief generals of his army had contended for many years, all histories agree in stating that the supreme power centred in four. For Seleucus obtained Asia Major, and Antigonus Asia Minor, Cassander was king of Macedon, and was succeeded by Antipater, while Ptolemy the son of Lagos became the ruler of Egypt. They had agreed indeed otherwise among themselves; for Alexander had a son by Roxana, first daughter of Darius; he had a brother, Aridæus, who grew up to manhood, but was epileptic and of weak intellect. Then, since the generals of Alexander were cunning, they acted on this pretext, that all should swear allegiance to their young ward, and then to Aridæus, in case their ward should die before he was of age. Then Lysimachus was set over the treasury, and another commanded the forces, and others obtained various provinces. Fifteen or twenty leaders divided among themselves both offices and power, while no one dared to assume the name of king. For Alexander's son was the lawful king, and his successor was that Aridæus of whom I have spoken. But they soon afterwards united; and that was an admirable specimen of God's Providence, which alone is sufficient to prove

This also picks up the thread of an earlier chapter of Daniel: *'Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great. And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. And he came to the ram that had the two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of the earth.'*²⁵⁴⁴

Two animals were prominent in this vision. Daniel first saw a ram with one horn higher than the other. This ram's horns stood for the kings of Media and Persia, the higher of the two representing Persia, it being predominant. The ram moved westwards in victorious conquest. Historically, the Persians conquered all the kingdoms of Asia Minor, or modern Turkey, and sought several times to take over parts of Greece. They had such famous and powerful rulers as Cyrus, Darius, Xerxes, and Artaxerxes.

Daniel,²⁵⁴⁵ describing the then coming demise of the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, and its replacement by the kingdom of the Greek, Alexander the Great, a kingdom which itself is to be divided between four of his generals, has this use and meaning of *'uprooted'* in relation to that latter quartite division: Alexander's kingdom is to be arrogated by others besides the rightful posterity. *'And when he [Alexander the Great] has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken up and divided towards the four winds of heaven, but not among his posterity nor according to his dominion which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be uprooted, even for others*

that passage of Scripture He who sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed (Gen 9:6). For none of Alexander's generals escaped in safety except those four whom we have mentioned. His mother, at the age of eighty, suffered a violent death; his wife, Roxana, was strangled; his son perished miserably; Aridæus, his brother, a man of no intellect, and almost on a level with the brutes, was slain with the rest—in truth, the whole family of Alexander suffered violent deaths. With respect to the generals, they perished in battles, some of them being betrayed by their soldiers, and others the victims of their own negligence; and yet, although they expected a sanguinary end, they did not escape it. But four only survived, and so the whole empire of Alexander was divided into four parts. For Seleucus, whose successor was Antiochus, obtained Upper Asia, that is, for an eastern empire; Antigonus, Asia Minor, with a part of Cilicia, and Phrygia, and other neighbouring regions; Ptolemy seized upon Egypt and a part of Africa; Cassander and then Antipater were kings of Macedon.'

²⁵⁴⁴ Dan 8:3-8

²⁵⁴⁵ Dan 11:2-4

*besides these.*²⁵⁴⁶ In Daniel, therefore, *'uprooted,'* or *'plucked up by the roots,'* means arrogated by others who are neither lineal nor lawful descendants nor rightful posterity.²⁵⁴⁷

However, to end the Medo-Persian empire, *'an he goat came from the west.'*²⁵⁴⁸ Strangely, the goat *'had a notable horn between his eyes.'*²⁵⁴⁹ This goat represented Greece; and the horn typified Alexander the Great, the first king of Greece. Alexander's conquest of Persia was lightning fast. Alexander marched across Asia Minor,²⁵⁵⁰ defeating the Persian armies in key battles at Granicus River and at Issus. He then captured Syria and Egypt before entering and swiftly conquering Persia itself.^{2551 2552}

Thereafter, the *'great horn'* on the goat *'was broken.'*²⁵⁵³ Alexander died of a fever prematurely after extending his kingdom as far as the Indus river in India. In place of the *'great horn,'* there *'came up four notable ones toward the four winds,'* in the form of four of his powerful generals, mentioned above, who each began to rule a portion of the great empire set up by Alexander.²⁵⁵⁴

*'And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered.'*²⁵⁵⁵

From the horn later represented by Antigonos, who ruled Syria, *'came forth a little horn.'*²⁵⁵⁶ This little horn was Antiochus IV, called Epiphanes, who, as already noted, violently persecuted the Jews²⁵⁵⁷ in *'the pleasant land.'*²⁵⁵⁸ He took away the *'the daily sacrifice'* and desecrated the *'sanctuary.'*²⁵⁵⁹ Antiochus Epiphanes

²⁵⁴⁶ Dan 11:4 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁵⁴⁷ The same is seen in Rev 13:1, *'And he stood upon the sand of the sea, and I saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.'* Horns do not wear crowns, other than through the arrogating power of the horn. The kings of the ten word kingdoms do not sit by divine or hereditary right. They have arrogated the 'rights' to themselves. And arrogation brings us back to the rider's Greek: stephanos, for it is awarded falsely. It is a counterfeit; it is assumed; it, too, is arrogated.

²⁵⁴⁸ Dan 8:5b

²⁵⁴⁹ Dan 8:5c

²⁵⁵⁰ beginning c.334BC

²⁵⁵¹ Sir Isaac Newton on Dan 8:5b, *'an he-goat,'* i.e., Alexander:

'It is also remarkable that Alexander's son by Roxana was called 'the son of the goat;' and some of his successors are represented on their coins with goat's horns.'

²⁵⁵² Turner, W. H., *The Second Coming of Christ*, Appendix One:

'The description of Persia as a ram was very appropriate, for it was Persia's national emblem....The description of Greece as a goat was very appropriate, for the goat was the national emblem of Macedonia.'

²⁵⁵³ Dan 8:8b

²⁵⁵⁴ q.v. sup.

²⁵⁵⁵ Dan 8:9-12

²⁵⁵⁶ Dan 8:9a

²⁵⁵⁷ c.171-165BC

²⁵⁵⁸ Dan 8:9b

²⁵⁵⁹ Dan 8:11b

actually took control of the Temple that had been rebuilt as related in Haggai and Zechariah. In doing so, he defiled the house of God in as many ways as he could; some are mentioned above. Thereafter, the Maccabee family led a revolt against this abominable defiler and the Jews were able to re-establish their sovereignty in the land of Palestine.²⁵⁶⁰

*'Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden underfoot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.'*²⁵⁶¹

As intimated, some expositors have held that this passage is exclusively a prophecy of the events of the time of Epiphanes's desecration,²⁵⁶² but that would fail to explain, 'he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.'²⁵⁶³ The hand of man was very much in evidence in the events of the Temple cleansing.²⁵⁶⁴ However, this event is seen as being described as '*broken without hand*,'²⁵⁶⁵ and this corresponds with a clear reference to the Messiah: '*Thou sawest till that a stone was cut without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands....the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof is sure.*'²⁵⁶⁶ This places the prophecy at the time of the end, possibly resulting in a certain duality.²⁵⁶⁷ Phrases such as '*at the time of the end*,' and the '*last end of the indignation*,'²⁵⁶⁸ place the ultimate events in a similar timeframe to earlier tracts in Daniel.²⁵⁶⁹ As such, the eighth chapter of Daniel exhibits a very similar prophetic structure to the eleventh in that it is part singular and part dual, in this case running seamlessly from Epiphanes to the Antichrist.

*'And the king of the south shall be strong, and one of his princes; and he shall be strong above him, and have dominion; his dominion shall be a great dominion.'*²⁵⁷⁰ '*The king of the south*' refers to Ptolomy I, Soter, who ruled Egypt, and actually began a lengthy dynasty of eleven successive Greek rulers in that ancient land,²⁵⁷¹ down to Cleopatra, the last of the Ptolomaic rulers, who occupied the throne from the time of Julius

²⁵⁶⁰ by 165BC

²⁵⁶¹ Dan 8:13,14

²⁵⁶² 171–165BC

²⁵⁶³ Dan 8:25c

²⁵⁶⁴ in 165BC

²⁵⁶⁵ Dan 8:25c

²⁵⁶⁶ Dan 2:34,45

²⁵⁶⁷ Dan 8:13,14

²⁵⁶⁸ Dan 8:17-19

²⁵⁶⁹ Dan 2:44,45,7:24-26

²⁵⁷⁰ Dan 11:5

²⁵⁷¹ from 305BC

Cæsar,²⁵⁷² to one year after Octavian²⁵⁷³ defeated Mark Antony.²⁵⁷⁴ Cleopatra then committed suicide and Rome annexed Egypt.

*'And in the end of years they shall join themselves together; for the king's daughter of the south shall come to the king of the north to make an agreement: but she shall not retain the power of the arm; neither shall he stand, nor his arm: but she shall be given up, and they that brought her, and he that begat her, and he that strengthened her in these times.'*²⁵⁷⁵

'The king of the north,' is a reference to the Seleucid monarchy established by Seleucus I, Nicator, over Syria, Babylonia, and areas to the east. The Seleucid dynasty held sway over this territory,²⁵⁷⁶ and Nicator himself is reported to have established no fewer than sixteen Antiochs during his reign, all so named in memory of his father. Both the Syrian and Egyptian rulers, all of whom were of Greek origin, vied for control over that territory between them geographically, namely Palestine, and the returned Israelites found themselves in the midst of this severe power struggle. *'They shall join themselves together'*²⁵⁷⁷ refers to events surrounding Bernice, the daughter of Ptolemy II, Philadelphus, of Egypt, who married Antiochus II, Theos so-called,²⁵⁷⁸ to end years of war between the two powers. But Antiochus put aside his first wife, Laodice, who had a son, Seleucus II, Calinius, and agreed that the progeny of Bernice should inherit the throne. However, both Ptolemy II and Antiochus II died in the same year,²⁵⁷⁹ and Bernice and her son were murdered by Laodice just before Ptolemy Philadelphus died.

*'But out of a branch of her roots shall one stand up in his estate, which shall come with an army, and shall enter into the fortress of the king of the north, and shall deal against him, and shall prevail.'*²⁵⁸⁰ *'A branch of her roots'* refers to Ptolemy Philadelphus' son, Ptolemy III, called Eurgates I,²⁵⁸¹ the brother of Bernice. He came *'north with an army,'*²⁵⁸² and plundered Syria, *'the fortress of the king of the north,'*²⁵⁸³ but he did not kill the king or take over the kingdom.

*'And shall also carry captives into Egypt their gods, with their princes, and with their precious vessels of silver and gold; and he shall continue more years than the king of the north.'*²⁵⁸⁴

²⁵⁷² 47BC

²⁵⁷³ viz., Cæsar Augustus.

²⁵⁷⁴ 30BC

²⁵⁷⁵ Dan 11:6

²⁵⁷⁶ until 65BC

²⁵⁷⁷ Dan 11:6a

²⁵⁷⁸ in 252BC

²⁵⁷⁹ in 246BC

²⁵⁸⁰ Dan 11:7

²⁵⁸¹ 246–222BC

²⁵⁸² in 245BC

²⁵⁸³ Dan 11:7b

²⁵⁸⁴ Dan 11:8

After plundering the north, Ptolemy III returned to Egypt with great spoils and continued ruling until his death.²⁵⁸⁵ He resisted attacking the northern kingdom for some time and never lost a battle with the north.

*'So the king of the south shall come into his kingdom, and shall return into his own land.'*²⁵⁸⁶ *'So the king of the south shall come'* is actually a mistranslation of the Hebrew, which reads, literally: *'And he²⁵⁸⁷ will come into the realm of the king of the south.'* This refers to Seleucus Callinicus' invasion of Egypt²⁵⁸⁸ in which he was defeated and had to *'return into his own land.'*

*'But his sons shall be stirred up, and shall assemble a multitude of great forces: and one shall certainly come, and overflow, and pass through: then shall he return, and be stirred up, even to his fortress.'*²⁵⁸⁹ *'But his sons'* refers to the sons of Seleucus II: Seleucus III, called variously Ceraunus or Soter, and Antiochus III, the Great. Seleucus III was assassinated,²⁵⁹⁰ so Antiochus III took over, eventually running roughshod over Ptolemy IV in the land of Egypt. Later, he was defeated in the north; but he eventually captured the *'fortress'* of Gaza in Palestine.

*'And the king of the south shall be moved with choler, and shall come forth and fight with him, even with the king of the north: and he shall set forth a great multitude; but the multitude shall be given into his hand. And when he hath taken away the multitude, his heart shall be lifted up; and he shall cast down many ten thousands: but he shall not be strengthened by it.'*²⁵⁹¹ *'And the king of the south,'* meaning Ptolemy IV, Philopater, *'shall come forth and fight with him,'* meaning Antiochus III.²⁵⁹² The battle of Raphia²⁵⁹³ is in view here, in which Ptolemy IV was victorious. *'His heart shall be lifted up,'* presages Ptolemy's growing pride in his victory, yet he was not to be *'strengthened by it'* because he did not press his victory to completion. Instead, he retired to enjoy himself in various vices and general debauchery.

*'For the king of the north shall return, and shall set forth a multitude greater than the former, and shall certainly come after certain years with a great army and with much riches. And in those times there shall many stand up against the king of the south: also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision; but they shall fall. So the king of the north shall come, and shall cast up a mount, and take the most fenced cities: and the arms of the south shall not withstand, neither his chosen people, neither shall there be any strength to withstand.'*²⁵⁹⁴

²⁵⁸⁵ in 222BC

²⁵⁸⁶ Dan 11:9

²⁵⁸⁷ referring to the *'king of the north'* in the preceding verse.

²⁵⁸⁸ in 240BC

²⁵⁸⁹ Dan 11:10

²⁵⁹⁰ in 223BC

²⁵⁹¹ Dan 11:11,12

²⁵⁹² cf. Dan 11:10

²⁵⁹³ in 217BC

²⁵⁹⁴ Dan 11:13-15

'The king of the north,' Antiochus III, *'shall return....after certain years.'* Following his defeat at Raphia, Antiochus the Great strengthened his forces, solidified his eastern holdings, and returned to Egypt²⁵⁹⁵ just after the death of Ptolemy IV who left only a four-year-old son, Ptolemy V, Epiphanes, to rule. *'A great army,'* allied with the Macedonians, completely sacked Egypt, as indicated by the words *'shall come, and cast up a mount,*²⁵⁹⁶ *and take the most fenced cities.'* The resistance of the south under their boy king was minimal, and they were badly defeated.

*'But he that cometh against him shall do according to his own will, and none shall stand before him: and he shall stand in the glorious land, which by his hand shall be consumed.'*²⁵⁹⁷ *'None shall stand before him'* indicates the completeness of Antiochus' conquests of Egypt and the territories he controlled, even as far north as Sidon. *'He shall stand in the glorious land'* is a reference to the Holy Land. The Jews co-operated with Antiochus III and thus were his allies.

*'He shall also set his face to enter with the strength of his whole kingdom, and upright ones with him; thus shall he do: and he shall give him the daughter of women, corrupting her: but she shall not stand on his side, neither be for him.'*²⁵⁹⁸ Hoping to conserve the results of his victory in a permanent manner, Antiochus III gave in marriage his daughter Cleopatra, calling her *'the daughter of women,'* because she was so young, to the young king Ptolemy V.²⁵⁹⁹ However, Antiochus' hopes did not materialise, since his daughter Cleopatra did not *'stand on his side.'* She sided instead with her young husband, Ptolemy V.

*'After this shall he turn his face unto the isles, and shall take many: but a prince for his own behalf shall cause the reproach offered by him to cease; without his own reproach he shall cause it to turn upon him.'*²⁶⁰⁰ *'After this,'* believing that his new marriage alliance with Ptolemy V would protect him in the south, *'he,'* Antiochus III, turned *'his face unto the isles,'* meaning some of the islands and coastlands of Asia Minor and even Greece. He was allied with Hannibal of Carthage who aided him. This created difficulties with Rome and eventually resulted in Antiochus' defeat by Scipio Asiaticus at the battle of Magnesia²⁶⁰¹ in Asia Minor.

*'Then he shall turn his face towards the fort of his own land: but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found.'*²⁶⁰² Thereafter, Antiochus III returned to Syria. The phrase *'his own land: but he shall stumble and fall, and not be found'* is simply another way of predicting the death of Antiochus the Great, which occurred a year after his return.²⁶⁰³

²⁵⁹⁵ in 203BC

²⁵⁹⁶ viz., a siege ramp.

²⁵⁹⁷ Dan 11:16

²⁵⁹⁸ Dan 11:17

²⁵⁹⁹ in 197BC

²⁶⁰⁰ Dan 11:18

²⁶⁰¹ in 190BC

²⁶⁰² Dan 11:19

²⁶⁰³ in 187BC

*'Then shall stand up in his estate a raiser of taxes in the glory of the kingdom: but within a few days he shall be destroyed, neither in anger, nor in battle.'*²⁶⁰⁴ *'Then shall stand up in his estate,'* refers to Antiochus' son, Seleucus IV, Philopater, who took over after his father's death. Owing the Romans huge annual tribute payments, he quickly became *'a raiser of taxes.'* His reign lasted eleven years, only a *'few days'* compared with his father's thirty-seven-year regency. He was assassinated by his minister, Heliodorus, who hoped to gain the throne for himself, since Seleucus' only son was being held hostage as security against the tribute payments by Rome.

*'And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries.'*²⁶⁰⁵ *'And in his estate there shall stand up a vile person'* refers to an infamous character.²⁶⁰⁶ The *'vile person'* under consideration is none other than Antiochus IV, Epiphanes. He was the brother of Seleucus IV, and the third son of Antiochus the Great. He quickly ousted Heliodorus and gained control for himself *'by flatteries.'* The kingdom was not rightfully his, for it belonged to his young nephew in Rome.

*'And with the arms of a flood shall they be overthrown from before him, and shall be broken; yea, also the prince of the covenant. And after the league made with him he shall work deceitfully: for he shall come up, and shall become strong with a small people. He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province; and he shall do that which his fathers have not done, nor his father's fathers; he shall scatter among them the prey, and spoil, and riches: yea, and he shall forecast his devices against the strongholds, even for a time. And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall be stirred up to battle, with a very great and mighty army, but he shall not stand: for they shall forecast devices against him.'*²⁶⁰⁷ Antiochus IV, 'God manifest',²⁶⁰⁸ as he blasphemously styled himself, began military conquests against Egypt. He worked *'deceitfully'* against the young Ptolemy Philopater, first by posing as a friend coming only *'with a small people.'* But his true intentions were soon established, for he took *'the fattest places of the province.'* After these initial successes, *'the king of the south'*²⁶⁰⁹ *shall be stirred up to battle.'* The battle was fought at Pelusium east of the Nile Delta. The reason for Ptolemy's defeat was that his own men *'forecast devices against him.'* This simply means that there was treason among Ptolemy's men.

'Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him, and his army shall overflow: and many shall fall down slain. And both these king's hearts shall be to do mischief, and they shall speak lies at one table;

²⁶⁰⁴ Dan 11:20

²⁶⁰⁵ Dan 11:21

²⁶⁰⁶ Dan 11:21-35

²⁶⁰⁷ Dan 11:22-25

²⁶⁰⁸ Greek: Theos Epiphanes.

²⁶⁰⁹ Ptolemy Philometer.

*but it shall not prosper: for yet the end shall be for the time appointed.*²⁶¹⁰ Antiochus' army was victorious beyond the battle at Pelusium in which he captured Ptolemy Philometer. But the Greek overlords of Egypt quickly replaced Philometer with Ptolemy Euergetes. Antiochus then assured Philometer he would reinstate him, thus courting his favour. The two spoke *'lies at one table'* in their efforts to gain an advantage by way of false promises. *'For yet the end shall be at the appointed time'* refers to the coming death of Antiochus Epiphanes.

*'Then shall he return into his land with great riches; and his heart shall be against the holy covenant; and he shall do exploits, and return to his own land.'*²⁶¹¹ *'And his heart shall be against the holy covenant'* refers to Antiochus Epiphanes who left Egypt,²⁶¹² returned to Syria, and continued his policy of Hellenization among the Jews. He promoted the worship of Zeus, naked participation in the Greek games, and other practices utterly odious to the Jews.

*'At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south; but it shall not be as the former, or as the latter.'*²⁶¹³ *'He shall return, and come toward the south,'* means Antiochus Epiphanes once again tried to recapture Egypt. *'But it shall not be as the former, or as the latter,'* indicates that this latter attempt would not turn out successfully, as had the former campaign.

*'For the ships of Chittim shall come against him: therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant.'*²⁶¹⁴ *'The ships of Chittim'*²⁶¹⁵ are the forces of Rome who met Antiochus Epiphanes as he approached Alexandria. They forced him to return home without engaging in battle. Completely humiliated, he vented his wrath and *'indignation against the holy covenant,'* meaning the children of Israel, in the personage of the Jews, and against the sacred Temple, and the practices pertaining thereto. He joined forces with those Jews who forsook *'the holy covenant,'* including the apostate priest of the Jews, Menelaus.

*'And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.'*²⁶¹⁶ Antiochus Epiphanes authorized his forces to *'pollute the sanctuary and....take away the daily sacrifice.'* They sacrificed a sow or a hog, spread its remains inside the Holy Temple, and erected a large statue of Zeus over the sacrificial altar for the people to worship.²⁶¹⁷ This last was called *'the abomination that maketh desolate.'*

²⁶¹⁰ Dan 11:26,27

²⁶¹¹ Dan 11:28

²⁶¹² in 168BC

²⁶¹³ Dan 11:29

²⁶¹⁴ Dan 11:30

²⁶¹⁵ cp. Num 24:24

²⁶¹⁶ Dan 11:31

²⁶¹⁷ I Macc 1:57

*'And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.'*²⁶¹⁸ Unfortunately, there were many Jews who went along with Antiochus' new programme, but Mattathias Maccabeaus was among *'the people that do know their God.'* He resisted, along with his five sons; and together they engaged in guerrilla warfare.²⁶¹⁹ Their numerous *'exploits'* exhibited great courage. Time and again a small number of Jews would defeat Antiochus' much larger armies. As a result of his antics, Antiochus Epiphanes was commonly nicknamed Epimanes: 'madman.'

*'And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days. Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed.'*²⁶²⁰ Yet it was true that many did *'fall by the sword.'* But after several years of fighting, they were able to restore worship to the Temple in Jerusalem. It was cleansed and purified.²⁶²¹ *'And to make them white, even to the time of the end'* appears to have an end-time correlation extending to those clothed in white robes in Revelation.²⁶²²

Wilful king

*'And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done.'*²⁶²³ Partly from towards the end of the preceding verse, and wholly from this verse, the prophecy turns to describe the actions of a *'king'* that *'shall do according to his will,'* sometimes referred to as the 'Wilful King.' *'He shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many'*²⁶²⁴ gives his deceitful strategy: speaking peace, but all the while covertly inciting hatred, conflict, war, and mass destruction.

*'And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.'*²⁶²⁵ A better translation gives: *'And through his policy also he shall cause fraud to prosper*

²⁶¹⁸ Dan 11:32

²⁶¹⁹ 168–165BC

²⁶²⁰ Dan 11:33-35

²⁶²¹ on 25 Kislev (viz., 9th. month), 165BC

²⁶²² Rev 7:13,14

²⁶²³ Dan 11:36

²⁶²⁴ Dan 8:25; *'Peace'* does not come from Hebrew: shalom, but from shalvah, which actually means 'quietness,' 'ease,' or 'prosperity.' *'Destroy,'* from Hebrew: shachath, also means 'corrupt' or 'ruin.' A safer translation, therefore, would be: *'by prosperity shall corrupt many.'*

Dan 8:25 and 9:27 both have the word rab translated *'many'* in the K.J.V.. It can equally mean *'leaders or chief men'* and this gives a better understanding of the two verses.

²⁶²⁵ Dan 8:25 K.J.V.

in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by prosperity shall corrupt leaders: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.'

The Wilful King or Antichrist will produce a false economic revival, based on fraud and deceit,²⁶²⁶ and feigned moral rectitude.²⁶²⁷ The elite will benefit, in a heavily bifurcated society, to the detriment of the masses. The Antichrist's impact on a world in the depths of misery, poverty, collapse, and extreme privation will be nothing short of electrifying. The prosperity he will bring, illusory though it will be in anything other than the short-term, will corrupt many, leading to personal adulation, the mass worship of a world-girdling but false quasi-religion, and hedonistic materialism. His policy will be founded on the basest of human ways: bribing men with gifts, flattery, and false prosperity; dazzling them with wonders; striking a working relationship with the wicked of the world; debasing standards; persecuting the 'elect'; projecting confidence in his deeply occult powers, and so on, all of which will lead to a spectacular, if short-lived and illusory 'victory.' His wilful actions will go beyond those of Antiochus Epiphanes, and he will meet his death in Palestine,^{2628 2629} rather than in Tabæ in Persia as did Epiphanes. This spotlights the career and strategy of the '*Antichrist*' of the time of the Great Tribulation. '*He shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god.*' Though Epiphanes considered himself deity in some degree, evidenced by his coins, this will be one of the outstanding characteristics of the Roman World Empire Antichrist described by Paul.²⁶³⁰ He '*shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished*' refers to the closing events at the time of the end.

*'And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper until the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the gods [plural] of his fathers, nor the desire of women,²⁶³¹ nor regard any god [singular]: for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate shall he honour the god [singular] of forces: and a god [singular] whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strongholds with a strange god [singular] whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain.'*²⁶³²

²⁶²⁶ at the very least, an equally valid translation.

²⁶²⁷ possibly even to claiming to clean up the sewer of modern politics, but, in reality, making it much, much worse.

²⁶²⁸ Dan 11:45

²⁶²⁹ (Tanach) Dan 11:45 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), '*He shall pitch his tent* [correct translation] *between the sea* [Mediterranean] *and the holy mount.*' (thus pitched in Beit Shemesh, perhaps? but other translations give the same as K.J.V., and a much safer understanding: his '*tent*' will be pitched on Mount Moriah).

²⁶³⁰ II Thes 2:3,4

²⁶³¹ Dan 11:37, '*the desire of women*' and Hag 2:7, '*the desire of all nations,*' both exhibit the Hebrew: chemdah for '*desire,*' but only the latter refers to Christ; the former possibly refers to the attraction to women of power, influence, wealth, and notoriety and, a deal more specifically, to the adoration of female deities by women, the principal being the supreme female deity, now usually known as the virgin Mary.

²⁶³² Dan 11:36-39 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); in v.37, some expositors think that '*the desire of women*' is a reference to homosexuality in the Antichrist. This is incorrect. Others see in it a reference to what

is alleged to have plagued Adolf Hitler, namely, his being 'smooth between the legs,' (q.v. Ravenscroft, Trevor, *The Spear of Destiny*, p.171). This is not a reference to castration, either physical or chemical, but to the results deriving from Hitler having suffered Satanic, sadistic sexual rites, allied to an injury suffered in World War I, which rendered him incapable of giving pleasure to any woman, very likely in large measure a form of psychologically-driven impotency. However, this too is inapplicable here.

The correct meaning of the phrase might well be derived from a comment by Peake, A. S., *Jeremiah Volume II*, p.275 (footnote) (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): '[Jer 51:44d,] *'the wall of Babylon shall fall.'*' Cornill [cf. Cornill, Carl Heinrich, *The Prophets of Israel*] thinks that the parallelism requires a reference to a deity, and suggests that *'the Desire of Babylon shall fall,'* i.e., the chief goddess of Babylon; he compares Daniel 11:37, *'the desire of women,'* which seems from the context to mean a deity, perhaps Tammuz.' Taking both parts of Cornill's comments together, and bearing in mind women's apparently perpetual desire for a female deity, the reference in Dan 11:37 could be to the supreme pagan female deity, historically variously known as Astarte, Aphrodite, or Juno, and now known as the virgin Mary, although probably a safer reference would be the male god of fortresses, Jupiter (in any of his cognate / associated pagan names, such as Nimrod).

Some further analyses of relevant passages:

'The subject here commenced is of the deepest interest, and needs peculiar caution in its treatment. The words in which it is conveyed are obscure in themselves, and, consequently, all the early translations of them are imperfect. Calvin has thrown great light upon the original phraseology, but still reference may be profitably made to some modern translators. The sixteenth chapter of the "Two Later Visions of Daniel," is occupied with this discussion; various views are clearly and fairly stated; some conjectures are refuted, and some conclusions enforced which differ very materially from Calvin's. The translation of obscure passages adopted in this work are excellent, as well as those given by Elliott in his notes to pp.1327 and following, of volume 3 of his *Horae Apocalypticae*. Professor Lee's translations are exceedingly full and explanatory, while his hermeneutical views agree more with Calvin's than either Elliott's or Birks'. See his Inquiry into the 'Nature, Progress, and end of Prophecy,' Book. 2, chapter 2, p.189 and following. Wintle's notes are much to the point. And Bishop Newton traces the analogy between this king and Antichrist in his *Dissertation*, volume 3, chpt. 26. The annexed comments from Birks, p.271 and following, will explain some grammatical difficulties.

Daniel 11:37, *"He shall not regard the elohim of his fathers."* The clause is ambiguous, as the word "elohim" may receive two opposite constructions. Bishop Newton and others think it to mean, the one true God; but Mede, with many able writers, renders it correctly, the gods of his fathers, implying the false deities of the heathens. Arguments are then given in support of this view, and objections forcibly answered. *"Neither shall he regard the desire of women."* The meaning of this phrase is shortly discussed. The received view, that it refers to the Messiah, is set aside, and it is taken in the enlarged sense of despising and trampling upon these humanizing affections of which women are the object. Elliott, after a good Hebrew criticism, applies it to the Messiah, fortifying his opinion by Faber, George Stanley, A *Dissertation on the Prophecies*, pp.380–385, volume 1, edit. 5; so Lee in his preface, p.126, to *Euseb. Theophania*—"This occurring as it does in a context speaking of deities, was probably intended to designate the Messiah."

Daniel 11:38, *"But in his estate with Eloah he will honor Mahuzzim."* We now enter upon the second part of this description, which exhibits the new worship set up by the Wilful King. Here several questions of some difficulty will arise, but first to offer what appears the most natural translation, and consider afterwards the chief points in dispute one by one.

"But in his estate with Eloah, he will honour Mahuzzim; even with an eloah whom his fathers knew not, he will honour them with gold, and with silver, and with precious stones, and with pleasant things. And he will offer to the strongholds of Mahuzzim, with a foreign eloah whom he will acknowledge; he will increase their glory, and will cause them to rule over many, and will divide the land for gain." The meaning of the word Mahuzzim, fortresses or strongholds, is next described, and in conclusion, it is decided, that Mahuzzim "must here denote guardian deities or tutelary persons, who receive worship as protectors and guardians, defences and fortresses, from their votaries." Professor Lee's translation is as follows, *"But in his estate he shall honour the god of forces; and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and with pleasant things."* "Nero was the first of this series." "Domitian was the first emperor who generally persecuted, and who, during his lifetime, assumed the title of the Lord God, and insisted upon being worshipped as a deity." This is the professor's interpretation, p.192. The translations of Mede, Bishop Newton, and Dr. Gill, vary slightly from each other, but none of them are so correct as that given above. The original word, translated *"offer,"* has very wide and various meanings. In Exodus 10:25, it is rendered *"sacrifice"* to the Lord our God, and is very frequently used in this sense. The words, *"a foreign god whom he will acknowledge,"* are probably an explanation of the previous phrase, *"a god whom his fathers knew not;"* implying that the worship of this divinity was borrowed by the Wilful King from some other nation, and was unknown to his fathers.

'Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers.' This expression does not indicate with any specification the identity or nationality of the Antichrist, although many hold it to be a reference to a person of Jewish descent, which he might well be. *'But in his estate shall he honour the god of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things,'* is a reference to Nimrod, *'the god of forces,'* or, more correctly translated, *'the god of fortifications.'* The Antichrist *'shall magnify himself above all,'* and have regard to nothing or nobody other than himself.²⁶³³ The phrase *'nor the desire of women'* is usually taken to be a reference to the false Christ of the soft, 'doey' eyes so prevalent in the pagan and apostate 'Christianity' of the present day; Moffatt has it as *'Tammuz'*; some as the Virgin; while others see it

"Such, in conclusion," says Birks, "are the results which flow from a careful inquiry into the natural meaning of this passage. The Wilful King here described is one which might be expected to rise after the renewed persecution of the faithful, when imperial help had been given them [sic], and to continue perhaps for ages, until the restoration of Israel. His title as the king, and the time appointed him in the words of the angel, prove him to be the same with the Little Horn, speaking great words against the most High. He will reject every form of heathen worship, commended to him by the long practice of his fathers, utter proud speeches of surprising arrogance, and of real blasphemy against the God of heaven, trample under his feet the strongest instincts of domestic love, and thus magnify himself against God and man. He will, however, adopt a foreign eloah derived from the Jews for his own; but will turn the very worship he pays to the Son of God into the keystone to a wide and spreading system of idolatry, in which he will pay reverence to a multitude of guardian powers, and cause them to receive homage and worship from his people." The comments of this able writer on Daniel 11:36-39 are so contrary to the views of Calvin, that it is only necessary here to state their variance with those of our Reformer. Some explanations are worthy of notice, as, for instance, the following—"These words apply accurately to the local persecutions of believers under the Arian emperors, and the fierce and savage cruelties of the Vandals against the confessors of the faith. When, however, the time of the end, or the predicted three times and a half should begin, these persecutions would gradually become more systematic and severe. So that the prophecy at once proceeds to describe the king, who would prosper in the time of the end, and by whom the fires would be kindled afresh with more than Pagan cruelty, against the followers of God."

Elliott in his *Horae Apocalypticae*, Vol. 3, p.1294, has devoted a section to the elucidation of this chapter. His comments upon the Hebrew words of the original text are valuable, displaying great judgment, and throwing much light upon the Prophet's meaning. His chronological list of the kings of Syria and Egypt is correct, and very clearly explains the history of this prophetic period. This prophecy, he states, naturally divides itself into two parts: first, that from Daniel 11:1-31, sketching the times of the Persians and Greeks; secondly, that from Daniel 11:32 to the end of Daniel 12, sketching the sequel. His comments upon the whole of Daniel 11 to v.35, are illustrative of Calvin's views in these Lectures; but this writer interprets v.36 and following, in accordance with the expositions of Mede and the two Newtons. These are so fundamentally at variance with Calvin's writings that it would be out of place to dwell upon them here. Elliott's notes on the Hebrew words throughout the latter portion of this chapter are most excellent, and may be trusted as scholarlike, sound, and judicious.

Chapter 6 of the *"First Elements of Sacred Prophecy"* is occupied by a refutation of Dr. Todd's theory. The details of the fulfilment of each verse are plainly and accurately stated, and the objections of the Fourth Donnellan Lecture are shewn to be futile. This work is chiefly devoted to the refutation of the Futurist theories, which are directly opposite to that of Calvin. See particularly pp.135-149.

Fry [John] in [*The*] *Second Advent*, chpt. 5, sect. 21, has collected the views of various English Commentators, but they all vary exceedingly from those of Calvin.' (Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 2, pp.256-258, Dissertation 15).²⁶³³ Possibly the best translation of the relevant verses, Dan 11:36-39, discovered so far, with one or two caveats, is to be found in the Tanakh: *'The king will do as he pleases; he will exalt and magnify himself above every god, and he will speak awful things against the God of gods. He will prosper until wrath is spent, and what has been decreed has been accomplished. He will not have regard for the god of his ancestors or for the one dear to women; he will not have regard for any god, but will magnify himself above all. He will honour the god of fortresses on his stand; he will honour with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly things, a god that his ancestors never knew. He will deal with fortified strongholds with the help of an alien god. He will heap honour on those who acknowledge him, and will make them master over many; he will distribute land for a price (i.e., a bribe).'*

²⁶³³ symptoms of extreme malevolent narcissism.

in terms of Jewish females' desire of old to give birth to the Messiah, and, thus, a reference to his not regarding Christ. It has to be said that this last notion appears extremely remote.

*'And at the time of the end shall the king of the south²⁶³⁴ push at him: and the king of the north²⁶³⁵ shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.'*²⁶³⁶ [A]t the time of the end' refers to the time encompassed by the seven seals of Revelation, just before Christ returns with His saints to set up His earthly kingdom. *'The king of the south'* is the then supreme leader of the Muslim nations in the Near and Middle East.²⁶³⁷ The Antichrist *'shall enter also into the glorious land,'* that is the Holy Land, *'and the king of the north²⁶³⁸ shall come against him.'*²⁶³⁹ Antiochus Epiphanes, of the kingdom of Syria, previously termed *'the king of the north,'*²⁶⁴⁰ desecrated the Temple, as a prototype. In like manner, the latter-day Antichrist, the basest of men, will also do so as the fulfilling antitype of the Syrian dynasty long ago conquered by Rome. The Antichrist will rout the Arab and Muslim forces, *'and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown.'* However, there will be a limit to this, as some will escape: *'but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.'* Historically, these were located in what is now Jordan and the extreme southern part of Syria, and also a section of the desert lands in the southern part of the modern-day state of Israel.²⁶⁴¹

*'He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; and the Libyans²⁶⁴² and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.'*²⁶⁴³ The Antichrist will strike a telling blow against this Islamic leader and his forces, and enter into some, but by no means all of the Islamic countries. The geograph-

²⁶³⁴ *'the king of the south,'* de facto, is a rival to the Antichrist, the king of the north. The king of the south must, therefore, found his power and his wealth on the collective riches flowing into Islamic states and principalities—acting as a form of pan-Islamic Caliphate—largely from the export of oil, gas, and related products.

²⁶³⁵ *'the king of the north'* corresponds with *'the foe from the north'* in Jeremiah: Babylon, descending on Judah from the north via 'the fertile crescent.'

²⁶³⁶ Dan 11:40,41

²⁶³⁷ not black Africa as some mistakenly have it.

²⁶³⁸ Wilful King / Antichrist.

²⁶³⁹ Muslim leader, the Mahdi / 12th. Imam.

²⁶⁴⁰ Dan 11:21-35

²⁶⁴¹ some have extrapolated Edom to encompass modern-day Turkey, largely based on an interpretation of Obad 13,14 through connection with the long-defunct Ottoman Empire.

²⁶⁴² Libya was a name given to much of Africa, rather than merely to the land comprising the modern state of Libya.

²⁶⁴³ Dan 11:42,43; *'Ethiopians,'* Hebrew: *kuwshiy*, more properly *'Sudanese.'*

ical limit is given by the phrase *'and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.'*²⁶⁴⁴ While the power of the Antichrist will be apparent to all, it will be only temporary.

*'But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.'*²⁶⁴⁵ The phrase *'But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him'* has suggested to many the Gog and Magog uprising in the thirty-ninth chapter of Ezekiel, with some even confusing and coalescing it with chapter thirty-eight. What actually is pictured here is, in part, the Gog and Magog uprising of Ezekiel chapter thirty-nine only, in tandem with the forces of the kings of the east, mentioned as the sixth vial in Revelation.²⁶⁴⁶ The drying up of the river Euphrates is the necessary preparation for the march on the Holy City by the forces of the *'kings of the east,'* allied with those of Gog and Magog described in Ezekiel chapter thirty-nine.

'And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain' refers to the last three-and-a-half years of the seven year time at the end when the Antichrist utterly desecrates the Tribulation Temple, converting it into a place of overt and purely pagan worship, and probably a palace for his own use.²⁶⁴⁷ Ultimately, he will set himself against Christ, *'[H]e shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.'*²⁶⁴⁸ He will meet his end, supernaturally, *'yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him,'*²⁶⁴⁹ when he shall be seized along with the False Prophet and cast into the lake of fire, *'where they are tormented to the age of the ages.'*²⁶⁵⁰ In other words, despite being mortal, they are kept alive supernaturally until the consummation at the end, when Satan and his demons are divested of their immortality and cast into the lake of fire, and all are consumed.²⁶⁵¹ *'I shall bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee'*²⁶⁵² *to ashes upon the earth,'*²⁶⁵³ is, therefore, literal, and not poetical. Satan,

²⁶⁴⁴ owing to the use, sup., of the term Libyans, it is unsure whether the current political boundaries of the respective countries is in the prophetic purview.

²⁶⁴⁵ Dan 11:44,45

²⁶⁴⁶ Rev 16:12

²⁶⁴⁷ it could also refer to his placing his palace in Beit Shemesh, 'the house of the sun,' near to and immediately west of Jerusalem, but the former, in the Temple itself, is taken to be far more likely, given the phrase *'in the glorious holy mountain.'*

²⁶⁴⁸ Dan 8:25b

²⁶⁴⁹ Dan 11:45b

²⁶⁵⁰ Rev 20:10; or *'the age end of the age ends.'*

²⁶⁵¹ q.v. inf.

²⁶⁵² Satan, depicted as the *'king of Tyrus'*; Chapter 26 of the book of Ezekiel opens the divine discourse and judgement on multi-faceted Tyrus. In that chapter, the city-state of Tyre (Tyrus) is threatened with desolation and utter destruction, never to be raised as a state. Chapter 27 is a lamentation for the city-state, portending its destruction. Chapter 28 is in two sections: The first, vv.1-10, is addressed in v.2 to *'the prince of Tyrus,'* who is destined to die by the edge of the sword, *'at the hand of strangers, the terrible of the nations,'* q.v. v.7. In light of the content of the second section, this can only be a reference to a human leader of the city-state of Tyre. When Tyre was overthrown by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II after a siege, 585–572BC, its leader, Hiram, was killed. He had arrogated divine honours to himself—as do many vainglorious leaders—proclaiming himself 'god,' sitting in God's seat. So God's judgement was against him, carried out by the *'terrible of nations,'* the Babylonians.

stripped of his immortality,²⁶⁵⁴ and the two most evil humans ever, the Wilful King and the False Prophet, are tormented in the flames of the lake of fire and brimstone²⁶⁵⁵ for the length of the Millennium of rest, and, after Satan's release and final uprising at the end of that period,²⁶⁵⁶ will be consumed in the flames together with the rest of the condemned wicked,²⁶⁵⁷ when they will 'have ceased to be forever.'²⁶⁵⁸

*'And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting²⁶⁵⁹ chains²⁶⁶⁰ under darkness²⁶⁶¹ unto the judgment of the great²⁶⁶² day.²⁶⁶³ Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal²⁶⁶⁴ fire.'*²⁶⁶⁵ Thus Jude's phraseology 'everlasting chains of darkness,' is poetical, majoring on the interminable aspect of the darkness everlasting rather than the existence ad infinitum of mere physical chains, till the consummation, in the penalty at the very end, the 'ages of the ages.'²⁶⁶⁶

All of which leaves begging what to many is the most difficult verse of all concerning the eventual fate of the wicked: *'And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.'*²⁶⁶⁷

The second section deals with the fate of an entity called 'the king of Tyrus.' He was not in Tyre. Rather he had been in the garden of Eden, the 'covering cherub' in the 'holy mountain': Ezek 28:12-15, 'Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord God; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering....the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so; thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways in the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.' The fate of 'the king of Tyrus,' for this is a lamentation, q.v. v.12, is recorded in vv.18b,19: 'therefore I will bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.'

That is the fate of Satan, the 'king of Tyrus.' He is made mortal after his capture at the conclusion of the war of Armageddon, cast into the abyss for the duration of the Millennium, then released 'for a little season,' taken again, and cast into the lake of fire, q.v. Rev 20:1-3,10, where he is consumed and reduced to ashes at 'the age-end of the age ends,' i.e., the end of the age (correct translation of 'for ever and ever,' Rev 20:10c). Finally, death and the grave—Hades—is cast into the lake of fire, and consumed, thus ending all sin, death, and wickedness, Rev 20:14,15.

²⁶⁵³ Ezek 28:12-19; cp. Mal 4:3

²⁶⁵⁴ Rev 20:1-3; spirit beings are unhurt by flames of fire; incarceration is a punishment, certainly, but there has to be more as the two most evil human beings ever are tormented by fire. It is unconscionable that it be otherwise.

²⁶⁵⁵ Rev 20:10

²⁶⁵⁶ Rev 20:3c,7f.; q.v. inf.

²⁶⁵⁷ at the Great White Throne Judgement.

²⁶⁵⁸ Ezek 28:18,19

²⁶⁵⁹ Greek: aidios, 'everlasting,' 'eternal.'

²⁶⁶⁰ Greek: desmos, 'bonds.'

²⁶⁶¹ Greek: zophos, 'darkness,' used in the darkness of the nether world.

²⁶⁶² Greek: megas, 'great.'

²⁶⁶³ Greek: hemera, 'day.'

²⁶⁶⁴ Greek: aionios, 'age-' or 'era-ending' or 'the coming age,' with the suffix -ios meaning 'pertaining to.'

²⁶⁶⁵ Jude 6,7

²⁶⁶⁶ Rev 22:5; Greek: aionios, 'age-' or 'era-ending' or 'the coming age,' with the suffix -ios meaning 'pertaining to.'

²⁶⁶⁷ Rev 20:10 K.J.V.

In order to discern the meaning of this perplexing verse, it is first necessary to strengthen and correct the translation: *'And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are,*²⁶⁶⁸ *and [they] shall be tortured day and night to the age end of the age ends.'*²⁶⁶⁹ As such, the torment or torture must refer to the Devil, the beast, and the false prophet. The *'age end of the age ends'* is simply the termination of measured time: the end of the seven thousand years,²⁶⁷⁰ so the 'tripartite' torture does have a definite termination.

Revelation says that the Beast and the False Prophet are both cast alive into the lake of fire and brimstone,²⁶⁷¹ and it is that which has lead certain expositors to conclude that, being mortal flesh and bone, they must die immediately. The following chapter, however, strongly implies otherwise.²⁶⁷² Satan is taken and cast into the abyss,²⁶⁷³ for a period of one thousand years. The abyss is described as burning with the smoke of a furnace.²⁶⁷⁴ It is reasonable to infer, therefore, that the abyss contains the lake of fire. It has already been establishes that Satan dies, at the end. When he is thrown into the abyss, men will look at him and say: *'Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms, that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof, and that opened not the house of his prisoners?'*²⁶⁷⁵ Satan is mortal at that point: he is a man, and not a spirit being, having been stripped of his immortality by God. Therefore Satan and, by implication, his demons, and the Beast and the False Prophet, then being mortal to a man, are all supernaturally kept alive in the lake of fire in the abyss for the entire of the Millennium. After being released for a short time for one last attack on the kingdom of God, Satan is taken outside Jerusalem and cast into the lake of fire, where he dies,²⁶⁷⁶ together with those previously recited who were kept alive in its torments and tortures. All die by being cast into the lake of fire, including the wicked down through the ages whose names have not been found written in the book of life. This happens at the Great White Throne Judgement at the close of the Millennium.

That is the correct exposition, and it demands no modification whatsoever of the Greek text of the New Testament or the Hebrew of the Old Testament. In fact, it has interesting implications. Firstly, the only two who start as human beings and end up being tortured in the lake of fire (as opposed to being thrown in and immed-

²⁶⁶⁸ *'were cast,'* could also be *'are,'* for both are correct grammatically, with the latter actually the stronger, q.v. inf. Surprisingly, the N.E.B. gets this part right, then completely misunderstands the last phrase. The K.J.V. words *'shall be tormented'* or *'tortured'* are future plural: it implies 'they,' not 'he.'

²⁶⁶⁹ Rev 20:10, with implicit 'they' rather than implicit 'he.'

²⁶⁷⁰ q.v. inf.; depending on the definition of 'time,' before then was endless time; and after it certainly there will be 'endless' time.

²⁶⁷¹ Rev 19:20

²⁶⁷² Rev 20:10

²⁶⁷³ Rev 20:1-3

²⁶⁷⁴ Rev 9:1,2

²⁶⁷⁵ Isa 14:12f., particularly vv.16,17; the implications are profound, since the abyss would then be a place of torment for demons and the Devil when they were in a state of being divested of their immortality.

²⁶⁷⁶ Satan is not buried, confirmed in Isaiah chpt. 14.

ately consumed, as will happen to the rest of the wicked in mankind), are the Beast and the False Prophet. The question has to be asked: why? The answer:

1. They are the antipoles of two that are righteous: the witnesses. Just as the two most evil of all mankind are tortured in the lake of fire for the duration of the Millennium, so the two righteous are elevated to the highest rank available in God's kingdom: that of archangel,²⁶⁷⁷ for all eternity;

2. The various 'glimpses' and 'spirit-provided previews' of hell, such as the apparitions of the so-called 'Blessed Virgin Mary' is wont to give on occasion, where human bodies are seen writhing over each other in the indescribable torments of hellfire, in reality can only refer to Satan, his demons, and the two most evil humans; they cannot refer to the rest of humanity, no matter how evil. What is actually happening is that Satan and his demons are misrepresenting to gullible humans their own soon-coming millennium-long anguish in the fires of hell as a supposed warning from the 'virgin' against human sin and as a spur to increased worship and veneration of her. In other words, to turn and embrace pagan goddess worship disguised as the true faith; and,

3. The only two humans to be termed '*the son of perdition*' in the Bible are Judas Iscariot,²⁶⁷⁸ who had entered into a league with Satan, and the Antichrist,²⁶⁷⁹ who will also do so. Again, there is an antithesis. While the '*son of man*,' the '*son of God*,' Jesus Christ, is the son by birth, the '*sons of perdition*' are sons by adoption. They must both have taken an oath of the deepest and most loathsome kind to Satan, handing themselves over to him unconditionally, to be his by adoption. They are, literally, sons of utter destruction: sons of Satan. Satan and various demons, no doubt, live in the two protagonists at the time of the end; Satan propels them, orchestrates them, and fires them with his vengeful hatred of the righteous. And even here there is a possible inference: just as the first son of perdition, the antetype, was Jewish,²⁶⁸⁰ hailing from Judah proper, then the second, the type, could well be Jewish too, and hail from what is now termed the state of Israel or the Jewish Diaspora.²⁶⁸¹

Assumptions various

Wild assumptions, that is. In terms of the time of the return of the Messiah, and the ending of the rule of the Antichrist, some expositors have postulated a possibility that could derive from a variant of the 'year-for-a-day' interpretation. Working from a start date of 171–165BC, this could give a date of c.2130–2136AD for the return of Christ.²⁶⁸² However, this would then be inconsistent and incompatible with the seventieth week in

²⁶⁷⁷ q.v. sup.

²⁶⁷⁸ John 17:12

²⁶⁷⁹ II Thes 2:3

²⁶⁸⁰ the only non-Galilean among the disciples.

²⁶⁸¹ the southern part thereof, approximately corresponding to the extent of biblical Judah.

²⁶⁸² on a more mundane front, and as an explanation of why this postulation appears not to have been promulgated, a predicted date for the return of Christ which is still well over a century hence would not engender any fear and trepidation in those living at present, and hence would preclude any cynical financial leveraging, as this time-span falls well beyond the life expectancy of anyone alive today.

Daniel,²⁶⁸³ and the prophesied end-time events. Neither would it allow for a rational explanation of the time, times, and half a time, or its setting in recorded history.

Despite what has been led,²⁶⁸⁴ a prime contender for the title of Antichrist was the next pope, that is, according to John Paul II,²⁶⁸⁵ on record as saying that he was attempting to live into the then new millennium in order to frustrate the Roman Catholic Antichrist whom he believes will arise after his death and seize power at the very start of the millennium. Winnowing the wheat from the chaff in this statement is unnecessary as it entirely comprises of the latter. The Roman Catholic Church was never a repository of detailed knowledge of biblical truth, especially elements of prophecy, and any prophetic interpretation made by the pope or any other dignitary of that organisation should be viewed, at the very best, as profoundly suspect.

In rebuttal, and in no particular order:

1. The year 2000AD has absolutely no prophetic significance; Christ was not born on the point of 'BC-0-AD';
2. 2000AD is not the start of the next millennium, it is actually 2001AD;
3. The Antichrist cannot be a pope; and,
4. The mere thought of attempting to frustrate or avoid the appearance of the Antichrist by living a few more years while occupying the office of pontiff, the very seat of apostasy, is simply ludicrous.²⁶⁸⁶

This strange belief, however, could have been promoted by the so-called 'Third Prophecy of Fatima,' allegedly given off by an apparition of the Virgin Mary,²⁶⁸⁷ and which, allegedly, is known only to the sole surviving recipient of the Fatima prophecies, and to the pope: 'Pope John Paul II realised that after exhaustive examination of the documents concerning the visions of Mary at Fatima, and after 'nothing less than a personal communication from heaven,' that Fatima signified a geopolitical agenda attached to an immediate timetable. He is convinced that in his lifetime there will be a sign in heaven, as predicted by 'Our Lady of Fatima,' that will point to him and confirm him to all the world as its spiritual and moral leader—in the 1990s—of a world government.'²⁶⁸⁸

'Pope John Paul II believes in his own special destiny as directed by Our Lady of Fatima. He is convinced that he will be called in the 1990s to be the moral and spiritual leader of a world government....[this

²⁶⁸³ Dan 9:24-27

²⁶⁸⁴ ut sup.

²⁶⁸⁵ apparently, there was some medical doubt as to whether the then current incumbent would survive into the new millennium, but he did.

²⁶⁸⁶ Latin: credo quia absurdum.

²⁶⁸⁷ in 1917

²⁶⁸⁸ Martin, Malachi, *Keys of This Blood*.

accompanied by] a sign in the sky, which the Pope is convinced will be manifest [before 2000], and accompanied by the 'Second Coming of Mary,' predicted by the first apparition at Fatima....The Pope has been able to carry his theme of unity into any forum however political....[before the European Parliament in October, 1998AD]....his theme was of an united Europe, East and West, from the Urals to the Atlantic.'²⁶⁸⁹

'[O]n the eve of the chronological millennium [John Paul II] feels himself to be at the centre of the emergence of a spiritual millennium in which the religious of the world will be united for a final victory over the irreligious. He has helped to bring about....an alliance between official Catholicism and fundamentalist Islam.... the heirs of the Crusades and the heirs of the jihad²⁶⁹⁰ uniting for a final war against the godless.'²⁶⁹¹

'Fatima 3'

Many have speculated that 'Fatima 3' refers to the end-times in terms which, in addition to predicting a large scale falling away from the Roman Catholic faith, and a desire revolving around the successful consecration of Russia²⁶⁹² to the Virgin Mary, reinforce the common but mistaken Romanist belief that the Antichrist will be the last pope in the form of an 'Anti-pope.'

²⁶⁸⁹ Semlyen, Michael, *All Roads Lead to Rome?* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁶⁹⁰ Jihad: the aestheticization of violence.

Burke, Jason, *Al Qaeda—the True Story of Radical Islam* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'Jihad, meaning 'struggle,' resolves into personal (the greater) and third party (the lesser). It can mean 'holy war,' but usually it doesn't. Like almost all Muslim practice and belief, the doctrine of Jihad is the product of various readings and applications of the principles of the sacred Koranic texts, each in specific historical and political contexts.

Fundamentally, 'suicide bomber' attacks are conceived of as demonstrations of faith performed for God by an individual.

Islam, being social and political, fundamentally, in confronting tyrannical force and oppression, becomes complicit in the 'struggle' to establish new political and economic systems, in which all may enjoy freedom. As Jihad is seen as part of the 'cosmic struggle,' to expect an immediate result from it would be presumptuous and wrong (it is believed that the final resolution will not occur until judgement day), though Jihad will eventually result in victory, should Allah will it. That victory might be generations, centuries, even millennia away. It is the act that is important; not the results.

In the Middle East, the model of a small group of militants using violence to seize control of a state and then being greeted with grateful acclamation is a familiar one to nationalists, pan-Arabists, and Islamists alike.

[It is believed that] from the apocalyptic millenarian struggle, conflict, and cataclysm there will arise, out of the ashes, a new Muslim world order.

The Arabic Qur'anic word for martyr, shahid, also means witness. Spectacular martyrdom is thus the ultimate demonstration of faith to various audiences for various purposes. Suicide attacks are intended to demonstrate to all that despite the apparent disparity in material strength, the combatants in the 'cosmic struggle' are, in fact, fighting an equal battle, and that it is the moral courage of the suicide attacker that will out in due course, by permission of Allah. It is the love of death in the [social and political] path of Allah that is the weapon that will annihilate the evil empire of [The United States of] America, by the permission of Allah (Al-Zawhiri, September 2002 interview).

There is also a 'shaming effect' on other non-suicide Muslims. The vast majority of Muslims reject Bin Laden and others' methods and reject extremism. Though many might be sympathetic to Bin Laden's objectives, very, very few Muslims are going to act on those sentiments.'

²⁶⁹¹ O'Brien, Conor Cruise, *On the Eve of the Millennium*.

²⁶⁹² likely an imbedded reference to an alliance of Russian Orthodox with Roman Catholicism, extending to a healing of the rift between Rome and the Eastern Orthodox churches, institutionalised since 1054AD.

According to Lucia dos Santos,²⁶⁹³ the sole surviving recipient of the Marian revelations at Fatima and a cloistered nun called Maria dos Dores in the Carmelite Convent at Coimbra, Portugal, 'Fatima 3' covers the content of Revelation chapters eight to thirteen inclusive, up to the point of the arrival of the Antichrist and the ascension of the false prophet to the pontifical throne. When augmented by information from sources allegedly close to the Vatican, it is also claimed to include the date of the start of World War III; the explicit mention of the union of the Roman and Eastern Orthodox rites; an instruction to the then pope to convene a General Council of the Church involving both Western and Eastern bishops; the conversion of Russia in the name of the 'Immaculate Heart'; intimation that Satan has entered the Roman Church bringing agents to occupy the highest positions; and warnings concerning the Anti-pope, the overthrow of the hierarchy, and the rise to power of the Antichrist.²⁶⁹⁴

Fatima is fervently regarded in the Roman Catholic Church as representing the key Marian apparition of the twentieth-century. Pius XII opined that the message of Fatima was one of the greatest interventions of God through Mary in world history since the deaths of the Apostles.

Despite this, there has been evidence recently of some redefinition and backtracking, amid widespread controversy over the whole affair. For claimed 'divine revelations,' the Marian prophecies have already been seen to be inaccurate. The world war prophesied to start in the reign of Pius XI did not do so until the later reign of Pius XII. The miraculous signs in the heavens have not occurred to date, and the long-running dispute over whether Russia has or has not been consecrated to the 'Immaculate Heart of Mary' continues. This last is important from a public-face point of view, as the lack of consecration of Russia by John Paul II in either 1982 or 1984 would lead inevitably to a fundamental weakening of the Roman claim that the pontiff had brought Russia to her economic and political knees through the power and graces of the 'Virgin Mary' and her 'Immaculate Heart.' As late as 1987, Sister Lucy was still confirming that the consecration of Russia has not been done as requested by 'Our Lady.'²⁶⁹⁵

The reported retractions by Sister Lucy,²⁶⁹⁶ in that the consecration had, in fact, been done in accordance with the apparition's wishes, are claimed to have been made in two interviews she gave to Carlos Evaristo.²⁶⁹⁷ Evaristo reported that Sister Lucy essentially retracted everything she had said about the message of Fatima in the previous three-quarters of a century. Some see this as double-talk, dissembling, or a somewhat facile device to render the Roman apocalyptic view more readily conformed to that of the New Age, the sensit-

²⁶⁹³ some maintain she is an imposter, and not without grounds.

²⁶⁹⁴ so, not a pope?

²⁶⁹⁵ 20 July, 1987AD

²⁶⁹⁶ Sister Lucy was called Sister Marie des Dores, Sister Mary of the Sorrows, in the College of the Sisters of St. Dorothy, at Vilar do Porto, entering in 1921AD and becoming a nun of the Carmelite order by 1925AD.

²⁶⁹⁷ 11 October, 1992AD & 11 October, 1993AD

ivities of modern ecumenism, or whatever the fashionable current trend or flavour happens to be. Certainly there appears to be a need of revision.

All such apparitions are devices of Satan, but in the claims that are made, there is one fundamental flaw: they are the claims and predictions of Satan, not of God. Satan does not have a free hand in bringing to pass his prophecies. The 'Restrainer,' Michael the archangel, does not permit Satan at this time to indulge himself completely in the fulfilment of Marian and similar prophecies. Satan well knows the ultimate plan of God, and those who are the 'elect,' and it is the Restrainer²⁶⁹⁸ who keeps Satan from bringing to pass absolutely all of his evil devices. Therefore, timeframe and factual errors in Marian prophecies can be seen as restrictions placed on the originator of these prophecies, Satan himself, by God through the actions of the Restrainer. Satan can only do his wicked work to the extent permitted by God, and no further.

The fact that a second interview was conducted, a year to the day after the first,²⁶⁹⁹ lends some credence to the claim that the interpretation of the Fatima message in its revised form appears to have been the result of a pressing need for public promulgation. The results of the first interview resulted in less than widespread acclaim, with wholesale criticism that the format of 'reported speech' was misleading in circumstances where it had not been transcribed or recorded at the point of interview, but had been compiled later. It is this that appears to have led to a second interview intended to make good the deficiency. It is difficult to see how a second interview could have been arranged and conducted had the content of the first been seriously misreported or misrepresented by Evaristo.

When asked during the second interview whether Russia had been consecrated, Sister Lucy allegedly replied that it had, "for the news²⁷⁰⁰ speaks for itself." Another interesting excerpt from this interview has Sister Lucy being asked how Russia could have been converted when the conversion was a clear indication of conversion to Roman Catholicism, and her allegedly replying that, "there is now a freedom to make the choice for conversion, and that many are doing so."

This, then, is the extent of the claimed 'supernatural miraculous conversion to Rome.' As in the case of all such drivel, the reality is a good deal different. Roman Catholicism in Russia has steadily declined in numerical terms since immediately before the Russian Revolution,²⁷⁰¹ and more massively so in percentage terms. There are about one third of a million Roman Catholics in Russia at the moment, outnumbered about ten-to-one by Muslims, and overwhelmingly so by those of the preponderant religious persuasion, the Russian Orthodox.

²⁶⁹⁸ archangel Michael, q.v. inf. and 'Ranking of Angels' in the Appendix.

²⁶⁹⁹ on the eleventh day, an occult prime.

²⁷⁰⁰ the fall of the Eastern Communist Block in 1989AD.

²⁷⁰¹ in 1917AD

Proselytising by Roman Catholics has been proscribed by the civil authorities in Russia²⁷⁰² and stopped by the Roman Catholic Church itself through an agreement with the Russian Orthodox Church.²⁷⁰³

There is one further and most disturbing consideration in relation to the supposed consecration of Russia: 'We would be tempted to believe this²⁷⁰⁴ if [it] wasn't for that rather scabrous detail in the wonderful story of Fatima. The promise of Russia's conversion, sensibly given to the clairvoyant Lucia in 1917, was 'revealed' by her only in 1941, when she had become a nun, and made public in October 1942 by Cardinal Schuster, a keen partisan of the Rome-Berlin Axis; it was made public by request, or shall we say order, from Pius XII—this same Pius who, three months later, expressed the call for a Christian Crusade.²⁷⁰⁵

Very "enlightening" indeed. One of Fatima's apologists²⁷⁰⁶ admits that, because of it, the matter "evidently loses some of its prophetic value." This is the least one could say about it! A certain canon, great specialist in the matter of the "Portugese miracle,"²⁷⁰⁷ tells us in confidence: "I must confess that, as far as I am concerned, it is only with great reluctance that I added to my first editions the text revealed to the public by Cardinal Schuster."

We certainly understand the good canon's feelings.

So the Holy Virgin told the shepherdess Lucia, in 1917: "If my requests are heeded, Russia will be converted....," while charging her to keep this "secret" to herself. How, then, could the Christians have come to know these "requests" and meet them? "Credibile quia ineptum."

It seems that, from 1917 until 1942, "unfortunate Russia" did not need to have prayers²⁷⁰⁸ offered on her behalf, and that they were urgently needed only after the Nazi defeat at Moscow and when Paulus²⁷⁰⁹ was trapped in Stalingrad.

At least, it is the only conclusion this late revelation allows.²⁷¹⁰

The need for a 'supportive Marian revelation' at a crucial point in the Nazis' pressing of Operation Barbarossa,²⁷¹¹ in order to rapidly garner a 'Christian Crusade' in support of the Axis forces, allied to the Roman

²⁷⁰² since 1984AD

²⁷⁰³ in 1983AD

²⁷⁰⁴ failure to 'tell' sufficient rosary beads claimed to be the cause of the failure to consecrate Russia.

²⁷⁰⁵ in support of Germany against Russia in World War II.

²⁷⁰⁶ Agnellet, Michel, *Miracles à Fatima*, p.54—Imprimatur 1958AD

²⁷⁰⁷ Canon Barthas, *Fatima, Merveille du XXe Siècle*, p.81—Imprimatur 1957AD

²⁷⁰⁸ told on rosary beads.

²⁷⁰⁹ Friedrich Wilhelm Ernst Paulus (23 September, 1890AD—1 February, 1957AD), elevated to rank of Field Marshall by Hitler one day before his surrender to the Russian forces at Stalingrad.

²⁷¹⁰ Paris, Edmond, *The Secret History of the Jesuits*, p.180

²⁷¹¹ Hogue, John, *The Last Pope—the Decline and Fall of the Church of Rome*, p.259 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Pius XII declared on Vatican Radio that the Nazi exploits in Russia were "magnanimous acts of valour which now defend the foundations of Christian culture." This papal approval no doubt inspired those Catholics in S.S. special action units in Soviet-occupied territories to step up their torching of Russian villages by the thousands—citizens included—and their slaughter of Jews by the millions. Other "magnanimous acts" of the Nazi iron "Christian" cross crusade would include the killing of 2½ million German citizens, and 28 million Soviet soldiers and citizens in a little over three years. In their

church's pact with Hitler permitting 'missionaries' from the specialist Collegium Russicum in Rome to enter captured territories tasked with evangelising the Russian population to Catholicism, appears to have brought forward a hasty and a less than well thought out public airing of a supposed request from the Virgin, given 'in confidence' no less than a quarter of a century previously. The sheer paucity of the flawed papal strategy in this is all too evident. Whatever its details, interpretation, or sheer hyperbole, the 'Fatima 3' prophecy is currently sealed and in the vaults of the Vatican, apparently so dreadful are its contents when taken in their entirety.²⁷¹²

There is one final consideration to be taken into account, however, for the geographic and strategic plans behind certain Marian apparitions are striking on occasion, and should not be overlooked. Fatima is named after the daughter of Mohammed,²⁷¹³ and is a place that even attracts a certain number of Muslims who seem to hold a certain affection and reverence for the Virgin. In this, Fatima is a bridgehead reaching out towards Islam. On the other hand, one of the best known, recent apparitions has been at Medjugorje, a Croatian area in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where it is claimed the Virgin has appeared almost daily over the last three decades or so,²⁷¹⁴ sometimes accompanied by putti, or occult child angels. Bosnia-Herzegovina is an area of significant religious importance to Eastern Orthodox adherents, widely regarded as the birthplace of Serbian Orthodoxy. Given that the stance of the Orthodox Church on the position of Mary is inimical to that of Rome, this may be seen as a form of aggressive 'Marian bridgehead' for the Roman cult.

Jewish parallels

Turning to Judaism, and somewhat surprisingly to some commentators, the various descriptions of the Messianic Age given by many religious Jews today bear a striking correlation with the Antichrist.^{2715 2716} Price observes: 'The Lubavitchers promotion of a coming Messiah who will be a strictly human, non-miracle working Jewish leader has opened the field for many such messianic candidates. The Lubavitchers are preparing the Jewish world to accept as Messiah whoever is instrumental in bringing about the building of the Third Temple. Israeli Lubavitcher campaign leader Menachem Brod defines this Messiah as "a great leader of the Jewish

zeal to make the world a better place without communists, the Nazi crusader destroyed nearly 2,000 Russian cities and towns and 70,000 villages and hamlets. Included in this toll is the spilled blood of the [same nation as] the crucified Christ—two million Jewish citizens annihilated.'

²⁷¹² it is apposite that it be so, for Vatican derives from vates or vatis, meaning 'diviner,' 'seer,' or 'oracle.' Vatican hill is actually the former site of an Etruscan oracle (Keller, Warner, *The Bible as History*, p.390) and a haunt of fortune tellers.

²⁷¹³ a relic of Moorish occupation of Spain.

²⁷¹⁴ since 1981AD

²⁷¹⁵ Hoffman, Michael, *Judaism Discovered*, p.382 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'When the [Jew's] Messiah comes, he will destroy the Christians (BT Sanhedrin 99a).'

²⁷¹⁶ Hoffman, Michael, *Judaism Discovered*, p.933 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'It is a tradition [in Judaism] that the Mashiach (Messiah) will be born on the Ninth of Av [Tisha B'Av].'

Comment: A significant number in Roman Catholicism hold that the year of the Antichrist's birth was 1966AD. Putting the Jewish and Romish traditions together, the date brought out, that of 9th Av on the Judaic calendar in 1966AD, would be 26 July.

people; he will be such a great charismatic leader that the whole world will unite behind him." However, Brod believes he will not be identified as Messiah immediately: "The people may only realise that he has come after the fact—after we see his actions." What actions are expected to be performed in confirmation of the messiahship? Rabbi Manis Friedman reveals the Lubavitch opinion: 'If he goes on to build the Temple and gather all Jews back to Israel, then we will know for sure that he is the Moshiach. Moshiach comes through his accomplishments and not through his pedigree. Maimonides says that once he builds the Temple and gathers the Jews back to Israel, then we will know for sure that he is the Moshiach. He doesn't have to say anything. He will accept the role, but we will give it to him. And his coming, the moment of his coming, in the literal sense, would mean the moment when the whole world recognizes him as Moshiach....that both Jew and non-Jew recognize that he is responsible for all the wonderful improvements in the world: an end to war, an end to hunger, an end to suffering, a change in attitude.'²⁷¹⁷ ²⁷¹⁸

This new Jewish concept of the Messiah, then, is that of a mortal man and a leader with sufficient charisma to capture and command the admiration of the world, if not its devotion. He is to be recognised not by his lineage, as the biblical Messiah, a descendant of the Davidic dynasty, but by his acts of global significance.²⁷¹⁹ Today, many Jews hold that their Messiah need not be born in Bethlehem, but merely be of the same tribe as David: Judah. These two relaxations, in terms of place of birth and lineage in the royal line from David, open up the Jewish messiahship to almost any Jew, possibly even to anyone claiming to be a Jew. The arrival of this Messiah will supposedly take place during a time of military threat to the Jewish people.²⁷²⁰ Loewenthal

²⁷¹⁷ interviewed by the University of Maryland professor Susan Handelman in the Hasidic journal *Wellsprings*.

²⁷¹⁸ Price, Randall, *In Search of Temple Treasures*, pp.209-212

²⁷¹⁹ Rabbi Simmons on the Jews' Messiah:

'What is the Messiah (Mashiach) supposed to accomplish? The Bible says that he will:

- 1) Build the Third Temple (Ezek 37:26-28).
- 2) Gather all Jews back to the Land of Israel (Isa 43:5,6).
- 3) Usher in an era of world peace, and end all hatred, oppression, suffering and disease. As it says: "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall man learn war anymore." (Isa 2:4)
- 4) Spread universal knowledge of the God of Israel, which will unite humanity as one. As it says: "God will be King over all the world -- on that day, God will be One and His Name will be One" (Zech 14:9).

The messiah will be a regular human being, born naturally to husband and wife. He is not to be a god, nor a man born of supernatural or virgin birth. The very idea that God would take on human form is repulsive to Jews because it contradicts our concept of God as being above and beyond the limitations of the human body and situation. Jews believe that God alone is to be worshipped, and not a being who is His creation, be he angel, saint, or even the messiah himself.'

²⁷²⁰ Jewish cabalistic—i.e., occult, channelled—interpretation of the Old Testament final battle is that that will be the last of three world wars. This tripartite war was stated in 1896AD at the Sixth Jewish International Congress in Basle, Switzerland. Thereupon, given the cabalistic view, will be ushered in a time of autosoteric healing of mankind and a new era of peace and blessedness. This meshes synchronously with the advent of the Antichrist, especially if he were to be Jewish or of Jewish extraction. This is bolstered by the words used by Christ in John 5:43, 'I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another [Greek: allos, 'another of the same genus'] shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.' He did not use the word heteros, meaning 'another but different from.' The Antichrist will most probably be Jewish, or of Jewish extraction.

Compare Deut 18:15,17,18, 'The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken. And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken.'

has observed that war has always been an expected precursor to the advent of the Messiah: 'Throughout history Jewish leaders have seen international events and especially wars as expressing messianic portents. The book of Daniel prophesies wars as preceding the Messiah. The Midrash states, "If you see nations battling together, you can expect the feet of the Messiah."²⁷²¹....many Jews in our time saw the Second World War as the war of the "birthpangs of the Messiah."²⁷²² Recently, the Gulf War excited similar speculation."

While some aspects of the Hasidic Messiah have a biblical basis, the expectation of a human leader who will arrive in a time of war, resolve the conflict, deliver Israel, and then rebuild the Temple also fits the Old and New Testament descriptions of the False Messiah. Many have sought to identify this counterfeit Messiah with the Antichrist, since the Antichrist will probably be responsible for constructing the Third Temple through his covenant with Israel,²⁷²³ and this role is predicted of the Messiah.²⁷²⁴ However, while this False Messiah will undoubtedly be an antichrist,²⁷²⁵ he will not necessarily be the Antichrist. That's because the long-awaited Messiah is expected to be Jewish, and the Antichrist appears to be Gentile [sic]. While Jews in the past have on occasion accepted a Gentile as Messiah,²⁷²⁶ ever since the State of Israel was formed it became a mandate among Hasidic Jews that the true Messiah would make his appearance as a Jew²⁷²⁷ in Israel.²⁷²⁸

Gruber further describes the 'Jewish Messiah' in light of the failure of the Jews to discern Jesus Christ as the true Messiah: 'The Holy One, blessed be He, will sit in Paradise and give instruction, and all the righteous will sit before Him and all the hosts of Heaven will stand on His right, and the sun and stars on His left; and the Holy One, blessed be He, interprets to them the grounds of a new Torah which the Holy One, blessed be He, will give to them by the hand of King Messiah."²⁷²⁹ This new Torah that Messiah brings is related to the Torah at Sinai, but different in some respects.

The Midrashim are written several centuries later,²⁷³⁰ but they ascribe their views to Talmudic times. In the Midrash on Psalms, we are told that Torah will change in the days of the Messiah. Unclean animals will be declared clean, but "some of the demands of the Law would be even more severe: thus marital relations would become stricter."²⁷³¹ What does this mean? Some say that in the time to come all the animals which are

I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and I will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I have commanded him. ' Here Moses speaks to the children of Israel, saying that the coming Messiah will be 'like unto me,' and 'from among their brethren,' i.e., of the same racial stock.

²⁷²¹ cf. Gen. Rab. 42.7

²⁷²² Hebrew: cheble ha-Mashiach.

²⁷²³ Dan 9:27

²⁷²⁴ Zech 6:12

²⁷²⁵ I John 2:18,22,4:3

²⁷²⁶ e.g., Napoleon Bonaparte.

²⁷²⁷ generally as a rabbi.

²⁷²⁸ Loewenthal, Naftali, a writer and an Hasid.

²⁷²⁹ Yalqt on Isaiah ch. 26; Davies, W. D., *Torah in the Messianic Age and / or the Age to Come*, p.74

²⁷³⁰ later than the 3rd - to 5th-centuries AD.

²⁷³¹ Footnote: "*The Lord permits the forbidden*," (Psa 146:7) (A.V and R.V. 'looses the prisoner;' the word 'forbidden' is got by a pun).

unclean in this world God will declare to be clean, as they were in days before Noah. And why did God forbid them (i.e., make them unclean)? To see who would accept His bidding and who would not; but in the time to come He will permit all that He has forbidden."²⁷³²

Perhaps the most radical declaration of all is found in the Midrash on Ecclesiastes. "The Torah which a man learns in this world 'is vanity' in comparison with the Torah of the Messiah."²⁷³³ The reasoning seems to be that all things in this age are but form and appearance compared to the substance of the Messianic age and the kingdom of God on earth. According to the Rabbis, 'In the days of the Messiah, bastards....will be pure.'²⁷³⁴

There is also the later equation of the new Torah that Messiah brings with the Oral Torah: "and this is the great hope (vouchsafed to the Jews) in Exile....for all is for good in order to (allow them) to merit 'the light of the Messiah and the Oral Torah' which will be revealed through him."²⁷³⁵

Messiah upholds Torah or brings a new Torah.²⁷³⁶ In any case, when he comes, he is to be obeyed. "Come and hear: 'Unto him ye shall hearken,' even if he tells you, 'Transgress any of all the commandments of the Torah' as in the case, for instance, of Elijah on Mount Carmel, obey him in every respect in accordance with the needs of the hour!"²⁷³⁷

"The literature of Judaism evidences an expectation that in the Messianic Age the spirit of prophecy will be restored and prophetic figures will be prominent in the life of the nation....The inclusion of Deut 18:18 in the 'testimonia' fragment discovered at Qumran indicates that in certain circles, at least, the appearance of a prophet 'like unto' Moses was an important feature in messianic expectations."²⁷³⁸

The concluding words of Torah, which were understood to refer to the promised Messiah, emphasise the supernatural nature of the ministry of Moses. "Since then, no prophet has arisen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, who did all those miraculous signs and wonders the Lord sent him to do in Egypt—to Pharaoh and to all his officials and to his whole land. For no one has ever shown the mighty power or performed the awesome deeds that Moses did in the sight of all Israel [sic]."²⁷³⁹

From Isaiah chapter eleven, Messiah's reign was believed by some to be eternal, and to bring changes in nature. "And wild beasts shall come from the forest and minister unto men. And asps and dragons shall come forth from their holes to submit themselves to a little child.

²⁷³² Mid. Teh.; Davies, W. D., *Torah in the Messianic Age and / or the Age to Come*, pp.58,59

²⁷³³ Eccl. Rab. 11.7

²⁷³⁴ Kid. 72b.

²⁷³⁵ Peri Zadik V.

²⁷³⁶ Hag. II. 2

²⁷³⁷ Yeb. 90b.

²⁷³⁸ Longenecker, Richard N., *The Christology of Early Jewish Christianity*, pp.32,33

²⁷³⁹ based on Deut 34:10-12

And women shall no longer then have the pain when they bear, nor shall they suffer torment when they yield the fruit of the womb."²⁷⁴⁰

Different scenarios present Messiah as a supernatural being. There is an eschatology "presumed throughout 4 Ezra. First, the signs will come, then 'the hidden city' (presumably the heavenly Jerusalem) and the Messiah will be revealed....The manner in which he slays his enemies with the breath of his mouth is paralleled in Revelation nineteen (*'the sword of his mouth'*) and evidently reflects apocalyptic traditions that were current at the end of the first century. In the interpretation, the 'man' is explicitly identified as the Messiah. He will gather the ten lost tribes." 4 Ezra.²⁷⁴¹

One of the Dead Sea Scrolls says that, "The heavens and the earth will obey His Messiah....he will release the captives, make blind see, and raise up the downtrodden....he will heal the sick, resurrect the dead, and announce glad tidings to the poor."^{2742 2743}

Fragments from Qumran refer to the 'Son of God' and the 'Son of the Most High.'^{2744 2745} "The first group of texts dates from the second or early-first century BCE....in the second group are three documents that date from the late-first century BCE, etc."²⁷⁴⁶

In another text from Qumran, "we are told that the heavens and the earth shall obey (or serve) 'his Messiah.'"^{2747 2748} In the Similitudes of Enoch, Messiah is presented as a supernatural being. "As Sjöberg has remarked, he is not a man, at least not in the usual sense of the word, but is rather a heavenly being."²⁷⁴⁹

Akiba redefined the Messianic Age. He separated it from the World to Come. In so doing, he eliminated the supernatural and the exceptional from the Messianic Age and from the role of the Messiah.²⁷⁵⁰ It was no longer necessary for God to demonstrate through signs and wonders who His Anointed was, because "No proof can be brought from a carob-tree." This stands in marked contrast to Yeshua's declaration: "*....the very [miraculous] works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.*"²⁷⁵¹

²⁷⁴⁰ Charlesworth, James H., *ANRW (Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt, or, in English, The Rise and Fall of the Roman World)*, pp.201,202

²⁷⁴¹ Collins, J. J., *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to the Jewish Matrix of Christianity*, p.162

²⁷⁴² 4Q521, referring to Isa 61:1; in the D.S.S. there sometimes appears a *vorlage*, an alternative, probably earlier version of the Scriptures, which is sometimes found to be superior, cf. Snow, Eric V., *A Zeal for God not According to Knowledge*, pp.67,68.

²⁷⁴³ Silberman, Neil Asher, article 'Searching for Jesus,' *Archaeology*, Nov-Dec 1994AD, p.31

²⁷⁴⁴ 4Q246; 4Q521

²⁷⁴⁵ Charlesworth, James H., *Reinterpreting John*, p.22

²⁷⁴⁶ Charlesworth, James H., *Jesus Within Judaism*, pp.149-151

²⁷⁴⁷ 4Q521

²⁷⁴⁸ Charlesworth, James H., *Reinterpreting John*, p.22

²⁷⁴⁹ Collins, J. J., *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to the Jewish Matrix of Christianity*, p.149

²⁷⁵⁰ Green, *Approaches to Ancient Judaism*, Vol. II, p.120

²⁷⁵¹ John 5:36

With this redefinition, Akiba declared Bar Kokhba the Messiah....He knew that Simon ben Kosiba would not deliver Israel [sic] from the Romans, but still chose to anoint and crown him.²⁷⁵²

The last ably demonstrates the difficulty facing rabbinical Judaism at that time: while the Judæo-Christians, the Minim,²⁷⁵³ had the Messiah in Jesus Christ, Judaism had nothing, having rejected their very Christ and Saviour. As a result, when viewing the sorry state of the Jews about a century after the life of Jesus Christ, with the nagging doubt that the time for the appearance of the Messiah had come and gone, Akiba's recension and redaction of the messianic promises can be seen, in context, as a futile grasp for political independence and religious control through the messianically-worthless Bar Kokhba. Desperation maketh strange bed-fellows indeed!

The matter is rendered even more opaque and problematical from the perspective of Judaism, as can be seen from the words of some of the Jews of Jerusalem to Jesus: *'Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is this not he, whom they seek to kill? But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.'*²⁷⁵⁴ The concluding remark is a reference to a very ancient tradition of the Jews, stretching back to before the time of Christ, that the Messiah, when he comes, will remain hidden for a long time, his identity unknown. There is, in this, an occult connection to the false-messiah. The pagan god Saturn is known as "the hiding one" to his devotees. The Jews' end-time false-messiah will be under the control of, and animated by the true 'hiding one,' he who largely remains hidden to mankind: Satan.

The purview in Judaism is eerily narrowed, at the last, and for the Jews, in the Jerusalem Targum,²⁷⁵⁵ with its mention of four memorable nights:

1. When the Memra of Jehovah was revealed upon the world for its creation;
2. When the Memra of Jehovah was revealed upon Abraham between the divided pieces (the Abrahamic covenant);

²⁷⁵² Gruber, Daniel, *Rabbi Akiba's Messiah: The Origins of Rabbinic Authority*, pp.142,143,166-168 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁷⁵³ Hoffman, Michael, *Judaism Discovered*, pp.397,398 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): '(The note on this passage [BT Avodah Zarah 16b-17a] in the Soncino edition states, "abstract noun....Min....'heresy' with special reference to Christianity").' According to Hilchot Teshuva 3:7, there are five people who can be classified as heretics:

One who denies the existence of God or the ruler of the world;

One who says there are two or more rulers of the world;

One who accepts there is one Master of the world but maintains He has a body or a form;

One who denies that He is the sole First Being and Creator of all existence; and,

One who serves entities that serve as intermediary between him and the eternal Lord such as stars, constellations or any other entity.

²⁷⁵⁴ John 7:25-27

²⁷⁵⁵ Targum of Ex 12:42

3. When the Memra of Jehovah was revealed unto the Egyptians, when His right hand slew the firstborn of the Egyptians but spared the firstborn of the Israelites; and,

4. At the coming of the Messiah and the end of the world, where it is stated that Moses came forth from the midst of the wilderness, and the king Messiah will come forth from the midst of Rome.²⁷⁵⁶

Note: 'Rome'!

Curriculum vitæ

The Antichrist of the end-time, the 'Wilful King,' has his 'career' outlined in Daniel: *'And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate shall he honour the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honour with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory: and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain. And at that time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.'*²⁷⁵⁷

This curriculum vitæ cannot refer to Antiochus IV Epiphanes. The actions of the 'Wilful King' go way beyond those of that previous desecrator.²⁷⁵⁸ He is the Beast. He exalts himself above every god. Although Epiphanes considered himself some form of deity, this latter-day king's degree of self elevation is a singular, defining trait, an outstanding characteristic: *'Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come,*

²⁷⁵⁶ Gruber, Daniel, *God, the Rabbis, and the Virgin Birth*, p.43 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets, sublinear emphasis added):

"Like the first redeemer, so will the final redeemer be. The first redeemer was Moses, who appeared to them and then disappeared....The final redeemer [Messiah] will also appear to them and disappear." (BaMidbar Rabbah 11:2).'

²⁷⁵⁷ Dan 11:36-45

²⁷⁵⁸ 'Wilful King' will meet his death in Palestine, rather than Epiphanes' in Persia.

*except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.'*²⁷⁵⁹

This is not some temporarily aberrant individual. Rather this Beast is the most evil human being ever created, and that up against some incredibly strong competition. His claim to be above all gods shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished; this referring to the end of the Tribulation period and the conclusion of the Day of the Lord.²⁷⁶⁰ *'And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be.'*²⁷⁶¹

As noted earlier, the phrase *'neither shall he regard the God of his fathers'* has prompted the notion that the Antichrist will be Jewish. This does exhibit some apparent symmetry,²⁷⁶² as will be seen later. Others, as also noted, have connected this verse with the omission of the tribe of Dan from the one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed to come up with the far-fetched suggestion that the Antichrist will be Irish. Still others point to, *'And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon. One woe is past; and behold, there come two woes more hereafter,'*²⁷⁶³ where Apollyon is held to be a form or corruption of Napoleon, and this suggests, to some, a French or Greek Antichrist. But these are wild conjectures and speculations. There is no biblical foundation whatsoever for any of them, save the Jewish one, given that Judas Iscariot, himself a Jew, was the other *'son of perdition,'*²⁷⁶⁴ mentioned in the Bible.

What can be said with some confidence is that the fathers of this 'Wilful King' worshipped the true God, but this alone does not make him Jewish. In theory, his forebears, depending how far back is under consideration, could equally have been Christian. As to the Irish, French, and Greek suggestions, they are not worthy of consideration, and the same applies to various attempts to introduce a North American into the position. To be certain of the individual's identity, of course, the world will simply have to await the outcome.

Various passages and texts in the Bible refer to the one called *'that man of sin.'*²⁷⁶⁵ Given that he is the man of sin, the most baleful human ever, the misrepresentation of his provenance to his perceived gain would be a simple matter for him. He can be whatever he wishes, subject to being able to dupe the bulk of the population of the world into believing him.

²⁷⁵⁹ II Thes 2:3,4; it should be noted in v.3, *'Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition,'* that there is meant a particular man, as evidenced by the repetition of the Greek article ὁ, the man of sin, and the son of perdition.

²⁷⁶⁰ q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

²⁷⁶¹ Dan 8:19

²⁷⁶² q.v. inf.

²⁷⁶³ Rev 9:11

²⁷⁶⁴ John 17:12

²⁷⁶⁵ Dan 11:36-45; Mat 24:15-28; II Thes 2:1-12; Rev 13:1-10

Many of the rather compelling aspects of a Jewish origin, in addition to the symmetry arising from Jesus Christ being of Judah, and, thus, the possibility of the Antichrist arising from the same tribe (something also seen in the Iscariot connection), lie in the falseness and actions of the anti-Messiah. It is known that the Antichrist will be held by many of the Jews to be the Messiah. This was prophesied by Christ: *'I am come in the name of my Father, and ye receiveth me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.'*²⁷⁶⁶ This, in turn, serves as a reasonable explanation of the seven-year covenant which permits the building of the Jewish Third Temple; the re-commencement of the Jewish sacrifices; the whole panoply of legalism bound up in the world-wide imposition of the Noachide laws which are so much part-and-parcel of the Talmud and Jewish belief; the disregarding of the God of his forefathers, Who actually happens to be the God of the Old Testament, the Word, incarnate in Jesus Christ; and even, to an extent, his sitting in the Temple as God, such is the Jews' Talmudic view of their false-messiah.²⁷⁶⁷

Significantly, there is a certain chilling correlation between *'if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive'*—the 'Wilful King'—and the events surrounding the trial of Jesus Christ. The Jewish crowd, encouraged by the chief priests and elders, their religious and civil leaders, called out for the release of a rebel, Barabbas, who had been active in a political insurrection against Rome,²⁷⁶⁸ and who at that time was under sentence of death for murder. Bar-Abbas means, literally, 'Son of the Father.' An ancient reading, 'Jesus Bar-Abbas,' while not sufficiently attested to be adopted, does give an added flavour to the name, for it means: 'The Saviour, the Son of the Father.' Here the Jews were vociferous in their clamorous support of a violent criminal guilty of the capital offence of political and armed insurrection, and murder, while even more vociferous in their repudiation and condemnation of Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

'At Jerusalem men hoped that when the blow from heaven came, it would give them a vulgar conqueror to break the yoke of Rome and pour out wrath upon the heathen. Such a perversion of God's crowning promise to mere revenge on men of yesterday simply renounced the....Servant of the Lord, whose sufferings were for the healing of the nations. It was an apostate nation long before the decisive morning of the cry: *"We have no king but Cæsar."*'²⁷⁶⁹

Is there here a form of dread antitype, in that the Jews, prompted by their religious and secular leaders, will again clamour for the soon-coming Antichrist? And will they again exclaim, as they did on that day of the

²⁷⁶⁶ John 5:43

²⁷⁶⁷ the degree of religious exclusivity to be expected in the coming Temple can be gleaned from the second wall of enclosure, constructed within the Second Temple complex, upon which was carved, in Greek and Latin, the warning: 'No stranger may enter here on pain of death.' This served to separate Jew from Gentile. The Second Temple penetralia or inner sanctum was an Israelite and Jewish preserve not open to Gentiles. That restriction may well be repeated.

²⁷⁶⁸ Jesus or Barabbas? The choice remained open for forty years after the crucifixion, the entire of the probationary period allowed to the Jews by God. Would Judah—and, by implication, all Israel—receive the liberty of Christ, or fight with Rome for such liberty as a Barabbas might give? The choice, sadly and inevitably, was for the latter, the recreant Jews merely confirming the error of their forebears.

²⁷⁶⁹ Gwatkin, Henry Melvill, *Early Church History to AD 313*, Vol. 1 pp.48,49; John 19:15

trial and crucifixion of Jesus, *'We have no king but [Messiah] Cæsar!'*²⁷⁷⁰ It would appear so, for the Antichrist will be the king of the last rising of the Roman Empire in its final and most fearful head; king of the world; the wilful king of the New World Order.

Taking all-in-all, it is evident that the closest fit to known circumstances is found when the Antichrist is presumed to be of Jewish origin, specifically of the tribe of Judah, rather than Levi or Benjamin, although this does not exclude the possibility.²⁷⁷¹

Irrespective of his antecedents, this so-called 'king' will have no time for anything other than his misguided self-interest. *'And shall divide the land for gain,'*²⁷⁷² or, as the Tanakh, *'he will distribute land for a price,'* indicates a strong commercial interest in disposing seized lands and redistributing those and other assets. In terms of worship, at the last, he will honour a pagan god.²⁷⁷³

Horns

*'And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition,'*²⁷⁷⁴ the *'eighth,'* which was *'of the seven,'* should be viewed in light of the Greek translated *'of,'* meaning *'origin,'* *'from,'* or *'out of.'*²⁷⁷⁵ The phrase thus: *'originating from the seven,'* refers to the number of breakings-forth or risings of the Beast Empire.

The correspondence is with seven risings of the Roman Empire, where the Wilful King / Antichrist's rule can be seen as being superimposed or built on the existing Beast kingdom, for *the 'ten horns'* or ten kings and their respective kingdoms of the seventh *'head'* are in place before the Antichrist rises and comes into his full world-wide power. Thus an *'eighth,'* but *'of the seven,'* is wholly appropriate, so uniquely vile and evil will be this last, relatively short-lived eruption.

The Antichrist will reap the political benefit of coming into prominence just as the world economy, at long last, is due to drag itself out of the massive depression and its long, tailing effects.²⁷⁷⁶ Once the worthless and near-worthless investments and capital allocations have been extinguished / liquidated, the world economy will be set to grow once again. After eight, nine, ten years, or even longer, all will be 'set fair' for the public

²⁷⁷⁰ John 19:15c (with imported addition)

²⁷⁷¹ this should be taken with the caveat on speculation in the 'Preamble' and 'Notes.'

²⁷⁷² Dan 11:39d

²⁷⁷³ Dan 11:38, *'But in his estate shall he honour the god of forces,'* or, if more accurately described, the god of fortifications, strongholds, fortresses, or munitions, Hebrew: mauzzim, also capable of translation, apparently, as *'god's protectors,'* Dan 11:39, *'in most strongholds,'* may also read: *'in fortresses of munitions.'*

As stated previously, the *'god of fortifications'* is a reference to Nimrod, also known as Saturn, amongst other names. In addition, this god of fortifications reference is to the politico-military system which will expand to encompass and deceive the world at the time of the end: his own evil empire.

²⁷⁷⁴ Rev 17:11

²⁷⁷⁵ Greek: ek.

²⁷⁷⁶ world economic collapses, no matter how severe, cannot last forever.

presentation of his glorious economic 'solutions,' solutions which, in fact, will be no more than a repackaging of the old familiar failures. But the public is easily duped, and only sees short-term. And, short-term, in comparison with the cataclysms of the preceding decade, the Antichrist's 'solutions' will appear attractive to the many.

Perhaps a further, embedded correspondence can be discerned from the Tanakh version: *'While I was gazing upon these horns, a new little horn sprouted up among them; three of the older horns were uprooted to make room for it.'*²⁷⁷⁷ The Moffatt translation has this last as, *'which uprooted three of the earlier horns.'* In the remaining ensemble, after the appearance of the Antichrist, there are seven of the original ten horns, and there is an eighth horn, the Antichrist. And so here there is an eighth horn kingdom seen raised above the ashes of the three fallen horns; eight being the 'number' of resurrection.

Jewish traditional belief in the 'eighth' of Micah, *'And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men,'*²⁷⁷⁸ as a reference to the Messiah appears more than a little tenuous, for lack of any scriptural corroboration, but could import an explanation, through the negative form, by comparison with, *'And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition,'*²⁷⁷⁹ where this Beast, *'the eighth,'* is identified as the false-messiah. This can be compared with, *'And did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah the eighth, a herald of righteousness, bringing a flood on the world of ungodly ones.'*²⁷⁸⁰ In this context, the Beast can be seen as a 'false Noah,' most certainly not a herald of righteousness, despite his eventual claim to deity. The eighth Beast of Revelation, which is [of] *the beast that was, and is not,*²⁷⁸¹ becomes active, as the Antichrist, making a dramatic appearance on the world stage, reinvigorating what is to become, in very short order, the world's largest ever empire.

This could imply a prior role in world events, followed by what would be to the world at large a wholly unexpected revival or resurrection. Eight is the occult number of 'new beginnings,'²⁷⁸² of the long-yearned for New Age. The Beast is deeply occult, certainly, but his inevitable end is given: *'The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition.'*²⁷⁸³ He and his kingdom come from the Devil, *'from the bottomless pit,'* but, despite his satanic powers, he awaits his eventual destiny when Christ returns, being *'destroyed by the brightness of His coming,'* and *'going into perdition,'* or condemnation, and later, suffering the death penalty.²⁷⁸⁴

²⁷⁷⁷ Dan 7:8

²⁷⁷⁸ Micah 5:5

²⁷⁷⁹ Rev 17:11

²⁷⁸⁰ II Peter 2:5; from Green's Literal Translation, the K.J.V. is a little deficient.

²⁷⁸¹ Rev 17:11a (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁷⁸² 8 or 8th. in occult lore means 'new beginnings.' 13 means 'extreme rebellion.' In that lore, greater power is achieved when an occult number is compounded or repeated twice, or, especially, thrice. 6, incidentally, is believed to be 'all sufficient.'

²⁷⁸³ Rev 17:8

²⁷⁸⁴ q.v. inf.

At the very end, however, for 'an hour,' or a very short time, the number of individual kingdoms will return from seven (being full kingdoms with an additional 'three-in-one'—the eighth!—under the personal control of the Antichrist)²⁷⁸⁵ to ten, under ten usurping kings, all in thrall to the Antichrist, then being the eleventh:²⁷⁸⁶ *'And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.'*²⁷⁸⁷ The date for this final declension is possibly implicit in the day of the rising of the dog-star.²⁷⁸⁸

Very false-messiah

The 'Wilful King' will deceive the many, including many of the Jews, and their leaders, if 'deceived' be the word, given the occult predilections of the ruling classes: *'And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off,*²⁷⁸⁹ *but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary;*²⁷⁹⁰ *and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant*²⁷⁹¹ *with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.'*²⁷⁹² This is placed in stark

²⁷⁸⁵ q.v. inf.

²⁷⁸⁶ an occult 'prime.'

²⁷⁸⁷ Rev 17:12,13

²⁷⁸⁸ q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet: 19 July, 2027AD.

²⁷⁸⁹ alters: Dan 9:26b, 'and shall be no more'; Dan 9:26a,b, 'And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah make a covenant, but not for himself.' (subscripted emphasis added).

²⁷⁹⁰ Dan 9:26b,c, 'the prince [Hebrew: nagiyd, 'prince,' 'military commander'] that shall come shall destroy both the city and the sanctuary,' viz., in the first instance, both city and Second Temple, this by the Roman Vespasian in 70AD, as admitted by many of the Jews themselves, and as attested by Gill, John, *Gill's Commentary*, Daniel 9:25,26:

'As many of the Jewish writers themselves interpret it: Aben Ezra, Jarchi, Abarbinel, and Jacchiade....the end of the city and temple, and of the whole nation, should be by the Roman army, which, like a flood, would overspread the land, and carry all before it. It denotes the number, power, and irresistible force of the enemy, and the sad devastation made by them....and all this appointed and determined by the Lord, as a just punishment for their sins.' In the end-time, as type and antitype, the Antichrist will be the consummate destroyer, the destroyer of everything, including himself.

²⁷⁹¹ Latin translations: 'firmus,' in classical Latin meaning 'firm contract' or 'fixed agreement.'

²⁷⁹² Dan 9:26,27; concerning the phrase, 'the people of the prince,' Nelte, Frank notes:

'[T]here are three different Hebrew words that can be used to refer to 'people.' The Hebrew word used in this verse is am. The other two Hebrew words are goy and le'om. In general terms, le'om is used to identify a race of people, and goy is used to identify a nation. The word am is used to identify a group of people more numerous than a tribe, but less numerous than a race. The word am is also commonly used to identify military troops, i.e. an army. And that is what is found in Dan 9:26. The fact that these people destroy the city and the sanctuary makes clear that this is a reference to an army.'

That this prince is not the Messiah the prince is evident from the context. Confusion in readers of English translations, once again, arises from the English language being syntactic, where word order is of paramount importance to meaning and pronouns refer to the immediate antecedent, unlike Hebrew, which, like many ancient languages, is inflective, and where pronouns, or the equivalent word suffixes, do not necessarily refer to the immediate antecedent, and can refer to subjects at some distance, i.e., twice displaced. In this case, it is significantly displaced, referring to Dan 8:23-25 and the personage of the 'Wilful king,' q.v. Nelte explains the pronoun in v.27 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'A key point for understanding that this [key] part of the verse represents a change in identity for the

relief, especially in relation to the Jews, as circumstances surrounding the Antichrist will virtually force many to recognise him as their Messiah, for the appearance of the Antichrist will be accompanied, at least initially, by a time of relative but false peace, which he will seek to bolster to his own ends, of course, by covenanting or confirming a covenant 'of peace,'²⁷⁹³ thus permitting the building of the Third Temple in Jerusalem. To the later shock and dismay of the Jews, that phony peace will prove to be but short lived, barely lasting beyond the completion of building operations and subsequent consecration of the Temple.²⁷⁹⁴

An encrypted indication of the identity of the Beast is given off in the form of a well-known number: *'Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the Beast: for it is the number of a man: and his number is six hundred and threescore and six.'*²⁷⁹⁵ There have been countless suggestions on this made by expositors.²⁷⁹⁶ ²⁷⁹⁷ The '666 Beast' was taken to be a cryptogram of Nero Cæsar, then various popes, and sometimes more than one pope at one time, with the ensuing victor expected to be revealed as the Beast.

A marker is given in Daniel: *[A]nd the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*²⁷⁹⁸ The prince that shall come, the Antichrist, will be of the same people as the Roman Empire: a latter day and final rising of the Holy Roman Empire. In other words, the Antichrist will be the civil head or king of the last eruption of the Empire. Thus it is manifest that some prince of the Holy Roman Empire *'that shall come'* is the very person who will confirm a covenant with the leaders or bulk of the Jews for a period of seven years. No such covenant could have been

pronoun "he" is the fact that the Hebrew verb for 'cease,' shabath, is here used with the hiphil stem. The hiphil stem expresses causative action. That is why most translations for this verse include the words '*he shall cause,*' or words to that effect.'

²⁷⁹³ albeit it transient and false.

²⁷⁹⁴ q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

²⁷⁹⁵ Rev 13:18; such a number is called a gematria, a corrupted form of Greek: geometria.

²⁷⁹⁶ *Scott's Commentary*, number and name of the Beast:

'Rev 13:18. Lateinos signifies the Latin man; or the man of Latium, from which place the Romans derived their origin and their language; and this word, according to the genuine orthography, contains, in numerical letters, exactly the number six hundred and sixty-six....But though the apostle wrote in Greek, he yet used some Hebrew names in this book; so we may perhaps think he alluded to a name in that language; and it is most astonishing to think that the word Romiith in Hebrew, which answers to Lateinos, signifies Roman, contains in numeral letters exactly six hundred and sixty-six. Nor can any other two words be produced from two different languages which so nearly coincide together in meaning, and exactly stand for the same number in numerical letters; the coincidence is really most surprising. As John could only refer to the Greek or Hebrew language in this matter, and as the number of the name of the Latin man, or the Roman, in both languages is exactly the same as the number of the beast, so I see no occasion to doubt any more either about the beast or his number, especially as Irenæus in the second century put the same construction on it.'

²⁷⁹⁷ all six of the letters which represent the numbering system of the Roman Empire added together give the number 666: I = 1; V = 5; X = 10; L = 50; C = 100; D = 500. There is no letter / number M in early Roman numbering. 1000 was written as two Ds back-to-back, which approximately resembled an M, and which later transmuted to it.

²⁷⁹⁸ Dan 9:26,27 (sublinear emphasis added); latter tract, N.C.V.: '*A destroyer will do blasphemous things until the ordered end comes to the destroyed city.*'

made before the destruction of the Second Temple²⁷⁹⁹ because, in the regular order of prophecy, it is detailed as taking place after that destruction.

Hitherto, there has never been any record in history of such a covenant or concordat having been made, and in any case it would have to have been followed three-and-a-half years later by the abolition of the restored sacrifices in the middle of the seventieth week, and by the consummation upon its termination. Thus it is yet to be covenanted. And the '*prince that shall come*' who shall confirm it, although only a '*little horn*,' or comparatively minor political ruler or personality at the commencement of his career, will quickly rise to become the Great Antichrist and head of the revived, world-girdling Holy Roman Empire by the time of those fateful seven years.

Expositors, especially in the nineteenth-century, viewed the Antichrist, in the final negotiations leading to the implementation of the seven-year covenant, as seeking at one and the same time to present himself to the Jews as the Messiah,²⁸⁰⁰ and to the Moslems as the Mahdi or the Twelfth Imam.²⁸⁰¹ Again, this is pure conjecture and, in the round, seriously in error, for that longed-for Imam will be the '*king of the south*,' while the Antichrist will be the '*king of the north*.' It is obvious that these opponents cannot be satisfied in one personage. The biblical record views the Antichrist setting himself up as '*god*' in the second and final moiety, having portrayed himself / been accepted as the false-messiah of the Jews. Doubtless, this final outcome will involve much manoeuvrings precedent as the Antichrist will seek in the initial stages to present himself as 'the divine saviour' to as wide a public as possible. General gullibility and credence of the absurd in the general public will greatly aid him in his endeavour.

South versus North, when?

When does the '*king-of-the-south*' '*push against*'²⁸⁰² / attack the '*king-of-the-north*'? Theoretically, there are three possibilities, with the war falling within part of either:

1. One of the three horns '*plucked up by the roots before*' or '*subdued by*' the Beast;²⁸⁰³
2. The '*second seal*' or second horseman 'War' of Revelation;²⁸⁰⁴ or,

²⁷⁹⁹ in 70AD

²⁸⁰⁰ Hoffman, Michael, *Judaism Discovered*, p.382 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'When the [Jew's] Messiah comes, he will destroy the Christians (BT Sanhedrin 99a).'

²⁸⁰¹ Shia belief, the twelfth Imam being held to be the final hereditary successor of Mohammed; in Sunni belief an Imam is a religious leader in prayer and study.

²⁸⁰² Hebrew: nagach, K.J.V. '*push*,' also means '*thrust*,' '*gore*,' and '*wage war*.' It is not merely a tactical manoeuvre or feint that is in purview; it is a full-blooded military attack.

²⁸⁰³ Dan 7:8,24

²⁸⁰⁴ Rev 6:3-6

3. The 'second woe,' the 'sixth trumpet' of Revelation.²⁸⁰⁵

The language used in the book of Daniel to describe the demise of the three horns—which, in context, represent three kings, since their actual kingdoms maintain to the end of the Beast's military-industrial commercial empire—is not that of military conquest, and certainly not by the Beast, who at the time would only be coming into his hegemonic power. For this and other reasons, the 'war' in question cannot be part of the three fallen horns, an event sensibly taken to occur before the seven-year 'apocalyptic reign' of the Beast.

The second seal / horseman post-dates the construction and cleansing / dedication of the Third Temple. Some have wondered why, at the time of the war in question, would the '*king-of-the-south*' wait until completion and dedication before mounting his attack? That, however, could be the consequence of continuing Moslem military weakness and internal strife²⁸⁰⁶ until the long-awaited arrival of the Twelfth Imam / Mahdi,²⁸⁰⁷ allied to the time needed to amass a viable Moslem force. The fact that come the fifth seal and the start of the Great Tribulation, which starts immediately after the preceding three 'war and its aftermath' seals, the Antichrist is found in the Holy Land, setting up his image of the Beast, etc., tends to support a war precedent, a swift war, a '*whirlwind*,'²⁸⁰⁸ in the time of the second seal, and a victory resulting in conquest of the Holy Land and surrounding territories.²⁸⁰⁹

The third option is that it comprises part of the second woe, also known as the sixth trumpet, and will form a major part of the three hundred and ninety-one day world war involving two hundred million combatants, presumably largely drawn from Russia, China and other Eastern regions, inter alia, attacking the oil states from the north, crossing the river Euphrates to hit the Holy Land, Egypt, etc., resulting in the death of one third of humans alive at that time.²⁸¹⁰

²⁸⁰⁵ Rev 9:12-21

²⁸⁰⁶ with Wahabi vs. Sunni vs. Shia, or any combination of these; Islam is rife with internal strife and conflict. A common proverb in Arab countries runs: 'I and my brothers against my cousin, I and my cousin against the stranger [or against the world].'

²⁸⁰⁷ James, Lawrence, *The Rise and Fall of the British Empire*, p.304 (slightly paraphrased, with added comment and clarification in square brackets, sublinear emphasis added): 'A previous mahdist revival, in West Africa in 1905, under the banner of Mahdist millennialism, identified the British and French armies which had entered [the] country during the [previous] decade with Baggal, an anti-Christ figure who, in Islamic eschatology, would appear before the coming of the Mahdi.' This view bears out the chronology presented.

²⁸⁰⁸ Dan 11:40b; not something taking 391 days to accomplish.

²⁸⁰⁹ Dan 11:40-43; that period, ending with the resurrection of the two slain witnesses, starts 18 May, 2026 and ends 13 June, 2027; q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

²⁸¹⁰ if Dan 11:44 relates to this war, and in context that would appear to be a safe assumption, then the second postulation is correct. If that be so, then v.45 is not in chronological order, but neither would it be were the third postulation correct.

²⁸¹⁰ if that be so, then v.45 is not in chronological order, but neither would it be were the third postulation correct; q.v. sup.

The problems with the last are substantial. The tidings from the north and east,²⁸¹¹ from which derive the Antichrist-precipitated world war—seventh seal, sixth trump—a war aimed, initially, at Russia and the regions of the East, but rapidly engulfing the entire globe, and resulting in the death of one third of the world's population—appears to have the Antichrist in location in Jerusalem, from where the compass directions are given. To satisfy the specific disposition, he must, of necessity, have become established in Jerusalem, formally '*planting the tabernacle of his palace*' there. If he is already there, then the Muslim armies, under the Mahdi, must have been defeated sometime beforehand. This places the Mahdi's attack earlier than the sixth trump.

The later drying up of the Euphrates,²⁸¹² however, is an end time event—the seventh trumpet, sixth vial—precedent to the massing of the world's armies at Har Megiddo²⁸¹³ in the Jezreel Valley before the assault on Christ and His forces near Jerusalem. That would imply that the kings of the east (not the north east, as in Daniel, when referring to the sixth trumpet Antichrist-precipitated world war) participate in this and that it is altogether distinguishable and separate from the events described in the sixth trumpet.²⁸¹⁴

Taking all-in-all, the safest conclusion is that the war between the '*king of the south*' and the '*king of the north*' will take place during the currency of the second seal.²⁸¹⁵

Why attack?

After the collapse of the false peace of the first seal, the Antichrist, the 'saviour-king' of the Jews will defeat the champion of the Moslems, the '*king of the south*,' and, in so doing, enter into the Holy Land and some, but not all of the surrounding territories.

That the '*king of the south shall push at him*' is correctly held by most expositors to be a reference to action by the Arab or Muslim world. The Moslem messiah, or Mahdi,²⁸¹⁶ can be seen as one who can draw upon the unifying nature of the political concept of tauhid, leading to a politically-united, pan-Moslem umma; one vast Moslem community. This will be greatly facilitated by the fact that 'the Arabs do not consider themselves as several separate nations or peoples who inhabit separate political entities. In the Arab view, fostered for at least one generation by almost all Arab leaders, the Arabs constitute one nation, the Arab nation, and the division of the one Arab fatherland into numerous separate countries is but a temporary condition that sooner or later must

²⁸¹¹ Dan 11:44a

²⁸¹² Rev 16:6, the drying up of the Euphrates is an end-time event comprising the fifth vial and is not to be conflated with Rev 9:14, the sixth trumpet's four angels (or demons) bound in the Euphrates. The fifth vial is a precursor to the massing of the world's forces at Armageddon precent to the final war against Christ in the valley of Jehoshaphat, q.v. inf.

²⁸¹³ Armageddon.

²⁸¹⁴ Rev 9:13-21

²⁸¹⁵ viz., the second possibility.

²⁸¹⁶ in Islamic lore, the Mahdi will be called Mohammed, and have his father's name of Achmed. He will have a 'V'-shaped aperture between his front teeth. His purpose, inter alia, is to 'restore' Islam to its 'original, pristine state.'

be, will be, overcome. In this theoretical or ideal view, all Arabs are brothers, children of one single qawm or nation.’²⁸¹⁷

‘This is what Edward Atiyah has to say on the relationship of the Arabs to language: “It is a characteristic of the Arab mind to be swayed more by words than by ideas, and more by ideas than by facts.”²⁸¹⁸ ‘The leading Arab-American historian, Philip K. Hitti, elaborates the same theme: No people in the world has such enthusiastic admiration for literary expression and is so moved by the word, spoken or written, as the Arabs. Hardly any language seems capable of exercising over the minds of its users such irresistible influence as Arabic. Modern audiences in Baghdad, Damascus and Cairo can be stirred to the highest degree by the recital of poems only vaguely comprehended, and by the delivery of orations in the classic tongue, though only partially understood. The rhythm, the music, produce on them the effect of what they call “lawful magic.”’²⁸¹⁹ Ibn Khaldun comments on the vulnerability of the Arab character to religiously-grounded emotional presentation: ‘The Arab can obtain authority only by making use of some religious colouring, such as prophecy or sainthood, or some great religious event in general.’²⁸²⁰

The Mahdi, a political and military leader, and not a purely religious one, will reflect, in some measure, the caliphs of old who were vested with significant military and political powers but no inherently religious ones, but his religious standing as the long-awaited Twelfth Imam goes immeasurably beyond even that. Given his uniquely elevated position, in religious terms the ulema would be expected to bond together in a similar way, the entire being intended to result in the creation of a near monolithic, pan-Moslem society, encompassing Sunni, Shi’ite, Wahabi, etc., based on a strict and extremist interpretation of the Qur’an and other writings, and ranged against the all-pervasive evils of modern Western decadence and cultural imperialism. The Mahdi’s task, at least initially, will be threefold:

1. Revive Islam;
2. Unite all Muslims; and,
3. Liberate Muslims from foreign domination and form a new, world-girdling Islamic culture.

²⁸¹⁷ Patai, Raphael, *The Arab Mind*, p.14; Patai further identifies the strong economic, commercial, and other drivers bound in the actions of the Mahdi; Patai, Raphael, *The Arab Mind*, p.217, citing a pamphlet of Abu Zahra, Muhammad, *Al-Wahda al-Islamiyyah* (Islamic Unity):

‘Aggression against any individual Muslim or any one Muslim country is aggression against all Muslims. All Muslim lands must cooperate in fighting for the liberation of brethren who are under the yoke of the enemies of Islam. Muslims must be ruled by Muslims. And....all planning and other activities in the economic, financial, and commercial spheres must be carried out exclusively by Muslims’; also cf. Qubain, Fahim I., *Inside the Arab Mind*, p.25.

Here is fertile ground for the rise of the Twelfth Imam, especially since the Arab nations possess considerable oil and gas reserves.

²⁸¹⁸ Atiyah, Edward, *The Arabs*, p.96, cited by Patai, Raphael, *The Arab Mind*, p.51

²⁸¹⁹ Hitti, Philip K., *The Arabs: A Short History*, p.21

²⁸²⁰ Patai, Raphael, *The Arab Mind*, p.51

'The theological principal of oneness or unity,²⁸²¹ is a fundamental, and deeply political concept. Many Muslims....believe it should be given political expression through the eradication of divisions, national or other, among Muslims and the unification of the Muslim community.²⁸²²

There have been successive waves of dissent and schism, all of which have been rooted in a specific social and political context. An early example was Islam's split into Sunni and Shia branches, within a century of Mohammed's death, over whether a direct descendant of the Prophet should be appointed over the broader community's favoured candidate when appointing the caliph, the leader of the umma,²⁸²³ a position in which were vested significant military and political powers, but no inherent religious authority. The origins of the split were political and personal, though the division later became enshrined in doctrine (and, many scholars say, by ethnic divisions between Persians and Arabs).

The problems of defining jihad²⁸²⁴ condense many....key issues²⁸²⁵....Mohammed's pronouncements on jihad vary and, taken together, show clearly how Islamic scholars dealt with the ambiguities by showing how Mohammed's injunctions were appropriate to the various stages of his struggle. Early Qur'anic verses, delivered to Mohammed²⁸²⁶ while his community was small, unpopular, and barely tolerated by vastly superior forces, urge patience and the spreading of the word of Islam through non-violent means alone. '*There is no compulsion in religion, for the right way is clear from the wrong way,*' the Qur'an says.²⁸²⁷ After the time of the hirja,²⁸²⁸ Allah appears to have given permission for Muslims to engage in defensive warfare. Later verses, received by Mohammed when at the height of his power, enjoined an offensive against unbelievers: '*fight and slay the pagans wherever ye find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them.*'²⁸²⁹ These verses, known as the 'sword verses,' were held by the ulema²⁸³⁰ of the powerful and expansionist Ummayyad and Abbasid dynasties to abrogate the previous more pacifistic Qur'anic injunctions. This interpretation provided a religious justification for armed expansion by the newly confident dominant ruling group. Though modern moderates prefer to quote the early verses, contemporary radicals....maintain that they are abrogated by the later, more aggressive verses.

²⁸²¹ Arabic: tauhid.

²⁸²² Arabic: umma.

²⁸²³ more formally, Arabic: umma Muhammadiyya, 'Muhammadite nation,' a view further developed in the Arabic saying: la umam fi'l-Islam, 'there are no nations in Islam.'

²⁸²⁴ jihad: 'struggle,' i.e., one that can take many forms, with the greater being with oneself, and the lesser with others; thus there can be a jihad for literacy, social services, education, or justice; jihad can also mean 'holy war,' but that is but one of a number of applications, replete with the idea of a 'cosmic struggle' between the forces of good and evil.

²⁸²⁵ for Muslims.

²⁸²⁶ 610–623AD

²⁸²⁷ 2:256

²⁸²⁸ flight from Mecca to what is now called Medina.

²⁸²⁹ 9:5

²⁸³⁰ body of Islamic scholars, effectively a trans-national clergy.

[The cadence to this Islamic New World Order, in terms of religious response, therefore appears tripartite:

1. When Islam is weak and defenceless: by non-violent persuasion and example to others;
2. When Islam is attacked militarily: by robust and resolute military defence; and,
3. When Islam is in power: by eradication of non-believers through warfare].

So, like all Islamic practice and belief, the doctrine of jihad is the product of various readings and applications of the principles of the sacred texts, each in specific historical and political contexts....with activists and militants working in the space between the Qur'anic texts and their interpretation....Despite this, there are a number of elements in the doctrine of jihad that are widely accepted and are important to comprehend....There are, for example, both defensive and offensive elements in the contemporary Islamic militant's understanding of jihad. In the 'cosmic struggle' between the forces of good and evil, jihad is seen as largely defensive. A sense of last-ditch defence is a common theme in the writings of Islamic militants. It is not sophistry but a manifestation of a genuine sense that they are warriors engaged in a desperate struggle for survival against an aggressive and powerful enemy intent on humiliating, weakening, and eventually destroying them. This is a more extreme version of the widespread perception in the Middle East in particular that the West has never abandoned the project of the Crusades and therefore poses an existential threat to the umma. [The latter has given rise to] the nihilistic, anti-rational, millenarian rhetoric and worldview of today's extremists.

[It has been argued that] jihad is the central tenet of the religion, [and] that its aim should be political: to establish an Islamic state.²⁸³¹ Islam is [widely seen as] not just a religion but a political programme....to be implemented through practical action. Consequently, religion is turned into an ideology of political struggle....Islamism, with its own totalizing ideology and techniques of mass organisation aimed at seizing and controlling the state, [thus] bears comparison with the totalitarian ideologies of Fascism and Communism.

If the world is understood as dominated by a cosmic struggle between good and evil, all problems are explained. An individual can explain personal suffering and humiliation. Even better, someone can be blamed for both. A battle involves a clear and present danger from an obvious enemy. Seeing the world as a battlefield enables an individual to deploy a whole series of mythical, cultural, and religious references. This is hugely empowering. Those who take part in the cosmic struggle are holy warriors, proud, strong, deserving of respect and prestige. [Seen in this context, the disparity in strength and matériel between an economic, military, and decidedly secular and hedonistic West, led by what is often dubbed 'the world's only superpower'—The United States of America—and small groups of active and ascetic Islamic militants, becomes an essentially equal struggle,

²⁸³¹ and, eventually, if Allah so wills, an Islamic New World Order.

given that the conflict is conducted at the time and location, and in the manner and on the terms dictated by the terrorists. Thus the might of the opponent is essentially nullified, while the relative weakness of the militants becomes projected as greatly magnified strength].

[T]he views of militants are also informed by a more offensive reading of jihad....in which the aim “is to ensure the annihilation of the tyrannical force, whether a political or racial tyranny, or domination of one class over the other within the same race, [leaving] Islam [to] establish a new social and economic political system, in which all men enjoy real freedom.”²⁸³² Jihad is thus an obligation on all Muslims.

However, it is a mistake to see jihad as merely a tactic aimed at achieving a specific worldly goal. The point is critical in understanding why acts of spectacular terror, especially those involving the suicides of the attackers, occur. Fundamentally, acts of jihad are conceived of as demonstrations of faith, performed for [the Muslim Allah] by an individual. The immediate local aims or enemies are largely irrelevant. Jihad is part of the cosmic struggle, and thus to expect an immediate result from it would be presumptuous and wrong.

Though jihad will eventually result in victory, should Allah will it, that victory may be generations, centuries, even millennia away. It is the act that is important, not its results. Jihad is conceived of as an eternal process of affirming faith that should be performed by all Muslims at all times....the struggle of living as a good Muslim in a world of trial and temptation is jihad. Like so many other key Islamic concepts, jihad is thus uniquely transferable to any geographic or political context.

[Thus Jihad is part of] a statement of profound personal faith and a declaration to others, a ‘bearing witness.’²⁸³³ The suicide attack demonstrates faith and strength to those the bomber, and his comrades, hope to motivate. It makes it impossible to ignore what the martyr believes and suggests strongly that only something with inherent value, authenticity, and power could provoke such an act. Similarly, it suggests that the ‘cosmic struggle’ is also a reality. On top of all this, there is a shaming element. A suicide attack, an incredible sacrifice carried out ‘on their behalf,’ presents a challenge to a spectator’s own lack of faith or inaction....[although] extremists are aware that, of the many Muslims sympathetic to them, very, very few are going to act on those sentiments. Though they may be pleased, sometimes secretly....and feel a profound, though complex, identification with [their] cause, the vast majority of Muslims do not condone [their] methods and are not disposed to take up arms.’²⁸³⁴

Certainly, for many reasons, some convoluted, some not, the Mahdi will invoke a global Muslim jihad. Inevitably, this will lead to a military campaign, and war. ‘Unbelievers will be put to the sword.’

The question begged, of course, is: Why? Why would the ‘king of the south’ wage war, it would appear in largely conventional terms, with the much more powerful ‘king of the north,’ the Antichrist? Whilst conjecture,

²⁸³² Syed Qutb, Egyptian radical thinker.

²⁸³³ Arabic: shahid, Qur’anic word for martyr or the martyred, also means witness.

²⁸³⁴ Burke, Jason, *Al Qaeda—the True Story of Radical Islam*, pp.25-35,47,48,50,51 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

the reason could rest, in part, on the extent of the Antichrist's personal geopolitical influence. *'After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.'*²⁸³⁵ The 'ten horns' represent ten end-time regions into which the world is divided. Three of these regions are destined to fall before the Antichrist. It is submitted that the three most likely are:

1. North America (including Mexico);
2. Europe; and,
3. Russia.

These would give the Antichrist dictatorial powers over almost half the landmass of the planet giving him a de facto world-girdling empire in the northern hemisphere, an empire, ironically, 'on which the sun does not set.' As a result, he would have access to the oil and gas reserves of Mexico, Canada, United States, Northern Europe, and Russia—and through Russia to its suppliers in Central Asia.

So an attack by the *'king of the south'*—head of a world region almost exclusively dependent upon oil and gas exports—on the *'king of the north'* could be propelled by the latter's interdiction of those exports.²⁸³⁶ Any resulting shortfall in the West, however, could be made good, in the near-term at any rate, by supplies from Russia and Mexico, and, out of region, from South America and West Africa.

That there would be a predictable, immediate, and violent reaction throughout the Muslim world to the events which had resulted in the destruction or removal of the Muslim shrine, the centrepiece of the Haram ash Sharif,²⁸³⁷ The Mosque of Omar²⁸³⁸ / The Dome of the Rock, and the subsequent construction and dedication of the Jewish Third Temple on that very site,²⁸³⁹ something wholly unacceptable to the Muslim mind, is quite easily perceived, and this would serve as fertile ground for jihad, but because of the Muslim eschatological belief that

²⁸³⁵ Dan 7:7,8

²⁸³⁶ possibly by naval blockade of Straits of Hormuz or by sinking supertankers in that narrow channel, linked to removal of tanker insurance cover.

²⁸³⁷ The Noble Sanctuary, the third most holy site in Islam, after Mecca and Medina.

²⁸³⁸ technically a shrine rather than a mosque.

²⁸³⁹ the topography of the rockhead dictates that the earlier temples were build on that very site, on the apex of the mount (Hebrew: Zion, meaning, literally, *'the highest point,'* a reference to the foundation stone and the Sanctuary)—the remote Dome of the Spirits / Dome of the Tablets, located 100 metres / 109 yards to the north of the Dome of the Rock, features what is mistakenly assumed to be the topmost outcrop of the rockhead, but which is actually a fragment of the ancient Herodian or Hadrianian pavement, the rockhead being 4.8 metres (15 feet) below the surface.

Baggal, as he is termed—the Antichrist—will precede the Mahdi onto the world stage, the Muslim full-scale reaction must await the arrival of the Mahdi, thus explaining in large measure the want of an immediate pan-Islamic response to the Antichrist's acts with the Jews over the Third Temple.

Whatever the final compelling mix, according to Islamic writings, especially the hadith,²⁸⁴⁰ the Mahdi, the twelfth and last Imam, in tandem with the then leading Imam,²⁸⁴¹ is to wage war with the '666' beast, known as the '*son of perdition*' to Judæo-Christians, and more colloquially as 'the Antichrist.'²⁸⁴² This gives by far the most cogent explanation of all as to why the Mahdi would attack the militarily-superior forces of the '*king of the north*:' he is prophesied to do so, and so is compelled to attack.²⁸⁴³ Contrary to the account given in the book of Daniel, of course, in the hadith the Mahdi is successful, overcoming the Antichrist at Armageddon, of all places, and establishing a world-girdling Muslim Caliphate. Unfortunately for the Mahdi and all Islam, what is perceived to be the Antichrist at Armageddon will, in fact, be the true Messiah, and the forces of Islam will meet their fate along with the forces of the rest of this apostate world.

²⁸⁴⁰ Bukhari Hadith: supposedly the writings of the sayings of the prophet Mohammed, duly sanitised of spurious additions, of which there were about 60,000, no less; Lacey, Robert, *The Kingdom*, p.479:

'Belief in the future coming of a Mahdi, or messiah, trickles back into the early years of Islamic history. The Koran itself makes no mention of a Mahdi, but during the leadership disputes that followed Muhammad's death, sayings with a messianic flavour began to be attributed to him.

'The princes will corrupt the earth,' Muhammad was said to have prophesied, 'so one of my people will be sent to bring back justice.'

Different hadith, or traditions, fleshed out this 'right-guided one' or Mahdi—though few Muslim theologians treated them as seriously as the more down-to-earth hadith on which Islamic law is based. The earth, it was prophesied, would swallow up the armies sent against the Mahdi. His coming would be marked by violence. He would come from among the blood descendants of the Prophet, his name would be Muhammad, he would appear at the dawn of a new century. One tradition even specified that the redeemer would bear certain facial characteristics.'

Patai, Raphael, *The Arab Mind*, p.146:

'The Hadith—the great storehouse of originally oral religious tradition which regulates all aspects of Muslim life.'

²⁸⁴¹ possible correspondence with the rise of the Antichrist from relative obscurity and his alliance with the False Prophet, q.v. sup.

²⁸⁴² who is supposed to have one eye or a damaged eye, according to Islamic writings; possible vague Islamic correspondence with Zech 11:17, q.v. sup.; known as Baggal in Islamic eschatology.

²⁸⁴³ *Wikipedia* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Islam—Muslims believe that the Islamic Prophet Muhammad prophesied several events to occur just before the advent of the Day of Judgment (Yawm al-Qiyamah). Al Messieih Al Dajjal (the Antichrist) will fool people into believing that he is God and ask people to worship him. True believers will reject him but will not be able to defeat him on their own. God will then send the Messiah [Mahdi] to earth to fight the Antichrist in the battle of Armageddon, and he will defeat the unlawful Messiah and his followers.'

Chapter 18

The Lamb & His Firstfruits

The fourteenth chapter of Revelation is both the sequel and God's answer to the wickedness of those described in the previous chapter. Here God intervenes in grace and judgement.

The first five verses form a brief preview of certain events which are to happen after the glorious return of Christ: *'And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred and forty four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: And I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.'*²⁸⁴⁴

A number of erroneous interpretations have arisen out of these five verses, mainly centring on where the events take place. Many expositors place the singing of the one hundred and forty-four thousand before the throne of God in heaven, but we have the word of Christ in John: *'And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but*

²⁸⁴⁴ Rev 14:1-5; the restriction on those singing that new song which no man could *'learn'* or *'understand,'* from Greek: manthano, appears to exclude the bulk of the firstfruits, the *'dead in Christ,'* cf. I Thes 4:16d. Presumably, they will otherwise be employed. The use of Greek: oudeis, for *'no man'* actually means *'nobody,'* thus appearing to lend some support, albeit very weak, to the contention that the 144,000 comprises both males and females (cp. The use of Greek: anthropos, *'man,'* in Rev 13:8).

*he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.*²⁸⁴⁵ Doubtless, the same expositors would counter that the one hundred and forty-four thousand are spirit beings and thus perfectly capable of being in heaven before the throne, but they would be in profound error.

The answer to this postulation is relatively straightforward: The Lamb, Christ, stands on Mount Zion, which is on earth. With him are the one hundred and forty-four thousand who *'follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth,'* so the scene described takes place centred on Jerusalem. The voice from heaven, as of thunder, referred to in the second verse, ends with a colon; the balance thereof, the voice of harpers and others, comes from heaven, the abode of the Father. This is complimentary to the content of the third verse, from where springs the main error. This verse opens with, *'And they sung as it were a new song before the throne.'* This does not mean that they are actually before the throne in heaven. The phrase *'as it were'* can relate, as is confusingly common in New Testament Greek, to either the song or the throne. The song is obviously a new song because, later in the same verse, it states that, *'no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand,'* so it is not *'as it were'* a new song; it is a new song. It follows that the phrase, *'as it were,'* relates to *'before the throne.'* The scene is not *'before the throne,'* but *'as it were, before the throne.'* The scene is still on earth, on Mount Zion, but in full view of God's throne, for it is before the Lamb's throne, on Mount Zion. The singing takes place on earth; the voice and harping accompaniment comes from heaven. The view here is one of utter harmony between God's throne in heaven, the Lamb's throne on earth, and the *'elect,'* the redeemed; namely, the firstfruits of the church.

The *'virgins'*²⁸⁴⁶ of the fourth verse is a correct, literal translation, but the connotation can be misleading for some. There is no attempt to advocate celibacy over against marriage in the end-times,²⁸⁴⁷ but only to emphasise their chastity in life. They have kept themselves from the idolatry so blatantly fostered by the Beast and the False Prophet. Repeatedly in the Old Testament, idolatry is likened to fornication and adultery.²⁸⁴⁸ It has been observed time and time again throughout history that idolatry inexorably leads to wanton and perverse sexual practices.

These *'virgins'* have the highest fellowship available: that with the Lamb. They are greatly honoured to be among the firstfruits to Christ. Christ was the firstfruit in resurrection, confirmed by Paul: *'But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.'*²⁸⁴⁹ The position of the church in this context is this: *'Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should*

²⁸⁴⁵ John 3:13

²⁸⁴⁶ Greek: parthenoi.

²⁸⁴⁷ cf. Heb 13:4

²⁸⁴⁸ cf. Hosea

²⁸⁴⁹ I Cor 15:20

*be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.*²⁸⁵⁰ In a day of wholesale falsehood and mass deception—perpetrated by Satan, his demons, and his willing henchmen—these '*virgins*' will be held unblemished and without guile before God. That they were '*not defiled with women*' speaks of their remaining apart and separate from defiling women, a direct reference, given the biblical allegorical relationship of a woman with a church, to those false and defiling churches: the worldly churches of Satan.

The scene now shifts to what is correctly termed the '*mid-heaven*.'²⁸⁵¹ This speaks of the universality of the message. '*And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of the waters.*'²⁸⁵² The angel here is the first of three in the next seven verses of chapter fourteen having different announcements. Before the end, '*This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*'²⁸⁵³ But such will be the mind of unreconstructed man that the gospel, in the very end days, will be all but extinguished, save in the minds of the 'elect,' and, to a lesser extent, those who will comprise the 'intermediate people.'²⁸⁵⁴

The first angel of chapter fourteen announces the judgement and brings the gospel to the minds of those of the earth who have neither received the mark of the Beast nor worshipped the Beast or his image, those termed the 'intermediate people.'²⁸⁵⁵ It is made freely available to all who will receive it; not just revealed to the 'elect' few. The gospel is everlasting; it changeth not, neither does God change, '*For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*'²⁸⁵⁶ The good news for these 'intermediate people' is that their trial is over, and the trial of their persecutors is begun. The vials of God's wrath are to be poured out only on those taking the mark of the Beast; they will have no effect on those who have refused to take the mark.²⁸⁵⁷

Gospel preached

There is a continuing controversy as to when the point is reached, or perhaps was reached, that the gospel is preached throughout the whole world. Many contend that this event has been completed but there is no scriptural support for such a contention. The only element which appears relevant to the timing and which is

²⁸⁵⁰ Jas 1:17,18

²⁸⁵¹ cf. *Green's Literal Translation*.

²⁸⁵² Rev 14:6,7; '*the everlasting gospel*' is rendered '*an everlasting gospel*' in *Green's Literal Translation*.

²⁸⁵³ Mat 24:14

²⁸⁵⁴ q.v. inf.

²⁸⁵⁵ q.v. sup.

²⁸⁵⁶ Mal 3:6

²⁸⁵⁷ q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

consistently overlooked is found in the words of Christ: *'This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.'*²⁸⁵⁸ The crucial wording here is, *'preached in all the world for a witness.'*²⁸⁵⁹ There is no mention of preaching on a worldwide mass movement, evangelising and baptismal scale. The witnessing references in the gospels and, more especially, in Acts, are not worldwide preaching for a final witness. Preaching is something done physically; it imports personal involvement; physical acts; words spoken. The only reference to such worldwide witnessing activity in the Bible is found in Revelation chapter eleven, in the personages of the two witnesses. The angel's subsequent proclamation of the gospel *'in the midst of heaven'*²⁸⁶⁰ is an announcement of some rapidity; a reprise and reminder, even a warning, rather than long-term witnessing.

There is one Old Testament word which resonates in this regard: '[W]hat are the implications of the word Maskil.... [I]t has not been easy to find the correct equivalent in English. Literally, it could mean 'man of understanding,' 'man of insight,' or 'instructor'....I believe that the evidence²⁸⁶¹ goes to show that it corresponds [therein] to a particular office. In the Bible, and in the book of Daniel in particular, a maskil is one who is both endowed with the gift of insight into divine wisdom and a teacher of that wisdom. *'The maskilim (plural of maskil) of the people shall give understanding to the multitude.'*²⁸⁶² *'The maskilim shall be as bright as the brightness of the firmament, and those who bring righteousness to the multitude, like the stars for ever and ever.'*²⁸⁶³ *'And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.'*²⁸⁶⁴

From this, it is clear that the end-time 'elect' shall be maskilim. That part of the 'elect' can only be exclusively male, so far as teaching and discussing doctrine are concerned, for females are not permitted to do so.²⁸⁶⁵ In addition, the Hebrew word itself is masculine. It is related to haskalah, meaning 'enlightenment' and 'intellect.' The word maskil used in certain prefatory notes in Psalms indicates that it contains instruction in Godliness. The two 'elect' instructors par excellence, of course, are the two witnesses.

As prophesied, events then happen quickly: *'The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.'*²⁸⁶⁶ Immediately after the death and resurrection of the two witnesses, the third and final woe commences, culminating in the return of Christ, His victory over the evil triumvirate, and the setting up of the

²⁸⁵⁸ Mat 24:14

²⁸⁵⁹ (sublinear emphasis added)

²⁸⁶⁰ Rev 14:6,7

²⁸⁶¹ found in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

²⁸⁶² Dan 11:33

²⁸⁶³ Dan 12:3, *'And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.'* This speaks of all of God's people down through the ages, as v.2 indicates.

²⁸⁶⁴ Dan 11:33; Vermes, Geza, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, pp.22,23 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

²⁸⁶⁵ I Cor 14:34a

²⁸⁶⁶ Rev 11:14

kingdom. Taking this in the context of the words of Christ in Matthew,²⁸⁶⁷ it is surely more than a reasonable contention that they refer solely to the activities of his two future witnesses and to the end-time 'elect,' expanded in the immediate and eschatological in Daniel: *'And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.'*²⁸⁶⁸ Although this had an exposition during the time of Epiphanes, a dual import appears appropriate. It follows that the gospel, the true and complete gospel of this current dispensation, has yet to be preached in all the world for a witness. And only then shall the end come.

Babylon's people

Chapter fourteen is significant in that it contains the first reference in Revelation to Babylon. The good news for all is contained in the words of the second angel: *'And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.'*²⁸⁶⁹ Drawing on many Old Testament passages, this is the evil empire, Satan's primary vehicle for the enslavement of mankind: the evil duality of an apostate religious system, founded on Rome (together with her harlot daughters), and a political, civil empire of awesome power. The entire of this section of the fourteenth chapter is proleptic.²⁸⁷⁰ Preterists regard Babylon here as a reference to pagan Rome alone; Historical interpreters as a reference to papal Rome;²⁸⁷¹ Futurists as a reference to the capital of the Antichrist who is yet to come, either Rome or Jerusalem. All are deficient or in error. Babylon, of course, is the pagan religious system, based on Rome, but it is also here the last resurrection of the political and civil empire; the entire coalescing in the very last eruption of the Holy Roman Empire, this time on a worldwide scale.

The following verses have not raised any significant comment, although, given the content, that is surprising: *'And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the Beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the Beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.'*²⁸⁷²

²⁸⁶⁷ Mat 24:14

²⁸⁶⁸ Dan 11:33

²⁸⁶⁹ Rev 14:8

²⁸⁷⁰ anticipatory of the content of chpts. 17,18

²⁸⁷¹ should be conjoined: Rome pagan, Rome papal.

²⁸⁷² Rev 14:9-12

The question begged is simple: if down through the ages the vast bulk of mankind has adhered to one or other manifestation of Satan's apostate religious system yet still retains an opportunity for salvation—based on their life lived subject to their conscience, and through the convicting of that conscience to repentance and obtaining salvation for the remission of sins—by dint of not having had exposure to the true gospel,²⁸⁷³ then why do those who similarly adhere to the same apostate religious system in the latter days, and who have the mark of the Beast, not only fail to receive an opportunity to repent and obtain salvation for the remission of sins, but are *'tormented with fire and brimstone....and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever'*?²⁸⁷⁴ God is not a respecter of persons, as Luke recorded, quoting Peter's realization: *'Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons,'*²⁸⁷⁵ so why the stark differentiation between such apparently like-minded peoples?

The answer appears to lie in the comparable nature of the opportunity made available to those alive at the end-time. These people are made more than abundantly cognisant of the nature of their sin and apostasy by the two witnesses.²⁸⁷⁶ The differentiation between the two groupings is encapsulated in Mark: *'He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.'*²⁸⁷⁷ So effective and overwhelming to an open and contrite mind will be the witnessing of the two witnesses that the entire world of sin and apostasy will be left utterly without excuse. The miracles done by the two witnesses, allied to their testimony, promulgated worldwide over a three-and-a-half-year period, will leave the people of the time condemned. The gospel will have been laid open before them, and they will have rejected it. Not only that, despite being warned as to the true nature of the Best, they will have taken the dreaded mark. Once they have done that, the way of redemption is barred. They cannot be called by God; they are not called by God.

The well known warning of apostasy contained in Hebrews refers, but only in part: *'For it is impossible for those who were once'*²⁸⁷⁸ *enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.'*²⁸⁷⁹ Basically, for each individual there is but one

²⁸⁷³ q.v. inf.; cp. Rev 20:12, *'And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.'*

²⁸⁷⁴ or, correctly *'to the age end of the age ends.'*

²⁸⁷⁵ Acts 10:34b

²⁸⁷⁶ and, to a vastly lesser extent, by the other 'elect'; but all witnessing will cease, with the deaths of the two witnesses: John 9:4, *'I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work.'*

²⁸⁷⁷ Mark 16:16

²⁸⁷⁸ Greek: hapax, *'once-for-all.'*

²⁸⁷⁹ Heb 6:4-8

opportunity to secure salvation. It is either accepted and held fast, or it is rejected. If rejected, it does not matter whether this is done initially,²⁸⁸⁰ or subsequent upon receiving the Holy Spirit, the end result of all such rejection or repudiation is the same: death. While the latter day world population, by definition, will not have been imbued by the Holy Spirit, so evil will be their ways and so vehement their rejection of God's word and gospel,²⁸⁸¹ despite the words and deeds and warnings of the two witnesses and the instruction of the latter day 'elect,' that they will have become incorrigible, fit only for destruction. This, in itself, is a sad commentary on the state of mankind in the latter days. Paul terms these the '*perilous times*,'²⁸⁸² then goes on to give a description of the debased nature of mankind at that time. Even Christ raised the question in the parable of the importunate widow in Luke: '*And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?*'²⁸⁸³ In the latter days, true faith on earth will be at an absolute premium.

Those refusing God's message, and the results, are described by Paul: '*And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*'²⁸⁸⁴ These despicable people actually take extreme pleasure in their perverseness and wickedness, wittingly seeking to take their wickedness and depravity to the very limits of their ability. The declension will be to the uttermost. No generation ever before will have been so evil as that at the end-time.

The lot of those trusting not in the Lord is described by Jeremiah: '*Thus saith the Lord: cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited.*'²⁸⁸⁵

²⁸⁸⁰ cf. II Peter 2:20-22 inf.

²⁸⁸¹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.35:

'Mat 12:19, '*he shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.*'

He will not strive, nor cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets. The word that is used for 'to cry aloud' is the word that is used for the barking of a dog, the croaking of a raven, the bawling of a drunken man, the uproar of a discontented audience in a theatre. It means that Jesus would not brawl with men....In Jesus, there is the quiet, strong serenity of one who seeks to conquer by love, and not by strife of words.'

²⁸⁸² II Tim 3:1f.

²⁸⁸³ Luke 18:7,8; don't 'nag' God? read Luke 18:7, '*And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them.*' Prayer should be continuing, heartfelt, and fervent. The widow had come up against an unjust judge '*which feared not God, neither regarded man,*' who would not grant her relief from her adversary, but who was worn down, eventually, by her continual pleading. God, Who is by no means an unjust judge—rather, the antithesis—does listen to His 'elect,' and then acts speedily.

²⁸⁸⁴ II Thes 2:10-12

²⁸⁸⁵ Jer 17:5,6

One chance

But the lot of those who do trust in the Lord is found in the two verses following thereupon: *'Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.'*²⁸⁸⁶

The lot of those receiving the gift of salvation, and then turning from it, is found in an epistle of Paul, *'Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy;*²⁸⁸⁷ *for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are,*²⁸⁸⁸ also in Peter, *'For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is returned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire,'*²⁸⁸⁹ again by Paul, *'And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years,'*²⁸⁹⁰ and, finally, *'For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.'*²⁸⁹¹

²⁸⁸⁶ Jer Jer 17:7,8

²⁸⁸⁷ Peake, A. S., *Jeremiah Volume II*, pp.210,211 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'For He was the Creator, it was He who had planted, He who had built up. Certainly, He did not destroy His own work wantonly or with indifference, but only with pain; if He brings Himself to do it, then no alternative remains to be tried....If He destroys His own work it can only be with pain and reluctance, and because no alternative is open to Him.' [It is God's decision, God's call, whether that destruction be wreaked by human, natural, or supernatural means, or, indeed, the division or measure which exists between punishment in this life and punishment at the time of the second death]. 'The thought here expressed [in Jer 45:4], that the Creator, just because He is the Creator, must be filled with love for His creation [q.v. John 3:16-17].'

²⁸⁸⁸ I Cor 3:16,17

²⁸⁸⁹ II Peter 2:20-22

²⁸⁹⁰ Gal 4:6-10

²⁸⁹¹ Heb 6:4-8

Fallen away

Those who do fall away from the truth of God have these familiar characteristics: a basic lack of genuine love for God and love and concern for others and a refutation of the '*royal law*.' The reason is given in Matthew: '*And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.*'²⁸⁹² Indeed, it is much worse than even that state of depravity: '*We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted but not forsaken; cast down but not destroyed.*'²⁸⁹³ So widespread will the persecution be, that those who have been called to the truth but have fallen away will be among the foremost of persecutors; a horrifying prospect.

'The sorrowful and tragic act of apostasy²⁸⁹⁴ is expressed by just one word in the Greek.²⁸⁹⁵ To "*fall away*" seems dramatically incongruous in the context of the blessed privileges described in the previous two verses.²⁸⁹⁶ Everything about the gracious work of God through the gospel leads one to expect an outcome of salvation. That redeemed people fall away is not God's purpose in regenerating people. This makes the warning shocking and is part of the reason for the controversy that has attended this passage.

Nothing in the grammar lessens the impact. Lane comments, "The aorist tense indicates a decisive moment of commitment to apostasy. In the LXX, the term²⁸⁹⁷ has reference to the expression of a total attitude reflecting deliberate and calculated renunciation of God."²⁸⁹⁸ He rightly points out that this is the equivalent of the idea of Hebrews²⁸⁹⁹ where the term²⁹⁰⁰ is used in the phrase "*falling away from the living God.*" Therefore Hebrews is clearly a warning against apostasy."²⁹⁰¹ Lenski aptly describes it: "There is no need to say more, this one word tells the whole story. It is tragic to the highest degree."

The impact of the warning is heightened by the horrific consequences. Apostates are beyond hope, it is "*impossible to renew them again to repentance.*"²⁹⁰² The reason for this impossibility is the shame and reproach they have brought to Christ: they "*crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.*"²⁹⁰³ The reference is to the mockery to which Jesus was subject at His trial and crucifixion. The passage uses two present participles (literally translated "*crucifying again*" and "*exposing to public humiliation*") to describe the state of apostates and why it is impossible for them to be renewed. Apostates are disillusioned followers. These make the best propaganda artists against a movement. Apostates bring continued shame and reproach to the

²⁸⁹² Mat 24:12,13

²⁸⁹³ II Cor 4:8,9

²⁸⁹⁴ Heb 6:6a

²⁸⁹⁵ Greek: parapesontas, '*fall away.*'

²⁸⁹⁶ Heb 6:4,5

²⁸⁹⁷ Greek: parapiptein.

²⁸⁹⁸ Ezek 20:27,22:4

²⁸⁹⁹ Heb 3:12

²⁹⁰⁰ Greek: apostenai.

²⁹⁰¹ Heb 6:6

²⁹⁰² Heb 6:6b

²⁹⁰³ Heb 6:6d

Lord and thus dishonour Him in the most wicked manner. For this reason, some have concluded that this sin is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit and is unforgivable as Jesus taught in the gospels.²⁹⁰⁴

Lenski concurs: "The word blasphemy is not used here as it is in the passages in the Gospels that speak about the sin against the Holy [Spirit]; but "*exposing to public ignominy*" is a full equivalent."¹³ Likewise, Simon Kistemaker writes, "Deliberately sinning against God in full awareness and knowledge of God's divine revelation constitutes sin against the Holy Spirit."²⁹⁰⁵ This sin God does not forgive."

Further support for the identification of apostasy as blasphemy against the Holy Spirit can be found in the parallel warning in Hebrews.²⁹⁰⁶ There wilful sinners are warned of receiving a more severe punishment than those who thus sinned under Moses because they have "*insulted the Spirit of grace*."²⁹⁰⁷

The book of Hebrews is filled with quotations and allusions to the Old Testament. Therefore, the warning against apostasy may have roots in Numbers.²⁹⁰⁸ Here there is a distinction between the one who "*unwittingly*" sins and the one who sins "*defiantly*." The first is offered atonement upon making the appropriate sacrifices, the latter is cut off. The terminology is very similar to the teaching in Hebrews: "*But the person who does anything defiantly, whether he is native or an alien, that one is blaspheming the Lord; and that person shall be cut off from among his people. Because he has despised the word of the Lord and has broken His commandment, that person shall be completely cut off; his guilt shall be on him.*"²⁹⁰⁹ Defiance [on the basis of knowledge] is blasphemy and it shall not be forgiven.

We need to understand that this is not about backsliding. If it were, many, if not most of the readers of Hebrews, would lose hope. What is being described is a wilful renunciation of the faith, not a Christian having through weakness, carelessness, or temporary indifference fallen into serious sin. Even Peter who denied His Lord three times was forgiven and renewed to fellowship. Barnes comments on the meaning of "*fallen away*" which he considers the equivalent of "apostatize from," "[It] implies an entire renunciation of Christianity, or a going back to a state of Judaism, heathenism, or sin." Calvin offers this explanation: "But the Apostle speaks not here of theft, or perjury, or murder, or drunkenness, or adultery; but he refers to a total defection or falling away from the Gospel, when a sinner offends not God in some one thing, but entirely renounces his grace."²⁹¹⁰

This 'one chance of salvation' does not contradict Christ's words in John: '*Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice. And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. I can of my*

²⁹⁰⁴ cf. Mat 12:31

²⁹⁰⁵ Mat 12:32; Mark 3:29; Luke 12:10

²⁹⁰⁶ Heb 10:26-29

²⁹⁰⁷ Heb 10:29; Marquis, Doc, *The Arrival of Antichrist*, Part 1, notes that during the Illuminati initiation ceremony, each initiate must sign their given occult name in their own blood in what the Illuminati call *The Book of the Dead*, a book covered in lamb's hide, no less!

²⁹⁰⁸ Num 15:22-31

²⁹⁰⁹ Num 15:30,31

²⁹¹⁰ C.I.C. Ministry, issue 49 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

*own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.*²⁹¹¹ This must be read in conjunction with the Great White Throne Judgement in Revelation: *'And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.'*²⁹¹²

Those who are judged '*according to their works*' are those who had not heard of the Word, or had opportunity during their lifetime to become part of God's people. They are judged on the merit or otherwise of their lives lived in the conviction of their own conscience. Those whose names are written in '*the book of life*' will have lived lives sufficiently good to indicate that, had they heard the Word, they would have acted upon it and accepted it, wholeheartedly. That, of course, is down to God's judgement.

'We do not and cannot condemn a man who has gone wrong through ignorance, and because he never had the chance to know any better; but if a man who has had every chance to know the right does the wrong, then he does stand condemned. We do not condemn a child for that for which we would condemn an adult; we would not condemn a savage for conduct which we would condemn in a civilized man; we do not expect the person brought up in the handicaps of a city slum to live the life of a person brought up from birth in a good and a comfortable home. We must remember that the greater our privileges have been, the greater is our condemnation if we have failed to shoulder the responsibilities and accept the obligations which these privileges bring with them.'²⁹¹³

'The plain fact is that when people do not want to listen to the truth, they will easily enough find an excuse for not listening to it.'²⁹¹⁴ They do not even try to be consistent in their criticisms; they will criticise the same person, and the same institution, from quite opposite grounds and reasons.'²⁹¹⁵

Reaping the earth

The concluding section of Revelation chapter fourteen comprises: *'And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them. And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and*

²⁹¹¹ John 5:28-30; the definite article '*the*' in v.29, appearing before both uses of the word '*resurrection*,' does not appear in the original Greek text.

²⁹¹² Rev 20:12-15; cp. Jude 12g, '*twice dead*.'

²⁹¹³ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, pp.13,14

²⁹¹⁴ Huxley, Aldous: 'Most ignorance is vincible ignorance. We don't know because we don't want to know.'

²⁹¹⁵ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol.2, p.11

upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud voice to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.²⁹¹⁶ There is a rather obvious correlation between Joel and Revelation: Joel's sickle²⁹¹⁷ correlates with this tract in chapter fourteen; the darkening of the sun and moon of Joel²⁹¹⁸ with the fifth vial of Revelation, and also the corresponding prophecy in Matthew.²⁹¹⁹

The blessed status of the dead that die henceforth in the Lord is attested. These have died during the period after Revelation was written,²⁹²⁰ thus the use of the word '*henceforth*,' but prior to the Great Tribulation. Consequently, they are not subject to the incomparable trials and tribulations²⁹²¹ suffered by their 'Tribulation brethren,' described by Christ: '*For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should be no flesh saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.*'²⁹²²

The reaping of the earth is twofold.²⁹²³ The first, in order of appearance, is the reaping of the harvest of the earth by Christ, described as sitting on a cloud with a golden crown on his head. The exact moment of this momentous event is intimated to Him by an angel from God the Father. That Christ is authorised to so judge and execute judgement on all the earth is recorded in John: '*For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.*'²⁹²⁴ That this reaping of the earthly harvest is done by Christ should not be surprising, for the 'elect' are His. This first reaping is that of the resurrection of the '*dead in Christ*,' followed by the one hundred and forty-four thousand. At this time, Christ is not yet actually on the earth, for He has not yet returned to the mount of

²⁹¹⁶ Rev 14:13-20

²⁹¹⁷ Joel 3:12-14

²⁹¹⁸ Joel 3:15

²⁹¹⁹ Mat 24:29

²⁹²⁰ 95–96AD

²⁹²¹ as the nascent Judæo-Christian grows in faith, he or she begins to partake of our Lord's trials, His testings, His temptations, and, *de minimis*, in base form, His sufferings. (q.v. Zech 11:9; Rom 5:3-5,8:29,35-39; II Cor 1:3-11; I Peter 1:7,4:12-19; Rev 3:18). These intensify as the Christian grows in Christ.

²⁹²² Mat 24:21,22; the word '*sake*' should be deleted as it does not occur in the original Greek text, leaving '*but for the elect.*'

²⁹²³ Rev 14:13-20

²⁹²⁴ John 5:22,27

Olives. At this point He is *'in the air,'* the first heaven, *'on a white cloud.'* Once the second sickle has been thrust in, of course, Christ is on the earth, for by that time He will have been here for seventy-five days.²⁹²⁵

Some expositors regard this harvest as a judgement of the damned, but the conclusion is erroneous. *'Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest,'*²⁹²⁶ denotes a harvest anything but one merely of a judgement of the damned. Another interesting correlation lies in the parable of the kingdom: *'Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field. But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, wilt thou then we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into mine barn.'*²⁹²⁷ While this passage contains a sequence, the tares being dealt with first, it does not contradict the parallel tract in Revelation²⁹²⁸ which does not have this specific sequence, since the foregoing parable of the kingdom refers to a different and later event: the Great White Throne Judgement.

The second reaping in chapter fourteen is prefigured as being done by an angel, which might appear strange to some, although the word *'angel'* can equally be translated *'messenger.'* It should be recalled that the seven vials, or bowls, of the wrath of God are poured out on the end-time apostate world by seven angels. This is a judgement of the damned, with the end coming in the great battle which is to be waged in the valley of Jehoshaphat.²⁹²⁹ This reaping refers to the great battle, or, more accurately, war, given its geographical extent, of the forces of Satan against Christ on His return to earth. The wholesale casting of the tares into the fire of Matthew,²⁹³⁰ by contrast, refers to the events during the Great White Throne Judgement, an event which occurs after the completion of the Millennium.

The obvious correlation of the second reaping in chapter fourteen is with Joel: *'Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their*

²⁹²⁵ q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

²⁹²⁶ Luke 10:2

²⁹²⁷ Mat 13:24-30

²⁹²⁸ Rev 14:13-20

²⁹²⁹ q.v. inf.; the blood will flow over a distance of 200 miles (320 km.), or 1,600 furlongs, from the Greek: *stadia*, and to a depth of about four feet (120 cm.), to the horse bridles. This distance, e.g., is the distance from Bozrah in Edom in the south, cf. Isa 63:1-6, to the valley of Jehoshaphat at Jerusalem, cf. Joel 3:1-3,9-14, to Megiddo in the north, cf. Rev 16:14,16.

²⁹³⁰ Mat 13:30

*wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.*²⁹³¹ That the Assyrians, known to the world today as the Germanic peoples, in the main, will be present, is shown in Isaiah: *'For through the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which smote with a rod.'*²⁹³²

And of that second reaping, more later.

²⁹³¹ Joel 3:12-14

²⁹³² Isa 30:31

Chapter 19

Final Preparations for Judgement

In Revelation chapter ten²⁹³³ it was stated that the mystery of God was finished, but no details were furnished. Chapters fifteen and sixteen make good that wanting. To introduce these fearful judgements in the form of plagues, John is shown '*another sign in heaven,*' which is characterised as '*great and marvellous.*' In these plagues the wrath of God is filled. The plagues are recited in chapter sixteen.

Chapter fifteen contains only eight verses: '*And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the Beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of the saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest. And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle in heaven was opened: And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory*

²⁹³³ Rev 10:7

of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.'²⁹³⁴

Those who have secured victory over the Beast, his image, and his worship, are here pictured standing on a sea of glass mingled with fire. The sea of glass is a firm, unmoving counterpoint to the sea from which the Beast rises in chapter thirteen,²⁹³⁵ for that sea represents the masses of the world in tumult. The sea of glass has waters no longer disturbed, unalterable and utterly secure. The fire represents the trials through which the victorious have passed.

They have harps with which to accompany their praise of God.²⁹³⁶ The theme of their harp playing is the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. The song of Moses is recorded in the book of Exodus and is a song of deliverance and triumph: *'Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him.'*²⁹³⁷

This song celebrates the deliverance of the children of Israel from the forces of Satan acting through Pharaoh and his army. Likewise, the song of the Lamb celebrates the redemption and deliverance of the church from the forces of Satan acting through the Beast and his empire. The Passover lamb of Exodus has its fulfilment in Christ, our Passover: *'Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened.'*²⁹³⁸ *For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.'*²⁹³⁹ In their singing, they extol God's great and marvellous works, His righteousness and truth, His sovereignty over the nations, His holiness, and ultimate reception of universal worship.

²⁹³⁴ Rev 15:1-8

²⁹³⁵ Rev 13:1

²⁹³⁶ Rev 14:2

²⁹³⁷ Ex 15:1-21

²⁹³⁸ unleavened, to the Judæo-Christian, means all and anything that leavens or puffs up food. There is no distinction made between leavening by fermentation and chemical leavening. That said, the specific definition of chametz varies among religious and ethno-cultural traditions in the Middle East. In Ashkenazic and certain Sephardic applications of Jewish Law, chametz does not include baking soda, baking powder or like products. Although these are leavening agents, they leaven by chemical reaction whereas the prohibition against chametz is understood to apply only to fermentation. Thus, bagels, waffles and pancakes made with baking soda and matzo meal are considered permissible, while bagels made with sourdough and pancakes and waffles made with yeast are prohibited. Karaite Jews and many non-Ashkenazic Jewish traditions do not observe a distinction between chemical leavening and leavening by fermentation.

The main symbol of the Passover holiday is Hebrew: matza, pl. matzot, or unleavened bread, a type of flatbread made solely from flour and water which is continually worked from mixing through baking, so that it is not allowed to rise. Matzo may be made by machine or by hand; the latter type of matzot, called shmura matzo ("watched" or "guarded" matzo), is the bread of preference for the Passover Seder (literally: Order) in Orthodox Jewish communities.

²⁹³⁹ I Cor 5:7

The final four verses of chapter fifteen must be read with care as the various references to the Temple most often relate to the Sanctuary / Holy of Holies in heaven,²⁹⁴⁰ but in the ultimate verse it could be taken as a reference to the Temple at Jerusalem. This is because it states that, *'no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.'*²⁹⁴¹ As has been seen, no man has ascended into heaven, save Christ. It follows that the reference in this verse could be to the earthly Temple. If that be true, then the Temple at Jerusalem, having been desecrated by the Beast, is placed out of bounds to all men—especially the Antichrist who will have been headquartered there—until the wrath of God is poured out on the apostate world in the form of the seven vials, administered while the 'elect' are in the sky, attending the wedding supper of the Lamb.²⁹⁴² That it will remain a debased, profaned Temple is clear, since it is only cleansed of the abomination thirty days after Christ's return, as shown in Daniel.²⁹⁴³ And that presents the underlying difficulty in this interpretation: if the smoke of God is there present, the smoke of His glory,²⁹⁴⁴ then He will have arrived too soon, and to a profaned, *'abomination of desolation'* containing Temple at that!²⁹⁴⁵

The smoke filling the Temple, from the glory of God, underscores His power and glory. Where God's glory is manifest, man cannot abide the sight. So it was with Moses,²⁹⁴⁶ and in Solomon's day, *'And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the Lord, So that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord.'*²⁹⁴⁷ It should be noted that many have held that no Temple or Sanctuary will exist in Jerusalem at the return of Christ and some base this on the fact that the true Christian church is a Temple to the Lord: *'Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy Temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.'*²⁹⁴⁸ However, this does not preclude in any way an extant Temple or Sanctuary at Jerusalem at the time when Christ returns; it merely illumines the last verse of chapter fifteen.²⁹⁴⁹

A further difficulty with the composite approach is that one part of it is wholly founded on a particular interpretation of the eighth verse. Not only are there two usual translations for the actual building—Temple and

²⁹⁴⁰ q.v. inf. for discussion of the absence of a complete temple in heaven.

²⁹⁴¹ Rev 15:8; cf. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

²⁹⁴² q.v. inf.

²⁹⁴³ Dan 8:14; cf. 'The Days of Daniel.'

²⁹⁴⁴ Ex 40:34,35; I Kings 8:10,11

²⁹⁴⁵ not Ezekiel's millennial Fourth Temple, as the temple under consideration clearly pre-dates that.

²⁹⁴⁶ Ex 40:34,35

²⁹⁴⁷ I Kings 8:10,11

²⁹⁴⁸ Eph 2:19-22

²⁹⁴⁹ Rev 15:8

Sanctuary—there are two usual translations for the phrase rendered '*no man*,'²⁹⁵⁰ which can also mean '*no thing*.' The latter, if adopted, would appear to remove the underpinning of the postulation that the event cannot be in heaven owing to man not being able to enter. Interestingly, an earlier verse uses the same Greek word, again translated '*no man*:' '*And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.*'²⁹⁵¹ where man cannot be. Clearly, the proper translation here and in chapter fifteen is '*no one*' (being non-human) or '*no thing*.'

Under these circumstances, it is simply poor exegesis to import the understanding that the Temple that is filled with smoke is the physical Temple at Jerusalem. It follows that the correct correlation of the Temple of verse eight is in a straightforward continuation of the Temple or Sanctuary in verse five,²⁹⁵² and that is clearly identified as being in heaven. Where God's Spirit is, evil can find no place.

That there is a Temple or Sanctuary at Jerusalem at the time of Christ's return is evident from other passages led. That it is debased and profaned is made abundantly clear. And that Temple will only be cleansed of '*the abomination*' thirty days after Christ's return to earth.²⁹⁵³

Smoke

Smoke in the Tabernacle in the desert and in the physical Temple in Jerusalem was a sign of God's presence and power.²⁹⁵⁴ At the end of the building of the Tabernacle there cometh the words: '*Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud abode upon it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.*'²⁹⁵⁵ It had been in this cloud that God descended to give Moses the Law.²⁹⁵⁶ Once again, this strange mysterious luminous cloud appears when the first Temple was dedicated by Solomon, king of Israel.²⁹⁵⁷ In lower form, the Law commands the symbolic representation: '*And he*²⁹⁵⁸ *shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not.*'²⁹⁵⁹

²⁹⁵⁰ Greek: oudeis, oudemia, or ouden.

²⁹⁵¹ Rev 5:3

²⁹⁵² Rev 15:5

²⁹⁵³ Dan 8:14; cf. 'The Days of Daniel.'

²⁹⁵⁴ Ex 13:21f.; Isaiah 6:1-4 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): '*In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above [better: 'over against'] it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.*'

²⁹⁵⁵ Ex 40:34-38

²⁹⁵⁶ Ex 34:5

²⁹⁵⁷ I Kings 8:10f.; II Chron 5:13f., 7:2

²⁹⁵⁸ the high priest, on the day of Atonement.

²⁹⁵⁹ Lev 16:13

Since neither Tabernacle nor Temple exists at the present time, it follows that the vision of the Temple filled with smoke in Isaiah²⁹⁶⁰ could only be the Millennium Temple, from which the returned Christ will reign over the whole earth in glory, since *'the whole earth is full of his glory.'*²⁹⁶¹ Accordingly, Isaiah's personal projection into that time, in vision, is not literal, but figurative. It is intended not only to show that his sin, signified by his unclean lips, was purged away so that he could speak to the nation in a wholesome manner on the Lord's behalf—as seen in the intrusion contained in the following three verses²⁹⁶²—but also that he would stand in the inner court of the Lord, as a member of the immortal 'elect,' in the 'blessed time' of the Millennium of rest.

Verse eight of Revelation chapter fifteen,²⁹⁶³ therefore, must be in heaven, as are all the previous seven verses, and not in the earthly, profaned Third Temple,²⁹⁶⁴ or, for that matter, in the subsequent Millennium temple in Jerusalem.

Cleansing

It may appear strange, at first glance, for the cleansing of the Temple by Christ to fall on the day following that of the New Moon,²⁹⁶⁵ especially since that day is a weekly Sabbath. Why not on the preceding day? There is a precedent, however, for cleansing the Temple on the Sabbath. While John is not specific as to the day on which the first cleansing took place,²⁹⁶⁶ two other tracts,²⁹⁶⁷ both of which describe the second cleansing, when taken together, show that the event took place four days before the Passover.²⁹⁶⁸ Four days before the Passover that year fell on the weekly Sabbath, whereas the nearest New Moon occurred a further nine days before the weekly Sabbath.

Given the symmetry commonly found in the Bible, it is likely, therefore, that the first cleansing also took place on a weekly Sabbath. This is bolstered by the fact that Jesus forbade money-changing, in other words, temple commerce,²⁹⁶⁹ a particularly profane act when engaged in on the Sabbath. Also, during the second cleansing, Jesus forbade the carrying of a burden or a vessel through the Temple precinct.²⁹⁷⁰ Such an act

²⁹⁶⁰ Isa 6:1-4

²⁹⁶¹ Isa 6:3b

²⁹⁶² Isa 6:5-7

²⁹⁶³ Rev 15:8

²⁹⁶⁴ i.e., prior to cleansing by Christ thirty days after His arrival upon the mount of Olives.

²⁹⁶⁵ dark lunar conjunction q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet; to occur on 30th. October, 2027

²⁹⁶⁶ John 2:13-22

²⁹⁶⁷ Mark 11:15-20; John 12:1,12

²⁹⁶⁸ which was, on what is termed nowadays, 'Tuesday evening at dusk,' being just inside the actual start of the following day, 'Wednesday,' 14 Abib. The Bethany supper, cf. John 12:1,2, was six days before Jesus' celebration of the Passover; the triumphal riding into Jerusalem was five days before, John 12:12; and the cleansing was on the following day, i.e., four days before.

²⁹⁶⁹ John 2:14-16; latter verse's '*merchandise*,' Greek: *emporion*, meaning an emporium, a place of much commerce and profit.

²⁹⁷⁰ Mark 11:16

would also have deeply profaned the weekly Sabbath. Whilst buying and selling and trade are prohibited on the New Moon,²⁹⁷¹ a much greater offence would occur on a weekly Sabbath—a Sabbath Shabbathown—than on a New Moon Shabbathown.²⁹⁷²

With these precedents (one certain, the other inferential), it could be expected appropriate that Christ's third and final cleansing—three being the number of judgement—should fall on a weekly Sabbath, which it does, as will be seen later.²⁹⁷³

Spiritual temple

In addition to the physical building, there is a spiritual Temple at the time of Christ's return, in the form of the firstfruits born into the spirit.²⁹⁷⁴ This is the real Temple to which our Lord returns. Patently, the abominable Temple then at Jerusalem is utterly debarred from being able to receive the King of kings, for it is in need of cleansing; it is not so with the spiritual election of the firstfruits. In light of this, there is no benefit to be derived from the extraneous importation of seriously deficient exegetical conjecture.²⁹⁷⁵

The seven angels with the seven vials²⁹⁷⁶ are garbed in white linen with golden girdles to mark them as God's priests. They appear as priests because they come for the sacrificing of a great sacrifice to the offended holiness and justice of God.

The vials or bowls filled with the wrath of God are now ready to be poured out on the wicked, without mitigation, and without delay. The scene is thus set for the great and terrible Day of the Lord.

²⁹⁷¹ q.v. sup.

²⁹⁷² no matter which year is selected for the crucifixion, the nearest New Moon is always thirteen days precedent to the day of Christ's death; the -own suffix imports the added meaning of emphasis or a singling out.

²⁹⁷³ actually falls on Sabbath, 30 October, 2027AD, q.v. inf.

²⁹⁷⁴ Eph 2:19-22

²⁹⁷⁵ Rev 5:18 Temple or Sanctuary is in heaven.

²⁹⁷⁶ 'vials,' is better translated 'bowls.' Greek: phiale; similarly, in Zech 12:2 the translation 'cup' is inadequate; it is better as 'bowl.'

Chapter 20

First Six Vials

The cadence and modus of the wrath of God are here revealed, the entire dynamic being thrice septempartite: seven seals, the seventh seal being divided into seven trumpets, and, in turn, the seventh trumpet being divided into seven vials of the wrath of God. Seven is the number of the holy and sacred, and the number of completion; thrice-over signals complete judgement. The martyred knew from Romans that, *'it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.'*²⁹⁷⁷ It must happen, in its course.

'When God spares and even indulges the wicked for a time, He proves His servants like gold and silver.'²⁹⁷⁸ ²⁹⁷⁹ God often makes wicked people instruments of destruction to one another.²⁹⁸⁰ The righteous Lord permits the transgressors to execute His righteous vengeance upon one another, but what is in prospect here is of an entirely different order. The great and terrible Day of the Lord will occur when God will pour out His plagues of vengeance on this world and its persecuting powers.

²⁹⁷⁷ Rom 12:19

²⁹⁷⁸ Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 1, pp.35,36

²⁹⁷⁹ Calvin, John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 1, p.36 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'[The wicked] prostitute the sacred name of God to the jests of the impious.'

²⁹⁸⁰ Deut 32:35,39, *'To me belongeth vengeance, and recompense: their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste. See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.'* 'Make haste,' Hebrew: chuwsh, literally 'making haste,' a word singular and masculine, is here joined with the former word plural and feminine, to intimate a particular hastening of every judgement in sore measure. The same was referred to by Peter when speaking of 'false teachers.' II Peter 2:1,3, *'their judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their perdition slumbereth not.'*

Chapter sixteen of Revelation lists the seven last vial plagues to be poured out on the apostate, but there is a difference when compared with the first six trumpets. These last plagues, comprising the seventh or last trump are, at once, far more extreme and wide-ranging and, in part, more specific in their target. The first six seals are borne by all mankind alive at the time of the end. The first six of the seventh seal's plagues, the first six trumpets, are directed toward all humanity then alive on earth save only those who have been sealed by God in their foreheads, in other words, the one hundred and forty-four thousand, confirmed in, *'Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea nor the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them that were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.'*²⁹⁸¹ The final trumpet, the 'last trump,' itself divided into seven vials, is a great deal more specific, and onerous. The first vial only falls upon a certain element: *'And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth: and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the Beast, and upon them which worshipped his image,'*²⁹⁸² while the pouring out of the fifth vial is location specific, although the effects are felt throughout the entire world-girdling Beast kingdom, *'And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the Beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain.'*²⁹⁸³ The final seven vials of the final trumpet are directed specifically at the wicked of the world. The 'elect' are sealed and attending the wedding supper of the Lamb *'in the air'* during this time, and the 'intermediate peoples,' as they are termed herein, are not affected by the remaining vials since they have not taken the mark of the Beast, nor worshipped him or his image.²⁹⁸⁴

Plagues of Egypt

The seven vial plagues²⁹⁸⁵ parallel, in part, the nine plagues and the Passover poured out by God on the Egyptians.²⁹⁸⁶ Platt²⁹⁸⁷ lists them as follows:

²⁹⁸¹ Rev 7:3,4

²⁹⁸² Rev 16:2

²⁹⁸³ Rev 16:10

²⁹⁸⁴ Rev 7:13-17

²⁹⁸⁵ the seven trumpets, the last divided into seven vials or bowls of God's wrath, appear foreshadowed, in a way, in the seven day's God-ordained trumpetry at the fall of Jericho (Josh 6:3-5), with the last day—when the city's walls fell outward over the glasis, completely filling the surrounding defensive vallum or ditch—comprising seven circuits of trumpet blowing.

²⁹⁸⁶ thought to be in 1447BC under Pharaoh Dudimose, thirty-sixth ruler of the 13th Dynasty, and not Ramesses the Great, i.e., Ramesses II, of the 19th Dynasty—q.v. Rohl, David M., *Pharaohs and Kings: A Biblical Quest*, p.284, 'New Chronology' and 'Conclusion 26.' This is seriously questioned, however, with the Exodus placed in 1599BC, deriving from the *7,000-year Chronology*, q.v. inf.

²⁹⁸⁷ Platt, Steve, *The Ten Plagues of Egypt*

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1. River turned to blood;	6. Boils, breaking forth with blains;
2. Frogs;	7. Thunder and hail, mixed with fire;
3. Lice, or stinging gnats;	8. Locusts;
4. Flies;	9. Thick darkness; and, finally,
5. Disease afflicting Egyptian livestock;	10. Egyptian firstborn, man & beast, die.

The fundamental difference between the pre-Exodus plagues and end-time vial plagues is not solely in taxonomy, it is also in geographical scope and intensity. The Egyptian world was limited, whereas the Beast's kingdom is the Holy Roman Empire's final worldwide eruption. Death and suffering arising from the vial plagues will be of a wholly different order of magnitude.

Seven vials

The seven vial plagues are recorded in chapter sixteen: *'And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the Beast, and upon them which worshipped his image. And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shall be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments. And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory. And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the Beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain. And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores,²⁹⁸⁸ and repented not of their deeds. And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to*

²⁹⁸⁸ viz., ulcerous boils.

the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.²⁹⁸⁹ And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.'²⁹⁹⁰

Summarised, these vial plagues are as follows:

1. Sores on those having taken the mark of the Beast;
2. Sea turned to blood;
3. Rivers and fountains turned to blood;
4. Scorching sun, burning men with fire;
5. Darkness²⁹⁹¹ on the Beast's seat and kingdom, possibly with further ulcerous boils and sores on those having taken the mark of the Beast,²⁹⁹² and with devils likely to be roaming,²⁹⁹³ as in the Exodus plague;
6. Euphrates dried up—unclean spirits gather kings of the earth to battle; and,
7. Thunder, lightning, earthquake and hail.

The increased intensity and range of plagues are easily discerned in this final series of God's dealings in judgement of the ungodly. In previous judgements in Revelation, it was common to learn that the afflictions impacted on a third of the earth; the areas, although large, were still limited. But no such restriction is recorded concerning the vial judgements now in process; they are all-encompassing. There is an unmistakable finality about all the transactions. The pouring out involves full measure, without reserve.

²⁹⁸⁹ paraseismal force / seismic activity (earthquake); currently, half a billion people worldwide live in areas potentially at risk to volcanic and volcanic-derived activity.

²⁹⁹⁰ Rev 16:1-21

²⁹⁹¹ presaging eternal destruction.

²⁹⁹² cp. Ex 9:9-11

²⁹⁹³ cp. Psalms 78:49

The first vial plague reminds at once of the sixth plague of Egypt. The content of this first vial imparts loathsome, unsightly, malignant, cancerous sores, which afflict all who have taken the mark of the Beast and worshipped him and his image. The outward corruption of ulcers is indicative of the inner corruption of the adherents of the whole Babylonian system. As noted, the 'intermediate peoples,' by not taking the mark of the Beast, are unaffected.

The pouring out of the second vial results in the sea becoming as the blood of a dead man. All marine life dies. Coagulated blood is death-dealing, emitting an unbearable stench.

The third vial turns all potable water to blood. So it was with the water of Egypt as a result of the first plague on the Egyptians. As they have ruthlessly martyred the saints and poured out the blood of the 'elect,' they are given blood to drink, for they are worthy.

The fourth vial increases the heat and intensity of the sun.²⁹⁹⁴ The sun, correctly the 'servant,' a source of blessing and essential for life, and, to the contrary, the very object of pagan worship, is now turned into a medium of God's wrath. Such intense heating of the sun will also result in huge Coronal Mass Ejections of plasma / charged particles (C.M.E.s) which will bombard the earth, causing electrical systems and electronic apparatus to short and cut out.²⁹⁹⁵

The fourth trumpet judgement darkened the sun, moon and stars; but only a third part. The fifth vial is poured upon the seat of the Beast, the heart and capital city of '*Babylon the great*,' the Holy Roman Empire: Rome, with its pagan temple, the Vatican, identified as the seat of Satan and the Beast's worldwide kingdom.²⁹⁹⁶ This vial, worldwide in scope, is God's unequivocal answer to the insolent question posed by the world's populace, '*And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the Beast: and they worshipped the Beast, saying, Who is like unto the Beast?*'²⁹⁹⁷ That same arrogance is met with finality in chapter nineteen,²⁹⁹⁸ discussed later. The darkness is paralleled by the ninth plague of Egypt, but in this case it appends the expression that '*they gnawed their tongues for pain*,'²⁹⁹⁹ the only such usage in the Bible, clearly speaking of the most intense agony and suffering, in a heightened reprise of, '*He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them.*'³⁰⁰⁰ Here God utilises Satan's demons against those in thrall to Satan. Those to whom the Devil has been a deceiver, he will, at length, be a terror. The sudden and total destruction of '*Babylon the great*'³⁰⁰¹ is here signalled. All is to be ended. No candle will ever

²⁹⁹⁴ Rev 16:8,9

²⁹⁹⁵ C.M.E.s in excess of X5 magnitude (the greatest) and of south polarity (by far the more destructive) will approach the earth at speeds in excess of 2,000km.p.sec. (4,500,000m.p.h.).

²⁹⁹⁶ q.v. sup.

²⁹⁹⁷ Rev 13:4

²⁹⁹⁸ Rev 19:19-21

²⁹⁹⁹ viz., anguish.

³⁰⁰⁰ Psa 78:49

³⁰⁰¹ Rev 18:8-10,23

shine therein again;³⁰⁰² just everlasting darkness. The 'Eternal City' is to be no more,³⁰⁰³ but the final throw against her is not taken until the seventh vial.

³⁰⁰² Rev 18:23a

³⁰⁰³ *Encyclopedia Americana*, 1999 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Historically, Rome saw destruction in c.390BC and again in 64AD, both occurring on the day of the rising of the dog-star, Sirius: 19 July. Sirius is the brightest star in the constellation canis major. In occult lore, any canicular reference to the dog-star [magnitude: 1.4], the brightest star not only of its constellation but also of the night sky, is symbolic of Satan, who styles himself 'the hound of heaven.' Rome's third and final destruction by fire comes at the end of the seventh vial: 30 September, 2027, q.v. inf.

Further, Sirius is held to represent man's 'spiritual sun' during the Dog-days when the rising Sirius appears to coalesce with the solar sun, becoming enveloped its glowing light, and then to disappear behind it—a physical sun enveloping and consuming a 'spiritual' one, as it were. Occultists believe that after that 'spiritual' union, a rebirth or resurrection is to be expected. This sits well with the timing and expectation of the Antichrist's covenant with the Jews, a covenant which puts in train the events of the last seven years.

The exact date of the heliacal rising of the Dog-star depends on the location, specifically the latitude, of observation. Currently, if observed from Cairo, Egypt, it falls on 5 August. Over time, the equinoxes move and, with them [to an extent, q.v. sup.], despite its relative calendral stability, the date of the heliacal rising of the Dog-star.

In Egypt, for example, beginning about 2773 BC, the year began with the heliacal rising of Sirius, which coincided with the start of the flood period of the Nile and came not long after the summer solstice.'

The Ancient Egyptians, Phoenicians and Persians began their new year with the autumn equinox (September 21), while the Greeks, up until the 5th century BC, observed their new year with the winter solstice (December 21).

The Egyptian Middle Kingdom used the heliacal rising of Sirius, the 'god,' known to them as Sopdet, as the start of their calendar. It was considered to be the most important star in the sky.

Sirius was called by the Egyptians the 'Dog Star,' after their god Osiris. On the Pleiades' 'return from exile,' seen in the heliacal rising, the ancient Babylonians held a celebratory feast.

B.B.C. (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)::

'[Of old, it was] noticed, and the Sothic cycle confirms, that Sirius does not move retrograde across the sky like other stars, a phenomenon widely known as the precession of the equinox. This gives Sirius the unusual characteristic of appearing to stay stable relative to the equinox and solstices, and for the same reason, the helical rising (or zenith) of Sirius does not slip through the calendar (at the precession rate of about one day per 71.6 years), as other stars do. This remarkable stability within the solar year may be one reason that the Egyptians used it as a basis for their calendar whereas no other star would have sufficed.

According to Jed Buchwald, professor of the history of science at Caltech, in his article *Egyptian Stars Under Paris Skies*: "Sirius remains about the same distance from the equinoxes—and so from the solstices—throughout these many centuries, despite precession."

As already mentioned, in the summer, Sirius is on the same side of the sky as the Sun. Due to the rotation of the Earth and its orbit around the Sun, the stars rise four minutes earlier each day, so there comes a day when Sirius rises at exactly the same time as the Sun. A week or so later, it will rise about half an hour before the Sun, which means it will be visible briefly in the dawn sky just before the Sun comes up. For a given location, this will be the same day every year (although the exact date moves slightly over centuries). This phenomenon of rising just before the Sun is known as 'heliacal rising' from the Greek word for Sun, Helios.

The heliacal rising of Sirius was considered very important in ancient Egypt, making Sirius by far the most important star. They noticed, probably in about 2800BC, that the rising of Sirius coincided with two natural phenomena: the beginning of the hot weather of summer, and the annual flooding of the Nile. They used the appearance of Sirius to predict the coming of the floods, and declared the first day that Sirius was visible before the Sun to be the first day of their new year. At that time at the latitude of Egypt, the date of the heliacal rising of Sirius was about 1 July, although it has moved to later in the year during the intervening thousands of years.'

Souledout website (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The Dog Star is a symbol of power, will, and steadfastness of purpose, and exemplifies the One who has succeeded in bridging the lower and higher consciousness.'

19 July, held to be the day of the heliacal rising of the dog-star, was the first day of the French Revolutionary Republic's eleventh month called Thermidor [derived from the Greek: therme, 'heat,' and doron, 'gift']. It ran from 19 July to 17 August, inclusive. Thermidor started on what was held in occult lore to be the day of the heliacal rising of the dog-star, Sirius, the occult signature of Satan. The month was also known as Fervidor.

Three times in this sixteenth chapter, in verses nine, eleven, and again in twenty-one, it is declared that men will react to their punishments with blasphemy against God and not with repentance. These judgements are not remedial or corrective in effect, but they reveal the corruption of those undergoing them all the more. The judgements are punitive; the dwellers on earth incorrigible. There is no repentance here, only further degradation. Men who will not be drawn by God's love will not be attracted by His wrath either. It is for this very reason that salvation is locked to them and they are reserved unto destruction.

The sixth vial is a little different to the former. The great river Euphrates has been introduced earlier in connection with the sixth trumpet judgement and the four angels and the army of two hundred million.³⁰⁰⁴ Here it is the drying up of a river that is about two thousand, eight hundred and fifty kilometres³⁰⁰⁵ long, varies from one metre³⁰⁰⁶ to over one kilometre³⁰⁰⁷ in width, and from three to ten metres³⁰⁰⁸ in depth. History records what hindrance the river has been to military operations. This drying up will greatly facilitate the passage of initially inimical forces into the Middle East arena for the final conflict of the current dispensation. The kings of the

Calendar: Egyptian calendar, dating back perhaps as early as 2773BC, was solar—365 days—and started its first month in its first year on the heliacal rising of the dog-star Sirius, known to them as Sothis. Since the Egyptian year advanced against the solar year, it migrated through the entire, returning to its originating point every 1,456 years [or so]. This became known as the Sothic cycle.'

Rees, Laurence, *Auschwitz: The Nazis and the 'Final Solution,'* p.193 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The killing of [Jewish] Poles was about to intensify. On 19 July [1942] Himmler announced: 'I herewith order that the resettlement of the entire Jewish population of the General Government be carried out and completed by December 31.' In this context 'resettlement' was a euphemism for 'murder' [or 'elimination']. Himmler thus revealed that he had set a target date for the annihilation of several million Polish Jews.'

Here is the confluent use of '42,' "the answer to everything," in 1942, and 19 July, occult day of the heliacal rising of the Dog-star Sirius, occult signifier of Satan.

Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, pp.26,27 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'In the years 5 to 2BC there was an unusual astronomical phenomenon. In those years, on the first day of the Egyptian month Messori, Sirius, the dog-star, rose heliacally, that is at sunrise, and shone with extraordinary brilliance. Now the name Messori means 'the birth of a prince.' and to those ancient astrologers such a star would undoubtedly mean the birth of some great king. [Not that the symbol of Satan—the dog-star—of all heavenly bodies, could possibly presage the coming of Jesus Christ!].

It may seem to us extraordinary that those men should set out from the East to find a king, but the strange thing is that, just about the time Jesus was born, there was in the world a strange feeling of expectation of the coming of a king. Even the Roman historians knew about this. Not so very much later than this, Suetonius could write, "There had spread over all the Orient an old and established belief, that it was fated at that time for men coming from Judæa to rule the world" (Suetonius: *Life of Vespasian*, 4:5). Tacitus tells of the same belief that "there was a firm persuasion....that at this very time the East was to grow powerful, and rulers coming from Judæa were to acquire universal empire" (Tacitus: *Histories*, 5:13). The Jews had the belief that "about that time one from their country should become governor of the habitable earth."

Sothic year: consisting of 365¼ days as opposed to the Egyptian year of 365 days. The word comes from the Greek sothis, an Egyptian name for the dog-star. Since the Julian calendar year, in its Gregorian revision (which the world predominantly uses today), contains, on average over four years, 365¼ days, it too is the dog-star (more commonly known as Sirius) calendar, specifically dedicated to Satan.

³⁰⁰⁴ Rev 9:14-21

³⁰⁰⁵ 1,780 miles

³⁰⁰⁶ 3 feet

³⁰⁰⁷ >half a mile.

³⁰⁰⁸ 10–30 feet

east³⁰⁰⁹ are the Asiatic lands like China, Japan and the other nations of the Far East, and which sensibly can be regarded as being comprised of three of the kings of the world regions³⁰¹⁰ recited previously. All would need free and clear passage over a dry Euphrates river-bed in order to be able to assemble their forces rapidly at Armageddon in the valley of Jezreel.³⁰¹¹

Chapter sixteen³⁰¹² gives a preview of Armageddon,³⁰¹³ to the point of the assembly of the forces of darkness. The actual final battle is dealt with in chapter nineteen.³⁰¹⁴ The dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet are out in full force, ready for mortal combat and the final consummation. All three are characterised by the same uncleanness and corruption. Three unclean, frog-like spirits, leaping hither and thither, are each able to perform miracles of such magnitude and convincing quality that, in aggregate, they are able to deceive not only the kings of the east but the kings of the whole world:³⁰¹⁵ the objective of this vast enterprise being to summon them to Armageddon in preparation for the *'battle of that great day of God Almighty.'*³⁰¹⁶ There is a huge mustering of the forces of the world here in view.

*'Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame,'*³⁰¹⁷ is parenthetical. Scripture warns believers that Christ will come as a thief in the night, *'For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night,'*³⁰¹⁸ and, *'But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.'*³⁰¹⁹ A tract in Isaiah corresponds, to some extent, with the latter section of the foregoing: *'Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall*

³⁰⁰⁹ Greek: apo anatoleseliou, literally *'from the sun rising.'*

³⁰¹⁰ viz., #3—Japan; #9—India and south-east Asia; #10—China, q.v. inf.

³⁰¹¹ in this context, the Tigris is not mentioned, despite almost paralleling the Euphrates for most of its length. This could mean either that the 'dry crossing' takes place south of the point where the Tigris joins the Euphrates—at a point roughly 50 kms. north, north-east of Basra, forming the Shatt al-Arab waterway—or that the Tigris is essentially dried up due to drought, water denial / water wars, or hydro-electric dams, or any combination of them. In any event, the Tigris, the smaller of the two great rivers, will not present any difficulty or impediment.

³⁰¹² Rev 16:13,14,16

³⁰¹³ Hebrew: Har Megiddo, the hill of Megiddo.

³⁰¹⁴ Rev 19:18-21

³⁰¹⁵ viz., the ten very end-time kings of the ten world regions, Rev 17:12c, who *'receive power as kings one hour with the beast.'*

³⁰¹⁶ Rev 16:14b

³⁰¹⁷ Rev 16:15

³⁰¹⁸ I Thes 5:2

³⁰¹⁹ II Peter 3:10

*fall, and not rise again.*³⁰²⁰ The 'elect' are warned to keep their garments; in other words, to hold fast what they have, as instructed: *'Prove all things; hold fast that which is good,*³⁰²¹ for the times are parlous.

³⁰²⁰ Isa 24:17-20
³⁰²¹ in I Thes 5:21

Chapter 21

Mother of Harlots

Revelation chapter seventeen deals with the doom of the Harlot: Babylon the great. The original Babylon—known as Babilu, 'the gate of god'—existed on the plain of Shinar.³⁰²² Hislop says Shinar most likely derives from shene naar, 'to repeat childhood,' or 'the regenerator,' in the sense of 'twice-born.'³⁰²³ It was here that the inception of organised idolatry occurred at the tower of Babel:³⁰²⁴ man's attempt to rise above what was perceived to be the level of any God-directed flood while maintaining a clear sight of the heavens and the stars above the ground mist that frequented the Mesopotamian plain, in order to avail of a self-devised calendar, a time system, and a means of control and communication untrammelled by the precepts of God. This led God to frustrate the effort by confusing man's language.³⁰²⁵ Had this not been done, the tract shows that *'nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do,'*³⁰²⁶ then it would have been fast forward to the Antichrist and the time of the end, allowing insufficient time for the plan of God and the mode of redemption to unfold.

³⁰²² Gen 10:10; '*land of Shinar*,' from the Hebrew name of that land, corresponds to the land of Sammur in ancient secular texts; ; Akkadian: babilu, 'gate of god,' also bab-el, relating to Hebrew: balel, 'confusion.'

³⁰²³ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, p.137, footnote

³⁰²⁴ tower of Babel, known to the Babylonians as E-temenanki, 'the house of foundation of heaven and earth,' rose to a height of 182 metres (600 feet) above the plain of Shinar. The value of gold, silver, and precious stones, with which the tower and its associated temple were adorned, has been estimated variously in the region of £6–10bn., or \$11–19bn. (2006 prices).

³⁰²⁵ cf. Gen 11:7-9

³⁰²⁶ Gen 11:6,7

Babylon was the seat of a great empire, dominating the ancient world from the fall of the Assyrian Empire with the capture of Nineveh³⁰²⁷ until, in turn, its own demise through its capture by Cyrus of Persia.³⁰²⁸ Reduced from an imperial to a tributary city, it continued in gradual decline until about the end of the first century,³⁰²⁹ but since then has remained ruined as prophesied: *'And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there: neither shall the shepherds make their fold there,'*³⁰³⁰ *'For I will rise up against them, saith the Lord of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son, and nephew, saith the Lord. I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts,'*³⁰³¹ this notwithstanding the recent attempt by the late Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein to rebuild a small part of the ruins located near the town of el Hillah, both as a tourist attraction and a monument to his own megalomania. And, of course, Alexander the Great had planned to restore it to its former glory, designing to make it the metropolis of his eastern or even of his universal empire. Ten thousand were employed in repairing the embankments of the Euphrates and the temple of Belus, but his death put an end to the work. Indeed, *'she is not healed.'*³⁰³²

Harlot

Revelation does not deal with this original Babylon of the Shinar plain. This is made clear in chapter seventeen where the Babylon of Revelation sits on seven mountains, not on an open plain.³⁰³³ Neither could Babylon of the plain have contained *'the blood of the prophets, and of the saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth,'*³⁰³⁴ for it has been derelict for almost the entire of the church era. Propertius speaks of Rome in near-apocalyptic terms: *'The lofty city on seven hills, which governs the whole world.'*³⁰³⁵

*'According to the traditions, Rome was founded by Romulus and his twin brother Remus'*³⁰³⁶....Over the years, additional territory was added until finally, in the time of King Severius Tullius,³⁰³⁷ Rome comprised the seven hills.³⁰³⁸ Rome was known throughout the Roman Empire as 'The City of Seven Hills' in the centuries before Christ. It was widely believed in pagan circles that when Rome was founded by Romulus and Remus in

³⁰²⁷ in 612BC

³⁰²⁸ in 539BC

³⁰²⁹ 1st-c. AD

³⁰³⁰ Isa 13:19,20

³⁰³¹ Isa 14:22,23

³⁰³² Jer 51:9a

³⁰³³ Rev 17:9

³⁰³⁴ Rev 18:24

³⁰³⁵ Propertius, Lib. iii. *Eleg.* 9, p.721

³⁰³⁶ in 753BC

³⁰³⁷ 578–535BC

³⁰³⁸ *Encyclopedia of the Roman Empire*, p.362

the eighth century B.C., the city had to be placed on seven hills since seven is the number of 'completion' or 'perfection.' Rome is known as 'mystery Babylon' in Revelation, its predecessor being ancient Babylon in the Mesopotamian plain.

When the eastern part of the Roman Empire was established, its capital, Constantinople,³⁰³⁹ the capital of Byzantium and built on the site of the city of the same name, was placed on seven hills. The other city of renown built on seven hills is Jerusalem. What ties all together is the seat of power of a pagan line of despots:

Babylon: Babylonian Empire and kings;

Rome: Roman Empire and emperors;

Constantinople: Eastern empire and rulers; and,

Jerusalem: Eventual seat of the Antichrist (during second moiety of his power).

The first six verses of chapter seventeen of Revelation identify unique aspects of the '*woman*,' the '*great whore*,' the great apostate church. A woman in the Bible is representative of a church,³⁰⁴⁰ but the true church is described as '*a chaste virgin to Christ*.'³⁰⁴¹

*'There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.'*³⁰⁴² In this case, man's way, the literal high-jacking of Judæo-Christianity, saw its beginnings in the first-century, effectively consummating in the fourth-century with the Edict of Nantes and the Council of Laodicea. These imported, wholesale, the Babylonian mystery religion in the guise of an alternative and supplanting form of Christianity. Revelation describes that religion for what it is: '*And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.*'³⁰⁴³ Babylon, religiously, is signified by a name on the forehead: '*Mystery*.' Apart from the light of God's Word it would not be possible to understand Rome for what it is. Her outward reverence, her inward hatred of the Word of God; her outward profession of piety, her inward corruptions which betoken the satanic energy which is the driving power of the whole evil regime, are so conflicting. Like all heavily occult systems, her outer garb is portrayed in a false and innocent light in order to attract, while, all the while, at her innermost, her visceral wickedness seethes and erupts.

Chapter seventeen deals with the identities of the woman and the Beast and the ultimate fate of the woman at the hands of the Beast. The six opening verses describe her in detail.

³⁰³⁹ also known as Nova Roma.

³⁰⁴⁰ Eph 5:22-27; II Cor 11:2

³⁰⁴¹ II Cor 11:2b

³⁰⁴² Prov 14:12

³⁰⁴³ Rev 17:5

Her position

*'And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters.'*³⁰⁴⁴ Harlotry is amply explained in passages of both the Old Testament and the New Testament.³⁰⁴⁵ Both adultery and harlotry are sins of physical immorality which are made to represent spiritual defection and apostasy. Her harlotry is exposed in detail,³⁰⁴⁶ both dealt with later. This great apostate church sits on many waters, identified as *'peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues.'*³⁰⁴⁷ All are held in the twin iron grip of fear and superstition.

Her sin

*'With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.'*³⁰⁴⁸ Her dominant position over the nations of the earth is, at once, civil, political, and religious: a corrupt strumpet—papal Rome with all her harlot daughters and all those worldly systems and sects nominally Christian but which are wholly anti-Christian, ultimately included under her hegemony. Also allied are New World and other apostasies. So grievous are her acts of immorality, twice mentioned in this verse alone, that the results are likened to a drunken stupor. She is completely and incorrigibly apostate.

Her seat on the beast

*'So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured Beast, full of the names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.'*³⁰⁴⁹ Here she is pictured sitting on and influencing, even dominating to a limited extent,³⁰⁵⁰ a scarlet coloured Beast. In other words, the apostate harlot religious system is deeply entwined with the political power. In short, centred at Rome, the politico / military power is under a certain sway of the religious one, even though it supports her. The scarlet colour indicates the wanton nature of the politico-military power of the *'beast from the sea,'*³⁰⁵¹ glorious and splendid, but drenched in the blood of its victims: the entire pagan in tooth and claw.

³⁰⁴⁴ Rev 17:1

³⁰⁴⁵ Ezek 16:15; Hosea 1-3; James 4:4; II Peter 2:14

³⁰⁴⁶ Rev 17:4-6; 18:3-5

³⁰⁴⁷ Rev 17:15b

³⁰⁴⁸ Rev 17:2

³⁰⁴⁹ Rev 17:3

³⁰⁵⁰ q.v. sup.

³⁰⁵¹ Rev 13:1

Traditionally, the leader of the overriding occult religious system has been crowned with a 'triple crown',³⁰⁵² signifying the combination of civil, political, and religious authority. In her own insatiable desire for blood, the harlot clearly exhibits her pagan roots. Lewis shows the importance of blood rituals in heathen ceremonial: 'The importance which the sun-worship cult attached to baptism is further shown in the baptism of blood,³⁰⁵³ which formed a prominent feature in the Mithraic system of atonement and spiritual enlightenment.'³⁰⁵⁴

The pouring forth of blood, signifying human bloodletting, is a constant theme in paganism, presaging the general time of evil hegemony on earth known as The Great Tribulation, when Satan's lackeys will be able to do his wicked work to the full.

Her garb & her golden cup

*'And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour,'³⁰⁵⁵ and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.'*³⁰⁵⁶ The colours of her decking or gilding, but really her frippery, reflect her nature: purple for her claimed position as the true Christian church and her regal demeanour; scarlet for her supposed regality, her harlotry, and blood-letting. Six elements are used here to indicate the harlot's wealth, luxury and extravagance, but all are utilised to one end: the demonstration of her absolute uncleanness and immorality. Chapter eighteen pictures this extravagant wealth.³⁰⁵⁷ The golden cup relates to the enticements recited in the second verse,³⁰⁵⁸ and also relates to *'Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad.'*³⁰⁵⁹

'There is also a correlation with the cup depicted in the hand of various Assyrian kings and, in the instance of ancient Babylon, a woman. There is a reference by Pliny to the cup of Semiramis, which fell into the hands of the victorious Cyrus. The emblem of the woman with the cup in her hand was embodied in the symbols of idolatry derived from ancient Babylon, as exhibited in Greece, for thus was the Greek Venus originally depicted. The Roman church has also taken this symbol for its own.³⁰⁶⁰ On the then Roman Jubilee,³⁰⁶¹ Pope Leo XII struck a medal, bearing on the obverse his own image, and, on the reverse, that of the church of Rome

³⁰⁵² others state it thus: the pope's triple sovereignty: person, Holy See, and Vatican state.

³⁰⁵³ i.e., Latin: Taurobolia, a pagan ceremony wherein the candidate was showered in a slain bull's blood.

³⁰⁵⁴ Lewis, Abram Herbert, *Paganism Surviving in Christianity*, p.34

³⁰⁵⁵ Roman Catholic bishops wear purple, cardinals scarlet.

³⁰⁵⁶ Rev 17:4

³⁰⁵⁷ Rev 18:9-19

³⁰⁵⁸ Rev 17:2

³⁰⁵⁹ Jer 51:7

³⁰⁶⁰ Lorenzo Sabbatini's 16th-century portrayal of *Fides*, the Catholic faith, on the vault of the Vatican's First Sala de Foconi, is of a woman holding the golden cup of the Mass.

³⁰⁶¹ in 1825AD

depicted as a woman holding in her left hand a cross and in her right hand a cup, with the legend written around, *'The Whole World is her Seat.'*³⁰⁶²

Her name

She is identified: *'And upon her forehead was a name written,*³⁰⁶³ *MYSTERY,*³⁰⁶⁴ *BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.'*³⁰⁶⁵ There is no mistaking her identity for her name is written upon her forehead. Roman harlots in their brazenness wore a label with their names on their foreheads. The literal Babylon of old is typical, symbolical of religious Babylon.³⁰⁶⁶ Here is the mystery religion, the Babylonian mysteries recast under the name of Christianity; a counterfeit, apostate, whorish system which not only enslaves the world but spawns harlot daughters and abominations. These daughters split off from the Harlot herself exactly as the Eastern Orthodox and Russian Orthodox had done, and also as the Protestant daughters had come out of the Roman church. Despite the animosities and superficial differences, they are really one and the same. Given the vagaries and obtuseness of human nature, it is not surprising to find that while so many Protestant and Non-Conformist churches can clearly identify the Roman Catholic Church, its popish hierarchy, its popish doctrine of supererogation, human merits, and priestly absolutions, as being pictured in this verse and, thus, forming but the latest manifestation of the spoor, they completely fail to identify her harlot daughters with their own apostate religious systems and beliefs.

Her bloodthirstiness

*'And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.'*³⁰⁶⁷ The harlot, while guilty of spiritual and moral atrocities, is also guilty of much, much more. The blood of the saints and the witnesses for Christ has stained her hands. In the concluding verse of chapter twenty-four,³⁰⁶⁸ the climax of two chapters on Babylon, she is found to be filled with the blood of the saints who have been martyred on earth. Here is professing Christendom with her motley followers persecuting and slaying the very saints of God. No wonder John was amazed!

³⁰⁶² Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*, p.217; Latin: Sedet Super Universum.

³⁰⁶³ Greek: gegrammenon, perfect tense participle, 'having been written,' the name was written in the past and she remains so labelled.

³⁰⁶⁴ translator's error, apparently: 'MYSTERY' should not have been portrayed in capitals as it does not form part of her formal title. Mystery indicates something unknowable by man unless and until revealed by God.

³⁰⁶⁵ Rev 17:5; written in capitals (or large letters) for emphasis, and also to indicate her formal title.

³⁰⁶⁶ Jer 50:38;51:7

³⁰⁶⁷ Rev 17:6

³⁰⁶⁸ Rev 18:24

Development of papal authority

The Donation of Constantine is a forgery that claims to be the document of transfer of the temporal crown from the emperor to the pope, allegedly taking place in the time of Sylvester, bishop of Rome at the time of Constantine; this according to a certain papal official, Christophorus. It is also claimed that Sylvester was offered but declined the imperial crown, but accepted, instead, a simple Phrygian cap, the so-called humble forerunner of the great triple tiara.

The Phrygian cap—besides being representative of an ancient society dedicated to sodomy, and a device worn in the Roman Empire by a freed slave (hence often termed ‘the liberty cap’)—is also a symbol of freedom from God’s Law, dating from the crass moral nadir in the region of Phrygia in ancient Asia.³⁰⁶⁹

‘The primary symbol of the papacy is the Tiregnum, the pope’s three-tiered tiara. Following a general design of probably Persian or Byzantine origin, the tiara consists of three jewelled silver circlets over a white cap, a form arrived at in the fourteenth century.³⁰⁷⁰ Various versions of the tiara were worn from that time right through to Pope Paul VI, who was crowned with the latest version.³⁰⁷¹

After the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, Paul VI set his tiara on the altar of St. Peter’s Basilica as a gesture of humble piety and a symbolic renunciation of any hint of a claim to temporal power. Although his Apostolic Constitution³⁰⁷² required that his successor be crowned with it, the popes since Paul VI—John Paul I, John Paul II, Benedict XVI, [and Francis I]—have all refused coronation ceremonies outright and have opted for inaugurations instead (leaving the crowning of British sovereigns as the only surviving coronation ceremony in the world). So while it is currently not part of the papal regalia, the tiara is still depicted in heraldic symbols and flags of the Vatican, the Pope, and the Holy See, and it is up to each individual future pope whether or not to have a traditional coronation or an informal inauguration.

The three levels of the papal tiara are often associated with a wide range of trinities, and there is no clear answer as to whether any of them is definitive. Even the two formal bodies that constitute the Vatican disagree. The Holy See attributes the three crowns (from top to bottom) to: the Pope’s authority as universal pastor, his universal ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and his temporal power. The Vatican City, on the other hand, says that the levels symbolize the Pope as father of the princes and Kings, Ruler of the World, and Vicar of Our Saviour Jesus Christ [sic].

³⁰⁶⁹ the cap is also seen on the head of the pagan deity Mithras in the bull-slaying scene, the Tauroctony.

³⁰⁷⁰ 1314AD

³⁰⁷¹ 1963AD

³⁰⁷² 1975AD

[T]he [pope's personal] coat of arms is topped with a headpiece. In the first versions of his emblazon, Benedict XVI broke with tradition and topped his arms with a simple mitre, representing his inauguration rather than coronation. In later versions, it seems to have reverted to the more traditional papal tiara.³⁰⁷³

Assuming Malachy O'Morgair's prophecy proves accurate,³⁰⁷⁴ then Francis I, or more likely the next thereafter,^{3075 3076 3077}—as it appears to many commentators, enigmatically called 'Peter of Rome',³⁰⁷⁸ and the

³⁰⁷³ Kenner, T. A., *Symbols and their Hidden Meanings*, pp.83,84,87 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets; also updated); the personal coat of arms of Francis I also lacks the tiara.

³⁰⁷⁴ q.v. sup.

³⁰⁷⁵ *The Cutting Edge* website (sublinear emphasis added; with added comment and clarification in square brackets): The thirteen days 'blood sacrifice to the beast,' (19 April—01 May), the first and last days of which are days of human sacrifice.... Benedict XVI, was elected on 19 April, 2006.

Malachi O'Morgair (or a Vatican forger appropriating his name) predicted that the next pope, called Francis I, will be the last-in-line, 'Peter of Rome'; if correct, otherwise known to the 'elect' as the false prophet.
Unlikely, for a number of reasons, which will be explored later.

³⁰⁷⁶ Urquhart, Gordon, *The Pope's Armada: Unlocking the Secrets of Mysterious and Powerful New Sects in the Church*, pp.185-187 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets; sublinear emphasis as original):

'Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger [Pope Benedict XVI] has also recognised the value of portraying the papacy as the champion of the new [Romish cultic] movements. Suddenly, according to Ratzinger, the Catholic church has embraced pluralism—in the form of the movements. Only the fuddy-duddy bishops are too conservative to accept it. 'Even today,' says Ratzinger, 'we see certain kinds of movements which cannot be reduced to the Episcopal principle, but rather draw support, both theologically and practically, from the primacy of the pope.'

Ratzinger and bishop Cordes have gone on to develop a theory of greater centralization in the papacy using the movements as an argument. This finds clear expression in *The 'Communio' in the Church*, a talk given by Cordes at The Second International Conference of Ecclesial Movements in March, 1987.

Cordes sees the papacy as saving the church from 'the absolutist tendencies of the local churches.' What we are witnessing in the case of the current pontiff [John Paul II] is the defence of pluralism. That is, of course, used in Ratzinger's sense; not with the commonly understood meaning of a diversity of ideas, but the varied structures represented by the movements.

Cordes calls on the historical parallels of the papacy of Gregory VII (1073–1085) and the rise of the mendicant movements, Franciscans and Dominicans, in the thirteenth century—periods which, according to Cordes, have 'extreme relevance' for today's situation. He quotes an article of Cardinal Ratzinger's on *Pluralism as a Question for the Church and for Theology* in which he asserts that 'the two major impulses which produced the full flowering of the doctrine of the primacy—that is to say, the struggle for the Western freedom of church from state under Gregory VII (d.1085) and the controversy over the mendicant orders in the thirteenth century—are not derived from a desire to unite but from the dynamic of pluralistic needs.'

He explains how the mendicant order of monks who were no longer confined to monasteries, but roamed freely from one diocese to another, no longer depended on the bishops but received their orders from general ministers who owed allegiance directly to the pope. 'This centralism, thus provoked by the monks, naturally had its repercussions on the concept of the [Roman] church of the faithful in general: the Petrine ministry emerged with greater clarity.'

Thus the argument of the importance of the papacy to the movements is used to justify a model of papal power that returns to the excesses of the Middle Ages.

The historical parallels used by these advocates of the new ultramontanist to sustain their arguments are quite extraordinary. Gregory VII and Innocent III (1198-1216), who approved the Franciscan order, were guilty of the greatest abuses of papal power that the Catholic church has ever known. It is curious that Gregory VII is bracketed with the events surrounding the mendicants in the thirteenth century, still more strange that he should be held up by Cordes as an example of 'extreme relevance' for today. His main claim to fame was to have asserted the jurisdiction of the papacy not only over spiritual matters but over temporal too, in his excommunication and humiliation of the holy Roman Emperor Henry IV. Powers claimed by Gregory for the papacy included: 'That the pope is the only one whose feet are to be kissed by all princes....That he may depose emperors....That the pope may absolve the subjects of unjust men from their fealty....That he may himself be judged by no-one....That the Roman church has never erred, nor never, by the witness of Scripture, shall err to all eternity [footnote: q.v., Granfield, Patrick, *The Limits of the Papacy*] Not satisfied by the title 'Vicar of Christ,' Innocent III styled himself 'Vicar of God.'

last-in-line—will take upon his head the Triregnum in a full ‘pomp and circumstance’ coronation ceremony after his election, thereby restating the old papal tripartite claims at absolute authority on earth.

The ‘*whore sitting upon many waters*,’³⁰⁷⁹ is described as sitting on or arrogating or assuming regality over ‘*peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues*.’³⁰⁸⁰ The whore ‘*reigneth over the kings of the earth*,’³⁰⁸¹ where the Greek translated ‘*reigneth*,’³⁰⁸² means, literally, ‘*holding royalty*.’ This is assumed royalty, arrogated authority, and has to be compared with God’s rule, expressed as ‘*reigneth*.’³⁰⁸³ God’s is by divine right; it is not hereditary. The whore’s is by presumption and arrogation; a false reign with no foundation. As before, a woman in eschatology signifies a church, a religion, or a religious movement. The pure woman in Revelation³⁰⁸⁴ is the true church, the Judæo-Christian church. The ‘*whore*,’ by comparison, is degenerate: a strumpet, a harlot.

The conferrer of the Antichrist’s crown is the head of the whore church, a whore that rides the beast: ‘*and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns*.’³⁰⁸⁵ The whore cannot be a male rider: ‘*I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow*,’³⁰⁸⁶ or so she thinks. The heard of this false church has a triple crown, founded on arrogated power and authority, and on forgery. Accordingly, the pope cannot be the first horseman crowned with but a single garland. But that horseman can be garlanded, of course, conferring the title of Holy Roman Emperor. The old title is set to return. Charlemagne crowned himself by seizing the crown from the hands of the pope.³⁰⁸⁷ In the instance of the first horseman, however, he is ‘granted’ or ‘given’ the garland. That grant, and the title attendant of ‘Holy Roman Emperor,’ can only come *from* the pope, not in the person of the pope.

Does this view of the papacy tie in with the pope’s mandate to the new movements: the ‘New Evangelization’: the creation of a united Europe ‘from the Atlantic to the Urals’; the new Christendom, not only in the spiritual but in the temporal realm? Can Cordes and Ratzinger seriously be suggesting a return to this model of the papacy?’

³⁰⁷⁷ Urquhart, Gordon, *The Pope’s Armada: Unlocking the Secrets of Mysterious and Powerful New Sects in the Church*, p.326:

‘Cardinal Ratzinger’s definition of political morality as ‘the art of possible compromise.’’

³⁰⁷⁸ an interesting correlation exists with the preparation of and formation of the Roman Catholic Church: “Peter of Rome” took the place of the Pet-Roma, the “Book of Stone” which played a major part in initiation into the Eleusinian Mysteries. An effective unification of all of Rome’s religions had to not only include the major deities of those religions, but it also had to place them in a position subordinate to the over-god, who was to pull them all together, and to grant him the higher authority. The names of the disciples, then, corresponded to the names of those deities. Matthew was Mithras, Thomas - Tammuz, Mark - Mars, John - Oannes, Peter - Jupiter, Paul - Apollo. Even the Virgin Mary was a variation on older myths. The name “Jesus Christ” was actually a contraction on “Hesus” and “Christos”. The use of crosses, as symbols, was almost non-existent before then. This was generally regarded as a violation of the second commandment, and the reminder of Christ’s suffering was usually deemed inappropriate.

³⁰⁷⁹ Rev 17:1

³⁰⁸⁰ Rev 17:15

³⁰⁸¹ Rev 17:18

³⁰⁸² Greek: exousa basileian.

³⁰⁸³ Rev 19:6; Greek: ebasileuse.

³⁰⁸⁴ Rev 12:1-17

³⁰⁸⁵ Rev 17:3b

³⁰⁸⁶ Rev 18:7c

³⁰⁸⁷ in 800AD; Antichrist anointed by the pope? cf. Rev 13:12 in Green’s Literal Translation.

Detailed exposition

What John had seen still needed explanation in its details. Since the disclosure was granted him, not to perplex but to instruct, the angel undertakes to clarify the mystery of the woman and the Beast. *'And the angel said unto me, Wherefore did thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her,'*³⁰⁸⁸ *which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth'*³⁰⁸⁹ *over the kings of the earth.'*³⁰⁹⁰

As noted previously, the carrying Beast described here is the Roman Empire, in its historic appearance, its long disappearance, and its future brief reappearance. In its final eruption it will come from the bottomless pit, being devilishly empowered and promoted, and ultimately find its end, with its leader going into perdition. As has also been seen, the ancient Roman Empire was destroyed in its imperial form.³⁰⁹¹ This was basically the same as that ruling at the time of John when the Revelation was given off.³⁰⁹² That political power is not in existence today, but Satan will be allowed this final revival to fulfil God's purpose. Such a resurrection may appear wholly unlikely today to those not imbued with the Holy Spirit. In the end-time, it will amaze the earth-dwellers, plainly identified as being non-believers.

³⁰⁸⁸ the woman of Rev 17:7, signifying the great whore false church, is carried by the beast—she sits upon it—she does not ride it in the sense of controlling its every movement.

³⁰⁸⁹ or, better, *'hath a kingdom,'* for it admirably describes the reality.

³⁰⁹⁰ Rev 17:7-18

³⁰⁹¹ in 476AD

³⁰⁹² in 95–96AD

The phraseology used, *'whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world'*,³⁰⁹³ raises an oft-discussed question: are some predestined to inherit the kingdom of God, and, if so, do they have any choice in the matter? From this text, and from other related biblical readings, it is clear that while man has freedom of choice, other than in the small number of instances where a man is called by God to serve His specific purposes,³⁰⁹⁴ God knows the beginning from the end and the end from the beginning. Christ says, *'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last'*.³⁰⁹⁵ Every outcome is known in advance, and nothing, but nothing, is left to chance in God's plan. The names of those who will eventually inherit the kingdom of God can thus be written in the book of life from the foundation of the world.

That God's wisdom, which is imparted through being imbued with the Holy Spirit, is necessary for an understanding of the disclosure concerning the Harlot, is made evident.³⁰⁹⁶ The woman sitting on the seven hills is that old apostate church, the Roman Catholic Church, sitting on the seven hills of Rome. Whilst the woman is carried by the power of the Beast, she still retains some degree of influence over it, even dominating it in certain areas.³⁰⁹⁷ The seven kings and the viewpoint of this passage have been resolved previously, being taken during the reign of the Axis Empire under Mussolini / Hitler.

The duration of the 'revived' empire, termed The Holy Roman Empire,³⁰⁹⁸ from Justinian's Restoration to its collapse with Napoleon at Waterloo,³⁰⁹⁹ was about one thousand, two hundred and sixty years. The time from Pope Gregory I³¹⁰⁰ until the empire's effective termination with the Papal States plebiscite³¹⁰¹ was also one thousand, two hundred and sixty years, as was that from the decree of Byzantine emperor Phocas granting temporal power³¹⁰² to the empire's complete cessation in the capture of Rome by the nascent nation state of Italy.³¹⁰³ On a year-for-a-day, this represents a type of the one thousand, two hundred and sixty days extent of the Beast's awesome and climactic end-time power.³¹⁰⁴ The Holy Roman Empire's later brief, spluttering exposition under emperor Benito Mussolini is then described: *'The beast that thou sawest was, and is not....And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must*

³⁰⁹³ Rev 17:8c

³⁰⁹⁴ e.g, Moses, Jeremiah, et al.

³⁰⁹⁵ Rev 22:13

³⁰⁹⁶ Rev 17:9

³⁰⁹⁷ e.g. in the adoption and operation of Canon Law, q.v. sup.

³⁰⁹⁸ in 554AD

³⁰⁹⁹ in 1815AD

³¹⁰⁰ in 590AD; ecclesiastically taken as the start of Rome's temporal power.

³¹⁰¹ in 1850AD

³¹⁰² in 610AD

³¹⁰³ In 1870AD; the Holy Roman Empire was terminated by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1808AD. By the time of the complete abolition of the Papal States in 1870AD, they had been in existence for 1,116 years. The complete loss of temporal power dates from 1870AD, the same year pope Pius IX declared his dogma of papal infallibility.

³¹⁰⁴ Dan 12:7; Rev 13:5

*continue a short space.*³¹⁰⁵ The rise of the sixth '*Beast*' under the hegemony of Mussolini was hardly visible at all, even though he did call his very limited empire of Italy, Abyssinia,³¹⁰⁶ Eritrea, and Albania, 'The Holy Roman Empire.'

The twelfth-century mystic writer Otto of Freising captured in '*Chronica*' the thinking of old on the pending destruction of the great temporal power: 'Temporal power passed from Babylon to the Medes, then to the Persians, afterwards to the Greeks, lastly to the Romans and in the name of the Romans transmitted to the Franks. Finally the Franks....were divided among themselves....and had a presentiment that the kingdom.... would be destroyed according to the Gospel.'³¹⁰⁷

Confederated colossus

The seventh human revival of this evil empire will be followed in train by the inevitable, hellish, and cataclysmic events of the last three-and-a-half years, sponsored and promoted by the Devil out of the bottomless pit. This last will be so complete in itself as to be regarded as an eighth Beast under the Devil-possessed Antichrist; eight again being the number of resurrection. The Antichrist himself, as its emperor, is also regarded as that eighth Beast: '*And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.*'³¹⁰⁸

The ten kings, reduced to seven, and the ultimate 'ten-king world kingdom' comprise the form of this final revival of the Holy Roman Empire. It has never existed in this way before. The very short duration of the ultimate end-time ten-king colossus is indicated by the phrase, '*but receive power as kings one hour with the Beast.*'³¹⁰⁹ These confederated and usurping kings of the revived Holy Roman Empire will have one mind and purpose: total subservience to the Roman Beast and to Satan, but they will have little or no regard for the whore, other than in what they can make out of using, trading with, and defrauding her.³¹¹⁰

It is evident that these ten kings, who are both wholly confederate with and subservient to the Beast, will live until the establishment of the millennial kingdom, '*And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed.*'³¹¹¹ That these ten kings are to be incarcerated, and pun-

³¹⁰⁵ Rev 17:8-10

³¹⁰⁶ i.e., Ethiopia.

³¹⁰⁷ Freising, Otto of, *Chronica*

³¹⁰⁸ Rev 17:11; Greek: *apoleia*, '*perdition*' or '*ruin*,' but can also refer to a certain punishment in the lake of fire, which is reserved for the two most evil: the Antichrist and the False Prophet, q.v. inf.

³¹⁰⁹ Rev 17:12b

³¹¹⁰ Dan 8:25

³¹¹¹ Dan 2:44 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets); *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, p.24:

'''In the days of these kings, the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom.' This shows that at the time the kingdom of God is set up, there will be a plurality existing contemporaneously. It cannot refer to the four preceding kingdoms; for it would be absurd to use such language in reference to a line of successive kings, since it would be in the days of the last king only, not in the days of any of the preceding, that the kingdom of God would be set up.'''

ished later is clear from the Moffatt translation: '*And then shall the Eternal punish the [fallen] hosts of the high heaven above and kings on earth below, bundling them into a dungeon, penning them inside a prison, till their day of doom arrives.*'³¹¹² The demons are incarcerated in the pit with their leader, Satan, for the period of the millennium.³¹¹³

Mass control

Historically, the aberrant religions of man have been instrumental in underpinning the markets and governments of this world. Radcliffe-Brown notes: 'The hypothesis we are considering is that the social function of a religion is independent of its truth or falsity, that religions which we think to be erroneous or even absurd and repulsive, such as those of some savage tribes, may be important and effective parts of the social machinery, and that without these 'false' religions social revolution and the development of modern civilisation would have been impossible.'³¹¹⁴

This is a deal closer to truth than many would imagine. The whole fabric of our modern civilisation is founded on apostate religious beliefs and agnostic, repulsive, and downright heathen practices. 'One of the mysteries in the ordering of human life is the way that otherwise inadequate or even dysfunctional social systems can be made functional, for a time, by man's religion. These religions enable a vast range of petty, dishonest, and downright malevolent human beings to work with one another by depending upon a power greater than themselves, and, in so doing, achieve status, and power, and domination.'³¹¹⁵ So it will be with these end-time ten kings of the empire, and the Beast, and the False Prophet. The ultimate dysfunctional empire will underpin and support the ultimate dysfunctional religion in a mutual embrace.

A useful working definition of culture (or its effects) is 'how people perceive things,' this being informed by background, environment, character, inclination, and learning, amongst other things. To this barren recital will be added hate-propaganda and media-spin saturation at the end-time, resulting in wholesale prejudice,³¹¹⁶ with hatred toward Judæo-Christianity being orchestrated by the workers of iniquity, both religious and political.

Can there be any doubt regarding the fulfilment of this prophecy?

'The great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter; and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure,' Dan 2:45. History corroborates the predictions of this prophecy up to the very least specification, and we can readily believe that this, too, will be fulfilled as certainly as all the others. How fully the inspiration of the Bible is vindicated, can be known only by the study of the prophetic word.'

³¹¹² Isa 24:21,22 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³¹¹³ the ten end-time kings are incarcerated for a short period, presumably, for it cannot be long before they are cast alive into the lake of fire in similar manner to that of their complicit leaders, the Beast and the False Prophet.

³¹¹⁴ Radcliffe-Brown, Alfred Reginald, *Religion and Society*

³¹¹⁵ Davidson and Rees-Mogg, *The Great Reckoning* (heavily paraphrased and redacted to suit context).

³¹¹⁶ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, p.243:

'Prejudice can distort our vision. There is nothing which so destroys a man's judgment as prejudice does. It prevents him from forming the clear, reasonable and logical judgment which is the duty of any man to form. It blinds him alike to the facts and to the significance of the facts.'

'Einstein's theory of relativity and Heisenberg's principle of uncertainty both postulated a universe of flux and taught that all "facts" are simply fleeting perceptions of different possibilities. Truth now appeared to be a function of subjective perception and morality just an expression of individual or group choice.'³¹¹⁷ This ably describes the vacuity, depravity, and utter worthlessness of modern culture and philosophical thought, whilst being descriptive of the wantings of science, which can never come to a settled understanding of fact or truth. All is 'fleeting,' all is subject to revision, amendment, or deletion. 'The individual must cope with the uncertainty of the global world by him- or herself. Here individualisation is a default outcome of a failure of expert systems to manage risks. Neither science, nor the politics in power, nor the mass media, nor business, nor the law, nor even the military are in a position to define or control risks rationally. We are in a world that is beyond controllability. I'm talking about a situation where normal instruments of calculating, anticipating, and colonising the future don't work any more.'³¹¹⁸

The evil goal of the ten confederated powers under the Beast is world domination, a goal leading inexorably to war with the Lamb at the Second Coming. If the war in heaven between the archangel Michael and his angels, and the dragon and his angels, proved a highly unequal combat, then in this one the balance of power is infinitely against the ungodly armies. The issue is to be never in doubt; it will be victory for the Lamb and His redeemed, described in three adjectives concluding the verse: '*called, and chosen, and faithful*.'³¹¹⁹ Here, by anticipation, is another preview of the final, cataclysmic battle, more fully set forth in chapter nineteen.³¹²⁰

Retribution

As noted, the great apostate church sits on many waters, identified as being '*peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues*.'³¹²¹ She sits on, or rules over, her apostate world. Despite this, she shall be made desolate by the very people she rules, the subservient turning the tables and venting their hatred against the Harlot. So thoroughgoing will their retribution on her be that it must be expressed by four concepts: desolation, nakedness, consumption,³¹²² and burning. The ten kings '*shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire*.'³¹²³ There will no trace of her left. She will be gone.

This can be compared with the fate of Jezebel of old: '*And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down: and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he trode her under foot. And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her: for she is*

³¹¹⁷ Fischer, Klaus P., *Nazi Germany*, pp.184,185

³¹¹⁸ from a lecture by Beck, Ulrich, author of *Power in the Global Age*.

³¹¹⁹ Rev 17:14c

³¹²⁰ Rev 19:14-21

³¹²¹ Rev 17:15

³¹²² in other words, cannibalism.

³¹²³ Rev 17:16b

a king's daughter. And they went to bury her: but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands. Wherefore they came again, and told him. And he said, *This is the word of the Lord, which he spake by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel.*'

³¹²⁴ Jehu's command that resulted in Jezebel being thrown from a window and trampled by his horses also resulted in the fulfilment of an aspect of Elijah's prophecy;³¹²⁵ when the dogs had finished eating and dismembering Jezebel, there was not enough of her corpse left to make a positive identification.³¹²⁶

Ultimately it will be God who oversees the execution of His judgement upon the Harlot. All that has been said in the prophetic word will be fulfilled; there will be none to save her. *'And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.'*³¹²⁷ The world will turn on her, in hatred over what she has done, to utterly do away with her, as God has planned. The apostate religious system based in Rome will be destroyed; as will Rome itself, together with its empire.³¹²⁸ This will be Rome's third, and, this time, final destruction by fire.³¹²⁹

The antecedent, the final, irrevocable consummation by fire of Babylon of old, is described by Porter: 'Fallen Babylon bears another mark of judgement, which has not been effected by the overflowings of the Euphrates, the ravages of wild beasts, the devastations of time, nor the rapacity of man. There are, on the ruins of Birs Nimrod, or temple of Belus, which was standing after the beginning of the Christian era, large fragments of brickwork that have been 'completely molten,' and that ring like glass, which must not only have been subjected to a heat 'equal to that of the strongest furnace,' but which, being vitrified all around, bear evident proof of the operation of fire....exactly what Scriptures prophesy it should become: *'a burnt mountain.'*³¹³⁰

³¹²⁴ II Kings 9:33-36

³¹²⁵ I Kings 21:23

³¹²⁶ possibly a second, rather weird parallel can be identified in the personage of one sometimes referred to as the 'She-pope,' Joan, originally from England, who came via the German states to Rome. She is known to history as Pope John VIII, who lived in the 9th-century. It is recorded by some that, indeed, this pope was a woman dressed as a man, whom, at one point, having conceived, gave birth in the streets between the Coliseum and St. Clement's Church in Rome. Immediately, she was set upon by the mob, and killed. Others, it must be said, dispute this account in its entirety, claiming it to be a calumny on Romanism.

³¹²⁷ Rev 17:16

³¹²⁸ Rev 18:8-11

³¹²⁹ previous occurrences: c.390BC and again in 64AD.

³¹³⁰ Porter, Sir R. K., *Birs Nimrod*; Jer 51:25,26; with Babylon the great's final destruction, an ironic part-fulfilment of the satanic Illuminati³¹³⁰ ('Illuminati,' according to Adam Weishaupt, means 'holder of the light,' and derives from Lucifer) plan formulated in 1776AD by Adam Weishaupt will be finally achieved. John Robison, a professor of natural philosophy at Edinburgh University in Scotland, wrote a book in 1798AD entitled, *Proof of a Conspiracy to Destroy all Governments and Religions*. In it, he exposed the Illuminati plan for a one-world government, based on a copy of Weishaupt's by then updated conspiracy. The elimination of religion of any hue, including the occult Roman one, is presaged. This may seem perverse, for it appears strongly counter-productive, but, despite all, the Antichrist, the most wicked person ever to live, remains allied to the False Prophet even after the fall of Rome. Doubtless, the need of the unprecedented occult power of the pope will still commend itself to his wicked mind. Ultimately, the last-in-line pope will care not a whit for his deluded and violent flock, but will flee to safety in order to save his own skin and to be beside his evil partner in mounting one last, desperate attempt at world hegemony in a battle with the returning Messiah Himself.

Double curse

All this, perhaps, necessitates an exposition of the meaning and impact of the so-called 'double curse': *'But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.'*³¹³¹ Through repetition for emphasis, and by way of confirming the imminent judgement of God, this is sometimes referred to as the 'double curse.' It is not, however, tautological.

One level of this curse can be gleaned from a reading of the concluding verses of chapter seventeen: *'And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall at her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.'*³¹³² Here is pictured the wrath of men meted out on the apostate religious system which will ensnare the world. And the wrath is put in their minds by God. The other level is what occurs both on the return of Christ and a millennia later with the final Gog and Magog uprising and the Great White Throne Judgement: the wrath of God. And of these, more later.

³¹³¹ Gal 1:8,9

³¹³² Rev 17:16-18

Chapter 22

Seventh Vial

The seventh vial is poured out by the angel into the air. This is the domain of Satan, as prince of the power of the air: *'Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.'*³¹³³ Though cast out of the 'middle' or second heaven,³¹³⁴ Satan still has access to the earthly, atmospheric heaven. When cast down to earth, Satan retained his activity throughout the air immediately above the earth; all this with the authorisation of God and in keeping with His holy plan.

The concluding section of chapter sixteen of Revelation presages events concerning Babylon the great contained in the following two chapters. Firstly, there is a prefatory gathering: *'And he'*³¹³⁵ *gathered them together in a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.'*³¹³⁶ And then the seventh angel strikes: *'And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.'*³¹³⁷ The voice from heaven utters one word, *'It is done,'*³¹³⁸ which declares that all of God's plagues, in the time of the seventh angel and his vial, have thus been completed.

³¹³³ Eph 2:2

³¹³⁴ q.v. sup.

³¹³⁵ presumably referring to the Antichrist.

³¹³⁶ Rev 16:16

³¹³⁷ Rev 16:17-21

³¹³⁸ one word in Greek: gegonan.

*'And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came into remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.'*³¹³⁹ There is a series of voices, thunders, and a great earthquake, the greatest earthquake in the history of man. The great city described is that same city similarly described in chapters fourteen and sixteen: Babylon. In other words, the seat of the Beast empire: Rome.

World-wide catastrophe

The catastrophe which strikes Babylon the great also strikes the great metropolises of the world. This is a worldwide earthquake which also wreaks devastation on every island and on the mountains.³¹⁴⁰ Such a world-wide earthquake, with attendant tsunamis, will reduce man's environment to rubble. Everything will be affected: economic activity including agriculture and industry, finance, communications, and travel. All of the basic essentials for life as perceived by this wicked world will lie utterly in ruins. Nothing remotely like this has happened before, or will happen again, for it is the consummation. No wonder men will be in anguish.

Referring to the third and final destruction of Rome, the text reads, *'And the great city was divided into three parts....and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.'*³¹⁴¹ The sense conveyed in '*parts*' is that of becoming the third and final part of a tripartite fall, being the final allocation or allotment of judgement for that '*great city*.' The third and final destruction is clearly presaged here, three being the biblical number of judgement; a fitting terminus. Despite previous destructions which occurred on the day of the rising of the dog-star, Sirius, it is apparent that the final destruction will not complete until later in the year.³¹⁴²

The ten very end-time kings have their mind and actions specifically identified: *'And the ten horns which thou sawest, are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast....These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them....these shall hate the*

³¹³⁹ Rev 16:18-20

³¹⁴⁰ Rev 16:20

³¹⁴¹ Rev 16:19 (sublinear emphasis added); Greek: ginomai, poorly translated '*divided*,' actually means '*became*,' Greek: meros, translated '*parts*,' means a '*division*' or '*share*,' deriving from the obsolete but more primitive form meiromai, meaning '*due portion*,' '*allotment*,' or '*allocation*.'

The final collapse of Rome, by divine intervention in the form of a massive earthquake on 30 September, 2027, is to be followed by its burning and complete destruction by the ten kingdoms on 1, and, possibly, 2 October, 2027. By then, all members of this evil world will have seen the return of Christ and His armies to the mount of Olives on 30 September, and belatedly have concluded that they have been hopelessly duped by the false church and its leader, the False Prophet. Revenge, in the form of utter destruction of Rome by fire, will ensue, the entire exhibiting an inevitable cadence.

³¹⁴² 30 September, 2027, q.v. inf.

*whore, and shall make her desolate, and naked, and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. And the woman which thou sawest, is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth.'*³¹⁴³

The burning of Rome for the third time is here in view, executed by the angry combination of the ten very end-time kingdoms. As their kings' reign lasts for but '*one hour*,' a very short time, it is possible that they are not elevated to their position until after the second woe, possibly even on the day of the rising of the dog-star. While speculative, this would fall within the one hundred and nine days not counted by God—the time from Pentecost to Yom Teruah in the year in question—leaving but a short time for their reign.³¹⁴⁴

Completing the utter devastation: '*And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.*'³¹⁴⁵ Each hailstone is described as weighing about the weight of a talent: fifty-kilograms³¹⁴⁶ or thereabouts. Hailstones have already been mentioned in the Apocalypse in chapter eight,³¹⁴⁷ but this is of a wholly different order of magnitude. It takes little imagination to picture the destructive force bound in these stones, especially on a human population which will be largely devoid of shelter as a result of the previous great earthquake. Despite the severity of this plague, mankind still blasphemes God. It is difficult to fathom the depth of such alienation from God, but it continues nevertheless: the more severe the judgement, the greater the blasphemy.

³¹⁴³ Rev 17:12,14,16,18 (sublinear emphasis added).

³¹⁴⁴ q.v. inf.

³¹⁴⁵ Rev 16:21

³¹⁴⁶ one hundredweight.

³¹⁴⁷ Rev 8:7

Chapter 23

Fall of Babylon

Chapter eighteen of Revelation deals in some detail with the fall of Babylon the great. *'And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people,³¹⁴⁸ that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and*

³¹⁴⁸ Rev 18:4,5, 'Come out of her (the pagan religious whore) my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues' imports spatial separation. God's people could not, at that point, have any truck or contact with pagan worship dressed as Christianity, so the reference must be spatial: "Get out of Rome!"

*mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner of vessels of ivory, and all manner of vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, And saying, Alas, alas that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsmen, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.'*³¹⁴⁹

This chapter carries on the subject of God's judgement on Babylon. Strangely, some expositors have understood chapter seventeen to speak of one person and system, and chapter eighteen to deal with a totally different person and system. This is erroneous. It is proper to view Babylon in chapter seventeen as a vast, subtle, apostate, ecclesiastical system,³¹⁵⁰ and also, in chapter eighteen, as a huge, interlocking commercial system.³¹⁵¹ They are simply alternative aspects of the same Babylon the great.

The close tie between the false prophet, the world's premier religious leader, and commerce is but an intensification of that of Babylon of old. Keller describes the latter: 'Babylon was not only a commercial but a religious metropolis as can be seen from an inscription: "Altogether there are in Babylon fifty-three temples of the chief gods, fifty-five chapels of Marduk, three hundred chapels for the earthly deities, six hundred for the

³¹⁴⁹ Rev 18:1-24

³¹⁵⁰ Rev 17:2,4,6

³¹⁵¹ Rev 18:3,11-17

heavenly deities, one hundred and eighty altars for the goddess Ishtar, one hundred and eighty for the gods Nergal and Adad, and twelve other altars for different gods.”

Polytheism of this kind with worship and ritual which extended to public prostitution must have given the city, in terms of the present day, the appearance of an annual fair.

On the streets and squares between the temples, the chapels and the altars, trade and commerce flourished. Solemn processions, heavily laden caravans, traders’ barrows, priests, pilgrims and merchants surged to and fro, colourful and noisy. Religious life and business life were so closely associated in Babylon’s everyday affairs that they dovetailed into each other, as they did in the temples. What else could the priests do with all the sacrificial animals, all the “tithes” that were presented daily on the altars, many of them quickly perishable, apart from turning them into money as soon as possible? Just as in Ur, the temple authorities in Babylon ran their own department stores and warehouses. They also ran their own banks to invest their revenues to the best advantage.³¹⁵²

Throughout history, Babylon, in both its manifestations, has been adamantly opposed to God and his righteousness. Chapter eighteen pictures the doom of the latter-day, so-called Christian civilisation in its social and commercial guise.

There is a correlation here with the ‘woman’ of Zechariah, where the ‘woman’ symbolizes Satan’s false religious system: *‘Then the angel that talked with me went forth, and said unto me, Lift up thine eyes, and see what is this that goeth forth. And I said, What is it? And he said, This is an ephah³¹⁵³ that goeth forth. He said moreover, This is their resemblance through all the earth. And, behold, there was lifted up a talent of lead: and this is a woman that sitteth in the midst of the ephah. And he said, This is wickedness. And he cast it into the midst of the ephah; and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof. Then lifted I up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came out two women, and the wind was in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork: and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven. Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah? And he said unto me, To build it an house in the land of Shinar: and it shall be established, and set there upon her own base.’³¹⁵⁴*

The significance of the ‘woman’ in the midst of the ephah, the largest dry measure used by the children of Israel to measure grain, is highlighted by the descriptive terms used. The core wickedness contained in the ephah cannot escape from it; there is a talent of lead, the heaviest weight measure used by the Israelites, upon its opening. The talent of lead is lifted high enough, but not removed, to reveal that there is a woman sitting in

³¹⁵² Keller, Werner, *The Bible as History*, pp.287,289

³¹⁵³ the ‘ephah’ and the ‘talent’ hail from the Hebrew: kikar, a round lead weight; the ‘woman’ is false religion, sent back to its origin, Babylon—deriving from the Akkadian: babilani, inter alia, q.v. sup., meaning ‘the gate of the gods’—where false religion started with the woman Semiramis. It does not refer to the Babylonian captivity, for that happened long before Zechariah was written, but to the future, end-time cleansing of the Jews of their false Judaism, which is but a heavily-agglomerated, mystically-enhanced, sub-set of Mithraism.

³¹⁵⁴ Zech 5:5-11

the midst of the ephah. For the Israel of Zechariah's day, the significance was that wickedness, especially religious wickedness, must be removed entirely out of the land. Although an impossible task from man's viewpoint, from God's viewpoint this is simply and efficiently accomplished; so the people should not let any form of wickedness deflect them from their task of bringing the Temple at Jerusalem to completion. To the Israel of the future the vision looks to the seventieth week of Daniel when God is going to remove every system and form of wickedness that manifests itself against Him.

The angel that comes down from heaven in verse one of chapter eighteen is frequently held to be Christ, based on the description used of great power and the earth lightened. This is most probably correct, as is the same attribution found in chapter ten,³¹⁵⁵ but Christ does not appear on, as opposed to above, the earth in person until chapter nineteen. This powerful angel's announcement that Babylon the great, the latter day Babylon, is fallen is the exposition of the proleptic verse eight in chapter fourteen.³¹⁵⁶ The statement in chapter sixteen³¹⁵⁷ was similarly brief and anticipatory. Chapter seventeen shows the doom of the whore at the hands of those whom she has ruled and suppressed,³¹⁵⁸ but here, God's purpose concerning her is realised in detail. Just as wholesale, organised idolatry was incepted in Babylon of old, so it will have its hideous, unclean, and hateful consummation in Babylon the great. All Satan's evil agencies will congregate there, a veritable cesspool of apostasy, pagan rites, and wickedness.

The universality of her sway is here underscored.³¹⁵⁹ All the nations are pointed out here as the subject of her deceptions and seductions. Godless religion knows how to capture the attention of this unwary world by display, ritual, easy redemption, and conspicuous wealth. The phrase *'the kings of the earth'* refers to all kings, not merely the ten confederated kings. The merchants³¹⁶⁰ of the earth and their riches and wealth are co-joined. There is a strong commercial side to Mystery, Babylon the great.

Flee Babylon

The call to flee the doomed Babylon is directed solely to God's people. God mercifully warns His own prior to the coming catastrophe, to avoid their partaking of her plagues. But there is an apparent difficulty here. The one hundred and forty-four thousand are already sealed, and gone; they are attending the wedding supper

³¹⁵⁵ Rev 10:8-10 vis-a-vis Ezek 2:8-3:3, and Jer 15:16, *'Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy words were unto me a joy and a rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts,'* but note that the LXX has Jer 15:15c-16b: *'I have suffered reproach from them that despise thy word. Consume them, and let thy word be unto me a joy.'*

³¹⁵⁶ Rev 14:8, *'And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all the nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.'*

³¹⁵⁷ Rev 16:19

³¹⁵⁸ Rev 17:17

³¹⁵⁹ Rev 17:1,2,15,18

³¹⁶⁰ Greek: emporoi, as in emporium.

of the Lamb 'in the air.'³¹⁶¹ So who are the recipients of this direction? The answer is those Jews, other Israelites, and Gentiles who have not received the mark of the Beast or worshipped him or his image, and have come through the Great Tribulation. They are not included in the one hundred and forty-four thousand, and they have to flee Babylon the great in order to avoid partaking of her judgement.

Ancient Babylon had wanted to build a tower, a ziggurat, 'with its top in the sky.'³¹⁶² It was intended as protection from another flood. In addition, through various devices such as zodiacal signs—which they could plot and observe above the low-lying fogs and mists that frequently enshrouded the plain of Shinar—and heavenly calendars, they would be able to secure control over men by completely diverting their attention away from God's sacred calendar.³¹⁶³ Here her mystical, modern counterpart piles up her sins unto heaven, in an affront to God. Whilst it is said that 'God hath remembered her iniquities,' it is not that these have ever been forgotten, it is just the biblical way of stating that the hour of reckoning and judgement has arrived.

Given that Babylon's sins have accumulated over so long a period of time, and she has been impervious over the centuries to God's warnings, the Mosaic Law of recompense is doubled.³¹⁶⁴ The root of Babylon's degeneration is Satan-inspired pride, self-security, godlessness, persecution of the righteous, and her glorification of wealth and luxury, all directed to self-exaltation. But her fortifications and bulwarks, and all the great abundance of worldly riches will avail her nothing. God in His omnipotence will be her Judge: *'Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms. I was wrath with my people, I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thine hand: thou didst show them no mercy; upon the ancients hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke. And thou saidst, I shall be a lady forever: so thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it. Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children: But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments. For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me. Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know.'*³¹⁶⁵ The phrase 'I am',³¹⁶⁶ repeated to indicate the certainty and immediacy of judgement, is used blasphemously by this wholly apostate,

³¹⁶¹ Rev 19:1,9

³¹⁶² Tanakh, Gen 11:4

³¹⁶³ q.v. inf.

³¹⁶⁴ Rev 18:6; Ex 21:23-25

³¹⁶⁵ Isa 47:5-11 (sublinear emphasis added)

³¹⁶⁶ actually one of the names of God, from Hebrew: hayah.

pagan church, for she sets herself above all. The visitation is detailed in five particulars: *'plagues....death and mourning, and famine; and....fire.'*³¹⁶⁷ All of these will be visited on her in one day;³¹⁶⁸ a very short space of time.

World-wide mourning

The mourning over her demise is widespread and heartfelt. The kings of the earth, her partners in fornication, shall weep and lament over her, *'for in one hour is thy judgment come.'*³¹⁶⁹ This last phrase moderates the parallel phrase earlier in the chapter which refers to *'one day.'*³¹⁷⁰ This is to impart the fact that her demise will come in a very short space of time, and not over the space of one year, which could otherwise be calculated on the principle of a day for a year.³¹⁷¹

The merchants also weep and mourn, for with her demise goes all of the world's economic system. No-one buys, no-one sells; money loses all its worth and is useless; economies around the world abruptly implode and terminate. The inventory of cargo recited in this chapter shows a combination of religious goods with commercial. With all of this unsold, the wealth of the world will be immediately thrown into confusion and hopeless collapse. The fall of commercial Babylon will have serious consequences for the maritime trade and for all traders. The losses will be irretrievable. The impact of the calamity is also presaged in James: *'Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.'*³¹⁷² Whilst this state of affairs has in purview events a little wider than those pertaining at the fall of Babylon the great—for it also encompasses the 'reduction to dust' of the current world economy which happens before the onset of the seven seals of Revelation—it is apposite, and it is utterly terminal. The fraudsters' wealth is no more. But what a change is depicted when the scene is shifted to God's people. The same wailing will not apply there. These are instructed to rejoice greatly over her demise; for it is the vengeance of God, meted out in double judgement. The incorrigibly wicked of the earth mourn; but the righteous rejoice.

³¹⁶⁷ Rev 18:8

³¹⁶⁸ Greek: eo instante.

³¹⁶⁹ Rev 18:10c

³¹⁷⁰ Rev 18:8a

³¹⁷¹ and which would be wholly inconsistent with and incongruous to the time periods mentioned and used in 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet, q.v. inf.

³¹⁷² James 5:1-6; the phrase, *'Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days,'* is better translated, *'Ye have heaped treasure together in the last days.'*

Jeremiah describes Babylon's fate: *'Behold I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyeth all the earth....thou shalt be desolate forever.'*³¹⁷³ The Hebrew here translated *'destroying mountain'*³¹⁷⁴ is that used of the mount of Corruption, located on the southern slope of Olivet, where, at one time, idolators gathered to perform their abominable practices. The correlation is all too apparent. The finality of her doom and a core reason for her fall are recited in chapter eighteen.³¹⁷⁵ The symbolism in the form of the great millstone is reminiscent of Jeremiah: *'And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of the Euphrates: and thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her: and they shall be weary. Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.'*³¹⁷⁶ This bears out the sheer impossibility of recovery from God's judgement. Babylon's evil entirety—city, empire, and church³¹⁷⁷—must fall, and fall for all time, while the joyous wedding supper of the Lamb is held *'in the air.'*³¹⁷⁸

The root of this is the whore's deception of all nations with her religious sorcery, actively promoted by Satan and his demons. Included is the entire system of ungodliness from the beginning of man's sojourn on earth. She is worthy of all the misery and judgement God pours out on her. She is guilty of the blood of martyred *'prophets, and of saints, and all that were slain upon the earth.'*³¹⁷⁹ This inclusive statement shows the depth of her guilt: it was at Babylon that God had to confuse the tongues of men. Babylon was at the core of apostasy shortly after the flood, and, as such, must bear the penalty in full, twice over. It is, as it were, its own wild law,³¹⁸⁰ visited upon it, in double measure: poetic justice. Rejoice indeed!

³¹⁷³ Jer 51:25,26

³¹⁷⁴ Hebrew: har hamashchiyth.

³¹⁷⁵ Rev 18:21-24

³¹⁷⁶ Jer 51:63,64

³¹⁷⁷ viz., of Rome.

³¹⁷⁸ Rev 19:1,9

³¹⁷⁹ cp. Rev 17:6

³¹⁸⁰ Latin: lex talionis, the law of the jungle.

Chapter 24

Two Suppers

Chapter nineteen of Revelation deals with two main themes: the Wedding Supper of the Lamb and what is sometimes called the Supper of God or the Supper of the Damned. They are very different; as different as can be.

'And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me,

*See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*³¹⁸¹

The total destruction of mystical Babylon recited in chapters seventeen and eighteen evokes great rejoicing in heaven. The '*much people*' reference is to those immediately surrounding God's throne and to all God's holy angels. The blasphemy and vile vituperation which characterized Babylon the great is no more and the blood of God's martyred servants spilled by the workers of iniquity has been avenged: '*Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*'³¹⁸² Those who are the firstfruits are commanded by a voice out of the throne to praise the Lord.

This is the hour for which the church has prayed and longed, and all creation has groaned, '*For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body,*'³¹⁸³ and, '*For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.*'³¹⁸⁴

Destroyer of death

'But I will venture to say this—that there is no such thing in the Old Testament Scriptures (till Gospel light be thrown on them) as an abolition of death and a bringing of life and immortality to light. It was reserved for Jesus Christ to destroy death first of all by His Word.

Need I remind anyone of the clearness and the fulness with which He makes a life beyond death the subject of express revelation? '*Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.*' '*The hour is coming, in which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.*' '*This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day.*' '*I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth on me, though he were dead (though he have died), yet*

³¹⁸¹ Rev 19:1-10

³¹⁸² Rom 12:19

³¹⁸³ Rom 8:22,23

³¹⁸⁴ I Cor 15:22-28

shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.' 'I go to prepare a place for you: and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also.' 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am: that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me, for Thou lovest me before the foundation of the world.'

Thus Jesus destroyed death by His Word. To those who have learned to trust Him—to those who believe that He came forth from God with a message of truth and reality for man—His word is enough: enough for faith, enough for conviction, enough for hope. He brings life and immortality to light by His Gospel.

And yet, so great is the danger, so terrible the foe, so critical the question therefore for each one of us, that it has pleased Him to add something to the bare word, *'that by two immutable things we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to the hope set before us.'*

He destroyed death, secondly, by His works done below [His miracles]....He recalls the child from its recent flight [death], and at another He revives the corpse in its burial, and at another opens the sealed tomb, and stays corruption itself in its visible course.

Thirdly, Christ was the destroyer of death by His death....If Christ had died and not risen, then would the victory at last have rested with His foe. A dead Saviour is none. A Redeemer holden permanently to death would have been powerless even to redeem Himself.³¹⁸⁵

Wedding arrangements

In the natural order of things, with the marriage of the Lamb to His Bride, the church, the Whore must be destroyed. Accordingly, Babylon the great, Satan's primary adversarial and counterfeit religio-political and overtly commercial system, has been brought to its knees and eradicated.

Of all provisions of God for man's well-being, and joy on earth, marriage, God's first social institution, is of extreme importance, this despite the warning in Genesis: *'Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children; and thy desire shall be against thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.'*³¹⁸⁶ The preposition here translated *'against'*³¹⁸⁷ is the correct translation; others adopting the prepositions *'for'* or *'to'* are not.³¹⁸⁸

³¹⁸⁵ Vaughan, C. J., *Christ the Light of the World*, pp.208-216 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³¹⁸⁶ Gen 3:16; Hebrew: teshugah, 'evil urge,' 'burning desire.'

³¹⁸⁷ Hebrew: el.

³¹⁸⁸ Cripps, Richard S., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Amos*, p.236 and footnotes (with added comment and clarification in square brackets; subscripted emphasis added):

'Amos 7:15b, 'and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel.'

'[P]rophesy unto.' So Ezek 36:1,37:9. In the next verse the priest calls the act of Amos *'prophesying against.'*

(1) However, it is possible that the correctness of the reading *'unto'* in this verse will not be questioned insofar as the view is taken that God raised up Amos like some other of His prophets not only to destroy, but to build (Jer 1:10), to call to repentance as well as to announce doom (Amos 5:5, and 1:2).

Both Old and New Testaments give ample evidence of the importance of this symbolism. In the Old Testament Hosea spoke of it from the traumatic experience of his own life;³¹⁸⁹ Isaiah spoke of it in relation to the church;³¹⁹⁰ Jeremiah dwelt on the theme;³¹⁹¹ and Ezekiel portrayed it with fullness.³¹⁹² The New Testament speaks of the marriage feast in Matthew³¹⁹³ and Luke;³¹⁹⁴ the bridal chamber and wedding garments;³¹⁹⁵ the sons of the bridal chamber;³¹⁹⁶ the bridegroom;³¹⁹⁷ and the friends of the bridegroom.³¹⁹⁸ Paul writes of the church as the betrothed virgin of Christ: *'For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.'*³¹⁹⁹ Paul also spoke of the relationship

(2) None the less, it is likely that in v.15 the true reading is *'against,'* as in v.16.

The phrase *'prophesy against'* (*'al*), is used of the utterances of Jehovah's prophets fourteen times elsewhere, and probably there should be added to these some seven occurrences in Jeremiah and Ezekiel where the Masoretic Text should be changed to *'al*. The expression *hinnabhe 'el* may be said to occur in the Old Testament scarcely more than twice (as above, Ezek 36:1, and especially 37:9, *'prophesy unto the wind'*). The confusion of *'el* and *'al* is one of the commonest cases of textual corruption.

Cp. Gen 3:16 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), *'Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children, and thy [evil] desire shall be for [actually *'against'*] thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.'* Exactly the same Hebrew construction and phraseology is found in Gen 4:7c, when speaking to Cain of Satan's evil intent against him: *'And unto [actually *'against'*] thee shall be his [evil] desire, and thou shalt rule over him.'*

'al meanings:

on
with
in
to
near
after

'el meanings:

to, toward, unto (of motion)
into (limit is actually entered)
in among
toward (of direction, not necessarily physical motion)
against (motion or direction of a hostile character)
in addition to, to
concerning, in regard to, in reference to, on account of
according to (rule or standard)
at, by, against (of one's presence)
in between, in within, to within, unto (idea of motion to)

³¹⁸⁹ Hos 2:19,20

³¹⁹⁰ Isa 54:5

³¹⁹¹ Jer 3:14;31:31,32

³¹⁹² Ezekiel chpt. 16

³¹⁹³ Mat 22:2f.

³¹⁹⁴ Luke 14:16f.

³¹⁹⁵ Mat 22:10,11; Greek: *poneros*, in *'bad and good'* should read *'burdened and good'*—for the *'bad'* cannot attend.

³¹⁹⁶ Mark 2:19

³¹⁹⁷ Mat 25:1; Mark 2:19

³¹⁹⁸ John 3:29

³¹⁹⁹ II Cor 11:2

between husband and wife,³²⁰⁰ encapsulated in, *'Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.'*³²⁰¹

Those with no wedding garment,³²⁰² are barred or figuratively thrown out. This is not 'dinner',³²⁰³ but the 'early meal',³²⁰⁴ signifying the wedding feast of the first-born, the 'elect.' The lack of wedding garment corresponds with a tract in Zechariah,³²⁰⁵ and the last-era church being rejected pursuant to Paul's *'falling away first.'*

National Israel is the unfaithful, and yet to be reclaimed, betrothed of the Lord in the Old Testament. The church is the Bride of Christ the Lamb in the New Testament, but only after purification, *'as a chaste virgin to Christ,'* and, *'That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.'*³²⁰⁶ For the glorious occasion of the wedding, the bride, of necessity, has to make herself ready. When the Bride clothes herself it is with the finest of apparel, *'fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.'*³²⁰⁷ Here 'righteousness' is identified by the Greek plural,³²⁰⁸ or righteous acts of the saints. Her clothing is also described in Isaiah, *'I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.'*³²⁰⁹ *'Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.'*³²¹⁰ It is with these firstfruits that Christ will fulfil His words: *'This is my blood of the new testament, shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.'*³²¹¹

The inauguration of the kingdom is commensurate with the seventh trump and the start of the third woe, the 'elect' having risen immortal *'in the air'* to meet Christ: *'The second woe is past; and behold the third woe cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom³²¹² of this world is become the kingdom [both uses correctly singular] of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall*

³²⁰⁰ Eph 5:21-33

³²⁰¹ Eph 5:24

³²⁰² Mat 22:1-14; The word 'guest' in Luke 19:7, Greek: anakeimenon, means 'participant, or dining / eating together, to lie at the table or recline' (on the Greek: lectis tricliniaris). But the one ejected, cast out, was not wearing a wedding garment, suggesting strongly that those who will be ejected are not guests but mere participants, those who superficially profess church membership but are found to have nothing of substance within them.

³²⁰³ for that particular repast, q.v. inf.

³²⁰⁴ Greek: apiton.

³²⁰⁵ Zech 11:4f.; especially v.9

³²⁰⁶ Eph 5:26,27

³²⁰⁷ Rev 19:8a

³²⁰⁸ Greek: dikaionomata (plural).

³²⁰⁹ Isa 61:10

³²¹⁰ Rev 20:6

³²¹¹ Mark 14:24,25

³²¹² correctly singular.

*reign for ever and ever.*³²¹³ As noted before, this wedding supper takes place *'in the air'* before Christ's return to the mount of Olives.³²¹⁴

That these words are sure and certain is confirmed by the angel; these are the sayings of God. The disclosure of this truth was so marvellous, the out-turn so wholly wonderful, that John was moved to worship at the feet of the angel. When John fell at the feet of Christ, there was no rebuke, only reassurance, *'Fear not; I am the first and the last,*³²¹⁵ but both here, and later,³²¹⁶ the apostle is forbidden such worship. Angels are servants on the basis of creation; believers of the election are servants separated,³²¹⁷ and then elevated to sons³²¹⁸ on the basis of redemption. All homage and worship belongs to God and the Lamb, to whom all prophecy points. The phrase, *'for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy,*³²¹⁹ indicates that prophecy is meant to convey an indispensable witness of Christ. Prophecy, completely accurate as here, is, at once, indisputable proof of Christ's position and the very proof of God. For who else can know the end from the beginning and the beginning from the end?

King of kings

Chapter nineteen continues: *'And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.'*³²²⁰

Now is presented the prophecy of the visible coming of Christ. This will not be 'gentle Jesus meek and mild.' Neither will it conform to the Jewish view of a wholly mortal Messiah. This is Christ, returning in His all-conquering power and glory, to mete out the wrath of God on the latter day apostates who neither heed God's word nor obey God's statutes. So heaven opens, with Christ on a white horse, to go forth and judge and make war. Heaven has been opened in vision to John before,³²²¹ but never has such a sight as this been seen. The

³²¹³ Rev 11:14,15 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³²¹⁴ Rev 19:7-21

³²¹⁵ Rev 1:17

³²¹⁶ Rev 22:8,9

³²¹⁷ Rev 11:2

³²¹⁸ crowned angels, q.v. 'Ranking of Angels' in the Appendix.

³²¹⁹ Rev 19:10

³²²⁰ Rev 19:11-16; His title in capitals.

³²²¹ Rev 4:1

manner of His coming is seen in, *'Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven,'*³²²² and, *'Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him:'*³²²³ and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.³²²⁴

Here John sees the One with dyed garments from Bozrah in Isaiah's prophecy;³²²⁵ the Righteous Branch and King of Jeremiah's foretelling; the returning Shekinah glory in Ezekiel; the Stone cut out without hands in Daniel; the Lord coming with His saints in Zechariah; and the appearing of the Son of man in Christ's own prophecy: *'Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.'*³²²⁶

Surprisingly, the white horse mentioned here has often been confused with the white horse of chapter six.³²²⁷ But on that horse sat a false politico-messiah, the first of four horsemen of the Apocalypse who destroy the earth and its inhabitants during the opening of the first four seals. Here, the scene is set at the very return of Christ, at the last trump. This white horse, with its rider—indicative of the King going to war—symbolises purity, victory, and triumph. Christ is faithful and true in character and every deed. He is the mighty Warrior who will right the ills of this world, irrespective of the views and feelings of the surviving wicked. He will both judge and make war under the same principle: His righteousness.

The description of His glorious person continues. That *'His eyes were as a flame of fire,'* indicates penetrating, scrutinising omniscience. On His head, once crowned with thorns at Calvary³²²⁸ in shame and humiliation, *'were many crowns.'* These are tiered crowns;³²²⁹ one above the other, indicating the highest majesty and authority.

Many things have been divulged in the Apocalypse so far, and more are to follow, but there are certain elements which must remain hidden from man in this dispensation: *'The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.'*³²³⁰ Thus His name is withheld: *'and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he*

³²²² Acts 1:11

³²²³ Zech 12:10

³²²⁴ Rev 1:7

³²²⁵ Isa 63:1f.

³²²⁶ Mat 24:29,30

³²²⁷ Rev 6:2

³²²⁸ 'crown of thorns' is thought to have been woven from sisyphus spina christi, the Christ-thorn, as it is commonly known. The Syrian Christ-thorn is a bush or small tree, three to five metres high, with pliant white twigs. Its stipulae have each two strong thorns which curve backwards. This plant still grows in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

³²²⁹ Greek: diadema, 'a crown of divine right.'

³²³⁰ Deut 29:29b

himself.³²³¹ From scriptural usage it is known that the name written indicates His own essential glory, which expresses the fullness of His divine nature.

Our Redeemer is come to save His own and judge His enemies. That, *'he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood,'*³²³² points to: *'Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in mine fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.'*³²³³

The judgement of Christ will be exercised to the full: *'And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.'*³²³⁴

And the armies which were in heaven will follow him. Again, surprisingly, there is doubt in some quarters over their identity. The armies are comprised of those who fight on behalf of the Lord and who are in heaven: God's angels. Perhaps some of this confusion derives from a misinterpretation of, *'And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all.'*³²³⁵ The point to be remembered here is that the saints are risen to meet Christ *'in the air'* and to return with Him, as clearly shown in, *'For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.'*³²³⁶ The saints will return with Christ, but as spirit beings, and vengeance will be visited on the ungodly left alive on earth at that time by Jesus Christ.

³²³¹ Deut 29:29a

³²³² Rev 19:13a

³²³³ Isa 63:1-6

³²³⁴ II Thes 1:7-10

³²³⁵ Jude 14,15

³²³⁶ I Thes 4:16,17

The description of Christ continues, not merely to fill out the portrait, but to reveal the events bound up in the judgement. The '*sharp sword*' issuing from His mouth is undoubtedly the Word of God,³²³⁷ but specifically wielded in judgement. The nations, the object of His rule, will be ruled with a rod of iron.³²³⁸ The rule will be both stern and inflexible, but always absolutely righteous. He has more than ample power to implement His every command. Besides the mention of the sword and rod of iron, there is now the figure of the winepress. Again, this is the figure of the vintage.³²³⁹ Clearly, this is not Christ sessional, but retributive, in war.

In addition to the two names already connected with the returning Lord Jesus Christ,³²⁴⁰ there is another, a title: '*on his vesture and on his thigh....KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.*'³²⁴¹ It has been introduced already,³²⁴² albeit in reverse order. It is His full, patent, majestic title in His glorious position relative to the earth and the peoples thereof, visible for all to read. Such a title was arrogantly assumed by men in the ancient Near East. Conquering kings allowed their subjugated royal enemies to retain their former title in order to convey the idea that they, the victorious ones, were the highest, supreme above all. Certainly, this was empty boasting, but it is not so with the all-conquering Messiah.

Valley of decision

Now comes what has been termed the Supper of God,³²⁴³ or, alternatively, the Supper of the Damned, deriving from the 'guest list,' which turns out to be the main and only course. It also correlates with Joel chapters two and three, and Ezekiel chapter thirty-nine: '*And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.*'³²⁴⁴

³²³⁷ Isa 11:4; Heb 4:12

³²³⁸ Psa 2:9; Rev 12:5

³²³⁹ Rev 14:19,20; Isa 63:1-6

³²⁴⁰ Rev 19:12,13

³²⁴¹ Rev 19:16

³²⁴² Rev 17:14

³²⁴³ Rev 19:7

³²⁴⁴ Rev 19:17-21

*'Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withhold their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more.'*³²⁴⁵

'Therefore, thou son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: And I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee, and will cause thee to come up from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel: And I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand. Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. Thou shalt fall upon the open field: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God. And I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles: and they shall know that I am the Lord. So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord God; this is the day whereof I have spoken. And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall burn them with fire seven years: So that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down any out of the forests; for they shall burn the weapons with fire: and they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord God. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the noses of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it the valley of Hamon-gog. And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land. Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord God. And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord God; Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you,

³²⁴⁵ Joel 3:9-17

*even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan. And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord God. And I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day and forward. And the heathen shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity: because they trespassed against me, therefore hid I my face from them, and gave them into the hand of their enemies: so fell they all by the sword.'*³²⁴⁶

All of these passages must be taken together. Contrary to common belief, what is frequently and erroneously referred to as the final battle, the battle of Armageddon, does not take place either at Har Megiddo³²⁴⁷ or in the valley which lies between the Temple Mount and the mount of Olives, forming part of the Kidron Valley which runs approximately in a north-south direction, and is often given the wildly erroneous eponym: 'Valley of Jehoshaphat.' The actual location of the battle or war is noted in Joel as the Valley of Jehoshaphat,³²⁴⁸ also known as the Valley of Decision or Destruction.³²⁴⁹ This, however, is located about eleven miles to the south of Jerusalem, in the Valley of Beracha³²⁵⁰ where king Jehoshaphat was given complete victory over the Jews' enemies from Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir. It lies near Tekoah, south of Bethlehem. That valley, the valley of blessing, has a connection to the *'thousand, three hundred, five and thirty days'*³²⁵¹ of blessedness, in that the latter is the consummation of all, for the enemies of God are consumed in that battle. That consumption spreads

³²⁴⁶ Ezek 39:1-13,17-23

³²⁴⁷ Armageddon.

³²⁴⁸ Joel 3:2

³²⁴⁹ Joel 3:14

³²⁵⁰ Valley of Blessing.

³²⁵¹ Dan 12:12; the 1,335th day, the day of blessing, on the calculations in 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet, q.v. inf., falls on 14 December, 2027. There is an interesting addition or adjustment to this, however, and it lies in the fact that the full moon—in occult lore a time of mortals' maximising spiritual power through the opening of a door to the full spiritual power of the sun without 'interference' from the moon, which is positioned on the far side of the earth—occurs at 18.09 on the evening of 13 December. Since sunset occurs at 16.36, 18.09, being post sunset, falls in the following day, nominally termed the 14th. It follows that the time of destruction of the massed armies of the Antichrist will be 18.09 on 13 December, 2027, at the time of the new moon, a massive and final slap-in-the-face to debased occult power.

Shea, William H., *The Abundant Life Bible Amplifier: Daniel 1-7*, p.89:

'At the time of the full moon, Sin, the moon god, was said to be at his fullest strength. Ancient Babylon's fall at this time to the forces of the Medes and the Persians was intended to impress upon the pagan Babylonians the superiority of The Lord God, who had predicted the overthrow of Babylon, over their heathen gods.'

The dark lunar conjunction is one of two lunar syzygies, the other being the full moon.

'Armageddon,' at the time of the full moon on evening of 13 December, 2027, contains a possible reflection of Jehoshaphat in II Chron 20:20,24, where the people went out into the wilderness of Tekoa in the morning and were confronted by the dead bodies of their enemies, whom God had caused to be slain. The time of going out, therefore, would be on the day of 14 December, 2027.

back to include those forces marshalled and still moving forward from the plain of Megiddo, such will be the size of the world's armed forces.

*'And I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee,'*³²⁵² is interesting, for, although the meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain, and some would contend unreliable, its sense must be as the Authorized Version has it, for some of Gog must survive to take part in the battle at the end of the Millennium against Christ which is actually the subject of chapter thirty-eight of Ezekiel. The magnitude of the battle³²⁵³ in Jehoshaphat and Armageddon is given: *'For they are the spirits of demons doing signs, which go forth to the kings of the earth, even of the whole habitable world, to assemble them to the war of that day.'*³²⁵⁴ The whole habitable world is essentially here, and, with the exception of a one-sixth remnant of Gog reserved as seed-corn for a later conflict, they are all destroyed. Those left behind, presumably those too young and too old for battle, are destroyed where they stand: *'And I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles: and they shall know that I am the Lord.'*³²⁵⁵

The last five verses of Revelation chapter nineteen constitute the last treatment of the final throw of the Beast and the False Prophet. The former references in Revelation³²⁵⁶ are anticipatory, and, on the whole, general. Nowhere in the biblical exposition is there a blow-by-blow account of the final battle or a recital of manoeuvres in warfare as would be expected if this were a product of man's devising. Rather, it is divine revelation, and the objectives of Scripture are very different.

It should also be noted that despite the number of Christ's army, *'And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgement upon all,'*³²⁵⁷ it is Christ who kills His assembled enemies with the sharp sword of the Word of God,³²⁵⁸ not His army.³²⁵⁹ There is thus no conflict with, *'I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people*

³²⁵² Ezek 39:2a

³²⁵³ better, 'war.'

³²⁵⁴ Rev 16:14; Green's Literal Translation.

³²⁵⁵ Ezek 39:6

³²⁵⁶ Rev 14:18-20,16:13-16

³²⁵⁷ Jude 14,15

³²⁵⁸ Rev 19:15,21

³²⁵⁹ despite often being conflated with the day of the Lord in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, Joel 2:1-11 refers to a previous day of the Lord, and so is not germane to this discussion: *'Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them. The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness. They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks: neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded. They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in*

*there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in mine fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.*³²⁶⁰ After all, it is only just and fitting in the circumstances that Christ Himself destroys the incorrigibly wicked. The resulting carnage will be immense.

That the final place of assembly for the forces of evil prior to the march on Jerusalem happens to be the plain of Megiddo is not by chance, for the verb root means 'to cut off,' or 'to slaughter.'³²⁶¹ The range and inclusiveness of the armed forces to be set in conflict against the Messiah is impressive: *'kings....captains....mighty men....horses....them that sit on them....all men, both free and bond, both small and great.'*³²⁶² No fewer than five times in this verse is the word flesh used; a vast feast of carrion, as it were, on the hoof. It takes much space to assemble, accommodate and manoeuvre such an army, but the valley of Jezreel, in which Har Megiddo lies, has it, ready and available.³²⁶³

Once this vast army is assembled, ordered and placed in ranks for battle, the leading forces move towards their destiny in the Valley of Decision. Some may question why the move against Jerusalem? Demonically inspired? Satanically enraged? Deceived by the dragon? Well, yes to all. But there is perhaps more than even this. As Christ is spirit, they will not be able to see Him or sense that He is there if He desires it not. Zechariah states that, *'The Lord also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah.'*³²⁶⁴ It appears that He saves Judah first, before Jerusalem. The intent of the forces of evil, in such circumstances, undoubtedly would be to secure mount Zion, Satan's longstanding covet. And at the head of this evil force are his two prime agents: the Beast and the False Prophet. Despite their best laid plans and devices, the Holy Roman Empire's political leader, accompanied by the False Prophet, the thaumaturge,³²⁶⁵ the then last Roman Catholic pope, lead this vast array to a swift conclusion. There is no need for the redeemed to fight here: the encounter is both short and decisive.

These chief antagonists, the Beast and the False Prophet, are seized and thrown alive into the brimstone lake of fire.³²⁶⁶ They meet their judgement even before does their mentor, Satan.³²⁶⁷ Their followers

at the windows like a thief. The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble; the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withhold their shining: And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible: and who can abide it?'

³²⁶⁰ Isa 63:3

³²⁶¹ Hebrew: gadad, 'to cut off,' or 'to slaughter.'

³²⁶² Rev 19:8

³²⁶³ for centuries the area of Har Megiddo / valley of Jezreel has been the scene of battles, amongst which have been Sisera against Barak, cf. Judg 5:19,20; Gideon against the Midianites, cf. Judg 6:33,34; Saul and Jonathan against the Philistines, cf. I Sam 31; King Josiah against Pharaoh Nechoh, cf. II Kings 23:20; on the western border Elijah contended with the prophets of Baal, cf. I Kings 18:39,40; and Ahaziah died there, cf. II Kings 9:27. Relevant Scripture passages in this context are Psa 2:1-3; Ezek 39; Joel 3:9-17; Zech 12:1-9,14:1-4. There have been others too.

³²⁶⁴ Zech 12:7

³²⁶⁵ Magician.

³²⁶⁶ Rev 19:20

are slain by the sword of Christ, at His word they shall be consumed, *'And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.'*³²⁶⁸ The final word is that the Supper of God fills the appetite of the fowls of the air; again a description of horrendous carnage.

The main picture here is the antipole of the previous gathering: the blessed firstfruits at the marriage of the Lamb. Here the 'guests' are gathered together to see off the Messiah, but the feast is for the real guests, the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field; those that eat carrion: dead and decaying flesh. Never in the entire of man's troubled sojourn on the face of the earth has such a spread been set before them. The vultures are reminiscent of *'For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.'*³²⁶⁹

Zechariah describes the rotting away: *'And this shall be the plague which the Lord will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, and their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths. It shall come to pass in that day that a great panic from the Lord will be among them. Everyone will seize the hand of his neighbour, and raise his hand against his neighbour's hand.'*³²⁷⁰ *'For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.'*³²⁷¹ Just as the eagles are drawn to and collect wherever they find their prey, so shall the armies of the world, at the time of the end, answer the call of divine vengeance and congregate at Armageddon, albeit unwittingly in the instance. The expression used here by Christ contains a beautiful allusion to the eagles of the Roman standards, showing the provenance and position of the head of those armies.³²⁷²

This picture of decaying flesh and wholesale carnage is depicted again in Isaiah: *'For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered*

³²⁶⁷ Rev 20:7-10; little wonder that the Romish 5th Lateran Council passed a resolution in 1516AD forbidding anyone to write or preach on the Antichrist!

³²⁶⁸ II Thes 2:8,9 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets; sublinear emphasis added): *'And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume [Greek: analisko, meaning 'to expend,' 'use up,' or 'destroy'] with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy [Greek: katargeo, meaning 'render inactive,' or 'inoperable,' as well as 'do away with' or 'put an end to'] with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.'*

³²⁶⁹ Mat 24:27,28

³²⁷⁰ Zech 14:12,13

³²⁷¹ Mat 24:28; putrescible organics going the way of all flesh, collectively and at once; also cf. Mark 9:44,46,48, corresponding with Isa 66:24, *'And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall the fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.'*

³²⁷² Joel 2:20a *'the northern army'* is often mistaken for the army of the king of the North, when, in fact, it is a reference to a much earlier army of the king of Assyria, and a much earlier *'day of the Lord.'*

them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcasses, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea. And the unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness. For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up forever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.³²⁷³

There is another reference to this time,³²⁷⁴ given by Christ, which has perplexed many in relation to the last verse: 'I tell you, in that night there shall be two in one bed;³²⁷⁵ the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.'³²⁷⁶ Some have taken this last verse to mean that those taken by Christ at His return are intended for destruction at Armageddon, or the Valley of Decision, but nothing could be further from the truth, for these are they who are taken to partake in the great

³²⁷³ Isa 34:2-10

³²⁷⁴ Bible Readings for the Home Circle, p.43:

'And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.' (Luke 17:36, cf. also vv.27-30; Mat 24:37-39).

How was it in the days of Noah? 'And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of his heart was only evil continually.' (Gen 6:5).

Will it be easy for those living at this time to serve the Lord? 'Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.' (Luke 18:12).

'As it was formerly, so it is now, and so it will be to the end of time; he that is born after the flesh, the natural man, does and will persecute him that is....the regenerate man.' *Memoirs and Sermons of Whitefield.*

³²⁷⁵ Greek: kline, 'couch to recline on at food.'

³²⁷⁶ Luke 17:34-37 (sublinear emphasis added; K.J.V.-introduced references to men and women not appearing in the Greek manuscripts omitted); Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Luke*, pp.229,230:

'Luke 17:37, 'And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.' Christ's reply was a well-known proverb. 'Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.' That simply means that a thing would happen when the necessary conditions were fulfilled.'

The earlier part of the verse, which has given rise to a variety of secret rapture theories, is, in reality, a deal different. Greek: paralambano, translated in the K.J.V. as 'taken,' actually means 'to take an associate or companion to oneself.' This is not a reference to Christ's return in the air for the dead in Christ and the elect then alive, but to a later event, at the time of His coming in all-conquering power to the mount of Olives and Jerusalem, q.v. inf. It is at that time that the 'intermediate people', q.v. sup., are taken to be with Him in the Holy Land. They are not raised immortal. They remain mortal.

celebratory feast at Jerusalem after the return of Christ to earth, namely, the 'intermediate peoples.'³²⁷⁷ Christ's response was that where the body is, the mortal body, then there will be food for the eagles, and vultures, as already noted. And it would happen when the necessary conditions were fulfilled.

Ezekiel 38

To some, the exclusion of Ezekiel chapter thirty-eight from the account of Armageddon may seem obtuse. In fact, the account of Gog and Magog in that chapter is profoundly different from that in chapter thirty-nine.

Strangely, chapter thirty-eight correlates with the post-Millennium battle;³²⁷⁸ while Ezekiel chapter thirty-nine is an account of the pre-Millennium battle. This is clear from a comparative review of the following illustrative tracts: *'And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwall'd villages; I will go to them that are at rest that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land.'*³²⁷⁹ This is a description of the millennial world; a world without need of defence. Also, the method of destruction of the forces of evil, *'an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone,'*³²⁸⁰ corresponds with the destruction of Gog and Magog after the Millennium, *'and fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them,'*³²⁸¹ whereas the description of the aftermath of destruction in chapter thirty-nine, *'And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord God; Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, assemble yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth,'*³²⁸² corresponds with the pre-millennial account of Revelation: *'And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.'*³²⁸³ Also found in chapter thirty-nine is the following description: *'Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name; After that they have borne their shame, and all their trespasses*

³²⁷⁷ q.v. inf.

³²⁷⁸ Rev 20:7-10, q.v. inf.

³²⁷⁹ Ezek 38:11,12

³²⁸⁰ Ezek 38:22c

³²⁸¹ Rev 20:9b

³²⁸² Ezek 39:17,18

³²⁸³ Rev 19:17,18

whereby they have trespassed against me, when they dwell safely in their land, and none made them afraid. When I have brought them out from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations.'³²⁸⁴ This is a description of conditions after the battle at the Valley of Jehoshaphat. It follows from all of the tracts led that the Ezekiel chapter thirty-nine battle involving Gog is clearly pre-millennial.

The final battle, this time to complete destruction, involving Gog and Magog, is vividly described in Ezekiel chapter thirty-eight. This will be considered later, in some detail, in conjunction with other prophesied events for that time.

Edom

In passing, it is notable that the Edomites, as referenced by Idumea, the descendants of Esau,³²⁸⁵ are also mentioned specifically as the recipients of God's wrath. Edom was excoriated for standing aside and taking advantage of Jacob's trouble and for not assisting in their time of dire necessity. *'The vision of Obadiah. Thus saith the Lord God concerning Edom; We have heard a rumour from the Lord, and an ambassador is sent among the heathen, Arise ye, and let us rise up against her in battle. For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever. In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that strangers carried away captive his forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou wast as one of them. But thou shouldst not have looked on the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger; neither shouldst thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither shouldst thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress. Thou should not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; yea, thou shouldst not have looked upon their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor have laid hands on their substance in the day of their calamity; Neither should thou have stood in the crossway, to cut off those of his that did escape; neither shouldst thou have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress. For the day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head. For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, so shall all the heathen drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been.'*³²⁸⁶

The last verse suggests that Edom, one of the nations escaping invasion by the Beast,³²⁸⁷ and Esau, will be confederate in the plunder with the end-time Beast empire, being present on and profaning God's holy mountain at the time of the end. Most expositors hold that Edom, Moab, mount Seir, and Esau, in modern

³²⁸⁴ Ezek 39:25-28

³²⁸⁵ Gen 36:9

³²⁸⁶ Obad 1:10-16

³²⁸⁷ Dan 11:40,41

terminology, refer, in the main, to Turkey, the Palestinian state, and the western part of trans-Jordanian Jordan. In the form of a loose and highly opportunistic confederacy that they will have with the Beast empire, it appears that in this they will be running contrary to the position of all or almost all of the other Moslem nations in the region.

The post-Second Coming state of Edom in the form of the land within its original boundaries, and of Egypt for that matter, is given in Joel: *'Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land.'*³²⁸⁸ This can be compared to the blessings showered upon Jerusalem and Israel: *'The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more. But Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed: for the Lord dwelleth in Zion.'*³²⁸⁹

Distinguishing

Again, some, on occasion, have confounded the wedding feast of the Lamb with the feast mentioned in Isaiah: *'And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. And it shall be said in that day, We have waited on him, and he will save us. Lo, this is our God: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, and will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.'*³²⁹⁰ The latter is not the marriage supper 'in the air,' but the time of great spiritual blessings that shall prevail, commencing at this feast and continuing throughout all the earth in the Millennium. It is for 'all people,'³²⁹¹ the gathered 'intermediate people,'³²⁹² to share in the great banquet of the Lord, to be held in the Lord's mountain, at Jerusalem.

A further distinguishing point is necessary in order to correctly understand, *'Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'*³²⁹³ The last phrase should be trans-

³²⁸⁸ Joel 3:19

³²⁸⁹ Joel 3:16-18,20-21

³²⁹⁰ Isa 25:6,7,9

³²⁹¹ viz., the 'intermediate people,' q.v. sup.

³²⁹² cf. Luke 17:34-37 (sublinear emphasis added; K.J.V.-introduced references to men and women not appearing in the Greek manuscripts omitted): *'I tell you, in that night there shall be two in one bed;³²⁹² the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.'*

³²⁹³ Mat 5:10

lated: *'for of them is the kingdom of heaven.'* In other words, they, the 'elect,' shall comprise the kingdom. It does not mean that they shall be in a kingdom in heaven, for that would run contrary to the whole thrust and content of Scripture on the matter. The kingdom of God is on earth, during and after the Millennium.

Man & angels

In passing, and as to the question of man's place vis-a-vis the angels, both now and in the kingdom of God, there is this: so far as the current dispensation is concerned, the answer is found in Psalms, *'What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour,'*³²⁹⁴ explained in Hebrews, *'For we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.'*³²⁹⁵ But after the elevation to the kingdom of God there is a step-change: *'Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?'*³²⁹⁶ The exact ranking of various persons elevated to spirit beings in the kingdom of God is dealt with later.³²⁹⁷

³²⁹⁴ Psa 8:4,5

³²⁹⁵ Heb 2:9

³²⁹⁶ I Cor 6:2,3; this refers to judging evil angels, cf. II Peter 2:4; Jude 6

³²⁹⁷ cf, 'Ranking of Angels' in the Appendix.

Chapter 25

Fate of the Wicked

'But Christ is the Conqueror of Satan. *'When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.'*³²⁹⁸ In the original it is still more forceful. Not 'a strong man,' but 'the strong one,' in the former verse: not 'a stronger than he,' but 'the stronger than he,' in the second. In short, it is exactly, even in form and figure, the subject now before us, 'Christ the Conqueror of Satan'....It is needful [that we] ask the....question now, What, or who is Satan?

We might, no doubt, have expressed the idea differently, and said, 'Christ the Conqueror of Evil.' There are places, even in Scripture, where the original language leaves it ambiguous whether 'evil' or 'the evil one' is the right translation. It is so in the Lord's Prayer. 'Deliver us from evil,' might be rendered, 'Deliver us from the evil one.' It is so in our Lord's Intercession in the seventeenth chapter of the Gospel by....John: 'I not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil.' 'From the evil' might be given, in like manner, 'from the evil one.' Jesus did not pray that His men should be taken out of the world, or distance themselves from it, but only that they should be kept from the evil one,³²⁹⁹ and in the end He

³²⁹⁸ Luke 11:21,22

³²⁹⁹ John 17:15

deliberately and of set purpose sent them out into the world, *'As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.'*³³⁰⁰

And so in the fifth chapter of the First Epistle of John. *'We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.'* It might be, *'lieth in the wicked one.'*

These are ambiguous passages. But there are others, neither few nor exceptional, in which there can be no doubt and no evasion.

That evil which is in the world—that mass of sin and corruption which is ever working around, amidst, and in every man—has a personal head, who both embodies the principle of evil in all its malignity, and also stirs it into activity by a perpetual process of temptation.

The third chapter of the Bible shows us this being, and shows him to us at work. It is he who puts to mankind the first question of disloyalty, *"Yea, hath God said?"* lodges in the unsuspecting heart the earliest cavil of treason; and then follows it up with the audacious defiance of unbelief, *'Ye shall not surely die: for God,'* your tyrant, *'doth know that'* this which He has forbidden you is in deed and in truth your highest good. Hence *'sin entered into the world, and death by sin.'*

In the onward course of the Old Testament Scriptures, the same fallen spirit is presented again in the various yet consistent characters of man's tempter, man's accuser, and man's tormentor.

It is he who, in the twenty-first chapter of the First Book of Chronicles *'stands up against Israel, provoking David to number Israel.'* It is he who in the Book of Job defames the righteous man, in God's presence, *'as not fearing God for nought;'* as reverencing God only so long as he receives good at His hand, and ready to curse God to his face as soon as the Divine power is put forth upon him in suffering. It is he too who executes that ministry of evil by which the fidelity of God's servant is to be tried to the uttermost, and out of which he comes forth at last like gold from the refiner's furnace.³³⁰¹

Satan bound

The first three verses of chapter twenty of Revelation deal with the binding of Satan. *'And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.'*³³⁰²

³³⁰⁰ John 17:16; contrast with: Stylites, the pillarmen, who lived atop rocks or pillars, thought themselves pillar-saints, withdrawn from a wholly sinful world. Latin: *Inclusi*, called the 'shut-ins,' chose a niche in some monastery and literally got themselves bricked in, leaving only a narrow slit for the bare minimum of food and drink to be passed in to them.

³³⁰¹ Vaughan, C. J., *Christ the Light of the World*, pp.178-181 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³³⁰² Rev 20:1-3

This chapter follows on from the events of the previous one. Though unseen by the human eye, Satan has been on this earth since being cast down both initially and at the time of Christ.³³⁰³ Some have postulated that the angel here coming down from heaven is, in fact, Christ, but there is no biblical support for this. The fact that the angel binds Satan is insufficient, particularly in light of the specific wording used: an angel. After all, Satan was an angel of light at one time.

The purpose of the angel's mission is to bind Satan for a thousand years. Here four aspects of Satan's nature are recited:

1. *'Dragon'* indicates cruelty;
2. *'Serpent'* speaks of guile;
3. *'Devil'* indicates him as the tempter of man; and,
4. *'Satan'* indicates that he is the adversary of Christ and the 'elect.'

Thrown into the abyss of the bottomless pit, locked and sealed, incarcerated,³³⁰⁴ Satan is unable to deceive the nations for the duration of the Millennium. The sealing is for security, as elsewhere in Scripture. He is adequately curbed and restrained, as are his demons, only to be loosed a little season, or a short time, at the end of the Millennium.

The next grouping in this chapter pictures the resurrection and reign of the saints, the 'elect': *'And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.'*³³⁰⁵

What was seen in chapter eleven by way of anticipation³³⁰⁶ is here realised. It is clearly understood that Christ will sit on His throne and rule as the legitimate heir of David, as prophesied: *'And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end. Thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it*

³³⁰³ q.v. sup.

³³⁰⁴ cp. the demons' *'abyss'* of Luke 8:31; Greek: abussos, *'bottomless pit,' 'abyss,'* the deep, from whence rises the beast in Rev 9:1.

³³⁰⁵ Rev 20:4-6

³³⁰⁶ Rev 11:15

him.³³⁰⁷ That throne was Christ's, and it will be Christ's again at the start of the Millennium. It is noteworthy that Christ is pictured on this throne in chapter twenty.³³⁰⁸

The other occupants of these thrones are those who have overcome; the 'elect,' including those martyred through the Great Tribulation by being beheaded, and those of the election who resisted worshipping the Beast. Converted into spirit beings, and called Blessed, they shall reign as priests of God and Christ. In point is, *'Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?....Know ye not that we shall judge angels?'*³³⁰⁹ and, *'And Jesus said unto them, Verily, I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'*³³¹⁰

The earthly Levitical priesthood will be transformed, in part, from the mortal to the immortal, as one twelfth of the sealed will comprise the tribe of Levi. In addition, all those of Levi down through the ages who qualify will be present. In this way, God's promise concerning the position of the Levites will continue for all time. Also, there will be the other Old Testament patriarchs, prophets, and saints who will also qualify to rule from their thrones. While some see this as a mere physical resurrection, the word of Christ states clearly that the kingdom is open only to those born of the Spirit.³³¹¹ As such, the kingdom, in its final exposition beyond the close of the Millennium of rest, is solely comprised of spirit beings.

The rest of the dead do not experience resurrection until the thousand years are finished. Thus it is pointless to speak of a general resurrection in order to avoid the intervening period of one thousand years, as do the Amillennialists. The order of the resurrection can be gleaned from these scriptures: *'But everyman after his own order:'*³³¹² *Christ the firstfruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming,'*³³¹³ *'And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years,'*³³¹⁴ and *'at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting*

³³⁰⁷ Ezek 21:25-27

³³⁰⁸ Rev 20:4-6

³³⁰⁹ I Cor 6:2,3

³³¹⁰ Mat 19:28

³³¹¹ John 3:1-8

³³¹² Greek: tagma, 'military rank / order.'

³³¹³ I Cor 15:23

³³¹⁴ Rev 20:4-6

*contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.*³³¹⁵

All of the firstfruits are the recipients of the twin accolades, blessed and holy, as they are in the first resurrection. Blessed tells of their condition; holy speaks of their character. They are priests and kings, '*And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen,*³³¹⁶ and, '*Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ,*³³¹⁷ exactly as Christ combines the two offices: '*And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is the BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.*³³¹⁸ The ultimate High Priest is Christ.

The fate of the incorrigibly wicked down through the ages is dealt with in at the Great White Throne Judgement.³³¹⁹ Their end in the lake of fire, its location, its time of coming into existence, and the whole operation of the final judgement are dealt with later. The underlying equity in God's dealings is brought out in the story of Joseph's treatment at the hands of his brothers. What they meant for evil, God had intended for good; a clear and unambiguous declaration of divine providence. At the time of the end, God's 'elect' will be saved and the incorrigibly evil will be put to death. Davis has Joseph's experience as an exemplar: 'It serves as an important reminder that while the evil of men may appear to be to the disadvantage of the saints, the purposes and plans of God will ultimately prevail.'³³²⁰

³³¹⁵ Dan 12:1-3

³³¹⁶ Rev 1:6

³³¹⁷ I Peter 2:5

³³¹⁸ Zech 6:12,13

³³¹⁹ Rev 20:11-15

³³²⁰ Davis, John James, *Paradise to Prison: Studies in Genesis*.

Chapter 26

Millennium of Rest

This sees the consummation of the promises of old. Christ, as the Seed and Son of Abraham, is heir to the land;³³²¹ as the son of David, heir to the throne;³³²² and as the Son of God, heir of all things.³³²³ The reign with Christ, in the Millennium of rest,³³²⁴ as prophesied in the Old and New Testaments, will last for a thousand years. Over these righteous ones—these spirit beings reigning with Christ—the second death, in the lake of fire, hath no sway. The Millennium period itself is not addressed in any sort of detail in Revelation, having been covered in Isaiah,³³²⁵ but in order to get a picture of the conditions which will then exist, it is merely sufficient to review a series of excerpts from the concluding eight chapters of Isaiah together with certain tracts from chapters eleven and thirty-five, and a brief excerpt from Ezekiel chapter thirty-seven. Further commentary is almost unnecessary: *'And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.'*³³²⁶

³³²¹ Rom 4:13

³³²² Ezek 21:25-27

³³²³ Heb 1:2

³³²⁴ Latin: mundus regnium Christi.

³³²⁵ the Jews take the Millennium of rest to mean the earth lying desolate and untended for 1,000 years while the righteous 'hover' over it, while the Romanists have no millennial phase at all.

³³²⁶ Isa 59:20,21

*'Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.'*³³²⁷

*'And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee. Therefore thy gates shall be open continually: they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious. The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shall suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty one of Jacob. For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood, brass, and for stones, iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteous. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction in thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. The sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time.'*³³²⁸

*'And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations. And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your ploughmen and your vinedressers. But ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the Ministers of our God; ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.'*³³²⁹

³³²⁷ Isa 60:1-5

³³²⁸ Isa 60:10-22

³³²⁹ Isa 61:4-6

*'And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed.'*³³³⁰

*'For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be called Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. For as a young man marieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee. I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence. And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. The Lord hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured: But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the Lord; and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of my holiness. Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up the standard for the people. Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. And they shall call them, The holy people, the redeemed of the Lord; and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken.'*³³³¹

'For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more hence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet

³³³⁰ Isa 61:9

³³³¹ Isa 62:1-12

speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.'³³³²

'The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatlings together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.'³³³³

'Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. As one whom her mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem. And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb: and the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies.'³³³⁴

'And I will also take of them for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord. For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I shall make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord.'³³³⁵

During the Millennium the earth will be renovated: 'The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them: and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.'³³³⁶ Ezekiel describes this New Covenant as 'a covenant of peace....an everlasting covenant.'³³³⁷ And then 'the kingdom of God [once again will be] among³³³⁸ us.'³³³⁹

The Millennium of rest will commence on rosh hashana, the first day of the first year of the forty-first Jubilee cycle from the start of the third two-thousand year period.³³⁴⁰

³³³² Isa 65:17-25

³³³³ Isa 11:6-9

³³³⁴ Isa 66:10-14

³³³⁵ Isa 66:21-23

³³³⁶ Isa 35:1,2

³³³⁷ Ezek 37:26

³³³⁸ Greek: entos, better than K.J.V.'s 'within.'

³³³⁹ Luke 17:21b (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³³⁴⁰ 26 March, 2028; q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet inf.

Millennium temple

This naturally leads to consideration of what is frequently referred to as Ezekiel's Temple or the Millennium or Fourth Temple: the Temple described in Ezekiel chapters forty through forty-three.³³⁴¹ In reality, the Lord is the architect of this Temple, just as He was the architect of Solomon's Temple: *'Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof....And the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, of the courts of the house of the Lord.'*³³⁴²

Various views have been suggested by those who do not see this Temple as a real, literal Temple in the future Millennium age:

1. It is a description of Solomon's Temple. Even a brief examination of the detailed differences rejects this interpretation;
2. It is the plan for the Temple rebuilt by Zerubbabel, is rejected by the same reasoning;
3. Some would say it was the ideal for the Temple to be rebuilt by the returning exiles. This cannot be accepted, for the Temple described in Ezekiel differs from the pattern given by God in the Old Testament. Several major changes appear to have been made, such as the omission of the Ark of the Covenant,³³⁴³ the Mercy Seat, the Table of Shewbread, and the Golden Lampstand. Despite the description by Ezekiel being more a building description than an inventory of contents, these omissions are substantial, and certainly must be connected with the fact that this Temple will be the very throne of Christ on earth; and,
4. Some, who would allegorise, see the Temple as in some way representing the future glory of the church in heaven. As has been seen, the church doesn't ever ascend to heaven, and so this fatuous contention falls. It is also difficult to see why such detail would be given off if the meaning were simply allegorical.

The only interpretation which harmonises with all of the foregoing descriptions of the Millennium, and the events preceding same, is that Ezekiel is here describing a real, future Temple in great detail; one which differs markedly from Solomon's Temple and also substantially from the Second Temple. Ezekiel's Temple will be sited on earth, and not elsewhere, since such a location harmonises with the return of the Messiah. Also, the Temple is described in a geographical setting that is well known historically. It can only be built after the Third Temple, purified by Christ upon His return, is removed, and that can only happen after the battle (or war) of

³³⁴¹ the Temple in Ezekiel chpts. 8-11 was the literal temple of Ezekiel's day.

³³⁴² I Chron 28:11,12

³³⁴³ the Ark of the Covenant is no longer necessary because the church is the covenant. The Holy Spirit places the Law inside the 'elect' just as the two tablets of the Law were placed inside the Ark.

Armageddon,³³⁴⁴ when the wicked on earth are destroyed. This construction would then be completed by the start of the Millennium of rest on rosh hashana.³³⁴⁵

The form and operation of the temple of the Millennium, portrayed in the closing chapters of Ezekiel, is impressed upon the Israelites, who are commanded to, *'keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them.'*³³⁴⁶ This is an exact parallel to the Tabernacle which Moses saw in the mount of Horeb,³³⁴⁷ where he was instructed by God to *'let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.'*³³⁴⁸

Prophecies of a Millennial Temple: *'And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.'*³³⁴⁹ *'The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious.'*³³⁵⁰ *'Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy.'*³³⁵¹ *'And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim.'*³³⁵² *'And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.'*³³⁵³

Prophecies of animal sacrifices in the future Temple: *'Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all people.'*³³⁵⁴ *'All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered unto*

³³⁴⁴ q.v. sup.

³³⁴⁵ q.v. sup.

³³⁴⁶ Ezek 43:11j

³³⁴⁷ cp. I Kings 19:8b, where it is described as, *'Horeb the mount of God,'* a phrase also used in Ex 3:1.

³³⁴⁸ Ex 25:8,9

³³⁴⁹ Isa 2:3

³³⁵⁰ Isa 60:13

³³⁵¹ Isa 9:24

³³⁵² Joel 3:18

³³⁵³ Hag 2:7,9

³³⁵⁴ Isa 56:6,7

*thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory.'*³³⁵⁵ *'For thus saith the Lord; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; Neither shall the priests the Levites want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually.'*³³⁵⁶ *'And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which come against Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the Lord will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. In that day there shall be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts; and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein; and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts.'*³³⁵⁷

Ezekiel shows that the Messiah will dwell in this Temple and set His throne there: *'So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house. And I heard him speaking unto me out of the house; and the man stood by me. And he said unto me, Son of man, the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and my holy name, shall the house of Israel no more defile, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, nor by the carcasses of their kings in their high places,'*³³⁵⁸ **as does Haggai:** *'And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.'*³³⁵⁹ This Temple, described so fully in Ezekiel, is the Temple which will be built on Mount Moriah by Christ, as prophesied in Zechariah: *'And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.'*³³⁶⁰ This building will last for the entire Millennium, a duration greater than any previous Temple. *'And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.'*³³⁶¹

³³⁵⁵ Isa 60:7

³³⁵⁶ Jer 33:17,18

³³⁵⁷ Zech 14:16-21

³³⁵⁸ Ezek 43:5-7

³³⁵⁹ Hag 2:7,9

³³⁶⁰ Zech 6:12,13

³³⁶¹ Zech 14:16

While the firstfruits are an holy priesthood, *'And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen,'*³³⁶² and, *'Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ,'*³³⁶³ the ritual sacrifices for sin and the attendant ministering will be performed by the priests the Levites, the mortal sons of Zadok, as promised by God, *'And the Lord spake unto Aaron, Behold, I also have given thee the charge of mine offerings of all the hallowed things of the children of Israel; unto thee have I given them by reason of the anointing, and to thy sons, by an ordinance for ever. All the heave offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer unto the Lord, have I given thee, and thy sons and thy daughters with thee, by a statute for ever: it is a covenant of salt for ever before the Lord unto thee and to thy seed with thee,'*³³⁶⁴ as well as by the mortal *'prince'* of Ezekiel, insofar as the specified sin and omission etc. offerings are concerned. The priesthood in the Millennium, however, will be spirit beings, built up as a spiritual house, separated,³³⁶⁵ and wholly acceptable unto God, and will comprise all of the election.

Some have questioned why there is a need of blood and fat sacrifices when Christ is sitting on His throne and among His people. The answer is simple: other than the 'intermediate peoples' who appear to be divinely kept in close communion with Christ and whose sins, however few, are covered by His atoning blood, some of the mortal people of the earth living during the time of the Millennium will keep themselves virtually outside, or on the fringes of the church, and will still sin; this despite the temporary incarceration of the Devil, and the idyllic conditions extant in the Millennium.³³⁶⁶ They will still err, they will still forget, and, despite everything, some will commit unrepented wilful sin, for which there is no sacrifice in atonement, by refusing to come up before the Lord as commanded. They will suffer the consequences: *'And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the Lord will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.'*³³⁶⁷ In addition, disputes will still arise, of course, and the teaching of God's Law to these people will be a continuing activity. And there will be *'heathen,'*³³⁶⁸ even in the Millennium era: groups of non-believing, commandment-flouting non-Israelites to be dealt with. There is no doubt that the mortal priesthood will be kept extremely busy.

The condition of Jerusalem in the Millennium is spelled out in Zechariah, *'Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them,*

³³⁶² Rev 1:6

³³⁶³ I Peter 2:5

³³⁶⁴ Num 18:8,19

³³⁶⁵ Rev 11:2

³³⁶⁶ also see the prince of Ezekiel, sup.

³³⁶⁷ Zech 14:17-19 (sublinear emphasis added)

³³⁶⁸ Hebrew: *goyim*, in context, *'foreigners.'*

and see the therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts;³³⁶⁹ in Jeremiah,³³⁷⁰ Ezekiel,³³⁷¹ and Zechariah,³³⁷² where Jerusalem is thenceforth called 'Jehovah-Shammah',³³⁷³ and in, 'Thus saith the Lord; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; there shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for every age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the Lord of hosts. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness. For the seed shall be prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things. And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.'³³⁷⁴ The fact that God will have honoured every covenant promise to the nation of Israel, of whom a prominent part will be the Jews, will be well recognised throughout the entire world, as, ultimately, God will have used Israel as the channel through which He brings all peoples and nations of the earth to Him.

Satan loosed

Immediately upon the end of the Millennium, Revelation chapter twenty recounts the final, brief release of Satan from incarceration, the final attempt to overthrow Christ, and the resulting doom of Satan and his hoards: 'And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and

³³⁶⁹ Zech 14:21

³³⁷⁰ Jer 3:17

³³⁷¹ Ezek 48:35

³³⁷² Zech 2:10,12

³³⁷³ 'The Lord is there.'

³³⁷⁴ Zech 8:3-8,12,21-23

*devoured them. And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*³³⁷⁵

Satan is loosed from his imprisonment in the abyss for the last exposition of his hate and his venom. After Christ's glorious mediatorial reign on earth for one thousand years, Satan is allowed to stage a final, universal rebellion through his deceptions. It is the nations in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, that are gathered together to do battle. Here there is an indication that this Gog and Magog gathering is not that of Ezekiel chapter thirty-nine, as, in that chapter, Gog, the prince, is stated as being caused by God to come up from the north parts, entering into the Holy Land. The account in Revelation³³⁷⁶ has Gog and Magog distributed around the world, not simply lying to the north of the Holy Land. This last-time gathering corresponds with the account in Ezekiel chapter thirty-eight,³³⁷⁷ although they muster in the north. Here, the destruction of the forces is by fire that comes down from heaven.³³⁷⁸ There is no one sixth part left of Gog, or anyone, for that matter; no banquet for the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field; or lengthy seven-month burial activity by the people of the land, as was the case in the aftermath of the battle at the end of the Day of the Lord. This time the judgement is quickly executed and completed. The forces of evil are banded together for one purpose and will press on towards one composite goal, namely, to destroy the capital city of Christ, wreak havoc among His faithful subjects, and turn Christ out of His throne and banish Him. These forces surround the beloved city, Jerusalem, Jehovah-Shammah, and are immediately destroyed by the judgement of God with fire from heaven; Ezekiel identifies the happenings:³³⁷⁹ a '*great shaking*' or earthquake in the land of Israel, with mountains and all walls falling down, at once both swift and terrifying—finally, heralding Satan's denouement.

Lake of fire

It is at this point that the instigator of sin ever since the fall of man in the garden of Eden receives his terminal punishment. His final doom is in the lake of fire and brimstone that will have existed, by then, for a thousand years. Other than that which is connected to the abyss as the current abode of those demons there incarcerated, there is no hell fire at the moment: the full horrors of the lake of fire only needing to be brought into existence in sufficient time to receive the Beast and the False Prophet after being captured in the Valley of

³³⁷⁵ Rev 20:7-10

³³⁷⁶ Rev 20:8

³³⁷⁷ in Ezek 38:2,3, Gog being the ruler; Magog, the ruled land; with the following being the end-millennial descendants of the previous inhabitants of Rosh, Russia (Tanakh translates '*rosh*' as '*chief*,' and not a place, so not Russia); Meshesh, Moscow; and Tubal, Tobolsk in Siberia; all allied with Persia, Ethiopia, Libya, Gomer, and Togarmah.

³³⁷⁸ Ezek 38:22, agreeing with Rev 20:9.

³³⁷⁹ Ezek 38:17-23

Decision. All mankind's sins are placed on Satan, the originator, and he is cast into the lake of fire. It is this lake of fire³³⁸⁰ that is called in the Old Testament, the fiery tip.³³⁸¹

Vilnay gives a revealing glimpse into the dark deeds once undertaken in Ge-Hinnom: 'The ancients described idol worship in the Valley of Hinnom, the figure of Moloch, and the fences which surrounded it: "Although they made altars to all the heathen gods in Jerusalem, Moloch stood outside the walls of the town—in a separate place."

He was represented by a figure surrounded by seven fences. His face was shaped like a calf, and his hands were stretched out ready to receive whatever was offered to him. His body was hollow, and a fire was kindled within it. When the people brought him offerings, they approached him according to the nature of their sacrifice.

Whoever brought a fowl was only allowed to pass through the first fence and sacrifice. The man who brought a goat entered through the second fence; if he brought a sheep he entered the third. A calf allowed a man to enter through the fourth fence; a cow, through the fifth; and an ox, through the sixth.

But whoever brought his son as an offering entered through the seventh fence, close to Moloch. The man would kiss his son and then lay him in the arms of Moloch, which were red hot from the fire burning within him. The people used to bring drums and beat them vigorously, so that the cries of the child should not be heard and grieve the father's heart.

The sages explain why this valley was called Hinnom. Because the child groaned (in Hebrew: nohem) in its agony. Others say because the spectators groaned (in Hebrew: nomahim) and exclaimed to Moloch: "Let his offering be sweet, pleasing, and fragrant to you!"³³⁸² In reality, this is a type of 'baptism with fire,' and a forerunner of the final baptism with fire—that of the wicked—in the lake of fire.

The biblical lake of fire, once it is fully constituted, is age-ending and irrevocable. At the moment, it is not in full existence, save for the abyss or bottomless pit, but it will be fully constituted soon, for it is alluded to in Revelation chapter nine: '*And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.*'³³⁸³

³³⁸⁰ Greek: geenna in the New Testament; Hebrew: ghehennah—valley of Hinnom—Ge-Hinnom.

³³⁸¹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.222:

'There were ceremonial prohibitions which forbade the use of manure on the soil of the sacred city.' This waste was taken via the Dung Gate into the valley of Hinnom and then set alight.

³³⁸² Vilnay, Zev, *Legends of Jerusalem*, p.271

³³⁸³ Rev 9:1,2 (subscripted emphasis added)

Mortals

Some would even contend that the 'miracles' of the False Prophet indicate that he is an immortal being, immune from the rigours of the fires of hell. Presumably they would be bound to claim that Elijah, who brought down fire from heaven, is also immortal: a patently false claim. It is Satan who makes the fire come down from heaven at the command of the False Prophet, as, through replicating the act of God, he endeavours to fool the simple and gullible. Similar satanic replication is recorded in Timothy³³⁸⁴ in the deeds of Jannes and Jambres in withstanding Moses, and in the deeds of all Pharaoh's wise men, sorcerers and magicians, recorded in Exodus.³³⁸⁵ And none of those, of course, was immortal.

'Tartaroo'

Finally, there is an unique word used in the New Testament for '*hell*',³³⁸⁶ meaning '*to incarcerate in eternal torment or restraint*.' It is used only once³³⁸⁷ in the specific context of angels³³⁸⁸ being cast down into the place of torment and restraint, the very maw of hell, for the initial purposes of restraint,³³⁸⁹ and later of millennial torment in the fires of hell. With notable exceptions,³³⁹⁰ it does not and can not apply to condemned humans, who, on being cast into the lake of fire, will die immediately.³³⁹¹

In pagan mythology Tartarus³³⁹² is: '[A] dark place [way] below the earth....It was as far below Hades [where the dead abode] as earth is from heaven, and a falling stone would take innumerable days to reach it.'³³⁹³ The Egyptian Tartar, associated with the lamentations of relatives over the dead refused burial on account of their wicked lives, appears to have furnished the root of the Greek Tartarus.

³³⁸⁴ II Tim 3:8

³³⁸⁵ Ex 7:10-12

³³⁸⁶ Greek: tartaroo.

³³⁸⁷ II Peter 2:4

³³⁸⁸ viz., demons.

³³⁸⁹ at the moment, Satan is operating 'short-handed,' as it were, for many of his demons are simply not available to him, having been chained in the bottomless pit at the command of God; these are let out near the time of the end to work the worst that Satan and all his demons can do.

³³⁹⁰ q.v. inf.

³³⁹¹ cp. note sup. on evil mortal triumvirate being kept alive over the length of the Millennium of rest.

³³⁹² 'Tartarus,' from which derives tartaroo (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³³⁹³ *The World Book Encyclopedia*, article 'Tartarus' (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

Chapter 27

Great White Throne Judgement

The final five verses of chapter twenty of Revelation describe the Great White Throne Judgement: *'And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the heaven and the earth fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.'*³³⁹⁴

This is also the subject of, *'Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting³³⁹⁵ fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.'*³³⁹⁶ Everlasting fire does burn forever, obviously, and with the Devil and his angels therein. But there is a fundamental difficulty with the understanding of this translation. Whilst immortal, Satan cannot die, he cannot be annihilated, for he retains his spirit being, but once divested of that immortality, he can, to be consumed in the flames. Nothing will be left. Satan is to be

³³⁹⁴ Rev 20:11-15

³³⁹⁵ Greek: aionios; cp. Mat 25:46, Greek: kolasin aionion meaning 'punishment of the age' or 'punishment pertaining to an aeon or age'—a determinate period of time circumscribed by the context; Greek: aionios importing the idea of 'irreparable death.' 'The suffix -ios means 'pertaining to.'

³³⁹⁶ Mat 25:41

'ashes under the feet.' Speaking to him as the *'king of Tyrus,'*³³⁹⁷ God says, *'Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore I will bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.'*³³⁹⁸ That end-state is incompatible with everlasting fire, eternal punishment, or the correct meaning and import of the Greek. No reference to the immortality of any of the main protagonists,³³⁹⁹ save for the Devil prior to his divestment, is given in the Bible. Chapter twenty indicates the finality of the lake of fire for mortals: *'Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power.'*³⁴⁰⁰ Perpetual torment in the lake of fire is not a second death; it is everlasting life, albeit in torment. As the first death that cometh to all men is death, and not immortal life, likewise the second death. In view of this, and in context, the correct translation should be: *'and they shall be tormented day and night to the age end of the age ends.'* In other words, to the end of, what is for the Bride, the Millennium of rest, for that is the last *'age'* in sequence, where there is any sin.

The Great White Throne Judgement is sometimes called *'the judgement of the wicked dead.'* For the reasons below, this is not a wholly accurate description. This judgement is described as *'great'* because it is the most awesome assize ever conducted. The characterisation *'white'* has reference to the purity and holiness with which it is conducted. The *'throne'* speaks of the majestic authority involved. Paul uses a particular Greek word for the judgement seat,^{3401 3402} meaning the throne of condemnation of wrong, be it mild or severe.

The One who sits on the throne is our Lord Jesus Christ, *'For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son,'*³⁴⁰³ and *'I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.'*³⁴⁰⁴ To underscore the pivotal significance of this event and the proceedings, it is stated that from His presence, *'the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.'*³⁴⁰⁵ This does not mean the annihilation of the earth and heaven. It is rather that the Great White Throne Judgement will occur between the passing of the Millennium period and the ushering in of the new heaven and new earth.³⁴⁰⁶

³³⁹⁷ Ezek 28:12a

³³⁹⁸ Ezek 28:18

³³⁹⁹ viz., the evil triumvirate: Satan, the Antichrist, and the False Prophet.

³⁴⁰⁰ Rev 20:6

³⁴⁰¹ Greek: bima.

³⁴⁰² Rom 14:10-12

³⁴⁰³ John 5:22

³⁴⁰⁴ II Tim 4:1

³⁴⁰⁵ Rev 20:11b

³⁴⁰⁶ q.v. inf.

Dry bones

All of the dead are to be resurrected to face their judgement. This is the vision of the 'valley of dry bones' prophecy: *'The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones. And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? and I answered, O Lord God thou knowest. Again he said unto me, prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breath upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then he said unto me, son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves. And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord hath spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord.'*³⁴⁰⁷

While the Ezekiel prophecy refers to Israel, all the dead of mankind must be resurrected in this manner (save those who were resurrected or converted as the firstfruits, currently presaged by the feast of Pentecost). All of this multitude will have to accept God's ways, and be imbued by the Holy Spirit, if they are to be saved. God has promised to save all, if they so desire, and are willing to become His: *'For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.'*³⁴⁰⁸ The reference is to a passage in Isaiah: *'And the Redeemer shall come to Sion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord.'*³⁴⁰⁹

³⁴⁰⁷ Ezek 37:1-14

³⁴⁰⁸ Rom 11:25,26

³⁴⁰⁹ Isa 59:20

Those whose names are written in '*the book of life*' will wholeheartedly accept, after their physical resurrection before the judgement seat, the free offer of salvation in Christ. This they must do to enter the kingdom as spirit beings. This contradicts the erroneous contention mentioned previously that this is a resurrection before the judgement seat only of the wicked dead. Some have even postulated that the wording of the final verse in this chapter, '*And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire*,'³⁴¹⁰ implies that there is no indication whatsoever that any individual present before the Great White Throne ever escapes that dire judgement and fate. The cause of their final doom, therefore, is held not to be that they failed to accumulate sufficient good deeds and avoid sufficient bad deeds in the books of record, but that their names were not written in the Lamb's book of life from the very beginning, the beginning of sinning human existence.³⁴¹¹ This view is held to be immutable from Cain to the end of human history, but, happily, it is utter nonsense, for they are to be brought '*into the land of Israel....their own land*,'³⁴¹² not cast into the lake of fire.

Saved & damned

This tract in Ezekiel absolutely contradicts the errant view of the resurrection of the wicked dead: '*So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then he said unto me, son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves. And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord hath spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord.*'³⁴¹³ These people live, through the spirit of God, and abide in their own land, Israel, as God's people. They are not automatically consigned to the lake of fire.

There is also another, opposite view held by some to the extent that almost all human beings will be saved and that only a minute number will suffer the fate of the lake of fire. That, too, is erroneous. Those who have the mark of the Beast not only fail to receive an opportunity to repent and obtain salvation for the remission of sins, but are '*tormented with fire and brimstone....and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.*'³⁴¹⁴ This is not a trifling few. Neither is it the total measure of the prescription of the damned, as additional information on this point is supplied in Revelation chapter twenty-one: '*But the fearful, and unbeliev-*

³⁴¹⁰ Rev 20:15

³⁴¹¹ *ab initio*; predestination, with no choice in the matter.

³⁴¹² Ezek 37:12-14

³⁴¹³ Ezek 37:10-14

³⁴¹⁴ Rev 14:9-11

ing, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death,'³⁴¹⁵ and, again, directly by Christ: *'The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.'*³⁴¹⁶

That there will be much weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth at this juncture, and at others previously, is amply attested in the Bible. Christ warned of such: *'There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourself thrust out.'*³⁴¹⁷ 'Gnashing of teeth' is a frequent biblical description of intense anger and intense grief.

Despite all, some still maintain that those who are *'tormented with fire and brimstone....and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever,'* are the subject of everlasting punishment and torment. Again, this is a misreading of the Scripture. It is the smoke of their torment that ascendeth to the age-end of the age-ends, a limited time, not that their physical torment endures for time without end. They are mortal beings; they die. The second death is the end of them. There is no immortal soul in mortal man.³⁴¹⁸ Those who contend this again misread Scripture and import a fundamental of the Babylonian mystery religion, for if the soul were immortal, it could not be stated that, *'The soul that sinneth, it shall die.'*³⁴¹⁹ And if the soul were immortal, then the serpent's lie in the garden of Eden would have had some import.

A further misconception in the passage at the end of chapter twenty frequently arises from the meaning of the phrase: *'and death and hell were cast into the lake of fire.'*³⁴²⁰ Despite a variety of man's interpretations, the word here used for hell³⁴²¹ gives the meaning clearly: it simply means the grave. In other words, death is to be finally conquered. Paul wrote, *'For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when the corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?'*³⁴²²

Peter identifies the final conflagration of this world, and the fate of the wicked: *'But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and*

³⁴¹⁵ Rev 21:8

³⁴¹⁶ Mat 13:41-43; Universalism, the aberrant and satanically-inspired view that all are to be saved eventually, even Satan and his demons, is discussed inf.

³⁴¹⁷ Luke 13:28

³⁴¹⁸ q.v. inf.

³⁴¹⁹ Ezek 18:20

³⁴²⁰ Rev 20:14a

³⁴²¹ Greek: hades.

³⁴²² I Cor 15:53-55

*perdition of ungodly men.*³⁴²³ The wicked, and the existing earth and heavens are to be consumed by fire, and replaced by a new heaven and a new earth, utterly untainted by sin.³⁴²⁴

³⁴²³ II Peter 3:7

³⁴²⁴ Rev 21:1; cp. Job 38:7b, '*or who can stay the bottles of heaven,*' where Hebrew: nebel, here translated '*bottle,*' would better read '*collapsible skin bottle*' or '*skin bag,*' giving the idea of total, instant collapse of the existing.

Chapter 28

Only the Father Knows?

The crucial question which begs asking at this point is why Christ, when questioned by His disciples, did not know the date of His return in advance? The only One who then knew in advance is identified, or so it is thought, in, *'But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.'*³⁴²⁵ To many, it would seem strange that Christ would not be privy to this; but it appears to many that He is not, or, at least, was not. Christ is the very person who states, *'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end,'* who knows the end from the beginning, but, somewhat strangely, not the date of the Second Coming or, presumably, that of the Day of the Lord. Eadie views it differently: 'Our Lord foretold the time and the most remarkable particulars, and it is not reasonable to suppose that He knew not the predicted day.'³⁴²⁶

'Many ignorant persons suppose that the time of the end of this dispensation and of the Second Coming of Christ is altogether hidden from human discovery, but *"they err, not knowing the Scriptures,"* which distinctly intimate that the time of the end shall be revealed to watchful Christians by the prophecies.³⁴²⁷ The text in Mark, *"Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father,"*³⁴²⁸ was spoken in the present tense before the ascension and glorification of Christ, and before the

³⁴²⁵ Mat 24:36

³⁴²⁶ Mat 24:36; Eadie, John, *The Illustrated National Comprehensive Family Bible, Special Limited Edition with the Commentaries of Scott and Henry*, p.948

³⁴²⁷ Amos 3:7; Mat 24:32-43; John 15:15; II Peter 1:19; I Thes 4:4; the words *"It is not for you to know the times or seasons,"* were spoken only to the people of those days (cf. Acts 1:7).

³⁴²⁸ Mark 13:32

Pentecostal descent of the Holy Spirit, and also before the gift of the book of Revelation sixty years afterwards. It is a text that cannot apply to the present time, because it cannot now be said that the Son does not know the day and hour of His own Advent.

It is true that at first the Apostles did not know the exact date of the Second Coming of the Saviour,³⁴²⁹ however, from the time they were strengthened from on high at the descent of the Holy Spirit they were made aware of all.³⁴³⁰ For, as the Saviour foretold, by the Holy Spirit all the mysteries were revealed: I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he [it], the Spirit of truth, is come, he [it] will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come.³⁴³¹ From the time of the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost the Apostles, as well as all faithful Christians, with the illumination and wisdom given them by the Holy Spirit, were made able to know all truth. In other words, they became aware of the entirety of the divine plan for the history of the world and its end, and thus were able to determine through Holy Scripture the events of the future, such as the date of the Second Coming. Isn't such a determination possible?'³⁴³²

An answer to this question may be found in the context of the wording used by Christ: *'But of that day and hour knoweth no man.'* When uttered, He was a mortal being in His voluntary state of humiliation, and, so, could be classed as part of *'man,'* from whom the Father, at that time, had denied foreknowledge, especially as it is virtually impossible to calculate the exact date of the Second Coming from the Old Testament alone. When later He ascended to heaven, He became restored to His former immortal state, and became privy to all things of the Father, as seen in, *'The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass,'*³⁴³³ so His lack of foreknowledge on the matter was but temporary, restricted to His mortal life on earth.

Interestingly, if *'the angels of heaven'* don't know in advance the exact time of the Second Coming, then neither does Satan. It follows that Satan must have a steady stream of 'potential Antichrists' on tap over time, or certainly as events patently come near the time of the end, to ensure that when the time and opportunity does come with the restriction of the 'Restrainer,' at least one of them will be capable of stepping into the position. In addition, Satan is constantly attempting to kill God's people, and the flow of antichristian candidates is an aid to that endeavour, as Satan would see it. Even some nominally God's get in on this, as seen from, *'Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his*

³⁴²⁹ Mat 24:36

³⁴³⁰ an overstatement, surely, for Daniel prophesied that in *'the time of the end....knowledge shall be increased,'* Dan 12:4b

³⁴³¹ John 16:12,13

³⁴³² *Forty Coming Wonders*, p.4 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁴³³ Rev 1:1

*Father, making himself equal with God.*³⁴³⁴ It is also known that at the time of the end, even the families of the 'elect' will seek to persecute them, betraying and delivering them up to the most heinous, persecuting power in all of history—the revived, world-girdling Holy Roman Empire—for martyrdom.³⁴³⁵

Is evil forewarned, evil forearmed?

To put the question another way, can Satan avoid or negate a prophecy in Scripture simply by being forewarned and taking avoiding action? The 'track record' of the 'evil one' is telling: The ten world regions, prophesied over two and a half millennia ago,³⁴³⁶ is now under construction and well advanced in the process of coming forward. All Satan need do is to alter the number of regions and he'll have broken an unbreakable scriptural prophecy. Has he managed to do that? Of course not!

Or what about the prophecies in Daniel which have happened exactly as prophesied? Some examples: The '*handwriting on the wall*' incident.³⁴³⁷ Once Daniel had explained the meaning of the writing in the wet plaster wall, what happened? Nothing, perhaps? No! '*In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.*'³⁴³⁸ Almost immediately, in that very night, Belshazzar was killed, his kingdom was ended, and the entire given to the Medes and, later, the Persians, exactly as prophesied.³⁴³⁹ Or what about the various prophecies contained in Daniel chapter eleven?³⁴⁴⁰ This is a detailed, prophetic listing of historically-verified events so utterly accurate that many believe it written after the events. All Satan needed to do was avoid one single part of it, but he couldn't!

So what of prophecies yet to happen? Consider but three:

1. The end-time Antichrist's 'false-peace' covenant with the Jews, is to last seven years.³⁴⁴¹ Why doesn't Satan subvert the prophecy and set it for a different duration, or have his man, the Antichrist, conclude the covenant early or late, or renege on it either early or late? The reason? He can't!
2. Or set up a different image in the Temple to that prophesied?³⁴⁴² or to set it up at a different time?³⁴⁴³ The reason? He can't!

³⁴³⁴ John 5:18

³⁴³⁵ Mat 10:35,36

³⁴³⁶ Dan 7:23,24

³⁴³⁷ Dan 5:1-31

³⁴³⁸ Dan 5:30

³⁴³⁹ Dan 5:25-28

³⁴⁴⁰ 11:1-32

³⁴⁴¹ Dan 9:27

³⁴⁴² Rev 13:13-15

³⁴⁴³ Dan 9:27

3. Or why not gather somewhere other than at Har Megiddo in the valley of Jezreel³⁴⁴⁴ in preparation for the final battle of the era?³⁴⁴⁵ The answer? He can't!

The underlying reason is that while Satan always acts in type, seeking to destroy mankind, he acts in accordance with God's predeterminate will, and he cannot break that.

So what of the allegation³⁴⁴⁶ that by promulgating the exact times and dates of certain critical events to come, Judaeo-Christians are giving Satan the opportunity to avoid them and to break the prophecies? This is God's answer: *'To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.'*³⁴⁴⁷ The word *'Season,'*³⁴⁴⁸ *'a set or appointed time,'* is seen again in, *'for at the time appointed the end shall be.'*³⁴⁴⁹ In other words, there is a predetermined time for everything, which neither Satan, nor any demon, can break.

There is a question, however, of how much of the specific chronology and dates of the end-time is known to Satan and, presumably, at least, to some of his demons. Matthew records, *'And when he was come to the other side of the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God, art thou come hither to torment us before the time?'*³⁴⁵⁰ These demons knew something of the timescale, for they knew that His earthly ministry, almost two millennia ago, was too early for their torment, a torment which even they held to be certain. But does Satan know more than this? Does he know any real detail? There are some grounds to suppose that he does.

Demonically-inspired prophecies³⁴⁵¹ given during the course of the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries, concerning 'the three days of darkness' or 'the time of purification,'³⁴⁵² have led some to the tentative conclusion that Satan has more than an inkling of the timetable of soon-coming cataclysmic events. 'Three days of darkness' is a remarkably constant theme to be found in many Marian and other demonic apparitions, inner locutions, and the like, with other prophecies linking it to the satanic view of the sixth seal of Revelation. While it may be little more than a presumed extrapolation from the penultimate plague of Egypt, prior to the Exodus, the stress placed upon it, and the frequency of repetition over two centuries, suggests that there may be more to it than that.³⁴⁵³

³⁴⁴⁴ Armageddon; Rev 16:16

³⁴⁴⁵ Rev 19:19

³⁴⁴⁶ made by some self-professing Christians, no less! Laodicean era, predictably.

³⁴⁴⁷ Eccl 3:1

³⁴⁴⁸ Hebrew: z'man.

³⁴⁴⁹ Dan 8:19b

³⁴⁵⁰ Mat 8:28,29

³⁴⁵¹ such as those of Blessed Anna-Maria Taigi (19th-century, Italy) and Marie-Julie Jahenny of La Fraudais (19th-century, France), q.v. inf., and others.

³⁴⁵² after which, it is claimed, there will be no 'ungodly' left on earth; 'ungodly' referring to those in opposition to Satan.

³⁴⁵³ since Satan appears to know the duration of the sixth seal, it is likely that he knows or has estimated the duration of the Day of the Lord. As he must be aware of the year of Christ's announcement of the Jubilee, in 27AD, given that it is

In order to dupe the greater part of mankind at the time of the end, it is essential to Satan that he determines correctly the duration of the sixth seal, for he seems to be vesting much in his accurate prediction of three days for his 'days of darkness.' If the duration is different from three days, presumably mankind will be a lot less likely to swallow his deception. In order to achieve maximum deception, complete accuracy in this will be needed. The perception of some is that he has done all this, and that he knows quite a lot about the time of the end. In other words, Satan and his demons not only know their end—in the lake of fire—but also approximately when it will happen.

Ei me

*'But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only,'*³⁴⁵⁴ in its English translation has two occurrences of the word '*but*,' but that is not how it appears in the original Greek. The first is correctly translated from the Greek de, which does mean '*but*.' The second, occurring in a verbless clause which is conditional—Greek verbless conditional clauses, like their Hebrew counterparts, are often very ambiguous when taken in isolation—is incorrect: ei me,³⁴⁵⁵ is not '*but*,'³⁴⁵⁶ despite its translation as such.

recorded in the Bible; the import of the six days of the week on the basis of a day for a thousand years; the correct calendar (Satan having seen its operation and known the method of its calculation; indeed, to this day, he is responsible for the various perverted versions in circulation); he should have been able to project to 2027AD, calculate the correct number of days between Pentecost and Yom Teruah (109), roughly calculate and then refine the Day of the Lord to 700 days, and so be left with a residual three days for the sixth seal. If this be the case, and given the various prophecies relating to the time of the end, it is perhaps likely that he knows or suspects, to a considerable level, even approaching 'rather near certainty,' when Christ will return.

³⁴⁵⁴ Mat 24:36

³⁴⁵⁵ uses in the K.J.V. of ei me as '*except*'—the normal and more correct K.J.V. usage (also '*unless*') it should be said (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

Mat 19:9, '*And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except [ei me] [or '*unless*'] it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.'* The exceptive case, legal under the Law, is that of putting away a wife for 'fornication,' Greek: porneia, i.e., gross sexual perversity. In all other cases, it is unlawful to put away a wife.

Mat 24:22, '*And except [ei me] [or '*unless*'] those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened,'* and,

Mark 13:20, '*And except [ei me] [or '*unless*'] that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.'* The word '*sake*' should be deleted as it does not occur in the original Greek text, leaving '*but for the elect*.' The exceptive case is the '*elect*,' since their exposure to the Tribulation shall be shortened. And as a result of that exceptive case, others—but by no means all of mankind—shall be saved. That means that were there to be no '*elect*' at the end time, all flesh alive on earth would be destroyed by a rightfully vengeful God.

Mat 24:36, '*But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but [ei me] [or '*unless*'] my Father only,'* and,

Mark 13:32, '*But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but [ei me] [or '*unless*'] the Father.'*

The knowledge of the time of the Second Coming is not exclusive. If it were, Greek: parektos, '*besides*,' or '*with the exception of*,' (Acts 26:29e), or ektos (I Cor 15:27c), or alla would have been used instead of ei me. Rather, it is restricted, the exceptive or '*unless*' case being those to whom the Father alone has condescended that knowledge (cp. Rom 7:7 below).

Luke 9:13, *'But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except [ei me] [or 'unless'] we should go and buy meat for all this people.'* To the minds of the disciples, the exceptive case lay in going to purchase food for the multitude of five thousand people, without which the disciples could not perceive of them being fed.

John 9:33, *'If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.'* Here ei me is translated *'if....not'* [or *'unless'*]. The conditional and exceptive sense is patently evident here, for were it not that Jesus came from God, He could not act in the way He did, healing and performing miracles. Once again, and as ever in the New Testament, ei me is followed by acts or action.

John 13:8, *'If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.'* Here ean me is translated *'if....not'* [or *'unless'*]. Again, the conditional and exceptive sense is patently evident here, for were it not for Jesus's washing Peter's feet, Peter would have had no part with The Lord. Again, and as ever in the New Testament, ean me is followed by an act or action.

John 14:2, *'In my Father's house there are many mansions [places to live]: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.'* This is in a slightly different form: ei de me, which means *'otherwise,'* or *'but if not.'* It is followed by the act of preparation, and thereafter, by a return to earth.

John 19:11, *'Jesus answered, Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except [ei me] [or 'unless'] it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin'* (the Syriac and Persic versions add *'than thine'*). The exceptive or exceptional case was the authority and power granted to Pilate by God, as part of His Divine plan, otherwise Pilate would have been powerless in the situation. Pilate did not have exclusive, unrestricted power. It was not exclusive; it was conditional, exceptive, and time-restricted. Pilate had been guilty of sin already, in allowing the Roman soldiers to abuse Christ, and in having Him scourged. *'He that delivered me hath the greater sin'* is a reference to Caiaphas, the chief priest, whose sin was of an altogether greater order of magnitude.

Rom 7:7, *'What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I have not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except [ei me] [or 'unless'] the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.'* The exceptive case arises owing to the provisions of the Law, for, without the Law, sin would not be known. Unless the law had spoken, that special knowledge, the knowledge of sin, the transgression of the Law, would not have existed.

Rom 9:29, *'And as Esaias said before, except [ei me] [or 'unless'] the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom, and had been made like unto Gomorrha.'* The action of the Lord of Hosts caused the exceptive or exceptional case. Israel was different: a different race, a different people, separated unto the Lord through the saving grace of God, and through His Son, without whom the Jews and other Israelites would have been as the most depraved of men. They would have been as Sodom unless the Lord had acted. The 'action' is in God's giving Christ to Israel. The Messiah is not the only one in the kingdom, exclusively; there will be many firstfruits, followed by the *'great multitude,'* q.v. sup.

I Cor 7:5, *'Defraud ye not one the other, except [ei me ti: 'if not somewhat'] it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.'* Sexual abstinence in marriage is the very exceptional case, and should not maintain for long. The separation is time-limited. It is restricted to parting by mutual agreement for prayer and fasting. The 'action' is the temporary consent. It is not permanent, and so it cannot be exclusive.

I Cor 14:5, *'I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except [ei me] [or 'unless'] he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.'* The exceptive case is in interpreting foreign tongues spoken in the church, for, unless that were done, there could be no understanding.

I Cor 14:7, *'And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except [ean me] [or 'unless'] they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?'* The distinction produces the exceptive or exceptions in sound; it is not, and cannot be exclusive.

I Cor 14:9, *'So likewise ye, except [ean me] [or 'unless'] ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air.'* The exceptive or exception is found in that which is readily understood or comprehended.

I Cor 15:27, *'For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he said all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted [ektos], which did put all things under him.'* The specifically singular and blatantly obvious exception is He who did the act: the Father. All things are under the feet of the Son, put there by the word and power of the Father. But the Father cannot be put under the feet of the Son. This is an exclusive, and not an exceptive case. As such, ei me cannot be used, and ektos is substituted. Nothing could be clearer in this.

II Cor 12:13, *'For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except [ei me] [or 'unless'] it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong.'* The exceptive or exception in the case of the church at Corinth lay in their refusal to give Paul the then customary church welcome, support, and keeping, with the result that he worked to pay his own way, but that did not apply to other churches; the Corinth church was 'inferior' to other churches in that burdensome regard, but not in other matters. The exceptive case is in the church's inferiority, not in Paul's personally

supporting himself through work. There is no hint of exclusivity here, however, as it is framed as a question, leaving open the possibility of others.

II Cor 13:5, *'Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith: prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus is in you, except [ei me ti: 'if not somewhat'] ye be reprobates.'* The exceptive or exceptional case lay if they were, to an extent, self-deluding reprobates, in which case they would not really know whether Jesus dwelt in them or not.

Other New Testament texts using ei me or its variants (ean me, etc.), translated as 'except' and 'unless' (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

Mat 5:20, *'For I say unto you, That except [ean me] [or 'unless'] your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.'* The exceptional are those whose righteousness is great. Only they shall enter the kingdom. The 'action' is in acquiring righteousness greater than the scribes and Pharisees. It is open to many, but few really achieve it, q.v. Mat 22:14.

Mat 11:27, *'No man knoweth the Son [ei me] the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save [Greek: ei me] [or 'unless' through] the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.'* Many do know the Son, by permission of the Father (cp. John 6:44), and many know the Father by dint of the work of the Son; both are exceptive cases. The appropriate 'actions' are those of the Father and the Son, leading to the enlightenment of supplicants.

Mat 12:29, *'Or else, how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except [ean me] [or 'unless'] he first bind the strong man? And then he will spoil his house.'* The exceptions are the one or ones that can overpower the strong man of the house. The 'action' is the binding.

Mat 18:3, *'And said, Verily I say unto you, Except [ean me] [or 'unless'] ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.'* The exceptions are those converting, becoming as little children, which is the 'action.'

Mat 19:9, *'And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except [ei me] [or 'unless'] it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.'* Only those whose wives have been put away or divorced for porneia, (gross sexual misconduct), can remarry under the Law. The 'action' is the putting away in accordance with the Law.

Mat 24:22, *'And except [ei me] [or 'unless'] those days [of the Tribulation] should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days should be shortened.'* The word 'sake' should be deleted as it does not occur in the original Greek text, leaving 'but for the elect.' The exception, the 'elect,' suffer but part of the total duration of the Tribulation. The rest go through the entire, if they survive at all in many cases. The 'action' lies in the shortening.

Mat 26:42, *'He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except [ean me] [or 'unless'] I drink it, thy will be done.'* The exceptional case was Christ's drinking the cup, for it was the Father's will that He do so. The alternative of not drinking it could not and would not bear any fruit. The 'action' is drinking.

Mark 3:27, *'No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except [ean me] [or 'unless'] he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.'* The exceptional are the one or ones that can overpower the strong man of the house. The 'action' is the binding.

Mark 7:3,4, *'For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except [ean me] [or 'unless'] they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of their elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables.'*

Unless they washed their hands and utensils and tables, they would not eat, a tradition received from their fathers, but it was not always so: exceptive case. The 'action' is the washings of hands.

Luke 5:21, *'And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but [ei me] God alone?' At first pass, this appears exclusive, but Christ gave the answer in vv.22-26, wherein He showed them that He the power both to forgive sins and to heal the man in a bed, taken with palsy (v.18a), therefore it was not exclusive to the God in heaven.*

Luke 9:13, *'But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more than five loaves and two fishes; except [ei me] [or 'unless'] we should go and buy meat for all this people.'* To their mind, unless the disciples went and purchased food, they would not be able to feed the multitude, given the meagre resources available to them: exceptive case. The 'action' is in going to buy provisions.

Luke 10:22, *'All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and him to whom the Son will reveal him'*—cp. Mat 11:27 sup.—with some continuing to contend that the use of the word 'but,' from ei me, should read 'but exclusively.' Given this, it is then claimed that the specific addition of those to whom the Father would be revealed by the Son destroys the argument brought out in the excerpts above. The argument is that if Mat 24:36 were not exclusive, then there would be no need to mention them.

But there is something very obviously wrong with that interpretation and understanding—and that is beyond it constituting almost an argument from silence, q.v. inf.—for, in bare bones, it appears to state that only the Father can know the Son, and the Son the Father. If that be so, then how could any third party know the Son and, through Him, the Father? If it be so restricted, it is utterly self-defeating and incongruous. In any event, an argument from silence, as appealing as it may be, really is, in this instance, a logical fallacy, which reasons that a lack of evidence is evidence. In v.22, if the word ‘except’ or ‘unless’ be inserted for ‘but,’ it tends to bolster the alternative position, however, for it clearly shows that there are more than two who know the Father and Son, for the others in human terms comprise those ‘to whom the Son will reveal’ (neither of the K.J.V.’s double use of the word ‘him’ in that concluding phrase appears in the original Greek). So this does not exclude all mankind, but only those chosen by the Son (i.e., ‘those to whom the Son will reveal [it]’) are to receive the knowledge of the Father and the Son.

There is more to this, however, for the concluding phrase, ‘and him to whom the Son will reveal him,’ contains not a normal catenating or linking / copulative or joining ‘and,’ but an epexegetic ‘and.’ The explanatory epexegetis means ‘by that is meant’ or ‘that is,’ rather than the simple ‘and.’ (A similar construction is found in Rev 2:2, ‘I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience,’ which has, as the first ‘and,’ the epexegetic usage, and so should read: ‘I know thy works; that is I mean, thy labour, and thy patience’). This removes any idea of exclusive duality in the concluding phrases of Luke 10:22 and, as a consequence, of any idea of exclusive singularity in Mat 24:36 and the corresponding Mark 13:32.

Thus Luke 10:22 should read: ‘All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, except [by the condescendence and action of] the Father; and who the Father is, except [by the condescendence and action of] the Son, by that is meant he [the ‘no man’ in the opening phrase] to whom the Son will reveal Him.’

It is patently obvious that the knowledge of each other in Luke 10:22 could never be restricted to the dyadic Godhead. Angels know, and have known, since their creation, both divine beings in the Godhead, although they do not fall under the classification of ‘human.’ The ‘elect’ know both the Son and through Him, the Father, and have known them since receipt of the Holy Spirit. Eventually, indeed, vast numbers of people will know. The bar imported by ei me is not exclusive to the Godhead, and that parallels the position of Mat 24:36 and Mark 13:32, where the text most emphatically does not exclude all men from knowledge of the day and hour, but for the moment, only the ‘elect’ can discern the day and hour.

The corresponding verse in Matthew is Mat 11:27, ‘All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither know any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.’ Again, both uses of ‘he’ in the concluding stich do not appear in the original Greek. ‘But’ and ‘save’ derive from the same Greek ei me. This is virtually identical to the text of Luke 10:22.

The account by Matthew continues with Mat 24:37-39, ‘But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark. And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.’

The Old Testament account of Noah’s forewarning is given in Gen 7:4a, ‘For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights.’ Noah knew the exact day of the start of the flood. Likewise, at the time of the end, God’s ‘elect’ will know exactly the time of the Second Coming, this time well in advance of its happening, albeit with that knowledge restricted to the generation that is to experience it: Mat 24:34, ‘Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.’

The bulk of mankind will not know when these things shall be, but the few, God’s ‘elect,’ will know, and know in considerable detail, for they are commanded to ‘be awake’ and ‘pay careful attention’ (v.33 agrypneo and v.35 gregoreo respectively) on that day, q.v. Mark 13:35-37.

There is one further consideration. Christ knew the exact time of His commencing His ministry (Day of Atonement in a Jubilee year). He knew the Scriptures better than anyone, so He knew of the day-for-a-thousand years principle given in Psalms. Moreover, He would have known of the true import and implication of the feast of Weeks or Firstfruits (later called Pentecost) and that of the feast of Trumpets. It follows that He must have known not only the detail of the end-times given in His prophecy on leaving the Temple recorded in Matthew chapt. 24 but also the dates of the Second Coming and the times, for the latter are actually stated in a somewhat cryptic or embedded form in His prophecies in Matthew chaps. 24 and 25, q.v. It is inconceivable that He was ignorant of that further, detailed knowledge.

Luke 17:18, ‘There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.’ Ei me is here translated ‘save,’ similar to ‘except.’ Of the ten lepers healed, only one returned to give glory to God. The exception was the one who returned. All were equally healed, so the absolute self-exclusion of the others was in regard to their non-returning; their walking away; their action.

Now to Mat 24:36, the conditional bar in the Greek language excludes not all men and angels—in other words it is not absolute—but the exclusion is moderated, pertaining to the human possession of specific knowledge of a future event,

knowledge which can only be obtained by the express condescendence of the Father—‘*unless by [the condescendence of] the Father alone*’—and through the operation of the Holy Spirit.

The prefatory listing, when taken with Mark 13:32, includes the human, the angelic, and the Divine (*‘the Son’*), and it is inconceivable that Christ was in ignorance, as explained above. Therefore, there is no absolute, all-pervading, insurmountable bar on possession of that knowledge.

Luke 13:3, ‘*I tell you, Nay: but [de], except [ean me] ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*’ Repentance was the exceptional case. Without that, they perished. The ‘action’ is repenting.

John 3:2, ‘*The same [Nicodemus] came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except [ean me] [or ‘unless’] God be with him.*’

Unless God was with Jesus, He would be powerless in these matters: exceptive case. The ‘action’ lies in God’s indwelling. It was not exclusive in Nicodemus’s eyes, for many had done miracles from God, as recorded in Scripture.

John 3:3, ‘*Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except [ean me] [or ‘unless’] a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*’ To be born of the spirit, i.e., born again, is the exceptive case. Unless that be, a man cannot see the kingdom of God. The ‘action’ is in being born again, q.v. More than one, obviously, is born again.

John 3:5, ‘*Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except [ean me] [or ‘unless’] a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*’ To be born of the spirit, i.e., born again, is the exceptive case. Unless that be, a man cannot enter the kingdom of God. The ‘action’ is in being born again, q.v. More than one, obviously, is born again.

John 3:13, ‘*And no man [oudeis, ‘nothing’ or ‘no one’] hath ascended up to heaven, except [ei me] he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.*’ The ‘action’ is His coming down from heaven. This is the only text that appears, at first pass, wholly exclusive and yet it does not have the Greek: *parektos*, *ektos*, or *alla*. All becomes explainable, however, when the other persons who have done so are considered: The Father (cf. Gen 15:17 and inf.), and a variety of angels. If the atmospheric heaven is also held to be in purview, then the consideration widens, for the ‘elect’ alive and the dead in Christ will rise ‘*in the air*,’ and then return to the earth from that lower heaven. In going forth to meet the returning Saviour, there is seen a low mirror of Christ’s earlier ascension to the Father and His returning to meet them ‘*in the air*.’

John 3:27, ‘*John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except [ean me] [or ‘unless’] it be given him from above.*’ Unless God grants it, it will not come to pass. It is a matter of God’s condescendence: exceptive case. The ‘action’ is in God’s giving.

John 4:48, ‘*Then Jesus said unto him, Except [ean me] [or ‘unless’] ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.*’ Unless signs and wonders accompanied Jesus, the people would not believe His words: exceptive case. The ‘action’ is in seeing them. There were other signs and wonders too, so it is not an exclusive case.

John 6:44, ‘*No man come to me, except [ean me] [or ‘unless’] the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*’ Unless the Father decrees it, no man comes to Christ: exceptive case. The ‘action’ is the Father’s drawing.

John 6:53, ‘*Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except [ean me] [or ‘unless’] ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.*’ Unless a man keeps the Passover, in the form of The Last Supper, he is lost: exceptive case. Any other form is invalid. The ‘action’ is keeping Passover, q.v.

John 12:24, ‘*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except [ean me] [or ‘unless’] a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but [de] if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.*’ Germination in the soil is necessary for growth and fruits, for without that, nothing: exceptive case. Any other device is worthless. The ‘action’ is falling.

John 15:4, ‘*Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except [ean me] [or ‘unless’] it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.*’ Unless we live in Christ, we cannot bear fruit: exceptive case. The ‘action’ is abiding and living in the vine, and bearing fruit, expanded in vv.10-13 as keeping the commandments and loving one’s fellow man.

John 20:25, ‘*The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he [Thomas Didymus] said unto them, Except [ean me] [or ‘unless’] I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.*’ Physical experience of the risen Christ was necessary for Thomas, without which he would not believe that He had risen from the grave. Others had seen Him, with His wounds, so Philip wanted to too: exceptive case. The ‘action’ is touching and seeing.

Acts 8:31, ‘*And he said, How can I, except [ean me] [or ‘unless’] some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.*’ The Ethiopian eunuch could not understand the Scriptures without guidance from someone: exceptive case. The ‘action’ is guiding. Philip was not the only person who could have guided him through the scriptures.

Acts 27:31, 'Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, Except [ean me] [or 'unless'] these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.' The exceptive case, for survival, lay in remaining with the ship. The 'action' is staying on board during the storm; they would not remain on board indefinitely.

Rom 7:7, 'What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law for I had not known lust, except [ei me] [or 'unless'] the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.' The law introduces the exceptive case, bringing knowledge of sin. There are many Laws, and many sins, and 'lust' is not the only or exclusive sin.

Rom 10:15, 'And how shall they preach, except [ean me] [or 'unless'] they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!' They, who are many, must be sent by God to preach the gospel, for all other preaching is worthless: exceptive case. The 'action' is their being sent by God.

I Cor 14:5-9, 'I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except [ean me] [or 'unless'] he interpret, that the church may receive edifying. Now brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you, except [ean me] [or 'unless'] I shall speak to you by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying, or by doctrine? And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except [ean me] [or 'unless'] they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So likewise ye, except [ean me] [or 'unless'] ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? For ye shall speak into the air.' Unless words spoken in a foreign tongue are interpreted, they are worthless: exceptive case. The quadripartite 'actions' involve speaking and interpreting.

I Cor 15:2, 'By which [gospel] also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory that which I preached unto you, unless [ean me] ye have believed in vain.' The exceptional case to being saved by the preaching of the gospel is those that have heard it in vain, for they are lost. The 'action' is believing in vain.

I Cor 15:36, 'Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except [ean me] [or 'unless'] it die.' Unless the grain dies, it will not germinate and bring forth fruit. It can fall elsewhere, but for germination proper, soil is needed. The 'action' is the death.

II Cor 13:5, 'Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except [ei me] [or 'unless'] ye be reprobates?' Their faith was of Christ, unless they were reprobate, the exceptional case. The 'action' is being reprobate.

II Thes 2:3, 'Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day [the 'day of Christ'] shall not come, except [ean me] [or 'unless'] there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.' Unless there is a falling away from the true faith and the coming of the Antichrist, the day of the Lord shall not yet come: conditional case. There are many instances of this, but one principle one. The 'action' is a falling away from the truth and proper belief and conduct.

II Tim 2:5, 'And if a man also strive for masteries, yet he is not crowned, except [ean me] [or 'unless'] he strive lawfully.' That striving must be lawful: exceptive case. The 'action' is lawful striving.

Rev 2:5, 'Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except [ean me] [or 'unless'] thou repent.' Repentance or perdition. Without repentance, perdition: exceptive case. The 'action' is repenting, conditional or provisional in context.

Rev 2:22, 'Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except [ean me] [or 'unless'] they repent of their deeds.' Repentance or tribulation. Without repentance, tribulation: exceptive case. The 'action' is repenting, again, conditional or provisional in context.

There are notable and telling exceptions:

I Cor 15:27, 'For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he said all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted [ektos], which did put all things under him.'

The specifically singular and blatantly obvious exception is He who did the act: the Father. All things are under the feet of the Son, put there by the word and power of the Father. But the Father cannot be put under the feet of the Son. This is an exclusive, and not an exceptive case. As such, ei me cannot be used, and ektos is substituted [this reproduced, q.v. sup.].

Acts 26:29, 'And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except [parektos] these bonds.'

And the word translated 'except,' parektos, meaning 'with the exception of.....', 'except,' 'besides,' would be the obvious choice in Mat 24:36 and Mark 13:32 if the intention were to isolate the Father in terms of that knowledge. But that wasn't the phrase used, it was ei me, or ean me, and that imports a very different meaning.

Robertson, A. T., *Word Pictures In The New Testament*, Vol. 1, p. 47; the great Baptist scholar, when commenting on Mat 5:32, made the following comments:

Literally, it means 'if not.' It was translated into Latin by Jerome in the fourth-century Vulgate³⁴⁵⁷ as nisi, which means 'unless' (or in K.J.V. English 'except,' which meant 'unless' at the time). This provides a much more reliable and accurate translation.

In Greek, the verse has as its protasis—the subordinate or dependent clause expressing the outcome or conclusion—the opening statement: '*But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven,*'³⁴⁵⁸ and, as its apodosis—the main clause of a conditional statement expressing or identifying the regulator, moderator, or conditioning aspect—'*but my Father only.*'³⁴⁵⁹ In pre-eminently true conditionals, the protasis does not contain something that is exclusively true, but states something that is pre-eminently true, but with an exception or exceptions subject to one or more conditions.³⁴⁶⁰ This approach yields the correct meaning, for without the condescendence and prior approval of the Father, detailed knowledge of the '*day and hour*' of the Second Coming '*in the air*'³⁴⁶¹ is not possible. It follows that only God's 'elect' are capable of understanding and acting properly on Christ's words recorded here.

Had Christ in Matthew wished to record the complete exclusion of knowledge of '*the day and hour*' to the Father alone, then He would not have adopted the phrase ei me; he would have used the Greek paraketos, which means '*besides*' (or possibly the Greek: alla, which means '*but*'), which would have imported complete exclusion in favour of the following named party, the Father. That is the word used by Christ on what the K.J.V. translates as '*fornication*.'³⁴⁶² '*That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication,*'³⁴⁶³ has

"*Saving for the cause of fornication* (parektos logou porneias). An unusual phrase that perhaps means 'except for a matter of unchastity.' 'Except on the ground of unchastity' (Weymouth), 'except unfaithfulness' (Goodspeed), and is equivalent to me epi porneiai in Mat 19:9."

And there it is again -- parektos -- except, saving, besides.

It follows that Mat 24:36 and Mark 13:32 must involve action by the party mentioned: God the Father. He cannot sit unmoved and deny that knowledge to all and sundry. Rather, He divulges it—the 'action' in this case—to those to whom He condescends be apprised, viz., His 'elect.'

Further, if the intent of Mat 24:36 and Mark 13:32 were hard-and-fast exclusion, in that only the Father does and can know, then the Greek would not have been ei me, but parektos, meaning '*except*' or '*besides*,' or alla, meaning '*but*' in the sense of an exception or something to the contrary, a contradistinction (e.g. Acts 2:16 and almost all other instances in the New Testament of the derivation of the English word 'but').

³⁴⁵⁶ the similarly sounding Greek: ou me means '*never*' or '*not*,' or '*not at all*,' as seen in Mat 24:34's '*not*' in '*this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.*' Ou me is the strongest form of negative in the Greek language, and is thus unrelated to the conditional ei me.

³⁴⁵⁷ deriving from Latin: vulgus, 'the common people.'

³⁴⁵⁸ Mat 24:36a

³⁴⁵⁹ Mat 24:36b

³⁴⁶⁰ with these kinds of conditionals, a dynamic equivalent or periphrastic translation is often necessary to bring out the pre-eminently true sense of the conditionals. There are twenty-seven instances of this type of conditional sentence in the New Testament, including Mat 11:27,12:39,13:57,15:24,16:4; Mark 6:4; Luke 11:29; John 3:13,10:10; Rom 7:7,13:8; 1 Cor 1:14,2:2,12:3,5, 13; Gal 1:7; Eph 4:8; 1 John 2:22; Rev 2:17,14:3,19:12; cf. Bible.org. article *Textual Problem, Matthew 24:36*; Hagner, Donald A., *Matthew 1–13*, p.320; Morris, Leon, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, pp.293,294; Nolland, John, *Luke 9:21–18:34*, pp.273-275; Baima, J. K., *Making Valid Conclusions from Greek Conditional Sentences*, pp.64,65.

³⁴⁶¹ Greek: ekeinos, '*that*,' refers to the day in which the 'elect' are gathered from the earth; cf. Mat 24:31

³⁴⁶² Greek: porneia.

³⁴⁶³ Mat 5:32a

a clear exclusion of one thing: porneia. The word '*saving*' is from parakletos and imports an absolute exclusion. Had the same been in the mind of Christ in relation to knowledge of '*that day and hour*,'³⁴⁶⁴ to give the sense that uniquely and exclusively, denying it to all others, at all times, the Father solely has knowledge of that day and time, then He would have used parakletos to indicate an impenetrable division through which that knowledge could not pass. But He didn't,³⁴⁶⁵ because that knowledge is available, subject to the gracious condescendence of the Father. Without that condescendence, it is absolutely impossible to discern the time and date from Scripture.³⁴⁶⁶

Turner arrives at the same conclusion on the conditional use of the ei me clause: the words mean, literally, '*if not*,' and have the effect of negating the previous clause with a special case. Discussing a verse in Luke,³⁴⁶⁷ he says: '*And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?*' In this passage in Luke you have a similar set-up, where the discussion is centered around something only God can do! There was never any question about monotheism!....Nevertheless, in Greek, the last phrase of Luke 5:21 appear as thus: 'ei me monos ho theos;' literally "*Except only God?*" Hence the Greek indicative "ei," and the Greek subjunctive particle "me," together form and idiom that means, "except / unless." However, in this case better English is "but." However, the point is, you have the adjective "monos" functioning as an adverb just like [in] John³⁴⁶⁸ even though the sentence

³⁴⁶⁴ Mat 24:36a

³⁴⁶⁵ the latter, Greek: alla, is the word he used in a verse earlier in the same chapter, where it is translated '*but*' in the K.J.V.: Mat 24:6, '*And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.*' Here the exclusion is absolute, but time-limited: intervening wars and rumours of wars neither impact on, nor constitute, the cataclysmic wars at the time of the end, but they are wars, nevertheless, and they are part of the continuum of warfare culminating in the events of the time of the end.

³⁴⁶⁶ in English, the preposition *except* means 'other than' or 'apart from,' and, when used as a conjunction, is an archaic word for *unless* (derived from Old French: excepter, 'to leave out,' from Latin: exipere, 'to take out.'). It denotes the abnormal, the irregular, the deviation, the departure, the peculiar, the anomalous, the uncommon, the extraordinary; something not in conformity with the general rule or principle. As a verb it can mean *exclude*, and as a noun, *exclusion*. The modern English reader, scanning over the words in question, has a tendency to interpret the 'subordinating' conjunction as a verb or a preposition, rather than the archaic form *unless*. Indeed, *if*, found in ei me, '*not if*,' is a subordinating conjunction, and as such supportive of the conditional archaic reading.

The K.J.V.'s translation of the two verses' exceptive case, stating that only the Father knows, to the exclusion of all others, at all times, is grossly misleading. The use of ei me, or ean me, literally '*not if*,' may seem a strange conjunction to some in English: a negative immediately followed by a conditional conjunction, but that shouldn't be too hard to comprehend. A 'negative unless' is a straightforward construction. When translated '*unless*,' it correctly denotes the exceptional case. In fact, this separates or distinguishes 'with the condescendence' and 'without the condescendence' of the Father. Without that condescendence, it is absolutely impossible to discern the time from Scripture. Accordingly, the typical case is that the overwhelming mass of mankind is not in possession of that knowledge. Neither would they seek to know it, nor, indeed, would they have any interest in it.

The reference to future tense is interesting, for it could be argued that the tense of both verses should be future, lending credence to the divine condescendence interpretation through distinguishing the disciples then being spoken to, who did not know, from some, coming later, who would. But the use of the present tense is used to include those then present, who could neither fathom the dates (for all information had not been given at that time, especially that contained in the book of Revelation) nor live until the time of the Second Coming.

³⁴⁶⁷ Luke 5:21

³⁴⁶⁸ John 5:44

structure is different. The point is still the same because both contexts are discussing entities that are limited to God's discretion.³⁴⁶⁹ In addition, inspection of the texts utilizing ei me and ean me shows that the phrase is followed by an action (past, present, or future), or the implication of an action.

Collett notes a further consideration in relation to the apparent restriction of foreknowledge: 'It ought to be more widely known that the Greek, translated "but," consists of two words, the simple English of which is "if not"—thus ei meaning "if," and me, meaning "not."³⁴⁷⁰ The late Archbishop Trench, one of the greatest authorities on words, when lecturing at a London college, called attention to this about one hundred years ago; and it can be seen by anyone by reference to a good Greek lexicon. So that the clause³⁴⁷¹ should read—"nor the Son, if not the Father."³⁴⁷²

Again, this implies the possibility that foreknowledge can be granted to others by the Father at His will, through the Holy Spirit, that is, 'save through my Father' —'take ye heed, watch, and pray' being the given way of securing it. Under these circumstances, the concluding word of Matthew's foundation verse,³⁴⁷³ 'only,'³⁴⁷⁴ would refer to the sole provenance of such divine information—God the Father—and not to His uniquely possessing and retaining foreknowledge of the time of the Parousia. Such an interpretation, both credible and compelling, puts a completely different complexion on the matter, and opens up the prospect of divine propositional revelation concerning the time of the Second Coming.

Chronology

Chronologically, the first record of Jesus giving any indication of the time of day of the Second Coming 'in the air' is in Luke: 'Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning.'³⁴⁷⁵ And if he³⁴⁷⁶ shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. Be ye therefore ready also; for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.'³⁴⁷⁷ Peter then immediately queries, 'Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even unto all?'³⁴⁷⁸ He was seeking to ascertain whether the statement refers to the disciples only, or to all. Jesus' answer makes it clear that it is directed to all, for it makes specific reference to the time of His return and conditions pertaining. But even more, it describes the actions and status of the then three classes of 'servant':

³⁴⁶⁹ Nigel Turner (with added comment and clarification in square brackets; sublinear emphasis added)

³⁴⁷⁰ appearing in Mat 24:36; Mark 13:32,33; 'but,' in Greek, is de.

³⁴⁷¹ Mark 13:32c

³⁴⁷² Collett, Sidney, *The Scripture of Truth* (slightly paraphrased)

³⁴⁷³ Mat 24:36

³⁴⁷⁴ Greek: monos, 'remaining,' 'alone,' or 'singly.'

³⁴⁷⁵ i.e., inside a house, and dressed and girded, ready; 'lights burning' suggests a nocturnal return, with those waiting doing so indoors; 'loins girded,' signifies being dressed and ready for that journey.

³⁴⁷⁶ viz., the bridegroom, signifying Christ.

³⁴⁷⁷ Luke 12:35-40; esp. vv.35,38,40

³⁴⁷⁸ Luke 12: 41b

1. The faithful and wise steward;³⁴⁷⁹

2. The bad and completely rescidivist servant, who ultimately goes to perdition; and,

3. The slipshod and unprepared servant, who, depending upon his state, will receive more or less punishment.

The responses to the Lord's command to '*stay awake with loins girt*' will be varied, and an essential cause of this variance is to be found in the detail of the individual's waiting and expectation of His return and in his associated actions. The 'elect' will be awake, ritually cleansed by washing—for he will, after all, be rising, immortal, to meet the Lord in His immortal, all-powerful state—and waiting, ready to go, for only the 'elect' can understand the significance of the Scriptures and discern the date and time of His return, and only the 'elect' will keep that appointment.³⁴⁸⁰ The 'intermediate peoples' will still be asleep or at work. Their removal to be with the Lord will not occur until later, after the time of Christ's alighting on the mount of Olives.³⁴⁸¹

Both Matthew and Luke speak of night '*watches*.' '*Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.*'³⁴⁸² Mark speaks of the Parousia of being either, '*at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning*'³⁴⁸³—in other words, he mentions the same watch system. Whilst the earliest Greeks divided the night commonly into three parts, and, prior to the exile in Babylon, the Israelites had three watches in a night, after they became subject to the Romans they adopted the Roman custom of dividing the night into four watches. The second watch, therefore, ran from nine o'clock to midnight, and the third watch from midnight to three o'clock.

'*Behold, I come as a thief,*'³⁴⁸⁴ *Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments,*³⁴⁸⁵ *lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.*'³⁴⁸⁶ There is, perhaps, more than a passing connection to the wedding feast '*in the air,*' where the lack of a wedding garment³⁴⁸⁷ results in eviction, figuratively, from God's 'elect' people '*into outer darkness.*'³⁴⁸⁸

³⁴⁷⁹ or '*trusty and thoughtful,*' as Moffatt has it.

³⁴⁸⁰ q.v. inf.

³⁴⁸¹ q.v. Luke 17:34-36, et. sup.

³⁴⁸² Luke 12:37,38

³⁴⁸³ Mark 13:35b

³⁴⁸⁴ Greek: kleptes, '*embezzler*' or '*pilferer*.'

³⁴⁸⁵ Greek: himation, the outer '*cloak*,' the more expensive outer garment worn over the tunic.

³⁴⁸⁶ Rev 16:15

³⁴⁸⁷ Mat 22:12

³⁴⁸⁸ Mat 22:13c

There is, certainly, a very close correlation with the Second Coming, in staying awake and watching for that blessed event, seen in the following by Edersheim: '[I]n the midst of some dry account³⁴⁸⁹ of what went on in the Temple, we come upon the very words which....John has employed to describe heavenly realities.³⁴⁹⁰ Perhaps one of the most striking instances of this kind is afforded by the words....' *Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments.*' They literally describe, as we learn from the Rabbis, the punishment awarded to the Temple guards if found asleep at their posts; and the Rabbinical account of it is curiously confirmed by the somewhat naïve confession of one of their number,³⁴⁹¹ that on a certain occasion his own maternal uncle had actually undergone the punishment of having his clothes set on fire by the captain of the Temple as he went his rounds at night.'³⁴⁹²

Now '*Be ye therefore ready also, for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not*³⁴⁹³ would fit midnight, at the changeover of watches, most admirably. That would be the precise point of the least level of watchfulness when the guards' attention would be diverted by the changeover. The twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew runs on from the preceding one—there being no chapter divisions in the original Greek—with the parable of the ten virgins,³⁴⁹⁴ which contains: '*And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom*³⁴⁹⁵ *cometh; go ye out to meet him.*'³⁴⁹⁶ '*Midnight*' is translated from two Greek words³⁴⁹⁷ meaning '*the middle of the night,*' or '*in the midst of the night.*' Midnight, therefore, the least watchful of night times, would be the least expected, and hence the soundest translation. But midnight is not quite so simple to determine. On the day in question³⁴⁹⁸ true midnight actually occurs at 00:39 I.D.S.T.³⁴⁹⁹—owing to Cairo time being the time zone for Jerusalem,³⁵⁰⁰ and therefore slightly 'out of phase' for the exact time coordinates for the longitude and latitude of the Holy City; there's also a one-hour adjustment necessary for I.D.S.T.—or 21:39 U.T.C.³⁵⁰¹ on the day before, if using the Julian / Gregorian calendar.

³⁴⁸⁹ by Josephus.

³⁴⁹⁰ in Rev 16:15

³⁴⁹¹ footnoted: Rabbi Elieser ben Jacob, q.v. Middoth, i, 2.

³⁴⁹² Edersheim, Alfred, *The Temple, Its Ministry and Services as they were at the time of Jesus Christ*, pp.142,143 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets).

³⁴⁹³ Luke 12:40

³⁴⁹⁴ ten being the biblical number of God's divine order and also of completed course of time; five (here in two groupings) in biblical useage can indicate judgement or reward. In Mat 25:2-4, the five wise virgins represent the first two years of Christ's earthly ministry, which bore much fruit, and the church eras of Ephesus, Smyrna, and Philadelphia. The five foolish virgins represent the final year of His ministry, which bore little or nothing in terms of fruit, and the church eras of Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, and Laodicea, which fare similarly.

³⁴⁹⁵ signifying Christ.

³⁴⁹⁶ Mat 25:6

³⁴⁹⁷ Greek: mesos nux.

³⁴⁹⁸ Sunday, 13 June, 2027AD, q.v.

³⁴⁹⁹ Israel Daylight Saving Time.

³⁵⁰⁰ q.v.; an alternative to the location-specific adjusted, clock midnight method of calculation, based on the mid-point (midnight) between Jerusalem sunset on 12 June, 2027 and sunrise on 13 June, 2027 (19:45 and 05:33 I.D.S.T. respectively), gives the same result: 00:39 I.D.S.T.

³⁵⁰¹ Coordinated Universal Time.

In the middle of the night—Jerusalem time, for all things are taken relative to that pertaining at the Temple, or its site, in Jerusalem—Jesus Christ will come for His ‘elect.’³⁵⁰² The sheer physical impossibility of the ‘elect’ then alive maintaining a watch on a 24 / 7 basis implies that the actual date and time is both knowable and known in advance. Being found naked in the Temple as a result of having one’s clothes burned off meant but one thing: a hasty flight out of the Temple precinct in shame. Similarly, those who sleep and slumber on the great day of the return of the Lord will have no place at the glorious wedding supper in the air.

The position of the disciples on the issue of the timing of the Second Coming after the Resurrection of Jesus is interesting. It is seen in Acts: *‘When they were therefore come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.’*³⁵⁰³ The fact that they asked concerning the potential imminence of the kingdom is supportive of the exceptive nature of the Greek³⁵⁰⁴ in the context of the foundation verses in Matthew and Mark,³⁵⁰⁵ for if such knowledge had been wholly proscribed, then there would have been no point in their asking, for they or their successors would only know when it had actually happened. The Greek used by Christ for *‘times’*³⁵⁰⁶ designates a space of time rather than an identifiable point in time for a fixed or special occasion,³⁵⁰⁷ and thus points well into the future, whereas the word translated *‘seasons’*³⁵⁰⁸ in context refers to specific events at the end of the period of time.³⁵⁰⁹ Moffatt has, *‘It is not for you to know the course and periods of time that the Father has fixed by his own authority.’*³⁵¹⁰ The ‘sole’ or exclusive element in all of this is the setting of the dates for the events surrounding the Second Coming, et al., *‘which the Father hath set in his own power of choice.’*³⁵¹¹ While the knowledge of those dates is restricted to those to whom the Father chooses to reveal it, it would have been of no utility to the apostles—for they would all die in due course, well short of the period of time in question—and, in any event, the Holy Spirit had not yet been conferred.³⁵¹² Hence, possession of that knowledge is exceptive and not exclusive, all working through the operation of the Will or Power of God, the Holy Spirit.

If this additional inference is correct, then Christ's words, *‘But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only,’*³⁵¹³ were time specific, meeting the question when asked with a

³⁵⁰² thus while the era of the Judæo-Christian Church started on Pentecost 30AD (with the receipt of the Holy Spirit on those gathered in Jerusalem), Christ returns for His own, the firstfruits of the church, also on Pentecost, in 2027AD.

³⁵⁰³ Acts 1:6,7

³⁵⁰⁴ Greek: ei me.

³⁵⁰⁵ Mat 24:36; Mark 13:32

³⁵⁰⁶ Greek: chromos.

³⁵⁰⁷ as opposed to Greek: kairos, which does refer to a specific occasion / point in time.

³⁵⁰⁸ Greek: kairos.

³⁵⁰⁹ Greek: chromos.

³⁵¹⁰ Acts 1:7b

³⁵¹¹ corrected translation of Acts 1:7c; Greek: exousia, ‘power of choice.’

³⁵¹² conferred later that same year, at Pentecost, 30AD.

³⁵¹³ Mat 24:36

description of the then extant condition, but not referring to conditions extant when Paul wrote the Epistles, or John the book of Revelation, or eschatologically to near the time of the end.³⁵¹⁴

Doubtless, there will be other means of anticipating the time of arrival of our Lord, as long-prophesied, dread events unfold, so then there should not be scope for any lingering dubiety or uncertainty.

³⁵¹⁴ Tanakh's Zech 14:7b, '*only the Lord knows when,*' does not agree with other translations, such as Moffatt's: '*The Eternal knows it.*'

Chapter 29

When Shall These Things Come to Pass?

Astonishingly, it has been contended by some deeply-deluded people claiming to be in the church that, “Knowing the time and date of the Second Coming is not a salvation issue!” But Christ said, *‘Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.’*³⁵¹⁵ He continues, *‘And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.’*³⁵¹⁶ Later, He says something which Peter felt needed immediate clarification: *‘Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.’*³⁵¹⁷ Peter’s question: *‘Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?’*³⁵¹⁸ In other words, is the Lord’s statement a blanket statement covering all men down through the ages, or did it refer merely to those to whom he then spoke: the disciples? The Lord’s reply is telling: *‘Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.’*³⁵¹⁹ But ‘so doing’ what? The statement refers back to: *‘Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching.’*³⁵²⁰ Only those who literally

³⁵¹⁵ Luke 12:37; part of tract Luke 12:31f.; ‘Watching,’ Greek: gregoreo, means ‘stay awake.’

³⁵¹⁶ Luke 12:38

³⁵¹⁷ Luke 12:40

³⁵¹⁸ Luke 12:41b

³⁵¹⁹ Luke 12:43

³⁵²⁰ Luke 12:37a; ‘Watching,’ Greek: gregoreo, means ‘to pay strict attention.’ The corresponding verse in Mark 13:33 reads, *‘Take ye heed, watch, and pray: for ye know not when the time is.’* Here, Greek: agrupneo is translated ‘watch,’ but this Greek word actually means ‘stay awake.’

'stay awake,' who are awake and watching at the time of the Second Coming 'in the air,' will partake of the wedding feast in the air.³⁵²¹

So is it a 'salvation issue'? Well, it is, if you want to be part of the first resurrection, as will be seen.

But what was Christ saying to those to whom He spoke directly, at the time? He knew that He would not come in glory during their lifetime, and that His return would be almost two millennia later. So why command His disciples to keep 'awake' by paying careful attention? It is reasonable to conclude that He was commanding them to be awake by keeping the kings' feast at the appointed time on each new moon during their lifetimes.³⁵²² That way, they would be part of the first resurrection, the firstfruits, for they had been His, and had kept the monthly feast which serves as a glorious foregleam to the Second Coming and the Supper of the Lamb 'in the air.'

³⁵²¹ I Thes 4:14-17; Luke 12:45, 'Let your loins be girded about; and your lights burning.'

³⁵²² Sermons Series 3:192, *Rosh Chodesh, Yahweh's Gift of the New Moon* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The Purpose for the Moon's Creation:

Let us begin with Yahweh's plain instructions and go to the very first reference to the New Moon in the Bible in the first chapter of *Bereshith* or *Genesis*:

'And Elohim said, Let there be lights in the raki'a (expanse) of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for otot (signs), and for mo'adim (seasons, or appointed times), and for yammim (days), and shanim (years); And let them be for lights in the raki'a of the heaven to give light upon the earth; and it was so. And Elohim made (lit. 'assigned' from asah, not bara meaning 'create') two great lights; the greater light to rule the day (sun), and the lesser light to rule the night (moon); He made the kokhavim (stars) also.' (Gen.1:14-16, O.J.B.).

The Moon is an Ot or Sign:

We see from these verses that the sun and moon were not just created to give light and heat. They had other functions too as '*signs, appointments for festivals, days and years.*' We see from this passage, moreover, that the Divine Calendar with its feasts existed even before the creation of Adam so that this scripture *itself* becomes an ot or sign indicating that Yahweh's division of time and the appointment of His observances are for *all* the inhabitants of the earth in *all* ages. Finally, please note that the sun, moon and stars were not *created for the first time* (Heb. bara) on the fourth day (Yom Revee) but were *assigned their function* (asah) as described in this text. They were all created on the first day, Yom Rishon. [*'appointed time,' or an 'appointment' with God is the time of the dark lunar conjunction, a point in time that occurs all round the world.*]

The Time-Keeper:

As we carefully study the rest of scripture pertaining to the moon we discover that this heavenly body serves a vital function as a time-keeper for Yahweh's people so that they can keep His moedim or '*appointed times*' in His spiritual company. This is the same word that is used to translate '*feasts*' (Lev.23). One of the functions of the moon is to enable those who love Yahweh to meet with Him at especially set-apart, holy or consecrated times so that He can interface with His people in a special way to give them blessings.

'He (Yahweh) appointed the yarei'ach (moon) for mo'adim (seasons, appointments, appointed times, festivals).' (Teh. Ps.104:29, O.J.B.).

'Thus says Yahweh, which giveth the shemesh (sun) for an ohr (light) by day, and the chukkot yarei'ach (statutes / ordinances of the moon) and the chukkot kokhavim (statutes / ordinances of the stars) for an ohr (light) by night...' (Yir. / Jer.31:35, O.J.B.).

Special Appointments with Yahweh:

One of the otot or signs is that we are meeting with Yahweh at the right time and we do this by making our calendar calculations based on the moon. This should alarm orthodox, evangelical Christians who follow a man-made calendar that bases *all* its calculations on the sun [and also those who keep the Judaic Babylonian-based calendar, q.v.] Does not the sun also have a place in making calculating? Yes, the scriptures say so but *not* for calculating our special meeting times with Yahweh - Rosh Chodesh and the Seven Annual Festivals. This means that the annual festivals and monthly Rosh Chodesh fall on different days each year and month, respectively, though roughly at the same time as all previous years.'

'It is true that at first the Apostles didn't know the exact date of the Second Coming of the Saviour,'³⁵²³ however, from the time they were strengthened from on high at the descent of the Holy Spirit they were made aware of all. For, as the Saviour foretold, by the Holy Spirit all the mysteries were revealed: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come."³⁵²⁴ From the time of the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the Apostles, as well as all faithful Christians, with the illumination and wisdom given them by the Holy Spirit, were made able to know "all truth."³⁵²⁵

In other words, they became aware of the entirety of the divine plan for the history of the world and its end, and thus were able to determine through Holy Scripture the events of the future, such as a very close approximation of the date of the Second Coming, if not its exact date.

The 'elect' know their Lord's will, and the exact time of the Second Coming, for which detailed astronomical charts are needed, charts not available in the early centuries of the church era. As a result, those of the near end-time will know and will be awake and watching on that day, prepared and ready to be transformed, in an instant, into spirit beings, and then to partake of the wedding feast '*in the air.*'

The unheeding servant knows not the day and hour, neither can he or she. '*The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.*'³⁵²⁶ '*When he looketh not for,*'³⁵²⁷ means '*does not expect,*' and '*does not wait for.*' '*Not aware,*'³⁵²⁸ means '*has not come to know.*'

The seriously misguided notion that that knowledge and action is 'not a salvation issue' removes any possibility of being part of the first resurrection! And that is, most certainly, a salvation issue; one of paramount import!

Continuing speculation

Throughout history, men and women have used a wide variety of methods and devices to predict the date of the Second Coming.³⁵²⁹ By way of illustration of the general state of confusion, outside of the true

³⁵²³ Mat. 24:36

³⁵²⁴ John 16:12,13

³⁵²⁵ Cleopa, *The Truth of Our Faith: A Discourse from Holy Scripture on the Teachings of True Christianity*, chpt. 15; this to be moderated by Daniel's words in Dan 12:4b, for at '*the time of the end....knowledge shall be increased.*'

³⁵²⁶ Luke 12:46

³⁵²⁷ Greek: prosdokao.

³⁵²⁸ Greek: ginosko.

³⁵²⁹ the content of this chapter, when engaged in postulating when these things shall come to pass, invokes the admonition contained in the 'Preamble': '*On the rare occasion where any form of human speculation is incorporated*

Christian church, surrounding the time of the end and related events, Tichonius, an early Christian writer, so called, believed that Christ would return in 381AD. This he calculated on the basis of '*a time, times, and half a time*,' of Daniel, with each being a century, giving three hundred and fifty years, and adding the product to the supposed year of Christ's crucifixion,³⁵³⁰ so totalling three hundred and eighty-one.

Hippolytus³⁵³¹ and also Lactantius³⁵³² believed the year 500AD would see the Second Coming.³⁵³³ Bishop Gregory of Tours, who lived in the sixth-century, thought it would come between 799 and 806AD. In the year 998AD the French monk Abbon³⁵³⁴ wrote that monks were preparing for the Last Trump. They expected there to be: 'nations in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting with fear of what is coming on the world.' Floods, plagues, famines, earthquakes, solar and lunar eclipses, and lightning were all assumed to be part of the package. The year 1000AD, as it happened, was quite an eventful one in any event. There were earthquakes across Europe, and severe famine caused by a crop failure against the background of a growing population. A comet appeared. Trithem wrote that it was taken to be such an important sign that: 'Many who thought that it proclaimed the last day were frozen with fear.'

There were many suicides, flagellants roamed the countryside, debts were revoked, the rich gave money and goods of value to the poor, and criminals were let out of prison. Panic set in. Then, on New Year's Eve, 1000AD, a huge crowd gathered in Rome, awaiting the end of the world. Pilgrims flocked to the Holy Land, hopeful that they would see the advent of the Saviour as the Last Trump sounded. Midnight came, but nothing happened. In Rome the moment ended in anti-climax: Pope Sylvester II came out to the balcony, blessed the crowd and sent them home. In the Holy Land the moment passed peacefully too, all of so-called Christendom awaking with a sigh of relief on the first day of 1001AD.

The period that followed all of this was marked by what was termed 'a new spirit of piety,' allied to a spate of church building, partly as a symbol of thanks and partly because, as the millennium approached, church building had fallen off because it had hardly seemed worth the effort, given that the world was going to end. As a Cluny monk wrote:³⁵³⁵ 'It was if the whole world, having cast off its age by shaking itself, were clothing itself everywhere with the white robe of churches.' Barely had things got back to normal, however, when it was time to be off again, in 1033AD, the supposed millennial anniversary of the crucifixion. On this occasion, there was a massive pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and an equally massive trudge back home again for the dejected and disillusioned.

into this work, it is annotated accordingly, and the reader warned of its likely deficiencies; otherwise it is made perfectly obvious from the context.' That said, the evidence led is compelling, if studied closely.

³⁵³⁰ which he had as 31AD.

³⁵³¹ 170–263AD

³⁵³² 250–330AD

³⁵³³ based on some erroneous dates given in the LXX translation of the Old Testament.

³⁵³⁴ later to become abbot of Fleur-sur-Loire.

³⁵³⁵ in 1004AD

Joachim de Floris, an Italian monk, taught that the year 1260AD would mark the purification of the Roman church and the beginning of Christ's reign, based on the '*one thousand, two hundred, and sixtieth day*' of Daniel, and commencing with an erroneous date for the birth of Jesus. Others, using the same 1,260 days, added them to the then year of the supposed crucifixion,³⁵³⁶ to arrive at 1294AD. Still others added 1,260 to the year of John's writing of the book of Revelation, to give 1356AD. Benedictus Arietus of Berne³⁵³⁷ counted the 1,260 years from Constantine's 'legalisation' of Christianity in 312AD, to give 1572AD.

The Black Death which rampaged through Asia, Europe and Africa in the fourteenth-century, killing approximately twenty-five million people in Europe alone, was held by many to signal the onset of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, and of the end of the world. But it was not so.

In 1532AD, one of Luther's followers, a minister and amateur mathematician called Stiefel,³⁵³⁸ predicted that the world would end at 0800 hours on 9 October, 1533AD. Early that day, the local peasants duly assembled at his church; after the deadline had passed by a few hours, they seized and bound Stiefel, and dragged him off to the local magistrate, where several of them sued him for damages.

During the first half of the seventeenth-century, a good number of Jews held the belief that their Messiah would appear in the year 1648AD. That year Sabbotai Zevi proclaimed himself to be the promised and long-awaited Messiah, but the era of redemption that had been expected failed to materialise. Meanwhile, in so-called Christendom, many groups expected 1666AD to be the date of Christ's return, founding on the '*number of the Beast*' in Revelation, added to a millennium. Sir Isaac Newton, noted for his research on gravity and many other things, initially set the date of the Second Coming at 1715AD.³⁵³⁹ William Whiston also held this view, but when the date failed, he deferred it to 1735AD, and again to 1766AD. The fifteenth-century theologian D'Ailly³⁵⁴⁰ calculated that the Antichrist would arrive in 1789AD, with the Second Coming following shortly thereafter.

A veritable spate of dates came forth in the middle of the nineteenth-century, as many people thought that events and prophecy were rapidly coming to the time of the end. This view was propelled by the 'Enlightenment,' as it was called, which began to put extreme pressure on what was formerly thought to be 'unassailable' mainstream and fringe religious beliefs held throughout much of 'Christendom' which basically comprised Romanism and its many offspring.

An ingenious system of calculation was devised by Bengel.³⁵⁴¹ He believed that '666' was the length of years the Beast system would rule. Since another Scripture said that it would be '*forty two months*,' he divided

³⁵³⁶ supposed to be in 34AD.

³⁵³⁷ 1505–1547AD

³⁵³⁸ Michael Stiefel.

³⁵³⁹ later 'updated' or 'postdated' / 'deferred' to 2060AD.

³⁵⁴⁰ Pierre D'Ailly.

³⁵⁴¹ Johann Albrecht Bengel, 1687–1752AD.

one into the other, making each month equal to 15.857 years. By the use of some wild and inconsistent assumptions, and tortuous mathematics, he arrived at a date for the Second Coming: 18 June, 1836AD. It appears that Wesley³⁵⁴² favoured this date, as did a surprising number of people.

The 'Great Disappointment' happened in 1843–1844AD when both of Miller's³⁵⁴³ much-vaunted dates failed. Another American, Wolff³⁵⁴⁴ proposed 1847AD for the Second Coming, but that date suffered as all others before it. In fact, 1847AD was not a 'new' date when first proposed by Wolff, for Petri³⁵⁴⁵ had first proposed it in a book written in 1774AD. This date was based on the same prophecy used by Miller, the two thousand, three hundred days of Daniel chapter eight.

Philo Britannicus thought that the ultimate establishment of the kingdom would come in 1849AD. The Irvingites of England held that Christ would return in 1864AD. Wood³⁵⁴⁶ began the seventy weeks of Daniel and the two thousand, three hundred days, on the basis of a year for a day, at the same point, but since he thought that the seventy weeks ended with the destruction of Jerusalem, his final date extended to 1880AD. Southcott,³⁵⁴⁷ the 'visionary,' claimed Christ would return on 19 October, 1884AD. A noted Boston pastor, Griffin,³⁵⁴⁸ spoke in 1813AD of "the complete establishment of the millennial kingdom" in about 1921 or 1922AD.

In the twentieth-century the pace slackened somewhat, but dates were still proposed, sporadically. In the past, Jehovah's Witnesses have been prone to predict the Second Coming somewhat ahead of schedule. The first such prediction was for 1914AD, changed to 1918AD when the former proved to be rather a disappointment. That was supplanted by 1925AD; and that by the Second World War, which was reckoned to be the months before Armageddon. In 1960AD, a forecast indicated 1975AD.³⁵⁴⁹ The latest predictions hinted that the end of the twentieth-century will coincide with the end of the world.

Irrespective of all of these 'false alarms,' to many, the year 2000AD appeared to be such a tidy and apparently epochal date that a large number of religious organisations decided that it must be the end-point of the world. Some, being slightly more arithmetically minded, put the date at 2001AD. Both were destined to be wrong, and the 'born again' Christians who confidently expect to be 'raptured' out of this world before the cataclysmic events of the Great Tribulation were destined for a further 'Great Disappointment.'

³⁵⁴² John Wesley.

³⁵⁴³ William Miller.

³⁵⁴⁴ 1795–1862AD.

³⁵⁴⁵ Johaan Philip Petri.

³⁵⁴⁶ Hans Wood, d.1803AD.

³⁵⁴⁷ Joanna Southcott.

³⁵⁴⁸ Edward D. Griffin.

³⁵⁴⁹ The Radio Church of God, later known as The Worldwide Church of God, through Herbert Armstrong, predicted 1975AD as the year of the Second Coming, on the basis of a thoroughly tortuous symmetry involving Herman Hoeh's flawed theory of balanced 19-year time cycles both after Christ's ascension and before His return, allied to a confluence with the then current Jehovah's Witnesses' prediction. When the Second Coming failed to materialise, it was put back to 1985AD, the reason given being that Christ had delayed His coming in order to give Armstrong more time to warn the world of its fate. That fatuous nonsense was brought to a rather abrupt end with Armstrong's death in January, 1986AD, notably beyond even his revised date for the Parousia.

Despite their manifest error, some of the pundits were at least prudent enough to project their date for the Parousia³⁵⁵⁰ to a point likely to occur sometime after their own lifetime, sparing themselves the huge embarrassment of an apocalyptic 'no-show.' In retrospect, others have been found to be a lot less circumspect.

The whole matter of postulating when these things shall come to pass has become wholly debased by discredited expositions and forecasts. The method adopted here of calculating a more likely date is based on a close analysis of all relevant Scripture. That said, it is probable that the outcome remains trammelled by some deficiencies of human perception. While the Holy Spirit offers assistance, the matter is sealed to most people, other than those to whom God condescends to reveal it: *'But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken and the other left. Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.'*³⁵⁵¹

'Peter informs us that angels desire to look into prophetic truth, and God's plans and purposes for His children.'³⁵⁵² This shows that angels do not know about, or comprehend, all of God's plans and purposes, and, like us, they have to depend on revelation from Him³⁵⁵³....Uniformity of knowledge in Heaven seems as unlikely as it is in the church on earth.'³⁵⁵⁴

*'Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.'*³⁵⁵⁵ *'But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.'*³⁵⁵⁶ *'In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.'*³⁵⁵⁷ *'For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.'*³⁵⁵⁸ *'But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write to you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety [security]; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren,*

³⁵⁵⁰ Greek: parousia, 'presence,' of one coming.

³⁵⁵¹ Mat 24:36-42

³⁵⁵² I Peter 1:10-12

³⁵⁵³ by His condescendence, q.v. sup.

³⁵⁵⁴ Turner, W. H., *The Second Coming of Christ*, Appendix One.

³⁵⁵⁵ Mat 25:13

³⁵⁵⁶ Mark 13:32,33

³⁵⁵⁷ I Cor 15:52

³⁵⁵⁸ I Thes 4:16,17

*are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.*³⁵⁵⁹

'Peace and safety' was a motto of the Roman Empire at the time of the writing of Revelation. It is only meet, therefore, that this old motto should be applied to the final delusion of the Holy Roman Empire,³⁵⁶⁰ and be followed immediately by sudden, inescapable, and cataclysmic destruction. By comparison, the corresponding Christian salutation is, 'Grace to you and peace from God our Father,'³⁵⁶¹ or, otherwise, as in all of the Epistles of Paul: 'Grace and Peace.' This phrase always places together 'Grace,' the typical Greek greeting,³⁵⁶² and 'Peace,' the usual Hebrew greeting.³⁵⁶³ Paul always used both to bind together Jew and Gentile in the Lord. Whereas to the Greek mind there were Greeks and barbarians, and to the Jewish mind, Jews and Gentiles, to the mind of God there is but the 'saved' (those on the road to salvation, termed the 'elect'), and the unsaved: 'He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.'³⁵⁶⁴ This is not to infer that there is any element of superiority felt by the 'elect,' for it is recognised that all were unsaved before, and that, but for the grace of God, all would have remained so.

Finally, 'But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night: in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of person ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness. Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.'³⁵⁶⁵

This panorama of the Day of the Lord given by Peter extends through the entire Millennium and the Great White Throne Judgement, to the new Jerusalem, the new heavens, and the new earth beyond.

³⁵⁵⁹ I Thes 5:1-6 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁵⁶⁰ probably in the form 'Peace and security.'

³⁵⁶¹ Rom 1:7

³⁵⁶² Greek: charis.

³⁵⁶³ Hebrew: shalom; Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.171 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'In the Bible the word for peace, shalom, never means simply the absence of trouble. It means everything which makes for our highest good. The peace which the world [occasionally and capriciously] offers us is the peace of escape, the peace which comes from the avoidance of trouble and from refusing to face things. The peace which Jesus offers us is the peace of conquest. No experience of life can ever take it from us and no sorrow, no danger, no suffering can ever make it less. It is independent of outward circumstances.'

³⁵⁶⁴ I John 5:12

³⁵⁶⁵ II Peter 3:10-14

Paul had some words of comfort and caution: *'Now we beseech you brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him. That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.'*³⁵⁶⁶

The reference here to being troubled³⁵⁶⁷ denotes great inward pain and anxiety, a word which is used elsewhere in the New Testament only twice, both in the same eschatological context of the Second Coming. They should not be troubled that, *'the day of Christ is at hand'*,³⁵⁶⁸ or more accurately translated, *'that the day of Christ has come.'* In other words, Paul assures that the Day of the Lord is not then already in progress. There was certainly no hope or mention of a 'secret rapture to a place of safety' thereby missing the rigours of the Tribulation in the early apostolic era of the church. The Day of the Lord and events precedent induced great inward pain and anxiety in even their countenancing having to face *'the Tribulation, the Great One.'*

That the date of the Second Coming is in the future is sure. Also sure are certain precursors, such as the one mentioned, that the man of perdition, the Antichrist, would be revealed,³⁵⁶⁹ so the matter is not completely shrouded. It will not come upon the 'elect' unawares.³⁵⁷⁰

'666'

As noted, the nineteenth-century spawned an array of dates for the appearance of the Beast and, with them, a number of suggestions as to his personage, the latter based on fanciful derivations from the number '666'.³⁵⁷¹ The most common recipient of this opprobrious title during this period was Napoleon II. Into the twentieth-century, the pace quickened, with many being postulated, including: Hitler, Mussolini, De Gaulle, Strauss, Kissinger, Arafat, and Yeltsin. All were wrong. Fairly recent 'front-runners,' Kofi Annan and H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, despite being rather popular, are also destined not to be the Antichrist.

³⁵⁶⁶ II Thes 2:1-4

³⁵⁶⁷ Greek: throeo.

³⁵⁶⁸ Greek: enistemi.

³⁵⁶⁹ II Thes 2:3

³⁵⁷⁰ I Thes 5:4

³⁵⁷¹ Mark of the beast: Irenæus knew of the occurrence of the '616' variant, but regarded it as a scribal error. He affirmed that the '666' stood 'in all the most ancient copies,' and was attested by 'those men who saw John face-to-face.'

Perhaps the '616' derives from a wilful redaction in trying to 'fit' Nero Cæsar's gematria in Aramaic, where 'Neron Qe[i]sar' gives '666' but 'Nero Qe[i]sar' restricts it to 616. The extant copies showing '616' are from Egypt and the Sinai peninsula, the earliest being Papyrus #115 from the Oxyrhynchus site. All Egyptian- / Alexandrian- / Sinaitic-sourced New Testament material is deeply suspect.

Despite this, yet another attempt at the identity of the Antichrist can be seen from, 'Several influential groups, such as the Templars, still believe today that the Europe of the third Millennium will become a theocratic, totalitarian, and united state. At the head, they envisage a priest-king, originating from France, and who is supposed to be a direct descendant from God. In this connection, French President Jacques Chirac is on record as claiming that, "France shall again be the guiding star for all the people of the world and that is her destiny."³⁵⁷²

The simple fact is that attempting to positively identify the Beast by means of counting,³⁵⁷³ or calculating the number of a man using the Roman numeration system, is such a blunt instrument that the possible solutions are virtually innumerable. Perhaps the best prognostication has come from Hislop:³⁵⁷⁴ Nimrod, on the ground of his more common Roman name, Saturn. This is calculated on the basis that the name Saturn in Chaldee is pronounced 'Satur,' but the spelling consists of only four letters: Stur (Stvr). Utilizing the Roman numeration system, the number of Saturn can be calculated as follows:

S	=	60
T	=	400
V	=	6
R	=	<u>200</u>
		<u>666</u>

The apocalyptic number thus gives the root of the Beast, the god of ancient Babylon: Nimrod. The latter-day heir to this evil empire, a latter-day man against God: 'He³⁵⁷⁵ was a mighty hunter³⁵⁷⁶ against³⁵⁷⁷ God,³⁵⁷⁸ will be the '666' Beast. As Stigers puts it,³⁵⁷⁹ Nimrod literally means 'let us revolt,'³⁵⁸⁰ and he it was who established a thoroughly autocratic, imperialistic, despotic system of tyrannical government, referred to in Isaiah

³⁵⁷² *The Midnight Call*, April 1998, and *Topic*, January 1998; Roman Catholic prophecy: 666 x 3 = 1998AD, supposed 'year of the Antichrist.' Wrong again!

³⁵⁷³ Greek: psephizo; Rev 13:18, 'Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred three score and six.' Greek: nous, translated 'understanding,' means 'discernment.'

³⁵⁷⁴ Hislop, Alexander, *The Two Babylons*.

³⁵⁷⁵ Nimrod.

³⁵⁷⁶ meaning a tyrant; it is possible to infer here a tyrant of men rather than a hunter of animals.

³⁵⁷⁷ rather than 'before' as commonly translated.

³⁵⁷⁸ Gen 10:8-10, 'And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.'

'Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord' is also better translated, 'Nimrod the mighty hunter in place of the Lord,' exhibiting a similar meaning to Ex 20:3 (subscripted emphasis added), 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me,' being accurately rendered: 'Thou shalt have no other gods in place of us.'

³⁵⁷⁹ Stigers, Harold G., *Commentary on Genesis*.

³⁵⁸⁰ Hislop renders it 'subduer of the leopard,' a reference to Nimrod having first introduced the art of hunting with such animals, while others give it as simply meaning 'strong.'

chapters thirteen and fourteen, behind which stands Satan in his all-consuming rage against God and His 'elect.'

'On the origins of cities—'*Let us build us a city and a tower*'³⁵⁸¹—it is observable, that the first builders of cities, both in the old world³⁵⁸² and in the new world here, were not men of the best character and reputation: tents served God's subjects to dwell in; cities were first built by those who were rebels against him, and revolters from him.'³⁵⁸³

Gematria

Gematria is an occult Babylonian-sourced esoteric or 'hidden meaning' numerology system of fantastic glosses adopted by the Jews and developed in the Kabbalah.³⁵⁸⁴ Arguably the most ultra-Orthodox area of Jerusalem, Mea Shearim—meaning, 'one hundred gates,' an occult reflection of the putative city of one hundred gates, ancient Babylon—supports a gematria of 666. In Hebrew, Romulus, after whom the Roman Empire is named, is Romith, the gematria of which is 666. In Greek, where the gematrian count is sometimes termed isosephia,³⁵⁸⁵ this same name is rendered Lateinos, and this also exhibits a gematria of 666.³⁵⁸⁶

Although of limited interest here, it seems that the gematria even can extend across contemporary languages. A system has been researched utilising an arithmetic progression based on 'sixes' in the English language, with 'A' assigned 6, 'B'—12, 'C'—18, and so on, through to 'Z'—156. Under this system-of-sixes, it seems that '666' is found to be the gematria of 'mark of the Beast,' 'book of the dead,' 'witchcraft,' 'computer,' and 'son of sin'; while '888,' the well-known gematria of Jesus in Greek, gives off: 'The Lion of Judah,' 'Messiah Jesus' (with 'Messiah' and 'Jesus' each counting as '444'), 'The King Jesus,' and 'King of the Sabbath.' Others, such as 'Jesus Christ,' 'Jesus is Lord,' 'Lord of Hosts,' 'Holy Spirit,' and 'healing promise' all total '906.'

Those rightfully dismissive of any system based on the English language, or Hebrew, for that matter, may recall that, '*an hundred and fifty and three fishes*'³⁵⁸⁷—the number caught by the disciples off Tiberias, the third time Jesus shewed Himself to them after the resurrection³⁵⁸⁸—is the gematria of '*King of the Jews*,' part of

³⁵⁸¹ Gen 11:4a

³⁵⁸² Gen 4:17

³⁵⁸³ *Henry's Commentary*

³⁵⁸⁴ it was known even in the ancient world that while it is extremely easy to go from a word, name, title, or phrase to a composite number, it is impossible to uniquely reverse the process, because having the number does not enable one to go back to the word, name, title, or phrase without additional information.

³⁵⁸⁵ meaning 'equal count.'

³⁵⁸⁶ since seven is the number of biblical completion, six patently falls short; three sixes could thus signify man's failure at its worst. Man's worship of man, and of the works of man, is spiritual insanity of the highest degree.

³⁵⁸⁷ John 21:11b

³⁵⁸⁸ John 21:14a

the mocking titulus³⁵⁸⁹ in trilingual form erected on the cross above Jesus' head. Scant gematraic references in the Bible refer either to the wicked or to their deeds. At no point is there subscription to or approval of any of the numerology systems rooted in ancient Babylon.

Eruptions

The Beast kingdom, which will rule over all of the earth in the end-time, immediately prior to the return of Christ, is described in detail in Daniel: *'After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth Beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things. I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.'*³⁵⁹⁰

Three of the horns are seen as fallen: *'I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things.'*³⁵⁹¹ Which of the ten comprise the 'fallen'? Elsewhere in this work,³⁵⁹² the three most likely to comprise the 'personal empire' of the Antichrist³⁵⁹³ are identified and discussed in some detail, but in summary, they are:

³⁵⁸⁹ Catholic Church's substitution, I.N.R.I., ostensibly Latin: 'Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudæorum,' actually means, to the Jesuits, 'Iustum, Necare, Reges, Impios': 'It is just to exterminate impious (or heretical) kings, governments, or rulers.'

³⁵⁹⁰ Dan 7:7-9

³⁵⁹¹ Dan 7:8

³⁵⁹² q.v. inf.

³⁵⁹³ quite which kings comprise the three who are to fall has proved to be difficult to discern by expositors in the past in the absence of specifics. Erroneous expositions have accredited these to the Vandals, who sacked but did not destroy Rome in 455AD, and the Herculi and the Ostragoths, 493–554AD. But these kings described in Daniel, as has been seen, are end-time kings, and somewhat surprisingly, and as mentioned before, not those described in Revelation chapter seventeen: *'And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the Beast,'* Rev 17:12. Moreover, ancient Vandal raiders of Rome and the like cannot be end-time kings, or, indeed, the Beast's kings at all.

That these *'ten toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron,'* kings will be part, until their demise, of the last Holy Roman Empire—the final Beast kingdom of world-girdling proportions—is clear, but the specific identity of the kingdoms is not revealed. The matter is referred to in chapt. 7: *'And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings,'* Dan 7:24.

Given that the ten 'quasi-concerted' kings—described as *'dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly....it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it,'* Dan 7:7-9—are to be in place before the rise of the Antichrist, it follows that the Antichrist cannot be involved in the creation, ab initio, of the ten kings, or the world regions. Many expositors consider that the womb of the ten regions will be the United Nations Organisation, aided by robust co-ordinating efforts through the 'good offices' of the Vatican, Illuminati, Freemasons, New Agers, et al. Most probably, this will be largely the case, with the regions arising from the ashes of the current world system.

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1. North America (including Mexico);
 2. Western Europe; and,
 3. Russia, and a remnant of Eastern Europe.

It is no coincidence that the three most virulent neo-Fascist elements in the world today,³⁵⁹⁴ reflecting the coming ten regional groupings, are found in:

1. North America;
2. Western Europe; and,
3. Russia, and the remnant of Eastern Europe.³⁵⁹⁵

*'And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.'*³⁵⁹⁶ This excludes but a few of the Moslem nations of the Near- and Middle East. The brief listing of those not invaded corresponds approximately to the kingdom of Jordan (which has little or no oil and gas), and a small sliver of Syria, at the south and around Damascus. The limit of it, north-to-south, would appear to be a line running through Damascus and Amman to Aqaba. The *'king of the north'* will enter the

The empire of the Antichrist will be the greatest empire of all to date, in terms of geographical extent, even larger than the British Empire. One is reminded of Himmler's statement in 1938AD (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The German Reich will be the greatest empire [in geographical extent] the world has ever seen.' The Antichrist will achieve this.

In the Roman Empire, the political leader and the religious leader worked in close concert, just as will the Antichrist and the False Prophet (the then pope).

³⁵⁹⁴ although neo-fascism has also been found in South America, principally in Argentina and, in recent history, Chile. Some of this can be seen as having been exported by Nazi Germany.

³⁵⁹⁵ interestingly, this resonates with the then current energy impasse(1998–2000AD), where Russia was interdicting, on a sporadic basis, oil and gas supplies to western Europe. Doubtless, despite further flare-ups in the interim, under the coming triumvirate of the 'fallen,' that particular problem would no longer pertain, but it would immediately transfer economic pressure and competitive force onto the world's current dominant oil supplier, the Middle East region, and its leader, the *'king of the south.'*

³⁵⁹⁶ Dan 11:40-43

Middle East cauldron, and occupy the areas of vast mineral wealth. The bulk of the planet's oil and gas supplies are to be in his hands.

*'But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many.'*³⁵⁹⁷ The east and north, that is, the north-east, taken from the perspective of Jerusalem, is a reference to China and Japan, which are excluded, consequently, from the initial phase of the war. With the Antichrist, the *'king-of-the-north,'* master of the *'king-of-the-south'*³⁵⁹⁸ and all his lands in the Middle East, he will have secured a deadly grasp, a choke on the very economic and military lifeblood of China and Japan. The world's largest stores of internationally-traded oil and gas will be his.

The Orientals will react in predictable fashion: *'One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter. And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared'*³⁵⁹⁹ *for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army'*³⁶⁰⁰ *of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand.'*³⁶⁰¹ *and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions: and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.'*³⁶⁰²

When is this to happen? This is a description of the entire of the second woe, a woe that will last thirteen months. It comes after the first woe, which itself is to last five months. The numbers five and thirteen are not accidental, for they point to an occult and satanic provenance. The *'bound angels'* are demons, for only they are bound, being evil-doers. They were bound in mercy, for mankind's sake, but are now to be loosed in

³⁵⁹⁷ Dan 11:44

³⁵⁹⁸ Mahdi or 12th. Imam of the Shias, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Mahdi, born in July 869AD (about 255 years after Mahomet, therefore 255AH in the Muslim calendar) and who 'disappeared' or was 'hidden' in 874AD, aged five. Shias believe he is still alive but in occultation, awaiting the time decreed by Allah for his return. The Mahdi also appears in Sikhism.

Momen, Moojan, *An introduction to Shi'i Islam: the History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism*, pp.75,166-168 (Wikipedia excerpted, with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Shia traditions state that the Mahdi will be 'a young man of medium stature with a handsome face' and black hair and beard. 'He will not come in an odd year and will appear in Mecca between the corner of the Kaaba and the station of Abraham and people will witness him there.' The Twelfth Imam will return as the Mahdi with 'a company of his chosen ones,' and his enemies will be led by the one-eyed Antichrist and the Sufyani. The two armies will fight 'one final apocalyptic battle' where the Mahdi and his forces will prevail over evil. After the Mahdi has ruled Earth for a number of years, Isa [Jesus] will return.'

³⁵⁹⁹ or *'kept in preparation.'*

³⁶⁰⁰ actually plural: *'armies.'*

³⁶⁰¹ literally, *'myriad myriads.'*

³⁶⁰² Rev 9:12-19

wrath against sinning man. As there are four released demons, it is reasonable to imply that there will be four distinct armies or major protagonists involved in this world war, or that the four cardinal points of the compass are in purview.

*'Therefore, thou son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against thee, and will cause thee to come up from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel. Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee. Thou shalt fall upon the open field: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God.'*³⁶⁰³ At the time of the end, in a last desperate throw, Satan, the Antichrist, and the false prophet will lead an assault on Jerusalem and the returned Messiah from the north,³⁶⁰⁴ involving, inter alia, the massed Russian forces. To be in such a position at the end, Russia, and the remnant of Eastern Europe still allied to her, must be in the thrall and control of the Antichrist. This, almost certainly, places Russia as one of the three.³⁶⁰⁵

Enabling covenant

*'And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even unto the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolation.'*³⁶⁰⁶ Two key verses have the same Hebrew word translated *'many'*³⁶⁰⁷ in the Authorized Version.³⁶⁰⁸ It can equally mean *'leaders or chief men,'* and this, it is submitted, offers a better understanding. *'And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand,'*³⁶⁰⁹ is better as: *'And through his policy also he shall cause fraud to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by prosperity shall destroy leaders: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.'* The Antichrist will produce a false economic revival, based on fraud and deceit (an equally valid translation) and the elite will benefit, to the detriment of the impoverished masses.

The confirmation of the seven-year covenant with the multitude of the Jews removes the group of Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa (conflated with Israel as one world region) from consideration as part of the *'fallen three kings.'*

³⁶⁰³ Ezek 39:1,4a,5

³⁶⁰⁴ Har Megiddo and the Valley of Jezreel lie to the north of Jerusalem.

³⁶⁰⁵ in addition to other considerations, q.v. inf.

³⁶⁰⁶ Dan 9:27

³⁶⁰⁷ Hebrew: rab.

³⁶⁰⁸ Dan 8:25; 9:27

³⁶⁰⁹ Dan 8:25 K.J.V.

Massed military power

The fourth kingdom, in its ultimate eruption of the Beast kingdoms on earth, the Roman, is also described in the latter part of the second chapter of Daniel: *'Thou, O king, sawest, and behold, a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.'*³⁶¹⁰

This fourth Beast kingdom is described further: *'And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with the miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.'*³⁶¹¹

This end-time Beast kingdom, while extant with full powers, will be destructive beyond compare, and encompass and devour the whole world: *'Thus he said, The fourth Beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.'*³⁶¹² This fourth beast far exceeds its antecedents in power, fierceness, and destructive rage, as well as in the extent of its dominions, and no animal could be found so terrible and furious as to lend it a suitable name. Mercifully, it will be destroyed by the *'stone cut without hands,'* that is, without human agency or instrumentality. This is also the stone referred to by Luke in Acts, *'Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders which is become the head of the corner';*³⁶¹³ by Peter, *'Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture,*

³⁶¹⁰ Dan 2:31-35

³⁶¹¹ Dan 2:40-44

³⁶¹² Dan 7:23 (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁶¹³ Acts 4:10,11

Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed';³⁶¹⁴ and also by Matthew, 'Jesus saith....did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.'³⁶¹⁵

The four beasts of Daniel chapter seven lead to the same climactic era of the Antichrist: *'And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld until the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. And behold another beast, a second, like a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it:³⁶¹⁶ and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings³⁶¹⁷ of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and break in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.'³⁶¹⁸*

The first beast was *'like a lion,'* the king of the beasts. This one had eagle's wings, reminiscent of the carvings of Nimrod, signifying swiftness, and it was given a man's heart, indicating that it was a personal being, since it represented not only Babylon, but also that nation's leader. God's subsequent displeasure at the conduct of one of those leaders, King Balshazzar, is seen from the 'writing on the wall' incident which occurred during a feast which involved the illegitimate use of gold and silver vessels taken from God's Temple. Wine was drunk from these vessels, and praise was extended to pagan *'gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.'*³⁶¹⁹ In the same hour, God's judgement was handed down in the writing that was written by

³⁶¹⁴ I Peter 2:6-8

³⁶¹⁵ Mat 21:42-44; cf. Mark 12:10,11; Luke 20:17

³⁶¹⁶ *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, p.27 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The three ribs perhaps signify the three provinces of Babylonia, Lydia, and Egypt, which were essentially ground down and oppressed by [the Medo-Persian] power.'

³⁶¹⁷ *Bible Readings for the Home Circle*, p.28 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'[The four wings] must denote unparalleled celerity of movement, which we find to be historically true of the Grecian kingdom. The conquests of Grecia under Alexander have no parallel in historic annals for suddenness and rapidity.'

³⁶¹⁸ Dan 7:3-8

³⁶¹⁹ Dan 5:4

the fingers of a man's hand in the plaster of a wall in the king's palace: *'And this was the writing that was written, Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin. This is the interpretation of the thing: Mene; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. Tekel; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. Peres; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.'*³⁶²⁰ Mene means numbered; Tekel means weighed; and Pares means, in Daniel's contextual interpretation, divided. In parallel with this, of course, mene, tekel, and parsin would have been recognisable to the Jews of the time as the names of three weights: mina, shekel, and half-shekel: signifying something of little worth, something that was about to be ended.

The second beast was *'like to a bear,'*³⁶²¹ and devoured *'much flesh.'* This speaks of the Medo-Persian Empire in which the Persian element which absorbed the Medes was dominant, symbolised as *'the bear raised itself up on one side.'* Historically, this two-phased kingdom succeeded the Babylonian Empire when Darius the Mede, one of Cyrus's generals, conquered Babylon.³⁶²² The *'three ribs'* indicate rapacity and the remains of nations.³⁶²³

The third beast, *'like a leopard,'*³⁶²⁴ signifying Greece, was pictured as having four wings and four heads. The wings again speak of swiftness—with four wings it is extraordinarily swift—this time of the conquests of Alexander the Great and his four generals, and the four heads picture the quadripartite division of his empire after his death.³⁶²⁵

The fourth beast was pictured as *'dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly....and it had ten horns.'*³⁶²⁶ It stands for Rome, the fourth successive empire. Daniel had never seen such a strange creature in all his life. The ten horns³⁶²⁷ correspond to the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image,³⁶²⁸ but the ten end-time kings of Revelation chapter seventeen³⁶²⁹ is a reference to a group of yet future ten kings thereafter, who have but a

³⁶²⁰ Dan 5:25-28

³⁶²¹ the *'bear'* of Daniel, q.v. Dan 7:5, is the Syrian bear which is different from the brown bear of Europe, in that it is shorter in the limb and of a dirty yellowish colour, with smaller claws. It eats animal food only when hard pressed. Alternative translation: Dan 7:5 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets), *'And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side [or, alternatively, 'it raised up one dominion'] and it had three ribs [i.e., Babylon, Lydia, Egypt, q.v. inf.] in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it: Arise, devour much flesh.'*

³⁶²² in 539BC; Turner, W. H., *The Second Coming of Christ*, Appendix Two:

'Darius the Mede was appointed ruler of Babylon by Cyrus after Babylon was taken by the Persians and Belshazzar was killed in October of 539BC. He must not be confused with the later Persian king Darius Hypstapes, who reigned 521—486BC, and was an absolute monarch. We read in Dan 5:31 (subscripted emphasis added) that 'Darius the Mede received the kingdom,' not 'took the kingdom' as the A.V. states.'

³⁶²³ three ribs usually taken to stand for the three provinces of Babylon: Babylon, Egypt, and Lystra (Lydia), which were especially ground down and oppressed by this power; this view held by Smith, Uriah, inter alia.

³⁶²⁴ Dan 7:6

³⁶²⁵ in 323BC

³⁶²⁶ Dan 7:7

³⁶²⁷ Dan 7:7-9

³⁶²⁸ Dan 2:41

³⁶²⁹ Dan 17:12-14

very short time of power with the Beast, and give their all to the Beast,³⁶³⁰ as opposed to the ten miry toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image which do not cleave one to another. There can be no political cohesion involving miry toes. In terms of chronology, the miry toes appear first, then three fall, and only then, at the very end-time, do the ten kings of chapter seventeen appear. It is those, the very end-time kings, which make war with the Lamb.

Calvin describes it: 'But we know the Romans to have been masters even as far as Babylon; we know the following countries to have been subdued by them: Asia Minor, Syria, Cilicia, Greece, and Macedon, both the Spains, Gaul, Illyricum, and part of Germany. At length Britain was subjugated by Julius Cæsar. No wonder this beast is called formidable and very strong! For before Julius Cæsar became master of the Empire, the whole Mediterranean Sea was in all its parts under subjection to the Roman Empire. Its amazing extent is well known. Egypt had indeed its own kings, but they were tributary; whatever edicts the Romans decreed, they were executed immediately in Egypt. Mirror sovereigns existed in Asia Minor as a kind of spies, but this state of things we shall treat presently. It is also well known that they possessed supreme power throughout the Mediterranean Sea, and that by the conquest of Mithridates, Pompey reduced Pontus under his dominion. In the East affairs were all at peace. The Medes and Persians gave them some trouble, but they never moved unless they were provoked. The Spains were not yet accustomed to the yoke, but we know that there were always two prætors there. Julius Cæsar was the first who entered Britain after subduing Gaul. Hence we see how far and wide the Romans extended their power, and with what immense cruelty. Hence Daniel calls this beast, formidable and very strong. He afterwards adds, it had large iron teeth. This ought to be referred to its audacity and insatiable greediness. We see how completely free their nation was from the fear of death, for they were so hardened that if any one deserted his rank for the sake of avoiding danger, he was afterwards branded with such marks of infamy, that he was compelled either to strangle himself or to incur a voluntary death! There was, then, a certain brutal cruelty in that nation, and we also know how insatiable they were. For this reason Daniel says they had large iron teeth. He adds, it consumed, and broke to pieces, and trod the remnant under foot. These things are spoken allegorically, not only because this vision was offered to the holy Prophet, but also because God wished to paint a kind of living image, in which he might show the peculiar characters of each government. For we know how many lands the Romans had consumed, and how they transferred to themselves the luxuries of the whole world, and whatever was valuable and precious in Asia Minor, and Greece, and Macedonia, as well as in all islands and in Asia Major—all was swept away—and even this was insufficient to satisfy them! This, then, is the ravenousness of which the Prophet now speaks, since they consumed, says he, and rubbed to pieces with their teeth. He adds, they trod the remnant under their feet—a metaphor worthy of notice, as we know they were accustomed to distribute the prey which they could not carry with them. They devoured and tore with their teeth the treasures and costly furniture and everything else; for their supplies were

³⁶³⁰ Rev 17:12

provided by tributes which produced large sums of money. If there was any portion of the Mediterranean which they could not defend without keeping a permanent garrison there, we know how they engaged the services of tributary kings. Thus the kingdom of Eumenes increased to a great extent till the time of his grandson Attalus, but they bestowed it partly on the Rhodians, and partly on the Cyprians and others. They never remunerated those Allies who almost exhausted their own possessions in aiding them, out of their own resources, but enriched them with the spoils of others; and they not only seized upon the property of one city and bestowed it on another, but they set up their lands for sale. Thus, the liberty of the Lacedæmonians was betrayed to the tyrant Nabis. They also enriched Masinissa with so much wealth, that they acquired Africa for themselves by his means. In fine, they so sported with kingdoms in seizing and giving them away, that they rendered provinces tranquil by the wealth and at the expense of others. This was remarkably conspicuous in the case of Judea, where they created out of nothing Ethnarchs and Tetrarchs and kings, who were nothing but their satellites—and that too but for a moment. For as soon as any change occurred, they retracted what they had given as easily as they bestowed it. Hence, this their cunning liberality is called treading under foot; for that remnant which they could not devour and consume with their teeth they trod under foot, as they kept all those whom they had either enriched or increased subject to themselves. Thus we see with what servility they were flattered by those who had obtained anything through their generosity. And how degrading was the slavery of Greece from the time the Romans entered the country! for as each state acquired any new territory, it erected a temple to the Romans. They also sent their ambassadors there to act as spies, who, under the pretence of punishing the neighbouring people for 'plotting against them,' enriched themselves by plunder. Thus the Romans held under their feet whatever they had given to others. We see then how suitably and properly the Prophet speaks, when he says, the Romans trod down the remnant; for whatever they could not consume, and what their voraciousness could not devour, they trod under their feet....When he says, this beast was different from the rest, he confirms what we formerly said, namely, this was a horrible prodigy, and nothing could be compared to it in the nature of things.³⁶³¹

Reverting to the train of events and the ten miry toes / horns, a small, eleventh horn suddenly appears and destroys or plucks up three of them. This small horn exhibits the characteristics of a man, with eyes and speech, and it is demonic, signified by the occult prime 'eleven.' This horn or king is the Antichrist of Revelation chapter thirteen,³⁶³² who is at once both an individual and the leader of a kingdom, in a similar way to the forms of description used for the first Beast, being both empire and leader, the latter being the Antichrist.

A reference to this king in Daniel chapter seven, *'there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the*

³⁶³¹ Calvin John, *Commentary on Daniel*, Vol. 2, pp.11,12

³⁶³² Rev 13:1-10

eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things,³⁶³³ correlates with, 'And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the Beast: and they worshipped the Beast, saying, who is like unto the Beast? who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.'³⁶³⁴ It follows that this oft-mentioned 'little horn' is the first Beast himself, the Antichrist, who is the personal leader of the final Beast kingdom. It is not, as some have postulated, the second Beast, the False Prophet. Some may care to query such a conclusion based on what may be regarded as apparently flimsy correlation, but it is poor exegesis to interpret beyond the word of Scripture simply to import that which, although favoured by man, lacks any biblical basis whatsoever. And, indeed, there is yet more from Scripture on this very subject.

Frayers

*'Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there were four horns. And I said to the angel who talked with me, What are these? So he answered me, these are the horns that have scattered Israel, Judah, and Jerusalem. Then the Lord showed me four craftsmen. And I said, What are these coming to do? So he said, These are the horns that scattered Judah, so that no one could lift up his head: but the craftsmen are coming to terrify them, to cast out the horns of the nations that lifted up their horn against the land of Judah to scatter it.'*³⁶³⁵ 'I am coming and I will dwell in your midst, says the Lord,'³⁶³⁶ shows the timeframe of the prophecies in the first two chapters of Zechariah: the end-time events leading to and encompassing the Second Coming. The 'four horns,' therefore, are four of the ten horns of Daniel.³⁶³⁷ But which four?

Zechariah mentions 'Israel, Judah, and Jerusalem'³⁶³⁸ as being scattered. Israel is located in three of the upcoming 'horn' world regions: North America, Europe, and the greater part of the composite region of Israel, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. Judah,³⁶³⁹ for its part, is located in four of these world regions: North America, Europe, Russia and its satellites, and Israel. Since the last is only entered by 'the king of the north' near the very end³⁶⁴⁰ the three horns in which oppression and scattering of the Jews is prevalent must be North America, Europe, and Russia and its satellites. For that to happen, these three regions must be in the

³⁶³³ Dan 7:8 (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁶³⁴ Rev 13:4-6 (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁶³⁵ Zech 1:18-21

³⁶³⁶ Zech 2:10b

³⁶³⁷ q.v.sup.

³⁶³⁸ Zech 1:19

³⁶³⁹ i.e., the Jews.

³⁶⁴⁰ Dan 11:40,41

control of the Antichrist, and these, therefore, are most likely those '*plucked out by the roots*' which fall before the Antichrist.³⁶⁴¹

The '*craftsmen*,' '*smiths*,' or '*frayers*,'³⁶⁴² are four powerful angels, most probably cherubim, who are sent at the end time by God to '*terrify*' or '*worry*' the offending '*four horns*.' The divine focus on the four horn empires betrays the evil that is in them, and the wickedness of their deeds against God's people. He will avenge them, in full, in due season.

Little horn

'*The rest of the beasts*³⁶⁴³....*had their lives prolonged for a season and time*,'³⁶⁴⁴ serves to show that their individual characteristics remain extant, in a diminutive way, until the time of the end. This is essential, for out of the third beast, the leopard, representing the kingdom of Alexander the Great, came the king of the north, of whose progeny will come forth, at the time of the end, the Antichrist, its ultimate portentous exposition.

Notwithstanding the previous three beasts having their '*lives....prolonged for a season and a time*,'³⁶⁴⁵ or '*were allowed to live for a period of time*,'³⁶⁴⁶ they were stripped of their power: their '*dominion was taken away*.' The Roman Empire, the fourth beast, swallowed the '*king of the north*,' horn of the third- or Mecedonian beast, when the Seleucid empire became one of Rome's satrapies, with delegated administrative authority over the Holy Land.³⁶⁴⁷ This discernible train of events is what identifies the Antichrist as the end-time heir to the title '*king of the north*.'

In Revelation chapter thirteen³⁶⁴⁸ the beast seen rising out of the sea has aspects of the three former beasts of Daniel: a head (mouth) like a lion; the body of a leopard; the feet of a bear. The fourth beast, the Roman, rising out of the turbulent sea, in its final and most dread exposition, contains, therefore, residuals of

³⁶⁴¹ Dan 7:8

³⁶⁴² in K.J.V.: conjecture: The four '*craftsmen*,' or '*frayers*,' Zech 1:20,21, are most probably cherubim. If that be the case, then the total number of cherubim mentioned in Scripture, prior to the raising of the '*elect*,' q.v., is:

Before God's heavenly throne: 4

Covering the mercy seat: 2

Lucifer, before his fall: 1 (assuming replaced by another to sing before God)*

Gabriel, God's messenger: 1

Frayers or craftsmen: 4

Total: 12

Thus giving one for each of the tribes of Israel, and seven for the seven church eras, since 12 - (4+1, before God) = 7.

* there is an interesting parallel here with the twelve apostles. One fell—Judas Iscariot, the son of perdition, possessed by Satan (Luke 22:3,4; John 13:2)—and was replaced by Matthias (Acts 1:15-26), thus restoring the number to twelve.

³⁶⁴³ i.e., the first three beasts of Dan 7:3-6: lion, bear, and leopard.

³⁶⁴⁴ Dan 7:12

³⁶⁴⁵ Dan 7:12 K.J.V.

³⁶⁴⁶ Dan 7:12 N.I.V.

³⁶⁴⁷ the Seleucid empire was deeply Hellenised, and exerted a great pull on the priests of the Temple during the time with no prophets.

³⁶⁴⁸ Rev 13:2

the three former beast empires which, despite having lost their power long ago, still evidence in adumbrated form in key aspects of the end-time fourth beast.

Further detail on the matter of the identity of this 'little horn' can be gleaned from, *'Then I would know the truth of the fourth Beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them.'*³⁶⁴⁹ Here is found the same phrase describing the 'little horn,' *'and a mouth that spake very great things,'* and it most certainly refers to the first Beast of Revelation, as *'the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them.'*³⁶⁵⁰ Another description is also given off in the words, *'whose look was more stout than his fellows.'*³⁶⁵¹ The 'little horn[s]' 'fellows' are the 'ten horns' of the 'beast [that rises] up out of the sea,'³⁶⁵² and that 'beast' is not the False Prophet.³⁶⁵³ Despite this, some have claimed the 'little horn[s]' description to be that of either a pope or the Roman church, but, again, it is an erroneous postulation; the context simply does not permit it. The word translated 'stout' is the root Chaldean word meaning 'master, lord, captain or chief.'³⁶⁵⁴ It doesn't imply or import comparative financial strength, length of reign, or regal splendour, despite one of the blasphemous titles taken by the popes, the 'Most Holy Lord.'³⁶⁵⁵ Irrespective of whatever title is assumed by the papacy, such man-devised titling has no standing. This is nothing other than papal megalomania, a peculiar form of insanity characterised by self-exaltation. An illustration of the sheer breadth of assumption is seen in a part of the papal crowning address: *'Receive this tiara adorned with three crowns, that thou mayest know that thou art the father of princes and of kings, the ruler of the world, the Vicar on earth of our Saviour Jesus Christ, to Whom is honour, and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.'*³⁶⁵⁶ To Roman Catholics, the pope is an image of Christ, and sovereign of the world.

The phrase, *'and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them,'*³⁶⁵⁷ constitutes a clear and unequivocal reference to the first Beast of Revelation. The corresponding verses are, *'And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the Beast: and they worshipped the Beast, saying, Who is like unto the Beast? who is able to make war with him?'* and *'And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and*

³⁶⁴⁹ Dan 7:19-21 (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁶⁵⁰ Dan 7:21

³⁶⁵¹ Dan 7:20b

³⁶⁵² Rev 13:1

³⁶⁵³ Rev 13:11,12

³⁶⁵⁴ Chaldean: rab.

³⁶⁵⁵ Latin: Sanctissimus Dominus.

³⁶⁵⁶ (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁶⁵⁷ Dan 7:21b

to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.³⁶⁵⁸ The Beast that here makes war with the saints³⁶⁵⁹ is the same Beast described in Daniel chapter seven,³⁶⁶⁰ and the Beast described therein is called the '*little horn*.' It is not the False Prophet. It is a politico-military world leader, not a religious leader.

It has been stated many times by expositors that the '*little horn*' of Daniel chapter seven³⁶⁶¹ is not the same '*little horn*' found in chapter eight;³⁶⁶² the latter, as has been seen, being a reference to Antiochus IV, blasphemously self-styled, Epiphanes. However, it has also been seen that the latter part of the passage comprising chapter eight³⁶⁶³ positions part of the prophecy in the time of the end. As such, '*Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed. And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be,*³⁶⁶⁴ refers to an end-time series of events, further recited in, '*And in the latter time of their kingdom,*³⁶⁶⁵ when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences,³⁶⁶⁶ shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace³⁶⁶⁷ shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.'³⁶⁶⁸ The reference to being '*broken without hand*' correlates with the destruction of the final

³⁶⁵⁸ Rev 13:4,7

³⁶⁵⁹ Rev 13:7

³⁶⁶⁰ Dan 7:21

³⁶⁶¹ Dan 7:8

³⁶⁶² Dan 8:9

³⁶⁶³ Dan 8:13-19

³⁶⁶⁴ Dan 8:13,14,19

³⁶⁶⁵ Tanakh: '*When their kingdoms are at an end.*'

³⁶⁶⁶ Turner, W. H., *The Second Coming of Christ*, Appendix One (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Antichrist will be an occultist who '*understands dark sayings,*' Dan 8:23-25. The word for '*dark sayings,*' in Dan 8:23, is chiydah, which means, 'a puzzle, a trick, conundrum, dark saying, hard question, parable, proverb, oracle, and riddle.' The Scriptures tell us that Satan will give his power to Antichrist and dominate and direct his mind and actions, Dan 8:24; Rev 13:4. Antichrist revels in the power that flows from the supernatural knowledge that Satan possesses and gives to him. Satan's '*dark sentences*' give Antichrist power over men, as well as supernatural diplomatic deceit, and guidance in strategy in war [and much else besides].

He is the most powerful occultist of all time....Antichrist, like Judas, will be possessed by Satan, and will bring to pass Satan's final evil plans, II Thes 2:7. Both Judas and Antichrist are called '*the son of perdition,*' because they love evil and are unwilling to repent. They have reached the ultimate in evil; Judas by betraying Jesus and fulfilling Satan's desire to kill Christ, and Antichrist by bringing Satan's plans to dominate and destroy [not quite!] the world into reality, John 13:27; II Thes 2:3.'

³⁶⁶⁷ Hebrew: shalvah, '*security.*'

³⁶⁶⁸ Dan 8:23-25

Beast empire recited in chapter two.³⁶⁶⁹ Therefore, the expositors' common postulation is erroneous in part, for the end-time king of Daniel chapter eight is the same personage as the '*little horn*' of chapter seven.

The failure of the ten iron and miry toes to cleave together reaches a cataclysm in the instance of the three uprooted kings. Many expositors read into these passages that only seven of these kings will be left after the rooting out of the three by the '*little horn*,' although others see the importation of three substitutes. A frequent failing in this context lies in reading into the entire the strange notion that merely retaining seven is wholly consistent with: '*And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the Beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the Beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.*'³⁶⁷⁰ However, as has been stated, and, as will become evident later, the ten '*one hour*' kings are not the same kings as those of the ten iron and miry toes, and the number at the end must be ten.

In the circumstances surrounding the three kings uprooted by the '*little horn*,' it would appear that they are not replaced immediately, for there is no scriptural intimation of this, but, rather, it seems that the '*little horn*,' the Antichrist, rules directly over the kingdoms of these deposed rulers, probably by means of foreign occupying forces and his placemen. Given his character, this will be to the inhabitants' extreme harm and discomfort. It has been seen that these ten, reduced to seven kings, represent certain world regions in a world government. The three fallen kingdoms appear to comprise those most coveted by the Antichrist. It is possible, of course, that the fallen kings could have sought to resile from the nascent Beast kingdom, and be punished for such action by invasion and captivity. The most likely kingdoms to do so would be those naturally least in harmony with the methods and ultimate objectives of the final Beast kingdom. As the ten toes of iron mixed with clay indicate, some light on the level of possible dissension of the three kings can be deduced, for this is not merely a difference of emphasis. Ultimately it is a wholesale dispute over the fundamentals of the Beast empire. While the Bible is essentially silent on the detail and specific timing of this event, it is speculated later in this work as completing during the currency of the first four seals.

Ten end-time kings

Now to the ten very end-time kings who have their reign described in the phrase, '*receive power one hour with the beast.*'³⁶⁷¹ This is a short time, and it is with the Beast. That they will give their all to the Beast, but this only for a very short time at the end, is certain, and these are most certainly not those kings who before that

³⁶⁶⁹ Dan 2:31-45

³⁶⁷⁰ Rev 16:12-14

³⁶⁷¹ Rev 17:12b

are described as ten toes of iron and clay,³⁶⁷² for that was not an homogeneous mass, but a failing to cleave one to another. Also, they were members of a confederation ultimately reduced from ten to seven. This failure to cleave together will pertain until a very short time at the very end when ten, new, short-term kings, covering the entire world, acting in total concert, will give their all to the Beast. Interestingly, the Greek word translated *'receive'*³⁶⁷³ in *'receive power one hour with the beast,'* means, in context, *'to take'* or *'get hold of,'* in an active sense, rather than in the more passive Authorized Version's rendering. These ten kings seize power at the end, shortly before the three evil, unclean spirits go out to them,³⁶⁷⁴ and these usurpers are the ephemeral *'one hour'* end-time kings of the earth, who, together with the Antichrist, mass their forces to attack the Messiah and His company of saints and angels.

Of all of the postulations extant at this time, this gives the 'best fit' with all known parameters, and tends to induct the previously mentioned three world regions for the three fallen kings, to be replaced at the end with other kings, wholly attuned to the will and objectives of the Antichrist.

Jacob's trouble

Many expositors seem to consider the Great Tribulation to be a time of Joseph's trouble visited principally upon Ephraim and Manasseh, but the scriptural record is perfectly clear on this: it is a time of trouble visited on all of Jacob, and thus even on Dan, the only tribe to contribute nothing to the 'elect' alive at the Second Coming of our Lord.

Given the prophecies concerning the time of Jacob's trouble, it is certain, however, that Great Britain is to be part of one of these three fallen kings or kingdoms, although the cessation of the kingly line will not occur owing to the promises given concerning the throne of David. *'In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.'*³⁶⁷⁵ The current identity and location of the throne of David, the British crown, is confirmed in a later chapter.³⁶⁷⁶ It should be noted that the word *'tabernacle'* used in the phrase *'tabernacle of David'* is a translation of the Hebrew for a *'booth'* or *'hut,'*³⁶⁷⁷ and not the more usual phrase *'house of David'* from the Hebrew for a *'house.'*³⁶⁷⁸ The sorry state of Great Britain in the end days seems to demand the diminutive: a structure both temporary and fragile.

³⁶⁷² Dan 2:33-34,41-43

³⁶⁷³ Greek: lambano.

³⁶⁷⁴ Rev 16:13

³⁶⁷⁵ Amos 9:11

³⁶⁷⁶ q.v. inf.

³⁶⁷⁷ Hebrew: sukah.

³⁶⁷⁸ Hebrew: bayit.

That the United States of America is to fall is well attested by many expositors, being correctly identified as Manasseh. Great Britain's fall would also import her former empire / current commonwealth, insofar as in its Ephraimite exposition, but that is subject to the divisions of the world regions or kingdoms, for it is seen that Canada is included in the North American Region, and Australia, New Zealand and South Africa are included within the 'catch-all' region which also includes the modern state of Israel. Britain, for its part, is included in the Western Europe Region.

There is one tribe, or composition of tribes, that, initially, sees the Antichrist in a wholly different light. For Judah and Benjamin and Levi, who comprise a significant proportion of the modern state of Israel and its quasi-diaspora, all former reverses suffered in years previous will be 'righted'—or so it will seem at the time, though they 'mistake security for safety, forgetfulness of danger for freedom of danger'³⁶⁷⁹—by the Antichrist, in a seven-year 'peace and safety'³⁶⁸⁰ covenant or concordat which he will confirm or conclude with the leaders of the Jews. But what real worth vests in this man-made guarantee will become evident all too soon, as his demonic plan and the remorseless flow of events inevitably lead him to subsequently break the covenant and set up the abomination of desolation³⁶⁸¹ in the Temple at Jerusalem, starting the Great Tribulation. Such an occurrence will certainly result in a widespread revolt by religious and other Jews against the Antichrist, with terrible retribution being visited upon them. The surrounding of Jerusalem with armies and the terrible death toll during the final moiety attest to this most graphically.³⁶⁸²

The only remaining element of Jacob lies in the 'northern' European countries.³⁶⁸³ It seemed incongruous at the time,³⁶⁸⁴ given the enchantment with the European Union on the part of The Netherlands, say, to even suggest that they will fall at the hand of the Beast, but it should be remembered that once the full horror of the Beast kingdom becomes evident, those of Jacob would most probably seek to resile, with the singular exception of the tribe of Dan.³⁶⁸⁵ The overall enchantment has largely dissolved over the last decade-and-a-half, to the point that even in countries formerly well disposed to membership of the Union there has been significant disillusionment to the point where most citizens seriously question the benefit of continued membership.

This brings to the fore another interesting point that, save only one, none of these countries is completely in the thrall of Roman Catholicism. The one descended from Jacob that is in thrall and will be in thrall, and, as postulated, will likely not resile,³⁶⁸⁶ such will be their overwhelming enchantment with the Beast and the

³⁶⁷⁹ Vaughan, C. J., *Christ the Light of the World*, p.102

³⁶⁸⁰ Franklin, Benjamin: *'Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety.'*

³⁶⁸¹ the abomination of desolation, II Thes 2:4, the Antichrist, sets himself up in the temple (God's Temple), proclaiming that he is God. The real abomination of desolation, despite siting an idol in the Temple, is human, not wood or stone.

³⁶⁸² q.v. inf.; Dan 9:26; Joel 2:1-11 (as a form of prophetic iteration, or rehearsal); Luke 21:20-24, inter alia.

³⁶⁸³ approximately described as inhabiting countries, or the northern parts thereof, contiguous with the North Sea.

³⁶⁸⁴ written in 1997–1998AD

³⁶⁸⁵ q.v. inf.

³⁶⁸⁶ possible reason for Dan failing to provide any of 12,000 in the 'sealed elect.'

False Prophet, is Dan: Roman Catholic Ireland; impetuous and self-willed, so quick to follow wild inclinations. Idolatry was Dan's age-old failing, one that continues to this day, and one that will hold her in the close embrace of Catholicism, and in the Antichrist's embrace too.

Antichrist's covenant

The term and form of the seven-year Antichrist's covenant or concordat with the Jews has perplexed many, for it seems unduly short. Daniel, perhaps, partly elucidates, *'Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden underfoot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed,'*³⁶⁸⁷ when read with, *'But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.'*³⁶⁸⁸ The *'times of the Gentiles'* last till the consummation.

At the moment, the al-Quds³⁶⁸⁹ area is administered by the Moslem Waqf, with security provided by the Israeli Government. It is known, however, that Rome has long coveted the Old City of Jerusalem, seeking to secure internationalisation under her hegemony through careful diplomacy. As the last-in-line pontiff is the False Prophet and the ally of the Antichrist, it would seem likely that Rome's ambitions will be realised, with the Temple Mount placed under her control, or under international jurisdiction with operational input from Rome. A seven-year covenant would then imply the concurrence of the pope, and, from a Jewish viewpoint, would appear only to make sense if it were to contain some sort of reversionary interest—a form of 'quasi' buy-out option—after the expiry of the initial 'lease' period, allowing the Third Temple to remain in-situ.³⁶⁹⁰

World epochs

The method adopted in broaching the subject of when *'these things will come to pass'* is based on discernible world epochs relating to biblical tracts. These epochs are mentioned by Paul, *'But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.'*³⁶⁹¹ Two synonyms for time are used here, the first, translated *'times'*,³⁶⁹² denotes chronological extension or 'periods of time'; the second, translated *'seasons'*,

³⁶⁸⁷ Dan 8:13,14

³⁶⁸⁸ Luke 21:23,24

³⁶⁸⁹ Temple Mount.

³⁶⁹⁰ this speculation is an attempt to explain the short duration of the Jews' covenant with the Antichrist.

³⁶⁹¹ I Thes 5:1

³⁶⁹² Greek: chromos.

³⁶⁹³ denotes 'specific points' in time when designated events occur. In exposition, Paul then continues, *'For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.'*³⁶⁹⁴ Paul here identifies the Old Testament Day of the Lord with the Parousia of the New Testament. The Thessalonians knew that the Day of the Lord would take the world unawares, and that the ungodly would not escape, for Paul had written, *'For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.'*³⁶⁹⁵ But the children of light are not overtaken suddenly by that destruction: *'But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.'*³⁶⁹⁶ The 'elect,' in other words, should be able, at the very least, to see it coming in the unfolding of world events when read in the prophetic light of Scripture.

The idea of world epochs principally occurs in the calculation that the present world order is to last for seven thousand years: six thousand under the rule of man in thrall of the Devil, with the Millennium of rest under the rule of Christ following. This is based on the number of days in creation, allied to the concept presented in Psalms, *'For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night,'*³⁶⁹⁷ and, *'But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.'*³⁶⁹⁸ In addition, the Sabbath frequently is described as a *'sacred occasion,'*³⁶⁹⁹ the Hebrew equally meaning *'rehearsal.'* Paul, identifies the Sabbath as *'a shadow of things to come,'*³⁷⁰⁰ and, *'There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.'*³⁷⁰¹ The word translated *'rest,'*³⁷⁰² meaning Sabbath rest, is taken by many as a reference to the Millennium.³⁷⁰³ It follows that the Sabbath can be viewed with safety as a rehearsal of the rest to come, and, given the principle in Psalms,³⁷⁰⁴ it identifies and highlights, on a weekly basis, the forthcoming Millennium of rest.

A helpful historical perspective on this is provided by Baeck, in which he explains that: 'Jewish teaching in Paul's day divided history into three different epochs succeeding each other. An old tradition, as shown by its introductory solemn formula: 'It was taught in the school of [Rabbi] Elijah,' states: 'There are three epochs: two thousand years of chaos;³⁷⁰⁵ two thousand years of law;³⁷⁰⁶ beginning with the revelation on Mount Sinai; two thousand years of the 'Messianic age,' which will be finally followed by 'that world which is wholly Shabbath, the

³⁶⁹³ Greek: kairos.

³⁶⁹⁴ I Thes 5:2

³⁶⁹⁵ I Thes 5:3

³⁶⁹⁶ I Thes 5:4

³⁶⁹⁷ Psal 90:4

³⁶⁹⁸ II Peter 3:8

³⁶⁹⁹ Hebrew: migra.

³⁷⁰⁰ Col 2:17

³⁷⁰¹ Heb 4:9

³⁷⁰² Greek: sabbatismos.

³⁷⁰³ e.g., Lang, G. H., *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, pp.73f.

³⁷⁰⁴ Psal 90:4

³⁷⁰⁵ Hebrew: tohu wabohu.

³⁷⁰⁶ Hebrew: Torah.

rest in the life of eternity.' There is, thus, not a perpetuity, but a 'period,' of the Torah. If the 'Days of the Messiah' have commenced, those of the Torah came to their close [sic]. On the other hand, if the Law, the Torah, still retained its validity, it was proclaimed thereby that the Messiah has not yet appeared.³⁷⁰⁷

While this is horribly garbled on the question of the current validity of the Law and the effect of the coming of the Messiah on same, which, in large measure, is really bound up in the question of the timing of the transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant, the epochal concept itself is sound, even though the division is seriously wanting.

By comparison, a much more realistic and logical elemental division produces two thousand years for each period from mankind's fall and expulsion from the garden of Eden to the Abrahamic covenant; through the Law and prophets to the start of Christ's ministry; then to be followed by the primary period of the church.³⁷⁰⁸ The same general approach can be gleaned from: 'The Expression "*End of the world*," in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, where the question was asked, "*What shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?*" does not signify the annihilation or demolition of our material earth, but simply means the end of this Age or Dispensation—that is to say, the end of the world socially, politically, and ecclesiastically, but not materially or physically; for the Greek word aioon means 'age,' or 'economy,' or 'dispensation,' and does not mean the solid earth or globe, for which the Greek is gee or kosmos.

The ablest prophetic expositors hold that certain prophetic periods in Daniel and Revelation, which are spoken of as being so many days, will not only be literally fulfilled at the Final Crisis as days, but that they also have a figurative precursory fulfilment as being so many years—their longest year-day fulfilment being a rehearsal on a larger scale of their ultimate literal day fulfilment [sic]; so that the two thousand, five hundred and twenty days or seven times (i.e., seven years), the two thousand, three hundred days, the one thousand, three hundred and thirty-five days, the one thousand, two hundred and ninety days, the one thousand, two hundred and sixty days or three-and-a-half times (that is, three-and-a-half years), the three hundred and ninety six [sic] days or the year and month and day and hour,³⁷⁰⁹ and the three hundred and sixty days or a time (that is, one year)—mentioned respectively in Daniel and Revelation³⁷¹⁰—are all fulfilled as two thousand, five hundred and twenty years; two thousand, three hundred years; one thousand, three hundred and thirty-five years; one thousand, two hundred and ninety years; one thousand, two hundred and sixty years, three hundred and ninety-

³⁷⁰⁷ Baeck, Rabbi Leo, *The Faith of Paul, in Judaism and Christianity: Essays by Leo Baeck*, pp.139-168 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁷⁰⁸ q.v. '7,000 Year Chronology' inf.

³⁷⁰⁹ actually 391 days, q.v. inf.

³⁷¹⁰ Dan 4:23,8:14,12:12,11:7; Rev 11:3,12:6,9:14,15,10:6

six years [sic]; and three hundred and sixty years, although they will also have an ultimate literal fulfilment, as so many days.³⁷¹¹

The scriptural authority for taking prophetic periods of days typically to signify just so many years is found in Numbers, where the Lord himself declared that forty days during which the spies explored the Promised Land were to signify also forty years of their future wanderings in the desert. He said, "*After the number of days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities even forty years.*"³⁷¹² Again, Ezekiel was commanded to lie on his side for forty days, to typify forty years' chastisement of the Jews. "*Lie again upon thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days, I have appointed thee each day for a year.*"^{3713 3714}

Two of the following periods—namely, the six thousand years, and two thousand, five hundred years or Jubilee of Jubilees [sic]—differ from the other dates above in respect of their not being obtained by the application of the year-day principle, as the others are [sic].

It is important to notice, that although the End of the Dispensation seems indicated by these prophetic dates to be about the end of this [then] nineteenth-century, and that therefore the Napoleonic-Judaic seven years Covenant³⁷¹⁵ which is to be made seven years and seventy-five days before the End, may be expected to be made as soon as about 1893AD, yet if the Covenant is made later, the End of this Age will be proportionately later.³⁷¹⁶

The six thousand years from the creation of man are on good grounds understood to terminate in the Second Coming of Christ and the Millennium. It is a belief of great antiquity that the six days of Creation foreshadowed the six periods of a thousand years each, during the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian dispensations, and that the seventh day of rest typified the seventh period of a thousand years of the millennial dispensation. This idea was entertained among the Jews long before the birth of Christ; and scriptural warrant for it has been afforded by the statement that "*one day is with the Lord as a thousand years*,"³⁷¹⁷ and that "*there remaineth therefore a rest* (Greek: sabbatismos, a keeping of the Sabbath, a Sabbatical septenary) *to the people of God.*"³⁷¹⁸ This seventh period of a thousand years—the Millennium—is shown in the nineteenth and twentieth chapters of Revelation to commence with the resurrection of the righteous, the Advent of Christ, the

³⁷¹¹ there is no apparent scriptural basis for any such precursory 'year-fulfilment' contention in relation to 1,335, 1,290, 396 [sic], and 360 days. The 2,300 and 1,260 days, when taken on a similar basis, rely, to some extent, on the relative opacities of secular recorded history.

³⁷¹² Num 14:34 (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁷¹³ establishing, with other verses, the 'day-for-a-year' principle.

³⁷¹⁴ Ezek 4:6 (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁷¹⁵ Dan 9:27

³⁷¹⁶ the deficiencies and sheer futility in attempting to apply the year-day principle to all of those days noted in Revelation and elsewhere is here laid bare, for none of the events expected with some confidence in the 19th-century came to pass.

³⁷¹⁷ II Peter 3:8

³⁷¹⁸ Heb 4:9

chaining of Satan, etc; and after its termination the battle of Gog and Magog, the resurrection of the wicked, and the burning of the earth takes place.

Bishop Russell says on this subject: "The tradition that the earth, as well as the religious state of its inhabitants, is to undergo a great change at the end of six thousand years, has been found in the writings of pagans, Jews, and Christians; because six days were employed by Almighty God in the [re-]creation of the globe, after which He rested on the seventh day; and as with Him one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years one day, it was concluded by the Cabalists and Jews that the world was to continue six thousand years; and on the conclusion of this period there would succeed a Sabbath of a thousand years of corresponding length, a millennium of rest and of peace. This idea has been traced in the Sibylline oracles, in the poems of Hesiod, in Plato, and prevailed long before the birth of Christ, relative to a momentous change which is supposed to await the earth after a period not exceeding six thousand years. We find this expectation expressed by the Chaldeans, the Persians, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans—orators, poets, philosophers; and the only difficulty we experience in the examination of the records collected from the literature of the ages is to account for so great unanimity of sentiment where we cannot discover any source of information, or any authority which so many different writers would consent to acknowledge for a conclusion so remarkable."

The infidel historian Gibbon testifies to the prevalence of this opinion during the first four centuries of the Christian era.³⁷¹⁹ He says (chapter xv.)—"The ancient and popular doctrine of the Millennium was intimately connected with the Second Coming of Christ. As the works of the Creation had been finished in six days, their duration in their present state, according to a tradition³⁷²⁰ which was attributed to the prophet Elijah [sic], was fixed to six thousand years. By the same analogy it was inferred that this long period of labour and contention, which was now almost elapsed, would be succeeded by a joyful Sabbath of a thousand years; and that Christ, with the triumphant band of the saints and the elect who had escaped death, or who have been miraculously revived, would reign upon earth till the time appointed for the last and general resurrection. So pleasing was this hope to the mind of believers, that the New Jerusalem, the seat of this blissful kingdom [sic], was adorned with all the gayest colours of the imagination. A felicity consisting only of pure and spiritual pleasures would have appeared too refined for its inhabitants who were still supposed to possess their human nature and senses. A city was therefore erected of gold and precious stones, and a supernatural plenty of corn and wine was bestowed on the adjacent territory. The assurance of such a millennium was carefully inculcated by a succession of fathers [sic], from Justin Martyr and Irenæus, who conversed with the immediate disciples of the apostles, down to Lactantius. Though it might not be universally received, it appears to have been the reigning sentiment of the

³⁷¹⁹ the reference to Edward Gibbon is to his book, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, published in 1772AD, in which he cites early documents suggesting that the Christian disciples of the 1st-century were taught that Jesus would return after a period of 2,000 years.

³⁷²⁰ Footnote on p.449—"This tradition was that "the earth should be 2,000 years without the law, 2,000 years under the law, and 2,000 years under the Messiah."

orthodox believers." Gibbon further states that after the fourth-century this view began to decline, the Papal corruptions completely obscuring it; but since the great revival of religion³⁷²¹ at the time of the French revolution, ³⁷²² increased attention has been given to the prophecies regarding the Millennium, and the views of the Primitive Church respecting it have again become prevalent.

There is another striking type meriting observation in this connection. As God concluded the six days of Creation by forming the literal body of the first Adam out of the dust of the earth, and breathing into it the spirit of life, so, at the conclusion of the six thousand years, at the Second Coming of Christ, God will, by His resurrection power, raise to life and form the mortal dust of His deceased saints into the mystical body of the Second Adam—the glorified church of Christ—and breathe upon them the Holy Spirit in immeasurable abundance.³⁷²³

Further support for this general view can be gleaned from, *'After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.'*³⁷²⁴ On the 'day-for-a-thousand-years' principle, this text indicates a two thousand year interval followed by the Millennium. Taking this interval, which is also the latter tertile,³⁷²⁵ on inspection this is properly computed from the date of the start of Christ's earthly ministry.³⁷²⁶ It is

³⁷²¹ Adventist revivals: the following excerpted from *Ambassador Report #63*, September, 1996, in an article entitled *'Waiting for Superchurch'* (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'Large-scale Adventist revivals in the U.S.A. have traditionally occurred in times of great economic and political stress and in times of perceived moral decline. These revivals have not occurred randomly but cyclically: each great revival being concurrent with a great economic depression. The first was the 1830s and 1840s Millerite revival that occurred during the great depression of 1837 through 1845. The Millerite revival produced the Seventh Day Adventists, the Advent Christian church, Church of God (Adventist), Church of God (Abrahamic Faith), and other groups. The second great revival was the 1870s revival which was concurrent with the 1870s great depression. From this revival came the Russellites, and Andrew F. Dugger, leader of the original Church of God 7th-Day, which were both at one time affiliated with the Advent Christian Church. The third great revival came in the 1930s during the Great Depression, and produced the Radio Church of God [later known as the Worldwide Church of God], and Sacred Names movements. Andrew N. Dugger was the son of Andrew F. Dugger, and A. N. Dugger was leader of the Church of God 7th-Day when Herbert W. Armstrong was affiliated with that group [Armstrong was actually an ordained minister of the 'CoG-7D']. Perhaps this gives a clue to how and why the word of God will be received at the time of the end by so many people, despite the dire circumstances then prevailing. The now imminent economic collapse, or great depression, will be far worse than all others heretofore (written in early 2013AD). The dire circumstances, it seems, might well prompt many into thoughts of a religious nature.

³⁷²² 1793AD

³⁷²³ *Forty Coming Wonders*, Appendix I, pp.447-450 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁷²⁴ Hos 6:2

³⁷²⁵ viz., that last of the current 'world-eras,' just before the onset of the Millennium of rest, albeit that some, the 'elect,' are under the Messiah during this latter tertile.

³⁷²⁶ the ministry of John the Baptist is not admissible for this anchor date for it started in the early- to mid-part of 27AD. According to Luke, Pilate was governor of Judæa when the Baptist commenced his ministry. Josephus, notes that Pilate was deposed after ten years in the post by Vitellius, the Roman President of Syria and Pilate's superior, shortly before Passover (cf. Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 18.4.1-3). Pilate then hastened to Rome to appeal to Tiberius, but on route learned that the Emperor had died. Tiberius died on 16 March, 37AD (cf. Marsh, Frank B., *The Reign of Tiberius*) so Pilate's ten-year reign in Judæa must have commenced sometime in the early part of 27AD, and not in 26 as commonly reported (there being no regnal reign, as with kings, to complicate matters). Despite this inadmissibility, there is great significance in Christ's words recorded in Luke 16:16, *'The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.'* The particular K.J.V. rendering of the last phrase does not convey the actual violence involved, and other translations have it more

known that it started in the autumn of 27AD. It is also held by knowledgeable expositors, as discussed previously, that Christ will return to the mount of Olives after the Last Trump, i.e., on the Day of Trumpets, which again is in the autumn. Taking a third tertile of two thousand years, this gives 2027AD as the year of Christ's return.³⁷²⁷

Impossibilities

The only other dates of significance which may find favour in the eyes of some and so, to them, provide a factual anchor for such a method of calculation, and which can be determined with complete accuracy are:

1. The date of Jesus' presentation at the Temple when aged twelve. As this was at Passover, exactly two thousand years from this date does not arrive on the day of the Day of Trumpets, which is an autumn feast in September or October, and, accordingly, it is discarded;³⁷²⁸ and,
2. The time of Christ's crucifixion.³⁷²⁹ However, it will be noticed again that exactly two thousand years from this date does not arrive on the day of the Day of Trumpets. Calamitously, it actually falls within the Millennium of rest. Accordingly, it is also discarded.³⁷³⁰

Now turning to the views of Polycarp, expressed in the writings of his pupil, Irenæus, it is found that he held that, 'the day of the Lord is as a thousand years, and in six days created things were completed; it is evident, therefore, that they will come to an end at the six thousandth year.' Again, it is pretty sure that here is expressed a common and widespread belief held as good in the time of the early Judæo-Christian church, and recorded accordingly.

Baptism of John

There is a question for many over the baptism of John, which impinges upon the matter in hand, arising from the wording used in Acts in connection with certain disciples of John at Ephesus: *'And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding*

correctly as: *'and everyone to it is violent.'* This would then correspond to Mat 1:12,13, *'And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violence taketh it by force. For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John':* the terminus a quo.

A similar 2,000 years approach, this time lacking in any form of secure biblical foundation, is what gave rise to the 1996AD date, obviously an erroneous one for the return of Christ, being calculated incorrectly from the assumed date of his birth in the autumn of 4BC. Similarly, the widely acclaimed date of 2000AD (or 2001AD) had been calculated from a variety of inappropriate and debased data, and likewise proved incorrect. It lacked any factual anchor, and, in addition, there was insufficient time for the events prior to Christ's return recited in Revelation to play out.

³⁷²⁷ q.v. inf.; also 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

³⁷²⁸ for that and other reasons.

³⁷²⁹ April, 30AD, q.v. inf.

³⁷³⁰ for those and other reasons.

certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Spirit. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptised? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptised with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve.³⁷³¹ In connection with this tract, the following should be considered: Firstly, the Greek participle which happens to be translated '*since ye believed*'³⁷³² should be rendered '*when ye believed*.' In this form, it is specific to an event and a time, but it does not identify exactly when, but the context renders it certain that it had been John himself who had baptised them, as his disciples. John, however, merely baptised with water, as recorded in John,³⁷³³ which was a sign, whereas Christ brought the freely available gift of the Holy Spirit. When Christ was baptised, He already had a limitless superabundance of the Holy Spirit, and this serves to underscore the fact that there was no elevation of Christ at His baptism to deity, as is claimed by some. John's baptism clearly lacked the capacity. The second point is that the Holy Spirit only came upon the twelve or so after the laying on of hands, and not at the point of re-baptism. Where the previous baptism was deficient, with the omission of even the mention of the Holy Spirit,³⁷³⁴ it was made good by this means.

There is absolutely nothing here, however, which intrinsically debars John's ministry from a connection with the preaching of the kingdom of God, for, patently, John did preach this, as the one crying out in the wilderness, '*In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,*'³⁷³⁵ and in, '*The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the son of God; As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. John did baptise in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.*'³⁷³⁶

³⁷³¹ Acts 19:1-7

³⁷³² in the K.J.V.

³⁷³³ John 1:26

³⁷³⁴ cp. John 3:25: John's baptism, by inference, was one of purification and for the overlooking of sins (i.e., slips) to date, not that of the Holy Spirit. The general availability of the Holy Spirit came with Jesus' ministry. John's was unto purity, in preparation for meeting the Messiah. It did not confer the gift of the Holy Spirit, for that, generally and freely available for the asking, came, and can only come through Jesus Christ.

³⁷³⁵ Mat 3:1-3 (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁷³⁶ Mark 1:1-4 (sublinear emphasis added)

Christ's ministry

The only date or time referred to or given off in Scripture which could be taken as a secure type or marker of the tertile commencement, however, is the beginning of Christ's ministry: *'Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye and believe the gospel.'*³⁷³⁷

Symmetry

The next Jubilee is calculated as falling in 2027AD, exhibiting a certain symmetry. The Jubilee is the time of restoration of Israelites to their hereditary lands, and the Second Coming is described in very similar terms in Acts: *'And he sent Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.'*³⁷³⁸ Support for the Day of the Lord falling in the same year as the Jubilee can be taken from, *'For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.'*³⁷³⁹ Jesus Christ will proclaim the Jubilee on the Day of Atonement, 2027AD.

Start of Millennium

The Millennium of rest will start in the spring of 2028AD.³⁷⁴⁰ An interesting confirmation of this is found in the seventy years desolation of the land for the lack of its Sabbatical years and the sin of the Jewish population,³⁷⁴¹ when combined with the quadripartite warning from God of seven times increased chastisement if they did not repent and keep His commandments.³⁷⁴² Seventy years x four x sevenfold = 1,960 years. Taking this from the start of Vespasian's siege of Jerusalem in the spring of 68AD gives the end of the extended period of chastisement as spring, 2028AD.³⁷⁴³

Warning

The postulation adopted on the date of the Second Coming, however, irrespective of how compelling it may appear, might still be aberrant, for while the 'elect' are instructed that *'we, according to his promise, look for*

³⁷³⁷ Mark 1:14,15

³⁷³⁸ Acts 3:20,21 (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁷³⁹ Isa 63:4

³⁷⁴⁰ q.v. inf.

³⁷⁴¹ II Chron 36:15-21; Jer 25:11

³⁷⁴² Lev 26:18b,21b,24b,28b

³⁷⁴³ the siege was lifted temporarily, allowing the Christians to escape to Pella in late summer, 68AD, q.v. inf. An earlier siege, in 66AD, under the Roman general Cestius Gallus, lasted but three months, inflicted little damage, and ended in his departing, losing 6,000 men to Jewish military counter-action in the process.

*new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness,*³⁷⁴⁴ there is a general (but not specific, in the case of Judæo-Christians)³⁷⁴⁵ warning, *'for ye know not when the time is.'* There is a vast difference between knowing—an absolute—and postulating, incorporating a certain element of uncertainty, for one is a known and established fact, the other merely a notion, an hypothesis, for the mind of man cannot discern that which is sealed by God. Nevertheless, we are not left with speculation, and little besides, as seen from, *'But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.'*³⁷⁴⁶ As stated above, the 'elect' are described as being *'the children of light,'* not those in darkness—and herein lies the crucial factor—led by the Holy Spirit into all truth. Thus the 'elect' can discern the true intent and meaning of Scripture (including the dates of key events to come) and watch and compare unfolding events with Scripture and prophecy, and, in so doing, accurately discern / confirm the times and the seasons. There is much more to this, of course, as will become apparent later.

Dates

It follows that if this epochal procedure is pertinent, and for absolute safety this must be regarded as marginally provisional, irrespective of however compelling it may appear to be, the relevant base date is the start of Christ's earthly ministry. Taking two millennia thereafter, allied with Daniel's prophecies, and correcting for postponement and leap year errors in the Judaic calendar,³⁷⁴⁷ this results in the following series of dates:³⁷⁴⁸

7-year covenant signed / confirmed by Antichrist with the Jews:	19.07.20
Third Temple completed and cleansed:	26.03.21
Two witnesses begin their witness:	27.12.23
Abomination of desolation set up in Temple: ³⁷⁴⁹	31.12.23
Great Tribulation starts: ³⁷⁵⁰	01.01.24
Mark of the Beast (on / in right hand / forehead, permitting buying & selling):	(inception) 01.01.24
End of tribulation primary period:	28.10.25
Start of days of darkness:	29.10.25

³⁷⁴⁴ II Peter 3:13

³⁷⁴⁵ as will be seen later.

³⁷⁴⁶ I Peter 4:7

³⁷⁴⁷ by adopting the sacred calendar derived from Scripture, q.v. inf.

³⁷⁴⁸ also shown graphically in 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet and 'The Days of Daniel.'

³⁷⁴⁹ possible correlation to Deut 27:15, *'Cursed is the one who makes a carved or moulded image, an abomination to the Lord, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and sets it up in secret.'* This from Moses addressing the children of Israel.

³⁷⁵⁰ the mark of the beast starts on 1 January, 2024, although it might take a little while to become fully effective on a worldwide basis. Antichrist's 31 Dec., 2023 / 1 Jan., 2024 gambit exhibits another classic military strategy. It has the element of surprise.

End of days of darkness:	31.10.25
Sealing of elect:	31.10.25
Start of 1st. woe:	19.12.25
Start of 2nd. woe:	18.05.26
Start of 3rd. woe:	13.06.27
Death of two witnesses:	09.06.27
End of tribulation 'second and final' period:	13.06.27
Christ returns 'in the air': ³⁷⁵¹	13.06.27

³⁷⁵¹ there is a form of parallel to be found in the biblical provisions for the release of Hebrew slaves. Deut 15:1,2,12,16,17, 'At the end of seven years ye shall make a release....because it is called the Lord's release....And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free of thee....And it shall be, if he say unto thee, I will not go away from thee: because he loveth thee and thine house, because he is well with thee: Then thou shalt take an awl, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant forever. And also unto thy maidservant thou shalt do likewise.'

Ex 21:2, 'If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years shall he serve, and in the seventh shall he go out free for nothing.'

Lev 25:1-7 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'And the Lord spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the Lord. Six years shalt thou sow thy field, and six years shalt thou prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof: But the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest [a Shabbat Shabbathown, q.v. inf.] unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest shalt thou not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land. And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee. And for thy cattle, and for the beasts that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.'

The seven year period under the Law is a form of release for the Israelite peoples calculated from the beginning of the individual's servitude, not retrospectively and in truncated form from the next sabbatical year, so there would be no fixed point of time—with one exception, q.v. inf.—when all the slaves or servants would be released, for the occasion of release might fall at any time. The sabbatical year clearly counts as one of the years of service for the purpose of calculation, despite it being an economically unproductive 'sabbath of rest.'

The exceptional case relates to the Jubilee: Lev 25:8,10-13,39-42, 'And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed. For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field. In the year of this jubilee ye shall return every man unto his possession. And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant: But as an hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of the jubilee: And then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return. For they are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: they shall not be sold as bondmen. Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour; but shall fear thy God.' The Jubilee is thus a long-stop or restitution point in which all in Israel are set free.

But there is one further consideration: Jer 34:12-14 (with added comment and clarification in square brackets): 'Therefore the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel: I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, saying, At the end of seven years ye shall let go every man his brother that is an Hebrew, which hath been sold unto thee [or, 'hath sold himself'] and hath served thee six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee: but your fathers hearkened not unto me, neither inclined their ear.' This refers to a special case concerning the position of the Jewish people under King Hezekiah, living in invested Jerusalem at the time of the siege by the Babylonians. They were to release all their

Resurrection of two witnesses; rise to meet Christ:	13.06.27
Dead in Christ rise to meet Christ:	13.06.27
'Elect' left alive transformed and rise to meet Christ:	13.06.27
Wedding feast 'in the air':	13.06→30.09.27
Destruction of Babylon the great (Rome):	30.09.27
Christ returns to mount of Olives (day of Trumpets—a New Moon):	30.09.27
Yom Kippur / Atonement:	09.10.27
Christ proclaims 40th. Jubilee (Yobel) since 27AD:	09.10.27
Sanctuary cleansed of abomination:	30.10.27
Valley of decision / Armageddon (world's armies destroyed):	(at full moon on 13 th . ³⁷⁵²) 14.12.27
Start of first calendar year, Millennium of Rest:	27.03.28
Duration of Day of the Lord:	700 days
Duration of wedding feast 'in the air':	109 days
Great Tribulation primary duration (shortened days 'for elect' ³⁷⁵³):	666 days
Great Tribulation secondary duration (1,260 less 666):	594 days
Days of darkness:	3 days

Daniel gives off the time of the cleansing of the Sanctuary, *'And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand, two hundred and ninety days,'*³⁷⁵⁴ ending with what must be a safely inferable removal and cleansing. Cleansing the Temple occurs on a weekly Sabbath, the day following the New Moon.³⁷⁵⁵ While travel for a holy purpose on a New Moon is permitted, as seen from the return of Christ on the preceding day of Trumpets, a New Moon, there is no precedent for Temple cleansing during the course of a New Moon. The day following the new Moon is a weekly Sabbath in the year in question, for which there is ample precedent for cleansing.³⁷⁵⁶

The following two verses allow working back to the time of the recommencement of the offering of the sacrifice, *'Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long*

slaves and servants, under a covenant with God, but as soon as the siege was temporarily lifted, the perfidious people re-enslaved them, breaking the covenant. The outcome was wholly predictable and inevitable, q.v. Jer 34:8-22.

³⁷⁵² the full moon occurs in the evening of the 13th. December, but technically within the gambit of the 14th., which corresponds to the 17th. day of the 9th. month of God's sacred calendar, a day that starts at sunset on the Julian calendar's 13th. December.

³⁷⁵³ Mat 24:21,22; the word 'sake' should be deleted as it does not occur in the original Greek text, leaving *'but for the elect.'*

³⁷⁵⁴ Dan 12:11

³⁷⁵⁵ Sabbath, 30 October, 2027AD cleansing.

³⁷⁵⁶ q.v. sup.; thirty days 'lapse' before cleansing of the Sanctuary will afford the three, frog-like, evil spirits sufficient time and opportunity to claim before unreconstructed man that the returning Messiah is not the true Messiah since He has not cleansed the Temple immediately upon His arrival. It takes a further forty-five days to assemble the armies of the nations and to march on Jerusalem.

shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden underfoot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.'³⁷⁵⁷ This gives the time of the commencement of the Temple sacrifice and the final '*righting*'³⁷⁵⁸ of the site. It also implies a residual precursor of two hundred and fifty days; this, on reasonable presumption, to build and consecrate the Third Temple.

Verse twelve gives the time of Blessedness, which is also the time of The Valley of Decision, being seventy-five days after the consummation of the Day of the Lord with the return of Jesus Christ, and forty-five days after the cleansing of the Sanctuary: '*Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.*'³⁷⁵⁹

When plotted graphically, what is revealed, the inter-relationship, is matrix-like.³⁷⁶⁰

The same reasoning can be seen in: 'Daniel, however, when mentioning this latter 3½ times or years (i.e., 1,260 days) of Antichrist's universal supremacy, also speaks of two longer periods of 1,290 and 1,335 days, which are universally understood, both by year-day and literal-day expositors, to commence at the same time as the 1,260 days,³⁷⁶¹ but which extend respectively 30 days and 75 days beyond the end of the 1,260 days. This will be the supplementary interval of Antichrist's overthrow.

For the Angel standing on the river Hiddekel,³⁷⁶² in the last chapter of Daniel, when asked in regard to the predicted "*Time of Trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time,*" how long it should be, swore a solemn oath that "*it shall be for a time, times, and half a time* (i.e., 1,260 days): *and when he* (Wilful King, previously described) *shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be ended.*" Then he added, "*From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate* (i.e., Antichrist's idol image) *set up, there shall be 1,290 days. Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the 1,335 days.*"

³⁷⁵⁷ Dan 8:13,14

³⁷⁵⁸ Hebrew: tsadaq.

³⁷⁵⁹ Dan 12:12

³⁷⁶⁰ q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

³⁷⁶¹ strangely, and utterly illogically, the R.C.G. / W.C.G., in their various attempts at exposition and graphical presentation, had these three time periods (1260, 1290, 1335 days) ending conterminously!

³⁷⁶² Tigris: Hiddekel '*that flows east of Asshur*' is generally identified as such. The Hebrew *Hiddekel* is mentioned in Gen 2:14 and Dan 10:4. The Tigris / Hiddekel river is known as the Idiklat or Diklat in Assyrian, and as the Tigra in Old Persian. Gen 2:10-14 mentions the four rivers of Eden: Pison (Hebrew: piyshown, '*increase*'), Gihon (Hebrew: giychown, '*bursting forth*'), Tigris / Hiddekel (Hebrew: chiddeqel, '*rapid*'), and Euphrates (Hebrew: perath, '*fruitfulness*'). Of these, two are dried up—Pison and Gihon—but their former river beds can still be traced from satellite camera images and ran in almost diametrical opposition from the west (in present day Saudi Arabia, through Kuwait) and from the east (in present day Iran) respectively, to a point just south of the southern end of the Shatt-al-Arab waterway, there joining the other two rivers, making a common confluence of all four (cf. Gen 2:10b; q.v. inf.). Owing to the substantial rise in sea levels since then, this places the garden of Eden substantially in what now comprises the seabed of the Persian Gulf. Therefore a more faithful and useful translation of Gen 2:10 would give: '*A river went forth to Eden to water the garden, parted in four heads.*'

It seems evident from these words that Antichrist's idol image will stand erect in the Jewish sanctuary for one thousand, two hundred and ninety days, and will then be cast out of it, and thus the sanctuary will be cleansed. Hence, the two thousand, three hundred days, which are stated to end with the cleansing of the sanctuary, will also terminate at this same point of time with the one thousand, two hundred and ninety days. In other words, the two thousand, three hundred³⁷⁶³ days will not terminate at the same period as Antichrist's covenant seven years, and its latter half of one thousand, two hundred and sixty days of his universal dominion, but will end thirty days, i.e., a month, later. And even then there will be forty-five days more to elapse before the end of the one thousand, three hundred and thirty-five days, and, in fact, of this Age itself. So that the two thousand, three hundred days will terminate forty five days before the End.

Hence the two thousand, three hundred days, terminating thirty days after the covenant seven years, which latter amount to two thousand, five hundred and twenty days³⁷⁶⁴ (i.e., seven times three hundred and sixty days), will necessarily commence two hundred and fifty days, or eight months and ten days after the date of the covenant, which is the starting point of the covenant seven years. For two hundred and fifty added to two thousand, three hundred, is equal to two thousand, five hundred and twenty added to thirty. Or, to express the same thing in another form, as the two thousand, three hundred days terminate forty-five days before the End,

³⁷⁶³ Turner, W. H., *The Second Coming of Christ*, Appendix One (with added comment and clarification in square brackets):

'The Puzzle and Problem of the 2,300 Days, Dan 8:13,14,26.

In Dan 8:13,14, a "holy one" asks, "*How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden underfoot?*" Another "holy one" answers and informs Daniel, "*Unto two thousand and three hundred evening-mornings; and then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.*"

Some state the treading down of the Sanctuary for 2,300 days, in Dan 8:13,14,26, refers to Antiochus Epiphanes; others equally confidently affirm that there is no such period in the time of Antiochus, and say it refers to Antichrist in the last days. We read that the Sanctuary is to be "*trodden under foot,*" for "*two thousand three hundred evening-mornings*" before the Sanctuary will be cleansed; that is 2,300 repetitions of the evening and morning sacrifice. The phrase is unique, however. Some say that Scriptures like Gen 1:5 are significant, and tend to confirm that the "*evening mornings*" refer to 2,300 days. Others think that the 2,300 evening and mornings are sacrifices, representing 1,150 days. However, no Hebrew reader would understand it in this way, nor would they make 40 days and 40 nights means 20 days. Leupold states that the 2,300 does not fit historical facts in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, either in the form of 2,300 days, or 1,150 days, no matter how the facts and figures are juggled.'

The two thousand, three hundred day period, which ends with the cleansing of the Temple, surely also begin with the same, for the sake of symmetry, which is often found in the Scriptures. Daniel's question: '*How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden underfoot?*' suggests that the sanctification occurs within the initial two hundred and fifty days from the signing or confirming of the Antichrist's concordat with the Jews, permitting the building of the Temple, such will be the Jews' haste to bring forward the operation of the Third Temple. Not one day further will be allowed to elapse. Bolstering this contention is the conclusion drawn from an analysis of the actual dates brought out in the year of its completion. The two hundred and fifty days start on 19 July, 2020AD, and terminate on 25 March, 2021AD (both dates inclusive). The following day (a Friday), on the Jewish calendar is a preparation day for their Passover (which coincides with their first day of Unleavened Bread) on 28 March, 2021AD, with a weekly Sabbath intervening. The Sacred Calendar for that year gives Passover falling a month later on 25 April (observed the previous evening).

This, in turn, gives: 2,345 days from completion of the dedication of the Third Temple to Armageddon (2,300 + 45), and 184 days (109 + 75) from 'Christ in the air' to Armageddon.

³⁷⁶⁴ interestingly, 2,520, the number of days to the time of the wedding feast in the air, is the least number capable of being divided by each of the ten digits—zero to nine—without a remainder. It is, therefore, the number of chronological perfection, bringing all to the time of spiritual perfection of the 'elect.'

and as the seven years, or two thousand, five hundred and twenty days, terminate seventy-five days before the End, therefore the two thousand, three hundred days must begin two hundred and fifty days after the commencement of the covenant seven years, because two hundred and fifty, and two thousand, three hundred and forty-five, added together, are equal to two thousand, five hundred and twenty and seventy-five added together.³⁷⁶⁵

Again, even earlier, the very same fundamental sentiment and reasoning is apparent: 'Maramensis, an expositor of extraordinary ability,³⁷⁶⁶ published the following exposition³⁷⁶⁷ of the two thousand, three hundred days....namely, that the two thousand, three hundred days commence with the restored Jewish sacrifices, and end at the same time as the one thousand two hundred and ninety days. He said—"Now it is evident that the Jews shall of themselves return unto their own land, and re-establish their former religious worship, as far as circumstances will permit them; that, notwithstanding this zeal, they shall yet apostatize; that the 'Little Horn,' a "king of fierce countenance,' shall arise against them; that this king shall at last be destroyed by Divine power; and that then [sic] Christ shall work '*His short work*' upon the earth, and '*cut it short in righteousness*.'

With regard to the two thousand, three hundred days, the question asked is, '*How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression* (that is, the apostasy or '*the falling away*,' [sic] as expressed in the Epistle to the Thessalonians) *of desolation*,' to give both '*the sanctuary and the host to be trodden underfoot?*' (Dan viii. 13). The answer is, '*Unto two thousand, three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed*.' The meaning of the question, expressed in other words, seems to be this: How long shall be the period comprising these events? namely, the establishment of the daily sacrifice, the declension of the Jews into apostasy, the consequent desolation of the holy places, and the treading under foot of their sanctuary. The two thousand, three hundred days will, therefore, commence with the first administration of the daily sacrifice, and end with the cleansing of the sanctuary.

The one thousand, two hundred and ninety days (as well as the one thousand, two hundred and sixty days—Dan xii. 7,11) both commence with the setting up of the abomination of desolation. What they are to end with is not stated. It seems, however, natural to suppose that there must be some relation between the event that marks the close and that which marks the commencement of any prophetic period. As, therefore, the one thousand, two hundred and ninety days begin with the taking away of the daily sacrifice and the setting up of the abomination of desolation, they will probably end with the cleansing of the sanctuary from that abomination of desolation, and the re-establishment of Jewish [sic] worship. If so, the two thousand, three hundred and the one thousand, two hundred and ninety days have a common termination. The last period mentioned is the one thousand, three hundred and thirty-five days, which begins simultaneously with the one thousand, two hundred

³⁷⁶⁵ *Forty Coming Wonders*, pp.92,93 (5th edition, published c.1890AD; first edition published 1866AD)

³⁷⁶⁶ Maramensis, *Investigator*, vol. iii., p.293

³⁷⁶⁷ in 1834AD

and sixty and one thousand, two hundred and ninety days, at the commencement of the unparalleled great tribulation, and of Antichrist's three and a half years of persecuting power, and concludes with a period of blessedness. *'Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the one thousand, three hundred and thirty-five days'* (Dan xii.12)."³⁷⁶⁸

The dates shown in the table above exhibit some additional points of interest:

1. The date of signing or confirming the Antichrist's 'false-peace' covenant with the Jews—Sunday, the nineteenth of July—is the day of the rising of the dog-star Sirius, occult symbol of Satan;³⁷⁶⁹
2. The date for the commencement of sacrifices, taken on the Judaic calendar, is the thirteenth of Nisan, 5781, just in time to observe the Jewish Passover season starting on the twenty-eighth of March that year;
3. Setting up the Abomination in the Temple on Sunday, the thirty-first of December, 2023,³⁷⁷⁰ will allow its presentation to the world immediately before the first of January, the profane world's traditional time for the start of new regimes—in this case, the Great Tribulation;³⁷⁷¹
4. The ensuing *'flight'* from Judæa,³⁷⁷² *would* occur in mid-winter, but *not* on a weekly Sabbath.³⁷⁷³ The wise, of course, will have fled from the coming cataclysm long before the onset of that fateful winter, for they will be fully cognisant of the prophetic timeline being worked out on earth, and be able to read and understand the signs of the time of the end, as the verse, most probably, contains that subliminal message. No one would ever think of fleeing on the Sabbath (and it would have to be a Sabbath rather than a Shabbathown, for, on the latter, flight would be permissible³⁷⁷⁴). Obviously, if one cannot flee on the Sabbath, one must flee beforehand. Similarly, it is contended, that if one dare not flee in the winter, one should flee beforehand, in the summer. In order to do that, one must know the key times and dates; in short, one must be one of the wakeful 'elect'; and,

³⁷⁶⁸ *Forty Coming Wonders*, pp.94,95 (with added comments and clarifications in square brackets)

³⁷⁶⁹ known to the Romans as Janitor Lethacus, 'the keeper of hell,' and to Vedic India as 'the leader.'

³⁷⁷⁰ from Dan 8:12 it appears that God gives up the Temple and its sacrifices into the hand of the Antichrist, as not owning or acknowledging the worship so rendered *'by reason of transgression.'*

³⁷⁷¹ on the proposed *World Calendar*, q.v. inf., 1st January would *always* be a Sunday; dies solis, the day of the sun.

³⁷⁷² Mat 24:20

³⁷⁷³ q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

³⁷⁷⁴ Hebrew: Shabbath, properly, means *'ceasing.'* The weekly Sabbath and the day of Atonement are referred to in Scripture as Shabbath Shabbathowns, or, more meaningfully in English, *'ceasing, of ceasing,'* importing a complete prohibition of all forms of work. Shabbathowns, such as the other annual holy days—save Passover, which has a classification of its own, q.v. inf.—are *'of ceasing,'* further defined in Lev 23:7,8 as the prohibition of servile work (but not all forms of work, cf. 'Permissible on Sabbaths' in Appendix) on the first and last days of Unleavened Bread, with the same prohibition found in v.21 for Pentecost, in vv.24,25 for the day of Trumpets, and in vv.34-36 for the first day of Tabernacles and the eighth or Last Great Day. The weekly Sabbath's designation Shabbath Shabbathown gives a clear inference as to what is to be done when a new moon or annual holy day Shabbathown lands on a weekly Sabbath, where the weekly Sabbath restrictions take precedence.

5. The period of two thousand, three hundred days ends with the cleansing of the sanctuary. While the ultimate profaning of the Temple occurs at the start of the second moiety of one thousand, two hundred and sixty days, the Temple can be viewed by Judæo-Christians as profaned from the start of the two thousand, three hundred days since it will operate under Pharisaic / Rabbinic control (until the Antichrist's ultimate and utter profaning), keeping the sacrifices and festivals / feasts on the basis of the Judaic calendar.

Witnesses / sealing / great multitude

When the above timetable³⁷⁷⁵ is considered in the context of the spreadsheet,³⁷⁷⁶ if the fundamental hypothesis be correct—and its accuracy and lock-fit suggests strongly that it is—then it is possible to establish the dates of the arrival, death, and resurrection of the two witnesses, as the *'third woe'* immediately follows upon their death and resurrection.

In light of their being presaged in the waveloaves,³⁷⁷⁷ Pentecost will be the time of their resurrection. Working back through the three-and-a-half days of their lying slain in Jerusalem, *'And after three days and a half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them,'*³⁷⁷⁸ together with the duration of their witness, given in, *'And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand, two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth,'*³⁷⁷⁹ the following dates can be adduced. These indicate that the two witnesses are scheduled to start their witnessing three-and-a-half days before the time of the setting up of the Abomination of Desolation (with the onset of the Great Tribulation proper the next day):

Event	Ad finem 2027
Start of 1,260 Days Witness:	27.12.23
Sealing of the 'Elect':	31.10.25
Death of the Two Witnesses:	09.06.27
Their Resurrection:	13.06.27

The time after the death and resurrection of the two witnesses until the return of Christ to the mount of Olives, from Pentecost to the day of Trumpets in that year,³⁷⁸⁰ is one hundred and nine days. This time exhibits

³⁷⁷⁵ q.v. sup.

³⁷⁷⁶ 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

³⁷⁷⁷ waved at Pentecost.

³⁷⁷⁸ Rev 11:11

³⁷⁷⁹ Rev 11:3

³⁷⁸⁰ 2027AD

two characteristics: Firstly, it cannot have been counted in the prophecy known as the *Days of Daniel*,³⁷⁸¹ in much the same way as the seventy years reprise of missed land-Sabbaticals was not counted by God. Secondly, it lies beyond the second moiety³⁷⁸² of the Beast's demonical power which commences the Great Tribulation and which spans the fifth and sixth seals, the first six trumpets of the seventh seal, including the first and second woes.³⁷⁸³ Whilst not every one of the individual durations of each element of this timeframe are given in the Bible,³⁷⁸⁴ the primary period of the Beast's power has been taken as six hundred and sixty six days³⁷⁸⁵—this being the primary and main period of the Great Tribulation—with the secondary period, covering all other events up to the end of the second woe, providing the balance: five hundred and ninety-four days. This is speculative, admittedly, but it should be noted that as the first woe lasts one hundred and fifty days, and the second three hundred and ninety-one days (totalling five hundred and forty-one days), the actual division cannot possibly be far removed, and given the ramifications³⁷⁸⁶ of a primary period of the Tribulation based on the Beast's number, it appears to be well-founded. The difference in these two aggregates, fifty-three days, would cover the sixth seal—sometimes termed 'the heavenly signs' of three days³⁷⁸⁷—and the '*about half an hour*' silence in heaven, with the first four trumpets of the seventh seal aggregating to the final fifty days thereof. Further, the duration of the sixth seal—three days—permits calculation of the date of the sealing of the 'elect.' This would occur six hundred and sixty-nine days³⁷⁸⁸ after the completion of the first moiety one thousand, two hundred and sixty days, giving the date of sealing as 31 October, 2025AD.³⁷⁸⁹

The three days of darkness—extracted from the spreadsheet, extending over 28–30 October, 2025AD³⁷⁹⁰—will make it extremely difficult for the occult powers to assemble the desired masses of human victims for ritual sacrifice on the day of Savan, the 'lord of the dead,' commonly called Hallowe'en, the greatest of the eight annual occult high-festivals of human sacrifice. Not only that, on the very day that the Antichrist and his occult devotees would wish to gorge themselves in the mass sacrifice of God's 'elect' on the first day after the period

³⁷⁸¹ q.v. inf.

³⁷⁸² 1,260 days

³⁷⁸³ cf. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

³⁷⁸⁴ viz., the days of darkness, taken as three days by commentators, is not mentioned specifically in that number in Scripture, although there is a precedent, perhaps, in Ex 10:22b, '*and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days.*' Prophetically, Egypt stands for sin.

³⁷⁸⁵ based on the number of the Beast: '666'; Rev 13:18c.

³⁷⁸⁶ q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

³⁷⁸⁷ taken as three by commentators; q.v. sup.; the Bible does not give a specific duration for each of the seals, trumpets, and vials. Of particular interest here is the likely duration of the sixth seal, for, with that in place, it would be possible to calculate the duration of the Day of the Lord. Estimates of the duration of the sixth seal usually come from extremely unreliable sources, it must be said. Marian visions and apparitions quite often allocate three days to this event, often termed 'the three days of darkness when devils will roam the earth,' q.v. prophecy of the Blessed Anna Marie Taigi. Due to the demonic provenance, these time estimates have always been discounted, but there is at least some biblical precedent, perhaps tenuous but unlikely so, in the plagues of Egypt, where the thick darkness plague—that prior to the death of the firstborn—lasted for three days, cf. Ex 10:21-23.

³⁷⁸⁸ i.e., 666 + 3 days.

³⁷⁸⁹ a date vested of considerable occult significance, q.v. inf.

³⁷⁹⁰ q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

of darkness—Hallowe'en, that year—they are thwarted by the Lord's divine sealing, finding that all God's people have been rendered utterly unassailable.

But there is more to the matter than even this. When three days are ascribed to the sixth seal in the spreadsheet,³⁷⁹¹ the Duration of the Day of the Lord can be calculated:

Secondary period of Tribulation:	594
Days not counted, extending beyond the last (Pentecost to Yom Teruah, 2027):	109
<u>Less</u> Duration of sixth seal:	<u>-3</u>
TOTAL (in days):	700

Seven hundred days for the Day of the Lord would be apposite, for seven is the number of completion. It is also of greater duration than that permitted to the Beast as the primary period of the Great Tribulation; evidence of the superiority of God's retribution.

Chapter seven notes when the '*day of the Lord*' commences: '*For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?*'³⁷⁹² This happens after the completion of the sixth seal, the 'heavenly signs.' The Day of the Lord comprises the entire of the seventh seal, which itself is sub-divided into seven trumpets, the last of which is further subdivided into seven vial plagues. That the Day of the Lord cannot be a literal twenty-four hour day is obvious: the fifth trumpet itself lasts for one hundred and fifty days,³⁷⁹³ and the sixth for three hundred and ninety one days.³⁷⁹⁴ The Greek translated '*day*,'³⁷⁹⁵ in relation to the latter also means a '*period*' or '*time*,' and gives a better sense of the time involved.

The primary period of the fifth seal, the Great Tribulation, is the foreshortened one, else the 'elect' would be completely extirpated, and all mankind would be allowed to perish as a result, for they would be worthless in God's eyes.³⁷⁹⁶ The foreshortened period only applies to the 'elect'—the one hundred and forty-four thousand of the tribes of Israel³⁷⁹⁷ who are to survive the Great Tribulation. After the expiry of six hundred and sixty six days it follows that the Beast cannot hurt them, although their actual sealing does not come until after the completion of the sixth seal, the heavenly signs. The balance of those one thousand, two hundred and sixty days—five hundred and ninety-four days—sees the Beast waging war on the great multitude who come out of all nations, and kindreds, and tongues, termed the 'intermediate peoples,' who purify themselves during the course of the Great Tribulation, and who do not accept the mark of the Beast, nor worship him, nor his

³⁷⁹¹ q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

³⁷⁹² Rev 7:17

³⁷⁹³ Rev 9:1-12

³⁷⁹⁴ Rev 9:13-21

³⁷⁹⁵ Greek: hemera.

³⁷⁹⁶ q.v. sup.

³⁷⁹⁷ save for Dan.

image. Near the end of the second moiety, the two witnesses are martyred, and, three-and-a-half days later, at the end of the second moiety, they are resurrected. Their martyrdom completes the prescription; no more of the 'elect' or 'intermediate peoples' are to be killed by the Beast.

Further considerations

Continuing in the matter of foreknowledge of these events, once the covenant is confirmed between the Antichrist and a substantial part of the Jews or their officers,³⁷⁹⁸ all will know, or should know, that the Messiah will return to the mount of Olives in a further seven years, each of three hundred and sixty days: two thousand, five hundred and twenty days, and to the duly cleansed Temple in the same plus thirty days: two thousand, five hundred and fifty days, but allowing for a period of one hundred and nine days for the wedding supper '*in the air*' intervening between the end of the two thousand, five hundred and twenty days and the start of the thirty days.³⁷⁹⁹

Despite the views of some expositors, the tract, '*and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined*,'³⁸⁰⁰ refers only in small part to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Roman army under Titus.³⁸⁰¹ The prince that shall come, the Antichrist, will be of the same people as the Roman Empire: the latter day, final rising of the empire. In other words, the Antichrist will be the civil head or king of the last eruption of the Holy Roman Empire. Hence it is manifest that some prince of the Holy Roman Empire '*that shall come*' is the very person who will confirm a covenant with the leaders or bulk of the Jews for a period of seven years. No such covenant could have been made before the destruction of the Second Temple as, in the regular order of prophecy, it is detailed as taking place after its destruction and, moreover, it is described as occurring seven years before the consummation, or end of this dispensation.

Hitherto, there is no record in history of any such covenant being made or confirmed, and in any case it would have to have been followed three-and-a-half years later by the abolition of the restored sacrifices in the middle of the seventieth week, and by the consummation upon its termination. Thus it is yet to be covenanted. And the '*prince that shall come*' who shall confirm it, although only a '*little horn*,' or comparatively minor sovereign, at the commencement of his career, will have risen to become the Great Antichrist and head of the Holy Roman Empire by the time of those fateful seven years.

Many expositors, especially in the nineteenth-century, viewed the Antichrist, in the final negotiations leading to the covenant, as seeking to present himself to the Jews as their long-awaited Messiah—and thus

³⁷⁹⁸ Rashi's interpretation, inter alia.

³⁷⁹⁹ q.v. 'The Days of Daniel' and 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

³⁸⁰⁰ Dan 9:26

³⁸⁰¹ 70AD

concluding that he must of necessity be Jewish—while simultaneously seeking to present himself to the Moslems as the Mahdi. Although this is conjecture on the part of the necessity of being Jewish, it is certainly within the bounds of possibility, but it is wildly astray concerning the Mahdi (who will be his adversary), the prophesied *'king of the south.'*³⁸⁰²

The Antichrist, at the very least, must portray himself as being of Jewish descent. Doubtless, the final outcome will involve much manoeuvrings precedent. He will be very complex character indeed.

Two thousand, three hundred days

The greater part of expositors have eschewed the belief that the two thousand, three hundred days are, in reality, restricted to that number of evenings and mornings, viz. one thousand, one hundred and fifty days. The Laodicean church has adopted it, however, while simultaneously being unable to reconcile it with the latter-day prophecies contained in 'The Days of Daniel.' *'Then I heard one saint speaking; and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.'*³⁸⁰³ *'And the vision of the evening and morning which were told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days.'*³⁸⁰⁴ Here the vision of the two thousand, three hundred days is termed *'the vision of the evening and the morning.'* Slotki comments on these verses: 'The numeral refers to the number of times the twice-daily offerings will be omitted, giving a total period of 1,150 days.'³⁸⁰⁵ At the end of this 'restricted' period the sanctuary was to be *'cleansed'* or *'justified.'* That the prophecy is dual is widely acknowledged, as the extension, *'he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand,'*³⁸⁰⁶ indicates. This stand against the Prince of princes, Christ, did not occur with Antiochus Epiphanes, but it will occur in the day of the Beast. But will the period immediately before that final cleansing be but one thousand, one hundred and fifty days?

The fundamental problem for those expositors who claim that the duality is defined purely in terms of one thousand, one hundred and fifty days, comes in two ways:

³⁸⁰² q.v. sup.; the Masih ad-Dajjal, meaning 'the deceiving or imposter Messiah,' is an evil figure in Islamic eschatology. He is to appear near the end, pretending to be the Masih (Messiah), and corresponds, directly, with the Antichrist of Judæo-Christianity. Armilus is the nearest Judaism comes to this, for the Jews will be eager supporters of the Antichrist.

³⁸⁰³ Dan 8:13,14; Hebrew: tsadag, 'cleansed,' also means 'righted'; Revised Standard Version (R.S.V.) reads, *'For two thousand and three hundred evenings and mornings.'* For the word 'days,' a footnote in many Bibles reads, *'literally evening-mornings.'*

³⁸⁰⁴ Dan 8:26

³⁸⁰⁵ Slotki, Dr. Judah J., *The Jewish Soncino Commentary on Daniel*

³⁸⁰⁶ Dan 8:25

1. The restricted days conflicts with the word of God on the matter contained in, '*And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand, two hundred and ninety days.*'³⁸⁰⁷ One thousand, one hundred and fifty days is not one thousand, two hundred and ninety days: it conflicts; and,

2. In 'The Days of Daniel,' any attempt at plotting back one thousand, one hundred and fifty days from the time of cleansing of the Temple arrives at a date which implies that the sacrifices will continue for one hundred and forty days beyond the time when they will have been stopped by the covenant breaking activities of the Beast. Again, this is clearly in conflict both with prophetic revelation and reason. This is more than tacitly admitted by at least one Laodicean expositor when seeking to extract the hypothesis from the difficulties with the words: 'But the fulfilment of this prophecy in the latter days will not again be for one thousand, one hundred and fifty days, but for one thousand, two hundred and ninety days, according to Daniel.'³⁸⁰⁸

The prohibition placed on the daily sacrifice by Antiochus Epiphanes³⁸⁰⁹ during which two thousand, three hundred evening and morning sacrifices were allegedly lost, giving one thousand, one hundred and fifty days³⁸¹⁰ does not mesh with the historical record, nor does it prescribe the exact detail of the days of the end. While one thousand, one hundred and fifty days conflicts with later prophecies in Daniel, two thousand, three hundred days meshes synchronously with prophecy and the graphic exposition of same shown in 'The Days of Daniel.' Thus the use of the word '*days*' after the two thousand, three hundred is correct.³⁸¹¹

Finally, concerning the destruction of '*Babylon the great*,' Rome, on the day of the completion of the seventh vial. This destruction is, as it were, tripartite and comprehensive: city, empire, and church.³⁸¹² The given calendar year of destruction—on the basis of the fall of the fifth and seventh vials, and the attendant detail—gives the projected date of destruction of the seat of the Beast, Rome:³⁸¹³ 30 September, 2027AD.

Accuracy

God's sacred calendar gives off many interesting and very specific dates in matters eschatological. The accuracy is astounding,³⁸¹⁴ for the entire is based on predictable relationships of the sun and moon. Since now-

³⁸⁰⁷ Dan 12:11

³⁸⁰⁸ again, Dan 12:11

³⁸⁰⁹ 167–164BC

³⁸¹⁰ Josephus gives it as three years and six months (presumably 1,278 days or somewhere thereabouts, depending on the vagaries of any backward reflection of the then Jews' manipulated calendar); cf. Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, 1.1.32.

³⁸¹¹ Latin: *ecce signum*, 'behold the proof.'

³⁸¹² Rev 16:10,17:15-18,18:1-24

³⁸¹³ 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

³⁸¹⁴ unlike all other calendars, the sacred calendar does not lose time.

adays these can be determined to accuracies of about one minute or less, a proper understanding of the sacred timeline given off in the Bible leads to the exposition of key dates in the plan of God.

The time of Christ's alighting on the mount of Olives, on 30 September, 2027AD,³⁸¹⁵ will be the time of the dark lunar conjunction³⁸¹⁶ that day, the feast of Tabernacles, 02:36 Universal Time, or 05:36 Israel / Jerusalem local time,³⁸¹⁷ which at that time of the year is Jerusalem Daylight Saving Time (J.D.S.T.).³⁸¹⁸ It will also herald the supernatural close to the existing, chaotic, secular world order.

The time of His alighting on that day, brought out above, is consistent with what can be gleaned from a comparison of two relevant verses in Malachi and Mark: '*shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings*,'³⁸¹⁹ and, '*Watch ye therefore, for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning*.'³⁸²⁰ Sunrise on that day, at Jerusalem, occurs at 06:32 local J.D.S.T. (03:32 U.T.C.). The first rays, therefore, would be visible just under one hour earlier, at the time of the dark lunar conjunction.

The 'cockcrowing' does not mean a literal cockcrow. Here—and as used by Christ to Peter, '*The cock will not crow, till you have denied me thrice*'³⁸²¹—it refers to the twice repeated Roman trumpet call signalling the changing of the guard, first at the Roman third watch at midnight, and then at the fourth, at three o'clock in the morning. These two watch trumpets were called the 'cockcrowings,' with the actual military trumpet or bugle being known as the 'Gallus,' meaning 'cock' or 'crower.'

³⁸¹⁵ q.v. 'The Seven Seals of Revelation' spreadsheet.

³⁸¹⁶ the dark lunar conjunction is one of two lunar syzygies, the other being the full moon.

³⁸¹⁷ the local time meridian in the Israeli time zone is based on Cairo, in Egypt. Cairo Time / Jerusalem Standard Time is 2 hours ahead of Universal Time (U.T.C.): (U.T.C.+2). The Jerusalem meridian is actually 2 (+1 for J.D.S.T.) hours, 29 minutes ahead of the Greenwich meridian on that day, but only 2 (+1 for J.D.S.T.) hours on a time zone basis. Since the conjunction time is expressed in both U.T.C. and local Cairo / Jerusalem Time in published astronomical data, and since Israeli summer time ends on 10 October that year (based on data available at the time of writing, but from 2013AD, the state of Israel will use the European Union's adjustment date in late October to end their daylight saving time. This does not affect the calculations herein), a one hour adjustment for the difference between what is, in fact, Cairo time (2 hours ahead) and U.T.C. / G.M.T. / true local time need be made, as seen above, giving the local time as 5:36am (Dark lunar conjunction, 30 September, 2027AD, occurs at 05:36 Jerusalem—actually Cairo time; or 03:36 U.T.C.). No adjustment need be made for the 29 minutes mentioned above, as the conjunction is a specific point in time, and is accurately reflected in the Cairo / Jerusalem and U.T.C. data.

³⁸¹⁸ up until 2012AD, the end of Daylight Saving Time in Jerusalem appeared to fluctuate between 4 and 9 days after the Hebrew calendar's rosh hashanah, 1 Tishri. In 2027AD, rosh hashanah falls on 2 October on the Hebrew calendar, and, as such, would have removed any consideration of the effect of the end of D.S.T. from the calculations for 30 September that year. The later adjustment, from 2013, whereby the state of Israel is to use the European Union's adjustment date in late October to end their daylight saving time further removes any doubt.

³⁸¹⁹ Mal 4:2b

³⁸²⁰ Mark 13:35; Greek: proi, translated '*morning*,' actually means '*at dawn*,' the first rays of light before sunrise. Mark 13:33, '*Watch*,' Greek: agrypneo, means '*stay awake*.' Mark 13:35,37: '*Watch*,' Greek: gregoreo, means '*pay strict and close attention*,' in contraposition to v.36, '*lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping*.' Also in Luke 12:35, '*Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning*.' The key, in the hour of His return, is staying awake. In short, be ready!

³⁸²¹ John 13:38

Not awake

The Jews will not be awake, watching, and ready. According to the operation of the Judaic calendar (a subset or offshoot of the ancient pagan Babylonian calendar), the first day of Yom Teruah can fall only on the second, third, or fifth day of the week, or on Shabbat. It can never fall on the first, fourth, or sixth day of the week. This regulation is an ordinance of Chazal.³⁸²² That regulation or ordinance came from man, not from the Bible: 'Chazal, our sages, teach us that we are not to sound the shofar on Shabbat in accordance with the above passage from Vayikra.³⁸²³ This pasuk indicates that the shofar is not sounded but commemorated. This is in accordance with the understanding that [the Jews] do not carry even a shofar from a private domain to a public domain on Shabbat.'

The Jews will not intend sounding the shofar on their calendar's Rosh Hashanah / Yom Teruah, for it falls on a Sabbath.³⁸²⁴ Since the dark lunar conjunction falls on Thursday 30 September, 2027AD, at 05:36, the Jewish postponement rules delay their observance until 02 October, through a day lost awaiting the sighting of the first visible crescent, and a further day owing to the Jews' 'not on a Friday' ordinance.

Therefore the Jews will not be expecting the return of the Messiah for numerous reasons, including calendar ones. In any event, the Jews' shofar, were it to be sounded then, would be two days late. By their intention of not sounding it at all until the following day,³⁸²⁵ they will be utterly ignorant of the time of the Second Coming at the mount of Olives.

Doubly unexpected?

There is a text that might well have some import here, and it is found in Matthew: *'Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.'*³⁸²⁶ The postulated date³⁸²⁷ shows the day for the return of the Messiah at a time, or hour that certainly would not commend itself automatically to the minds of the Jews, or, at least, the followers of ultra / Orthodox Judaism. Should the day of Trumpets happens to fall on a weekly Sabbath, then, as noted, according to their tradition, shofars and trumpets are not blown, but are blown on the following day, for even in the Holy Land, again according to their tradition, the Jews keep a 'double' Rosh hashanah. The years in the schematic Judaic calendar, until 2030AD, when weekly Sabbath and Rosh hashanah conjunctions occur are: 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2020, 2023, 2026, 2027, and 2030. So, to ultra / Orthodox Judaism, 2027AD is a year when the Messiah most certainly is not expected. When the

³⁸²² Chazal, meaning 'Our Sages'; deriving from an acronym standing for Hakameinu Zikhronam Liv'rakha.

³⁸²³ viz., Leviticus.

³⁸²⁴ 2 October, 2027D

³⁸²⁵ 3 October, 2027AD

³⁸²⁶ Mat 24:44

³⁸²⁷ q.v. sup.

postponement and leap year corrections are effected for that year, returning the date to conform to God's sacred calendar, the projected date does not even land on the Judaic Rosh hashanah—it is two days earlier—and thus the Messiah will be doubly unexpected, as it were. In addition, Christ's return will be *'in the air,'* in the first instance, for Christ will return to the house of God: *'the house of God which is the church of the living God.'*³⁸²⁸ That will occur at Pentecost. Very few indeed will be expecting a first sighting at such a time.

Time of blessedness

Christ will marry the church—the direct descendant, in church form, of the nation of Israel, whom He divorced and for whom He gave His life. *'Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And he said unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb....These are the true sayings of God.'*³⁸²⁹

The *'time of blessedness'* described in Daniel³⁸³⁰ is here pictured as that timeframe encompassing attendance at His marriage ceremony and the subsequent return to the mount of Olives with the Messiah as part of His kingdom, to see the overthrow of Satan's forces in the Valley of Decision. Not many will enter into the kingdom at this time, and, hence, not many will attend: a few here, a few there, as seen in Jeremiah, *'Go and proclaim these words towards the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion.'*³⁸³¹

The wedding shall be *'in the air,'* prior to the return to Jerusalem, in Zion, which will be called the throne of the Lord. In the aftermath, *'At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart.'*³⁸³²

Some might be prompted to contend that a wife who is divorced is not free to remarry, at least until the death of her husband. But even here Holy Scripture proves unassailable: Christ not only died, He died for His church, His *'wife,'* and, as a result, she is free. And so Christ, Israel's husband, died, not only to redeem Israel, and usher in the free availability of the Holy Spirit, but also to render Israel free to remarry. This is love unsurpassed. Christ's first coming was to redeem; not to restore. The complete restoration comes with the implementation of the New Covenant, confirmed at the marriage ceremony described in Revelation chapter nineteen.

³⁸²⁸ I Tim 3:15c

³⁸²⁹ Rev 19:7,8

³⁸³⁰ Dan 12:12

³⁸³¹ Jer 3:12,14

³⁸³² Jer 3:17

Some legalists, seeking to substantiate their own predilections, attempt to divide the Law into 'convenient and discreet elements,' by saying, for example, that the statutes and judgements and sacrifices were shadows, and no longer apply, while only the Ten Commandments represent God's love towards man. But this is mere dissembling, and a seeking after the smooth and palatable, and not the truth, for, as will be seen, the Law is a coherent whole, and is not subject to man's whims. When Christ accused the scribes and Pharisees of being '*hypocrites*,'³⁸³³ the word used in Greek means '*dissemblers*,' amongst other things.³⁸³⁴ Christ also said, '*Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*'³⁸³⁵ Most certainly the Law is extant, and Christ, in accordance with the Law, marries His Bride. There is no infraction.

Finally, to round off those participating in this '*time of blessedness*,' there is also '*the great multitude out of all nations*,' who received not the mark of the Beast, or worshipped him, or his image, '*who came out of the great tribulation*,' and whom '*the Lamb clothed with white robes*.'³⁸³⁶ These wait until after the one thousand, three hundred and thirty-fifth day, for they do not attend the wedding. They are not immortal, and will not become so until after their death and the second resurrection at the end of the Millennium of rest. Pending that, they stand before the throne of the Lamb, mortal, for they have been purified '*in the blood of the Lamb*,'³⁸³⁷ and they shall serve there Him day and night.

Great supper

The parable of the great supper,³⁸³⁸ found in slightly differing forms in Matthew, where it is described as a '*wedding supper*' for the son of a king,³⁸³⁹ and in Luke, where a '*certain man*' made a '*great supper*,'³⁸⁴⁰ refers to a rather complex interlocking of a number of events and appeals to attend. In Matthew, the king makes two attempts to summon his guests, who refuse, and then a wider appeal at large.³⁸⁴¹ Here Christ was reviewing the depressing lack of interest in God's invitation exhibited by the nations of Israel and Judah down through the ages, and rehearsing the soon-coming general call to all, including the Gentiles, to come and enter the kingdom

³⁸³³ Luke 11:44; Greek: hupocrites.

³⁸³⁴ the covert and deadly nature of the Pharisees' beliefs and practices is well described by the acting analogy. In those days, the word '*persona*' did not have the connotation of personality that it does today. The persona was, in fact, a mask worn by actors when playing on the stage. It served to hide their real identity.

³⁸³⁵ Mat 5:17,18 (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁸³⁶ Rev 7:9-17

³⁸³⁷ Rev 7:14

³⁸³⁸ Mat 22:2-14; Luke 14:16-24

³⁸³⁹ Mat 22:2,3; likely that this is an account of a different telling of the parable than the account given in Luke, q.v. inf.

³⁸⁴⁰ Luke 14:16; two parables on the same topic rather than two accounts of the same parable, cf. sup.

³⁸⁴¹ Mat 22:3,4,9

and participate in the feast. The phrase '*both bad and good*'³⁸⁴² used to describe the condition of this latter grouping is wildly astray, for it should read '*both hard-pressed and upright*.'³⁸⁴³ The purview then is the entire timespan over which man may gain entry to the kingdom, and highlights the widespread indifference or open hostility to it, especially evident in Judæa at the time.³⁸⁴⁴ In Luke, there are two biddings,³⁸⁴⁵ the first achieving nothing, with the bidden guests offering but one excuse after another. 'That which exhibits the true character of these men is their actual treatment of a present invitation; not what they said about it, not the flattering terms in which they replied to the host, but their conduct when summoned to come now to the feast.'³⁸⁴⁶ 'And yet do you not constantly find men speaking of the necessity of postponing God's will and work to the world's business? Do not men on all hands betray that inwardly they put earthly possessions first, God second? They profess to be compelled to do so, and to be sorry they are compelled; and do not see that nothing compels them but their own likings and will,'³⁸⁴⁷ for that is their driver, and that is their compulsion. The ensuing general call is made under the express command '*to compel*'³⁸⁴⁸ attendance, that '*my house may be filled*.'³⁸⁴⁹ That compulsion is not one enforced by force or violence, or driven by indifference or base carnal choice. Rather, it is an edict uttered in love.³⁸⁵⁰ Since the house is filled, the terminus ad quem³⁸⁵¹ is the same as in Matthew.

³⁸⁴² Mat 22:10c

³⁸⁴³ Greek: poneros and agatuos respectively; *Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*, on Mat 22:10 notes that: 'The Persic version has '*both known and unknown*,'" which gives an interesting slant on the matter.

³⁸⁴⁴ the gospel of Matthew is primarily structured for the Jews.

³⁸⁴⁵ Luke 22:17,23

³⁸⁴⁶ Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord, as recorded by St. Luke*, p.92

³⁸⁴⁷ Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord, as recorded by St. Luke*, p.94

³⁸⁴⁸ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1, p.168:

'The word used for '*to compel*' is the verb aggareuein, and aggareuein is a word with a history. It comes from the noun aggareus, which is a Persian word meaning 'a courier.' The Persians had an amazing postal system. Each road was divided into stages lasting one day. At each stage there was food for the courier and water and fodder for the horses, and fresh horses for the road. But, if by any chance there was anything lacking, any private person could be impressed, compelled into giving food, lodging, horses, assistance, and even into carrying the message himself for a stage. The word for such compulsion was aggareuein.

In the end the word came to signify any kind of forced impressment into the service of the occupying force.'

The usage in Luke, however, does not import forced impressment or, indeed, Roman Catholic tyrannicide / murder.

The corresponding texts to this act are Mat 24:40,41 and Luke 17:34-36, where, variously, one is taken and the other left. They are '*taken*,' Greek: paralambano, which actually means '*to take an associate or companion to oneself*.' They have no say in the matter; they must go, and that constitutes a form of compulsion. At that time, they will have been in hiding, fearful of what is happening, and they must be '*taken*.' This is not a reference to Christ's return in the air for the dead in Christ and the elect then alive, but to a later event, at the time of His coming in all-conquering power to the mount of Olives, q.v. inf. It is at that time that the 'intermediate people', q.v. inf., are taken to be with Him in the Holy Land. They are not raised immortal. They remain mortal. And they are taken to be with their victorious Christ.

Luke 14:23, '*And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.*'

³⁸⁴⁹ Luke 14:23d

³⁸⁵⁰ 'There is one sentence in this parable that has been sadly misused. "*Go out*," said the master, "*and compel them to come in*." Augustine used that text as a justification for religious persecution. It was used as a defence, and even a command, to coerce people into the so-called Christian faith. It was used as a defence for the Inquisition, the thumb-screw, the rack, the threat of death and imprisonment, the campaigns against the heretics, for all those things which are the shame of mainstream, visible Christianity—in short, [Roman Catholic], repugnant, satanic, and vile. Jesus does

It follows that included in this vast scope of time are the following:

1. The unheeding guests originally bidden;
2. The firstfruits, the 'elect';
3. The 'intermediate people,' *a great multitude*;³⁸⁵² and,
4. An even greater multitude of all nations and peoples at the last.

It also follows that there will be two suppers / feasts of God's people,³⁸⁵³ and very possibly three.³⁸⁵⁴

1. The wedding supper of the Lamb with the 'elect' in the air;
2. The great feast with the 'intermediate people' conjoined, to be held at Jerusalem;³⁸⁵⁵ and,
3. A feast at the consummation of all things, in the New Jerusalem, involving all God's people.³⁸⁵⁶

These complete the plan of God for the redemption and elevation of man by ingathering.

not coerce, He invites. Beside it we should always set another text—'*The love of Christ constrains us.*' (II Cor 5:14). In the Kingdom of God there is only one compulsion—the compulsion of love.'

It must be added that Judæo-Christianity is entirely pacific: Mat 5:43-48 constrains us to '*love our enemies.*' We are not to kill them, or anyone else for that matter. Christianity is not violent; Christianity is not repressive; and Christianity is not murderous and inquisitorial. It cannot be. With love, it simply cannot be.

³⁸⁵¹ the terminal or destination.

³⁸⁵² Rev 7:9-17, 19:7-9

³⁸⁵³ the parable of the wedding garment refers principally but not solely to the wedding supper or early meal '*in the air*' at the time of the Second Coming, but also includes the great feast thereafter.

Dods, Marcus, *The Parables of Our Lord, as recorded by St. Luke*, p.87:

'In the parable of the great supper, Luke 14:16-24, the Pharisee knew it was good to enter the kingdom of God.

"Blessed," he says. "is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God."

³⁸⁵⁴ the third, exhibiting a certain symmetry with the three *shalosh regalim* feasts, would be at the 'wedding,' q.v. inf., when God the Father comes down, with the New Jerusalem, to dwell with the Lamb, among His immortal people, Rev 21:2,3.

³⁸⁵⁵ Rev 19:7-9

³⁸⁵⁶ Rev 21:2,9,10

Chapter 30

New Jerusalem

Chapter twenty-one of Revelation describes the passing away of the old heaven and earth, the introduction of the new heaven and earth, and the coming of the very God Almighty, the Father, to dwell with His people; all post-Millennial. *'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.'*³⁸⁵⁷

Biblical prophecy does not dwell long on the detail of new Jerusalem. There is no detailed descriptive schedule as is the case with the Temple in Ezekiel. The new Jerusalem, the holy city, the real eternal city, and, indeed, the entire new universe, only receives a few references besides Revelation: *'For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind'*;³⁸⁵⁸ *'For as the new*

³⁸⁵⁷ Rev 21:1-7; cp. Job 38:7b, *'or who can stay the bottles of heaven,'* where Hebrew: nebel, here translated *'bottle'* would better read *'collapsible skin bottle'* or *'skin bag,'* giving the idea of total, instant collapse of the existing.

³⁸⁵⁸ Isa 65:17

heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord';³⁸⁵⁹ and, 'Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.'³⁸⁶⁰ In addition, in point: 'And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.'³⁸⁶¹ John saw, in vision, 'the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven.'³⁸⁶² To many, possessing but superficial biblical knowledge, all references in Scripture to Jerusalem are to the earthly city, the one that King David made his capital. But there are other references that do not have that city in view. For instance, this difference is brought into sharp focus in Galatians, 'For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.'³⁸⁶³

Paul speaks of Abraham as one seeking a city whose architect is God: 'By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.'³⁸⁶⁴ Paul then contrasts this with, 'But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels. To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.'³⁸⁶⁵

There is a millennial Jerusalem predicted in Isaiah,³⁸⁶⁶ to which all nations shall flow, a true confluence of people; but there is yet another Jerusalem, designated the new Jerusalem, with the added description that it is the holy city. Popular opinion equates this new Jerusalem with heaven; but that is in error. The new Jerusalem comes down from heaven to earth at the end of the Millennium. Its locus is on earth, a new earth. It is interesting to note that the new holy city is described as being '*prepared as a bride adorned for her husband*,'

³⁸⁵⁹ Isa 66:22

³⁸⁶⁰ II Peter 3:13

³⁸⁶¹ Rev 20:11

³⁸⁶² Rev 21:2a

³⁸⁶³ Gal 4:25,26

³⁸⁶⁴ Heb 11:8-10,13-16

³⁸⁶⁵ Heb 12:22-24

³⁸⁶⁶ Isa 2:1-4

³⁸⁶⁷ and, later, is referred to as, *'the bride, the Lamb's wife.'*³⁸⁶⁸ Previously the Bride has been described as the church. The wedding feast takes place upon the return of Christ, when Christ is united with His church. Now the Bride is described as the new Jerusalem, the new holy city. But these two events are separated by the whole of the Millennium. Why the apparent discrepancy?

The answer: *'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them....Behold, I make all things new.'*³⁸⁶⁹ The new Jerusalem, which comes down from heaven, is the making of all things new. The old world, despite being replenished and made whole during the Millennium, is to be swept away, *'for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.'*³⁸⁷⁰

Family of God

It is abundantly evident that there must be a family of God. The Lamb marries his Bride, the church, recorded in the wedding supper in chapter nineteen.³⁸⁷¹ The guests, spirit beings comprising of the firstfruits, are admitted to membership of this God Family, as crowned angels.³⁸⁷² Afterwards, multitudes are admitted through having passed through the Great Tribulation, having repented and been baptised, living a Christian life, dying, and being resurrected to spirit beings at the end of the Millennium. Finally, there are others who are to be granted eternal life at the Great White Throne Judgement.³⁸⁷³

The family is further referred to in Isaiah, *'For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government will be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.'*³⁸⁷⁴ This is still in the future. Christ will be the Father both of the election, changing them into the immortal firstfruits of His creatures, and ultimately those who follow them into the kingdom of God. This is confirmed again, *'Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures,'*³⁸⁷⁵ and, *'But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.'*³⁸⁷⁶

³⁸⁶⁷ Rev 21:2

³⁸⁶⁸ Rev 21:9

³⁸⁶⁹ Rev 21:3,5

³⁸⁷⁰ Rev 21:1; cp. Job 38:7b, *'or who can stay the bottles of heaven,'* where Hebrew: nebel, here translated *'bottle'* would better read *'collapsible skin bottle'* or *'skin bag,'* giving the idea of total, instant collapse of the existing.

³⁸⁷¹ Revelation chpt. 19

³⁸⁷² q.v. sup., and given everlasting glory or a *'name [Hebrew: shem] better than of sons and of daughters,'* cf. Isa 56:5.

³⁸⁷³ q.v. sup.; e.g., those convicted of their consciences but never having had access to the Word of God. ³⁸⁷³ I Cor

5:13a *'But them which are without God judgeth;'* Greek: krino.

³⁸⁷⁴ Isa 9:6 (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁸⁷⁵ James 1:18

³⁸⁷⁶ Gal 4:26 (sublinear emphasis added)

The final marriage, pictured in chapter twenty-one, is between Christ and the new Jerusalem, condensed in: *'And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.'*³⁸⁷⁷ Just as our earthly carnal marriage is a type, so, to an extent, is the marriage of the election to the Lamb, as the ultimate Family will not be completed until God the Father comes to reside with all the spirit family in the new Jerusalem here on earth: *'Having the glory of God: And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.'*³⁸⁷⁸ This final marriage unites God the Father, God the Son, the election, and all who are raised in the Spirit as part of the kingdom of God and members of the family of God.

New heaven & new earth

The new heaven, new earth, and the new holy city represent the culmination of perfection. So too does the church, wed to Christ and composed purely of spirit beings. In this way, the new holy city is the consummation. *'For thy Makers [plural] are thy husbands [plural]; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.'*³⁸⁷⁹ Plural husbands, but yet as One, united; a composite whole.³⁸⁸⁰

But this still leaves another aspect relating to this. What the angel showed John in vision as the Bride, the Lamb's wife,³⁸⁸¹ is recorded in detail.³⁸⁸² This includes a description of certain physical aspects of the holy city: *'And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones.'*³⁸⁸³ Twelve stones are mentioned which correspond with the twelve stones that were in the breastplate of the high priest.³⁸⁸⁴ The symbolism in this portion seems definitely to be rooted in the *'lights of perfection'* passage in Exodus. In Revelation, the names of the twelve apostles are in the foundations; in Exodus, the twelve stones have the

³⁸⁷⁷ Rev 21:2,9,10

³⁸⁷⁸ Rev 21:11,22

³⁸⁷⁹ Isa 54:5 (corrected translation; added comment and clarification in square brackets)

³⁸⁸⁰ John 17:11b, *'Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.'*

'One,' Hebrew echad, a composite unity, and Greek, as above, a composite and collective unity.

Echad, Numbers 10:4, *'one,'* as one of two trumpets, a pair. The Hebrew word echad, therefore, can exhibit plurality at a remove.

Gen 2:14 of a husband and wife; Deut 6:4.

³⁸⁸¹ Rev 21:9

³⁸⁸² Rev 21:10-27

³⁸⁸³ Rev 21:19,20

³⁸⁸⁴ Ex 28:17-20; Urim and Thummim, *'lights of perfection.'*

names of the twelve tribes. In Revelation, the streets are gold; in Exodus, the breastplate is decorated with gold. In Revelation, the city is '*foursquare*'; in Exodus, the breastplate of the high priest is '*foursquare*.'³⁸⁸⁵

The same passage further identifies and confirms the inhabitants, '*But there shall in no wise enter into it anything....but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life*.'³⁸⁸⁶ These inhabitants comprise the church. This is where both are unified: just as the church is the Bride, so is the new holy city: two elements of a composite whole. The church will be seen throughout all eternity as the adorned Bride.

God with man

The tabernacle of God is with men. God dwelling among men was the purpose of the tabernacle of old, as evidenced by God's instruction, given through Moses, to the children of Israel: '*And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them*.'³⁸⁸⁷ The first coming of Christ is described in similar terms in John, '*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth*.'³⁸⁸⁸ The aftermath of the Second Coming is described in Revelation: '*Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them*.'³⁸⁸⁹

Immanuel, God with us, will wipe away every tear. Death will have been consigned to the lake of fire.³⁸⁹⁰ All sin will be ended. The One on the supreme throne is the Father; for the kingdom has been delivered over to Him by the Son, the Mediator: '*Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith that all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all*.'³⁸⁹¹

'*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end*'; God is the source and end of all glory, '*For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen*.'³⁸⁹² He is the First, Alpha, and the Last, Omega. All-in-all.

³⁸⁸⁵ Woodrow, Ralph, *His Truth is Marching On*, pp.119,120

³⁸⁸⁶ Rev 21:27

³⁸⁸⁷ Ex 25:8

³⁸⁸⁸ John 1:14

³⁸⁸⁹ Rev 7:15

³⁸⁹⁰ Rev 20:14

³⁸⁹¹ I Cor 15:24-28

³⁸⁹² Rom 11:34-36

Tree of Life

After their sin in the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were prohibited from taking of the tree of life. *'And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil:'*³⁸⁹³ and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.³⁸⁹⁴ This is the closest man has ever come to wholesale judgement and torment everlasting in the lake of fire, for if, at any point after the fall of man, Adam or Eve had eaten of the tree of life, they would have become as Satan, in whom iniquity was found, and as Satan is to be consigned to the lake of fire,³⁸⁹⁵ so would they.

The tree of life is first mentioned almost in passing.³⁸⁹⁶ Adam and Eve did not partake of the fruit of that tree. Rather, in direct contravention of God's command, they opted to take of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, with predictably disastrous results. The tree of life reappears in Scripture in the book of Revelation, which has the tree of life in the new Jerusalem, *'with the leaves of the tree for the healing of the nations,'*³⁸⁹⁷ while adding, later, as emended to conform to the majority text: *'And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, may God take away'*³⁸⁹⁸ *his part from the tree of life,'*³⁸⁹⁹ *from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.'*³⁹⁰⁰ As such, the tree of life either must be for the healing of the nations, eternally, or stand as a symbol for same.

Surprisingly to some, the tree of life was freely available in the garden of Eden. The fruit thereof could have been eaten at any time: *'And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.'*³⁹⁰¹

³⁸⁹³ Gwatkin, Henry Melvill, *Early Church History to AD 313*, Vol. 1, p.22:

'The Oriental dualism of good and evil is a confession of failure and despair, which renounces as insoluble the moral problem of the universe, and gives this world over to the powers of evil as their rightful prey.'

³⁸⁹⁴ Gen 3:22-24

³⁸⁹⁵ q.v. inf.

³⁸⁹⁶ Gen 2:9

³⁸⁹⁷ Rev 22:2

³⁸⁹⁸ and not 'God shall take away,' K.J.V.

³⁸⁹⁹ and not 'book of Life,' K.J.V.

³⁹⁰⁰ Rev 22:19

³⁹⁰¹ Gen 2:8,9,15-17

Instead of disobeying God and eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil,³⁹⁰² had Adam or Eve eaten of the tree of life, they would have become immortal, but they did not do so. The resulting separation from God and the waiting down through the ages, however, is made good at the end, when all are invited to partake *'of the fountain of the water of life freely.'*³⁹⁰³ The matter will have come full circle, only this time the result is eternal life, not death.

We are instructed to seek first the kingdom: *'Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.'*³⁹⁰⁴ The 'elect' are separate,³⁹⁰⁵ chosen by God from the foundation of the earth, *'But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.'*³⁹⁰⁶ It is God's good pleasure to give His own the gift of eternal life and a place in His kingdom: *'Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.'*³⁹⁰⁷

Further, the future of the flock is described in John: *'That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.'*³⁹⁰⁸ It is the purpose of our being to inherit the kingdom, literally to become the sons of God: *'He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.'*³⁹⁰⁹ And, once in His everlasting kingdom, *'But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.'*³⁹¹⁰

But the portion of the ungodly, categorised, *'But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which*

³⁹⁰² since ancient times, it has been well known to the occult-initiated that mind-altering drugs are required for 'enlightenment and illumination.' Rabbinical traditions teach that Adam and Eve took mind-altering narcotics when they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In this way, the tree symbolized all religions of magic and witchcraft, and of all Gnostic ways of knowing through the use of mind-altering drugs. When the drugs are used it is claimed that the 'third eye' is opened and the initiate becomes illuminated.

³⁹⁰³ Rev 22:17d

³⁹⁰⁴ Mat 6:31-33

³⁹⁰⁵ Rev 11:2

³⁹⁰⁶ II Thes 2:13

³⁹⁰⁷ Luke 12:32

³⁹⁰⁸ John 1:9-14 (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁹⁰⁹ Rev 21:7 (sublinear emphasis added)

³⁹¹⁰ I Cor 2:9

burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death,³⁹¹¹ is death: the end. No eternal life. No becoming the sons of God. No eternal punishment. Nothing—except death. Annihilation.

Description

Chapter twenty-one provides a description of the new Jerusalem: *'And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolyte; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.'*³⁹¹²

There is no slow, fading entropy, no whimpering end to the universe evident here. The holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from heaven, has a particular form. The massing is cuboidal: one thousand, five hund-

³⁹¹¹ Rev 21:8

³⁹¹² Rev 21:9-27

red miles³⁹¹³ cubed. Each side has three gates, giving twelve in total, named after the twelve tribes of Israel.³⁹¹⁴ The city wall has twelve foundations, and in them is found the names of the twelve apostles.³⁹¹⁵ These foundations are formed of precious stones, akin to those found in the breastplate of judgement, or the breastplate of decision, worn by the High Priest. These were twelve in number, set in gold, with one for each of the tribes of Israel. While the schedule of stones in both bear close similarity, with seven being identical: sardius, topaz, emerald, sapphire, amethyst, beryl, jasper; and two being exceedingly close: onyx—sardonyx, agate—chalcedony, which is a form of agate, the remaining three are not so readily correlated: carbunkle (garnet), diamond, and ligure (titanite) in the breastplate, as opposed to chrysoprasus, jacinth (zircon), and chrysolyte in the foundations.

It is interesting to note, *'And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually.'*³⁹¹⁶ Here is another confirmation of the names of the twelve tribes being before God throughout eternity. The holy city has the names of the children of Israel on the gates, and the precious stones as the foundations. Thus it can be said that as the holy city is eternal, the names and the stones will be before the Lord continually, for evermore; built in with the bricks, as it were.

The city itself is of pure gold, which speaks of divine glory, as in the tabernacle of old where the cherubim of gold were called the cherubim of glory. Contrary to the long history of temples in Jerusalem, there will be no actual temple building in the new Jerusalem, for God the Father and Christ will be *'the temple thereof.'*³⁹¹⁷ What this means is that there will be free access to God for all. Formerly, before the time of the ministry and sacrifice of Christ, only the priests could enter the sanctuary proper, and only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies, and that on only one day of the year. The second wall of enclosure, the *'middle*

³⁹¹³ 2,400 km.

³⁹¹⁴ tribes of Israel (cf. Gen 49:1-33):

Asher:	Happy or Fortunate
Benjamin:	Son of the Right Hand
Dan:	Judge
Ephraim:	Very Fruitful
Gad:	Troop or Company, or Overcome
Issachar:	Hire or He Will Bring a Reward
Joseph:	Addition or Increase
Judah:	Praise the Lord
Levi:	Joined
Manasseh:	Forgetfulness
Naphtali:	My Wrestling
Reuben:	Behold, a Son
Simeon:	Favourable Hearing
Zebulun:	Wished-for Habitation

³⁹¹⁵ including Paul, and not Matthias, the selected replacement for Judas Iscariot, cf. Acts 1:26

³⁹¹⁶ Ex 28:29

³⁹¹⁷ Rev 21:22b

wall,³⁹¹⁸ constructed within the Second Temple complex, upon which was carved, in Greek and Latin, the warning: 'No stranger may enter here on pain of death,' will be gone.³⁹¹⁹ *'But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.'*³⁹²⁰

In the current dispensation, man is offered the opportunity of communing directly with the Father and of praying to Him through the name of His Son—subject to repentance, baptism and conferring of the Holy Spirit. In the Millennium, Christ will be in Jerusalem among His 'elect' and they shall see Him and have ready access to Him. Many misunderstand, *'For unto angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak....Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet....but now we see not yet all things put under him.'*³⁹²¹ This refers not to *'the new heavens and the new earth'* being subject to man,³⁹²² but, when properly translated, *'the world to come'* gives *'habitable land coming,'* a reference to conditions in the Millennium of rest. Only then will matters crystallise into all things on earth being finally put under the foot of man: *'Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.'*³⁹²³

Throughout eternity thereafter, both the Father and Son will be accessible in the new Jerusalem. There will be immediate access; access without barrier or restriction. The illumination will be God the Father and the Lamb, sufficient to meet every need. There will be no sun, and no moon. In the Temple in Jerusalem, as in the tabernacle, there were three means of illumination. For the outer court, the illumination of the sun by day, and the moon by night, was ample. For the inner sanctuary, the candlesticks lighted all the furniture, because the light of sun and moon did not penetrate there. For the Holy of Holies, the Shekinah provided all. This typified the blessed light of the Lamb: *'In him was life; and the life was the light of men. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.'*³⁹²⁴

The new Jerusalem, with the church surrounding God the Father and the Lamb, will be the centre of government of the earth, and the centre of government of all the new creation. The gates shall never close. Full and free access without hindrance will be available. For ever since Adam and Eve sinned, there was a barrier to access; they could no longer enjoy the garden of Eden. Even Adam feared communicating with God and hid himself.³⁹²⁵ When Israel went under the Law, as described in Exodus chapter nineteen, immediately they were

³⁹¹⁸ the Soreg.

³⁹¹⁹ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 18.1.5:

'This served to separate Jew from Gentile, preventing access to the penetralia or inner sanctum by any unauthorised persons: a prohibition strictly enforced during the time of the Temple. Access to the entire complex was later forbidden to those Jews who refused to offer sacrifices.'

³⁹²⁰ Eph 2:13,14

³⁹²¹ Heb 2:5,8

³⁹²² Heb 2:6-8

³⁹²³ Heb 2:8a

³⁹²⁴ John 1:4,9;9:5

³⁹²⁵ Gen 3:10

not allowed access to Mount Sinai on pain of death. When the tabernacle, and later the Temple also, was constructed, God placed the symbol of his Presence, the Shekinah, the Dwelling Presence of God, in the innermost compartment, as far from sinful man as possible; and he could only come through his representative, the High Priest, with the blood of an offering for sin, and that but once a year. During this dispensation, only a few walked with God; only a few spoke with God; only a few were the prophets of God; only one was described as the friend of God, although Jesus described His disciples as His friends.³⁹²⁶ With the coming of Christ and the Christian dispensation, many more, but still a few in comparison with those excluded, can come to God, through Christ. In the new Jerusalem, all blockages to access to God the Father are to be removed forever.

The glory and honour of all nations will be brought into the holy city. In the worship of Israel and Judah, no Gentile could be brought into the holy inner precincts without serious repercussions. Paul suffered persecution when some inferred erroneously that he had brought a Gentile into the Temple.³⁹²⁷ But now, with all being of Israel, and with free access, nothing wholesome, and good, and holy, will ever be debarred. Sin, in all its hideous forms, will have been conquered: it will never be seen again, for all eternity. The Law, which had long acted as a guide to Christ, will pass away, in its current form, as stated by Christ, *'For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, until all be fulfilled.'*³⁹²⁸ The old heaven and earth will have passed away, to be replaced by the new heaven and the new earth, with the capital of all, the new Jerusalem. The old covenant will have finally gone, and the new covenant will be fully operational, for all eternity. The written Law, together with its penalties, will have gone, forever. There can be no sin in the fullness of God's kingdom. All will be in perfection, in accordance with God's Will, forever. Perfect love, perfect peace, perfect unity. God's Law, His Will, will be done; perfectly. The never-ending beauties of the new Jerusalem, and the new earth, and the new heaven, are beyond mortal imagining: *'neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.'*³⁹²⁹

Haste the day.

³⁹²⁶ John 15:14,15

³⁹²⁷ Acts 21:22-29

³⁹²⁸ Mat 5:18

³⁹²⁹ I Cor 2:9b

Chapter 31

It is Done

Chapter twenty-two of Revelation, the final chapter of Scripture, deals, in the main, with a continuation of the subject matter of the previous chapter, confirming and expanding upon it. Also, there are the final words on the matter from Christ, delivered through an angel to John, including a warning.

*'And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it: and his servants shall serve him.'*³⁹³⁰

The pure river of water of life speaks of the same refreshment, fulfilment, and abundance of joy as Psalms: *'They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.'*³⁹³¹ '[T]he river of thy pleasures,' literally, *'the river of thy Edens,'* conveys the picture that God will give freely to His own to drink from the inexhaustible waters of the kingdom. In other words, God will fully sustain all and everything, similar to the way the fountains of paradise watered the garden of Eden: only

³⁹³⁰ Rev 22:1-3; cf. Rev 21:2,22:2, *'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea....In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.'* A much safer rendition of the concluding phrase, in context of Rev 2:7b et al, inf., is: *'and the leaves of the tree had been for the healing of the nations'* (subscripted emphasis added).

'The tree of life' symbolizes Christ, with the twelve fruits symbolizing the twelve apostles, q.v. inf.

Spirit beings do eat and drink, however, in the coming kingdom of God, q.v. Mat 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18

³⁹³¹ Psa 36:8

this time it will be His church, His Bride, in new Jerusalem, for all eternity. For at this time, with Christ in the new Jerusalem, the church is united with God the Father in the final and complete family of God.

The same waters were referred to by Christ, in the context of receiving the Holy Spirit, *'But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life,'*³⁹³² and also, *'In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)'*³⁹³³

No more curse

The tree of life is in abundance, being found *'on either side of the river.'* The satisfying fruit thereof will be there in abundance, every month of the year. Even the leaves will be for the healing of nations, or, as can be variously translated from the Greek,³⁹³⁴ for the attendance, or relief, or adoration of the nations. This is not referring to physical healing, for that need is past, but to spiritual growth. *'And there shall be no more curse.'* This refers to the curse brought on the human family through the disobedience of Adam, *'And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,'*³⁹³⁵ and, *'Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.'*³⁹³⁶ This dual curse, the curse of the ground and the curse of death, is wiped away. The price of sin was paid at Calvary by He who was without sin; death is cast into the lake of fire at the end of the Great White Throne Judgement; and the barrier between God and man created by the sin of mankind is removed forever. The wanting of old is made

³⁹³² John 4:14

³⁹³³ John 7:37-39

³⁹³⁴ Greek: therapeia.

³⁹³⁵ Gen 3:17-19

³⁹³⁶ Rom 5:12;17-19

good, and there is placed, in its stead, redemption, and salvation, and everlasting life. When the throne of God and of the Lamb exist on the new earth, there can be no curse.

Some have confused *'the tree of life'* with the *'plant of renown'* in Ezekiel, *'And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bare the shame of the heathen any more.'*³⁹³⁷ From the context, and the content, it is obvious, however, that the Ezekiel plant occurs in the Millennium, to satisfy physical needs. In the new Jerusalem, comprising of spirit beings, there cannot be consuming physical hunger. The Tanakh has a footnote that states the phrase *'plant of renown'* is of uncertain meaning in Hebrew, so the identity of the plant is not known.

Together forever

*'And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever. And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.'*³⁹³⁸

God's family will be in the new Jerusalem, on earth. An unsullied, fulfilling, eternal existence without failure or weariness and with fullness of joy and praise; *'And they shall see his face.'* Many in the past have wondered whether this would ever happen. Exodus offers a remarkable vignette, *'Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink.'*³⁹³⁹ This is a record of a sight of the Word, Christ, the God of Israel, and Isaac, and Jacob. But when man is glorified with the Saviour, the very name of God the Father *'shall be in their foreheads.'*³⁹⁴⁰ This indicates the complete acknowledgement of belonging to Him, as well as free, unhindered access and total conformity to His blessed nature.

And there shall be no darkness there. Darkness will be banished forever. Darkness always flees in the presence of light, *'And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.'*³⁹⁴¹ This darkness is the unbelief and sin of mankind, and the very antithesis of light. The verb used means to grasp, comprehend,

³⁹³⁷ Ezek 34:29

³⁹³⁸ Rev 22:4-7

³⁹³⁹ Ex 24:9-11

³⁹⁴⁰ Rev 22:4b

³⁹⁴¹ John 1:5

put out, or seize with hostile intent.³⁹⁴² This imports an hostility between the light and the darkness, with the darkness unable to withstand the former. God and the Lamb are the eternal light of the world.

The saints *'shall reign for ever and ever.'*³⁹⁴³ The millennial reign and the eternal reign are seamlessly united. Saints will never cease to reign. The earthly reigns of mankind always come to an end. They are terminated either by injustices, or fraud, or ineptitude, or by death. None of these will be present when Christ reigns with His Bride, the church and, thus, the holy reign will be one without end. The validity of this message is attested by the angel: *'These sayings are faithful and true.'*³⁹⁴⁴ These sayings, from the Lord God of the holy prophets, Christ, are directed, *'to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done,'*³⁹⁴⁵ a form of recapitulation of *'to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass.'*³⁹⁴⁶

*'Behold, I come quickly.'*³⁹⁴⁷ The soon-coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, without delay, is stated three times in chapter twenty-two.³⁹⁴⁸ This ties the end of the book of Revelation with the beginning, where it is written: *'Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.'*³⁹⁴⁹ The blessing is reflected in Daniel, *'Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.'*³⁹⁵⁰ Blessedness is promised to those who treasure, preserve, persevere, endure, and live in the light of this prophetic book, the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

'The revelation of God is a costly thing. There is always a moral basis for it; it is to the man who keeps His commandments that Christ reveals Himself. No evil man can ever receive the revelation of God. He can be used by God, but he can have no fellowship with Him. It is only to the man who is looking for Him that God reveals Himself; and it is only to the man who, in spite of failure, is reaching up that God reaches down. Fellowship with God and the revelation of God are dependent on love; and love is dependent on obedience. The more we obey God, the more we understand Him; and the man who walks in His way inevitably walks with Him.'³⁹⁵¹

'And I John saw these things, and heard them, And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then said he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship

³⁹⁴² Greek: katalambano.

³⁹⁴³ Rev 22:5d

³⁹⁴⁴ Rev 22:6a

³⁹⁴⁵ Rev 22:6b

³⁹⁴⁶ Rev 1:1

³⁹⁴⁷ Rev 22:20b

³⁹⁴⁸ Rev 22:7,12,20

³⁹⁴⁹ Rev 1:3

³⁹⁵⁰ Dan 12:12

³⁹⁵¹ Barclay, William, *The Gospel of John*, Vol.2, p.169

God.³⁹⁵² Again, because of the surpassing wonder of the disclosures he has witnessed and heard, John seeks to worship the creature that mediated these truths to him. Worship of the creature, rather than the Creator,³⁹⁵³ is never justified, and is foolishness, and darkness, *'Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.'*³⁹⁵⁴ The more seemingly worthy the creature, apparently the greater is the danger.

Left unsealed

Contrary to the conclusions of some expositors who see the direct voice of Christ in the concluding verses of Revelation,³⁹⁵⁵ the angel's final words seem to comprise the entire balance of the chapter, although he speaks on behalf of Christ, as before: *'And he said unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.'*³⁹⁵⁶ And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth

³⁹⁵² Rev 22:8,9

³⁹⁵³ Rev 19:10

³⁹⁵⁴ Rom 1:21-25

³⁹⁵⁵ Rev 22:20,21

³⁹⁵⁶ Rev 22:16; K.J.V. corrected translation gives Greek: othrinós as 'dawn' rather than 'morning'; cp. Rev 2:28, 'And I will give him the morning star,' where Greek: proimos is correctly translated 'morning.'

*these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*³⁹⁵⁷

Contrary to the instruction given off to Daniel,³⁹⁵⁸ John is told not to seal the prophecy. In Daniel the time of the end was not at hand: now it is. It is only in the recent past that man has begun to discern something of the fullness of prophetic meanings in Revelation, and Daniel, and the rest. The early Christian church was privy to much of the wonders in Revelation, but could not put them in context or timeframe. They thought it was about to happen any day. They were living in one eruption of the Roman Empire: but there were more to come. Revelation has its viewpoint from the time of the sixth eruption, as discussed previously. From that time on, it was palpable that the time of the end could be seen as being very, very close at hand.

Human nature

'The human nature is ambitious; loves power; desires distinction; thirsts for greatness. To such dispositions and inclinations did Satan....address himself to Christ. He offered Him universal empire. He would make the kingdoms of the world the kingdom of God and of His Christ without delay and without a struggle. He proposes, as it were, a short road to redemption. He will spare the Saviour all suffering: he will excuse mankind from centuries of sin and pain and conflict: all shall be Christ's at once—on one condition. He must do homage for His throne to Satan. He must hold His crown as from him. In short, it was an offer of a great good through a little evil [sic]. It was the proposal of a momentary compromise, out of which was to spring endless blessing. To save Himself, and to save mankind, a deluge of blood and tears, He was to make a royal road to the destined end, not through the cross and the grave, not through the bitterness of atonement, and not through the tardiness of sanctification, but by one brief acknowledgement of an enemy's right, and by one passing homage to a usurper's crown.'³⁹⁵⁹

That human nature and character is basically unchangeable is attested in Revelation.³⁹⁶⁰ At the time of the end, irrespective of whether it is in the firstfruits, or in the dreadful Day of the Lord, or during the Millennium, or as prompted by Satan in his last desperate throw with Gog and Magog, or in standing before the Great White Throne Judgement, the name of each and every man will be found to have been written in the book of life from the very beginning, or it won't.³⁹⁶¹ Death or the coming of the Lord effectively confirms one's character and

³⁹⁵⁷ Rev 22:10-21

³⁹⁵⁸ Dan 12:4

³⁹⁵⁹ Vaughan, C. J., *Christ the Light of the World*, pp.183,184; this bears a remarkable correlation to the 'born again' myth, where upon accepting Christ one is held to be saved for all time, without need of running the race in full, q.v. inf.

³⁹⁶⁰ Rev 22:11

³⁹⁶¹ a peculiar difficulty arises in comparison with scriptural witness in Rev 22:14 where the K.J.V., dating from 1611, unhappily utilises a Greek text which not only is faulty, but which actually teaches what the rest of the Bible denies, i.e., salvation by keeping the commandments. Better is the wording adopted in the 1881 revision: '*Blessed are they that*

eternal destiny, and the outcome of this crucial matter is known from the very foundation of the world. Christ comes quickly with the reward of man, for weal or woe.³⁹⁶² He is Alpha and Omega. He is the One who created the world and everything that is therein.³⁹⁶³ His will shall stand.

Final reminder

While some may see the excluded sorcerers, liars and the like,³⁹⁶⁴ as some sort of indication that these types of people are still alive during eternity, or possibly alive in eternal torment in the lake of fire, they are simply adhering to a mistaken view. They are long dead. This is simply a warning to unbelievers of the gravity of their situation, for the end of them is graphically described.³⁹⁶⁵

There is also a reminder that the message of the book of Revelation is for the churches; yet how it has been neglected by all but the few. The 'root' connects Christ with Israel and David, *'Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead,'*³⁹⁶⁶ and, *'I will give him the morning star.'*³⁹⁶⁷ Peter confirms this: *'We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts,'*³⁹⁶⁸ which links Him with His church.

The Old Testament ends with Christ described thus: *'But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.'*³⁹⁶⁹ The New Testament closes with Him as *'the bright and dawn star.'*³⁹⁷⁰ He will come for His 'elect' before He comes to reign, just as the morning star appears before the sun. The title of *'morning star'* will be conferred on His firstfruits, who will be elevated to the immortal ranks of cherubim and seraphim, with the two witnesses taking the latter.³⁹⁷¹

wash their robes (K.J.V. has *'that do his commandments'*), *that they may have the right to come to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city.'*

³⁹⁶² better or worse.

³⁹⁶³ John 1:1-3

³⁹⁶⁴ Rev 22:15

³⁹⁶⁵ Rev 21:8

³⁹⁶⁶ Rom 1:3,4

³⁹⁶⁷ Rev 2:28

³⁹⁶⁸ II Peter 1:19

³⁹⁶⁹ Mal 4:2

³⁹⁷⁰ Rev 22:16; K.J.V. corrected translation gives Greek: *othrinos* as *'dawn'* rather than *'morning'*; cp. Rev 2:28, *'And I will give him the morning star,'* where Greek: *proimos* is correctly translated *'morning'* and used in the name of a title bestowed on the 'elect' by Jesus Christ upon their immortality. The dawn star truly is Christ, for dawn is when He comes with His armies to the mount of Olives, as Conqueror, q.v.sup.

³⁹⁷¹ q.v., 'Ranking of Angels' in the Appendix.

The invitation of old is repeated, this time by the Holy Spirit and the Bride, the church. All are invited to *'take of the water of life freely.'*³⁹⁷² Man should not place himself in opposition to God, as this puts him under the control of Satan, to his ultimate destruction. This is the last reminder.

Warning & benediction

There is now a solemn warning not to tamper with prophecy. The message of the Bible, the good news of the Gospel, is complete and permits of no collaboration, or additions, or omissions, or amendments from anyone. So-called biblical revelations subsequent upon the book of Revelation, claiming to be Scripture,³⁹⁷³ merely bring down on the heads of the perpetrators a fiercesome curse. The same sort of prohibition on adding and detracting applies to the Law can be seen in, *'What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.'*³⁹⁷⁴ The curse in Revelation is to suffer the fate of the reprobate and contumacious³⁹⁷⁵ ungodly. What a rebuke to those who would take such matters lightly, for their very life is at stake.

The final testimony refers to the contents of the entire book; all the message is from Christ personally. He has promised to come quickly, *'For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.'*³⁹⁷⁶ If the reckoning were taken on God's chronometer, then hardly two days are gone: *'But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.'*³⁹⁷⁷ *'Even so, come, Lord Jesus,'*³⁹⁷⁸ is the answer given by John that represents that of the entire church.

The Old Testament closed with a threatened curse;³⁹⁷⁹ the New Testament concludes with the benediction of grace. There is this vast difference, because Christ has come, and died for our sins, and is risen, and is glorified.

Closing summary

In closing, it is confirmed with absolute certainty that, through Christ, nothing is left unresolved, nothing left undone, and that out of chaos cometh forth perfection. The fall of man is made good; Satan is left powerless and trapped in fiery torment, along with his demons, for the duration of the Millennium; the incorrigibly wicked are consumed at the last, together with Satan and his demons; and the 'elect,' from all of the nations, are

³⁹⁷² Rev 22:17d

³⁹⁷³ with perhaps the best known and most promulgated being the book of Mormon, although the book of Enoch and the Shepherd of Hermas and such ilk also fall into the purview.

³⁹⁷⁴ Deut 12:32

³⁹⁷⁵ i.e., stubbornly disobedient.

³⁹⁷⁶ Heb 10:37; cp. Hab 2:3b

³⁹⁷⁷ II Peter 3:8

³⁹⁷⁸ Rev 22:20b

³⁹⁷⁹ Mal 4:5,6

transformed into spirit members of the very family of God the Father, to be with Him and His Son, our beloved Lord Jesus Christ, for all eternity.

Just as the weekly Sabbath can be viewed as a rehearsal of the Millennium of rest to come, so can the seven-yearly Sabbaticals. But these presage more, as they total, in any one fifty-year cycle, seven: this being God's number of completion. Seven Sabbaticals encompass the full dimension of the Millennium, from beginning to end, and lead to the fiftieth-year Yobel or Jubilee, in which all previous wantings are righted. The Yobel, therefore, in its ultimate consummation, presages the new Jerusalem, when all things will be returned to perfection, for all of eternity.³⁹⁸⁰

This is Christian doctrine and belief; true Christianity, Judæo-Christianity, not that mish-mash or pot-pourri of paganism which currently masquerades under its name. It is no empty slate.³⁹⁸¹ On the contrary, it is vibrant; it lives, informing our every thought, and our every deed. It is selfless, generous, courteous, caring in the real Christian way, not by way of that superficial sentimentality conformed to this world, but in a genuine caring for the eternal well-being of the fellow man.³⁹⁸²

Such is the communication of the Holy Spirit, and such is the abundance of it, that it is not only refreshing to the recipient, but pours out to the benefit, comfort, and edification of others. But above all, in offering the gracious gift of the effusion of the Holy Spirit, there is imported salvation and membership of the God family for all eternity. And for this, there is no need of apology, for the apologia has been manifest, and it stands immutable and utterly unassailable.

Well can it be said, hold fast that which you have, deny it not, nourish it, cherish it, guard it with your very life, for on it your life eternal depends.

And, finally, in benediction,

*'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.'*³⁹⁸³

³⁹⁸⁰ 6 + 1 days = 7, the week, ending with the weekly Sabbath; 6 + 1 years = 7, the Shm'ittah cycle, ending with the Sabbatical year; 6 + 1 millennia = 7 millenia, ending with the Millennium of rest; 7 x 7 + 1 day = Omer count, ending with Shavuot, Pentecost; 7 x 7 + 1 year = the Yobel cycle, ending with the Yobel or Jubilee year.

³⁹⁸¹ Latin: tabula rasa.

³⁹⁸² John 7:37-39, 'In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of flowing water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)'

³⁹⁸³ Rev 22:21